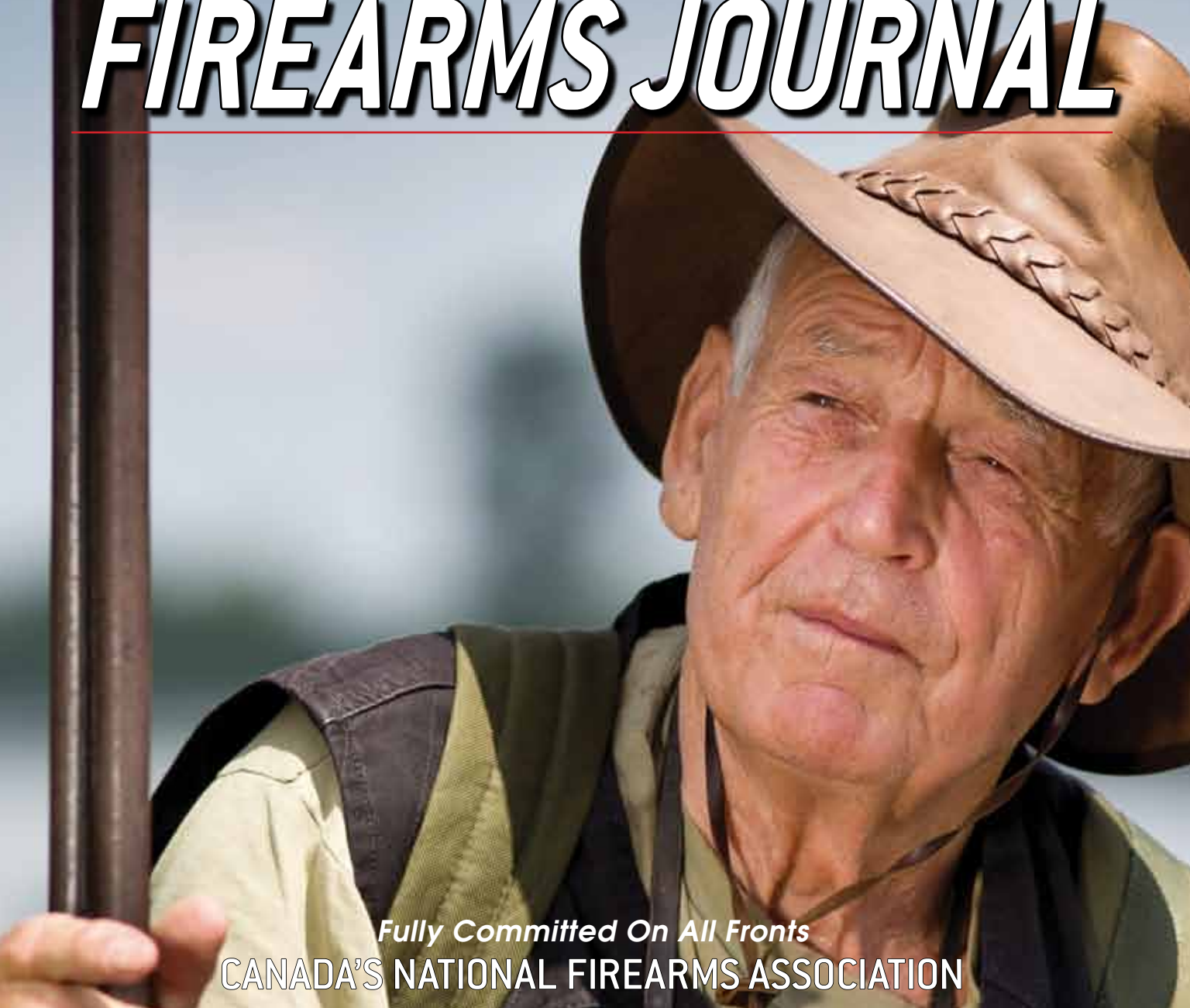


CANADIAN 

September/October 2015
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FIREARMS JOURNAL



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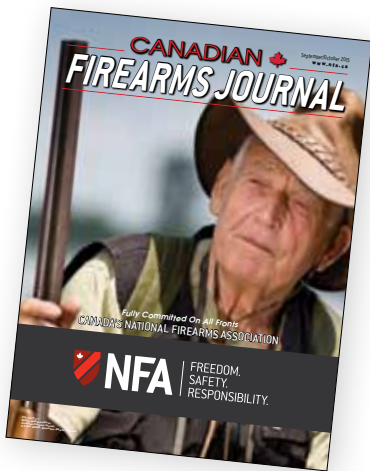


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MISSION STATEMENT

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

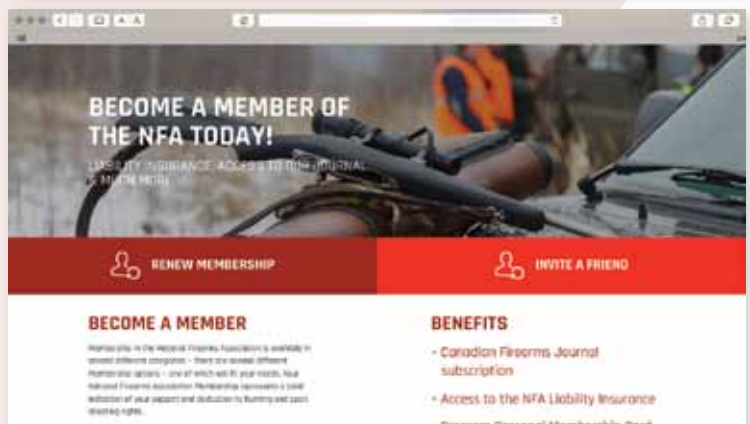
New NFA Branding *Taking a solid step into modern-day marketing*



About a year ago, the NFA decided to professionalize and standardize its corporate identity and branding strategy to raise the profile of the firearms community and improve its message. After teaming up with visual communications specialists, the NFA is proud to officially launch the association's new marketing identity, which includes, amongst many other aspects, new logotypes, a new website, fully revamped communication tools and a full branding guide to ensure consistency throughout its platforms.

While the NFA's historically important symbols, such as its official coat of arms, remain untouched, this new corporate identity constitutes a solid step into modern-day marketing strategies, which are considered essential for the success of any endeavour. This effort is designed to further define the NFA's image and mission, to better interact with the various demographics that constitute its current and potential membership base and to increase the credibility of our cause at the various social and political levels the NFA is actively involved in.

It is therefore with great enthusiasm that the NFA today unveils its new appearance - one that is sure to help better represent you and the firearms rights movement at large.





From The Editor's Desk

Al Voth

A New Face At The Editor's Desk

Welcome to the September/October issue of the *Canadian Firearms Journal*. As you can see, I'm the new editor of this publication; replacing Chris McGarry who has been doing a great job in helping out with editing duties. However, the only constant is change, and now I get to build on the work done by Chris and those who preceded him. Like any editor, I have my own ideas about how to improve the *CFJ*, and any success I have in doing so will be largely because of the solid foundation laid by those hard working people who went before me.

Part of the reason I get to take over is because I live close to the NFA head office and I'm retired. The government now, in effect, is paying me to stay away from their offices. It's a livelihood I highly recommend. By way of introduction, I worked for the RCMP for 35 years, starting out doing street level policing, eventually moving into Emergency Response Team work, and then doing my last 20 years as a forensic firearm examiner in a crime lab - a field in which I still do some consulting. Beyond that, I'm a lifelong hunter, competition shooter, handloader and gun tinkerer. I also love to write and if you pay attention to the bylines in outdoor magazines, you'll often see my name there.

However, working as an editor is a change in roles for me, and a challenge I'm looking forward to. You can expect to see some changes in the *CFJ*, too. One of them is reflected in this issue, which has a focus on the Canadian hunter. Going forward, many of our issues will feature a theme in keeping with what Canadian shooters are doing at the time of year the magazine is published. And since it's fall and September marks the start of some sort of hunting season in most of Canada, we're going to focus on hunting topics for several of the features in this issue.

Next issue I hope to add a page of reader's comments, so be sure to send me your thoughts and suggestions on what you read in this publication and how to improve the contents. The e-mail address to reach me is listed by my name in the masthead. I promise to read all the feedback I get, although I likely won't have time to respond to all of it. And if you're interested in writing for the magazine, be sure to let me know that as well. After all, this is your magazine.

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President's Message

Sheldon Clare

NFA On The National & International Front

The NFA is pleased to welcome Matthew Hudec, of Saskatchewan, and Teo Sanchez, of Quebec, to team NFA. Both of these young men have been performing at a high level in their chosen sport of biathlon and turned in impressive results with several trips to the podium last season, including at the Canada Winter Games representing their respective provinces. We can also be proud of our sponsorship of the National Pistol Team - we have sponsored their training equipment, which has taken Canada's shooters to the podium at the Pan Am Games. As the shooting sports become more popular, our legislative agenda will likewise become easier to achieve. Sponsoring youth shooters is a great way to build public support for firearms ownership and use. Our current levels of sponsorship have helped young Canadian shooters excel, with Megan Tandy even representing Canada at two Olympic Games, and supporting others who will likely be joining her.

As well, I have been checking the status of our petitions on magazine capacity and the AR-15. It seems there are some elements in the party that are seeking to delay response on those petitions, for various reasons connected with the election and their assessment of our ability to get action on them. For that reason, I need your help. Please take a moment to write and meet with your member of parliament and ask him or her just what is happening with the NFA petitions - is the Conservative government with us or against us on these two significant aspects of our firearms law? You worked hard to get those signatures, and now we need a

little more help in seeing some action on those serious and reasonable requests for reform.

There is an election this fall and indications are the writ will drop early. Canadian firearms owners deserve to know where the government stands on our issues. Press them firmly and make your voice heard.

On the international front, Director Robert Bracken and I attended the UN Meeting of Government Experts, which was held in New York in early June, to discuss the technical aspects of international arms control as it affects regulation of small arms and light weapons. There were some compelling presentations as to why registration fails, and why marking parts is a complex and expensive task. One presentation from the defence advisory group pointed out that several aspects of control on parts were a waste of effort, when parts such as M-16 firing pins were easily made from items as simple as double headed nails. As is often the case, much effort was wasted on investigating highly technical issues, such as 3D printing firearms, while ignoring the reality of basic issues that states are afraid to confront.

With the support of WFSA and Robert, I was selected to be one of three representatives to present to the body and I was highly critical of UN efforts to date, especially regarding statements by the UN Secretary General regarding confiscation of civilian firearms. UN efforts to control firearms have not gone away. We were able to meet with the senior staff of Canadian Mission and we were pleased to learn that our application for NGO status had received provisional approval. This status gives us a stronger voice and assures that we are better informed of activities that affect our interests. We praised the Canadian position on the *Arms Trade Treaty* and encouraged the government to assist other countries concerned about these UN initiatives.

There are several UN meetings being held this summer to organize and promote the disarmament agenda of the *ATT*; one was in Geneva, and though asked to attend, we declined in order to concentrate on our internal issues. As well, there are significant *ATT* talks coming up in both Mexico and Sweden, which WFSA is hoping we are able to attend to protect the interests of firearms owners. We have encouraged the participation of Canada at these talks, to support our friends to the south, and to observe and be wary of initiatives that may affect us even though Canada has neither signed nor supported the *ATT*. The blunt content, along with the concise and respectful style that our recent UN presentations have demonstrated has gone over well with our allies, and even garnered the respect of some of our opponents. The NFA is being heard and taken seriously internationally.

Please keep up your efforts at holding our politicians accountable. We have seen some test balloons lately in the form of hostile private members' bills which have gone nowhere, but be warned that there are many who still believe that more gun control is somehow going to eliminate violence. Make sure that when you vote this fall, you are voting for a candidate who will support you and the NFA on firearms law reform. Go to the debates, ask hard questions, and get the answers that make it clear who you should vote for this year. It shouldn't be a free ride.

Rapport du Président

Sheldon Clare

L'ACAF présente sur deux fronts, National et International

L'équipe de tir de l'ACAF souhaite la bienvenue à Matthew Hudec de la Saskatchewan et Théo Sanchez du Québec. Ces deux jeunes hommes pratiquant le biathlon de haut niveau, on réussi à obtenir des résultats impressionnants et sont montés sur le podium plusieurs fois la saison dernière, ainsi qu'aux jeux d'hiver du Canada alors qu'ils représentaient leurs Provinces. Nous avons aussi commandité l'équipe Nationale de tir au pistolet en lui fournissant de l'équipement d'entraînement. Cette équipe Canadienne a elle aussi très bien réussi et s'est retrouvée plusieurs fois sur le podium aux Jeux Pan Américains à Toronto. La popularité grandissante des sports de tir devrait faciliter l'atteinte de nos objectifs législatifs. Le fait de commanditer de jeunes tireurs contribue à augmenter l'appui du public pour l'usage et la possession d'armes à feu. Notre niveau actuel de commandites a permis à des jeunes Canadiens d'atteindre l'excellence, Megan Tandy a même représenté le Canada lors de deux Jeux Olympiques. D'autres jeunes tireurs sont susceptibles de l'accompagner prochainement.

Je surveille de près le résultat de nos deux pétitions, celle à propos de la capacité des chargeurs et l'autre à propos de la carabine AR-15. Certain éléments à l'intérieur du Parti tentent de retarder la réponse à nos pétitions à cause des élections prochaines. Ils semblent évaluer quelles actions nous pourrions générer grâce aux pétitions. C'est à cause de cela que j'ai besoin de votre aide. SVP, prenez un moment pour écrire et rencontrer votre Député Fédéral, demandez lui où ils en sont avec les pétitions de l'ACAF. - Le Gouvernement Fédéral est-il avec ou contre nous par rapport à ces deux aspects importants de nos lois sur les armes à feu. Vous avez travaillé fort pour recueillir ces signatures. Nous avons maintenant besoin d'un dernier effort pour obtenir des résultats, suite à nos demandes de réformes sérieuses et raisonnables.

Il semble que les élections seront déclarées plus tôt que prévu. Les propriétaires d'armes à feu méritent de savoir quelle est la position du Gouvernement à propos de leurs enjeux. Faites pression et faites vous entendre.

Sur le front international, le Directeur Robert Bracken et moi sommes allé à la réunion des Experts Gouvernementaux de l'ONU qui a eu lieu au début de juin à New York. Nous avons discuté des aspects techniques du contrôle international des armes affectant la réglementation des petites armes. Des arguments convaincants expliquant pourquoi l'enregistrement des armes ne fonctionne pas et le marquage des armes est une tâche complexe et onéreuse ont été présentés. Une des présentations, par le Groupe Conseillé en Défense a réussi à mettre en évidence que plusieurs aspects du contrôle des pièces est un gaspillage d'énergie puisque des percuteurs peuvent être fabriqués de manière artisanale en utilisant des clous à deux têtes. Comme d'habitude durant ces réunions, beaucoup de temps a été perdu à vérifier des composantes techniques tels les armes à feu imprimées en trois dimensions.

Avec l'appui de la WFSA et de Robert Bracken, j'ai été choisi pour être un de trois représentants à adresser l'ONU. Ma critique à leur égard fût sans équivoque. - En particulier l'affirmation du Secrétaire Général qui demande la confiscation des armes appartenant aux civils. Le contrôle des armes à feu par l'ONU est toujours bien présent.

Nous avons rencontré des membres seniors de la Mission Canadienne, qui nous ont informé que notre statut d'ONG était provisoirement approuvé. Ce statut nous permet de mieux nous faire entendre et d'être mieux informés sur les activités

qui touchent nos intérêts. Nous avons félicité la position prise par le Canada à propos du Traité sur le Commerce des Armes (TCA) et avons encouragé le Gouvernement de porter assistance aux autres pays inquiets de ces initiatives de l'ONU. Cet été il y aura plusieurs réunions de l'ONU en vu d'organiser et de promouvoir l'agenda de désarmement du TCA, dont une à Genève où nous avons été invités, mais nous ne y sommes pas allé car nous devons nous occuper de nos problèmes internes. Les autres réunions auront lieu au Mexique et en Suède. La WFSA souhaite vivement que nous puissions y aller pour bien veiller aux intérêts des propriétaires d'armes à feu. - Quoique le Gouvernement du Canada n'ait pas signé, ni appuyé le TCA, nous l'encourageons fortement à participer à ces réunions pour appuyer nos amis du Sud et pour observer avec méfiance tout initiative qui pourrait nous affecter. Le contenu, la forme concise et respectueuse de nos représentations à l'ONU ont donné une très bonne impression à nos alliés et ont même inspiré le respect de nos adversaires. L'ACAF se fait entendre clairement et est prise au sérieux sur le plan international.

Continuez de faire pression auprès de nos politiciens, leurs promesses doivent être tenues. Récemment, nous avons été témoins de plusieurs projets de loi hostiles, émanant de Députés, ils ont échoué. Mais soyez avertis, il y a encore plusieurs personnes qui croient qu'une augmentation du contrôle des armes réussira à faire disparaître la violence. Assurez vous de voter pour un candidat qui veillera à vos intérêts et qui appuiera les efforts de l'ACAF pour changer les lois sur les armes à feu. Assistez aux débats, posez des questions audacieuses, exigez d'avoir des réponses qui vous permettrons de voter judicieusement. Il ne faut pas leur rendre la vie facile.





Vice President's Message

Blair Hagen

The Politics Of Bureaucracies

Good news, right?
Sort of.

The Conservative government does get credit for implementing firearms law reforms, the first reforms ever to take place in our modern political era. These reforms were brought in through recognizing some of the more egregious failures, outrages and offenses against citizenship Canada's famously broken and failed firearms laws represent.

But the Conservatives are still missing the root cause of the problem altogether - the *Firearms Act*. The present *Firearms Act*, which was imposed in a most bloody-minded fashion by the Liberal government of 1995 under Bill C-68.

C-68 itself was a progression of firearms bureaucracy-driven civil disarmament legislation, which began in the 1970s. In 1995, the civil disarmament lobby and firearms control bureaucrats got almost everything they wanted - comprehensive legislation that not only provided for civil disarmament in the immediate term, but also far into the future, regardless of the political stripe of the government of that future day.

If that future government, which may not have supported the civil disarmament agenda of the 1995 Liberal government and firearms bureaucracy, wanted to steer a different course on firearms law they would have to pass entirely new legislation in parliament.

That's hard. That's controversial. And that's politically risky for any government to do. "Gun control" is a hot button political issue for both the political left and right in Canada.

The Liberal government of 1995 had the courage to legislate according to their civil disarmament agenda. Bill C-68 was controversial and it created divisions between Canadians - east and west, north and south and even divisions in the Liberal Party that was responsible for it. But Justice Minister Allan Rock persevered and imposed the worst piece of civil disarmament legislation ever visited upon Canada.

We are still living with it today. It is still the law of Canada in 2015, even under a Conservative government.

Since the Conservatives were elected in 2006, most Canadians have not been made to feel the brunt and full force of the *Firearms Act*. Amnesties have been implemented and legislative reforms have been introduced after the Conservatives had the means to do so, after achieving majority in parliament in 2011. However, the firearms bureaucracy has continued to selectively target the rights and property of many other Canadians, according to the provisions they still possess in the *Firearms Act*, right under the nose of the government. And it is going to continue as long as Bill C-68 is the *Firearms Act*.

The government of Canada and the Minister of Public Safety don't have enough hours in the day to stay on top of all of the bureaucratic machinations and official licentiousness that are made possible by this *Firearms Act*. They have attempted to do so recently and kudos to them. The truth is, no government and no minister can possibly govern the actions of the civil disarmament bureaucracy under this *Firearms Act* to the extent that the rights and property of Canadians can ever be made safer.

The firearms regulatory reforms instituted by the Conservatives are a respite. They're nice, as long as there is a federal government looking over the shoulder of the firearms bureaucracy. But one day, the Conservatives will be replaced by another government - a government that may have a civil disarmament agenda. This will be happily facilitated by the federal firearms bureaucracy using the 1995 C-68 *Firearms Act*.

Enjoy your Swiss Arms or CZ 858 rifle in the lawful, responsible manner of firearms use that Canadians are well known for. The political pressure millions of voters put on this government to reverse the bureaucrats unilateral reclassification made that possible. But understand that the firearms bureaucracy still has your gun, and every other lawfully owned firearm in possession of any Canadian targeted for confiscation. They still have all of the laws and regulations they need to do it.

Many Canadians will view the intended reversal of the Swiss Arms/CZ 858 reclassification under Bill C-42, and the government's review of the RCMP Mossberg .22 AK/Blaze rifle prohibited classification, as well as the other reforms contained in this bill, as victories in the battle for common sense in firearms regulation.

It's true, for most of the modern era of gun control in Canada reclassification went one direction: more and more gun bans based on cosmetics and political expediency. If you are a government that sees "unrelenting gun control" as a political winner, banning handguns and ugly black plastic or sheet metal army-looking guns is a great place to start.

"They're scary." "No one needs one for hunting." "They have no place in Canada's field and stream attitudes towards firearms ownership."

This is what happened in 1978 under the Trudeau government's Bill C-51, in 1991 under Kim Campbell's Bill C-17 and in 1995 with Allan Rock's Bill C-68. Gun bans, restrictions, prohibitions and even confiscations based on the get-the-ugly-black-guns-out-of-circulation-first culture of the federal firearms bureaucracy.

So, have things changed?

Yes and no.

Yes, the federal government is taking the threat to the rights and property of Canadians more seriously these days. Bill C-19 in 2012 ended universal registration, which was meant to control and provide for the eventual prohibition and confiscation of rifles and shotguns along the same lines as is still planned for handguns and other restricted and prohibited firearms.

In 2015, Bill C-42 has addressed some of the more ludicrous and bizarre paperwork offenses, arbitrary powers of chief firearms officers and the firearms bureaucracy's ability to criminalize the possession of property by Canadians according to their civil disarmament agenda.



Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas

Exploding The Hunting Myth & The Adventures Of Doctor Dave

The anti-everything progressives devote much of their energy to spinning myths like, "Guns are a danger to everyone," "Don't eat meat; eat only vegetables" and on it twirls. Hunters are vilified and profiled as beer swilling, old, overweight, bearded Caucasian men - demons clad in camo.

This is not reality. Hunters of today, as in the past, are true environmentalists who understand game populations and contribute to the economy. Local hunting and hunting tourism generates approximately \$50 million of economic activity annually in BC, supporting wildlife habitat protection and environmental programs. Hunters support wildlife programs and understand game as a valued, renewable resource. They are hunter-gatherers as nature intended, using a resource to balance nature, because if game populations are left unchecked an imbalance occurs. We hunters are a part of the natural circle of life. The progressives appear to be out of touch with the circle of life.

The hunting community has always comprised many and varied character

types and different social stratus. Images from my youthful memory are of individuals who enjoyed the outdoors, not only for hunting. They reveled in the entire outdoor experience: hiking, canoeing, fishing, horse adventures and simple immersion in the outdoor life. These people ranged from grizzled frontier types to trades people, shop keepers, artisans, labourers, accountants, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs and gentle ladies who enjoyed bird hunting. Country women hunted moose, deer, elk and bear as a food



Hunting buddy Paul, with a moose by the Stikine River.



A nice mountain caribou, taken in the Cassiar Mountains. The real work is about to begin.

source. In the urban area where I spent my early life, the neighbours were mostly hunters, including an instructor at the local university, an entrepreneur, a construction business owner and various business people. Of seven neighbours, four were hunting families. In the fall, it was routine to go after game. I, my father and my young friends went bird hunting every fall.

The hunting fraternity of today is much the same, with more emphasis on female hunters. The generation of women who were young in the 1980s and '90s has rediscovered firearms and hunting. These women have discovered that all the propaganda and negative media coverage about firearms and hunting is just a political spin. Today's hunting and firearms classes find representation of 30 to 50 per cent women, and young professionals are turning to hunting as a wholesome source of meat.

Due to legislation and the rise in license fees during the 1990s and early 2000s, the issuing of hunting licenses declined. By 2003, just over 82,000 resident hunting licenses were issued in BC. However, with positive changes in legislation, many more new hunters have been attracted. The numbers have swelled to over 97,000 resident hunting licenses in 2012/2013. The Ministry of Environment for BC expects the numbers to exceed 100,000 in 2014/2015. Particularly youth, women and minorities have discovered the benefits of hunting as recreation, for fitness and as a renewable resource of food, and are enrolling in firearms and hunting courses.

Doctor Dave is a stellar example of the new hunter; a BC-born individual who classifies himself as growing up a city kid. He lived his early years in a typical North American family. Both of his grandfathers were hunters, and his paternal grandfather was an experienced outdoorsman who was a member of the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers during the Second World War. David's hunting story begins after graduating from medical school and becoming a physician who accepted a posting in the out ports of Newfoundland. Doctor Dave's early experience in the out ports fostered his interest in hunting and the outdoors, although his family history likely encouraged a predisposition to rustic open air activity, as well.

After David's tenure in the out ports, he acquired a position as a country doctor in northern BC. There, in Dease Lake, accompanied by his wife and daughter, his passion for outdoor adventure blossomed. The social convention in the area revolves around hunting and David is surrounded by outdoor opportunity minutes from home. Three local professionals fill in as regular hunting partners: Maury, a health care worker; Paul, a CEO of a company; and

Mike, a superintendent of a school district. These sportsmen hunt moose in the Stikine Canyon and Spatsizi Park. They pursue ptarmigan on skis in the winter. They stalk mountain goat, stone sheep and mountain caribou. Ice fishing for pike is done in a wall tent. They have been stalked by wolves, a pack howling around their camp at night. This is recreation, but it's also hard work. Harvested game must be butchered and packed out of the area on their backs.

This foursome has a great love of adventure. Canoeing, hiking and tracking game, they hunt in concert or as individuals. Doctor Dave and his companions are ardent about documenting their exploits and recording their ability to deal with extreme weather, water and terrain in a rugged environment, such as canoeing on the Tanzilla River. Their acquired expertise means they are able to feed their families untainted meat, fish and fowl. Moose is a favourite. Basic living in an isolated area provides not only outdoor experiences, but also the opportunity to stay fit. Because their regime encourages a healthy life style, there's no need to go to the gym on a daily basis. Their environment provides the exercise.

Although Doctor Dave was raised as a city kid, he has learned valuable survival lessons while becoming adept at many frontier skills, learning not only how to track and hunt, but also how to skin, butcher, filet and prepare fresh game. He has honed his primal instincts to master basic living techniques, enabling survival in the wilderness.

Doctor Dave is a genuine, notable contributor to our firearms and hunting heritage. As a physician, he is providing a valuable service in one of the most isolated communities and medical clinics in the province of BC. We are most fortunate to have physicians who will forgo the ease of city life to practice in a challenging situation and environment.

By 2003, just over 82,000 resident hunting licenses were issued in BC. However, with positive changes in legislation, many more new hunters have been attracted. The numbers have swelled to over 97,000 resident hunting licenses in 2012/2013. The Ministry of Environment for BC expects the numbers to exceed 100,000 in 2014/2015.



Legal Corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney At Law

Recent NFA Legal Initiatives

Over the past several months, a lot of the NFA members' attention has been devoted to the internal struggles of the NFA and some have even questioned whether the NFA, as an organization, still mattered. This is very unfortunate because the NFA, as an organization, has continued to be active on several fronts, including the legal front, with a view to protecting and advancing the rights of law-abiding firearms owners. For that reason, I would like to devote this issue's column to review some of these initiatives and their impact on firearms owners' rights.

The NFA, as an organization, has continued to be active on several fronts, including the legal front.

The Long Gun Registry matter

On March 27, 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada released its long-awaited decision on Quebec's application to obtain the Quebec portion of the Long Gun Registry data. That decision was the culmination of litigation that had been started three years earlier, before the Quebec Superior Court. As mentioned in a previous column, I had the privilege of representing the NFA before the Supreme Court, after the NFA successfully obtained intervener status. As you probably all know by now, the

Supreme Court decision was favourable. Quebec's request to obtain the Long Gun Registry data was denied. Although Quebec has now repeatedly expressed its intent to create its own Quebec version of the Long Gun Registry, with or without the federal Long Gun Registry data, it remains questionable whether Quebec has the will or financial means to do so. One thing is for sure: the NFA will do all it can to prevent that from happening.

Range safety officer training

The NFA has been active in many Canadian provinces, providing training to range safety officers. In Quebec, the situation is different. The Quebec Shooting Federation enjoys an unofficial monopoly in respect of firearms safety officers training. I have discussed that matter at length in my most recent column, *The Perplexing Case of the Quebec Shooting Federation*. The NFA has developed a French language program and recruited highly qualified trainers to offer a Quebec alternative to the FQT monopoly. On the legal front, we have managed to convince the Quebec Department of Public Security to at least entertain the NFA's application to be certified as an organization providing range safety officer training. We are confident this initiative will succeed.

Firearms dealers' operations registries

Following the passing of Bill C-19, ending the Canadian Long Gun Registry, certain provincial CFOs continued to require firearms dealers to keep records of all incoming and outgoing non-restricted firearms. To defeat that initiative by the provincial CFOs, the federal government enacted a regulation that precluded CFOs from attaching to dealer and individual licenses an obligation to keep such records. To my knowledge, all provincial CFOs complied, except of course for the Quebec CFO. Even after the aforementioned Supreme Court of Canada decision came down, dealers were only partly relieved from keeping such records. As a matter of fact, they are still required by the CFO to keep records of each and every non-restricted firearms coming into their possession, as well as the date of its resale. This is not only burdensome for the dealers, but it could potentially be used, eventually, to re-create a Long Gun Registry in Quebec.

On behalf of the NFA and a Quebec firearms dealer, I have been involved in an initiative to force the Quebec CFO to end this requirement and inform all Quebec dealers accordingly. With the recent passing of Bill C-42, also known as the *Common Sense Firearms Act*, it is now indisputable that the CFOs' discretionary powers to attach conditions to a license are subject to the limitations set forth in the regulations enacted pursuant to the *Firearms Act*.

Attendance records at gun clubs and gun ranges

The NFA has been successful in getting the Quebec CFO to change its policies in respect of attendance records at gun clubs and gun ranges. Prior to the NFA's involvement, all Quebec gun clubs with ranges approved for restricted firearms forced all users of such ranges, including those shooting non-restricted firearms, to record their name and all information about the firearms they used. There was no legal basis for obtaining such information in respect of non-restricted firearms. That information was being obtained in violation of shooters' privacy rights, and obviously, it could prove useful for eventually re-creating a Quebec Long Gun Registry. It is quite remarkable to note that in this matter we clashed with the

Quebec Shooting Federation, which continued to voice its support for the collection of data on non-restricted firearms owners, even after the Quebec CFO admitted that its initiative had no legal basis and instructed all Quebec gun clubs and ranges to end the impugned practice.

The intervention of the NFA before the Supreme Court of Canada in R. v. Nur

R. v. Nur is a criminal law case that reached the Supreme Court of Canada in 2014. The decision was released in 2015. The NFA sought and obtained intervenor status in the case; not because it had an interest in the faith of Mr. Nur, who is a common criminal, but because there were underlying legal issues in the case that were of paramount importance for all gun owners.

The issues in R. v. Nur, and its sister case R. v. Charles, revolved around the application of minimum sentences for certain firearms related offences. In both instances, the Supreme Court found that the sentences imposed on the two accused were appropriate. However, the Supreme Court invalidated the minimum sentence requirements, because there was likelihood that in some reasonable hypothetical situations gun owners would be subjected to harsh sentences, amounting to "cruel and unusual punishment" for minor and victimless violations of firearms law. One such "reasonable hypothetical situation" considered by the Supreme Court was the case of a restricted firearms owner who would store his restricted firearm at an unauthorized location. The Supreme Court ruled that it would be unfair, in such a situation, to subject an individual to a minimum prison term for what was in essence a victimless regulatory offence.

The foregoing list is by no means exhaustive. These are but a few examples of the NFA's activity on the legal front.



A Smith & Wesson

BY BOB CAMPBELL



on Cowboy Gun



The many western operas and cowboy epics filmed during the last 100 years suggest the Colt Single Action Army was the only handgun used in the old west. This is far from true. There were many Colts, but there were also worthy competitors, such as Remington, Smith & Wesson and various Belgian ironmongers. Just like now, there were more cheap guns in circulation than first quality ones.

Smith & Wesson, a producer of quality guns, is one company that began the show with an advantage. They owned the Rollin White patent for bored-through cylinders, necessary for the use of metallic cartridges. But Smith & Wesson did not fully capitalize on this advantage, as their first revolvers were humble .22 and .32-calibre offerings. Just the same, these revolvers were immensely popular - some 300,000 were manufactured.

In 1870, Smith & Wesson changed the design of their revolvers. The original hinged-frame revolver gave way to a top break design. This new revolver, the Smith & Wesson American Model, fired a .44-calibre centrefire cartridge. By all accounts, it was an excellent revolver and is the revolver the 44 Russian was based on. As Smith & Wesson explored the American market, they discovered the hump on the grip frame and other features of the Russian Model were not popular with American shooters. I have examined a number of 44 Russian revolvers, in various collections, that have had the finger spurs ground off. Compared to the Colt Single Action Army, the Russian Model seems ungainly. However, the Russian Model had an advantage that is provable. This Smith & Wesson top break revolver was

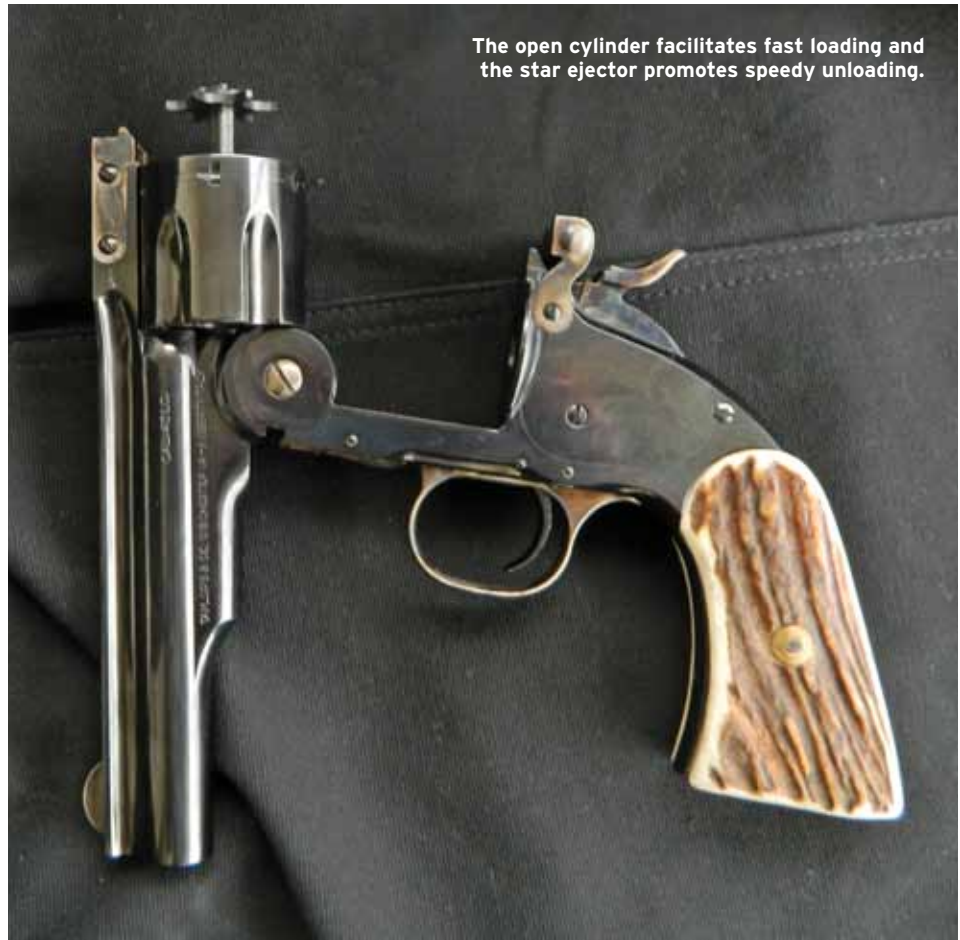
among the most accurate handguns of the day.

Smith & Wesson went forward and designed a new revolver they hoped would prove more popular with American shooters. One of the disadvantages of the Smith & Wesson was the power of the 44 Russian cartridge, firing a 246-grain bullet at only 750 feet per second. While the handgun was famously used to hunt American bison, the tactic was to gallop close to the animal and shoot it in the ear. When addressing motivated adversaries or attempting to drop an Indian war pony, the 45 Colt and its 250-grain bullet at 900 feet per second proved much more effective.

In 1878, Smith & Wesson introduced the New Model No. 3, with a new grip design more rounded than the original. The new revolver became popular, and also proved to be accurate. Some 35,000 were sold over a 30-year period. A less well known version is the No. 3 Frontier Model, a version that featured a grip frame redesigned for a better hand fit. Compared to the Colt, some prefer the handling of this well-balanced top break revolver. The heft, balance, feel and natural point are excellent. Best of all, the Frontier model featured a longer cylinder to accommodate the 44-40 WCF cartridge. Previously, top break revolvers were chambered for relatively short and stubby cartridges, as the leverage of the automatic ejector mechanism simply did not perform well with longer cartridges. However, with its new design, the No. 3 Frontier achieved good reliability and the 44-40 WCF offered about 200 feet per second more velocity than the 44 Russian. Just as important, the cartridge was also chambered in Winchester's repeating rifle.

I am of the opinion that the Frontier Model and its replicas are the best handling Smith & Wessons of the era. Although the revolver also featured an improved Schofield-style barrel latch, making for a hardier revolver, the Smith & Wesson No. 3 Frontier Model was not a commercial success. Some 2,072 were manufactured before production was stopped due to a lack of demand. Of those, 786 were sold to the Japanese, after conversion to the 44 Russian cartridge. As a result, Russian and Japanese Smith & Wesson revolvers faced each other during the Russo-Japanese war. Smith & Wesson also offered a double-action Frontier Model in 44-40 WCF that outpaced the single-action revolver by about 13 to 1 in sales.

Recently, I was able to obtain and fire



The open cylinder facilitates fast loading and the star ejector promotes speedy unloading.



With its excellent stitching, tooling and finish, the Rocking K Saddlery holster is a great match to the No. 3.

a modern reproduction of the Smith & Wesson No. 3 Frontier. This new revolver is offered by Taylor's & Co. and is manufactured in Italy by the noted firearm maker Uberti. I purchased this revolver in a local shop from their used collection. It appeared unfired, as close examination revealed no carbon deposits or signs of handling. Fitted with a nice

set of stag grips as a bonus, the original Taylor's & Co. wooden grips were in the box. And with the addition of the stag grips, I felt comfortable paying roughly 95 per cent of the retail price for this No. 3 Frontier. When I returned home and opened the Uberti box, I was pleasantly surprised to find not only the instruction manual, but also an additional

While the No. 3 was certainly a cowboy gun, it was also an adventurer's gun, a soldier's gun and even a Japanese naval officer's gun.



Firing pin strike is positive and no misfires occurred during testing.

set of grips. This third set possesses a beautiful mother-of-pearl appearance. The previous owner and I apparently share a fascination with different types of grips. All three have different character; my wife loves the look of the pearl version, the wooden grips are adequate for any chore, but the stag grips provide the best purchase when firing the piece.

Taylor's & Co. version of the New

No. 3 Frontier is offered in 45 Colt. This makes a lot of sense for practical use, economy and handloading, because with standard or cowboy loads the 45 Colt offers low recoil and decent accuracy. In keeping with tradition, the revolver is offered in both five and six-and-a-half inch barrel variants. My version features a five-inch barrel, which I think is preferable to the longer barrel. This New No. 3 Frontier is among the best fitted and finished Uberti revolvers I have ever inspected. The blue finish is deep, rich and attractive, while the barrel latch, trigger guard, hammer and the ejector spring actuator, which rides in front of the trigger guard, are all nicely case hardened.

Loading the revolver requires placing the hammer in the safety notch, permitting the cylinder to spin freely. Lifting the barrel latch then allows the barrel to swing downwards for loading, at which point cartridges can be loaded into the six chambers of the cylinder. Swing the barrel shut, close the latch and the revolver is ready to fire. After firing, open the barrel and as it swings downward, the spring-loaded ejector star kicks out all the cartridges simultaneously. If you are firing leisurely, you may ease the barrel/cylinder assembly open and, if you wish, reload only a round or two.

The trigger is smooth and breaks at a crisp four pounds. Among the best things about this revolver are the sights. The rear sight is a protected V type, and coupled with the sharp front post allows for what I think is a great sight picture. I fired Winchester's 250-grain Cowboy load during the evaluation and it averaged about 750 feet per second from the No. 3's five-inch barrel. The Winchester ammunition was reliable, clean burning and is a great choice for those who don't handload. Point of impact with the 250-grain loads was

about two inches high at 15 yards, while 225-grain cast bullet handloads were dead on target.

Firing offhand at targets of various distance, the No. 3 Frontier appeared accurate. I could not resist firing a few rounds as quickly as possible, then ejecting the cartridge cases and reloading. This is a tactical single action revolver! Loading time is much faster than with the Single Action Army. As for absolute accuracy, firing off the bench at 15 yards gave a credible five-shot group at one-and-a-half inches. This is a shooter.

I also fired a number of my own handloads. An Oregon Trail, 250-grain, .454-inch bullet in Starline Brass cases, over enough Trail Boss for 825 feet per second was first. This load gave more recoil, but the pistol remained comfortable. I also fired a few rounds of a proven handload that uses the Hornady 250-grain XTP and enough Winchester 231 powder for 800 feet per second. This load proved highly accurate and clean burning. Clearly the No.3 Frontier is accurate enough for any conceivable chore.

Every revolver needs a good holster, and for this Taylor's & Co. handgun I used a cowboy holster of the Slim Jim type. This is a practical choice, as the revolver rides low in the holster, affording good retention. Yet, when ready to shoot, a tug puts the revolver in your hand. The holster features a bit of border tooling and first class stitching, fit and finish. The maker is Rocking K Saddlery (Rockingsaddlery.com). I have used several holsters from this maker, always with complete satisfaction.

The Smith & Wesson No. 3 Frontier is an important piece of history and if I could afford an original, I probably would not fire it - which is okay, because in my opinion, the Taylor's & Co. product is at least as well made as the original and probably much stronger. While the No. 3 was certainly a cowboy gun, it was also an adventurer's gun, a soldier's gun and even a Japanese naval officer's gun.

The Taylor's & Co. new No. 3 Frontier is a great all-around handgun and the gun smoke that curls from its barrel has the ability to recreate all of that history.



Point Blank

Chris McGarry

Gun Rights Movement Stronger Today Because Of Social Media

Over the past decade or so, the gun rights movement in Canada has utilized a formidable weapon in its arsenal to combat the relentless social engineering and lies perpetuated by governments, the anti-gun movement and mainstream news outlets - social media. Due to the rise in online social networking services, particularly Facebook and Twitter, gun rights activists have had a much easier time reaching the masses of our society, many of whom sit squarely on the fence in regards to firearms issues.

It is estimated that close to half of the world's population is on Facebook. And because of that, Canada's National Firearms Association and other Canadian gun lobby groups have Facebook groups. These groups enable members from across the country to communicate with each other and

share information, not only with their fellow gunnies, but also friends, who in turn share with their friends. If there is to be a sea change in regards to the way the average Canadian views firearms ownership, especially as an absolute right instead of a privilege, then social media will surely play a substantial role in that transformation.

Two decades ago, when the Liberal government of Jean Chretien passed bill C-68 into law, there was a massive demonstration on Parliament Hill called Fed Up. The CBC and other news outlets, while giving the event minimal coverage, failed to inform the public there were several police snipers watching the crowd of 20,000. In 2013, the High River fiasco, like the Fed Up rally, received little media attention. However, in the latter case, because of the widespread use of social media and growing independent journalism such as Sun News, the public was well informed and the powers responsible for kicking in doors and stealing citizens' property could not simply hide their actions.

Before the Internet age and the social media revolution swept the world, gun owners in Canada were largely isolated from each other. Although the NFA did exist, many Canadians were not aware of the existence of what would become the largest gun rights organization in the country. Today, many Canadians spend a considerable amount of time on Facebook, communicating with family and friends from around Canada and the world - a situation the NFA has been able to capitalize on by marketing its online presence, and thus increasing membership.

Members of Canada's National Firearms Association are able to receive up-to-the-minute news and information about events such as this year's AGM in Quebec City and the NFA delegation that travelled to New York City in June to fight for the rights of Canadian firearms owners at the UN. Overall, social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter, have greatly augmented the power of the pro-gun movement in Canada by enhancing our ability to promote our cause and provide information. The battle to restore gun rights in Canada requires winning minds. The better we are able to educate our fellow citizens about draconian firearms legislation, the more people we will bring to our side.

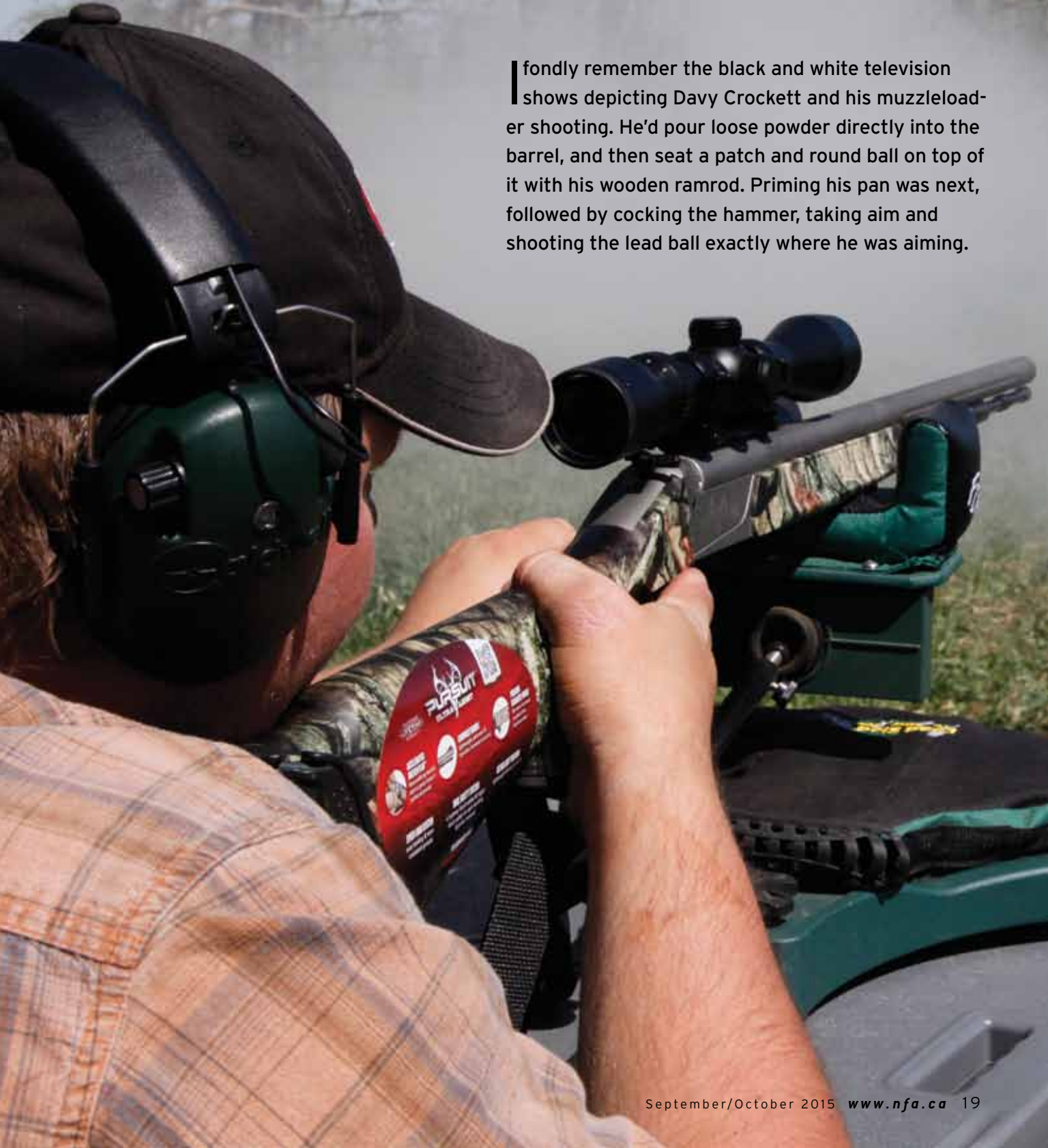


Social media has changed the way people are able to communicate with each other.

Black Powder Alternatives

By Brad Fenson

I fondly remember the black and white television shows depicting Davy Crockett and his muzzleloader shooting. He'd pour loose powder directly into the barrel, and then seat a patch and round ball on top of it with his wooden ramrod. Priming his pan was next, followed by cocking the hammer, taking aim and shooting the lead ball exactly where he was aiming.



Hollywood has always been good at making things look easy, but the truth of the matter is that muzzleloading in the good old days had to be a challenge. To start with, anyone living in the Deep South would've had troubles with the humidity affecting their powder. It wouldn't matter what horn you put it in, the powder would inevitably attract moisture because of its hygroscopic nature.

Those of us who like to dabble in traditional muzzleloaders know how to use different black powder granulations to get the most out of a specific gun. The extra fine FFFG black powder is used for priming, whereas FFG is pretty standard for use in rifles and Fg for use in old muskets. These powders were the norm for years, until we saw the development of the modern in-line muzzleloader. Developed by Tony Knight in the early 1980s, the in-line guns brought with them a resurgence of research and development in all levels of muzzleloading. Round balls were replaced with pistol bullets and plastic sabots, and it

didn't take long for ballistic enthusiasts to figure out that longer, more streamlined bullets provided better accuracy and performance out of front stuffers.

The biggest holdback for years was the limited powder options available for muzzleloaders. But as the modern in-line was being developed, or even before, Hodgdon was working behind the scenes. This major powder supply company introduced Pyrodex, a black powder substitute, to the market in late 1976 and it was quickly embraced by hunters. Initially, only loose powder, offered in Select (S) and Rifle and Shotgun (R + S), was available, but not long after we saw the first pre-formed powder pellets. Pyrodex powders worked well, but ignition problems did occur. The long breech plugs in the early days quickly cooled the spark from caps, and this led Hodgdon to develop an igniter pad on the base of each Pyrodex pellet to help ensure a quick, uniform burn.

Soon after, gun manufacturers made improvements to breech plugs and ig-

nition sources. Musket caps and No. 11 percussion caps were replaced with 209 shotgun primers and the extra heat and energy required ensured positive ignition was easily achieved. Today, we have specialized 209 muzzleloader primers, with optimal temperatures designed to ignite powder without creating extra pressure that might push pellets up the barrel before they ignite. The introduction of the 209 primers in muzzleloading guns was a turning point for propellants and there has been a parade of new powders and products ever since.

In 2001, Hodgdon came out with yet another black powder alternative called Triple Seven. An innovative black powder substitute, it allows guns to be cleaned up with water alone. Additionally, the removal of sulphur from the powder means there is less odour to deal with. But the most exciting part for shooters was the fact that Triple Seven granular powder delivered higher velocity for flatter, more accurate shooting. The pellets were designed to produce approximately the same velocity



Some of the black powder alternatives used in this test.

as Pyrodex pellets (50-grain equivalent), so switching over to the quick cleaning alternative was a natural for many black powder enthusiasts.

Hodgdon pioneered the black powder alternatives and Pyrodex and Triple Seven have withstood the test of time, remaining popular choices to this day. Pyrodex is still a preferred powder for many shooters who zeroed their guns with the product years ago and simply don't want to mess with success. However, what these shooters may want to consider is the load modification, which can be done with loose powder. While pellets have made it easy for hunters to load and go, most have never played with loose powder in their guns to find out which really offers the best performance. It's interesting to note that with some guns, for example, 85 or 90 grains of loose Triple Seven can produce the best accuracy. Even when getting into magnum loads, a shooter will quickly find a measure of powder that will work outstandingly in a specific gun. If you haven't tried 100, 110 and 120-grain loads in your hunting rifle, you could be missing out on greater performance.

Loose powder allows you to tweak loads and create repeatable results with your favourite gun and bullet. Loose powder is also more economical and all that's required for modern muzzleloader enthusiasts to try it is the purchase of a powder measure.

In an effort to see what different powders perform like, I tested them in a modern muzzleloader - a Traditions Pursuit G4 Ultralight, .50 calibre. A 250-grain Hornady bullet and sabot was used for all powders and we cleaned the barrel after each shot. We measured velocity with a chronograph for five different types of powder.

It didn't take long to realize why shooters still gravitate towards Triple Seven pellets, as three of them produced high velocities on the chronograph, averaging close to 2,052 feet per second. Shooting 120 grains of loose Triple Seven (150-grain equivalent) was in the same neighbourhood for speed at 2,020 feet per second. The Pyrodex clocked in at 1,891 feet per second with three 50-grain pellets, and 1,953 feet per second with 150 grains of loose powder. If you are trying a similar test, it's important to remember that Triple Seven powders require 209 primer ignition, whereas Pyrodex can be used with percussion caps or 209 primers.

IMR White Hots have no graphite or sulphur, making them another good op-

tion for easy cleaning at the end of a day's shooting. They too are made in a 50-grain pellet equivalent. As the name suggests, the powder is white, but the 50-grain pellets are compressed and smaller than their competitors. The three pellets proved to be consistent, producing velocities comparable to Triple Seven with chronographed speeds up to 2,300 feet per second.

Blackhorn 209 is a black powder substitute touted to have low residue, with dependable, high energies. It is only available as a loose powder for use in muzzleloaders and black powder cartridges. It should be loaded with up to 120 grains for a load equivalent to 150 grains. On the chronograph it produced speeds close to 2,000 feet per second, with low standard deviations. The powder burned very clean and there was no need to swab the barrel between shots. It will provide a big advantage to anyone who doesn't like cleaning guns after shooting; it is a little more expensive than the first three powders tested and comes in a smaller volume package.

Alliant Powders brought Black MZ to the market in 2012, another black powder substitute designed for hunters, cowboy action shooters and re-enactment aficionados. This powder is extremely moisture resistant and virtually non-corrosive, making it easy to shoot without swabbing your gun between shots, and a breeze to clean up at the end of your hunt or day at the range. After multiple shots, the barrel of our test muzzleloader was cleaned with a simple wet patch followed by a couple of dry ones. Black MZ provided dependable ignition with 209 primers.

A big benefit with this powder is its moisture resistance, guaranteeing dependable ignition in all weather and in humid climates. It burns cleaner than most powders, for less fouling. Some users go as far as to suggest cleaning isn't always necessary, but I don't believe it's worth the risk. This powder produced velocities up to 1,900 feet per second, with a recommended maximum powder charge of 90 grains. Alliant claims the powder burns at lower pressures, is similar to smokeless powder with higher energy, has less fouling and is moisture resistant. This is another black powder substitute with good benefits, reasonable price and is sold in one-pound bottles.

There were no issues or problems with any of the powders and all can be used for hunting or range shooting applications. However, the differences in velocities and clean up varied dramati-



The rifle used in testing black powder substitutes was a Traditions Pursuit G4 Ultralight.

cally and knowing the different qualities of these powders should help any muzzleloading enthusiast pick the best propellant for their needs. The Black MZ and Blackhorn 209 have some definite cleaning advantages and provided more than adequate velocities. They are more expensive, but would be the best option for anyone delinquent about cleaning their front stuffer after use. They are both great options if you live in a humid or moist environment.

Both the Triple Seven and White Hot

pellets were extremely convenient and were relatively easy to clean up after shooting. They are easy to store, produce consistent results and are economically priced. Good old Pyrodex pellets also proved convenient, but took the most cleaning effort of all propellants tested. It is the most economical and remains the standard that everything else is still compared to.

If you are looking for maximum performance, a powder measure should be part of your equipment. With Pyrodex,

Triple Seven, Blackhorn 209 or Black MZ you can fine tune loads to specific guns just like a hand loader does when producing the perfect cartridge. The art of fine tuning loads is quickly disappearing, as many newcomers to muzzle loading only shoot pellets and see no reason to change. But if you're a shooter looking for the best performance from specific guns, powders and bullet combinations, your best friend might be a powder measure, just like Davy Crockett.



Using the right propellant helped the author bag this beautiful buck.



BUYING USED GUNS

A Nine-Point
Inspection Plan

By **Lowell Strauss**

Used firearms are an excellent way to acquire a new hunting gun without paying new price, or to fill that gap in your firearms collection. Savvy gun buyers know what to look for to separate the lemons from the diamonds in the rough.



In most cases, second-hand gun buyers can tell at a glance if a gun is in poor condition or if it's next to new. I suppose a gun could be rough on the outside, yet perfect on the inside; but the chances are if the owner didn't look after the outside, he didn't look after the insides, either. Your best bet for a used gun is one that is mechanically sound, even if it needs a little tender loving care.

Used guns are a lot like used cars - sometimes minor cosmetic fixes or inexpensive accessories can be added to increase their selling price. Buyer beware! Don't be fooled by the gimmicks. I've seen battered old guns mounted with a cheap new scope. The seller was asking more than twice what it was worth, and got it! I've even seen guns painted with flat black paint to hide worn blueing.

Here are some of my hard-earned tips to help you get what you pay for.

Ways to buy a firearm

In person - See and handle the firearm before purchasing it. For me, this is the best option.

Classified ad/Internet website - This is second best. If I'm interested in a firearm from a classified ad, I always ask for photos and follow up with questions.

Blind luck - This is my least favourite way of purchasing a firearm. However, I may still buy sight unseen if I know the person or dealer, or if the price is right for a mechanically sound fixer-up gun.

I have been burned by this too! One time I earmarked a few "fixer-up" guns on a live gun auction. I assumed the condition would be as stated in the auction flyer (first mistake) and asked the auction company to proxy bid for me (second mistake). Picking up my four rifles at the post office, I was dismayed

to see a barrel poking through the shipping box—they were jumbled together in one box with a little crumpled newspaper. On top of it, the rifles were worth less than the box they were packed in (which obviously isn't saying much). Live and learn.

Point 1: Know the price

Want a good deal? Know the price range you should expect to pay. Start with a price guide, like the American Blue Book of Gun Values. Don't worry, there's no need to lug that encyclopedia around to look up the prices. Make notes at home and bring them along, or access the guide through the handy Blue Book (BB) phone app. Be aware that there are some differences between the Canadian and American gun markets. For example, military surplus rifles seem to command higher prices



A re-barrelled rifle. Checking headspace on this rifle before firing would be a good idea.

(an SKS rifle sells for nearly twice the price in the US), while many modern firearms sell for much less. It'll still get you in the ballpark; remember BB prices are in US dollars.

Price should correspond to condition. If the price is better than it should be, there may be some underlying issues with the firearm. It's good to take a closer look.

Before handling any firearm, always open the action and verify that both the chamber and the magazine are empty (remove the magazine if possible). Every time a firearm changes hands, it should be cleared.

The outside of the firearm can tell you a lot about its overall condition.

Point 2: Stock

Are there cracks, deep scratches or a damaged finish? What is the condi-

tion of the recoil pad or butt plate? Does the stock fit properly onto the receiver? Gun oil on the stock softens the wood and a stained stock is a sure sign of too much oil. Check the sling swivels to make sure they're present and tight.

Point 3: Receiver

Are the screws damaged? If so, the gun may be a victim of a home gunsmithing project gone wrong. Are there wear marks on the metal finish? Handling marks are inevitable, but excessive wear may indicate worn internal parts. Check the magazine and latch. If it's a detachable magazine, make sure one comes with the firearm. A missing magazine may cost \$30 to \$200, and that is if you can find one. If not, a repeater is now a single shot.

Point 4: Barrel

There are four main points to a barrel inspection:

Bulges and dents - Feel for barrel imperfections, such as bulge rings, with your fingers. Bulges are often caused by firing a "squib" load - a load with insufficient or no powder that leaves a bullet stuck in the barrel - followed, without clearing the obstruction, by a second full power load. Don't buy a gun with a bulged barrel. Dents on shotgun barrels are caused by impact - something hit the barrel. However, dented shotgun barrels can be repaired with special tools, and so can bent barrel ribs.

Blueing - Barrels that have little original blueing may have seen a lot of use, but not always. I purchased a coveted pre-'64 Winchester 94 with very little original blueing along the

Left:
**Using a bore light
is a good way to
inspect the bore.**

Right:
**Inspect the bolt face
for gas erosion.
Also check the
extractor and ejector.**



sides of the barrel and receiver. But the bore's lands and grooves are nice and crisp, indicating few rounds were fired through it. This rifle was apparently carried in a saddle scabbard, and years of riding in this sheath wore away the blueing.

Sights - Now is a good time to look at the iron sights, if present, and/or any scope mount holes. Though not a deal breaker, sights should be in good working order. If not, this may be a place to negotiate a little on the price - if you know what it will cost to fix the sights. Scope mounting holes should either be plugged with screws or have scope bases installed.

Crown - If the crown is damaged, ac-

curacy will suffer. Re-crowning a barrel is not an expensive job. You may even be able to do this at home with a crown cutter tool, but consider the work in the overall cost of the firearm.

The interior of the gun is where a shrewd buyer needs to pay close attention. Even a well-maintained firearm can have hidden issues that only close inspection will reveal.

Point 5: Action

Ask the firearm seller if you can dry-fire the gun, preferably with a dummy cartridge. If you can, load a dummy round in the chamber. Cock the firearm, engage the safety and pull the trigger. It

should not fire. If it does, there's a problem with the safety. Move the safety to the fire position; dry-fire the gun; cycle the action. If the firearm extracts and ejects the dummy round and feeds a new dummy from the magazine (if the firearm has one), you know everything is working as it should. This is a basic function test.

Inspect for wear - Work the action a few times to get a feel for loose or worn parts. A sticky action may be gummed up with dried lubricants. Most used firearms will have some hardened lube in the action. Not a big deal; the first thing to do with any new firearm (new-to-you, that is) is to detail strip, clean and re-lube before firing.



Bolt - Examine the bolt face for erosion (metal cut away by hot gases leaking around the primer), a sign the firearm has fired a whole lot of rounds.

Firing pin - Without gauges it's not possible to measure things like firing pin protrusion, but eyeballing it will tell you if the pin is broken or looks okay.

Extractor and ejectors - Visually check the extractor(s) for wear and the ejector for proper function (it should have good spring tension) as a confirmation of the function test.

Point 6: Magazine

Feeding tests are easiest with at least two dummy rounds loaded in the magazine. Cycle the action and check for proper feed. Problems feeding are often the fault of the magazine.

Point 7: Chamber

If there are problems in the chamber, you should likely not buy the firearm. If it looks decent, headspace should be measured with headspace gauges, especially if it looks like the firearm has been re-barrelled or if it's an older military surplus rifle. Excessive headspace can be dangerous and the firearm should be repaired before firing. A gunsmith will have the gauges to measure this for you, and repair it if needed.

Point 8: Bore

Looking down the bore is like looking at a gun's medical charts. We can tell the relative number of rounds it has fired, how the bore was maintained (hopefully there's no rust) and even if it was allowed to sufficiently cool down between series of shot strings. Some of this information

can be gleaned by using a \$2 plastic bore light, which can be used with a small flashlight to shine light down the bore. Unfortunately, you will not be able to get more than a basic peek inside with this tool. To really dig deep into the firearm's past, you will need a tool like a Lyman digital borescope to see damaged rifling, barrel pitting or carbon and copper build up. If the bore is heavily fouled, it may be impossible to determine if there is rust pitting under the dirt. A rusted or deeply pitted bore is a signal to walk away.

Point 9: Yourself

What is your gut feeling? Is this the gun for you? Are you willing and able to complete any necessary repairs? Is there room in the gun safe? Is your partner okay with this purchase? (Okay, maybe not that last one...)



A cracked stock.

There are a few special things to consider with different firearm types.

Rifles

Closely inspect military surplus rifles that may have shot surplus ammunition loaded with corrosive primers. If these firearms are not cleaned shortly after shooting, the chemicals from the primers will promote corrosion (rust) on the insides of the firearm, including the bore, bolt and anything else it contacts. If you see rust in a firearm, put it down and walk away!

Purchasing a used AR-15 is like buying a used sports car or 4x4 truck. Most people who own one will test its capabilities - high volume firing with short cool-downs that will shorten barrel life. There are deals to be had, but with ARs (and most firearms for that matter) you might ask the question, "Why are you selling this?" If you feel the answer is legitimate, and the firearm looks in otherwise good condition, it may be a sound investment.

Shotguns

Older shotguns were not designed to shoot steel shot. This is due to the type of steel used in the barrel, which is softer than modern barrels, and the typical fixed full choke that is not compatible with large steel shot

sizes. If steel shot has been used in these old guns without modifying the choke, a bulge ring will often form where the choke constriction starts. These guns will have little chance of patterning properly. You may also see longitudinal grooves in the barrel where the hard steel shot has marred the softer steel of the shotgun barrel. If the choke has been reamed out to accommodate steel, the new choke should be stamped on the barrel by the gunsmith who did the work. But if you want to use an older shotgun where non-toxic shot is required, bismuth shotshells are an option.

Final thoughts

If you buy and sell firearms, you will find good deals and you'll also buy the occasional dud. By knowing the approximate prices and what to look for, you should be able to stay away from most of the lemons. You still may end up purchasing a firearm even if it doesn't score perfect on your checklist. In that case, the price should make up for the low score. After you purchase, if there are any safety concerns have it inspected by a gunsmith.

If you love guns, buying and selling can be a lot of fun. So go out there and find a good deal!



Italian Military Rifles

Part 2

The 7.35 Carcano

By Bob Shell



The 7.35 Carcano

The 7.35 Carcano was brought out in 1938 to replace the 6.5 Carcano. The thought at the time was that the larger 6.5-millimetre bullet was needed for more power. At the time, the Japanese military also replaced their 6.5mm with a larger calibre, using a larger case and a heavier bullet. In the Italians' case, I just don't see an advantage. The 6.5mm shoots a 162-grain bullet at 2,200 to 2,300 feet per second while the 7.35mm shoots a 128-grain bullet at about 2,400 feet per second. The 128-grain doesn't have near the sectional density of the 162-grain, so given equal conditions the 162-grain slug should penetrate deeper than the 7.35mm, a desirable feature in a military round. However, the core of the 7.35mm is partly aluminum, which causes the bullet to tumble. This will cause a more severe wound and is why they adopted the 7.35mm. It may have been copied from the 303 British round.

Two versions of the Model 38 were brought out. The folding bayonet model has a 17.1-inch barrel, while the short rifle has a 21.1-inch barrel with a detachable bayonet. They are both relatively short and handy to carry and use. In any event, the timing was bad as Italy was getting involved in the Second World War, so they stuck with the 6.5 for supply reasons. But keep in mind the 6.5mm came out in 1891, so there was a lot of ammunition around, as well as rifles. Some 7.35mm rifles were re-barreled to the 6.5mm chambering. The Finns, however, used the 7.35mm against Russia, but didn't like it because the rear sight wasn't adjustable and the ammunition was hard to get. Like many military rifles of the period, they generally shot high. For civilian use, a three-corner file may resolve that issue.



A look at the action, both simple and rugged.

Some Carcanos were chambered for the 8X57mm Mauser and used in Africa by the Nazis. Evidently, 8mm Mauser ammunition was easier to obtain, to such a degree that they felt it was to their advantage to use the more common 8mm round. They were used in the African campaigns, but it wasn't their main weapon. Since the 8mm Mauser round is loaded to a higher pressure than the Carcano, perhaps the action isn't so weak after all. In fact, it was tested with German proof rounds, which reach 73,500 PSI, and the action held up. In addition, P.O. Ackley had a difficult time blowing up a Carcano action - so much for the weak action theory.

The bolt face must be slightly modified to handle the larger diameter 8mm round. I have shot mine with okay results and, like the 7.35mm, if you load it single shot, the bolt has to be removed and a cartridge snapped in and reinserted. A little playing around can delete the step of removing the bolt, but it is still slow. The clip is a modified 6.5mm Carcano and hard to find.

There were about 50,000 Carcanos produced in 8 mm.

Getting ammunition for the 7.35 Carcano is possible, but unless you handload, it can be a challenge. Military ammunition is drying up and isn't always reliable. Norma made ammunition for the 7.35 Carcano for years but, as far as I know, quit a few years ago. I checked Norma's website, as well as Sellier & Belliot, and neither makes ammunition for the 7.35 Carcano. Occasionally some can still be found, but it generally runs

at least \$40 for a box of 20. Years ago, there was a company that full-length swaged 308 Winchester cases down to the 7.35mm case diameter. It worked okay, but it was a lot thicker than normal brass so loads had to be backed off about 10 per cent. If you don't handload, custom ammunition makers are available to make it.

For handloaders, bullets can be a problem, as they need to measure .298-.300 inches in diameter - a unique size. Fortunately, Hornady makes 125-grain soft points and reloading dies are available from the big die makers, such as RCBS and Lee. Brass is easy enough, just get some 6.5mm Mannlicher Schoenauer cases, expand the neck, size as normal and trim to length. In addition, you can neck-up the 6.5mm Carcano and load normally. To neck-up, I use a taper die from RCBS as the necks turn out straighter that way.

The bullets I have been able to find weigh from 125 to 150 grains, when they are available. The outfit I originally bought some from closed their doors, so I was out of luck for this project. I decided to invest in the equipment to make my own, and thus avoid being at the mercy of someone else. Corbin bullet making equipment was used in making most of the bullets. C H Tool & Die provided the cannellure tool. Keep in mind that almost any type of equipment can be bought, but non-standard dies cost a lot more. Since I like to make a rifle as flexible as possible, making my bullets helps a lot. Also, using your own bullets adds another dimension to handloading,

as there is a satisfaction factor in making and using your own bullets. Making the .298-inch diameter bullets wasn't as hard as I thought. While I can make any weight I want, anything heavier than a 180 is not practical. Swaging down .308-inch jacketed bullets is another option, but muscle power is needed, especially with heavier bullets. Sometimes it is so hard that the jacket will flow backwards, which will ruin the bullet. In the end, you are better off buying Hornady or other commercial bullets, if available. Cast bullets are always an option too. Do not use .308-inch diameter bullets, as they can cause excessive pressure. In many cases, they won't chamber.

What can the ammunition be used for? In power, it's on the low side, similar to the 300 Savage, which makes it viable for deer and smaller bear. Beyond 100 yards, it would certainly be better than a 30-30 Win. or some other similar rounds, since pointed bullets are available. One of the customers I load for uses a 150-grain for Minnesota whitetails. He shoots, they fall. He has taken several out to about 150 yards. Of course, his rifle has been scoped and accuracy at 100 yards is one to one-and-a-half inches for three shots, which is more than enough for a deer rifle at normal ranges. A scope requires a side mount, because the rifle loads from the top with a stripper clip.

With lighter bullets, I think it would make a decent varmint round. Bullets could be 100 or 110 grains if desired for that purpose. Cast bullets may be used for small game, which one wants to eat.



Top view of a 7.35 action.

If you manage to get a scope on one, it should make a decent 200-yard deer gun. Like most guns, it will out shoot its owner given it's in good shape and good ammunition is used. Twist is one-in-10 inches so it can stabilize 180-grain bullets if desired.

I have a bunch of military ammunition and used some during the shooting test. The ammunition loaded with brass coloured bullets worked perfectly, in spite of the fact they were made in 1939. Some silver bullets made at the same time would not fire. Go figure. The 1939 military load worked consistently, which is impressive since it was made 76 years ago. The extruded powder looks similar to 4895. IMR has introduced some new powders that are not supposed to be temperature sensitive and reduces copper fouling. The tests that I have done so far indicate one of them, IMR 4166, is going to be a great powder for military rounds with similar capacities as the 7.35mm Italian Carcano.

Accuracy was good with most loads listed in the attached table. I tried others, but these were the best and most representative. The 50-yard groups averaged between one-and-a-half and two-and-a-half inches, depending on load. The groups were round and I have no doubt a scope could shrink the groups a lot. The groups compare favourably to other iron-sighted military rifles, which I have shot. Probably a younger shooter with better eyes can do better. I feel that at 100 yards, a scope sighted gun could put three shots into an inch with a good load. While the

sights are crude, once you get used to them, they are functional out to 100 yards or so. The trigger is typical military and has some travel, but let off is consistent and I don't find it a problem.

If you want an idea as to what the useful range is, here are a few figures. For example, a 150-grain bullet at a muzzle velocity of 2,500 feet per second

would have 1,916 foot-pounds of energy at the muzzle. At 400 yards, that would be 1,791 feet per second, while yielding 1,024 foot-pounds of energy. In theory, using the 1,000 foot-pounds of terminal energy principle would make this a 400-yard deer gun. In practice, if sighted in at 200 yards, it will drop approximately 10 inches at 300 yards, while at 400 the

LOADING DATA FOR THE 7.35MM CARCANO

Bullet	Load	Velocity in feet per second
115-grain cast	Eight grains of Alliant Unique	1,537
122-grain FMJ	Military load, circa 1939	2,549
122-grain military	39 grains of IMR 4166	2,453
125-grain soft point	Eight grains of Alliant Unique	1,293
125-grain soft point	37 grains of H322	2,770 ***
140-grain spitzer	39 grains of IMR 4895	2,465 **
150-grain spitzer	40 grains of WW 760	2,201
150-grain spitzer	38 grains of IMR 4895	2,569 *
165-grain cast	Seven grains of Alliant Unique	1,281
170-grain soft point	41 grains of WW 760	2,257 ***
180-grain soft point	40 grains of WW 760	2,218

*most accurate, ** second most accurate, *** third most accurate

FMJ: full metal jacketed bullet

Temperatures were between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit, barrel length is 21 inches, seven shots were fired through the chronograph to obtain velocity, and the start screen was 10 feet from the muzzle. Brass was either Hornady 6.5 Carcano necked up or 6.5X54mm Mannlicher Schoenauer shortened and necked up. Both cases worked fine. I used Winchester primers in all loads. Case life was good; many were fired several times with no sign of stretching or bulging. Primers always fit tight with no sign of looseness, which indicated these loads are not too hot for the gun or brass. As always, approach top loads with caution and start two or three grains of powder below listed loads.

bullet would drop about 30 inches. With that in mind, I would consider it a 300-yard gun if it had good sights or a scope.

At gunshows, sporterized Carcanos are fairly common. The bad news is they have no value as a collector item, as once you cut something it loses its collector appeal. On the good side, they are inexpensive, so anyone can afford one. Once cut down, they are light, handy and easy to carry. The action is simple and rugged and there is seldom a problem. The main issue for most people is the safety, which is difficult to use. For various reasons, this isn't an easy gun to customize but as is, it will do well in the woods.

Would you throw away the rest of your rifles and get one of these? Of course not! If you have a 300 Savage, use it. However, if you like oddball hunting rifles that work, this is a viable option. It's light and handy and a lot of fun to shoot. Would I take it hunting? Under the proper circumstances, I would. I have shot my rifle quite a bit and had no feeding or other mechanical problems. There were no misfires with good ammunition. Recoil isn't bad, either. I have been told that the Carcano rifles are junk. I don't think that's necessarily true. Instead, I have gained a lot of respect for it.



Pulled military round.

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Mossberg Patriot Rifle REVIEW

By Al Voth

In recent years, budget-priced rifles have been one of the strongest selling segments of the hunting rifle market. Therefore, every major rifle manufacturer has made a serious effort to have something in their line-up that falls into that niche. Mossberg is no exception, and in January of this year announced their newest version of a budget rifle at the Las Vegas SHOT Show. It's called the Patriot and is Mossberg's competition to Ruger's American, Remington's 783 and Savage's Axis.





Top:
The bolt body is fluted, and the two lug bolt head floats.

Bottom:
A safety lever occupies the space to the right of the bolt's cocking piece, while the bolt release sits on the left.



The barrel's fluting helps reduce weight to a small degree, but is largely cosmetic.

Like most people, my first look at the Patriot came at the SHOT Show and the quick examination I had there left me impressed. The Mossberg booth was displaying a version of the rifle with a walnut stock and I quickly formed the opinion that it was the best looking budget rifle on the market. That moved it high up on the list of rifles I wanted to test and it didn't take long to arrange for a loaner rifle.

The Patriot is available in a number of configurations and I was disappointed when I didn't get a model with a walnut stock to test. My test gun, as you can see in the photos, is a version with a black synthetic stock, but it did come complete with a mounted scope.

Specifications

At the first opportunity to spend some quality time with the rifle, I followed my usual procedure of taking the rifle apart and examining its internals, while doing some necessary measuring. Struck by the light weight of the gun, I put it on an accurate scale and found

that unloaded, with the supplied scope, it weighs in at six pounds and 10.5 ounces. I measured the barrel at a hair over 22 inches and the overall length at 42-and-a-quarter inches. Inside the barrel, I found six groove rifling, twisting in a clockwise direction at 1/10 inches. A detailed examination with a borescope showed some reamer marks, but nothing unusual for a factory grade, button-rifled barrel.

The overall finish of the metal is a utilitarian black matte, as you'd expect on a value-priced rifle. An unexpected feature on a rifle with this price point is straight fluting along the forward half of the barrel and spiral fluting along the entire length of the bolt's body. Scope mounting is accomplished with conventional Weaver-style bases screwed to the top of the receiver. And the scope that forms part of the rifle package is a Vortex Crossfire II, 3-9X40mm, equipped with their BDC reticle.

The stock is injection moulded plastic, with the trigger guard being an integral part of that moulding. The sling

swivel studs are metal and appear to be screwed into the structure of the stock. Like the injection moulded stocks on every other rifle of this price point, I found this one has a fair amount of flex in the forend. But the barrel/stock gap is sufficient that even with the rifle resting on sandbags there is no contact between the barrel and the forend.

At the other end of the rifle's metal, a simple safety lever blocks the trigger when on safe but does not lock the bolt in a closed position. A lever opposite the safety serves as a bolt release. Both are generously sized, intuitive and easy to operate. The trigger is reported to be adjustable from two to seven pounds, and while I didn't check its adjustment range, I did measure the as-received pull weight at two-and-three-quarter pounds, with a narrow variance and only the smallest amount of creep. Overall, it's an excellent trigger for a rifle of this price.

Looking deeper into the action area, I found a detachable synthetic magazine, capable of holding five rounds of



Of the five ammunition types tested, the Patriot shot its best with Winchester Super-X, 150-grain loads.

308 Winchester ammunition. The magazine is capable of taking cartridges with a maximum length of 2.85 inches. This is sufficient magazine length for every kind of factory ammunition I had on hand. But when tested with 168-grain A-Max bullets, handloads with those sharply pointed, polymer-tipped bullets seated long enough to touch the lands, were too long to work in the magazine. Using handloads with more rounded bullets, like the Speer 150-grain soft point I checked, the bullet could be made to both touch the lands and function through the magazine.

This is a push-feed action, which is available in both long and short versions depending on which of the 11 avail-

able calibres the rifle is chambered for. The barrel is attached to the receiver with a nut system, but it's done unobtrusively and as well executed as any similar system I've ever seen. The recoil lug is sandwiched between this nut and the front face of the action, and it's all bedded into the polymer stock. There are no pillars or metal bedding blocks in the Patriot system and this is the only area which gives me some concern. Tightening the front action screw produced a solid feel once the action bottomed out on the stock and the screw snugged up. However, the rear screw tightened up with a mushy softness and I couldn't shake the feeling that something was going to break if I brought

it up to a "normal" tightness. So, I left it set at 30 inch/pounds of torque and went shooting.

Shooting

A look through my ammunition collection produced five factory loads of 308 Winchester. After getting the rifle shooting close to point of aim at 100 metres, I started shooting for group. I gave the rifle a basic cleaning after every 10 rounds and the results for both velocity and accuracy are listed in the attached table.

Like every other gun I've ever tested, there are specific loads that this rifle appears to like and others that it just doesn't get along with. It's no surprise

MOSSBERG PATRIOT RIFLE - 308 Winchester Accuracy Testing AMMUNITION

AMMUNITION	VELOCITY	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	AVERAGE
Federal American Eagle, 150-grain FMJ	2,870 feet per second	3.37 inches	2.42 inches	2.90 inches
Federal Match 168-grain HPBT	2,659 feet per second	1.50 inches	0.98 inches	1.24 inches
Winchester Super-X 150-grain Soft Point	2,785 feet per second	1.82 inches	1.57 inches	1.70 inches
Winchester Match 168-grain HPBT	2,715 feet per second	2.60 inches	2.33 inches	1.47 inches
Winchester Ballistic Silvertip, 168 grains	2,696 feet per second	2.25 inches	2.00 inches	2.13 inches

-Velocity is average of five shots, measured 10 feet in front of muzzle

-Groups are five shots at 100 metres.

that the most accurate ammunition proved to be one of the match loadings. The most accurate hunting load was a surprise, however, as that is one of Winchester's lowest priced hunting options in this calibre. That's actually a convenient circumstance, because anyone buying a budget-priced rifle likely won't be running premium ammunition through it. A low-cost gun that shoots well with low-cost ammunition is the perfect pairing.

Aside from raw accuracy, I found the rifle to feed smoothly from the magazine whether working the bolt quickly or slowly. The magazine latched securely and stayed where it belonged. Dropping a single round into the open action and closing the bolt, also resulted in smooth feeding, with no secondary manipulation required to get one lone cartridge into the chamber. The trigger proved solid and repeatable, while the recoil pad effectively soaked up the 60 rounds I fired from the bench. Although I shot in shirtsleeves and recoil from the sub-seven pound gun was snappy, the gun left no marks or discomfort.

As an aside, the Vortex scope supplied with rifle/scope package worked well and, through the limited shooting I did, there were no issues with tracking or holding zero. This optic comes from Vortex's lowest priced line, so, like the rifle, keep that in mind when judging overall quality. You still get what you pay for, but one of the things you do get with Vortex optics is their lifetime repair or replacement warranty, even with the Crossfire II line.

During the time spent cleaning, I watched for signs of copper fouling appearing on the white patches. Traces of blue did show up, but it was never excessive and back in my shop when I did a thorough cleaning and inspection with a bore scope, there was no sign of excessive copper fouling. That's a valuable trait in any rifle, and while the next gun off the production line might be bad at collecting copper fouling, my test gun wasn't. It's a characteristic that certainly factors into whether I consider a rifle to be a keeper or not.

Conclusions

It would be incorrect to evaluate the Mossberg Patriot without taking into account its low price point. And taken from the perspective of what you can get for a few hundred Canadian loonies, I like almost everything about this rifle. The sole exception is the bedding contact area where the rearmost action screw mates the rifle into the stock. That screw doesn't tighten down solidly and the flexing I feel tells me this screw shouldn't be tightened beyond 25 to 30 inch pounds. Other than that, I have to conclude the Mossberg Patriot is a rifle worth considering if you're in the market for a low-priced rifle this hunting season.

As I write this, my local Cabela's has the same gun I tested, sitting on the shelf and wearing a \$549.99 price tag

- which includes the scope. If the Canadian dollar wasn't in such dismal shape, I have no doubt it would be priced under that magic \$500 mark. The walnut stock model is also available with a price that's \$20 cheaper. The reason is the no-name scope attached to it.

I'm not smart enough to figure out why they'd put the cheaper scope on the nicer rifle, but I guess there's a marketing genius somewhere who knows the reason. If I was buying this rifle, I'd certainly grab the walnut stock, as it should be stiffer and thus have more accuracy potential than the synthetic model. With a gun that nice, it'd be worth selling off the no-name scope and upgrading to something better. Find some ammunition it likes and you'll have a nice hunting rifle at a reasonable price.

Cleaning the Mossberg Patriot at the range gave me the opportunity to try a new field cleaning kit from Pro-Shot. It's part of what they call their Special Ops Series and it's intended to provide all the essential cleaning tools for a rifle in one field-ready case. Obviously, I used the .30 calibre kit, finding it to be a better cleaning choice than the pull-through systems I've used before. Mind you, those cord systems are more compact. So, if size and weight are the key considerations for your hunt, that's the way to go; otherwise, do yourself and your gun a favour and use a rod.

This kit uses a high quality segmented rod and provides all the pieces you see in the attached photo. There isn't enough solvent to do a lot of cleaning, but there never is in any of these field kits. Ditto for patches. Those are the items you need to keep replenishing.

The Pro-Shot Special Ops Kit is available in .30 and .22-calibre models, as well as various multi-calibre versions. The one I used on the Patriot is widely available in Canada, priced at around \$60.





A photograph of a rifle with a scope mounted on a tripod, positioned in a snowy, wooded area. The rifle is the central focus, with its scope and barrel clearly visible. The background shows a dense forest of bare trees under a bright sky, suggesting a winter or early spring setting. The overall scene is serene and focused on the equipment used for hunting.

Optics For Hunters

Choosing Your Sport Optics

By Edward Osborne

Fall is here, and with it comes the early mornings of hot coffee, cold air and the excitement of the hunt.

The standard issue human eyeball is your primary guide on that hunt, but sometimes it can use a little extra help. A good suite of observation devices will help you fill your freezer and any hunting trip should involve a binocular and a riflescope. However, a full ensemble also draws on the extended range of a spotting scope and the distance determination of a rangefinder.

Two key variables apply to every sporting optic under the sun: the size of objective lens on the front of the optic, and the power of magnification produced by the prisms inside. These variables are a sliding scale of pros and cons. The bigger your objective lens, the brighter and clearer your image, but the weight of your optic increases with it. Lower magnification has longer eye relief and is faster to get on target, but has less detail. The highest magnification might bring you nose-to-nose with your target, but will also be the most unstable and difficult to look through.

Those two variables can be found on the box and body of any optic you might buy. You'll perhaps see them written out as 8x42, meaning an eight power prism with a 42-millimetre lens on the front. If the optic has a variable power that you can adjust, you'll see the lowest magnification and highest magnification listed, as in a 4-16x56 scope.

There's a secret third variable for optics, one that can fall victim to pseudo-science and marketing jargon - glass quality. Glass coatings, cutting, polishing and origins can all play into a qualitative judgment of "better glass." Here's the good news: when it's you buying the optic, your eyeball is the final judge of what is sharper, clearer or brighter. It's a subjective experience, so if you like the warm hue of Leica glass, or prefer the green tint of Swarovski, there's no wrong answer. But almost any eye will see that a \$25 pair of gas-station binoculars won't stand up to a \$500 set. Between particular brands or models, it's up to you to decide what you like and what feels right.

Higher quality glass always costs more, but you can use it to tilt the scales on the other variables. For example, let's say I want a sharp pair of binoculars, but don't want to carry the hefty weight of 50-millimetre lenses. By purchasing a high end 10x25 Zeiss Victory, I can get the sharp glass and 10x magnification in a small, light package. But there's a price tag associated with that. Conversely, let's say I need a spotting scope but can't afford the dream unit this year. Working with a budget, I pick out a Bushnell 15-45x60 millimetre scope. By going for a lower mirror and higher objective, I can compensate for lower quality glass.

The triangle balance of lens size, power and quality can be applied to every optical device on the shelf of your local gun shop, but each of our four devices have extra variables that can influence your decision. Let's start with the most used piece of glass hanging around your neck - your binoculars.

Binoculars serve an important safety purpose by allowing you to inspect a potential target before pointing your rifle at it. But they're also a lighter, more comfortable way to glass distant objects and scan. A properly tuned binocular will give you the eagle vision to spot and identify things well outside your natural viewing range. Because you're using both eyes, a binocular is the most comfortable optic to use for long periods of time. This makes them the workhorse of your hunting trip. But remember, the higher your magnification, the less stable your image. It's an easy temptation to go for the highest power available, but that extra reach will also magnify the motions of your

body and make it hard to observe your target. With binoculars, the most popular powers are 8x and 10x, usually with a 42-millimetre or 50-millimetre lens.

But what if you need to see further? For the long-range requirements of an elk or sheep hunter, a quality spotting scope is a great tool to have available. Spotting scopes have magnification well above binoculars or riflescopes, and are designed to be rested on a pack or mounted on a tripod. A decent spotting scope will allow you to adjust your magnification from 30x to a whopping 60x. When you start looking at targets that are kilometres away, a spotting scope is your best friend. Or when you need the sharpest detail possible to count tines, or measure the curl of a horn, a spotting scope brings you in close for inspection.

There is one more variable when picking out a spotting scope, which is determined by your hunting situation. Most major models of spotters are available in either an angled or straight configuration. With angled, the eyepiece exits the body at 45 degrees, and can often be swiveled to face up, sideways or down in a periscope style configuration. A straight scope lives up to its name with the eyepiece in line with the objective lens. If you're spotting from a hill or glassing for long periods of time, an angled scope can be much more comfortable. But if you're scope is mounted on the window of a vehicle, or you're free-handing the optic, straight is a much simpler configuration. Try both, and think about what kind of hunting will require your highest magnification.

Once you've spotted an animal and

verified it's the one you want to take home with you, you're almost ready to take the shot. But first you need to know your distance. Whenever I'm outdoors, I play a game with all kinds of people called, "How far is that?" Hunting buddies, enlisted soldiers and my reluctant girlfriend are all subjected to guesses and wagers regarding different landmarks. It's amazing how far off we can all be at estimating specific distances. Even with years of experience or formal training, it's not uncommon for the basic eyeball to be off by 100 metres or more.

The laser rangefinder removes the guessing component from your target and puts hard numbers in your hands. While the previous optics are all about finding and identifying targets, the rangefinder is what turns a miss into a hit. The most important variable with a rangefinder is always how far the laser will ping back. As a general rule, manufacturers over-estimate their unit's ability. They are measuring under controlled test conditions to a reflective target, while you're out in the field ranging a fuzzy brown patch hiding amongst other fuzzy brown patches. As a general rule, assume 50 to 75 per cent effectiveness of the manufacturer's listed capability. So that 1,000-yard rangefinder might be most useful at 600 yards.

Most modern rangefinders allow the user to switch between metres or yards, but the more important variables are angle compensation and illumination. Illumination is a simple one: do you like your range readout in black LCD or lit up with a red LED? The angle compensation gets a little more technical.



The magnifying range of a spotting scope far exceeds binoculars or riflescopes. This Vortex Razor HD uses an 80-millimetre lens and magnifies your subject anywhere from 30x to 60x.

Quick physics lesson: you're at the bottom of a hill, and halfway up the hill above you is a bull elk. You get into a supported position, and aim way up. Your rangefinder tells you that the path of the bullet will be 450 yards. But the steepness means that you should hold for the 400-yard mark. Gravity is pushing straight down, not at the angle of the ground, so your bullet will only experience 400 yards worth of drop. This works the same way whether you're shooting uphill or downhill. If you're a prairie shooter, or in the dense backwoods of Ontario, this isn't going to make a difference to you. But if you spend time hunting in mountains or tree stands, the compensation of an inclinometer is something to consider.

The final major optic isn't in your pack, but the one on your rifle. Sure, you learned to shoot on irons and they're still a valid aiming solution. You might be able to hit the target at 200 yards with irons, but are you putting that round a particular zone? If you're like me, a riflescope is a key part of not just aiming at your animal, but also making sure you're placing the shot into that vital area for a clean kill.

The traditional do-it-all scope is a 3-9x40. It's the sort of scope that will work well enough whether you're hunting bears in the dense BC bush or chasing antelope out on the rolling prairie.

Improvements in technology in the past few years, though, have opened the door to more options. I like the wider range of magnification from a 2.5-10x44, and lots of magnum calibre shooters are moving up to scopes with 4-16x or even 6-24x power inside.

There are plenty of extra variables in riflescopes. What style of reticle do you want? Should it be illuminated too? Do you need exposed turrets to adjust your elevation, or will you hold over your target? One key choice is between a one-inch or 30-millimetre diameter scope tube. In earlier times, most scopes were one inch, but now the larger 30-millimetre tubes are available from almost every manufacturer. Contrary to what your gut might tell you, there is no difference in brightness or image clarity between these two. A 30-millimetre scope tube has more space for the crosshair to move, and as a result has more elevation and windage adjustment. A one-inch tube has less, but is also lighter and more affordable.

Those are the four key optics that make a successful hunt - your binocular, spotter, rangefinder and rifle scope.

When judging any optic, say picking one to buy, there are a few things you can do to get a feel for how it will perform in the field. First off, look far away! You won't likely be taking deer at 12

yards, so find a distant target with some detail to look at.

Second, spend some time with each optic. Especially when comparing brightness or colour, look through your given unit for at least 30 seconds before switching to an alternative. This will make differences between the glasses more apparent, and give you a better idea for how you'll actually use the binoculars. When picking a spotting scope, I would sit for a full 10 minutes with each scope before moving on to the next.

And third, try to simulate conditions. If you can, go in the evening and spend some time outside in low light. Try looking from an area of bright light into deep shadow. Use a parking lot on a hot day to see how the mirage effect manifests in different glass.

The final thing to keep in mind is that optics work on a rule of diminishing returns. So a \$300 binocular will be a huge improvement over a \$50 set, but maybe only a step down from a \$600 unit. By the time you're comparing \$1,200 and \$2,700 binoculars, there's only a minor improvement for a lot more money, but you'll likely get the sharpest glass in the world.

In the end, you'll have to judge what looks best to you and how many dollars you want to spend for that improvement over what the naked eye can see.



Used together, optics layer their capabilities to cover any situation. After spotting with binoculars, confirming with a spotting scope and ranging with a laser rangefinder, we're ready to take the shot.



Team NFA

Patrick Haynes, National Pistol Coach and SFC VP-High Performance

2015 Pan Am Games Shooting Performance

This summer, Canada hosted the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games, between July 10 and July 26, in the Greater Toronto Area. The first Pan Am Games in 1951 had 2,513 participants from 14 countries, hosted in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This year's Games were the largest by far, with an expected 6,132 athletes from 42 countries. Team Canada had a record 719 athletes, making it the largest team Canada has sent to any international multi-sport Games, including the Olympics and Commonwealth Games.

Of special interest to the NFA mem-

bers, Canada participated in 14 of the 15 Olympic shooting events, with a team of 24 athletes and eight support staff members. Shooting demonstrated longevity within our sport, claiming Canada's oldest female athlete (Susan Natrass, 64) and the youngest male athletes (David Mylnikov and Kabir Dhillon, both 17). As well, shooting had one of two father/son combos (Paul and Drew Shaw). All of these athletes came from the shotgun disciplines.

Unlike most previous Pan Am or Commonwealth Games held in Canada,

Sport Canada decided that the shooting facilities would remain in place, as a legacy of the Games. Initially, there was some confusion as to where the site would be built. At one point, it looked like it would be built at Canadian Forces Base Camp Borden, near Barrie, Ont. Eventually, the Toronto International Traps and Skeet Club (Cookstown, Ont.) was chosen as the home. Existing trap and skeet facilities were expanded and a new hybrid 25/50-metre range was built with a 10-metre air rifle/pistol range in the second story, above the firing points.



Lea Wachowich, of Alberta, practices the women's 25-metre pistol at the Pan Am Games. Lea made it into the finals and placed strongly in fourth.

Each small bore position boasts an electronic target, which hears where the projectile breeches the target face and, by acoustic triangulation, locates and scores each shot. The placement and value of each shot is recorded and displayed at each firing point for the athletes, and centrally for the officials. The trap machines were upgraded to new Laporte systems, as well. At last calculation, the facility had a \$6.2 million price tag attached to it, with some additional renovations required by the CFO to allow it to open as a general membership club. Going forward, this site will act as a National High Performance Training Centre and will host national and international shooting events.

As mentioned in the last issue, the Shooting Federation of Canada started planning for the Pan Am Games last year, from the Championships of the Americas in Guadalajara, Mexico. Additional funding from sponsors, such as the NFA and Sport Canada, allowed us to bring in support staff and hold training camps, making sure our athletes were preparing themselves as best they could.

Our plan was to hold a final training camp at the Pan Am Shooting Facility one month prior to the Games. Unfortunately, the site was still under construction and we had to find alternate locations to prepare. I want to thank two clubs that stepped forward and gave us crucial assistance: the Aurora Gun Club (indoor 25-metre facility, for 10-metre air rifle and pistol practice) and the Sharon Gun Club (outdoor 25/50-metre range, for small bore rifle and pistol practice). The executives of these clubs graciously offered their support and their members were very patient as we took over their facilities for four days. Suffice it to say, the help paid off. Canada's shooting team took three gold medals and one bronze, making this the best Pan Am Games in the last five quadrennials.

Our first and third shooting gold medals went to Lynda Kiejko, 34, of



Linda Kiejko (far right) displays her gold medal from the women's 10-metre pistol, with coach Lisa Borgerson and two fans from the Sharon Gun Club.

Calgary, Alta. First, she took gold in women's 10-metre (air) pistol, defeating Mexico and El Salvador. Then, a few days later, Lynda won the women's 25-metre (sport) pistol event, pushing out the US and Mexico. Our second gold medal was in women's trap, secured by Amanda Chudoba, 25, also from Alberta, in Edmonton. Amanda outshot both Americans, who came in second and third. Our fourth and last medal, bronze in men's 50-metre prone, was taken by Michel Dion, who resides in New York state.

While medals are very important, qualifying athletes for the upcoming Olympic Games is a primary goal of every nation at the Pan Am Games. While we won three gold medals, we only obtained two Olympic quotas: one by Kiejko and another by Chudoba. The international rules state that one athlete can only win one quota for his or her nation. Lynda earned a quota for Canada on the first medal (women's 10-metre pistol) and then became ineligible for another when she won the women's 25-metre pistol event. In that case, the Olympic berth fell to Sandra Uptagrafft of the US.

Of special note, Canada has estab-

lished its strength in women's 10-metre (air) pistol. Since 1999, Canadian women have won four gold medals (Kim Eagles, 1999; Avianna Chao, 2007; Dorothy Ludwig (Lynda Kiejko's sister), 2011; Lynda Kiejko, 2015) and a bronze (Lynda Kiejko, 2003).

So where does the team go now? We have approximately 12 months to select and prepare two athletes for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics, in women's 10-metre pistol and women's trap. The remaining members of the team essentially will hit their reset buttons and start building towards the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. As Canada's Olympic sport governing body for shooting, our goal is to support them in their preparation and development. I hope that as members of the NFA, and the shooting community in general, if you see someone at the range wearing Team Canada gear, take the time to get to know what they are doing. You'll hear about commitment, discipline and national pride, and how shooting best exemplifies those attributes. If you are interested, give thought to becoming an Olympic shooter for Canada. The opportunities have never been better.



Politics & Guns

Bruce Gold

Dishonest Policies Require Spin

When one looks at the wide world of government policy, it becomes clear that some policies are much better supported by evidence than others. If the policy's makers have a hidden agenda, or their main intent is posturing instead of solutions, they cannot make an honest admission of their true purpose. The facts will not serve either. Instead, they must rely on twisting facts into half-truths and misnaming. Emotion must be stoked as much as possible to prevent rational analysis of the facts. Demonizing opponents and energetic efforts to silence contrary views becomes rampant, as a fantasy story is woven to make it all seem believable. The anti-gun agenda uses all of these methods to evade a realistic pro and con analysis. Guns are demonized as the source of evil, gun owners are demonized as deviant, selfish and in need of the closest bureaucratic supervision. Next steps in the incremental process of total elimination of firearms are tied to sensational crimes for maximum emotional support. Whether the proposed regulation will have any effect on the crime they are supposedly addressing is not something worth answering. Let's look at two "scientific studies" where these methods are used to disguise a polemic as objective science in support of the anti-gun agenda.

The weapons' effect

This is a very influential theory that brings into question human responsibility and rationality. People, so it goes, are easily influenced, unable to exercise self-control and ultimately not responsible for their actions. The primary source of this theory is an article, *Weapons as Aggression-Eliciting Stimuli*, published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. In this experiment, a small number of University of Wisconsin students were divided into pairs and gave each other electric shocks based on their performance of a set task. Only

one student was being tested while the other was secretly part of the staff. The idea was that when their turn came to be the taskmaster, the shocks the students administered would be an accurate measure of their inclination to violence. The experiment was performed with a gun being present in the room and without a gun being present. The researchers observed that the shocks increased when a gun was present and concluded that the presence of a firearm stimulated violence, hence the "weapons effect." The researchers believed this was caused by physiological or symbolic ideas attaching themselves to inanimate objects, which would then influence and control human behaviour. Many of our current gun laws are based on this theory and it underlies the endless claims of more guns equals more violence. This "scientific proof" was soon being quoted as a justification for regulation, restrictions and gun banning. It also proved useful to politicians and police looking for a quick, easy way to reduce crime and an even quicker, easier way to avoid responsibility for failing to reduce crime.

Problems

The study group was small, composed entirely of university students willing to do on-campus experiments. This narrow sample was then extrapolated to a general statement about human behaviour.

Causation was simply assumed to be a psychological or symbolic event. Alternatives, such as students simply becoming bolder as they became more familiar with the experiment, were never considered. The students were not asked.

It simply assumed that a gun present was an unusual event, easily matched up with our relatively low levels of violence. Since guns were rare, there was no need to explain why violence did not break out at events like gun shows.

It invented the never-before-known phenomena of psychological or symbolic ideas attaching themselves to inanimate objects, giving them the supernatural ability to influence people. If there was a psychological or symbolic influence at work, it would have been carried by the students involved and not by inanimate objects. Hence, even if it existed, it could not be generalized to the general population from such a narrow research demographic.

Re-writing history

In 2000, historian Michael Bellesiles wrote a new American history called *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture*. The book was a radical new interpretation of American history, based on the recognition that our understanding of historical context and consequences can shape and direct a debate. It used probate records, gun censuses, militia records, homicide records and travelers' accounts to re-examine the role of guns in early America. He concluded that the vast majority of those living in North American had no use for firearms, which were costly, difficult to locate and maintain and expensive to use. Bellesiles argued there was no gun culture prior to the Civil War, and that it came into existence due to the industrial production of guns and the romanticized vision of firearms.

In short, he produced the perfect anti-gun history, which addressed four major debates. The claim that guns were not a central part of early American culture undercuts an individual right view of the *Second Amendment*. His claim that very low levels of violence in the colonial period were the result of low levels of gun ownership re-stated the anti-gun myth that guns cause crime. His view that America's gun culture was an aberration rising out of the turmoil of the Civil War period supported the root cause view of criminal misconduct (crime was caused by society's

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Weapons as Aggression-Eliciting Stimuli, Leonard Berkowitz and Anthony LePage, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1967.

Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture, Michael Bellesiles, Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

imperfections and not by individual choices). His strong correlation of rising violence with mass production and availability of guns supported the greed of manufacturers flooding the market myth.

Problems

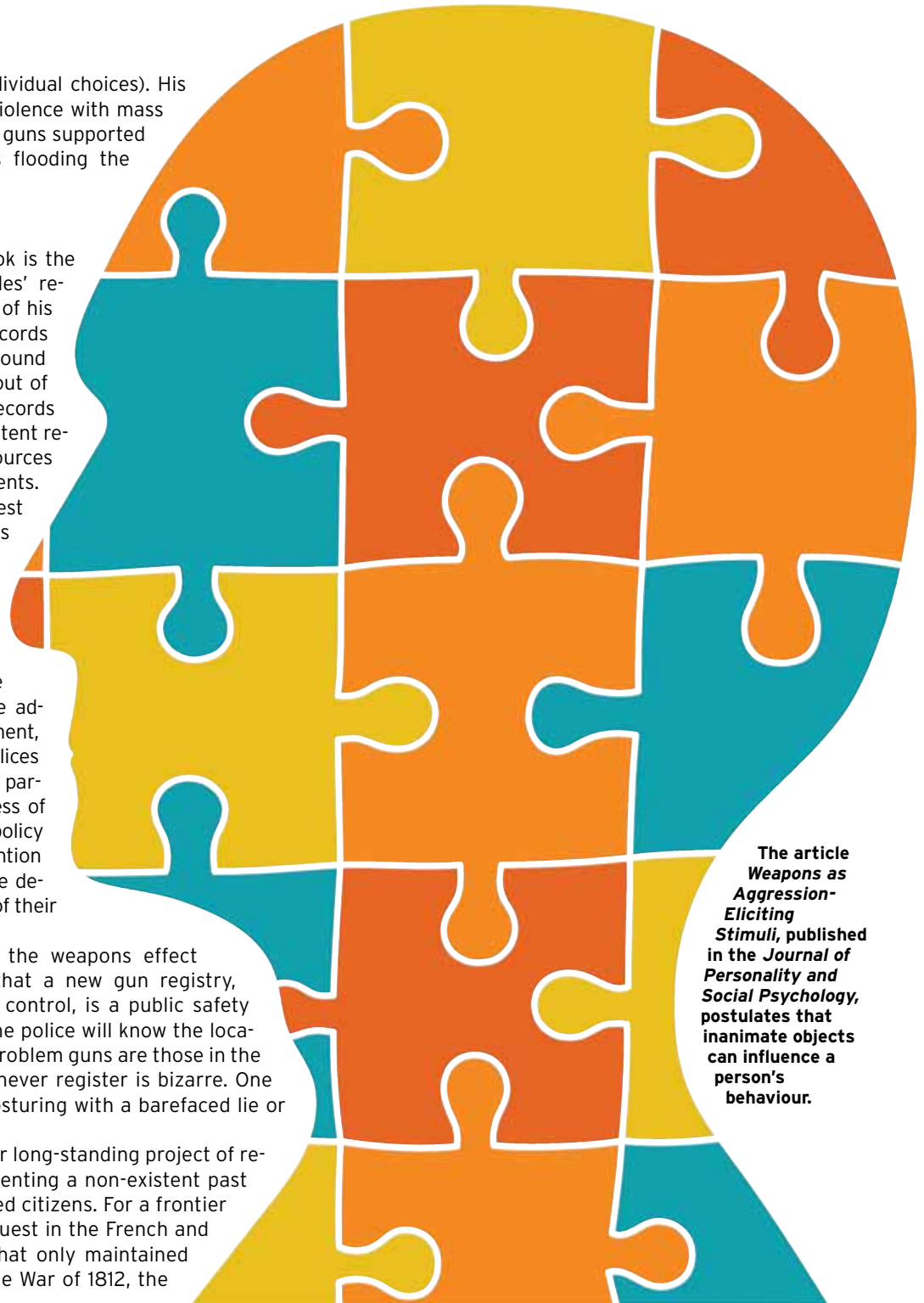
The problem with this book is the fraudulent nature of Bellesiles' research. Detailed examination of his work by experts in probate records and early American history found that he had quoted sources out of context, misstated what the records actually said, quoted non-existent records and simply ignored sources that did not fit with his arguments. In short, an utterly dishonest political polemic disguised as neutral scholarship.

Conclusions

We can see many of these techniques in our current election campaigns. Both the NDP and Liberal parties have adopted a strategy of concealment, hiding their positions and policies regarding gun control. Both parties are happy with the process of selling platitudes in place of policy specifics. Their obvious intention is to defuse analysis and stifle debate by keeping the specifics of their policies secret.

The NDP are continuing the weapons effect myth with their assertion that a new gun registry, bringing guns under official control, is a public safety essential. Their claim, that the police will know the location of every gun, when the problem guns are those in the hands of criminals who will never register is bizarre. One can chose whether this is posturing with a barefaced lie or simply delusional.

The Liberals continue their long-standing project of re-writing Canadian history, inventing a non-existent past of peacekeepers and disarmed citizens. For a frontier country, established by conquest in the French and Indian War, and a country that only maintained its nationhood by winning the War of 1812, the spin is brazen.



The article *Weapons as Aggression-Eliciting Stimuli*, published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, postulates that inanimate objects can influence a person's behaviour.

NFA Book Shelf

Bill Rantz

Ruger Pistols & Revolvers

The Vintage Years 1949-1973

Ruger Pistols & Revolvers

The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973

Author: John C. Dougan

**Andrew Mowbray Incorporated
- Publishers**

**Hard cover with dust jacket,
published in 2008**

**Eight-and-a-half by 11 inches,
391 pages**

Black and white photographs

ISBN: 1-931464-37-5

John C. Dougan has previously written several comprehensive books about Ruger handguns, including the classic *Know Your Ruger Single-Action Revolvers, 1953 - 63*. He is a highly respected author, enthusiastic Ruger collector and current president of the Ruger Collectors' Association.

Ruger Pistols & Revolvers - The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973 was written, in the author's own words, to chronicle the activities of Bill Ruger "while the original records are intact and persons with first-hand knowledge are still alive." These most valuable resources are usually not available to researchers of collectable firearms. Dougan's foresight and effort will be greatly appreciated by Ruger pistol and revolver collectors well into the future.

The first two chapters establish a bond between the reader and the early life of Bill Ruger. Dougan shares information, photos and documentation often provided courtesy of the Ruger estate. There is no doubt that, even at an early age, Bill Ruger was both a firearm enthusiast and talented inventor.

The Ruger Corporation, established in 1945, actually produced a line of hand tools designed by Bill Ruger. Discovering one of the various types of hand drills

marked "Ruger Corp" would be a highlight in the day of any Ruger enthusiast.

Bill Ruger partnered with Alexander Sturm in 1949 to establish Sturm, Ruger & Co., with the goal of manufacturing an auto-loading pistol designed by Ruger. In late 1949, Ruger's future as a producer of firearms was established with the production and delivery of about 1,500 .22 calibre auto-loading pistols. Over the next two decades, Ruger went on to produce a diverse line of high quality pistols and revolvers to satisfy the demands of the American market. They are now sought-after collectables, with escalating demand and prices.

Serious collectors of Ruger products will be immediately drawn to the vast information presented throughout *Ruger Pistols & Revolvers - The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973*, which deals specifically with the dozen models, variations, patents, advertising and accessories produced by the company over this 25-year time period.

Whether your passion is collecting the Single Six, Bearcat, Blackhawk, Old Army or any of the other models available during these vintage years, you will find the most up-to-date information easily accessible. A standard method of classification, Model/Sub-Models/Mechanical Variations, is used throughout *Ruger Pistols & Revolvers - The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973*.

Photographs, diagrams and copies of many Ruger patents are used effectively, to enable the reader to note and understand important details. Charts in the appendix, referred to by the author as the "meat and potatoes of Ruger collecting," provide data simply not available in any other publication.

The six-page index allows those searching for specific information to locate it quickly.

Ruger Pistols & Revolvers - The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973 is definitely not a coffee table book. It clearly meets the needs of Ruger enthusiasts seeking the most detailed and accurate information ever available on the early line of Ruger pistols and revolvers.

The suggested retail price of *Ruger Pistols & Revolvers - The Vintage Years 1949 - 1973* is \$65 US. This is reasonable for a high-quality publication that will be considered the most comprehensive resource on this subject for many years.





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