

CANADIAN 

May/June 2016

FIREARMS JOURNAL



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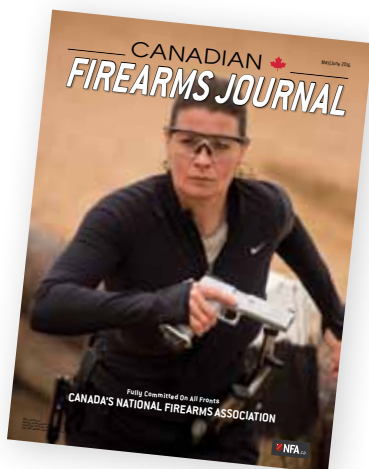
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MISSION STATEMENT

Canada's National Firearms Association exists to promote, support and protect all safe firearms activities, including the right of self defense, firearms education for all Canadians, freedom and justice for Canada's firearms community and to advocate for legislative change to ensure the right of all Canadians to own and use firearms is protected.

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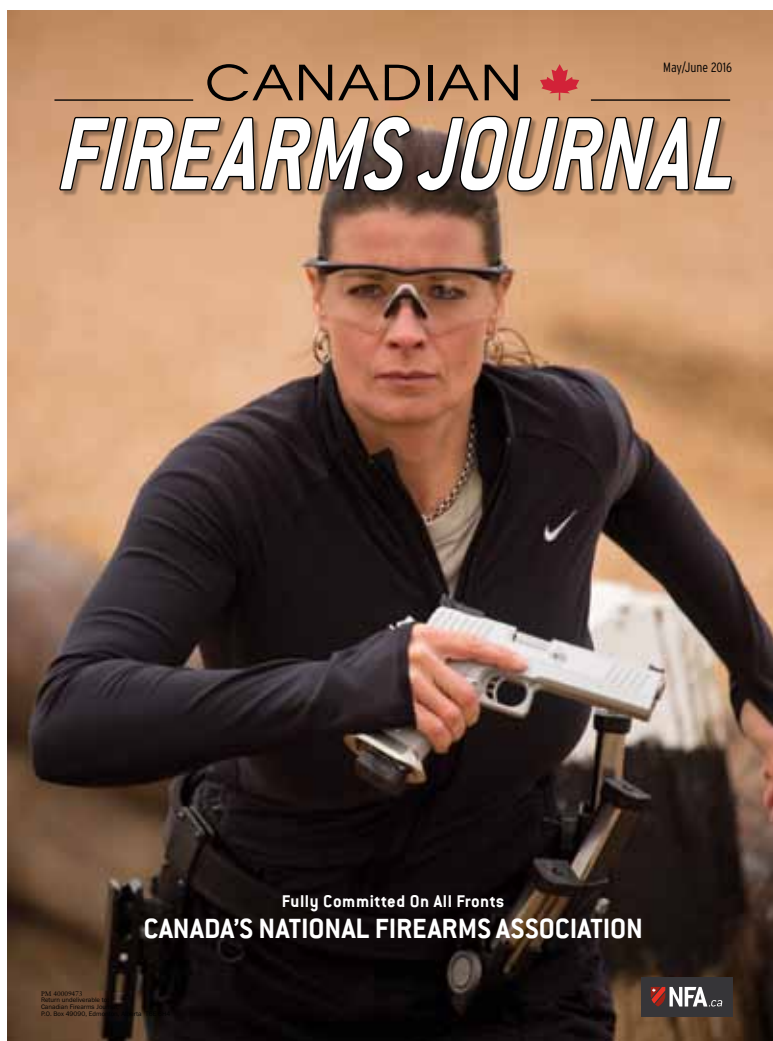


On The Cover

Outdoor Range Season

Photo by Howard Communications

Warm weather is bringing shooters out to play. So, our cover shows a competitor taking an STI, Executive model pistol, for a run on an outdoor range. It looks like an intense run, too.



Canadian Firearms Journal
The Official Magazine of



NFA

CANADA'S
NATIONAL
FIREARMS
ASSOCIATION

Editor

Al Voth

editor@nfa.ca

General Manager

Ginger Fournier

ginger@nfa.ca

Accounts/Membership

membership@nfa.ca

General Information

info@nfa.ca

Legal Inquiries

legal@nfa.ca

National Executive

National President

Sheldon Clare

1-877-818-0393

sheldon@nfa.ca

EVP, Communications

Blair Hagen

1-877-818-0393

blair@nfa.ca

Treasurer

Bill Rantz

1-877-818-0393

bill@nfa.ca

Secretary

Jerrold Lundgard

1-877-818-0393

jerrold@nfa.ca

CANADA'S NATIONAL FIREARMS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 49090

Edmonton, Alberta T6E 6H4

Toll Free: 1 877-818-0393

Local: (780) 439-1394

Fax: (780) 439-4091



NFA.ca



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PRINTED IN CANADA



From The Editor's Desk

Al Voth

Issues Plague Shooting Ranges

It's springtime in Canada, and for most shooters this time of year signals a move outdoors. And when shooting outside, there's a good bet you'll be going to one of the many outdoor ranges across this country. Unfortunately, there's a shortage of shooting ranges in many areas and this is limiting the number of people able to participate in the gun sports. But many existing ranges are facing challenges, too. Often, urban encroachment is causing problems, and sometimes it's government bureaucracy. If you pay any kind of attention to what's happening with shooting ranges around our country, you've likely heard of the problems some are facing.

It's why we're making shooting ranges the theme of this issue. I've asked a number of *CFJ* writers to contribute stories about the ranges operating in their areas.

So, in these pages you'll find the story of a range that has been closed and the inspiring tale of another one that has just opened. There's also the story of a Saskatchewan shooting club that has started an enormously successful youth program. There are lessons to be learned from each.

In an ideal world, we'd have a national network of some kind where shooting range operators could gather to share ideas, strategies and best practices. But until that happens, the kind of information sharing you see in these pages will certainly help. Remember, too, that the NFA stands ready to help shooting clubs with some of the issues they face, just as they do individuals.

Of course, we've a few technical/gear articles, as well. Dean Roxby explains the chemistry behind corrosive primers and tells us how to ensure your rifle doesn't fall victim to their nasty properties. And since it's turkey season, Jeff Helsdon talks about the ammunition and chokes needed for pursuing those tasty birds. In my mind, spring is rimfire season, so Duane Radford brings us a review on CZ's Mannlicher stocked rifle, the 455 FS. This is followed by Wes David's thoughts on how to successfully take a novice shooter from the shooting range into the hunting fields. Also, Gary Mauser is back, joining Chris McGarry and Bruce Gold for political commentary.

Read it all. Share it. And if you have a story to tell, let me know. It's your magazine.



Spring marks the time of year when shooters begin to move outdoors.



President's Message

Sheldon Clare

World News

From March 1 to 3, I was privileged to represent the NFA and Canada at the World Forum on Shooting Activities (WFSA) meetings in Nuremburg, Germany. As you are aware, the WFSA is an international co-ordinating body composed of firearm industry groups, various shooting disciplines, user groups and advocacy organizations. Canada's National Firearms Association is a voting member, and I was elected as a member of the WFSA executive, replacing Professor Gary Mauser who had served in the role for many years. The executive met in committees to share information about national developments, including legislation, statistics, environment and image. The meetings were held just before, and in conjunction with, one of the largest and classiest arms shows in the world - IWA in Nuremburg. I was glad to connect with many old friends at these events and build new relationships.

At this meeting, there was significant attention paid to the firearms proposals at the European Union, which are highly contentious and would cause significant harm to firearms owners under the guise of preventing terrorist attacks. We were given an excellent presentation on the issue by S. Petroni, of Malta, who explained the context of the EU firearms directive and its present goals. In short, the state of the European community firearms directive at this writing is something that might sound familiar to Canadians:

- To ban, confiscate and destroy semi-automatics that resemble fully automatic firearms;
- Include museums and collectors in the directive to force deactivation and prevent new acquisitions;

- End of sales-by-distance communications, even though these still require all standard processes to be followed;
- Include silencers in the list, and thus ban them in countries where they are currently legal;
- Prevent transfer, by way of donation or inheritance, of certain firearms to persons younger than 18 years of age;
- Introduction of medical checks every five years for issuing and renewing licences.

The proposals to amend the firearms directive were released hastily in response to the Paris attacks, and use dubious statistics and questionable goals to put further restrictions on hunters, sport shooters, collectors and museums. All of these changes would damage the trade and industry, as well as affect people's vocations and livelihoods, and most certainly not affect terrorists. There is even some discussion about preventing use of pepper spray and requiring so-called alarm and gas pistols to be registered. At time of writing, many countries oppose the changes and there is a tremendous backlash, especially from the firearms-owning public. Internet groups, such as Firearms United, are encouraging protest and the WFSA has been active in ensuring its members are informed and engaged on the issue.

The American presidential primaries were also the subject of much interest and concern. In the face of the Canadian situation, comments about the US choices were kept fairly muted.

Now one might think these events are happening far away and should not affect Canadian firearms owners. However, it is clear that gun control is a global issue that will increasingly see our opponents co-ordinating, as we must, in order to counter these nefarious efforts. There will be talks coming up at the UN in New York in June and in Geneva in August regarding the *Arms Trade Treaty*, and the NFA will continue to speak out against these dangerous international initiatives.

At the WFSA meetings, I presented summaries of two papers, one on the benefits of hunting to Canada and the other about Dr. Caillin Langmann's research. Both documents were well received and Dr. Langmann's paper will be particularly useful in helping combat misperceptions about firearms law. In our discussion regarding social media, I mentioned the NFA's efforts in sponsoring shooting athletes and sports, and this was lauded as exactly what needed to be done to build general support. We also heard about how social media can be used and misused, and the importance of good monitoring and strategic use. It was emphasized by William Kullman of the US BATFE that firearms organizations have an important role in preventing bad laws by being proactive, and by participating in the long game by playing chess, not checkers. His comments were echoed by one of the social media gurus, in order to make the case for having a social media strategy and monitoring social media 24/7. To that end, there will be a social media training session in October at the next WFSA meetings in Arizona.

On the Canadian side of the pond, we are still engaging with the major federal parties to ensure there won't be any poor legislation coming down the pipe to harm us. We are also being more vigilant of private members' bills as politicians try to "do something," but without the expertise of the firearm community, they just make proposals that would make the situation worse. We are prepping firearms proposals for party conventions and making sure our voices will be present on the firearms file.

Again, thanks for your support in these troubled times. The NFA is continuing to work hard on your behalf, as we strive for improvements in our laws and work to prevent more bad legislation. None of our efforts are possible without your strong support, and your efforts in connecting with your local MPs to keep them aware of our collective concerns.

Rapport du Président

Sheldon Clare

Nouvelles Mondiales

Du premier au 3 mars dernier j'ai eu le privilège de représenter l'Association Canadienne pour les Armes à Feu (ACAF) aux réunions du World Forum on Shooting Activities (WFSA) dans la ville de Nuremberg en Allemagne. Comme vous le savez, le WFSA est une organisation coordonnatrice de groupes d'industries reliées aux armes à feu, de tir sportif dans toutes les disciplines, de groupes d'usagers et d'organisations de lobbying. L'ACAF est membre du WFSA et a le droit de vote aux réunions. J'ai eu l'honneur d'être élu pour remplacer M. Gary Mauser qui a occupé un poste sur le comité de direction du WFSA pendant de nombreuses années. Le comité de direction s'est réuni en groupes de travail pour discuter des nombreux développements Européens tels que de nouvelles propositions législatives, des statistiques, l'environnement et l'image. Ces réunions ont eu lieu juste avant et conjointement avec la plus grande et prestigieuse exposition d'armes à feu au monde, la IWA Messe de Nuremberg. Ce fût un plaisir de revoir des amis de longue date et d'en créer de nouveaux.

Durant cette réunion, tous se sont concentrés sur les changements législatifs proposés par l'Union Européenne (UE). Hautement controversés ils causeraient de très grands dommages aux propriétaires d'armes à feu, sous la prétention de prévenir des attaques terroristes. M. S. Petroni de Malte a donné un excellent exposé sur le sujet, il a expliqué le contexte des amendements à la directive de l'UE par rapport aux armes à feu et leurs objectifs ponctuels. En résumé, ils ressemblent étrangement à ce que les Canadiens ont à faire face:

- Bannir, confisquer et détruire toutes les armes semi-automatiques qui "ressemblent" à une arme automatique.
- Que les musées et les collectionneurs soient inclus dans la loi pour forcer la désactivation des armes et empêcher de nouvelles acquisitions.
- Mettre fin aux achats via les communications à distance malgré le fait que ces transactions requièrent que tous les procédés légaux soient suivis.
- Bannir les silencieux dans tous les pays de l'UE.
- Empêcher que certaines armes à feu soient transférées à des jeunes de moins de 18 ans suite à des dons ou des héritages.
- Qu'un examen médical fasse parti du processus de renouvellement de permis à tous les 5 ans.

Ces amendements ont été conçus à la hâte suite aux attaques de Paris. Ils sont truffés de statistiques douteuses et leurs objectifs erronés ne font que nuire aux chasseurs, aux tireurs sportifs, aux collectionneurs et aux musées. Tous ces changements créeraient des torts irréparables envers l'industrie et le commerce, ils affecteraient les vocations et le gagne pain de gens honnêtes sans avoir aucun effet sur les terroristes. L'UE discute même de restreindre l'usage du poivre de cayenne en aérosol et demandent que les pistolets de secours et à gaz comprimé soient enregistrés. Au moment d'écrire ces lignes plusieurs pays s'opposent vigoureusement à ces changements et il y a aussi beaucoup de révolte de la part des propriétaires d'armes à feu.

Des groupes qui se rencontrent sur l'Internet tels que Firearms United encouragent les contestations et le WFSA s'assure que ses membres soient bien informés et engagés dans cette cause.

Le choix des candidats pour les élections présidentielles Américaines ont créé beaucoup d'intérêt et d'inquiétudes. Étant donné la situation au Canada, il n'y a pas eu beaucoup de commentaires face aux choix possibles au États-Unis. Il ne faut pas tomber dans le piège de penser que ces événements ont lieu loin de nous et qu'ils n'affecteront pas les propriétaires d'armes à feu Canadiens. Il est clair que le contrôle des armes à feu est un enjeu global qui sera mis de l'avant de plus en plus par nos adversaires. Nous devons travailler très fort pour contrer leurs vils efforts. L'ONU se réunit à New-York en juin et en août à Genève. Le Traité sur le commerce des armes

sera à l'ordre du jour. L'ACAF y sera pour continuer de décrire l'aspect dangereux de ces initiatives internationales.

Lors des réunions du WFSA, j'ai présenté le sommaire de deux recherches, une qui porte sur les bénéfices de la chasse au Canada et celle du Dr Cailin Langmann. Les deux documents ont été bien reçus et le travail de recherche du Dr Langmann sera extrêmement utile pour combattre les perceptions erronées sur les effets qu'ont les lois sur les armes à feu. J'ai aussi parlé du fait que l'ACAF commandite plusieurs athlètes et tireurs sportifs, cette stratégie fût reconnue comme étant une excellente initiative pour faire connaître les sports de tir sous un oeil favorable par le public en général. Nous avons discuté des médias sociaux et du fait qu'ils peuvent être utilisés à bon ou mauvais escient, d'où l'importance de les surveiller de près et d'en faire usage de manière stratégique. M. William Pullman représentant le BATFE (Bureau des Alcools, Tabacs, Armes à feu et Explosifs) des États-Unis est venu dire que les organisations pro-armes ont jouées un rôle important pour empêcher la création de mauvaises lois. Leurs vision à long terme leur a permis d'être proactives. Ses commentaires furent appuyés par un des gourous des médias sociaux qui insista sur l'importance d'avoir une stratégie sur ces médias et qu'ils soient surveillés 24 sur 7. Avec cet objectif en tête il y aura une formation sur l'utilisation des médias sociaux à la prochaine réunion du WFSA au mois d'octobre en Arizona.

Au Canada nous continuons d'être engagés avec les principaux partis politiques pour empêcher la création de mauvaises lois qui peuvent nous faire du tort. Nous avons augmenté notre vigilance envers les politiciens qui essaient de faire passer des projets de loi privés sous la prétention de "faire quelque chose", qui le font sans l'aide d'experts en matière d'armes à feu et qui apportent des propositions qui ne font qu'empirer la situation. Nous nous préparons à présenter des propositions en matière d'armes à feu aux conventions des partis politiques pour nous assurer que notre voix soit bien entendue.

Je vous remercie à nouveau pour votre appui dans cette période difficile. L'ACAF continue de travailler pour vous. Nous visons à améliorer nos lois actuelles et empêcher la création de lois néfastes. Nos efforts ne sauront porter fruits sans votre appui décisif et vos propres efforts en communiquant avec vos députés pour qu'ils soient informés de nos inquiétudes communes.



Vice President's Message

Blair Hagen

Why The CPC Lost Voter Support

The Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) lost firearms law reform voters in the 2015 election. But, was it the majority of firearms voters? No, it was not.

But it was enough that many of the voters who formed the coalition of bipartisan firearms law reform supporters hesitated. Those who had voted for the CPC previously did not show up in the 2015 election, or went back to voting for their traditional parties.

I know it may seem counter intuitive, given the attacks on firearms ownership by the Liberal and NDP parties. But, even if you do own a gun, you don't necessarily vote CPC.

Politics is complicated, and politics dealing with firearms legislation is even more complicated, with reason and rationale giving way to pure emotion. After the outrage regarding the C-68 *Firearms Act* in 1995, many members of the Liberal and NDP parties deserted those parties in the following federal elections to support the Reform, Alliance and then the CPC in the hopes that a government would be elected that would replace the 1995 *Firearms Act* with one that would respect the rights, culture and property of Canadians. Many political independents followed them, as well.

These actions by politicians culminated with the CPC being elected with a minority in 2006, returned in 2008, and then with a majority government in 2011. Independent, Liberal and NDP firearms voters went to the polls and cast their votes for fundamental firearms law reform and legislative change. It was evident to all Canadians at those times that it could take place only under a CPC majority government.

Fundamental change wasn't possible

in the two CPC minority parliaments. There were two government bills that fell well short of any meaningful reforms, and thankfully they died on the order paper. Two private members bills failed to make any headway.

But when that change came in 2012, the majority CPC government of Stephen Harper saw its way to end the rifle and shotgun registry. The rest of the *Firearms Act* was left intact. Ending long gun registration took away just one charge: failing to hold valid registration for a rifle or shotgun. The ending of long gun registration wasn't so much a service to gun owners as it was to all Canadian taxpayers, who knew full well the failure, expense and waste of the program.

Pressure from the highest echelons of the RCMP to keep it was extreme. The RCMP didn't like losing the gun registry. Not that it was particularly effective in reducing violence or tragedies, but it was a collection of data and the RCMP knows how to use data for all kinds of purposes. The common sense of Canadian voters won out, though.

So, after Bill C-19 was passed by the majority government of Stephen Harper in 2012, even the Liberals had to state that although they still supported the intent of the program, they "would not bring it back." Opposition to the 1995 *Firearms Act* was a huge stick wielded by the CPC during election cycles, and the Liberals sought to diffuse the issue by taking a softer stance on guns.

However, all the bureaucratic attacks on firearms ownership continued. In fact, the attacks continued to get worse. The RCMP firearms program undertook an aggressive firearms reclassification agenda that saw many firearms confiscated from their owners. Chief Provincial Firearms Officers continued negative and harassing bureaucratic and red tape initiatives against firearms licence holders. There has also been excessive harassment and bureaucratic stalling regarding the upgrading and use of long-established shooting ranges.

These were all things Canadians who voted for firearms law reform thought would stop once the CPC took power. The expectation was that, with at least a formed majority government, it would introduce fundamental firearms law reform legislation.

It was the RCMP reclassification of 14,000 semi-automatic rifles in 2014 that spurred the CPC to introduce a government bill to address some of the long standing demands for regulatory change. If not for the attempted prohibition and confiscation of the Swiss Arms/CZ 858 rifles, Bill C-42 would probably never have seen the light of day. However, the backlash from Canadians who demanded the government do something to address the latest RCMP firearms program onslaught against their rights and property was irresistible. The CPC had to act.

Although a solution of sorts, to overturn the semi-auto rifle confiscation plan, was found in Bill C-42, other reforms were less clear in their intent. So other than providing much relief to firearms owners who stood to have their property confiscated, the rest of C-42 was a patchwork of minor *Firearms Act* amendments, and some of those patches were very small indeed, and essentially meaningless.

The CPC and its government fell victim to the bright girls and boys, advisers and

strategists, who saw the firearms issue as a potential liability to CPC re-election fortunes. In 2011, the CPC knew it had to deliver on its long-standing rhetoric to end the gun registry. But some at the top levels of the CPC were uncomfortable with introducing an entirely new *Firearms Act*. Stopping the RCMP from harassing Dad about his duck gun was one thing. But handguns and rapid-fire rifles - that was something else! Letting people own their property without the permission of a bureaucrat? That could be controversial!

The British have a sarcastic term for it: being too smart by half, or too clever by half. In Canada we would say being too smart for one's own good.

This idiomatic term is applied to a relatively small and ignorant, but influential, clique that finally neutralized the firearms issue as a winning issue for CPC.

Seeking to downplay guns as an election issue, certain CPC strategists and policy makers diluted and obfuscated the party policy on guns. Most importantly, the CPC lost those Liberal, NDP and Independent voters who wanted to see firearms law reformed and a new *Firearms Act* created to replace it. It wasn't what was in Bill C-42 that did it. It was the omissions of Bill C-42 that convinced these voters that the CPC was done with firearms law reform. Further, there would be no new *Firearms Act*, and that they might as well return to their preferred voting patterns. Sure, the CPC was still nominally supportive of firearms owners, but some party policy makers felt that ending the long gun registry also ended their commitment to firearms law reform. This is myopia at its best!

Even so, the majority of MPs, Electoral District Associations and regular members of the CPC remain steadfast in their support for firearms law reform. Most CPC MPs, strategists and members understand the need for fundamental firearms law reform. Undoubtedly they will continue to work towards this goal. The firearms issue is now a political issue in Canada, the way it never was prior to 1995. Canadians believe in firearms and property rights. They have rejected and dismissed the scolds who demand that they have no legitimate political power and that they must be subjected to the whims of politicians and civil disarmament lobbyists.

There are many reasons the CPC didn't receive enough votes to form another government in 2015. The main fact of the matter is that it needed all of the voters it had in previous elections if it was going to do that again. On the firearms and private property rights issues, it lost votes because of what was seen as apathy towards real legislative reform.

The CPC generally provided good government for nine years. It is too bad it lost its way and failed to replace the 1995 C-68 *Firearms Act* completely, with one that respected the rights and property of Canadians.

The CPC generally provided good government for nine years. It is too bad it lost its way and failed to replace the 1995 C-68 *Firearms Act* completely.





Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas

Guns, Bicycles & Social Change

What is the connection between the development of smokeless powder in 1884, the pneumatic tire of 1888, the diamond frame safety bike in 1890 and the development of lady's bloomers in 1894? The answer: Independence!

The predawn of the 20th century saw a revolution in technology in the form of the bicycle. The invention of the pneumatic tire, the diamond frame safety bike, along with Betty Bloomer's new design for lady's cycling wear began a societal shift in travel and independence. Mass-produced bicycles were within the financial reach of all levels of

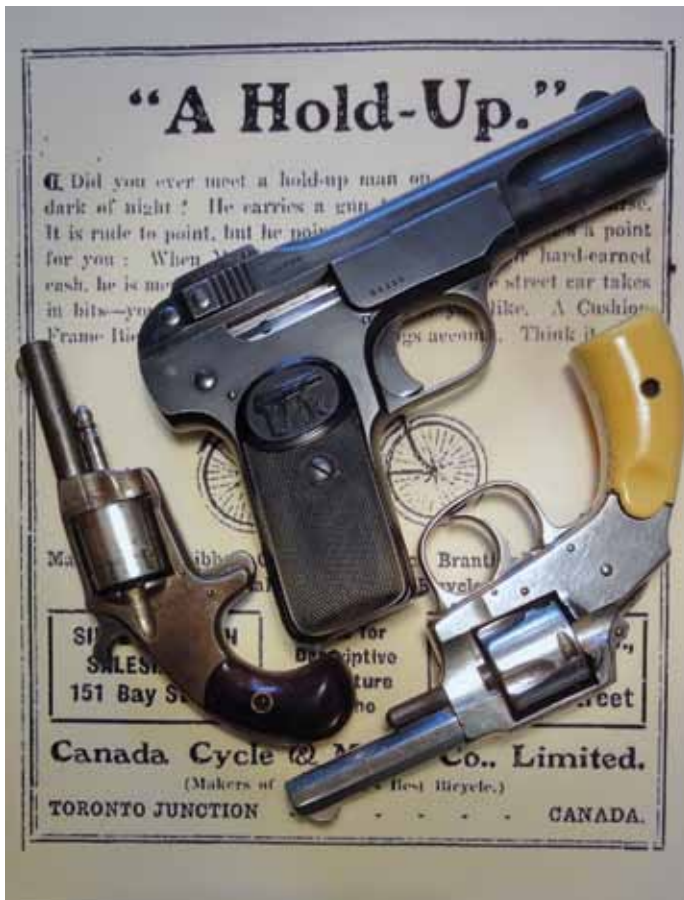
society. From the labouring class on up, this new innovation was affordable. There was an influx of women working outside the home. Small, medium and large towns were improving their roads. The safety bike was a sensation. Men, women and children alike became independently mobile. In the country, in cities, towns and villages, the world began teeming with cyclists, both commuters and recreational. The craze was on!

The advent of bloomers in the 1890s instituted female common sense dressing and increased their mobility considerably. But with this new-found bicycle freedom came hazards. The criminal element and miscreants discovered bicyclists could be easy prey on lonely country roads and dark inner-city streets. As the sales of bicycles blossomed, a new market opened up for thugs, purse snatchers, robbers and muggers. In North America, there were also packs of feral dogs. The independent individuals traveling on bicycles were easier victims than those on a horse.

The firearm and cycling industries rose to the occasion by beginning an aggressive campaign for new user-friendly safety revolvers marketed to the cycling fraternity. Many of the bicycle manufacturers developed small-frame revolvers with shrouded hammers, folding hammers and folding triggers that could be carried in pocket or purse with ease. In North America and Europe, a whole spectrum of the cycling revolvers were sold. Manufacturers focusing on the bicycling market included Hopkins & Allen, Harrington & Richardson, Iver Johnson, Stevens, Smith & Wesson and more. In the UK, there were a plethora of makers. The leaders in Europe were Fabrique Nationale, Girard & Boitte, Fagnus & Clement and others.

These compact revolvers were convenient, easy to clean due to smokeless powder and were safe to carry. In North America, they were universally called bicycle revolvers. In the UK, they were called cyclists friends, and in Europe were named velo dogs. The small-framed revolvers could be easily carried by anyone who was fit enough to ride a "wheel," as bicycles were called at that time. Armed with a revolver, the wheel riders could persuade a would-be robber to give them the road and unimpeded passage. The Suffragettes encouraged women to bicycle and be prepared to defend themselves. A quote by Susan B. Anthony, a noted suffragette: "I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self reliance." Bicycles and guns came to symbolize the new, modern woman. Gun clubs were accepting women in shooting competitions. A social revolution was underway because an unprecedented number of women were working and recreating outside the home.

By the late 1890s and the early 20th century, male and female bicyclists were purchasing bikes and guns in volume. The advertisements were candid and to the point. These small revolvers could be purchased for as little as \$3 or \$4. Admittedly, these were of poor quality, usually .22 calibre and not particularly reliable. That amount would



A Canadian bicycle advertisement shown (clockwise) with an FN Browning pistol, Hopkins & Allen revolver and a Guardian revolver.

IMAGE COURTESY GARY K. KANGAS ARCHIVE

equate to \$80 to \$100 in today's market. The high-quality revolvers from known makers sold for \$6 and up, about \$240 dollars in current currency.

Finishes of the more expensive revolvers varied greatly. They could be nickel or silver plate with ivory micarta or genuine ivory grips. Pearl grips were popular with ladies and dandies. The calibres began at .22 rimfire, however .32 and .38 centrefire were the most popular in North America. Barrel lengths were typically two inches, three inches and three-and-a-half inches.

In the UK, the slogans in the advertisements appealed to the self-defence aspect: "I fear no tramp," and "No lady or gentleman rider should be without one."

The North American advertisements were more focused on safety and convenience: "Specially adapted for bicyclists" and "Short barrel may be carried in the pocket without inconvenience or danger."

There were also a number of bicycle rifles for sale. The foremost brand was the Stevens Bicycle Rifle with a detachable shoulder stock. It could be ordered in 10, 12, 15 or 18-inch barrel lengths. The calibres available were the long rimfires in .22, .25 and .32 cartridges.

In the US, Canada, the UK, France, Belgium and many countries in western Europe, there were few restrictions on the ownership or carrying of firearms. In Canada and the US, the major catalogue sellers like the T. Eaton Co., the Hudson's Bay Co. and Sears Roebuck offered bicycle pistols by mail. An advertisement in the Hudson's Bay Co. catalogue lists Browning Automatic Pistols at \$12, that translates to \$480 in Canadian currency today. Or, you could order from The Bay an Iver Johnson hammerless revolver for \$7.50, which is \$300 in today's Canadian dollar. If you wanted the deluxe version with nickel plating and pearl grips, it was \$9, about \$360 in today's money. In Europe, there were many dealers and outlets advertising cyclists friends and velo dogs that could be purchased by mail.

In Canada and the US, outdoor stores would be listed as cycle and arms retailers. Bicycle shops sold guns and gun shops sold bicycles. Hardware stores also stocked a great selection of firearms and bicycles, including bicycle revolvers and pistols.

The new century ushered in a different innovation - the semi-automatic pistol emerged. John Browning designed the first small, reliable, safe, compact auto-load-

ing pistol. This arm was manufactured under Browning's patent by Fabrique Nationale. The FN Browning self-loading pistol found favour with many wheel enthusiasts. The semi-auto pistol would come of age in the early part of the 20th century, as the Browning was soon followed by Colt and Savage pistols.

By the First World War, the automobile began to eclipse the bicycle as the favourite mode of transportation in North America. By 1920, cars had become the chosen form of transportation, prompting the firearm industry to develop firearms to be carried in cars. And that's an entirely different story.

Bicycling is enjoying a renaissance. Cycling has come full circle and is now as prominent as it was 100 years ago. Once more there are a multitude of firearm manufacturers turning out small, light, medium-calibre firearms to be carried in those jurisdictions where allowed, both open and concealed. And the Internet has cycling forums devoted to these firearms and their carry systems.

Bicycling with firearms is a part of Canada's firearms heritage that is rarely portrayed, and is a revelation when disclosed.

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Politics & Guns

Bruce Gold

Self Defence - A Modest Proposal

The Canadian citizen's right to self-defence is now under sustained attack. For example, when Stephen Harper made a statement linking gun ownership with the right of Canadians to use self-defence firearms (if police were absent), he made a statement that most Canadians would consider common sense. His reward was a barrage of criticism. Michael Bryant, Ontario's former attorney general, denounced the idea of any such legal right. Legal experts utterly rejected any "castle doctrine" (the use of force to protect one's home) in Canada. Bryant dismissed the use of firearms for self-defence as "vigilantism." This dismissal of the right and need for self-defence was supported by the NDP, who pontificated that, "We live in a country of laws."

To clarify, the law says there is a justification for self-defence of the person and it rests on:

- A reasonable perception of force or a threat of force against a person;
- A defensive purpose associated with the actions;
- The actions must be reasonable in the circumstances.

This seems reasonable, but like so many things, what actually happens depends on how words like "reasonable" are being interpreted by those applying and administering the law.

We can note how the issue of defensive gun use is at the heart of the outrage, and for some the use of a firearm is, by itself, unreasonable. This is a clear demonstration of how a right can be attacked by attacking the means of exercising that right. In this case, we have two mutually supporting tactics to strip us of the means of self-defence and to re-define "reasonable" to exclude arms.

This curtailment of a natural right has never had much in the way of empirical justification. Historically, its justification, usually unstated, is political - an expression of our elites distrust and

disdain for Canadians. As a policy, it is utterly unsuited for the current situation where escalating political violence often targets the defenceless. As we progress further into this age of political terrorism, we can observe the dismal learning curve of the authorities in the face of calculated violence.

Montreal Massacre 1989

- Success of firearms laws in creating unarmed and defenceless victims: 100 per cent
- Success of police and government's claim of protection: zero per cent
- Official solution: more restrictions on the means of self-defence

Paris Massacre 2015

- Success of firearms laws guaranteeing unarmed and defenceless victims: 100 per cent
- Success of police and government's claim of protection: zero per cent
- Official solution: more restrictions on the means of self-defence

To be fair, we should consider that the official reason for more controls is based on the strategy of prevention by restricting access to firearms. So far this policy has bloodily failed, even in 100 per cent gun-free zones, where every power of the state is used to eliminate guns from the mix. Nonetheless, there is confidence that as soon as Canadian authorities secure 1,000 miles of ungarded border, and EU authorities seal up a border millions of people just walk across, the policy will become successful.

The sources

The persistence of an anti-gun, anti-self-defence agenda in Canada has a number of sources. For starters, the preference for top-down control was predominant in early Canada in the form of appointed governors and the home-grown politics of the Family Compact and the Chateau Clique. The current situation, with its annoying gaps between elite opinions and the opinions of other Canadians, is for some a justification of the need to impose where persuasion has failed. A recent example of this social re-engineering is Liberal Senator Hervieux-Payette's Bill S-231, which would ban most semi-auto firearms and force many gun owners to use non-existent range storage. It is instructive that this bill is based on nothing but her imperial will and arrogant assertions, with little pretence that it is justified by facts.

There is also the policy of mandatory pacifism. This is usually presented in terms of the elite's moral superiority (hence the despair that Harper was dangerously misleading the gullible public). This pacifist policy of never use force, never fight back, just do as you are told, is the politically correct opinion in official Canada. The elite disdain for self-defence is also supported by the UN, where a Special Rapporteur, a member of the anti-gun IANSA, issued a report



declaring that there is no human right to self-defence and that insufficient gun control is a violation of human rights. Typical of such "expert" enquires, only the violation of human rights was investigated; the use of arms to protect rights was ignored. Increasingly, it is being presumed that it is our duty to be helpless victims.

The underlying pattern

If we look at the larger pattern, we can see how Canada's elites are steadily shifting more decision making out of democratic control. A move some would tie to Trudeau's plan to social engineer Canada away from its historical roots and towards a progressive utopian future. We can see this clearly in the firearms issue. Bill C-68 shifted the entire matter of firearms regulation from parliament to the governor in council. At first glance, this seems like the normal arrangement for administrative law, giving government agencies the powers of rulemaking, adjudication and enforcement of a regulatory agenda. However, firearms law is not administrative, it is part of the *Criminal Code*. This shifts criminal lawmaking out of parliament and returns us to the practice of a governor and council dictating the law to their colonial inferiors.

Not content with this arrangement, the Liberals also shifted lawmaking to unelected bureaucrats. The recent RCMP reclassification of Swiss Arms rifles demonstrates how an unelected functionary can turn thousands of law-abiding Canadians into instant criminals. As it transpired, the Harper government was forced to issue an amnesty to protect thousands who now found themselves criminalized. The ability of Chief Firearms Officers to unilaterally make regulations (criminal law) also demonstrates this shifting of power.

The current Liberal plan to sign the *UN Arms Trade Treaty* would take the whole area of firearms law out of Canadian hands and subject our choices to the requirements of the treaty. The treaty is presented as a legally-binding agreement, establishing regulations for the arms trade. However, it also dictates domestic law, requiring national control systems and a national control list. Any amendment to the treaty can be forced on signatories with a three-quarters majority vote by mem-

bers. A signatory can withdraw from the treaty; however, they would still be required to fulfil all obligations, including financial obligations. In practice, these terms mean Canadian law can be dictated by an unelected international body, which we are still obliged to obey even after we withdraw. Such is the regard of the Liberals for national sovereignty.

Restoring the balance

The end result of these practices has been the separation of authority from responsibility. Practically speaking, the results of any such separation has always been uniformly disastrous. Responsibility without authority is a recipe for helpless inaction. Authority without responsibility is the imposition of despotism and totalitarianism.

Happily, the solution is both available and simple. Restore the connection. If an official feels free to restrict self-defence, in law or in practice, let them take responsibility for the results. Let those who advocate the denial of the right, on the promise of protection, pay full compensation for losses and damages when protection fails. Let the damages be paid, not from some general fund, but from their own budget. If the RCMP or other police agency want to advocate civil defencelessness because "they can do the job," let full compensation for robberies come out of their budgets. If they or some politician want to put the right or ability of self-defence in their pocket, let them pay compensation for injuries and deaths out of the same pocket. By this quick and simple process, the link between authority and responsibility can be restored.

How could anyone object to such a modest proposal?

REFERENCE

Bill C-26 (S.C. 2012 c. 9) Reforms to Self-Defence and Defence of Property: Technical Guide for Practitioners, Core Defence Elements. Department of Justice, Canada March 2013

Bill S-231 Strengthening Canadians' Security and Promoting Hunting and Recreational Shooting Act. Prevention of human rights violations committed with small arms and light weapons. Human Rights Council, sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights 58th Session Item 6. Barbara Frey Special Rapporteur.



Gun owners continue to be persecuted.



Point Blank

Chris McGarry

Gun Rights Are Women's Rights

In recent years, the shooting sports in Canada have seen a dramatic surge in popularity among many ethnic and minority groups, especially women. Increasing numbers of women in this country are getting their non-restricted PALs and RPALs and joining gun clubs. While some have a passion for target shooting or hunting, many others are learning how to shoot in order to protect themselves.

Over the past three or four decades, self-defence, while not an entirely taboo topic in Canada, has often been frowned upon by the liberal elites in government and the media. It is apparent many of them believe protection of the individual should be the sole domain of the state. Although the Sexual Revolution and various civil rights movements of

the 1960s and 1970s ushered in what many consider to be a golden age for women's rights throughout the western world, numerous feminists have lobbied voraciously for draconian gun control laws. Laws that do not protect women, but instead turn them into helpless victims.

For some radical anti-gun feminists, the horrific École Polytechnic massacre, which took the lives of 14 women on Dec. 6, 1989, was the key event from which to launch a massive crusade. Groups such as the Coalition for Gun Control were instrumental in lobbying for the passage of bills C-17 and C-68. Almost three decades later, after wasting billions of taxpayer dollars and ruining the lives of citizens who simply want to be left alone to enjoy their hard-earned property, Canadian women are no safer.

Instead of helping women, advocates of strict gun control legislation have only made their situation worse. We frequently hear news stories about women being assaulted or even murdered by estranged husbands and partners named in restraining orders. These orders, like firearms prohibitions, do not deter those members of our society intent on committing acts of violence. While ATCs (authorizations to carry) permits do exist, Chief Firearms Officers only issue them sporadically. A woman being stalked by an ex-partner has to have concrete proof that her life is truly in danger. This system is wrong and Canada's National Firearms Association is fighting to change it.

But most alarming is that most women's rights organizations are oblivious to or not concerned about the severe lack of self-defence options for Canadian women. Tasers,


pepper spray and some collapsible batons are prohibited items. However, the problem of denying an effective means of self-defence to women is not limited to our shores. Last year, during the migrant crisis that hit Europe, a 17-year-old Danish girl used pepper spray to protect herself against two thugs who intended to rape her. She was subsequently charged with possession of a prohibited weapon and was sentenced to pay a hefty fine.

Roughly a century has passed since women in Canada and other western nations won the right to vote and be considered persons under the law. But even before being emancipated, women were allowed to and frequently carried handguns for self protection.

Today, in addition to partaking in the shooting sports, an increasing number of Canadian women are joining gun rights organizations and getting involved politically in the fight for their rights. But most importantly, these women are sending a strong message to our elected officials that they are not content to be helpless victims and want the right to effectively protect themselves.



More than ever, women are joining in the fight to protect themselves against would-be attackers.



JUNIOR SHOOTING PROGRAMS

*Saskatoon's
model for success*

BY LOWELL STRAUSS

Any gun club that can attract new people to the shooting sports is a success. A club that trains 32 juniors, boasts an 85 per cent new-shooter retention rate and has high-performance athletes bringing home medals from national competitions is exceptional! This is the story of Saskatoon's Rifle and Revolver Club, a junior shooting program that's doing it right.

Following the 2011 Canada Winter Games, a group of determined parents were looking for a place for their kids to train for 10-metre air rifle competition. Following the games, changes within the provincial sport organization left the remaining air rifle athletes with only two options: train on their own or find coaching and training opportunities elsewhere. Neither of these options work well within the *Long Term Athlete Development* model, especially when athletes are at a high performance level in the *Train To Compete - Train To Win* training stages. They needed a home base.

The Saskatoon Rifle and Revolver Club, a club affiliated with the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation, was already operating in the city. However, they

didn't have a junior shooting program specifically designed for shooters to progress from beginner to high performance. So, Sherry and Kerry Ruddick, along with Scott and Shelly Arthur, approached the SRRRC about the possibility of running a junior airgun program for the club. The club executive saw the benefits, so in the spring of 2012 this group of four volunteers held their first training night.

Four years later, the SRRRC junior program has 32 members who train up to twice a week. Skills range from beginner to high performance, with members on both the national junior and national development teams. The club uses a portable 18-position air gun range, housed in the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation hall.

Key to success

So what does it take to build and sustain a successful shooting program? The crew at the SSRC gave me this advice:

Gun clubs, like many community organizations, look to youth to help grow membership and ensure a bright future for the group. While shooting sports, such as action pistol or long-range



Junior men training for 10-metre air rifle competition.

This plaque is designed to track athletes' training. A ring is added for each level a shooter advances in the program.

precision rifle, tend to attract more experienced shooters, other shooting disciplines are well suited to young shooters.

Airgun shooting is an excellent way for young people to get involved in the shooting sports. Low recoil and extremely accurate airguns give shooters the ability to sharpen their skills before moving into live-fire shooting disciplines, should they choose to do so. The SRRC Junior Program is based on the International Shooting Sport Federation's 10-metre air rifle and 10-metre air pistol events. One advantage for the junior program being part of the SRRC is that athletes do get exposure to other shooting disciplines, such as IPSC, PPC and silhouette. As time, coaching and facilities allow, the junior program is looking at training athletes for 50-metre prone rifle, three-position rifle and ISSF and NRA live-fire pistol events.

Volunteers

At the core of any successful organization is its volunteers. The passion for the sport of target shooting is evident in the volunteers who started this club.



The SRRC airgun range has 18 shooting positions. Balloons are tacked up for fun shooting at the end of the training session.

Their enthusiasm has been shared by others, such as Krysten Downham and Eric Mooney, who came from the cadet shooting program. Krysten has been assisting shooters with both shooting skills and mental training, while Eric has taken on the responsibility of range safety officer and official. While the structure of the program keeps volunteers busy, there are parents and grandparents willing to help out where they can.

Fundraising and recruitment

Shooting programs need money to operate. In addition to the traditional methods of fundraising, such as selling raffle tickets, the SRRC juniors have come up with a unique fundraiser that doubles as a recruitment event for target shooting. Each spring, the Saskatoon Wildlife Federation, the parent organization of the SRRC, hosts a sports and leisure show. For \$3, show attendees can squeeze off five shots using one of the club's target rifles or pistols, supervised by one of the club's experienced

members. It's a very popular event. The show lasts four days, and that means a lot of people get to try shooting an air pistol or rifle for fun, in a safe and controlled situation. The money raised is significant, but second in importance to the positive exposure. The youngest shooter at this year's show was three years old. Shooting with her dad behind her and the rifle firmly supported on a table, this youngster had her first exposure to the shooting sports. She'll need to wait seven more years before she can train at the club, but hopefully this experience is one that will have her hooked on shooting for life.

Retention

Getting new shooters through the door is the first step to increasing a club's membership and many of the clubs I've encountered do a good job at this. However, that's only part of the equation. Converting those new shooters into regular members and then getting them to renew their memberships



Intro target rifles waiting for young shooters to arrive for training.

in the following year is important, too. First and foremost, a club needs members to survive. More returning members means there is more experience within the club. Experienced members bring their enthusiasm about shooting to the club, and are a good indicator that they like the way the club is running. Finally, returning shooters are asked to assist new shooters. In juniors, more than any other age, seeing other people enjoying and succeeding in the sport is the justification they need to continue.

The SSRC saw early success, with many new shooters trying the sport of bull's-eye target shooting. But like many clubs, shooters were not sticking with the program, even those who did sign up and train for a while. In fact, the majority of shooters (about 85 per cent) didn't return after their first season. This prompted program volunteers to come up with a clever idea, an achievable challenge. Tracking shooter progress on a chart motivates juniors to come back week after week trying to reach the next level. Progress is broken into 10 stages - levels one to five are the introduction-to-shooting stages. Levels six to 10 are the competition stages. Everyone starts at level one. Shooters

receive assistance and, in order to move to level two, must have all 10 shots within the rings of their target. Once athletes reach level 10, they are considered marksman as defined by the Shooting Federation of Canada. There are other milestones athletes can achieve, too. By level six, shooters are achieving 50 per cent scores and can start training for competitive shooting. At this stage, additional training time is available. At level eight, shooters can wear the club jacket, a statement to others that you are well on your way to being a high-performance shooter.

The SSRC has also created a plaque that tracks athlete's levels. These trophies of achievement are proudly displayed in the club. The plaque is a bull's-eye target with each level represented by a ring. When a shooter moves up a level, new rings are added to the plaque.

Providing the ability for individuals to visualize their shooting improvements, through this award and incentive-based system, has made a huge difference to the club's shooter retention. Since introducing this concept, an estimated 85 per cent of shooters return to the club to try and reach the next level, the inverse of what was happening before.

Training

Shooters at the introduction-to-shooting stage train from September until May, one night per week. High-performance athletes assist the new shooters. Level one to five shooters are allowed to train for one hour, though many would spend much longer given the chance.

Shooters from level six and up shoot twice a week. But since many of them are training for specific provincial and national competitions throughout the year, their training plan is run over the full year.

Have fun

At the end of the day, it's all about people coming out and having fun. Target shooting is an individual sport, but also a social activity. Keeping it fun is good for the members, and the volunteers who put so many hours into the club and the program. They come back week after week because they truly like to help young athletes achieve their best.

The Saskatoon Rifle and Revolver Club junior program is an asset to the shooting sports. If you are looking to start a junior shooting program in your club, the model that the SSRC has developed seems to be working. Their program certainly scores a 10.9!

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Turkey Loads & Chokes

*Finding what works for
you and your gun*

BY JEFF HELSDON



Figuring out the right turkey load is a combination of the right ammunition, the right choke and a little bit of black magic.

The end goal is to have enough pellets in an area the size of a turkey's head for a clean kill. Depending on shot size, this can be a minimum of three to eight pellets. In some ways, the exercise of developing the right shell-choke combination is akin to building the right load for a rifle. It is also similar in that turkey hunters aim their guns like a rifle hunter, whereas when shooting moving targets, a shotgunner points the gun rather than aiming it.

To start the process, the hunter must choose if having the ultimate long-range gun, one that will reach out to 50 yards, is the goal. If so, when a tom comes strolling in at 10 yards, the tight pattern will require rifle-like shooting accuracy. The alternative is having a combination that will give a reasonable pattern at both close and moderate ranges.

Choosing a choke tube

As a generality, turkey hunters use tubes that are extra full or tighter. But comparing chokes on the shelf can be difficult. Some companies call their turkey chokes "extra full," others label

these tubes as "turkey," while others list the amount of constriction in thousandths of an inch.

Beginning turkey hunters, or those with a new gun, should consider the load they would like to work with. If it is the intention, at any time in the future, to shoot any of the non-lead products, ensure the tube will handle this harder-than-lead material. Shooting non-lead products through a choke not built for it can result in blowing the end off a barrel, injuries or both.

Another consideration is some shells – like Federal's FliteControl wad – are better shot through a more open choke without porting. A look at the FliteControl wad explains this. Traditional wads have a cup that is split in the front and designed with petals that open shortly after leaving the barrel, to release the shot. With FliteControl, the shot is protected inside a cup with no slits. The petals that open are at the rear of the wad. With this design, the wad protects the shot after ignition and stays with the shot charge five to 10 yards from the end of the barrel. Then, when the petals open on the back, it's like putting brakes on the wad. The end function is it keeps the shot together longer and in a tighter group. Super tight chokes or

porting can grab at the wad and separate it from the shot sooner, defeating the purpose of the technology.

"With FliteControl wads, we recommend not using ported chokes," said Tyler Pearce, a spokesperson for Federal. "The ports could damage the petals and effect the wad's performance. Full or extra full factory turkey chokes work great with our 3rd Degree ammunition. Restriction does not need to be too tight, as the FliteControl wad works to keep an ideal pattern. Of course, this is all dependent on individual guns."

Lead loads with conventional wads, on the other hand, can compress easily in a choke and are more responsive to tighter chokes.

Experimenting with the gun you intend to use is important. A choke tube that works well in one gun will not necessarily work well in another. Beyond all the marketing and fancy names, the one measurement that matters with a choke tube is the internal (bore) diameter, which is measured in thousandths of an inch. What really affects the constriction of the shot is the difference between the barrel diameter in front of the tube and the choke's diameter. With a turkey choke, the difference between the two numbers is typically somewhere in the



A selection of turkey chokes.

neighbourhood of 0.060 inches. More restriction could blow out the pattern.

Prior to purchasing a choke, research what the various manufacturers offer. The better informed you are, the more likely it is that you will purchase the right product for your needs. Buying from a reputable retailer can also help in this regard.

Dan Banting, general manager of Kent Cartridge Canada, said some turkey chokes might indeed be too tight with the heavy loads in a turkey shell. With a tight choke and a big payload, the shot could become distorted and no longer round.

"When it leaves the muzzle of the gun and it's no longer round, it won't pattern as well," he said.

One obvious difference between turkey chokes and standard tubes is porting. Those holes in the end of the tube aren't just for looks. Steve Milton, the gunsmith, engineer and president of King City-based Precision Arms, explained the porting helps to relieve the built-up pressure from expanding gases prior to the wad and shot leaving the barrel. If some of that pressure wasn't vented, it could blow out the centre of the pattern, he asserts.

That doesn't mean porting is the only way to go. As previously mentioned, if the plan is to use Federal shells with FliteControl technology, avoid porting. And many choke tubes without porting work well on other shells. The decision of which shell and choke tube is almost like a chicken and egg thing. Which is first?

My parting advice on chokes centres around the fact most hunters only have one choke for their turkey gun. If your gun came with one (mine did), then it's easy - you just need to find a shell that works with it. If you're purchasing a new choke tube, look at what's out there and consider that the choke is generally the primary part that will define the size of your pattern. To expand that concept, if long shots are the norm, then go for long range and a tighter choke. But, if the turkeys are shot anywhere from 10 to 40 yards, then a choke with less constriction is likely a better option.

Picking ammunition

Once you have your choke, purchase two or three different kinds of ammunition to find what shoots best in your gun. However, there are several questions to ask yourself first.

A few years ago, lead-shot alternatives were favoured to extend the range of turkey shells. The theory was that pellets made from these materials had a

higher density than lead, and therefore hit harder. This allowed using a smaller pellet, say a No. 6 instead of a No. 5, to increase the number of pellets in a load.

I have experimented with these shells and found that out of my Winchester 1300 turkey gun, with an extra full factory choke, Winchester's Xtended Range shells patterned well and I have taken several turkeys with them beyond 40 yards. Conversely, I experimented with Federal's FliteControl shells in both lead and HD versions. In my gun, the lead actually patterned better. This was also my shell of choice for a time.

Milton once told me he doesn't believe the non-toxic loads have the extra energy manufacturers portray.

"The killing energy is superior with lead because the Hevi-Shot (or similar products) punches holes right through and it doesn't expand," he explained. "There is never, ever a shot invented that is better than good quality lead and never will be."

A word of caution though: check and double check that the choke tube you are using is designed for substances other than lead. Also be aware that alternate shot loads cost more.

Shot size

Here in Ontario, turkey hunters only have three choices for shot size, No. 4, 5 or 6. Opinions abound on which is best. The same size payload with No. 6 versus



A good pattern from the author's Winchester 1300 turkey gun.



The turkey loads tested: Thunderstrut, Kent, Federal, Remington, Winchester and Hornady.

No. 4 will contain more shot. Many hunters believe more shot equals a better pattern and more hits in a turkey's vital area. Conversely, the larger No. 4 pellets retain more energy downrange and have more killing power at longer distances. No. 5s present a compromise between the two.

But, just because there are more pellets doesn't mean a load will put more pellets in the killing zone. One gun and choke combination might pattern No. 5s better than No. 6s, regardless of the pellet count. The next combination will

work better with No. 6s. Experimentation is the only way to find the answer.

The other alternative is new technology, as found in Federal's 3rd Degree and some Hevi-Shot products, which combine three different shot sizes. The concept is to have smaller pellets - 7.5s that spread more for close shots, and lead alternative pellets to reach out and touch birds past 40 yards. I haven't experimented with these since it is illegal in Ontario to use 7.5s for turkey hunting, but have read some positive reviews.

What shell length?

Are turkey hunters better off shooting 3.5-inch 12-gauge shells if their gun is built for it? There is no doubt more shot resides in a 3.5-inch shell than its three-inch counterpart. But, like all things in life, this comes with tradeoffs. The most obvious is the increase in recoil. Shooting 10 or 20 different brands of shells to find which patterns best in your gun is a punishing experience, as there aren't a lot of shells that recoil more than turkey loads. Developing a flinch is a real possibility with 3.5-inch shells. There is also no guarantee the longer shell will pattern better.

I'm not a big guy and heavy loads hammer me. But I know several guys who have 100 or more pounds on me who won't shoot 3.5-inch ammunition. If you have a semi-automatic with recoil dampening features, try the 3.5-inch shells and reach your own conclusions.

The black magic

So, just when you think you have it all figured out, there's nothing like a little black magic to mess things up.

Competitive turkey-gun shooters, who pepper four-inch paper circles, depend on pattern density for wins. Langton-area shooter Ron Porch is a consistent winner, and tells me higher atmospheric pressure pushes point of impact lower. Conversely, lower pressure provides less resistance and the impact point moves up.

"Depending on the gun, it can be quite extreme or not noticeable at all," he said, adding humidity can also make a difference.

Now is that black magic?

TO THE PATTERNING BOARD

I fired ammunition from several different manufacturers through my Beretta A400 Xtreme, some with the extended turkey choke and others through the standard full choke. All test shells were with lead, but as mentioned I've had great success at the pattern board and hunting with lead alternative shells. All numbers are the average of three shots, rounded off.

The targets I use have an outline of the vitals of a turkey, which makes it possible for a large group of shot to completely miss by only half an inch. With this in mind, I also subjectively compared the pattern density.

40 yards

Load and choke

Long Beard No. 5 (full)
Long Beard No. 5 (x-full)
Long Bead No. 6 (full)
Long Beard No. 6 (x-full)
Hornady No. 5 (full)
Kent No. 6 (x-full)
Remington No. 4 (x-full)
Remington No. 5 (x-full)
Federal FliteControl No. 5 2.75" (full)
Federal FliteControl No. 5 3" (full)
Federal FliteControl No. 5 2.75" (x-full)
Federal FliteControl No. 5 3" (x-full)
SCORE Thunderstrut (x-full)

Hits in vitals

4
5
6
7
3
5
4
5
4
4
3
3
4

Pattern density

Moderate
Good
Good
Good
Moderate
Good
Moderate
Moderate
Weak
Moderate
Moderate
Weak
Moderate

20-yard test to demonstrate pattern change

SCORE Thunderstrut
Kent No. 5

11
14

Good, even
Good, more clumped

VISIONARY

Building a range with local government support

BY EDWARD OSBORNE



The sign outside the Taber Shooting Complex reaffirms the municipal district's support of the shooting sports in no uncertain terms.



From the side of Highway 864, the Taber shooting range doesn't look like much. It blends into the southern Alberta prairie landscape, with only a little bit of dirt work visible. But the sign at the range entrance hints at something more, with an unusual phrase emblazoned underneath the shooting foundation's logo: "The Municipal District of Taber supports the historic right of ownership and use of firearms by law-abiding citizens." But it's not until I launch the drone and get an aerial look at the space that I really understand the vastness of this project and the calibre of the facility being built here.

World class

I meet Morgan Rockenbach, president of the Taber Shooting Foundation, and he shows me around the new Taber Shooting Complex. We are near the town of Taber (population 8,000) and within the Municipal District of Taber. When completed, this range will have six distinct range spaces, parking space for up to 300 vehicles and could theoretically have as many as 70 shooters

on the line firing simultaneously. That's assuming every shooting space is at 100 per cent capacity for some imaginary mega sporting event. Currently, the facility consists of a 100-metre pistol and rifle range, a 600-metre centrefire and silhouette range, a 200-metre rifle bay, a set of five action ranges, one 50-metre pistol bay and an archery hillside. All of this fits into 160 acres of land, with the wide-open expanse of the Alberta prairie behind each backstop.

On Dec. 10, 2015, the provincial Chief Firearm Officer was on site to inspect the ranges and confirm they are built according to the plans and photographs the foundation submitted. When I visited, the 100-metre range was open and functional, and the 600-metre, 200-metre and 50-metre pistol bay were all in the final stages. Those are open now, and the action ranges are expected to receive final approval mid-summer. And that's not the end of the project either. Plans have already been drawn up for a full shotgun facility with skeet, trap and sporting clays, along with on-site camping space. But it's been a marathon of work to get here.

Local government support

The Taber Pistol and Revolver Club has been active since the 1970s, using an indoor, underground range inside the town of Taber. They're an institution in the local shooting community and in October 2010, at their annual general meeting, MD of Taber councillor Ben Elfring came as a guest. He brought up the idea of building a range on municipal land, explaining that the municipal district had land available and would support the construction of a range that would provide their constituents with a proper place to shoot.

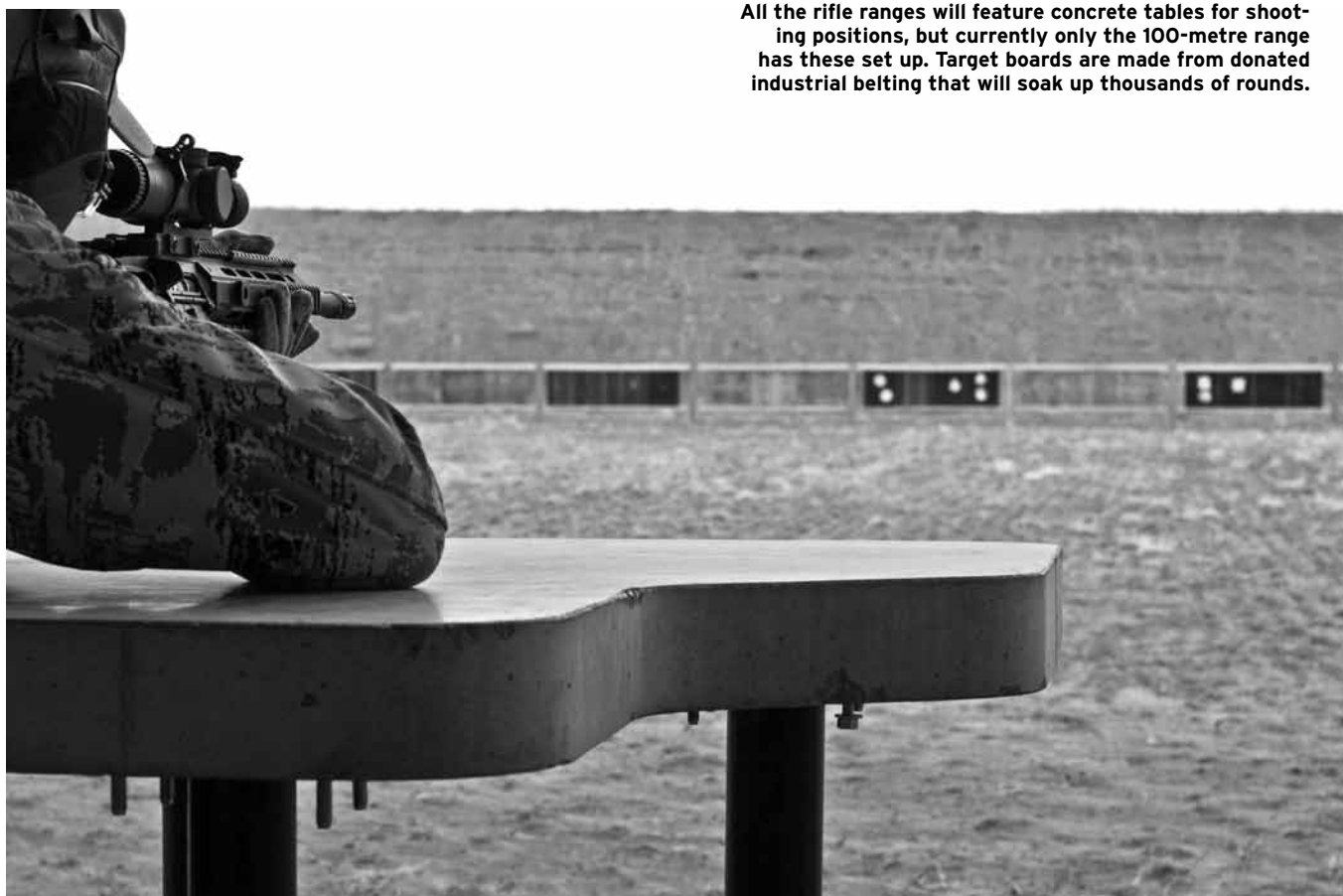
September 2012 marked the first official meeting of the Taber Shooting Foundation. The initial foundation set up was actually done by the municipal council, and the first executive board was made up entirely of councillors. At that very first AGM, they each resigned and handed over the executive to the current group of shooters, who began the project of designing and building the range.

The new executive featured the directors of disciplines whose members would use the imagined range: members from

Morgan Rockenbach, president of the Taber Shooting Foundation, surveys the soon-to-be completed action ranges. These are forecast to open mid-summer, if all goes well.



All the rifle ranges will feature concrete tables for shooting positions, but currently only the 100-metre range has these set up. Target boards are made from donated industrial belting that will soak up thousands of rounds.



fish and game associations, Southern Alberta Rifleman's Association, Taber Archers and Bowhunters Association, cowboy action shooters and the Taber Pistol and Revolver Club all stepped up to form the Shooting Foundation's executive board. Rockenbach stepped up to chair the new foundation.

The MD did have some conditions, though. Four years later Elfring is still on the executive board of the Taber Shooting Foundation, and there will always be a representative on the board whose role is to liaise with the Taber MD council. That executive also has a veto ability, in case they feel a certain decision by the foundation would conflict with the municipal district. That ability has never seen use, and Rockenbach says the real advantage of having a councillor on the board is the ease of consultation. Rather than formally approaching the MD to present various issues and requests, having a councillor in the executive provides a sounding board.

When I spoke to Derrick Krizsan, an administrator at the MD of Taber, he explained that one of the goals with designing the Taber Sport Shooting Complex was to, "Maintain the aesthetics of the prairie landscape." The natural shape of the land forms a bowl, with 10 metres

of dirt between the high and low points. When the machines bored into the ridge, all the dirt they took out making the 600-metre range was used to form the berms of other ranges. Remarkably, the construction project was "substance neutral." No new dirt had to be brought in for the berms and no excess dirt had to be removed from the range area. Everything was just shuffled around over months of heavy machine work to create the bays you see in the photos.

The range occupies a spot next to the Taber motocross club. Because, if you're going to enjoy a noisy sport, you may as well do it right alongside another noisy sport, right?

The land is owned by the MD and leased to the range, currently on a 10-year basis. But the MD has a vested interest in seeing the range succeed and last much longer than that. In November 2014, it was announced that the MD's department of public works would make their staff and equipment available over the winter in order to get the dirt work completed and ranges ready to go. So, in what is normally the off season, the MD employees were out in the snow carving out backstops and access roads.

It's that remarkable level of support that really sets the Taber Shooting Com-

plex apart from other ranges across the country. While older ranges struggle to get co-operation from their municipal districts or counties, and have to fight against encroaching development or be shut down, the MD of Taber has put its full support behind the shooting sports and fostered the growth of a world-class facility.

More support

Beyond the exceptional support from the municipal district, the Taber Shooting Foundation has had some stellar support from the community. The Alberta Conservation Association provided a \$37,000 grant for the electronic gate and site fencing, and the foundation secured a provincial grant from the Community Facility Enhancement Program of \$75,000 for range development.

Even the town of Taber has contributed to the project. The clubhouse was originally in the town of Vauxhall, serving as an administration building for the Bow River Irrigation District. When BRID was ready for a new building, they were told it would cost \$50,000 to have it demolished. Instead, the Shooting Foundation asked for the building and made a presentation to the town of Taber explaining their desire to move the build-

The set of five action ranges have all their dirt work complete now, but were also the last package submitted to the CFO. These were initially to be cowboy action specific, but renamed in order to accommodate more shooting disciplines.



ing to the range site. The town of Taber was on the same page as the MD, and voted immediately to pay the entire \$40,000 bill to move the building 40 kilometres from Vauxhall to the range.

This is not the first community enhancement project the MD of Taber has taken on. In fact, it's not even the first range they've worked on. In 2013, the Vauxhall Fish and Game range needed a number of upgrades to their backstops and shooting positions to meet the Alberta CFO's new safety requirements. The MD of Taber took that project on and upgraded the range. Beyond that, they're also involved with supporting the Taber Gymnastics Club, the Vauxhall Baseball Society and other recreation boards inside the district. But the range on Highway 864 has been an MD project from the very beginning.

It's about safety

Krizsan explained the construction of the range was almost a necessity for the community.

"Without these types of facilities, where can you go? People will still find spaces to shoot. We want them to do it safely, so this is as much a public safety project as a recreational one."

And the Taber area is certainly a

shooting community. Alberta has one of the highest per-capita ownership rates of restricted firearms. At 4,799 per hundred thousand people, the province is second only to the Yukon. And the Taber area is no exception.

The range uses a .338 safety template, so handguns, shotguns and the vast majority of centrefire rifles may be used. They initially sought a 50 BMG template from the CFO, as there is a real scarcity of .50 calibre certified ranges in this province. But the issue of distance to residences came into play, and ultimately the request was turned down.

Many of the ranges are designed with action shooting in mind, with a floating firing line and seven-metre high berms on multiple sides to allow for courses of fire with targets at multiple angles. Whether that's police training, IDPA or other competitive and defensive disciplines, it means an area that is purpose built for moving and shooting. I've competed at a lot of ranges across Alberta, and when you're trying to set up an action event on a static 100-metre range, the options for a match director can be pretty limited.

Membership in the Taber Shooting Foundation is currently open to anyone and is \$100 per year. Every range

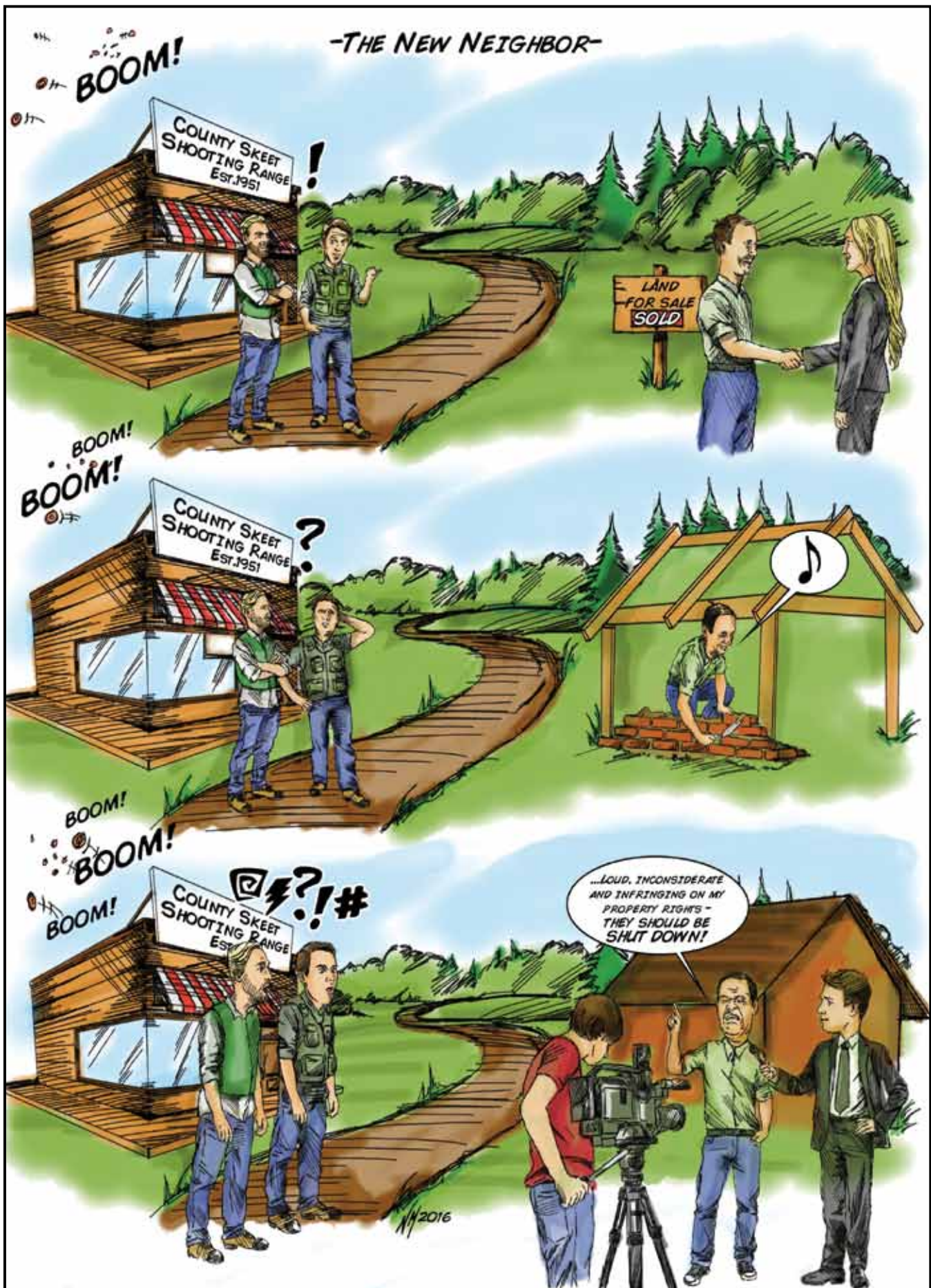
member is also a range officer, and goes through a training and procedures briefing as part of their membership. When multiple shooters are on the range, the first person there takes on the role of Range Safety Officer to call ceasefires, establish firing lines and generally keep things flowing. The electronic key fob system behind the automated gate is also networked with the MD council, so they can see when the range is in use and how many members are on site. A plan for security cameras is also on the table, to ensure site security and responsible use.

The Taber Shooting Foundation doesn't have many members yet, only 250 of the projected 1,000. As a result, the range supplies have largely been donated by local individuals and businesses. Raw materials, wood for target stands, belting for target boards, the entire sign in shed along with its lockers, first aid kit and RSO vests were all donations.

As the range grows and expands, the quality and quantity of shooting events in southern Alberta will no doubt expand along with it. The shooting sports are still growing fast, and Taber is a pitch perfect example of how those sports can be a part of the wider community.

The 50-metre pistol bay has seven-metre berms on three sides, which allows for a full 180-degree firing line. This particular range shows real promise for IPSC shooters and local law enforcement looking for training space.





BLINDSIDED



Spruce Grove gun range closure
BY DUANE RADFORD



This story does not have a happy ending for Canadian shooting enthusiasts, although one is still possible.

A few years ago, Alberta's Spruce Grove Gun Club began seeing the results of urban sprawl, when more and more rural residences started being built near the range property. The county even allowed a subdivision to spring up directly downrange from the club's 300-metre rifle range. It was predictable that all these new residents would start complaining about the presence of a shooting range "next door."

The gun club has been in operation at this location since 1972 and sits on private land owned by Al Shenfield, who leases it to the gun club. The Shenfield family operates a dairy farm adjacent to the range. Club membership is about 950 and it has eight ranges providing facilities for archery, rifle, handgun and shotgun. The facilities are used regu-

larly by youth groups, police and private security. Over the years, the club has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars developing and improving the range. The Chief Firearms Officer recently did a safety inspection and the range is fully compliant with that inspection.

However, Parkland County's Subdivision and Development Appeal Board closed the range effective Nov. 10, 2015, after area residents raised concerns about noise and safety due to stray bullets. The range had to shut down when its development permit expired.

However, Bill Newton, a club spokesperson and former member of the Edmonton Police Service, reports sound levels at the range have been professionally monitored and they're fully compliant with the county's bylaws, being less than 85 decibels during the peak period of use from May to September.

In regards to the reported stray bullets, he says in all likelihood stray bullets are

from reckless vandals, not legitimate users of the range. He said that shot up road signs are common in Parkland County.

"They're shooting up signs because they've got nothing better to do!"

However, a forensic report says the gun club "...is the most likely known source for at least some of the errant projectiles." The SGGC had 30 days to take the SDAB to court over their decision. They went to court last December in an attempt to re-open the range, but to their dismay the club lost its bid to re-open because in February 2016 the Alberta Court of Appeal refused to hear their appeal.

Sometimes politics doesn't make sense. The decision by Parkland County not to renew the SGGC range development permit is baffling to range members. Their denial of a development permit is yet another NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) activity that should have gun owners across Canada concerned.

Parkland County's Subdivision and Development Appeal Board closed the range after area residents raised concerns about noise and safety.



It's a prime example of a vocal minority of complainants who managed to persuade county officials to refuse a gun range's development permit on the grounds that it's both noisy and dangerous, although unproven.

In an interview with CBC News, club president Rob Hall said, "The club will now be considering all of its legal options to either get the range re-opened or have the county pay for a new range."

Newton echoed, "The president summed it up pretty well. We are looking at all our options and can't rule anything out just yet. We are committed to getting the club back up and running somewhere. Only time will tell."

The SGGC can re-apply for a range development permit. Parkland County spokesperson Sarah Mate said in an e-mail, "Section 16.13.5 of *Parkland County Land Use Bylaw No. 20-2009* requires a 12-month period between the refusal of a development permit application and the submission of another application for a development permit for the same or similar use, unless council waives this period by resolution. Additionally, section 16.14.2 of this bylaw establishes the effective date of the permit to be the date the appeal was finally determined."

The Court of Appeal decision was issued Feb. 3, 2016, therefore the SGGC cannot submit a development permit

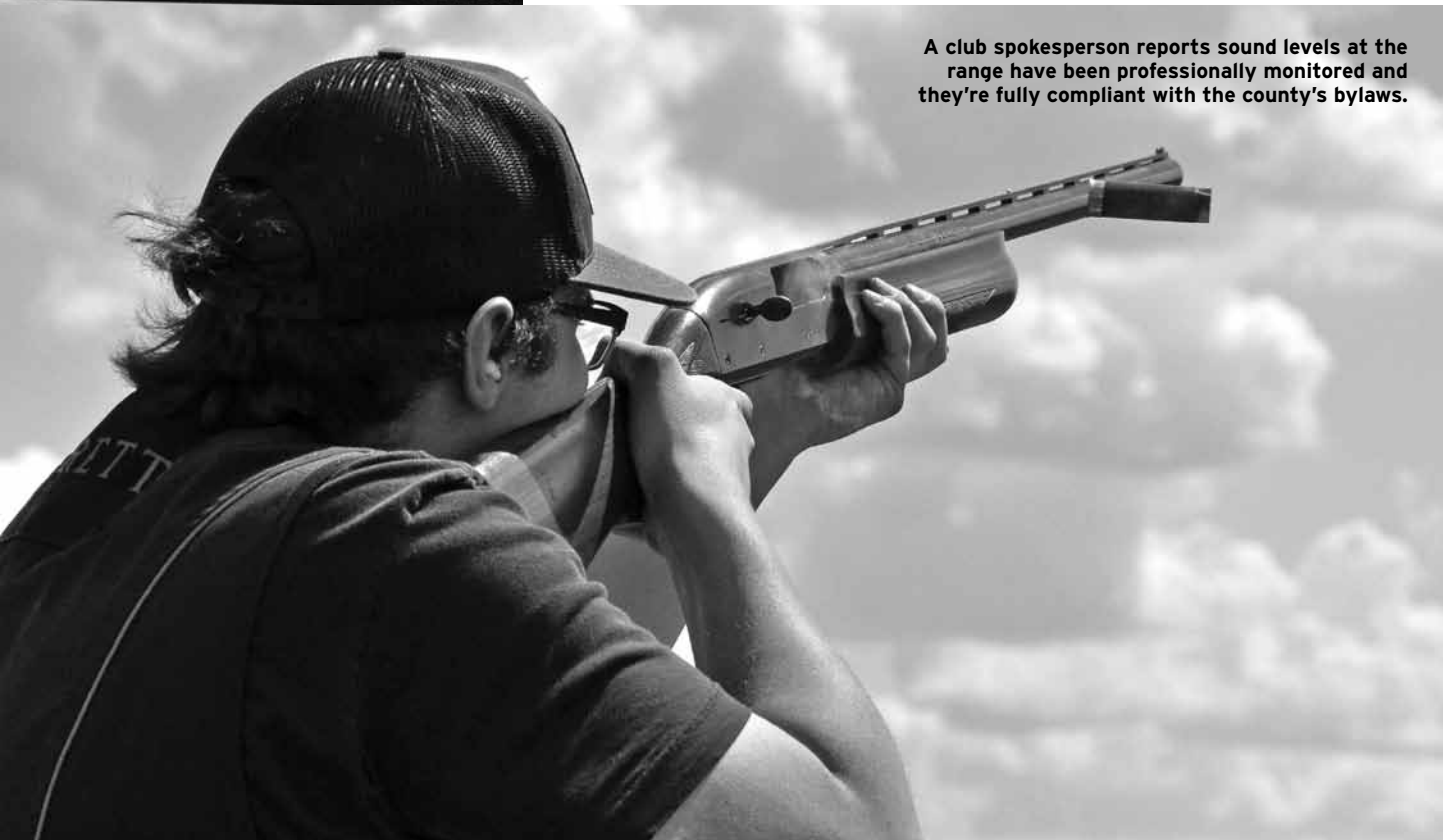
application before Feb. 4, 2017, without a waiver of the 12-month period from council. If a decision is made on a new development permit application in the future, this decision would be subject to appeal to the SDAB.

Doug Tymchyshyn, supervisor for Legislative and Administrative Services for Parkland County, said in an interview that appeal board hearing decisions are based on evidence evaluation.

"Every decision is based on the evidence the appeal board hears. There are five members on the appeal board and a minimum of three must be public members from the community."

Club members are using the phrase, "legacy land rights" in their battle to keep the range open. After all, the gun range came first, not folks who built homes or subdivisions after 1972 (with the county's blessing). While they feel blindsided after doing everything possible to be good neighbours, they do have another opportunity to submit a new development permit application. Or perhaps the county will do the right thing and help them move.

You've likely seen the club's petition on the NFA's daily news service. So, far about 5,000 people from all over Canada have signed it. Be sure to add your voice. Go to www.change.org and type "save our gun club" in the search box.



A club spokesperson reports sound levels at the range have been professionally monitored and they're fully compliant with the county's bylaws.

CZ 455 FS Mann

Euro-elegance in

BY DUANE



Boyhood dreams can come true.

Like mine, for example. After a lifelong love affair with the Mannlicher style of rifle stock, I finally bought a CZ 455 FS rifle in 22 Long Rifle. Its Mannlicher stock has the old world beauty of this outstanding design, making it easy to fall for all those curves. My hankering is rooted in the days when Jack O'Connor, the former gun editor of *Outdoor Life* magazine, swooned over the European

Mannlicher design. Back in the day, O'Connor was instrumental in popularizing it as a go-to mountain rifle. Truth be known, I actually bought the CZ as a collector's rifle. No need to explain, I'm sure. Gun aficionados understand the collector's bug. It doesn't go away and there's no cure for it.

The primary feature of the Mannlicher design is a stock that extends forward to the tip of the barrel. It's a design that originated in Austria's Tyrolean

Alps. For many gun owners, the jury is still out regarding the real value of this type of stock, but protection from falls and bumps is often cited. Regardless, among gun lovers and hunters, this type of rifle is considered a classic in Europe and North America.

Features

"CZ" is an abbreviation for the storied Czechoslovakian firearms manufacturer, Česká Zbrojovka. This is a

Mannlicher Review

.22 Long Rifle

RADFORD

SPECIFICATIONS

Magazine capacity: five rounds

Stock: Turkish walnut, Mannlicher style, matte finish

Sights: adjustable iron

Finish: gun metal blue

Unloaded weight: 6.38 pounds

Overall length: 39.2 inches

Barrel length: 20.5 inches

Rifling twist: 1:16 inches

Length of pull: 14.25 inches

company with a long history of supplying quality rimfire rifles to Canadian shooters. Their current line includes about a dozen variations of this rifle, all available in the 22 LR chambering. The receivers are made from a single billet of high-quality steel, and barrels are hammer forged. Most, including the 455 FS, feature a detachable five-round magazine as standard equipment. A 10-round magazine is an available option, as is a drop-in single shot

adaptor, which is likely intended for training young shooters.

An 11-millimetre dovetail is cut into the receiver's top surface for scope mounting, but it's a feature I didn't use, as I took the unusual step of not mounting a telescopic sight on this rifle. The safety is scope-friendly, as it is a wing-type lever that moves horizontally and doesn't interfere with optics use. That safety is also very effective, because it is mounted at the rear of the bolt and

blocks the firing pin, not just the trigger. The safety is backwards from the North American standard, however, in that pushing forward engages the safety. Pulling the lever back makes the rifle ready to fire. Other than that quirk, it's very functional in design.

I found the trigger on my rifle to have almost no creep, with the pull best described as crisp. While the trigger of the CZ 455 rimfire line is adjustable (by the user), I didn't make any changes to mine.



The safety blocks the firing pin, not just the trigger.



There is hood over the front sight, with a rectangular sun window.

Adjustments to the trigger pull can be made by turning a screw, but the stock must be removed to access it. According to a manufacturer representative I contacted, the trigger pull weight is typically set from the factory at about five pounds. Although owners can set it lower, it is at the shooters discretion to do so, as the

manufacturer does not send them out set lower than 4.5 pounds for safety reasons.

The CZ rifle series has a petite action and bolt assembly known for its reliability. The bolt is beautifully miniaturized to fit the 22 LR cartridge and features a twin extractor claw, with a fixed blade ejector. I found the action to be smooth and reliable, and have heard reports that it gets even better with age and use.

One feature I find appealing is the metal magazine follower, which makes it effortless to load 22 LR shells smoothly. I've found there tends to be just a bit of friction with plastic magazine followers.

The open rear sight can be adjusted for elevation and windage. There is a hood over the front sight, with a rectangular sun window. The iron sights have been zeroed at the factory for 50-metre shooting.

Most gun owners have probably heard about American walnut, but may not realize that gunstocks are also made from blanks of Turkish walnut, which is highly prized and used to make the CZ Mannlicher stock. According to some sources, American wood is denser and makes for sturdy stocks, but it isn't as flexible as European walnut and tends to crack more easily in guns with slender wrists. The stock is fitted with a rubber butt plate, as well as swivels for attaching a gun sling. With its cut checkering on the pistol grip and forearm, it's easy to grasp firmly.

Shooting

To be on the safe side, I adhered to break-in procedures before test firing the CZ 455 FS rifle. First, I cleaned the bore with solvent. Then I made two sweeps with a dry patch, then one oiled patch after every two shots, for the first 10 rounds. This procedure is supposed

With the smooth lines of its classic **Mannlicher** stock, and overall handsome appearance, the **CZ 455 FS 22 LR** rifle is obviously eye candy to gun nuts.

to burnish the bore - seal the pores of the barrel metal that have been opened and exposed through the manufacturing process.

I tested the CZ 455 FS with the five varieties of hollow point and solid point ammunition, using what I think is a reasonable sampling of ammunition popular with shooters interested in target practice, plinking, potting the odd grouse or varmint hunting.

With each brand of ammunition, I fired a pair of five-shot groups at 50 yards from a solid rest, subsequently measuring the group size from centre-to-centre with a digital caliper. This measurement represents the distance between the centres of the bullet holes farthest apart on the target. To be honest, I ignored a couple of annoying flyers, which were obviously not representative of the test process and something that often happens with a clean barrel on the first shot.

I gave the rifle a basic cleaning after every five shots and let the barrel cool off for several minutes before firing the

next series of rounds. A trusty Caldwell Lead Sled Plus gun rest served to steady the rifle for me. This is a great rest, ideal for sighting in rifles.

Frankly, I wasn't impressed with the accuracy of my test groups and can only blame myself for not shooting better. I did the test firing on a calm autumn morning, when the sun was still low on the horizon, and must admit that with the hood over the front sight there were some issues getting a clear sight picture. Granted, the front sight cover has a window-like opening to allow light onto the sight, but when the sun is low this doesn't make a lot of difference. Clearly seeing the front sight was made even more difficult because the range has a roof that covers the bench rest tables, further shading the front and rear sights. But those are excuses, and I'm confident the groups would be tighter if the rifle was fitted with a quality rifle scope.

Even though I was using iron sights, my best group of 0.738 inches holds up

nicely to the 0.866 inches of the factory test target, shipped with the rifle. Based on my test results, the CZ rifle shot a bit better with hollow point bullets, compared with solid points.

At press time, I was unable to locate any CZ 455 FS rifles with a Mannlicher stock at my local Wholesale Sports or Cabela's, although both carried other models priced at \$595 or more. I purchased mine by special order from a local sporting goods store, waiting over four months for delivery. It's not inexpensive, but is still a good buy for a quality rimfire with fine European lines.

Conclusions

With the smooth lines of its classic Mannlicher stock, and overall handsome appearance, the CZ 455 FS 22 LR rifle is obviously eye candy to gun nuts. But it's also a sturdy rifle, has excellent balance and shoulders smoothly. Even with iron sights, it shoots well. I wish I'd owned a rifle like this when I grew up in the Crowsnest Pass and did a lot of upland game bird hunting on alpine slopes in the Alberta Rockies. It's ideal for hunting blue, spruce and ruffed grouse, as well as for thinning out local Columbian and Richardson ground squirrels.



The CZ 455 FS will function with a variety of hollow point and solid point ammunition.

I gave the rifle a basic **cleaning after every five shots** and let the **barrel cool off** for several minutes before firing the next series of rounds.

ACCURACY TESTING

Ammunition	Group 1	Group 2	Average
American Eagle .22 LR, solid, 40 gr.	1.244"	2.777"	2.510"
Remington .22 LR, solid (golden bullet), 40 gr.	1.759"	2.422"	2.091"
Remington .22 LR, hollow point, 36 gr.	1.173"	1.828"	1.501"
Winchester X22 LRH, hollow point, 37 gr.	0.738"	1.437"	1.088"

All tests performed with this rifle were with open sights at 50 yards.

Are American Gun Owners Paranoid & Racist?

By Gary Mauser



*“A lie can travel
halfway around the
world while the truth is
putting on its shoes.”*

– MARK TWAIN

Media commentators often give the impression that blacks are the victims of gun violence, that Americans are trigger-happy and that ordinary civilians who own guns are to blame because they are so easily manipulated by NRA propaganda. What are the facts?

By definition, it is not paranoia when a person has a legitimate reason for fear. The US Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that over six million Americans were victimized by criminal



violence in 2013, with blacks much more likely to be victimized than whites (Truman and Langton 2014). Certainly it is irrational to cower in fear after watching frightening news reports without at least assessing the likelihood of any threat and deciding what needs doing, if anything.

Guns and criminal violence

Research shows that Americans use firearms responsibly and effectively when they act to protect themselves and their families (Lott 2010). The eminent criminologist Gary Kleck has established that civilians use guns in self-defence against offenders between one million and 2.5 million times each year (Kleck, 1997). Further research shows that resisting criminal attack is often successful, and that firearm use is the most effective method (Tark and Kleck, 2004).

It is arrogant for any politician, particularly one who is surrounded by armed guards, to piously claim that we shouldn't take steps to protect ourselves from criminal violence or terrorist attacks. Surveys consistently find that most people, including those vehemently opposed to firearm ownership, say they would use a gun to protect themselves or their families from violent attack. A survey I conducted a few years ago found that 65 per cent of Canadians said they would use a firearm

in such a case. Even a majority (54 per cent) of those who want all privately owned pistols confiscated, said they'd use a firearm to protect themselves or their family if they were threatened with death or serious injury (Mauser and Buckner 1997).

Media reports often mislead the public by confusing self-defence with retribution. It is illegal, as well as immoral, for anyone to decide unilaterally to punish another person with violence. This is what courts are for. By definition, deciding who and how to punish someone is taking the law into one's own hands. This is also called vigilantism, but it is not self-defence. On the other hand, it is legally and morally justifiable to use violence, including deadly force, to protect oneself or one's family from criminal attack. Stopping an attacker from injuring someone is not "taking the law into one's own hands." On the contrary, it is a natural right.

Americans who decide to arm themselves for protection are extremely law abiding. A study of over two million Florida concealed-carry permit holders found that there were 168 revocations for firearms-related violations - 168 of two million, or 0.008 per cent. For comparison, a study of American law enforcement in 2006 found that 118 out of 683,396 full-time police members faced weapons violations, or 0.02 per cent (Lott 2015). In other words, members of the police are more than twice as likely to face weapon charges than ordinary citizens who have a concealed carry permit.

What about racism?

This is an inflammatory, but unспорtable, claim. It is undeniable that race plays an extremely important role in American crime statistics. According to surveys (Morin 2015), twice as many whites legally own firearms as blacks (41 per cent to 19 per cent). However, gun ownership among black families is known to be under reported (Kleck 1997). Murder rates differ, as well. Blacks constitute just 13 per cent of the population, but 43 per cent of murder victims are black (FBI 2015). That hardly constitutes racism, because 90 per cent of those accused of murdering blacks are black themselves, as are 39 per cent of all accused murderers (FBI 2015; Taylor 2015). Defending oneself or one's family from criminal attack is not racism, even if the attacking criminal is black and the defender is not.

The 2012 Zimmerman case is often

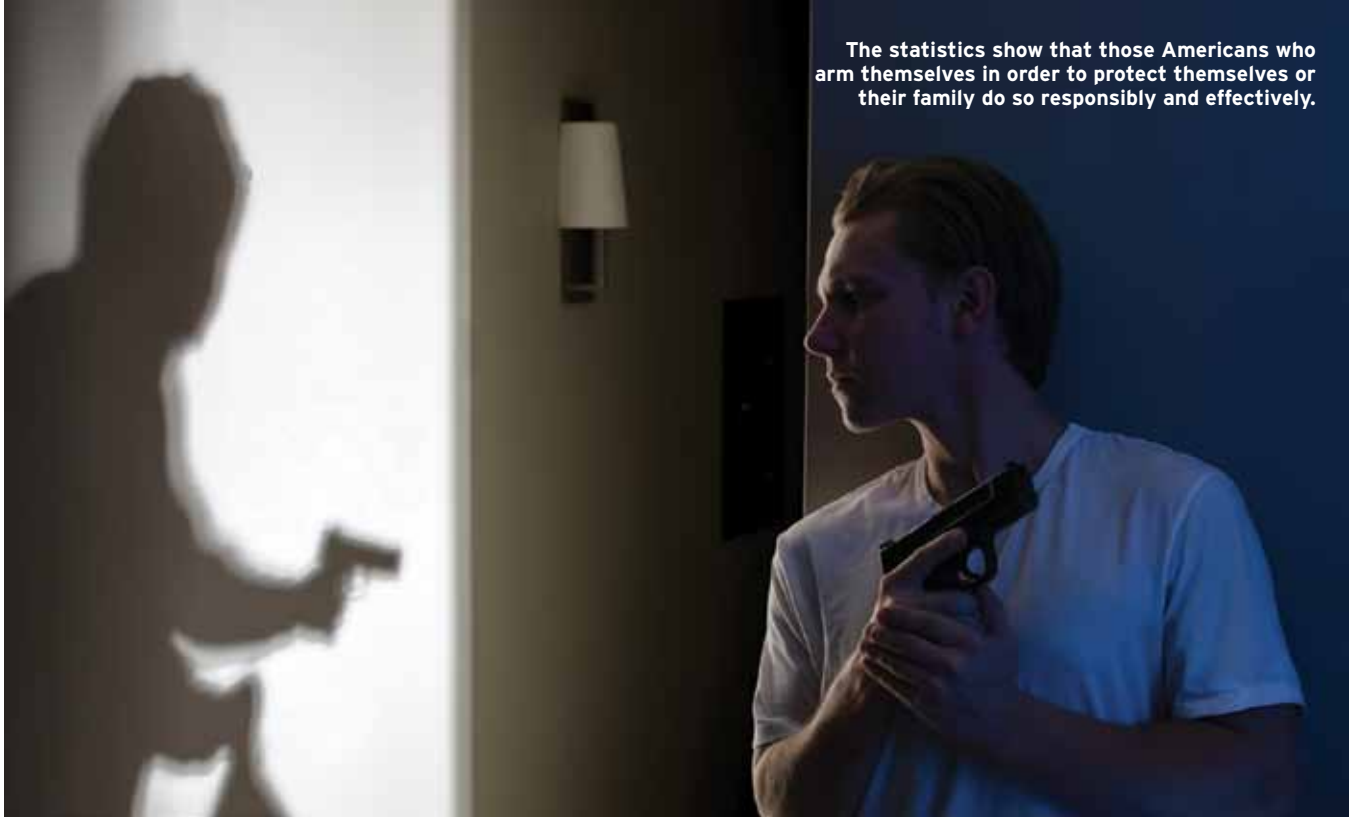
trotted out to bolster the accusations that American gun owners are racist and paranoid. George Zimmerman shot and killed a black teenager, and was vilified by biased media reports for doing so. But Zimmerman was found not guilty because court testimony exonerated him and contradicted claims of racism so prevalent in the media (Linder 2013).

According to court transcripts, Zimmerman, acting as a neighbourhood watch leader in a gated Florida community that had been troubled by recent break-ins, confronted a suspicious stranger while on duty one night. The suspicious person turned out to be Trayvon Martin, an unemployed teenager from out of the area. Zimmerman related the episode to a 9-1-1 operator as it happened, including when he was forced to defend himself with a handgun after being attacked and overpowered. The police did not initially bring charges against Zimmerman, judging the shooting as a legitimate example of self-defence, but because Martin was black, race baiters such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton spurred the media to relentlessly paint Zimmerman as a racist vigilante. Even President Obama weighed in, saying Trayvon Martin "could have been me 35 years ago."

Under political pressure, the local district attorney eventually brought charges against Zimmerman. In the end, a jury of six women acquitted him of all charges, accepting that the evidence was consistent with Zimmerman's claims that he had reasonable grounds to believe he was in danger, and acted without the "ill will, hatred and spite" necessary to prove second-degree murder.

Curiously, media reports typically referred to Zimmerman as a "white Hispanic," even though he was mixed race, as his mother was Peruvian with a black parent. Zimmerman's black ancestry was ignored, while focusing on Trayvon Martin's. It is impossible to prove that someone is not racist, but Zimmerman's personal history showed no indication of racial bias; he had even volunteered to tutor young black teenagers.

Arguably, Zimmerman should be considered a hero. As a neighbourhood watch volunteer, he undertook to defend his community, putting himself at risk of being injured, possibly even killed. But the media lionize victimhood, while simultaneously depicting self-defence, even heroism, as paranoia and racism. Gun owners may accept and even celebrate self reliance, but the media and the general culture, particularly in Canada,



The statistics show that those Americans who arm themselves in order to protect themselves or their family do so responsibly and effectively.

act as if they are shocked by the idea that individuals can and should assume responsibility for their own lives.

Conclusions

The short answer to the question of whether Americans are racist and paranoid is no. The statistics show that those Americans, of all races, who arm themselves in order to protect themselves or their family do so responsibly and effectively.

Armed Americans take seriously the tripartite division of people into wolves, sheep and sheepdogs, which seems to be so disdained by journalists. But people are alive today because other people accepted the responsibility for protecting them. This was expressed perhaps somewhat bombastically by Wayne LaPierre, the NRA's executive vice president: "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." This characterization is more realistic than many Canadians imagine.

As Interpol Secretary General Ronald Noble has publicly argued, arming a large number of responsible citizens could be an effective way to defend the public in the face of increasing threats of terrorism. It is impossible to predict where the next attack will occur, and the police cannot be everywhere. A distributed threat demands a distributed response. Armed citizens fill that gap, if well trained and responsible. This is the strategy that the US is pursuing more broadly against crime with concealed-carry laws (Margolin 2013).

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The Ammonia Myth

Protecting your gun from corrosive primers

BY DEAN ROXBY



There's a long-standing myth that a common household product can effectively clean your rifle, and protect it from the damage caused by ammunition loaded with corrosive primers. Let's take a closer look at this belief.

First, a little primer history. Many years ago, during the black powder era, mercury fulminate was the main ingredient in primers. However, after the switch to smokeless powders, mercury fulminate was found to be unsuitable. The US Army discontinued its use as far back as 1898.

The next generation of primers used potassium chlorate (KClO_3) as a major ingredient. But it was found to cause corrosion in rifle barrels, and the US military changed to a non-corrosive formulae in the early to mid-1950s. Oddly enough, the ammunition for the M1 Carbine never used corrosive priming, while 30-06 Springfield ammunition for the M1 Rifle certainly did. However, the potassium chlorate formulation is still commonly seen in ammunition originating from Eastern Bloc countries, partially because it functions well at very cold temperatures. However, modern North American ammunition is now loaded with primers that use lead styphnate ($\text{C}_6\text{H}_9\text{N}_3\text{O}_8\text{Pb}$) as a primary ingredient. But that's changing too, and there is now a move to replace lead styphnate with non-toxic, lead-free chemicals, due to concerns about inhaling lead pollutants from the fired primer.

The issue for us shooters in search of cheap ammunition centres around the older potassium chlorate compound. Thus, the many millions of rounds of cheap surplus Com-Bloc ammunition we currently enjoy presents an issue. That issue, of course, is how to deal with those corrosive salts left within the barrel after firing.

First, we need to understand exactly what happens when corrosive ammunition is used. Upon firing, the potassium chlorate (KClO_3) molecule chemically transforms into potassium chloride (KCl). As the potassium chlorate contained within the primer changes to KCl , it is carried down the barrel along with the burning propellant. Naturally, a portion is left on the bare steel of the bore, as well as throughout the gas system of semi-autos. KCl is similar to ordinary table salt, sodium chloride (NaCl). As with table salt, KCl absorbs moisture and promotes rusting. Imagine what might happen if you sprinkled extremely fine table salt down your



bore, then left it in a humid environment for a while.

So much for the chemistry lesson. How do we deal with the problem? There seems to be all manner of ideas and opinions offered online. By far the most prevalent is that Windex magically takes care of everything. While Windex is a fine product for its intended purpose (cleaning windows), it was never intended to be a barrel cleaning product. The wisdom is that the ammonia in Windex destroys the corrosive salts. Where this myth first originated is unknown, but it has gained a lot of traction. Unfortunately, there are several flaws with it.

First, in spite of the trade name Am-

monia-D, it contains very little ammonia. Technically, ammonia is a gas at room temperature and atmospheric pressure. When it is dissolved in water, it is called ammonia hydroxide. Because of ammonia's pungent smell, the cleaning product has been reformulated to contain very little ammonia. I tried to find out from SC Johnson, the parent company, what the percentage is, but that is proprietary information. However, their website does state, "Household ammonia has a strong odour; by using ammonia hydroxide in combination with other ingredients, we can achieve the same cleaning results while using much less ammonia."

Secondly, potassium chloride is almost completely insoluble in ammonia.



Ammunition loaded with corrosive primers can damage your firearm.

One kilogram of ordinary tap water at 25 degrees Celsius will dissolve 360 grams of KCl. Compare that to liquid ammonia, into which only 0.4 grams of KCl will dissolve. That is 900 times less effective than warm tap water.

Thirdly, the ammonia in Windex is used as a "surfactant." A surfactant helps to break down grease and oils on the surface of the item being cleaned. Removing greasy fingerprints from glass is what Windex does best. However, this same degreasing action will leave your bore as bare metal, prone to rusting. Yes, a light coat of oil afterwards will protect against this. However, the supposed advantage of the ammonia myth is that it is so simple. One squirt and you are done.

Fourth, if you did locate some really concentrated ammonia hydroxide, leaving it in your barrel would likely damage the steel you are trying to protect. There are several bore cleaners that do use ammonia, but they are specifically designed for copper fouling removal. The ammonia (in strong concentrations) does remove copper build up. However, these products generally warn against leaving it in the barrel more than 15 minutes. Over an extended period, it can attack the steel. More importantly, it creates an alkali (opposite of acidic) environment that promotes rusting on its own, separate from the bare metal issue noted above.

What do I suggest to remove the salts? Nothing more than boiling hot water. A kettle full of boiling water will take care of all the salt deposits perfectly.

Finally, those that advise, "Just spray Windex down the barrel," seldom mention the gas system. I recently saw a fine-looking Czech VZ 52/57 that absolutely would not cycle due to a seized gas system. Apparently, my friend loaned his rifle to another person, who then rusted the gas system solid. We were unable to free it that day, or since. I don't know if it will ever be salvageable.

What do I suggest to remove the salts? Nothing more than boiling hot water. A kettle full of boiling water will take care of all the salt deposits perfectly. I have a dedicated electric kettle, for which I paid \$3 at a garage sale, just for that purpose. I simply use a plastic funnel meant for car oil changes to direct the boiling water down the barrel. The great thing about boiling water is that it heats the steel enough to evaporate residual water. Remember to apply a light coat of bore cleaner or oil afterwards, as the bore will be bare following the boiling water.

If you are cleaning a semi-auto firearm with a gas system, be sure to clean that, as well. I pour the water from the breech end through the barrel and out into a plastic pail, so I place the internal parts, such as the piston and gas cylinder, in the pail as well. After the first kettle of water is through the bore, I dump it and run a second kettle through again. My thinking is that the water in the pail has a tiny bit of KCl salt in it, so the internal parts get a second rinse of clean water.

During the Second World War, the US military used corrosive ammunition, so they created a chemical to combat the salts. Packaged in small, olive drab tins,



The nail test is a simple way to determine if your ammunition is corrosive.

this rifle bore cleaner is still available, although the supply is drying up after 70 years. Be forewarned, it stinks! I used to use this evil stuff, but I now just use the kettle method.

There is a simple test to determine if your ammunition is corrosive or not. A cynic may suggest that if it comes from "over there somewhere," it is corrosive. While this is probably not far from the truth, it is not completely accurate. A more definitive method is called the nail test. This involves popping a primer over a bare steel nail and observing the results. You must use bare (not galvanized or otherwise coated) mild steel nails. You can sandpaper the shaft of the nail to ensure a bare surface area if you wish. Hammer several nails into a block of wood, leaving enough of the nail exposed to place a cartridge case over. Remove the bullet from a live round, discard the powder, and place the live, primed empty case over the nail. With a hammer and centre punch, pop the primer, thereby

covering the nail with primer soot. Then set the test aside for several days in a humid environment, perhaps the bathroom. Besides the suspect ammunition sample, it is a good idea to have some controls for comparison. A known corrosive round will serve as a positive control, while a known non-corrosive round acts as a negative control. You may also want to leave one nail untouched. The idea is that if the corrosive control does not rust, either your nail is plated or stainless steel, or your room is not humid enough. If your negative control or untouched nail does rust, perhaps your bathroom is too humid. The expected result is that the known corrosive positive control should rust, the non-corrosive negative control, as well as the unfired control, should not be rusted and the mystery round may or may not be.

As you will be detonating live primers during this method, safety is a must. Foremost is eye protection. A full face shield over glasses is the way to go. Ear protection is not mandatory, but recom-

mended. And leather gloves will defend your hands from stray bits of primer, should one pop free of the case. And another word about safety: I once spilled boiling hot water out of the breech and onto my foot. Unfortunately, I was only wearing socks, no shoes. I scalded myself badly, so now I always wear proper footwear while pouring a kettle of hot water through the barrel.

Whatever you do, don't trust in Windex to get your guns clean. That myth is busted.

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FROM BENCH TO FIELD

Teaching a youngster to shoot

By Wes David



Even as a youngster, I could always tell when whitetail season was getting close. My dad would spend more time at the gun range and there was always a variety of new hunting gear laying around the house. He would spend hours in his favourite areas, scouting and setting up ground blinds in preparation for the approaching season. I wasn't old enough to hunt, or even strong enough to hold a rifle, but I couldn't wait for the day when I was a "big boy" and could go whitetail hunting with dad. Even at a young age, I knew being asked to go hunting with dad would be like a rite of passage into manhood.

Every parent or guardian with a passion for hunting dreams of the day when he/she can take their child hunting. As an adult outdoor enthusiast, it's our responsibility to hand off the tradition of hunting, fishing and conservation to the next generation. And two of the most impor-

tant lessons we can pass on to a youngster are how to shoot a rifle safely and the responsibility of making a clean and humane shot on the animals we hunt.

Growing up on a family farm, I spent hours walking the fields with a .22 and shooting ground squirrels. I didn't realize it at the time, but that's where I took my apprenticeship in gun safety and handling. My dad's rule was one bullet in the magazine at a time, with the safety on, and the muzzle pointed to the ground until I was ready to shoot. I can still hear the stern tone in his voice, making it clear the rules I was learning were not to be taken lightly. I got pretty good at plunking gophers with my .22, and I know the time I spent in the field then is the biggest contributor to my hunting and shooting success today. However, not all of us have a family farm and a field full of gophers at our trigger finger in order to learn how to safely and accurately shoot a rifle.

Today, many avid hunters live in the city and have busy schedules. This makes it much harder to teach a youngster to shoot safely. It also harder to find a place to go shooting. However, the importance of passing on hunting and safe gun handling skills remains the same.

GUN RESPECT

The first time a youngster gets to see a big, heavy adult hunting rifle, he/she may be intimidated at its very presence. That intimidation is a good thing and will turn to respect as the youngster gets more comfortable being around and handling a rifle. This is where an adult conversation needs to take place between you, the responsible gun owner, and your student.

The power and damage a gun can do and the consequences if mishandled must be firmly instilled in the youngster. They need to understand that handling a real gun with live ammunition isn't like

their video games, where after the gunfight is over, their friends will go home. This respect needs to be embedded before a youngster ever picks up a rifle. And as anxious as we are to go shooting with our child, it's up to us, the adult and responsible gun owner, to determine if the child is truly ready to handle a rifle. The child needs to understand the damage high-powered hunting equipment can do if it isn't treated with respect and handled safely. This is the first and most important gun safety lesson you can teach a youngster.

CONFIDENCE IS KEY

It's not uncommon for a youngster to dream of the day he/she gets to go shooting or hunting with their parent or guardian, and because of this anticipation, they will often put a great deal of pressure on themselves. Depending on the child, if they aren't seeing positive results in accuracy, it can have a negative effect on their confidence and shooting experience.

To quickly build confidence and keep their experience positive, I personally

like to start all new shooters, regardless of age, by shooting from a bench. With a solid rest and the basic fundamentals, we shoot at targets only 25 metres away. As the shooter's confidence and accuracy grows, you can start moving the target further away. However, don't make the new distance change too extreme. Moving a new shooter's distances too far too fast may negatively affect the confidence you have instilled in them. A proven strategy for building shooting confidence, especially in young shooters, is target increments of 25 metres.

RIFLE FIT

Walk into any gunshop and you will find a wide variety of youth-sized firearms in an assortment of calibres. Rifle and shotgun manufacturers have made it easier to teach our youth how to shoot by manufacturing smaller and lighter firearms. With a youth-sized rifle, a youngster doesn't have to face many of the trials and errors caused by shooting with a rifle that is too large and too heavy. I didn't know it at the time, but the lightweight .22 rifle that I

spent hours shooting gophers with imitated today's modern youth rifles. It was shorter than a standard hunting rifle and much lighter, allowing me to handle it safely and shoot accurately once I understood the basics. Taking your son or daughter to your favourite gun store and getting them set up with a properly sized firearm will be money well spent.

RESPECT FOR THE PREY

Equally important to teaching a new shooter respect for a firearm is teaching respect for the animals we hunt. It doesn't matter if we are hunting gophers or a trophy whitetail buck, teaching a new hunter the importance of making a clean and humane shot should never be overlooked.

A friend's son came of legal hunting age only a month before the whitetail season opened. He had purchased his son a youth-sized .308. They spent hours at the range, and my friend told me his son was grouping three inches at 100 metres off the bench. On the fourth day of whitetail season, they spotted a nice buck walking directly at them. They



A youngster's first deer doesn't have to be a trophy.



It's not uncommon for hunting firearms that are too big or heavy for a young shooter to cause bad habits.



Rifle and shotgun manufacturers have made it easier to teach our youth how to shoot by manufacturing smaller and lighter firearms.

both laid down on the ground and used a backpack for a rest, waiting for the buck to close the distance. My friend said he could see his son was a little uneasy, but thought it was just the excitement of the buck moving closer. The buck was facing them when he stopped only 65 metres away. The boy began to fidget, in hopes of finding the buck in his scope. When he did find the buck, all he could see was hair. And by the time they made the magnification adjustments on the scope, the buck had moved and didn't offer a clear shot at his vitals. The father called off the shot. All they could do was watch the buck move out of range and out of the area.

My friend said the biggest mistake he made was not practicing realistic shooting positions. Because the father-and-son team had spent hours shooting from a bench in a sitting position, the boy had never experienced real shooting conditions during a hunt. As anxious as my friend was for his son to shoot his first whitetail buck, with no vitals showing, it was less than an ideal shot

for a first-time hunter. He didn't want to run the risk of wounding an animal and having his son's first kill turn into a negative experience. After the buck was out of sight, the boy's disappointment showed through. To make matters worse, the boy thought his dad would be upset. My friend sat his son down and explained he wasn't upset, emphasizing the importance of making a clean shot or passing on the opportunity.

Once a youngster or new hunter has the confidence to shoot from a bench, it's important for all of us, including veteran hunters, to practice from a variety of real-life shooting positions. A shooting instructor once told me, "I've killed a lot of deer, but never while I was sitting at a bench."

TROPHIES NOT REQUIRED

It's natural for hunters to talk extensively about trophy bulls and bucks. However, a youngster's first few hunts don't need the added pressure of a trophy hunt. My first successful whitetail hunt, over 30 years ago, was a nice, fat

whitetail doe, and my dad was there with me to celebrate it. My son's first successful big game hunt was also a whitetail doe, shot at 72 metres from our hidden location. As he walked to his downed doe, he fell silent. I showed my excitement, but he needed time to take it all in. Within a few minutes, a big grin came across his face. He later told me he was overwhelmed because he was so excited to go hunting, he didn't know how to act once the hunt was over. Each child's first successful hunting experience will be different, but it's important we give them the time to take it all in and make their experience as positive as possible.

If the youngster in your life is coming of hunting age, now is the time to get them shooting. Get them set up with a youth hunting rifle and take the time to teach them marksmanship. Build their confidence as they learn, teach them to respect the animals they hunt and, most importantly, be patient with them. Your teachings will grow with the youngster and you will have a hunting partner for life.



To quickly build confidence and keep their experience positive, I personally like to start all new shooters, regardless of age, by shooting from a bench.



Team NFA

Patrick Haynes

Train Like An Olympian

One of the defining characteristics of shooters at the top of their game is that they don't leave anything to chance. They set clear goals and develop plans to meet them. They know what events they are gearing up for, plus all the milestone events along the way. They know their strengths, as well as their weaknesses, and work hard to close performance gaps. This is true in all elite sports, and is evidenced in the highest levels of shooting competitions around the world.

First off, you need to know what your upcoming year is going to look like. Grab a calendar and write down the dates of your upcoming competitions and rank them by importance.

In this article, I'd like to share some of our Olympians' secrets, specifically aspects of the annual training plan. I can hear the pained groans of readers everywhere, thinking about the tedium of designing a training plan for their upcoming competitive season. But, let's be honest: if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Why bother investing hours of practice at the range if you end up missing your goal? And it doesn't matter what shooting sport you compete in, or at what level. Practical pistol or biathlon, service rifle or air pistol – planning is integral to success. You just need to understand the planning process and what you need to address during your year.

First off, you need to know what your upcoming year is going to look like. Grab a calendar and write down the dates of your upcoming competitions and rank them by importance. Usually, the last competition of the season is the most important. For some, it is the last league

match or provincial championships. For others, it may be nationals or the Olympics.

Once you have the competitions taken care of, catalogue all the training opportunities that you have. These will include your daily or weekly practices, as well as focused training camps. Make sure that you account for the number and duration of your practices. Be realistic: a two-hour training opportunity rarely allows for two hours of real training. Travel, talking with others, unpacking, setting up or taking breaks isn't "training." Studies show that the average time spent training during elite practices usually is less than 50 per cent of time on site. Plan accordingly and make the most of each session.

Next, we need to break up the year into periods. The date of your first official competition is important. This day marks the beginning of the competition period in your annual plan. The last official competition marks the end of your competition period and starts the beginning of your transition period, or the off-season. The first formal training event in your program ends the transition period and marks the beginning of your preparation period. Now that the periods are identified, what do they mean and why should you care?

The preparation period (with further divisions) lasts from 11 to 24 weeks. As the name suggests, this is where you get ready and build a solid foundation to compete from in the future. The competition phase (made of sub-phases) lasts between four and 20 weeks, depending upon the length and intensity of individual competitive seasons. The transition period may last from two to eight weeks, or comprise the total time between the end of competition and the beginning of training. Some athletes will have double periodized plans, which run the preparation and competition periods twice, with a single transition at the end of the year. Regardless of the breakdown, your preparation period should be longer than your competition period. Build your base before you compete.

At this stage, you're probably staring at the page and asking, "Why did I pick up this article?" Don't worry, every high performance athlete asks the same question and gets the same answer. You need to make sure that you're doing the right things at the right time.

Here's an example, in the form of a question: Do you want to be figuring out gun issues in the final days of your competitive season, or do you want to be shooting confidently with tried and true equipment? Obviously, at your premier match, you will want to be shooting and reaping the rewards of all your work. Consequently, all equipment and ammunition issues should be resolved in the early preparation period. At the beginning of the year, you either tear apart your equipment and review it from the ground up, or you get the new equipment required for the upcoming season. (Pro tip here: don't ditch your old gun. The new one may not live up to expectations and having Old Faithful as your back up is invaluable.) Sequence your training from the ground up.

Based on last year's performance and your current situation, you need to assess your strengths and weaknesses: technical, tactical, physical and mental. These assessments will guide you on what your training sessions will be built around.

Technical skills are your basic shooting skills, and include position, grip/hold, making correct sight changes and triggering. Shooting has many technical skills that must be mastered.

Tactical skills are your ability to read and respond to your environment, in order to maximize your performance. This can include reading the wind, knowing when to swap magazines in your course of fire or choosing specific tinted lenses to aid your sight picture, according to the lighting or your background. Depending on your shooting sport, tactics may be somewhat straightforward (indoor 10-metre air rifle) or very complex (outdoor 1,000-yard full bore rifle).

On the physical side, you should develop a solid core to maintain postural stability. General muscle tone will help you hold your shooting position and firearm. Additionally, you will reap benefits from average or better aerobic capacity. These benefits can include lower heart and respiratory rates, resistance to general fatigue, better adaptation to jet lag (if you travel to competitions, this is critical) and greater life expectancy (more time to train and compete!) While some shooters don't appear to be penalized by below-normal fitness levels, every shooter's performance will benefit from being fitter.

Lastly, mental skills are varied; but, they typically include attention control, emotional control, arousal control (relaxation or intensification), maintenance of confidence, imagery and goal setting. The mental side of the game is probably the most mysterious for athletes. As a result, it is often neglected in the preparation period and sought out during competition. Unfortunately, at this stage, it is too late.

Essentially, the preparation period is the identification and development of the skills that you will need for competition. The point to remember, though, is that you develop these skills in isolation, outside of competition, over time. You don't go to a match and shoot a course of fire to learn how to improve target acquisition. Similarly, you don't go to a world cup to learn about reading wind flags. Restated, training is not the repetition of match courses of fire. I see this quite often at the club level and I sense the frustration these people have when they don't improve. They need to train better.

In preparation, you deliberately practice the fine points of your technique, without the distractions of competitors, spectators and range officials. If you have an opportunity for improvement, isolate the skill and work that. Set aside several sessions in a row with that emphasis. If you can't perfect your technique in a stress-free environment, you certainly won't under pressure. As you move closer to the competition period, combine various foundational skills and introduce range commands, time restrictions, fellow competitors and distractions. Learn how to perform the task (and respond to that environment) under match-like conditions before you get to the actual competition.

Additionally, in training, seek immediate feedback on your performances. You need more information than performance outcomes, such as score and time. You need feedback on the mechanics of your performance, so you can adjust them intelligently. Some Olympic rifle and pistol shooters use infrared simulators that produce descriptive metrics on shot delivery. Athletes can play back the shot, quantify the delivery and set relevant training goals. The same goes with video playback. The rise of smart phones has introduced low-cost video analysis to every athlete. Slow motion video, once restricted to

expensive camera and software solutions, are readily available for instant review on iPhones. The keys to any form of performance analysis include identifying what you want to observe, creating and following an observation plan and then consistently quantifying what you saw. Once you can quantify your performance, you can manage and improve it.

When the competition period starts, your intention is to perform at your best. But, you are still testing and tweaking your competitive performance. Take



One of the defining characteristics of shooters at the top of their game is that they don't leave anything to chance.



and apply your training (technical, tactical, physical and mental) and assess your performance. First, review what went well. Being overly critical to the point of negativity doesn't help. We all have rough days and all can seem lost. You need to remember what you did well, so you can build on that and repeat it in the future. Additionally, you need to look at opportunities for improvement. I say that this is an opportunity because nothing is worse than not knowing what needs fixing. If you can identify something to work on, attack it with enthusiasm. Then, when you return to competition, you will be confident that you are moving forward. This is the basis for improvement.

I should also mention that you do the bulk of your training volume in the beginning of the year (in preparation) and reduce (or taper) your volume as you move into the competition period. Conversely, intensity increases over the course of the season into your final, major competition. Volume is initially used as a means of sport-specific physical training, as you develop skills and maximize trigger time. Over the season, vol-

ume decreases, so you can develop finesse, reduce the likelihood of repetitive strain injuries and avoid fatigue on game day. From an intensity standpoint, your mental game slowly narrows from a floodlight, looking at all aspects of your game at the beginning of the year, to that of a laser, focusing on performing your best at your most important competition.

During the competition period, you should also plan and review how you approach each match. The days leading up to a competition are as important as the match itself. Are you rested and stress-free when you arrive on game day? Did you eat properly beforehand? Did you pack what you need? I know of one shooter who forgot to pack a pistol for the nationals. A match plan leading into your competition can alleviate a lot of headaches down the road. Building the match plan starts just prior to the competition period and is honed continuously thereafter.

Lastly, write down everything. A shooting journal describes every training and competitive experience. It provides you with the details of your annual plan. It is the performance knowledge that you need to understand why you achieved your results at the end of the year. What worked out well, so you can repeat it next year? Conversely, if you didn't achieve your goal, what can you improve? Was your volume too low? Was your training emphasis misplaced? Without a shooting journal, you're stuck re-inventing the wheel every season, which is a terrible waste of limited resources.

With that being said, you have an opportunity to approach next year's shooting season with a plan. You can make educated decisions, plan your resources, train intelligently and make each shot count. You can do the right things at the right time, as you move closer and closer to your performance goals. Your preparation can support your efforts in competition. Regardless of what shooting sport you participate in, you can plan to train better. You can exert more control over your training and positively impact your competitive performances, just like an Olympian.

All the best on the firing line.



The mental side of the game is probably the most mysterious for athletes.



Legal Corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney at Law

Where Is It Legal To Shoot?

One of the questions most often asked on Internet discussion forums is, "Where is it legal to shoot or discharge a firearm?"

This is a question few people can answer with certainty, because there is no black and white answer. Rather, there are multiple factors to consider, including type of firearm, location, proximity of buildings or facilities, local noise legislation and environmental considerations.

Restricted & prohibited firearms

If we are talking about restricted or prohibited firearms, the answer is simple. They can only be shot at approved ranges. Under Section 29 of the *Firearms Act*, any place operated as a shooting range must be approved by the provincial minister. "Provincial minister" usually refers to the local province's Minister of Public Security. Shooting a restricted or prohibited firearm in one's own backyard or on Crown land, even if perfectly safe, is not legally allowed. In theory, it is possible to apply for and obtain an authorization to carry permit for a restricted or prohibited firearm for personal protection, whether against wildlife or ill intentioned human beings. In reality, very few, if any, ATCs are being issued by the respective Chief Firearms Officers of the provinces and territories. Even if one were issued, discharge of the firearm would be restricted to situations of personal protection. An ATC for personal protection against wildlife is not a licence to shoot at will in the woods.

Although quite restrictive, and largely because they are so restrictive, the rules pertaining to shooting restricted and prohibited firearms are fairly simple. The same is not true of non-restricted firearms.

Non-restricted firearms

The first thing to understand is that Section 29 of the *Firearms Act* enacts a prohibition to operate a shooting club or shooting range, unless the same is approved by the provincial minister. However, it does not prohibit discharging a non-restricted firearm at a place other than an approved range. The key word in Section 29 is "operate." A person who shoots a non-restricted firearm on his own property or on Crown land does not operate a shooting range. Thus, such activity is not prohibited by the *Firearms Act*.

But, what if an individual were to build some kind of permanent facility, be it a rifle range or clay target range on his own property, to engage in shooting sports? Arguably, if such facility is solely for the use of the owner and select invitees, it may not be regarded as being operated as a range, since the word "operates" likely means "as a going concern" or "for commercial purposes." In such an event, it would be wise not to invite members of the public at large to use the facility, or charge a user fee to the invitees. To my knowledge, that particular aspect of the *Firearms Act* has never been tested before a court of law. So, we might have to wait for an actual judicial ruling to know for sure.

Assuming that no permanent or temporary shooting facility is in play, and no money is being charged for the use of property, is it then legal to discharge a non-restricted firearm? To do so on Crown land does not require permission. However, there might be environmental and safety issues at stake and various prohibitions may exist. Legislation may prohibit the discharge of firearms in locations such as environmental preserves, parks, recreational facilities and in the vicinity of airports. From a safety standpoint, whenever a person discharges a firearm, that person will almost always be held liable for any damage that may result if someone else is harmed, or property is damaged. Hence the rule: know what is beyond your target and make sure that your bullet ends up in a safe place.

From an environmental standpoint, lead, which most bullets are made of, is generally regarded as a pollutant - an undesirable substance if released into the environment. Depending on applicable legislation, location and amount of lead released, an otherwise legal shooting activity may potentially lead to prosecution under an environmental protection statute, regulation or bylaw. In actual fact, this seldom if ever happens, if only for the reason that there are no witnesses when the deed occurs. However, with environmental groups becoming ever more vocal, and public tolerance at an all-time low for anything related to firearms, prosecution based upon environmental legislation might become more prevalent.

You might ask, "If releasing lead into the environment is illegal, then why do hunters not get sued when they hunt with and shoot lead projectiles on public land?" The answer is likely that by allowing hunting, the government has given hunters an implied licence to release a small quantity of lead into the environment. However, as we all know, this may not last forever. There already are prohibitions against using lead ammunition for waterfowl hunting and there are groups currently attempting to have governments outlaw all lead ammunition.

In certain jurisdictions, especially near inhabited areas, sound levels may be regulated, often by municipalities. Oftentimes, municipalities will also prohibit discharging a firearm within a certain distance of a building or other construction. Provincial legislation often prohibits shooting from, towards or across a public road. Even without such a prohibition, shooting towards or across a road is rarely a good idea, unless one can be certain that no danger to anyone or anything will result.

Finally, shooting on, towards or across someone else's private property constitutes trespass, unless one has the landowner's permission to do so.

So, to summarize: where and when is it legal to discharge a firearm? Well, it's complicated!



NFA Book Shelf

Bill Rantz

Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles

Author: Bill Ward

Published by AuthorHouse 2014

Six by nine inches, 223 pages

Black and white photographs

Hard cover ISBN: 978-1-4918-6291-9

Soft cover ISBN: 978-1-4918-6320-6

Kindle edition ISBN: 978-1-4918-6319-0

Bill Ward is a retired Tennessee Wildlife Officer who has almost 50 years of experience with many types of firearms, including .22 rimfire rifles. In *Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles*, Ward's

first book, he shares his passion for classic .22s manufactured in the early to mid-20th century.

The firearm enthusiast's attention is firmly grasped by the cover photo of four classic .22 rifles. Readers will recall their first .22, with many rounds fired at targets, tin cans and the occasional rabbit. Hours spent wiping the walnut stock, polishing deeply blued steel and cleaning the bore until it shone, reflecting the pride of ownership that has never been forgotten.

Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles provides a wealth of information related to all aspects of the .22, which is by far the most popular calibre ever manufactured. The reasons for its popularity throughout the world include negligible recoil, acceptable noise and the reasonable cost of ammunition.

Since knowledge increases appreciation and interest, Ward first shares the history of the .22 rimfire cartridge, beginning with its development in 1857 by Horris Smith and Daniel Wesson for their 1st Model revolver. In 1887, Joshua Stevens and the Union Metallic Cartridge Company introduced the 22 Long Rifle with a 40-grain bullet propelled by five grains of black powder.

Over the past 129 years, many companies have produced .22 rifles in a variety of actions. The author points out that a complete listing would be impossible. So, he chooses to discuss 20 models from five major companies, including Stevens, Savage, Marlin, Remington and Winchester.

Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles does not have a table of contents or index, but the reader will quickly become familiar with the book and be able to locate specific information.

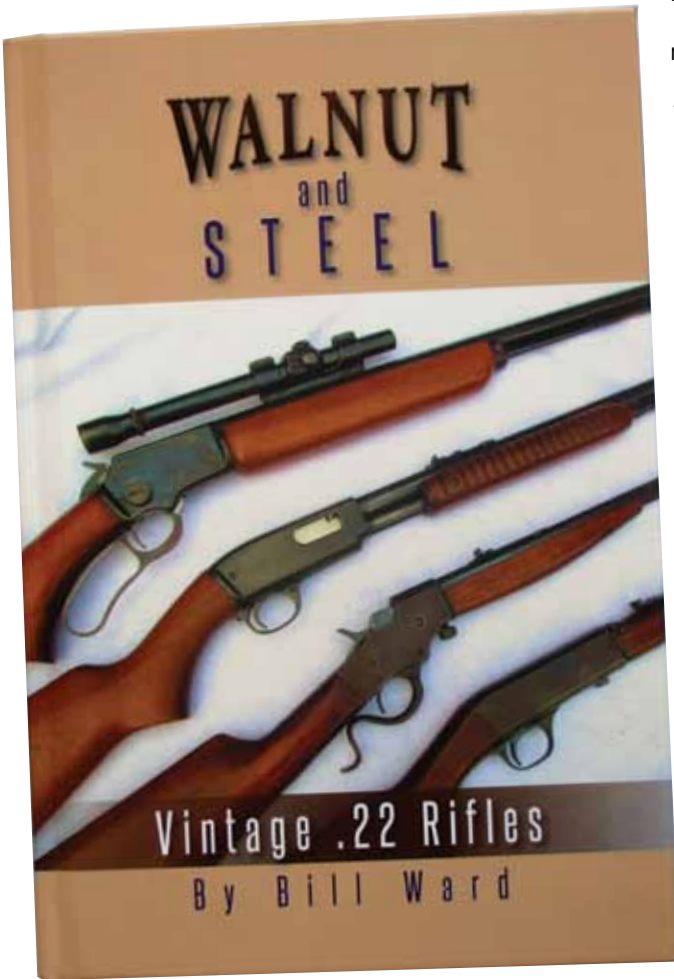
Ward has devoted a chapter to each manufacturer, first outlining the history of the company, followed by detailed information on a few of the specific models of .22 rifles they produced. Characteristics related to each model, as well as the author's vast experience, are shared throughout each chapter in an easy-to-read style. Almost 100 photographs are included in *Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles*.

Vintage rifles should be carefully preserved, but they were also made to shoot and are still capable of excellent accuracy. Ward spent considerable time shooting these rifles, and has provided tables that indicate how well each shot with a variety of ammunition at 25 or 50 yards.

Once reader interest has been aroused, the author advises how to locate and choose a classic .22 rifle. Tips provided on improving accuracy will help tighten up those groups fired at the range, and improve success when hunting small game.

All rifles that have survived many years of use deserve to be properly maintained after a day of shooting. Ward completes *Walnut And Steel* with a short chapter outlining how to clean, preserve and protect your vintage .22 rifle for future generations to enjoy.

Walnut And Steel - Vintage .22 Rifles lists at \$29.95 US in hardcover or \$19.95 US in the soft cover edition. It is also available online as a Kindle download for only \$3.98. Whether an advanced shooter or new to the sport, the reader will leave the final page with an increased appreciation for vintage .22 rifles.





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