

CANADIAN FIREARMS JOURNAL

MAY/JUNE 2019

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CANADIAN ***FIREARMS JOURNAL***

May/June 2019



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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

People who instruct in the safe and efficient use of firearms are perhaps the greatest resource the shooting community has. While we often see them as only teaching shooting skills, that perspective is much too limited. Their greatest role is in teaching new shooters the culture of safety and responsibility we all share. All good instructors understand that shooting skills are just a small part of being a student of the gun. They live and teach principles like honour, accountability, protection and sacrifice. This month's cover photo is courtesy of Wally Fong and was taken at a pistol course in Calgary conducted by ONN Training.



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From The Editor's Desk

Al Voth

Training Time

Even a quick look at the contents of this magazine will show that we're devoting much of this issue to firearms training. I've always been a huge believer in formal firearms training and figured it was time to highlight some of the great firearms trainers and schools we have in Canada. I've been lucky enough to attend a fair number of formal firearms training courses and have never failed to learn something at any of them. But beyond that, each one was thoroughly enjoyable. If you've never taken the opportunity to attend a formal training course in rifle, pistol or shotgun, it's something you should put on your list to do this summer.

We've highlighted three such courses this issue by assigning writers to attend courses in their area and review what they experienced and some of the gear they used. It should be enough to give you a taste of what's out there in the training market. With

a little research, you should be able to find something in your area that meets your needs. But in case you absolutely refuse to pay someone for training, Vanessa Harrop has written a piece that's directed at self-training hunters, while Eric Prevost has interviewed some of Canada's best IPSC shooters to extract training tips from them.

This should all serve to give you the idea that around here we think training is critical. And with summer upon us, this is the time to do it. Trust me on this: if you take a formal firearms course in rifle, shotgun or pistol from a great trainer, it'll be the highlight of your summer.

Summer is also rimfire season, so check out Lowell Strauss' review of ELEY's hunting ammunition. That firm's target ammunition is world famous for accuracy, but its hunting line is less well known. It shouldn't be, because, in every rifle I've ever tested

it, ELEY's high-velocity, hollow-point load outshot every other brand, and it's deadly on small game.

And there's more, as well, including stories about the Canadian University Shooting League and other news you need to know. All the usual columnists are here too, so be sure to check them out. I'd like to draw special attention to Guy Lavergne's column about the use of social media by gun owners. I say that because, as I write this, there are dark political clouds on the horizon, and I suspect they will have materialized into a storm by the time you get this magazine. So, be sure to keep up with current events on the NFA Facebook page and website. If you're not a social media follower, at least subscribe to the NFA Media Report which arrives daily via e-mail. You can sign up for it by sending an e-mail to info@nfa.ca.

Enjoy your magazine. 





President's Message

Sheldon Clare

Betrayal Of Trust

As I write this report, New Zealand's government has announced sweeping measures to ban semi-automatic firearms in the wake of a carefully planned terrorist attack by a clearly disturbed person. Media coverage of the shooter and the event will, as it always does, lead to additional shootings by others of evil intent as they try to emulate this act. These events are frequently followed up by sweeping controls put upon people who had nothing to do with the criminal acts and seizure or other controls placed upon the use of their property – in this case, firearms.

Well, enough is enough. The standard Liberal response of mass punishment is neither reasonable, nor effective. As was the case in all such previous firearms control dictates, these knee-jerk measures never stop the next lunatic from harming more people. Instead, the target is always ordinary citizens who have no harmful intentions whatsoever, and yet are punished with loss of freedoms, confiscation of property and sanctions for disobedience. None of that is acceptable, and the fact of the matter is that a disarmed society becomes increasingly vulnerable, both to the resulting increase in criminal activity, and even worse, to an oppressive government.

Firearms owners have traditionally been the most law-abiding and responsible members of society. These are people with above-average resources and incomes who are involved in their communities. Firearms owners are concerned with nature and the environment, and as conservationists, are concerned with issues such as game and habitat management. We are people who pay our taxes, raise families and are participants in our society.

One of the worst things anyone can do is to betray someone loyal. Cana-

dian gunowners have long practiced loyalty to community, country and sovereign. At some point, the treatment received in the form of continued erosion of rights, loss of use of property and even confiscation of property will no longer be accepted. Such treatment has never been accepted, but it has generally been complied with. But as such measures are demonstrably ineffective and unreasonable, there will be more people who will simply opt to not comply with bad law. The NFA would never advocate breaking the law. People are quite capable of making responsible choices about their rights, property and place in society without being told what to do.

In Canada, we have been faced with increased gun control from every government since the Pearson Liberals, not even counting measures taken during war and in earlier times. Generally, such measures of gun control have been grumbled about and complied with. But with the prospect of gun control measures in this country including additional arbitrary bans of some firearms and the return of 1990s-era discussion of central storage of firearms, we are hearing an increased tempo of anger that goes far beyond mere grumbling dismay. Firearms owners have accepted many measures that have been proven failures of gun control, including licensing of people, registration of firearms, arbitrary classifications and ridiculous transportation requirements. None of these measures can or will stop people who have decided to break the law from doing so. These measures have never prevented criminal activity and they never will. The easy target is the compliant firearms owner, and make no mistake, that is exactly who gun-control legislation is aimed at, regardless of emotionally based cries to the contrary.

There is a federal election coming. As NFA members of this society, it is our responsibility to be engaged in politics and to work hard for the defeat of candidates of all stripes who support gun control. It is even more important to see them replaced by those who will stop such measures and listen to the NFA regarding real firearms law reform. We each have our pet goals for firearms laws and return of lost rights and privileges, but these will only happen when we focus our efforts on electoral victory. There can be no half measures – our opponents must lose this election, and those who curry our support must win, and then produce major results. No other alternative is acceptable, and those who would curry our favour need to hear that message loud and clear.

There can be no compromise on our rights and freedoms as firearms owners. Compromise has always meant that we give something up for a false perception of safety, security or crime prevention. It's nonsense, and it must stop. Gun control does not save lives, it takes them, and it also works to destroy those important values that firearms owners bring to society. It's no longer acceptable. I have had enough of being associated with crime just because I own firearms and I hope you have as well. We need to be involved in this election, to choose good candidates and get them elected. Put forward your time or your money, and make sure that your candidates know who you are and why you are there. If you agree with the NFA and our efforts to date, please find more members to sign up and encourage them to volunteer their time and money to support our struggle against oppressive and ridiculous firearms control measures. If we don't stand up for ourselves, no one else will.

Message du Président

Sheldon Clare

La trahison de la confiance

Comme j'écris ces lignes, le gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Zélande vient d'annoncer des mesures radicales pour interdire les armes semi-automatiques suite à l'attaque terroriste bien planifiée par un individu évidemment atteint de troubles graves. La couverture médiatique du tireur et de l'événement fera, comme toujours, surgir d'autres fusillades commises par des malfaiteurs qui voudront copier l'horreur. Des contrôles radicaux imposés sur des gens qui n'ont aucun lien avec ces actes criminels arrivent fréquemment suite à ces événements. Ils prennent souvent la forme de saisies ou d'autres contrôles imposés sur l'usage de leur propriété - dans ce cas ci, des armes à feu.

Assez, c'est assez! La réaction Libérale habituelle de punir en masse est ni raisonnable ni efficace. Comme il fût le cas précédemment toutes les mesures de contrôle des armes ont été des réactions émotives qui n'ont jamais empêché le prochain fou de faire du mal aux autres. Ce qui arrive vraiment c'est que les citoyens ordinaires sont ciblés, ceux qui n'ont aucune intention de faire du mal à personne. Pourtant ils sont punis à répétition et perdent des libertés, ils se font confisquer leur propriété et font face à des sanctions sévères s'ils n'obéissent pas. Il n'y a rien d'acceptable là dedans, de plus, une société désarmée devient de plus en plus vulnérable à cause de l'augmentation de la criminalité que cela engendre et pire encore elle peut être opprimée par un gouvernement.

Depuis toujours, les propriétaires d'armes à feu ont été les plus respectueux des lois et les membres les plus responsables de la société. Ils ont habituellement des revenus supérieurs à la moyenne et sont des membres actifs de leurs communautés. Les propriétaires d'armes à feu accordent de l'importance à la nature et à l'environnement. En tant que défenseurs de l'environnement, la gestion de la faune et de leur habitat sont des enjeux primordiaux pour eux. Nous sommes des gens qui payons nos taxes,

élevons nos familles et participons activement à la société.

Une des pires choses à faire est de trahir la loyauté d'une personne. Les propriétaires d'armes à feu ont été depuis longtemps loyaux à la communauté, au pays et au souverain. Il arrivera un moment où, les mauvais traitements provoquant l'érosion des droits, les pertes de propriété, voire la confiscation de propriété ne seront plus acceptés. Un tel traitement n'a jamais été accepté mais les citoyens en général s'y sont conformés. Puisque toutes ces mesures sont inefficaces et déraisonnables il y aura de plus en plus de gens qui choisiront de ne pas obéir à de mauvaises lois. L'ACAF n'encouragera jamais les gens de briser la loi. Les gens sont capables de faire des choix responsables à propos de leurs droits, leur propriété leur place dans la société sans qu'on leur dise quoi faire.

Depuis l'ère des Libéraux de Pearson, sans tenir compte des mesures prises durant les guerres et avant, le Canada a été sans cesse la cible de mesures additionnelles augmentant le contrôle des armes. Ces mesures ont été reçues généralement avec mécontentement mais ont été toutefois suivies. Mais les propositions de contrôle des armes qui sont mises de l'avant aujourd'hui, incluant des interdictions arbitraires et le retour de l'entreposage central des années 1990 crée une atmosphère colérique qui dépasse le mécontentement et l'incrédulité.

Les propriétaires d'armes à feu ont accepté beaucoup de mesures de contrôle des armes qui furent des échecs telles que les émissions de permis, l'enregistrement des armes, les classifications arbitraires et les règlements ridicules pour leurs transport. Aucune de ces mesures ne peuvent empêcher quelqu'un de briser la loi. Elles n'ont jamais empêché les criminels d'agir et ne le feront jamais. Les propriétaires légitimes obéissants sont des cibles faciles et détrompez vous, les lois sur le contrôle des armes sont conçues pour eux, peu importe les pleurs qui en

invoque le contraire.

L'élection fédérale s'en vient. Comme membres de la société et de l'ACAF, c'est notre responsabilité de s'impliquer en politique et de travailler fort envers la défaite de tous candidats qui veulent le contrôle des armes. Il est encore plus important de les remplacer par ceux qui arrêteront toutes ces mesures et prendront le temps d'écouter l'ACAF à propos des réformes des lois sur les armes à feu. Nous avons tous nos objectifs personnels à propos de ces lois et le retour des droits et privilèges perdus mais tout cela ne peut arriver qu'à la suite d'une victoire électorale. Les demie mesures ne sont pas suffisantes, nos adversaires doivent perdre cette élection et ceux qui sont avec nous doivent gagner. En suite ils doivent arriver à des résultats majeurs. Il n'y a pas d'autre solution, ceux qui veulent notre vote doivent entendre très clairement ce message.

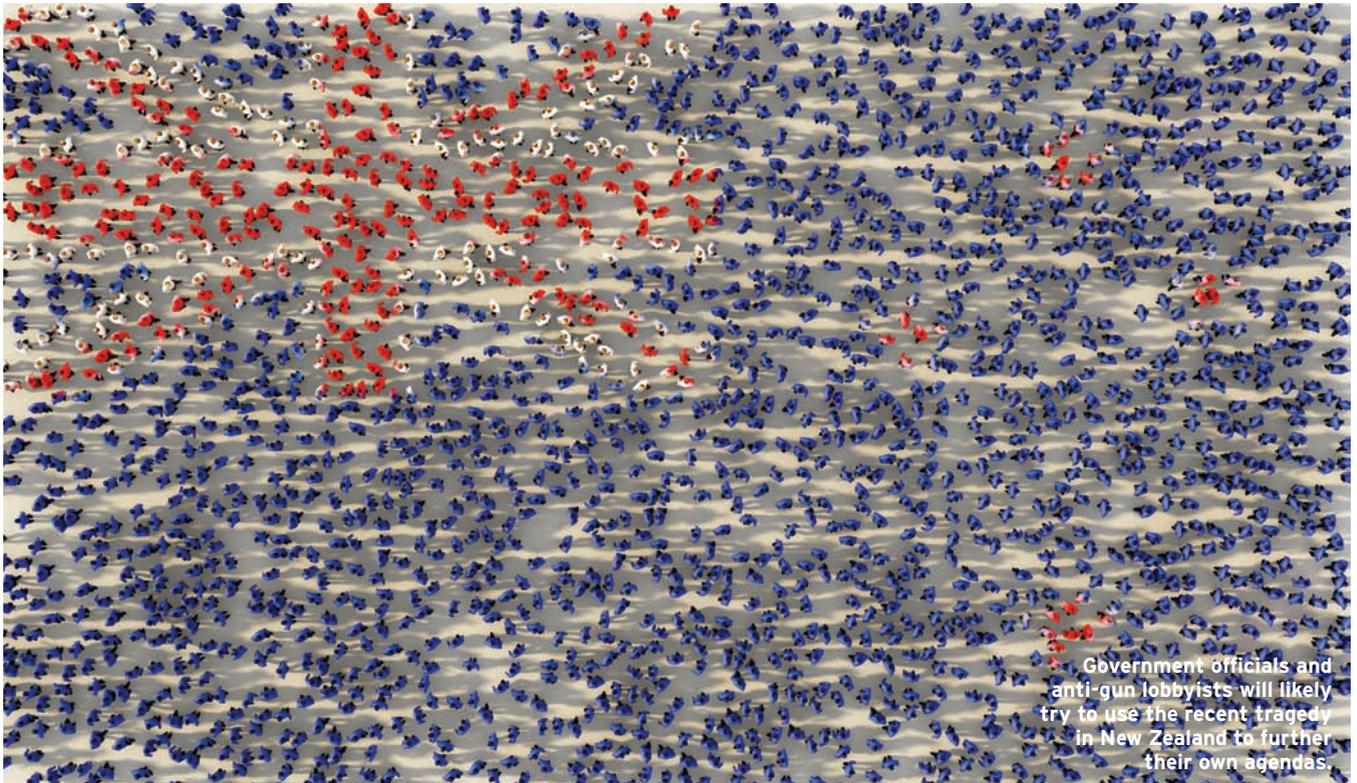
Il ne doit pas avoir de compromis à propos de nos droits et libertés en tant que propriétaire d'armes à feu. Le compromis nous a toujours fait abandonner quelque chose en échange d'une fausse perception de sécurité ou de prévention du crime. C'est insensé et ça doit cesser. Le contrôle des armes ne sauve pas des vies, il les enlèvent et détruit les valeurs importantes que les propriétaires d'armes à feu apportent à la société. Ce n'est plus acceptable. J'en ai assez de me faire associer à des crimes seulement parce que je possède des armes à feu et j'espère que vous en avez assez aussi. Nous devons nous impliquer dans cette élection, choisir de bons candidats et les faire élire. Donnez de votre temps ou de votre argent, assurez vous que vos candidats vous connaissent et pourquoi vous êtes impliqués. Si vous êtes d'accord avec l'ACAF et nos efforts jusqu'à date, SVP trouvez plus de gens à se joindre à nous et encouragez les à devenir bénévoles ou à faire des dons pour appuyer notre lutte contre des mesures ridicules de contrôler des armes qui ne font que nous opprimer. Si nous ne nous tenons pas debout, personne d'autre le fera. 🇩



Vice-President's Message

Blair Hagen

Reacting To New Zealand



Another tragedy has reignited the debate over guns worldwide and in Canada. A madman murdered scores of human beings in a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, apparently with the aim of starting a religious or race war using the gun-control issue.

As bizarre as it appears, both the extreme political left and the extreme political right want to use the issue of guns to spawn civil disarmament legislative agendas, furthering their individual causes. For the rest of us who are neither, it has very real ramifications on our rights, freedoms and property. However, none of this is new.

The government of Canada has historically targeted groups of Canadians over guns. Political, religious

and ethnic groups and subsections of Canadian society have had their rights and property targeted and confiscated during times of political and social turbulence, and war. The modern manifestation is to ban and seize rights and property after mass shooting tragedies, in order to deflect criticism and to be seen as "doing something." Anything.

Canada's National Firearms Association offers moral support to our cousins in New Zealand, who must now suffer the wrath of craven politicians and outraged social commentators seeking blind revenge for this senseless act.

What does this mean for Canada? The Liberal government has introduced Bill C-71, legislation to target the lawful ownership and use of firearms. The

legislation was passed by the Liberal majority government and is now under debate in the Senate. If it becomes law, the firearms bureaucracy will have new avenues to target Canadians who hold firearms licenses and registrations.

The Liberals also proposed a study on a complete handgun and semi-auto firearm ban in Canada. That study is nearing completion. We must assume that study will recommend the Liberal government pursue legislation to do this as soon as possible. The Liberals will target the lawful ownership of handguns in the next election by promising to pass legislation which uses the handgun registry to strip Canadians of their rights and property.

I have been personally offended and sickened by the actions of civil disar-

mament bureaucrats and politicians for many years now. I think you may have been as well. What other part of society has its rights and property dependent upon the actions of criminals and madmen, and suffers guilty-until-proven-innocent laws to be routinely criminalized by bureaucratic whim and fiat through bureaucracy and regulation?

The civil disarmament lobby will try the collective guilt angle once again to try and brow beat you into submission. Remember, they view you and I no differently than actual criminals and lunatics. Indeed, they have more empathy for real criminals and lunatics than those who are forced to license themselves for the simple peaceful possession of property. To the civil disarmament lobby, criminals and lunatics have legitimate excuses for their deviancies. "So-called law-abiding gun owners," not so much. Defy them. Throw their hypocrisy and vitriol back in their faces. We are Canadians and we demand full rights of citizenship. We will not be treated like criminals and we are not going away.

Despite the attacks of mainstream media, government and bureaucracy, the Canadian right and cultural tradi-

tion of firearms ownership is healthy and growing. Despite the burdens and insults of the firearms licensing system and firearms bureaucracy, Canadians have taken on those challenges in order to continue to assert their rights, freedoms and culture. Bill C-68 and its infamous long gun registry failed and exposed the true aims of its architects.

But our rights, freedoms and culture depend on eternal vigilance. I'll be blunt: unless politicians and governments who have civil disarmament agendas are defeated at the polls, they will continue to be ever emboldened to attack the rights and property of Canadians, using crime and tragedy as excuses.

Over the last year, Canada's National Firearms Association, like the major federal political parties, has quietly organized for the next federal election. Our colleagues in other firearms and civil rights organizations have as well. Those of you in the riding associations and election teams already know what the plan is and know what to do. The chief perpetrators and standard bearers for civil disarmament in the government are all well known. Their Liberal colleagues in the closely won ridings of the 2016 election have been

identified and targeted for defeat.

Canadians who believe in rights and freedoms are politically active and organized. The 2005/2006 federal election showed us what the proper response to threats of civil disarmament legislation and gun bans from political opportunists must be: defeat at the polls and the relinquishment of the reigns of power. This year is no different. It is clear now that the precedent set by then-Prime Minister Paul Martin, when he promised to ban handguns if the Liberals were returned to power in 2006, is now Liberal Party policy from here on.

This is the political scenario Canadians face. I ask you, please do your part in the federal election this year by working to defeat the Liberal government. If Canadians do not, we will surely suffer the same fate as the British, the Australians and perhaps New Zealanders. We've stood up for our rights, freedoms and culture and we've won. Canadians have defeated governments and defeated and changed legislation that has threatened those freedoms. We can and will overcome the tyrannical threats of today, overcoming them because that is the very definition of being Canadian. 🇨🇦





Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas

The Red Sash Militia



56-56 Spencer cartridge.

The US Civil War was an epic conflict. It is considered the first modern war fought on the land, in the air (balloons were deployed to gather intelligence), underwater (using primitive submarines), supported by speedy rail service and using instant communication (the telegraph). It was also the dawn of the metallic cartridge. Firearm technologies advanced rapidly as reliable repeating rifles like the Spencer and Henry were developed, as was the machine gun, known as the Gatling gun.

However, the cessation of the War Between the States was not the close of hostilities. The First Nations in the US were ramping up their resistance, there were factions that wanted to invade Mexico and the Fenian Brotherhood were developing a strategy to invade Canada and hold a city for ransom to convince Britain to release Ireland. Meanwhile, on an international scale, the militaries of the world were devel-

oping more professional armies, with training a by-word for future campaigns. Practice, drill and rehearse, the new soldiers were no longer viewed as simply cannon fodder but were destined to be trained as precision units. This focus on training, new tactics and advanced technologies transformed the face of war.

The Fenian invasion of the Niagara Peninsula and the Eastern Townships of Quebec in June of 1866 comprised 1,500 battle-hardened veterans of the Civil War known as the Fenian Brotherhood. The Niagara Peninsula had militias in every city and small town, but these were Sunday-soldiers who were competent marksmen but not well-trained combat soldiers. Nonetheless, when the invasion happened, the call-out was immediate. The Militia Men sprang into action, going toe to toe with the Fenian's on June 2, 1866. The Militia Men acquitted themselves well, and when they were ultimately supported by

regular troops, they were able to drive the invaders back across the border.

The Eastern Townships did not fare as well. The next Fenian incursion was on June 8, 1866, when the Fenian's crossed the border near Huntington, Que. They advanced rapidly, with no resistance, looting businesses, homes, stealing livestock and pillaging as they moved. The communities of Pigeon Hill, Frelighsburg and St. Armand suffered great losses and property damage. The Fenians then received word that three companies of volunteers were advancing toward them, but they were not aware the approaching force was inexperienced, and some had never even handled a rifle. There was a brief battle at Pigeon Hill and the Fenians withdrew as their own support of more men, provisions and arms had not reached them.

After the invasion, the population of the Eastern Townships was angry due to the damage and losses of the Fenian depredations. In 1868, Asa Westover and Andrew Tan Eyck of Dunham, Que., organized a Missisquoi home guard called the Red Sashes. The name flowing from the red sashes they wore over their right shoulders to identify each other in battle. They formed a militia using their own privately purchased firearms.

Westover and Pell traveled to Massachusetts, where they visited the factory that manufactured Ballard sporting rifles. There they purchased a number of rifles to be used by the home guard, selecting the Ballard .44 rimfire rifle, a breech-loading cartridge arm noted for accuracy. Although the .44 rimfire was really an enhanced pistol cartridge, it was accurate and effective at medium ranges. Home guard members also individually purchased other notable cartridge rifles of the era. Photographic evidence displays Ballards, Snider Enfields, Spencer repeating rifles, a Henry and even a Terry Carbine. There are likely others, but they are difficult to identify.



56-56 Spencer rifle with bayonet and Blakslee cartridge box.



Ballard .44 rimfire sporting rifle.

The most powerful of these rifles were the Snider Enfields, utilizing a cartridge that contained a .58-calibre lead mini ball weighing 535 grains. Not far behind was the Spencer repeater using a .50 calibre cartridge with a 350-grain projectile. These two rifles were genuinely robust, military-designed ordnance, whereas the Ballard was an efficient, accurate sporting rifle that would be easier to deploy and learn how to use than the Snider or Spencer.

The Red Sashes held regular training drills and shooting practice. Rumours of another invasion kept the Militia Men alert, they trained intensely, gathered intelligence and they surveyed their own territory for strategic positions to enable them to ambush any returning Fenians. Their practice, drills and reconnaissance were employed just after lunch on May 25, 1870, as a force of 200 Fenians, led by General O'Neill, crossed the border from Vermont on the road to Eccles Hill. Unable to purchase better rifles, the Fenians were armed with unreliable Needham

cartridge conversions of their Springfield muskets, converted by their own gunsmiths.

When the Fenians crossed into Canada, the Missisquoi guard were well concealed in their strategic positions on Eccles Hill. General O'Neill advanced with 200 men in columns of four with fixed bayonets. He also had 600 Fenians in reserve at a farm on the US side of the border in Vermont. As the Fenian troops moved along the road at Eccles Hill, they were met by a hail of accurate rifle fire from the Red Sashes in their well-hidden positions on the hill. With officers killed and men falling mortally wounded, the Fenians broke and ran for the United States. O'Neill attempted to rally his men; however, the Canadian's fire was overwhelming. It was a rout! The Red Sashes' intense training and excellent intelligence gathering carried the day.

As the Fenians dashed for the border, they left much of their kit, firearms and sabres strewn on the road. When the invaders crossed back into the US, they

were detained and taken prisoner by US Marshalls and the military for breaking the *Canada-USA Neutrality Act*. The Canadians captured a Fenian field gun, arms and equipment. The small contingent of Red Sashes with their Ballards, Spencers and Enfields won the day! Canadians 25, Fenians 0.

Cartridge rifles such as the Ballard, Spencer and Enfield were robust, dependable firearms and the courageous Red Sash Militia Men who used them were a pivot point in preserving our firearms heritage. 🇨🇦

Sources

Canadian Encyclopedia, Missisquoi Townships Heritage, Wikipedia, Grant Rombough, AI Page

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I would like to acknowledge AI Page and Grant Rombough, who were both very informative with their knowledge of the Spencer and Ballard rifles.



Politics & Guns

Bruce Gold

Four Reasons For A Gun Ban



Since 2004, the number of restricted firearms in Canada has increased from 384,888 to 907,362. This is partly because the shooting sports are increasing in popularity.

This article examines four reasons the Liberals are moving forward with Bill C-71 and are planning new legislation to further criminalize and suppress the hunting and shooting sports in Canada.

THE CONTEXT

The current debate minimalizes the role guns play in Canadian society. Typically, it limits the debate to the simple assertion that people own guns, and then goes on to discuss problems. However, people don't just own guns (causing problems) they use them as part of their common everyday activities:

- Firearms commerce, hunting and the shooting sports are a \$5-billion-per-year industry;
- Canada had 4,500 firearms businesses employing 25,000 people;
- Canada has 1,400 shooting ranges;
- Women are increasingly active in the shooting sports and it's one of the few competitive sports where women and men compete on an equal basis;
- Canada imports \$400 million a year in civilian firearms, ammunition, parts and accessories;
- Canada has 2.2 million hunters and

sports shooters, compared to 1.5 million golfers and 1.3 million ice hockey players, making it our largest sporting pastime.

REASON #1: THE UTOPIAN AGENDA

The Liberal Party has long opposed all civilian gun ownership in Canada. In the 1960s, Liberal heavyweight Alan Rock declared, "The only people in this country who should have guns are police officers and soldiers." Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy proclaimed that, "Disarming the Canadian public is part of the new humanitarian social agenda." Unfortunately, this plan to social engineer firearms out of Canada proved disastrous at the ballot box. The Liberal's solution was a new gun law, Bill C-68, designed to destroy Canada's gun culture incrementally through bureaucratic micro-management, increased costs and legal hazard. The prevailing theory was that new shooters would be discouraged and the old guys who owned guns and hunted would die off, diminishing gun ownership to levels that would permit an absolute ban. In 1979, there were 16,420 firearms businesses; and by 2010 there were only 4,465 busi-

nesses left.

This agenda failed when Canadian gun owners organized to preserve their rights, their hobbies and their property. Worse yet, the shooting sports, being challenging, fun and safe, are increasing in popularity. Since 2004, the number of restricted firearms has increased from 384,888 to 907,362. This is the exact opposite of what's desired, so more regulations are being contemplated to eliminate or at least severely reduce target shooting, which is what these guns are used for.

REASON #2: GUNS CAUSE HOMICIDE, THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE

America's high rates of gun ownership and "high" homicide rates have long been used as an anti-gun argument in Canada. There have even been arguments that violence is somehow, uniquely, in America's DNA. However, this factoid is the result of two deceptions. The first is a classic piece of statistical cherry picking. This is achieved by limiting comparisons to "advanced" or "developed" nations. The second statistical trick is to restrict homicides to firearms homicides, presumably on the basis that other methods of homicide leave people less dead.

If we examine UN statistics on 125 nations, we find that the "high homicide" rate of the US is a myth. Out of 125 countries surveyed by the UN, some 93 countries have higher homicide rates than the US. The highest, Honduras, has a homicide rate of 90.4 per hundred thousand (all numbers from UN Office of Drugs and Crime, 2012 figures). This is almost 20 times the US rate of 4.7. Twenty-two countries have rates four times as high, including Mexico with 21.5. Fifty-seven countries have rates more than twice as high as the US. The "horrific" US homicide rates start to look a lot different when put into perspective with the rest of the world, where the average homicide rate is 8.6, over twice the US rate. Judged from an honest comparison of homicide rates, many from countries with severe gun laws, perhaps we



A consulting firm recommended the Liberals exploit ignorance about gun laws, as it could win them another election.

should give more consideration to gun ownership as an anti-violence measure. Especially due to the deterrent effect of criminals knowing that the government is not guaranteeing them unarmed and defenseless victims.

For another real-world example of how US gun numbers affect their crime rates, we can examine the period 1994 to 2010. During this period, the number of guns in the US increased by 93,965,151 firearms (all numbers from Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives records of manufacturing, importing and exporting). Handguns, the current boogeyman of the Liberal Party, increased by 40,681,376. During the same period, all homicides dropped 37 per cent (from 23,326 to 14,722), firearms homicides dropped 36 per cent and handgun homicides dropped 47 per cent. Somehow these facts have been mysteriously excluded from the “evidence-based” policy of the Liberal Party and just a mysteriously gone unnoticed by the government-funded mainstream media.

REASON #3: THE AWKWARD REALITY OF CRIMINAL GANGS

Another important reason for a gun ban is the need to distract attention away from the rapidly escalating problem of criminal gangs. Gang firearm homicides have gone from 12 per cent of all homicides in 2015 to 21 per cent in 2017, from 65 in 2013 to 121 in 2016. Gang homicides have almost doubled since 2015 when the Liberals took office. This violence is part of the gang culture and driven by the economics of the drug trade, human trafficking and other criminal activities.

Three quarters of gang murders are with firearms versus only 20 per cent of non-gang murders. Worse yet, since gang killings are about economic competition and gang members do not co-operate with police, they account for 61 per cent of unsolved murders. Canada now has 430 active gangs.

Naturally, the politicians want to be seen doing something and legislating against the law-abiding is a lot easier then going after entrenched criminal gangs. Mayor John Tory has recognized that police now believe 65 percent of Toronto murders are gang related and that they have only issued warrants for 21 out of 61 recent homicides. Naturally he rushed to blame inanimate objects (guns) and law-abiding gun owners. Since he has no jurisdiction over gun laws, he can virtuously call for more laws without ever having to actually do anything other than posture.

REASON #4: ELECTION ADVICE, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PUBLIC IGNORANCE

The consulting firm Hill and Knowlton conducted a poll which found that despite having a very poor understanding of our gun laws, most Canadians still fear crime and want stricter laws. They recommended the Liberals exploit this ignorance and the anti-gun feelings of centre-left voters. They speculate that exploiting this opportunity might win them another election.

CONCLUSION

The Liberals have many reasons for more gun control, none of which have much to do with public safety. The most critical need is for a high-profile diver-

sion from failed gang polices, failed economic policies and diplomatic disasters.

This agenda follows the pattern set by the Montreal Massacre. As we know from the coroner’s report, the police just stood around outside and did not lift a finger to stop the killer or rescue the students. When the killer eventually shot himself, “No police assault was in progress or in any obvious state of preparation.” The coroner stated that her report did not address gun control because, “With the unlimited ammunition and time that Marc Lépine had available to him, he would probably have been able to achieve similar results even with a conventional hunting weapon.”

The government response to this disaster was to divert attention away from official failure to inanimate objects (guns) – a strategy that received a lot of assistance from anti-gun organizations. Curiously, the Coalition for Gun Control, founded after the Montreal Massacre and Canada’s major anti-gun organization, has never made an issue of the police just standing outside, abandoning the victims to their fate. This organization, wholly devoted to restrictive gun laws, has rarely, if ever, mentioned the coroner’s conclusion that the type of gun used was irrelevant. The Coalition received \$380,600 in government funding for lobbying the government in support of the government’s own anti-gun policies.

As we go into the next election, we can expect to see lots of lies, diversions and more funding for anti-gun advocates. 🚩

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VIDEO-SHARING YOUR HUNT

Reviewing the Tactacam 5.0

BY AL VOTH





The Tactacam gun package includes two mounts: one for barrel mounting and the other for rail attachment.

Just in case you missed it, you should know that video is popular. Really popular. There are over a billion videos on YouTube now, with about 300,000 added every day. And that doesn't account for other platforms like Vimeo and Facebook. Apparently, people like to take videos and share them with others.

That fact has been a struggle for old guys like me who feel comfortable working with a conventional camera but have had to go through a steep learning curve to work with video. However, I now must admit that video is cool, and fun to shoot and share. Part of my conversion to video has happened because the cameras have become easier to use, as has the editing software. But I don't have any illusions that I'll ever get to the same level of comfort with it as my grandkids, who I call "screenagers."

Hands down, the most fun I've had so far with a video camera has come from a camera specifically designed for the shooting sports. It's made by the folks at Tactacam and is designated as their 5.0 version. Like a smartphone, it packs an incredible amount of technology into a small package. And, of course, it links

to that smartphone as well. Is there anything these days that doesn't?

BACKGROUND

Tactacam was founded about five years ago by Ben Stern, a passionate hunter who wanted to create a way for hunters to easily share their hunting adventures with family and friends. However, he didn't see anything on the market designed for a hunter's unique needs. So, he cobbled together a video camera with available parts, using medical tape to hold it all together. He still has that original camera and it still works. That idea germinated into the Tactacam brand and product line. The company now has two other partner/owners and employs 20 people at its Caledonia, Minnesota, headquarters.

BASICS

The current 5.0 version of the Tactacam is shaped as a simple cylinder measuring 4.37 inches long and 1.29 inches in diameter (11.1 centimetres by 3.28 centimetres). It weighs in at 3.3 ounces (92.7 grams), making for a small and lightweight package. However, this is just the bare camera and a mount is required to attach it to a firearm. There

are five variations available for mounting to a firearm, one for bow mounting and another for head mounting. Most of my work has been done with a mount that slides under a rifle scope and attaches to a Picatinny rail.

The camera has three recording modes, including 4K, slow-motion and zoom. The 4K mode records at 30 frames per second, while the slow-motion mode works at 120 frames per second. Both give a view that's roughly similar to what you see with the naked eye. This is a major change from other point-of-view cameras which provide a wide-angle view. While that view is excellent for some applications, it's the worst possible choice for most shooting scenarios, especially hunting. This is because that wide-angle view "throws" the target of the recording far enough into the distance to become little more than a speck. The Tactacam's perspective brings the action much closer, making it significantly better for recording shooting/hunting events.

To further sweeten the pot for rifle hunters, the camera's third mode is an 8X zoom, again recording at 30 frames per second. As you can imagine, that 8X magnification brings the action even

The quarry's view of the Tactacam when mounted on a rifle.



closer. It has become my default mode when I'm using the camera on a rifle, allowing even 200-yard shots to be seen with good detail.

The camera is advertised as being weatherproof, and while I haven't tested that claim, it does work at temperatures down to -20 degrees Celsius, and it seems to be well sealed against moisture intrusion. Battery life of the rechargeable Li-Ion power plant is up to two-and-a-half hours of continuous recording, but that's noticeably reduced in cold weather. Swapping in a fresh battery is quick and easy, as is taking out a chilled battery and sliding it back in after some time in an inside pocket has warmed it up. I did find the battery will lose its charge if stored in the camera, so I always remove it for storage. Memory storage is accomplished via a micro SD card. Let your wallet be your guide as to how much memory you can afford, just remember that video takes a lot of memory, so more is always better.

CONNECTIVITY

As I mentioned previously, the camera will connect to a smartphone, using, of course, the appropriate app, which is available free from both the Apple and Android app stores. The camera has no built-in screen, but with the app, the camera's view is visible on your phone, allowing the user to position it pre-

cisely and to control several functions. However, to make that camera-phone connection uses wifi. It is not a Bluetooth connection. Naturally, videos can be downloaded to your phone as well. There are even options for live-streaming to Facebook, something I haven't tried.

SET UP

Setting up the camera is relatively simple, although diving into some of the deeper corners of the set-up menu requires care and attention to detail. But, overall, it's possible to have the camera up and running in a short period of time. The only issue that cropped up with mine was that the built-in microphone was turned off when it arrived. I didn't even realize it had a microphone and was capable of sound recording until after using it for several weeks. When I finally caught on, the assistance I received from the company's help desk was first rate, as they walked me through the steps to turn the microphone on. It was just another of my frequent embarrassing moments with technology.

IN THE FIELD

The camera arrived in the early part of coyote season, so it quickly found a home on whatever rifle was going afield with me that day. As a right-handed shooter, I found it best to mount the

camera on the right side of the rifle, setting it far enough forward to not interfere with ejection. One exception I made was a rifle with an MDT chassis, which has a short section of rail under the forend. This proved to be a great place to mount the camera as well.

After several months of use, the system I've defaulted to is keeping the camera completely off until I spot a shot opportunity. At that point, a single push of the power button turns the camera on into the 8X mode I've pre-set. I then let it record while I stalk, call or wait, as required. When the shooting is over, I turn it off and wait for the next opportunity.

In addition to the typical LEDs which report power status, the camera also has a vibration feature. Meaning that like your phone, the camera vibrates a short burst to signal turning off or on. When using a hard attachment like the under-scope mount, you feel it in your hands while gripping the rifle, making it unnecessary to maneuver the rifle in order to look at the LEDs to confirm status. It's a little weird at first, but it's a feature I've really come to appreciate, and shows the attention to detail the manufacturer has built into the system to make it useful to shooters.

Another great feature is the incorporation of image stabilization technology into the camera. This helps to cut out the shakiness that can be visible at higher magnifications and reduces the jump of recoil in the finished video. It certainly doesn't eliminate it, but it helps significantly. Shooting from a bipod really helps with video quality as well. Another tip is to perform a five count after the shot while keeping the camera on the downed critter. For shot-gunners, a parallel tip is to follow the bird to the ground after the shot.

ON THE RANGE

For me, the camera's primary use is for hunting, but some shooters will find a range application as well. It will fit on a handgun rail, but of course, there's no way to holster a pistol with the camera attached. Overall, I think Tactacam's head mount is your best option for recording a stage run in 3-Gun, IPSC or IDPA.

However, I have used the camera to record rifle misses on steel at extended ranges, as it's sometimes possible to see bullet splashes in the dirt or snow – splashes which are often lost to view in recoil. And, of course, the camera doesn't have to be mounted on a gun. It can be set on a table or strapped to



The barrel mount is sized to fit a typical 12-gauge barrel.

a tripod to record distant action or the shooter's technique. Personal needs and ingenuity are the only limits to its uses on a range.

OPTIONS & OPINIONS

Options I haven't used include an available remote to control the camera. In fact, the remote can control multiple Tactacams. And as I write this, Tactacam has just announced the development of an attachment which allows the 5.0 camera to record the view directly through a riflescope. It's not available yet, but it should be by the time you get this magazine. It's on my list of must-have items.

I like the Tactacam 5.0 enough that I rarely take a hunting rifle into the field without the camera attached. It's that useful and that much fun. Price on the Ultimate Hunter 5.0 package I'm using is \$550 CAD plus shipping. I don't know of any Canadian dealers stocking the product, but you can order from the major online retailers or direct from the company at www.tactacam.com.

Visiting the company website is also the best way to view sample videos. If you want to shoot video while shooting a gun and don't have a cameraman behind you, this is the best option I've seen. The price is reasonable and the performance leaves nothing to be desired. 🍷



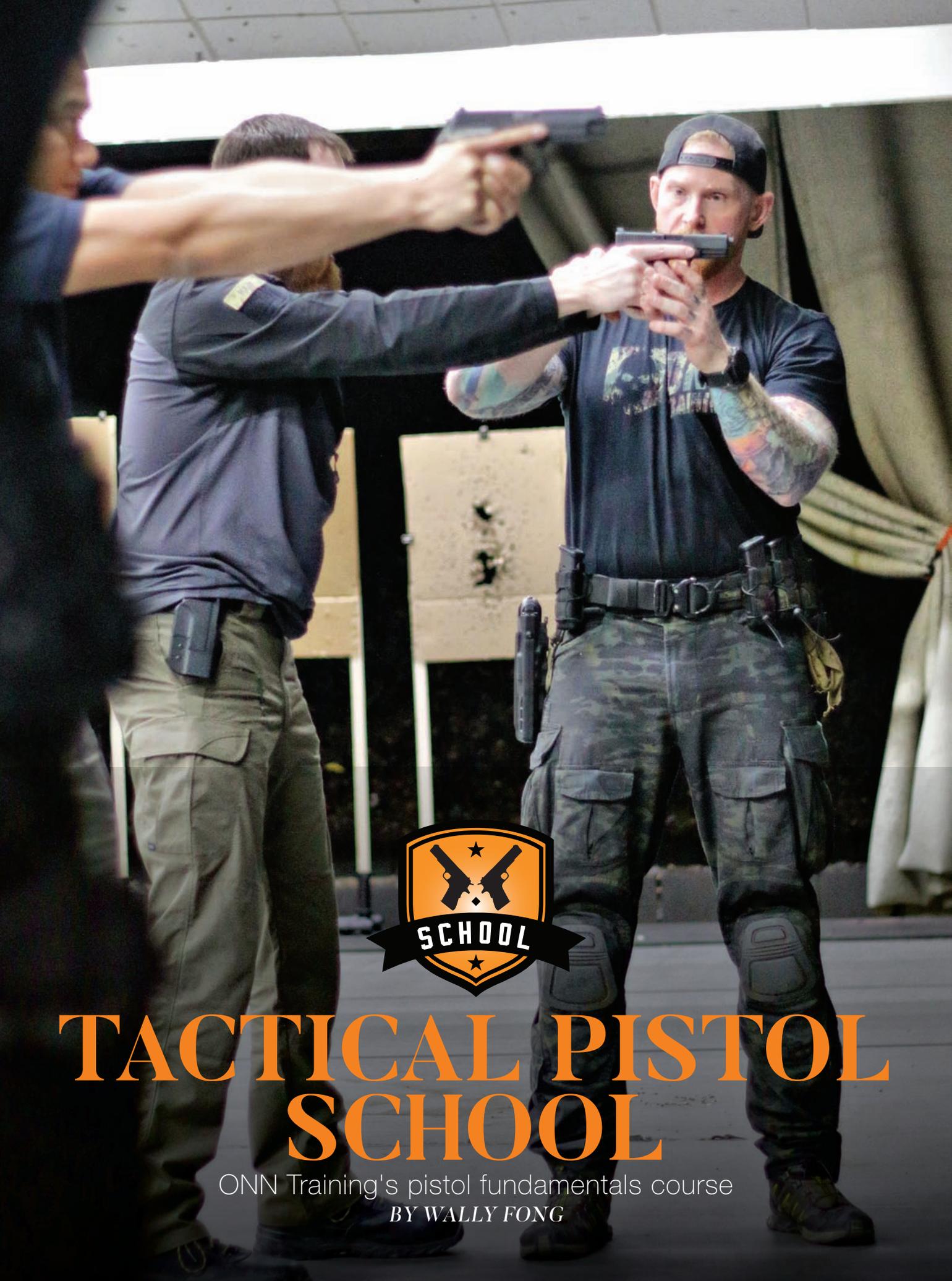
A Picatinny rail by Talley Manufacturing was added to this rifle so the Tactacam rail mount could be utilized.

Talley Rings & Bases

Mounting the Tactacam camera on a rifle with the supplied Picatinny mount is, without doubt, the preferred method for rifle mounting. However, it does require a Picatinny rail, something not all rifles have. My Ruger American in 22-250 was one such rifle. It's two Weaver bases have always worked fine to hold a scope, but adding a camera meant something had to change.

A search for a suitable rail led me Talley Manufacturing of South Carolina. This company is well known for making quality products, backed by a money-back guarantee. They make Picatinny rails for a huge variety of rifles, so when I asked for a Ruger American short action rail, with 0 MOA slant, in black, they had it - and rings to match. Everything fit perfectly and it gave me a huge upgrade in scope mounting hardware, as well as a place to mount the Tactacam.

If a Tactacam is in your future and you need a rail to mount it on, Talley likely has a product that will do the job.



TACTICAL PISTOL SCHOOL

ONN Training's pistol fundamentals course
BY WALLY FONG



A demonstration line allows students to practice manipulation skills without live ammo.

The staff at ONN Training are all alumni of the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR). With a history dating back to the Second World War, CSOR handles direct-action missions and specializes in the training of foreign military, among many other trades and abilities. This skill set in training is brought into the initial course in pistol shooting they offer to the civilian firearms community, making it a great place to showcase their skills. The ONN acronym, by the way, stands for Operators of No Nation.

ONN's pistol fundamentals course (PFC) is a solid foundation of teaching that fills the gap between finishing your PAL/RPAL course and actual safe and accurate shooting of a handgun. At first glance, some of the power points the instructors Chay and Freddy were going through seemed like a review of the PAL course, but they related the information back to the safe, efficient handling of a pistol and the reasoning they teach it that way. Having taken the PFC course before, I have the benefit of witnessing the evolution of the course. As an active observer the second time around, I was still learning.

DAY ONE

The first half of day one was filled with knowledge, power points and staff demos, familiarizing students with range commands and nomenclature. Chay dove deep into what is only skimmed over on other similar courses I've taken. It's not enough to know the difference between striker fire and hammer fire, internal safeties versus external and decocking levers, but why and how to use them through smooth and mindful repetition in the drills they taught.

Starting from literally the ground up, students worked on proper stance and posture, moving up to the support hand and master hand grip of the pistol, all of which are key to nail down before even thinking about sighting a target. All this works towards a correct trigger press. To a few of the beginner shooters, this seemed like a lot of information to take in, but Chay and Freddy gave ample time and personal one-on-one coaching to those that needed it, all while keeping the class pace running smoothly. While not just for new shooters, the emphasis on breathing was touched on more than once. Their box breathing drill of four seconds inhale, four sec- ➤

Students are supervised and coached through live fire exercises.



onds hold, four seconds exhale helped all the students on the practice line.

After lunch, it was on to live fire. The first exercise was firing a group at a target to establish a baseline. Afterwards, starting nice and easy, it was three-inch circles at five metres, with the staff diagnosing students on the fly to correct or reinforce skills taught. Ball and dummy drills were used with great effect to diagnose trigger pulls and flinching. The bump drill is a must for anyone running a DA/SA pistol like a Sig Sauer P226. To perform it, press the trigger back slightly then let it reset, repeat but this time press a little further on the trigger, let it go, repeat until your hammer drops. This helped students maintain accurate fire out to 15 metres.

The first day was capped off with a review of the six fundamentals: stable platform, grip, sights, trigger press, follow through and breathing.

DAY TWO

Day two was a quick refresher of day one and then the class plunged right

into immediate action (IA) stoppages. The three most common stoppages were covered, with explanations and demonstrations of live and dead triggers and how to remedy a stoppage. We learned the most important aspect is to actively diagnose the problem before attempting an IA drill, otherwise you could make the stoppage worse. There were many reps put into dry firing these IA drills, because being efficient with the drills will save valuable seconds needed to get your pistol back up and running again.

Once dry firing was practised sufficiently, everyone was back on the live fire line. Just to shake out the flood of information from the day prior, students started on the seven-metre line shooting at 12-inch targets, applying the drills learned the day before. Initially, two rounds were applied, moving towards a rhythm from a slow, one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two count, to a medium pace of one-and-two-and-three all the way to a quick pace of one-two-three-four. This

rhythm drill, if done properly while applying the six fundamentals, quickly exposed strengths and weaknesses in the shooters. Both Chay and Freddy helped individuals correct themselves right away. This reinforced my personal experience, that if you have the right instruction you don't need to expend hundreds of rounds down range to significantly improve your technique.

The early morning dry fire practice of IA stoppages was now put into effect on the live fire line. The emphasis on visually seeing what the status of your pistol is before conducting an IA drill was reinforced and categorized as follows: type one – failure to fire; type two – double feed, stove pipe, slide out of battery; and type three – slide locked to the rear or empty magazine. All these were practised with students loading each others' magazines with a mix of live rounds, dummy rounds and empty casings to simulate all three stoppages.

A short break was taken to cover care and cleaning of the pistol and how different pistols require slightly different

areas of attention when conducting maintenance. After that, students were pushed all the way out to the 20-metre line to test the skills picked up throughout the course. The bump drill was mandated again to test everyone's stance, grip, trigger press and follow through. When properly executed, everyone, including the newer shooters, were getting A-zone hits at 20 metres with their pistols.

The final exercise of the day was to shoot another single target, using the same drill everyone first shot on day one. This would be the litmus test for every student as to how much they had improved in a relatively short amount of time. The largest improvement I saw was from a local 3-Gunner who went from grouping wide at the beginning of day one, to all rounds but one touching each other in the centre of the target.

REVIEW

The after-action review of the course was organized, and the ONN Training team was receptive to feedback from the students. Chay and Freddy both emphasized that this course is the perfect wedge between a gun owner first getting their PAL/RPAL and going on to a pistol one-style course that populates the training market everywhere. I agree that the PFC course will give every new shooter, and even experienced shooters, the additional confidence and much-needed tools of proper self-diagnosis to develop into more competent pistol shooters. The way the instructors presented information, coached and diagnosed the students on the course was a pleasure to witness a second time. Both Chay and Freddy genuinely enjoy teaching and you can see their passion for delivering knowledge at work. Each of them has over a decade of experience working in Special Operations, which has allowed them to distill the best teaching techniques and coaching styles to maximize each student's abilities and time while on the course. I believe that's what allows ONN Training to achieve so much success in such a short time period. 🏆

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REVIEW

HIGHLANDER TACTICAL'S ODIN HOLSTER

Highlander Tactical is a Canadian grassroots small business through and through. They purpose-build holsters and related accessories from the ground up based on feedback from deployed soldiers and the Special Operations community. Veteran owned and operated, the staff at Highlander Tactical has been continuously evolving their designs since their inception. So, what better time than now to review one of their first products and the strong foundations it was built on, the ODIN holster.

A Kydex pressed, pancake-style, outside-the-waistband, belt-mounted holster, the ODIN is solid and beefy looking, willing and able to take abuse. Pressed from 0.08-inch Kydex, the holster is minimalist designed for comfort and ease of use. When a pistol is holstered, the fit is secure but has just enough flex to keep draw strokes smooth.

The 1.5-inch injection-moulded belt loops can be mounted high on the holster or optionally one inch lower via a pair of Philips head screws on each loop. There are also two screws just below the trigger guard to adjust how much retention you want your holster to have. The rubber spacers wedged between the tension screws help with finding that sweet spot between a smooth draw and positive retention of the pistol.

Draws from the holster are clean and the front of the holster is tapered inline

with the belt loop, so for those that practice shooting from retention you can easily clear the holster from the draw and shoot. The back side of the holster is tapered horizontally with a good 1.5 inches of flat real estate, should you need to rack the slide on your pistol while performing single-handed, immediate-action drills. Since the rear belt loop is situated right behind this flat spot on the holster, it holds the holster in nice and tight, and as a result, when you're racking your slide the holster doesn't bend outward, it just holds its position on your belt.

The inside slab of the holster is moulded slightly higher than the front slab to help you guide your pistol back into retention. This makes a good indexing point that you can hone in on when reholstering. The overall size, weight and feel of the ODIN holster is perfect for the casual weekend shooter or 3-Gun competitor, but it's built tough enough to be utilized in the field and on deployment where it has already proven itself in the Middle East and eastern Europe. Highlander Tactical has purpose-built an excellent Kydex holster that's 100 per cent Canadian sourced from the ground up and I'm happy to continue to purchase and use them. If you want to pick up an ODIN holster, they start at \$90 CAD and go up from there depending on attachments. See their website at www.highlandertactical.com. 🏆



SHOTGUN SCHOOL

Redneck Country's trapshooting/shotgunning clinic

BY JEFF HELSDON

Hitting a target 108 millimetres across, moving at 42 miles per hour, may seem like a daunting task to new shotgunners. Being expected to do it consistently 100 times in a row increases the challenge exponentially. Welcome to the sport of trapshooting.

Trapshooting is this continent's most common form of practice for wing shooters. It's practiced both informally

at local clubs and formally through the Amateur Trapshooting Association (www.shootata.com). With a few modifications, it's also an Olympic sport.

REDNECK COUNTRY

For those who want to learn trapshooting, or someone who just wants to improve shotgunning skills in general, the best option is professional instruc-

tion. And one way to get it is from Don and Todd Millard and Scott Goodall who regularly run a trapshooting/shotgunning clinic through their company, Redneck Country. Presented at their home base of St. Thomas Gun Club, in St. Thomas, Ont., the course teaches the theory and practice of hitting with a shotgun. Besides the Millards and Goodall, when I took the course



Todd Millard, left, demonstrates how having your elbow lifted and cheek locked to the stock prevents the shooter from lifting his or her head off the stock when shooting.

Redneck Country's Trevor Blair also assisted.

THE BASICS

"There is no right or wrong way to stand on the line, or right or wrong way of shooting," Don said. "All four of us have different styles."

"We can give you the principles and you'll develop your own style," Todd added. "The first principle is to point, not aim a shotgun, and focus on the target." Todd explained the bead, or multiple beads if there are two, are used to line up prior to calling for the target, and after you're confident of your gun mount, look past them. "The number one reason new shooters miss is they look at the goose, duck, rabbit or target and think, 'Is that ever moving fast,'" he

said. "You have to forget that and have the gun move to where you're looking."

Speaking more specifically to trap, Don said the number one reason for missing is the shooter taking their head off the stock to look for the target. Their solution is to have the elbow up, about parallel to the level of the gun, as this locks the cheek to the stock. This is the first part of the basics of proper form.

"You cannot lift your cheek or your head if your elbow is up," Todd explained. "It's important for the dominant eye to be in line with the front bead. This is a function of how the gun is held, but also the fit of the gun."

"If the eye is off by 1/16th-of-an-inch, that discrepancy gets really big at 40 yards," Don said. "Make sure you put that gun up the same every time."

Proper stance involves putting more of the body's weight on the front foot. This helps to absorb recoil. Then, with the gun up, call for the target. Any swinging is done from the hips, not by pushing or pulling the gun with the arms. "You want to do the same whether you're trapshooting, shooting sporting clays or hunting," Todd said. After which he pointed out that the secret is to match the target's speed and plane, then pull through the target. It was emphasized many misses are because the shooter didn't follow through and stopped the gun.

During the class, the Millards used a giant photo of a trap house with clays flying in different directions to illustrate the lead at some of the potential angles. The chart was created and brought to >



The basics of proper form are taught in the classroom before shooters go to the trap field to put what they learned into practice.

life as a training aid by champion trapshooter and long-standing St. Thomas Gun Club member, Terry Jordan. Jordan provides the chart for the Redneck Country trapshooting clinic free of charge in order to assist with the growth of the sport. It's available online at www.learntrapshooting.com.

EQUIPMENT

Most popular shotguns come in various configurations, often including trap-specific models. The Millards explained some of the differences in what the manufacturers call trap models.

To understand one of the primary dif-

ferences, it's necessary to understand a shotgun's point of impact and how it's expressed in percentages. With traditional field guns, the pattern is known as 50/50, because half of the pattern strikes above the bead and half below. Although exact percentages vary with manufacturers, and even models, a trap gun usually shoots with 70 per cent of the pattern above the point of impact and 30 per cent below. However, they can also be adjusted to other pattern distributions depending on the shooter's style and preference.

Sporting clays guns don't usually shoot as high as trap guns. Most shoot-

ers here prefer a 60/40 pattern so they can float the target above their barrel when shooting. Some shoot the same as field guns, with a 50/50 pattern, in which case the shooter would have to cover the target.

The Millards provided a little insight on ammunition also. Costs start around \$6 per box to reload shells, depending on components used. They said one of the advantages of handloading is that it provides a load tailored to the shooter's preference. A key differentiating factor in quality ammunition is the level of antimony in the shot. The more antimony, the harder the shot. "The harder



Don Millard, left, gives a few pointers to a shooter during the clinic.

the shot, the better the pattern and the better it breaks the target,"Todd said.

MIND GAMES

Anyone who has shot many trap targets knows they can break any target emerging from the trap house. The challenge is to break 25 in a row. But achieving that is as much a battle of the mind as it is physical ability.

As a trap shooter, I have committed all the sins, including counting targets, thinking about the next target and beating myself up for the one I just missed. So, when the Millards talked about how to overcome these challenges, it was

good to know I wasn't the only one who faced them.

"Make your mind blank, let your instincts take over," Don said. He explained it's also about practice, practice, practice. "You need your body to have a built-in automatic motion." Building muscle memory by repetition is not unique to shooting, it's something stressed in many competitive athletics – putting a basketball in a net is about muscle memory, technique and focusing on the target. Shooting is no different. "When you're down to the last five targets, you can't think about it, you have to focus," Don said. "You can't be

thinking about the other shooters."

COACHING CERTIFICATION

Todd is certified as a learning facilitator – instructor, beginner shotgun course as well as coach – instructor, beginner shotgun workshop. These are certifications are conducted by the Shooting Federation of Canada and Ontario Council of Shooters and allow him to train other coaches. The topics he covers when training trainers include safety, ethics, fitness, how to relate to individuals/teams, basics of a shotgun, shotgun mount, stance, swing, and most important, seeing the target.



REVIEW

BERETTA'S A400 XCEL SPORTING BLACK

An old adage says, "Beware the man (or woman) with one gun, as they likely know how to use it." While I can certainly see the advantages of shooting one gun for hunting and practice, I do like the wider rib of a competition gun and some of the other features. The A400 Xcel Sporting Black edition gave me the best of both worlds – it let me shoot the competition version of my field gun, yet it gave me the features of a competitive gun.

Released in 2017, the A400 Xcel Sporting Black was Beretta's newest competitive shotgun last summer. It carries on the tradition of Beretta's Black edition competition shotguns like the DT11, 690 and 692. The common feature of the Black line is a wide, 10-millimetre, carbon fibre rib. In the case of the A400 black, it reduces the barrel weight by four ounces, for improved swing and target acquisition.

The core of the gun is the A400 action, which Beretta claims is the fastest-shooting action on the market. It also claims to be one of the softest-shooting guns. In the case of the A400 Black, this includes a Kick-Off hydraulic recoil reduction system at the base of the stock and a MicroCore recoil pad. The Kick-Off system does restrict

the ability to change the length of pull, but the gun has shims to change the cast and the drop at the heel. There's also an oversized bolt release and handle to aid working them with gloves on. The forend cap is weighted and can be changed to adjust the balance of the gun. The chokes are extended versions of the A400's Optima choke system.

The sporting model of this gun shoots 50/50, but if more flexibility is wanted, the A400 Multitarget features an adjustable stock and rib. Shane O'Connell of Stoeger Canada said the pattern on this gun can be adjusted from 50/50 all the way up to 100/0.

Since I shoot an A400 Xtreme field gun, I found switching to the Black a seamless transition. One difference is the Kick-Off of the Black is located at the butt-end of the stock, while it is in the middle of the stock in the Xtreme. I found with the Kick-Off at the butt I could tuck the gun in tight and depress the Kick-Off slightly for consistency. With a length of pull at 14.5 inches, the gun fit me perfectly, and I did have the Millards check the fit. My biggest issue with the A400 Xcel Sporting Black was having to return it after the course. Expect to pay about \$2,750 CAD if you want one. 🍀

AT THE LINE

My go-to hunting gun is a Beretta A400 Xtreme field gun, so to take this course I obtained the loan of a Beretta A400 Xcel Sporting Black, on the assumption I would do my best with a familiar gun. This shotgun is a multi-purpose target gun, not a trap-specific gun, so it didn't shoot as high as some dedicated trap guns. Still, I adjusted to it quickly and was grinding clays in no time.

There was more advice before we shot. Todd's technique is that guns were to be closed after the person two positions before fired. This, he says, helps place all your concentration on the targets and raising your gun. We were told to have a positive grip on the gun with our right hand (for right-handed shooters) to help absorb recoil and then to concentrate on the trap house, looking for the streak of orange.

I went into the day not having shot trap in a few months. Grinding through the 10 boxes of shells provided over the two days, it came back to me quickly. Sometimes I shot over targets, I was behind a few and was even in front of one. But my most common reason for missing was stopping my swing. From what I heard on the line, this was the most common mistake amongst other shooters as well.

One neat feature of the Redneck Country clinic is the championship. At some time during the day, every shooter gets to call one round their championship round. The score is recorded, and the high shooter of the day has their name engraved on a trophy. I learned enough during the weekend that my 23/25 tied for the championship. Unfortunately, my mental game fell apart in the shoot-off and I lost there.

The aftermath of the course was better shooting, not just on clays, but on live birds as well. I noticed an improvement in hitting ducks and scored my first double ever on pheasants last fall. If you live in Ontario and want to improve your shotgunning, I recommend a dose of Redneck Country; but if you're in another part of Canada, seek out a similar course closer to home. 🍀

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RIFLE SCHOOL

Picking off pencils at 100 yards

BY PATRICK HAYNES

Early on a Saturday morning, last June, I found myself at the Silverdale Gun Club, about 35 kilometres west of Niagara Falls, Ont., and south-east of Hamilton. Silverdale Gun Club is a multi-range outdoor facility, offering rifle, pistol, shotgun (trap) and archery. One distinction of Silverdale is that it allows non-members to visit and use the facilities for a fee. Another distinction is that it is the primary location for TDSA Canada's firearms training courses. It was a beautiful day for outdoor shooting, and I was excited to be learning something new: precision rifle.

TDSA Canada specializes in firearms training in southern Ontario. The majority of the TDSA courses revolve around advanced pistol and tactical rifle training, with occasional dynamic shotgun and precision rifle courses. Kim Little is the director of TDSA Canada, and her husband, Scott Little,

is the lead instructor. Scott brings a wealth of firearms experience to each class, plus a martial arts mindset that is focused and to the point. Being in business for 15 years, Scott works out of three ranges and builds rifles for his customers. Several years ago, my wife and I took TDSA's tactical rifle 1 course. We both learned a lot and had a great time. This time around, I signed up for TDSA's precision rifle 1 course, to see if a pistol guy could learn how to use a bolt-action rifle.

My gear for the day was a Savage Model 12 Target Series in 223 Remington with a Leupold VX-3i LRP 4.5-14x50mm MIL RFP scope with TMR reticle. I shot a combination of Hornady Steel Match and Frontier cartridges, which you can read about in my product review.

The class started bright and early, with approximately 13 students, Scott and three other instructors. Their goal

was to build foundational skills for the students to take home and practice, while maintaining a safe environment.

Scott was the most experienced precision rifle instructor in this class. While the other instructors were friendly and expert range officers, when asked for technical details on precision rifle, they almost always deferred back to Scott. This was a different experience from my tactical rifle course years ago, when all the instructors were confident, sharing their expertise with the students. The precision rifle course is offered only twice a year and the supporting instructors may not have as much experience delivering it. As a result, this had a negative impact on the student to instructor ratio, changing it from three students per instructor, to 13 students per instructor. The line was safe and well maintained; but there wasn't as much one-on-one interaction as you

Scott Little, lead instructor at TDSA Canada, working with a student during the precision rifle course.



might expect. This precision course promises basic skill mastery. When Scott spoke with you, you had his full attention and you learned. Scott worked up and down the firing line, offering non-stop instruction and feedback. Nonetheless, I had the impression that he was spread too thin.

The course was broken into two sections: foundational skills in the morning, and then practical application in the afternoon. While this was advertised as a prone rifle course working at both 100 and 200 yards, facility issues at Silverdale forced us to relocate to the 100-yard benchrest range. Now, as

a guy with occasional back issues and not terribly comfortable on a shooting mat, I didn't complain. This venue shift may have impacted the instructors and the flow of the class and certainly reduced their training options; but they adapted well, and the course proceeded smoothly.

After being welcomed and walked through range safety rules, everyone got down to work. Students were asked to warm up with some sighting shots, which provided baseline observations for the instructors. Next, Scott instructed that the key to precision rifle is developing consistency in your

shooting position. Your body must be square to the rifle and become its backstop. Everyone received feedback on their position, from how they sat at the bench, to how they connected with their rifles. The instructors were observing students and offering feedback. Everyone was encouraged to set and maintain a steady, consistent head position. Breathing and trigger control were introduced and reinforced. Throughout the remainder of the morning, we worked on these foundational skills, reviewed our groups and received encouragement.

The course included a lunch and



The course was broken into two sections: foundational skills in the morning, and then practical application in the afternoon.

TDSA delivered well. I've been at some corporate training functions and have been disappointed with what was available. Not so with TDSA! A cold buffet-style lunch was provided onsite, with a variety of sandwiches, salad, desserts and drinks. All the students appreciated the food, plus the opportunity to discuss what they learned with each other and the instructors. Eventually, we stopped stuffing our faces and managed to squeeze back into our shooting positions behind the benches.

The focus of the afternoon was on the application of what we learned in

the morning. TDSA provided a series of drills and activities that tested our ability to deliver the shot. These activities started off with precision in mind, incorporating some fun, and then shifted to target identification and acquisition under time constraints. The argument given was that stress would ingrain the process and make us better shooters. The targets varied in size while delivery time shrunk.

Initially, the activities were a lot of fun and built confidence. Unfortunately, as difficulty increased, some students were left behind to figure things out on their own. With the instructors focused on

directing activities and calling targets, there weren't many opportunities for instructive feedback and correction. At some stages, the majority of shots down the line were called as misses. On several activities, students either didn't understand the instructions or couldn't figure out which targets were to be engaged. This should have been a warning sign for the instructors that one-on-one corrections need to be made. On breaks, I talked with a few students who had started doing their own thing, working on groups during these activities, so they could use their expensive ammunition more purposefully.

This TDSA course is promoted as a precision rifle course for all levels of shooters.

DO NOT POST TARGETS HERE



This TDSA course is promoted as a precision rifle course for all levels of shooters, which establishes mastery and then incorporates stressors to simulate making the shot. To this end, I believe they delivered on their promise for intermediate and advanced shooters. The morning session introduces the fundamentals of precision rifle, which is especially important for novices. The initial precision activities added an element of fun that increased student engagement. Unfortunately, rapidly adding stressors and increasing difficulty led to technique failures. Intermediate shooters perceived this as a developmental challenge that spurred growth. Newer rifle shooters ended up throwing ammunition down range. Once technique fails, novices require feedback and a

fall-back activity to re-establish themselves and gain confidence before increasing difficulties again. This situation wasn't addressed in the course. Perhaps in the future, different activities could be developed according to skill level and run concurrently.

Scott Little is a knowledgeable and respected instructor. Students benefit from taking his courses and should consider some one-on-one training with him. TDSA has numerous students who are repeat customers because they learn to shoot while having fun. The valuable social aspect of these courses cannot be understated. You pay for and receive instruction; but, as a bonus, you get time with like-minded people, doing something that you love. Personally, I had a good experience, learned some skills and

met some great people. I believe that everyone else felt the same way. So, as a pistol guy, I did learn how to use a bolt-action rifle and actually hit a pencil, first shot, at 100 yards. That may or may not be impressive to some of my rifle friends; but, as a pistol guy, that was pretty cool. Thank you, Scott and Kim Little, plus all the people with TDSA, for an excellent day at the range. 🍀

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REVIEW

LEUPOLD'S VX-3I & HORNADY AMMUNITION

I recently had the opportunity to test a Leupold VX-3i LRP scope, as well as some the Hornady Steel Match and Frontier 223 Remington ammunition. After several range visits over the last few months, here are my thoughts.

Let's start with the scope, a Leupold VX-3i LRP 4.5-14x50mm scope, with a 30-millimetre tube (MSRP \$1,327). This was my first MIL scope, as opposed to MOA, and used the rear focal plane (RFP) with Leupold's TMR reticle. The VX-3i LRP is also available with a front focal plane (FFP) option. There are advantages and disadvantages to both systems, so if you're scope shopping be sure to educate yourself before parting with any cash.

I found the elevation and windage knobs beefy, with solid clicks. Additionally, the elevation turret has a travel indicator with a very positive zero stop. The side-mount focus is easy to find and adjust. The scope also features a quick-turn power selector with an integrated throw lever, making zooming while maintaining position easy. Leupold's Twilight Max Light Management System promises an extra 15 to 30 minutes shooting time early in the morning or late into the evening by improving light transmission through the glass. This is a clear, bright scope that is straightforward to use at 100 yards.

Once the scope was sighted in, I shot a combina-

tion of Steel Match and Frontier 55-grain cartridges. During my tests using a Savage Model 12, the groups were comparable, but I repeatedly had misfires with the Frontier ammunition. These appeared to be due to light primer strikes. Running a short comparative test, I had three misfires out of five shots with the Frontier, yet all Steel Match fired. Subsequent attempts with the misfires in the Savage resulted in rounds going down range. Further testing, using my Norinco CQa AR copy, fired all Frontier ammunition without a hitch. I suspect that the Frontier primers are just harder than other ammunition that I use. Your mileage may vary, so buy test lots beforehand.

During accuracy tests, while the groups were comparable, the Frontier slightly outperformed the Steel Match. Using a Chrony chronograph, muzzle velocity measurements were more consistent with the Frontier ammunition. It had a lower standard deviation than the Steel Match, possibly accounting for the tighter Frontier groups.

As of the time of writing, the MSRP for the Frontier is \$10.49 for 20 rounds, which is very attractive given its performance. Speaking with Adam Patterson, marketing manager for Korth Group, Hornady has discontinued Steel Match as of March 2019. If Steel Match is your preference, source and buy as much as you can now. If not, you should definitely give Frontier a try. 🚩





TIPS FROM THE PROS

Improving your IPSC game

BY ERIC R. PREVOST



"This sport is all about performing on demand and being consistent throughout multiple stages," says Alex Berdat.

There is no doubt that action shooting sports like IPSC are dominating the Canadian shooting sports scene. The high-intensity action of running and gunning on paper and steel targets brings shooting enthusiasts from far and wide to participate in these events. While most competitors can be classified as weekend warriors, there are those among the sport that have risen to IPSC all-star status. These shooters dominate provincial and national competitions and represent Canada at international events.

But what does it take to be one of these stars? Are their skills born or is there a secret formula to their success? Luckily for us, Alex Berdat and John Schneiderbanger were willing to share a few of their trade secrets.

THE ALL-STAR

Alex Berdat is arguably Canada's IPSC all-star. Ranked the number one production division shooter in Canada, he carries a long list of national and international competition championships to his trophy case. In competition, his speed, agility, accuracy and game play are not only a pleasure to

watch, but are also skills that many wish to emulate.

Alex's status has led him to be a full-time member of the XMetal Targets team and positioned him as a highly requested instructor with the XMetal Targets Shooting Academy. He is also a regular guest on several sport shooting podcasts, including the Practical Pistol Show, a weekly YouTube show hosted by IPSC legend Ben Stoeger. Since 2013, Alex has dominated the IPSC scene in Canada. He agreed to answer some of my questions about his secrets for success?

What do you do to prepare physically for your shooting season, and how important do you think this physical training is?

I try to stay active in life. So, for shooting, I like to work on my core to help my stance and control recoil better. Working on balance and explosiveness is also very important for getting in and out of awkward positions.

How much does equipment play a role in your success, or on holding back novice shooters?

I don't think you need the most ex-

pensive tools to do great in this sport. Having your equipment work reliably should be your number one priority. Also, proper technique will always overcome equipment. Of course, if you get serious in the sport, you'll want the best gear to help you perform at your top capabilities.

What role does mental preparation play in your training and competitive shooting?

It plays a huge role. This sport is all about performing on demand and being consistent throughout multiple stages. Don't be scared to fail though, especially in training. Make sure you pay attention, so you can learn why you failed and what you need to do to make it work.

What are some of the biggest lessons you have learned from your fellow competitors?

Mindset, including when it's time to push and when it's time to just shoot. Also, consistency is key. And that even the top shooters make mistakes, but they can keep their mind clear and stick to their game. Because it's not over until it's over!

"Having your equipment work reliably should be your number one equipment priority."



XMetal has been a significant part of your shooting over the past few years. How has this relationship helped your competitive shooting career?

I'm very fortunate to be able to work for XMetal Targets. They gave me an opportunity to work as a firearm instructor for their shooting academy. They've also helped me a lot with my training, so I can stay on top of my game.

What role does dry fire play in your training? How do you use it compared to live fire?

Dry fire is a form of training by itself. A lot of people neglect dry fire because they find it boring. But with the right exercises and by paying attention to the right things while dry firing, you can step your game up by a lot. Also, it doesn't cost anything except your

own personal time. About 20 minutes of dry fire daily can make you improve dramatically.

Any final advice, tips or information that you would like to share with IPSC shooters?

There's no magic pill to do great in this sport. You must train hard and set yourself goals to stay motivated and focused. Mistakes will happen, but they provide the best opportunity to learn and become a better shooter. It's a long process, so be patient. Keep going and have fun.

THE AMBASSADOR

You will not meet a nicer guy on the range than John Schneiderbanger. John exudes a passion for shooting sports and teaching shooters how they

can be a better IPSC competitor. After retirement, John took up IPSC in 2010, quickly working his way to becoming a certified range officer, then chief range officer by 2012, and finally a black badge instructor in 2013.

But John's passion for IPSC extends off the range as well. In 2013, John launched his YouTube channel, Shooters Inc., a successful Canadian IPSC shooting channel with competition footage, instructional tips and a variety of live and dry fire drills. Another strong member of the XMetal team, John has competed internationally as part of Canada's standard division team at the 2014 and 2017 world shoots.

You have a long and successful shooting career, including representation on national teams. But what are you most



proud of off the shooting range?

Outside of my passion for competitive shooting, I am most proud of my 30 years of service in the Canadian Armed Forces, which includes two operational tours in Bosnia in 1994 and 1997. I retired in 2009 as a Lieutenant Colonel, with my final post as the base commander of Canadian Forces Base Shilo in Manitoba.

As a black badge instructor, what do you see as a common deficiency appearing in most of the new shooters you train?

One of the most apparent deficiencies I see is their lack of confidence in handling their gun. It's not that they are unsafe, but they simply don't handle their gun with confidence. There is always that hesitation, for example, to

executing the "load and make ready" or the unload command when under pressure. This shows me they are likely only handling their pistol at the range while doing live fire. Unless you are going to the range three to four times a week, which the majority are not, their confidence in their gun handling skills tends to remain weak under any type of pressure or stress. Dry fire practice and training would make all the difference in developing these gun-handling skills and building confidence.

What are some of the most common shooting skill-related questions you get asked on your YouTube channel, Shooters Inc?

In terms of skills, I have been asked about speed reloads, getting good accuracy, why I draw the way I do and how

to shoot faster more accurately. I answer all these questions the same way, by relating everything to the basic principles and skills needed to shoot well, or in executing a technique. But more importantly, I explain the why to executing those skills. When the new shooter understands the why, they will execute the technique better and will understand what to look for in order to determine if they are doing it correctly.

A good example is speed reloads. Keeping the gun high during the reload saves time and ensures you can both visually and physically guide the magazine into the magwell fast and smoothly, getting back on target in a minimal amount of time. The further you lower the gun during a reload, the more time you waste.

What are some of the biggest lessons you have learned from your fellow competitors that have helped improve your game?

During the 2014 world shoot, the US senior standard team members told me not to load my high-capacity mags to full capacity, but always leave one round out so it is easier to seat the magazine during a speed reload. It's most unfortunate when you effect a beautifully executed reload only for the mag to drop out of the gun on the first shot. Also, don't try anything new for the first time in a match. Practice it first and get competent with the technique before using it in a match. You will likely save yourself from a huge disaster and an embarrassing situation.

How do you approach your training throughout the year? What role does range time play in that training, and how do you approach your range sessions?

During the winter months, I simply maintain my skills through dry fire practice and by going to the range at least once a week in order to maintain my ability to manage recoil and keep up my accuracy. I mainly work on accuracy by shooting groups and setting up small drills. Conducting movement through snow is difficult, so I keep



"Don't try anything new for the first time in a match. Practice it first and get competent with the technique before using it in a match."

the drills basic and compact. My sessions are one or two hours, shooting 250 rounds max.

I start my live-fire training in early April and go to the range a minimum of three times a week. Each training session is about three hours long and I shoot around 500 rounds. I start all live-fire training sessions with accuracy shooting, going through two or three mags shooting five-round groupings. Then I'll do some draw-and-shoot exercises in order to warm up. I'll draw and take a single shot for one or two mags and then do it again but two shots per draw. After this accuracy work, I'll do a couple of basic movement and shooting drills. Then I'll set up training stages for my main training focus for that session. I have developed about six of these, which are all easy and fast to set up and

require minimal props. They are simple to set up so that I will never feel it's too much work to use them. I think this is key to using training stages. Keep them simple, but make sure they allow you to focus on the specific skills and techniques you are practicing that day.

I never go to the range without knowing exactly what I want to focus on. I usually focus on three or four specific items and no more. In this way, I know that I will have dedicated enough time and effort to improving those training objectives for that particular range session.

Any final advice, tips or information you would like to share with IPSC shooters?

New shooters should concentrate on being as accurate as possible. The focus should be on accuracy and not speed.

Only shoot as fast as you can shoot alphas, speed will come with time and experience. Also, don't go to the range without a plan. Otherwise you will not use your time there effectively. And dry fire at least three times a week for 15 to 20 minutes and shoot as many matches as you can. Matches are great training!

THE NEXT CHAMPION

While Alex and John are at the top of their game, so are many other sport shooters that grace local and regional matches all over Canada. One thing all these shooters share is hard work and dedication to their sport, all the while being some of the best ambassadors for the shooting sports in Canada. Who knows, with a bit of perseverance and practice, maybe you will be the next IPSC shooting legend. 🏆



REVIEW

REVISION YOUR EYEWEAR

BY NATHAN RINTISCH

What do you get when a company, focused on tactical gear and eyewear for the military, takes on the needs of hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts? Not one, not two, but three precisely crafted, durable, stylish-looking pairs of sunglasses.

The Canadian company Revision has recently launched three new eyeglasses for us outdoor folks. They are the Revision Pursuer, the Revision Caller and the Revision Seeker. The three styles of glasses are each made with a different purpose in mind, offer three frame colours and the option of three different colour lenses. Each lens offers a different vision enhancement experience, but all are specifically designed for hunting, fishing and outdoor activities.

Revision says the Pursuer has been specifically optimized for mountain hunting, while the Caller features maximum protection for hunting and fishing on or near water. Their third model, the

Seeker, is more of a general-purpose product designed to provide maximum protection and performance in a wide variety of outdoor activities. All lenses are polarized and made of a high-grade polycarbonate that features a molecular, beehive-like structure for better durability and clarity than traditional polycarbonate lenses. Of course, they have 100 per cent UVA and UVB protection. The lenses also feature an extensive coating technology, which makes them water and oil-repellant, abrasion resistant and gives them anti-fogging properties. And if you need prescription lenses, those are also available.

The Revision sunglasses I've been testing arrived securely protected in an impressive-looking custom box. I went with the Seekers in golden colour with slate lenses. Also inside the box was a storage pouch, retention strap, what Revision calls a Pro Bag and an information booklet about their new glasses

and the technology built into them. I was surprised at how light the glasses are and that they fit my head perfectly (large is an accurate description for my head size).

After initial inspection and my own field testing, I'm ecstatic about the quality of these glasses. They are comfortable, tough, functional and look awesome – qualities that are hard to find in one pair of glasses. I noticed immediately how clearly the definition between objects and landscapes at different distances became. The arms of the glasses move smoothly from the closed to open position and they even have key-holes at the arm tips for a retention strap. But the icing on the cake for me is that they remain comfortable both to the eyes and the head with extended wear. All around fantastic glasses. The military has been using Revision products for many years and I think it's great they now have eyewear for the rest of us. 



PRACTICAL PRACTICE

Developing rifle skills for hunting
BY VANESSA HARROP



Practicing from realistic positions, like prone with a bipod, is essential for success in the field.

Some of the best target shooters I know are the worst shots in a hunting situation. It's not that they can't shoot, the scores on their targets prove they can; it's just that they haven't practiced enough under hunting conditions. Having all the time in the world to find the X-ring on a piece of paper is much less stressful than having a big buck walk out on a cutline and offer a momentary opportunity. Most hunters spend way too much time on the bench. It's a good place to sight your gun in, learn trigger control and learn to control your breathing, but people need to practice under real-world conditions. You aren't going to be dragging a bench around with you when hunting, so the best thing to do is practice situations you might encounter in the field.

SHOOTING FROM BIPODS

When shooting in the prone position, a bipod is your steadiest option, but what often gets overlooked is some type of rear rest as well. Much of the movement when you are shooting prone comes from the rear of the rifle. You won't be packing a rear rest with you, so I usually use a rolled-up sweater or

coat slipped under the rear of the stock. Another trick to increase your accuracy when shooting off the bipod is to take your hand off the forestock and either wrap it around your hand holding the rifle grip, or place it softly against the rest supporting the rear of the stock. Bench shooters do this all the time, but it's a lesson often forgotten when hunting. If you practice that way, it'll become second nature in the field.

A few years ago while hunting elk, I got on a good bull, but the closest I could get was just over 500 yards. The elk were spooked, and I didn't have much time, so I quickly went prone with a bipod for a front support. A rolled-up jacket worked for a quick rear rest and everything was steady and solid when I squeezed off the round. The big bull soaked up the bullet, stumbled a few steps and then fell to the ground. Had I not already been well practiced in that position, I doubt that I would have had success.

I'm a big fan of bipods and most rifles I shoot are equipped with a model that allows me to shoot from the prone or sitting position. I practice extensively from both positions and while sitting

is not as solid as prone, I have become comfortable to over 300 yards in this position as well.

SHOOTING STICKS – STANDING, KNEELING & SITTING

Obviously, you can't use a short bipod in all situations, especially in tall vegetation. In that situation, the best option is shooting sticks. They allow you to shoot from a sitting position all the way to the standing position, while still offering a relatively solid rest. At first glance, shooting sticks look like they would be easy to shoot from, but even after more than a decade of using them, I still practice often.

One of the often-overlooked skills with shooting sticks is getting them set up quickly at the perfect height. On our first trip to Namibia, our professional hunter told us that from the time the sticks went up until the animal spooked was approximately seven seconds. We struggled on that trip. We had practiced lots of shooting using sticks, but we hadn't practiced getting them to the perfect height and the rifle on them quickly. We didn't make that mistake again. >

Shooting sticks get the shooter above the vegetation, but it takes practice to use them quickly.



Practical practice includes things like shooting off a pack and in all weather conditions.



Make sure to adjust the height of the shooting sticks so that your feet are flat on the ground in a comfortable shooting stance and the butt of the rifle is nestled well into your shoulder. Your knees should be slightly bent. I prefer the three-legged sticks over a monopod or bipod. Set up the sticks so there is a leg on either side of your body and one out front. This enables you to push into the leg at the front and there's no interference with your stance. With lots of practice, there's no reason not to be proficient to 300 yards or more. Sticks can also be utilized in the sitting and kneeling positions and this should also be practiced.

BACKPACKS & NATURAL RESTS

As you can tell, I prefer to shoot from rests, but there will be situations where you won't have a bipod or shooting sticks. It's during those times that you need to get inventive. Practice off a backpack, a tree stump, fence post, side of a tree, or anything that might assist

you to have a solid rest. While this seems pretty rudimentary, unless it is second nature for you, it won't come easily when the pressure is on. Without giving it a second thought, I know exactly how to set my backpack on the ground or how to place my hand on a tree to prepare for a shot.

OFF-HAND

I'll shoot from a rest at every opportunity, but it's also important to practice off-hand, because you know that one day that buck of a lifetime will suddenly appear and you'll have nothing to rest your rifle on. To become proficient off-hand takes a lot of practice and few ever get to the point where they should be shooting much beyond 100 yards. That may be a blow to some egos, but unless you can consistently hit a 10-inch circle off-hand, you shouldn't be taking those shots. If nothing else, all the off-hand practice lets you know your ethical range to shoot without a rest.

RIMFIRES ARE YOUR FRIEND

You need to practice extensively with your hunting rifles, to become intimately familiar with the scope, safety and trigger. However, shooting the big centrefires a lot can cause a flinch and it can get expensive. A good, and cheaper, alternative is to practice drills and shooting positions with a rimfire. Find a rimfire that is similar in size to your centrefires and if you can afford it, mount a similar scope. The 17HMR is an ideal choice as it allows you to practice at ranges well beyond that of a 22LR. We use a Tikka T1x for the bulk of our practice. It shoots great and with the right scope is effective to 300 yards.

REACTIVE TARGETS

Forget shooting paper targets when practicing for hunting situations, and don't get too focused on the size of your groups. You just need to ensure all shots are within the kill zone, which is typically a 10-inch circle. That's where using reactive targets is great, and steel gongs are ideal. Whether you are at 100 yards or 600 yards, hearing that sweet ping of the bullet hitting steel is a great reward. Avoid putting an aiming point on your gong as well. You want to become well practiced at naturally finding centre mass and hitting it consistently.

TRAINING DRILLS

Cycle Rapidly

A common mistake hunters make is not cycling the rifle's action quickly enough for a follow-up shot. As soon as you take the shot, your cheek weld should not break from the stock and with one smooth motion you should be chambering a new round and reacquiring your target in the scope. It drives me crazy when people lift their heads after a shot to look. The best look you will ever get is through your scope, so practice this religiously.

Change Positions

One nasty habit I had was that after taking a shot off sticks, I kept my feet glued to the ground, and it would take someone telling me to move after the animal. I knew I needed to break this habit before my hunt for cape buffalo in Tanzania. So, we set up a gong at 100 yards and I took my first shot off the sticks. But as soon as I fired, I'd cycle the bolt, then my hunting partner would tell me to shoot again quickly or perhaps to move up 50 yards and shoot off-hand. Not knowing what was coming next was the key to making this work. You can do the same, switching between standing and prone shots or virtually any position. The key is to do it rapidly until it becomes second nature.

Speed Drills

To practice acquiring targets quickly, set up six different coloured targets at varying distances. Then, standing with the gun at the low ready, have a friend call out a certain colour and start the countdown. You must find the target, shoulder the rifle and make the hit. This should be practiced from all positions with a variety of shooting rests. Not only does this help you with target acquisition, it helps you make split-second decisions as to what the best shooting position is to get the hit. Then, shoot the four remaining targets as your partner calls out the remaining colours. Track your progress with this drill to see how your times decrease.

It's Gopher Season!

Nothing beats practice at live targets, and gophers, or ground squirrels as they are more properly called, make ideal quarry for off-season practice. Again, practice shooting from all po-



Shooting gophers or other small varmints really helps improve spotting, ranging and target-acquisition skills.

sitions with all rests. Sure, you could likely hit every one you shoot at with a bipod, but that's not the point. Shooting gophers really helps improve your spotting, ranging and target acquisition skills. We like to head out with our 17HMR and have a set pattern of shooting positions we go through. Track your percentage of hits from day to day and it will quickly become apparent which shooting positions are your weakest, and then you can concentrate more on those. If you are preparing for a particular hunt, then by all means concentrate on those shooting positions exclusively. Before we go to Africa, we'll shoot several thousand rounds off of sticks at gophers, remembering the seven-second window of opportunity. Once you are proficient at shooting these tiny targets, a big game animal at 200 yards will seem easy.

Mental Exercises

Good hunters not only understand their quarry, are great stalkers and are well practiced with their firearms, they are also constantly aware of their surroundings and where they will take their next shot from if opportunity suddenly presents itself. A good drill to go through with a partner along is to go for a walk through a typical hunting area. The partner will then occasionally call out that he sees an animal in a certain place, and you must react by preparing for the shot. If you are set up quickly, you did your job right; but if you aren't, analyze why and what you could have done better. Always be looking for your next rest, your next flat spot to shoot prone or for an opening that will offer a shot.

Last season, I was hunting moose in Alberta. We spent the morning tracking a beautiful bull but lost him

in some thick cover. By the time we spotted him again, he was running. We'd just passed an opening that I'd taken mental note of, so I set the sticks up with my 300WM Finnlight pointed toward the opening, not the moose. As planned, the moose ran into the opening and paused. There was no time to range him, but I guessed 225 yards and later we determined he was at 224 yards. I wasted no time squeezing the trigger and launching a 200-grain bullet. He humped up and the sweet sound of the impact thump filled our ears.

If I hadn't spent time practicing different real-life scenarios earlier in the year, I doubt I would have been as efficient and confident. Having the familiarity with your gear to quickly and efficiently adapt to any conditions in order to place the perfect shot, only comes with practical practice. 🏆



THE CANADIAN UNIVERSITY SHOOTING FEDERATION

BY TIMOTHY FOWLER

The Canadian University Shooting Federation (CUSF) started in 2018 as a non-profit organization to promote competitive shooting sports at Canadian colleges and universities. David Fahlman is the current president and he told me, "I want students to be able have the same experience I had in university. I really enjoyed the shooting club and the sense of community that brought me together with a bunch of my fellow firearms enthusiasts. A bunch of my buddies are super jealous after we got it started. They said, 'Oh man, I wish I had this at my university.' Our end goal is to give everyone the same opportunity."

So far, seven post-secondary schools have joined the CUSF and the organization is working with 11 others to help them develop new, competitive shooting clubs. The goals for the CUSF are twofold:

- For CUSF to become a recognized non-profit (and potentially receive charity status) dedicated to promoting shooting sports in Canadian post-secondary institutions and,

- to create university-level shooting teams that are part of the school's athletic program

Fahlman encourages clubs to focus on formal coaching and competition. He prefers clubs be part of the athletic programs at the universities and colleges where they reside. This structure makes for a more permanent connection to the school than clubs which are part of a students' union, because student leadership turns over every few years.

Fahlman became familiar with the use of firearms on his uncle's farm in northern Saskatchewan when he was a kid. He started in shooting sports as a casual shooter, with his first purchase being an SKS rifle. When attending Carlton University in Ottawa, he joined the firearms association, found a shotgun coach, recruited 10 interested students and put together structured shooting lessons at a reasonable cost. After 18 months, he reached out to other active firearms groups at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University in Calgary for an inter-school competitive shotgun tournament.

CUSF focuses on reaching interested shooters on campus and supports them through the recognized shooting clubs. Fahlman and his colleagues have learned valuable lessons about overcoming resistance and finding the best way to help new shooting clubs succeed. They have developed a road map for new clubs to follow towards becoming a recognized club. CUSF shares templates that can be customized to each new club's situation, and this makes the on-site club leadership roles easier to execute because much of the work has been done already.

Fahlman said he loves his range days and introducing people to shooting sports. "Once they start shooting, they love it. Most people are over the moon after shooting." His advice for firearms enthusiasts wanting to start a university shooting sports club is, "Most of the opposition people see is in their own head. All it takes to be successful is to present yourself in a reasonable manner and you will not face much opposition."

For more information, visit the CUSF website at www.cusf.ca. 



high velocity hollow
.22 Rimfire long rifle / Longue Rifle
50
ELEY

established 1828 | accuracy defined
ELEY
high velocity hollow
rec pak
premium .22LR
98
1250
300 rds
E



A hollow point
unmatched expansion
patented black oxide
case that provides greater
ballistic consistency resulting
legendary ELEY accuracy

Eley hollow-point ammunition uses black cases for high-velocity and plain brass for subsonic. These bullets were recovered from ballistics gel and illustrate how different impact velocities affect bullet expansion.



TARGET ACCURACY, HUNTING PERFORMANCE

Testing Eley's 22 LR hunting ammunition

BY LOWELL STRAUSS

Eley competition ammunition is renowned for its accuracy, being the ammunition of choice for many Olympic target shooters. If a shooter is going for gold, there's a good chance Eley Tenex is in the chamber. However, Eley also manufactures ammunition for the rimfire action shooting sports, as well as two types of hollow-point hunting ammunition. And it's the latter offering which is the focus of this article.

I've always believed there's no better place to test the accuracy and terminal ballistics of any 22 Long Rifle hollow-point ammunition than a pasture overrun with gophers. And a population explosion of Richardson's ground squirrels (a.k.a. gophers) provided exactly the sort of target-rich environment needed. These varmints are the bane of ranchers and farmers, damaging pastures and croplands with their burrows and voracious appetites. So, in June 2018, myself and two other shooters converged on a ranch in southwest Saskatchewan, attempting to put a dent in its gopher population while collecting data in the name of ballistic science.

ELEY HOLLOW-POINT 22 LR AMMUNITION

Eley's hollow-point hunting ammuni-

tion is sold in two varieties: high-velocity, with an advertised muzzle velocity of 1,250 feet per second; and subsonic, with an advertised muzzle velocity of 1,040 feet per second. Both types are designed for penetration and expansion in game. Subsonic ammunition offers a quieter muzzle report, while high-velocity ammunition is supersonic at the muzzle, increasing its effective range while delivering more dramatic results on pests.

Both the high-velocity and subsonic offerings use a 38-grain, low-antimony lead alloy bullet with a deep cavity in the nose. The combination of a soft lead alloy and hollow-point design ensure maximum expansion within the practical limits of the 22 LR for varmint and small-game shooting. The bullets are lubricated with paraffin wax for smooth feeding in all action types. All Eley ammunition uses the patented Eley Prime compound – an automated dry priming system. If you've ever shot Eley, you'll know what Eley Prime smells like. Some say it smells like success. Eley's high-velocity hollow-point ammunition has a black oxide-finished case, while subsonic cases are plain brass – a difference that helps shooters differen-

tiate between the two types of ammunition in the hand.

My testing of this ammunition was divided into two phases. Starting in the field, and using several different rifles, myself and the two other shooters made observations about hit ratios, sound levels, accuracy, distance and terminal effects. These anecdotal observations were then compared later in phase two, which happened at the range using paper targets and ballistic gel.

RELIABILITY

During both the field and range tests, the Eley hunting ammunition functioned flawlessly. We shot over 1,200 rounds, and there were no failures-to-fire. Every single round went bang when it was supposed to. The ammunition cycled well in a variety of guns, including a new Ruger Precision Rimfire, a couple of Ruger 10/22 semi-autos and a bolt-action Lithgow LA 101 Crossover. One of the 10/22s had a custom barrel with a tight match chamber, and after a few days of slinging lead, the bolt got a bit sluggish. This wasn't surprising because it hadn't been cleaned. But who's got time for cleaning a gun in

Saskatchewan fence posts make a handy rest for the author when shooting gophers.



the field during the non-stop action of a gopher hunt?

VELOCITY

Later, at the range, when I chronographed this ammunition by shooting it from my 21-inch barrelled Lithgow, I found the velocities to be lower than advertised. The high-velocity ammunition averaged 1,199 feet per second with an extreme spread of 21 feet per second. That's 51 feet per second slower than the velocity listed on the box. This is on the low end of other high-velocity ammunition on the market. Subsonic ammunition averaged 1,009 feet per second, 31 feet per second slower than advertised, with an extreme spread of 47 feet per second.

A friend chronographed this ammunition as well, using an Anschutz rifle with a 22-inch barrel. He recorded similar results with the high-velocity ammunition, but his gun shot the subsonic almost 50 feet per second faster – showing once again that when it comes to rimfire ammunition, no two barrels perform the same.

ACCURACY

Eley touts its hollow-point ammunition as the "perfect round for hunters and pest controllers who need maximum velocity without compromising accuracy." Considering Eley's reputation and my own experience shooting their target ammunition, I had high hopes for Eley's hunting ammunition. And I wasn't disappointed. The high-velocity hollow-point's accuracy was outstanding. My range test gun was the Australian-made Lithgow Arms LA101 Crossover. Off the bench, a series of two five-shot groups at 50 metres averaged 0.28 inches. My best five-shot one-hole group (not included in the average) measured 0.12 inches! Now that's tack-driving accuracy! If the shooter does their part, this ammunition will consistently terminate varmints and small game at 100 metres or more. In the field, we picked off gophers out to 125 metres with this ammunition.

On paper, the subsonic ammunition shot reasonably well. My two best five-shot groups averaged 0.56 inches. But other groups were as large

as 0.84 inches. While my test lot was less accurate and less consistent than its high-velocity sibling, subsonic ammunition still shoots minute-of-gopher out to 100 metres. The subsonic's practical accuracy was on par with the high-velocity, killing just as many gophers at distances under 75 metres. My friend scored the longest kill-shot with this ammunition at 100 metres (111 yards).

As expected, despite using the same type and weight of bullet, the high-velocity and subsonic offerings performed differently from my test rifle at the range. It demonstrates the need to test each rifle with a variety of ammunition to find the optimal pairing. However, in the field I noticed the muted report of the subsonic didn't disrupt the gophers as much as the high-velocity's sharp sonic crack, meaning our targets spent more time out of their burrows and in harm's way. I also heard fewer ricochets from this ammunition when compared with the high-velocity, though I can't quantify this observation.



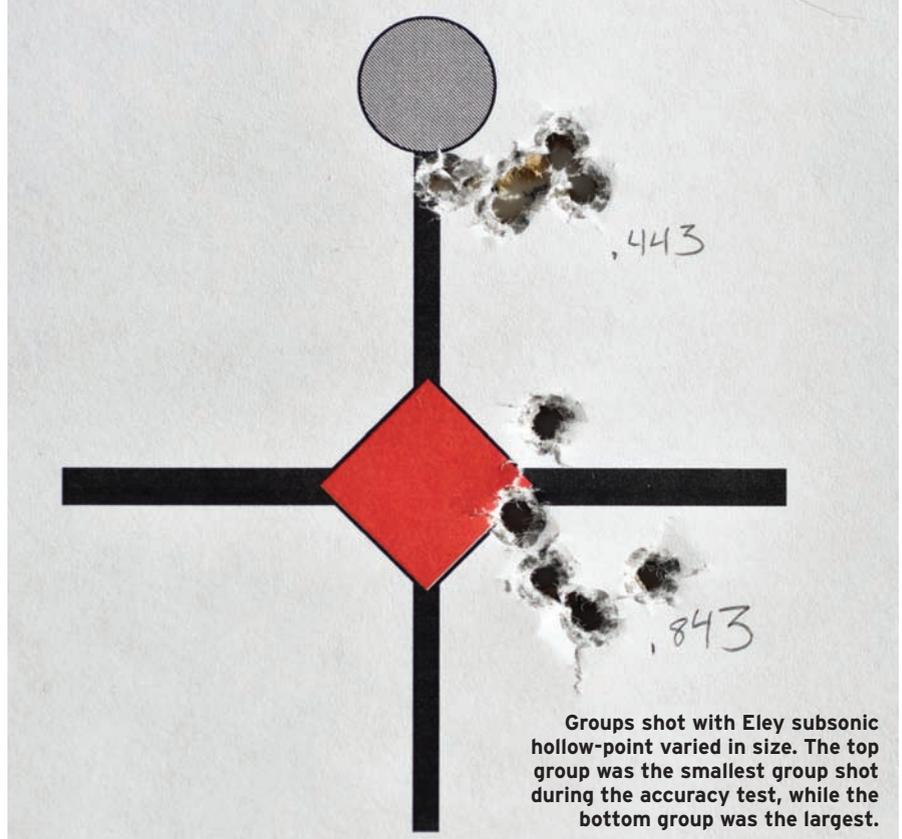
POINT OF IMPACT

Hunters switching between Eley's high-velocity and subsonic ammunition should be aware of a point of impact shift. As we'd expect, at 50 yards the high-velocity bullets impacted higher than the subsonic bullets. The POI change is consistent, so to correct the zero simply dial the elevation down for high-velocity ammunition and up for subsonic to zero the rifle. In my test rifle, this difference was about 1.2 inches. Most scope turrets are calibrated for 100 yards, so remember to double the number of clicks at 50 yards for the same amount of adjustment.

TERMINAL BALLISTICS

Hollow-points are designed to expand on impact, increasing the surface area of the bullet. This larger, expanded-diameter bullet then translates into a wider wound channel. To test this ammunition for expansion, I shot some samples into Clear Ballistics test media (ballistic gel) and observed some interesting results.

The high-velocity bullets expanded to 0.39 inches, a 77 per cent increase in diameter, and began to tumble through the



Groups shot with Eley subsonic hollow-point varied in size. The top group was the smallest group shot during the accuracy test, while the bottom group was the largest.

ballistic media, stopping in the gel at an average depth of 6.75 inches. Obviously, the wide frontal area slowed the bullets in the media, reducing penetration. For comparison, the high-velocity bullets have the same velocity at 50 yards as the subsonic bullets do at the muzzle.

The terminal ballistics of the subsonic ammunition surprised me. Bullets from this ammunition penetrated deeper into the media than the high-velocity bullets. Shots varied from 7.5 inches deep to 12 inches deep, with an average penetration of 9.4 inches, 40 per cent deeper than the high-velocity bullets. After extracting the bullets, it was clear that these bullets were near a velocity threshold, as the bullet with the most penetration didn't mushroom at all. Without expansion, it performed more like a round-nose solid bullet. Less expansion equals less friction, allowing the bullets to travel deeper into the ballistic media. However, I can't identify any occurrence of a failure to expand in the field, where even the longest shots exhibited large exit holes.

In comparison, when we ran out of hollow-point ammunition in the field, we switched to lead round-nose bullets. Solid bullets require a head-shot for an instant kill, versus the hollow-point bullets that cause more damage and can produce quicker kills. Of course, the goal of any hunter is to deal a first-shot lethal blow, killing their prey fast. To drop animals in their tracks, the bullet must be able to penetrate the skin and cause massive tissue damage to prevent critters

from escaping down their burrow. The 22 LR is a low-power round using a light bullet, so for ground squirrel and larger-sized animals, a hollow-point bullet is essential.

PARTING SHOTS

In summary, I found Eley's hollow-point ammunition to be a deadly-accurate hunting round. Though not nearly as expensive as premium competition ammunition, this high performance comes at a price. Eley's hunting ammunition retails for about \$11 per box of 50 or \$63 for a 300-round Rec Pack. That is significantly more than the competitor's bulk hunting ammunition, but Eley out-performs budget ammunition with much better accuracy, increased consistency and ultra-reliable performance. You'll need to decide if its benefits outweigh the higher price tag.

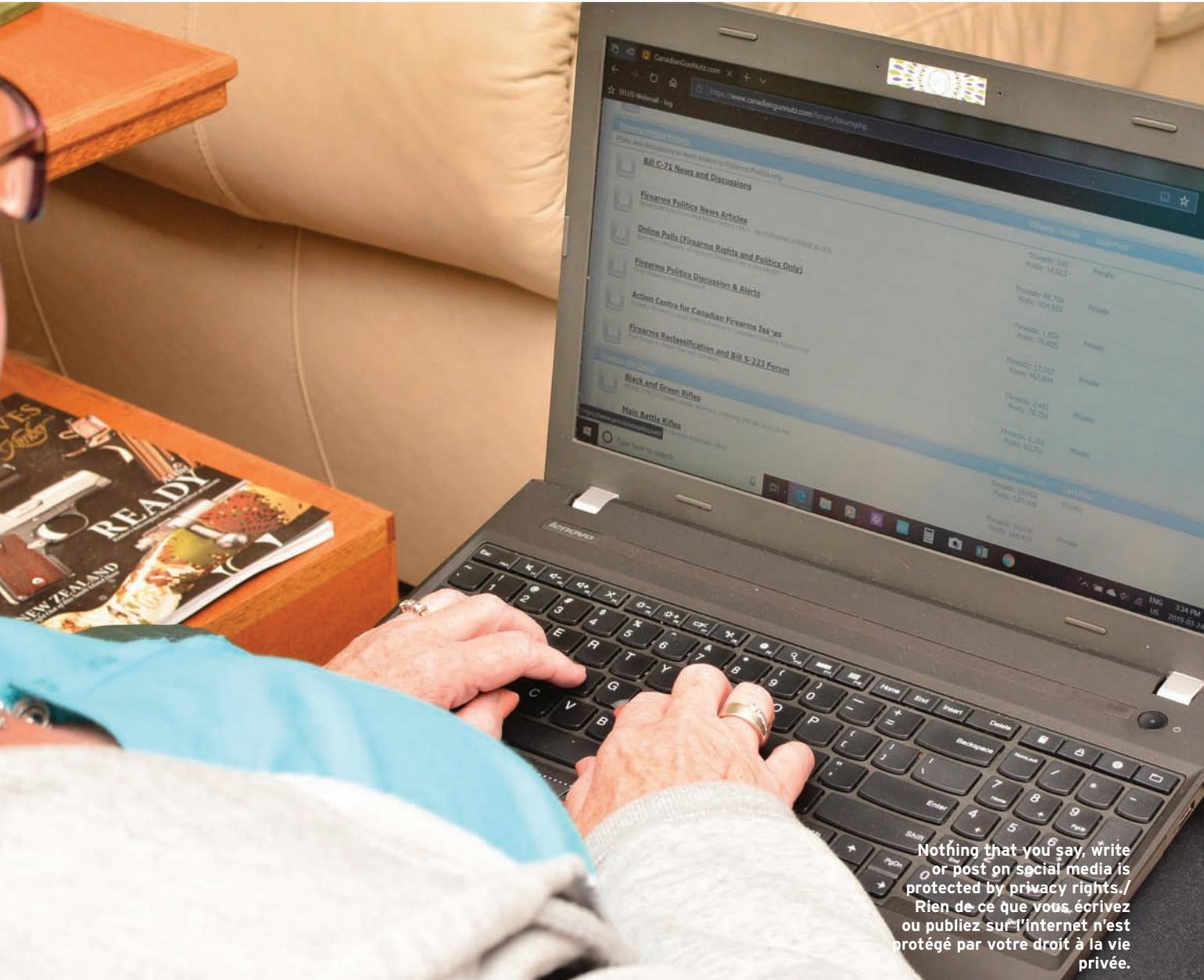
Eley hunting ammunition is perfect for hunting edible small game, where head shots are needed to minimize meat loss. For example, in some provinces, hunting upland birds with a 22 LR is allowed. When the target's head is the size of a toonie, accurate ammunition is needed to get the job done. Also, for exterminating wily animals like raccoons and skunks, accurate ammunition will ensure precisely placed first-shot hits. By the time you're reading this article, I'll be back in the gopher patch sniping gophers with Eley hollow-points. Try some in your rifle. I'm confident you'll be impressed by its deadly accuracy. 🍀



Legal Corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney at Law

A Breath Of Fresh Air & A Stern Reminder



Nothing that you say, write or post on social media is protected by privacy rights. Rien de ce que vous écrivez ou publiez sur l'internet n'est protégé par votre droit à la vie privée.

Some time ago, when this column was only in English, I wrote about the perils of social media activity facing firearms owners. A recent landmark decision of the Ontario Court of Justice in *R. v. Sorbie*¹ serves as a perfect illustration of some of the issues that I was talking about and a stern reminder that those perils are indeed very real.

THE CONTEXT

The respondent, Jim Sorbie, is a decorated veteran of the British military and a dual citizen of Great Britain and Canada, residing in Canada. He had no criminal record and no prior conduct that was a concern to police. He is also an expert in firearms, having been an instructor

in the use of firearms, use of force and rules of engagement with the British military.

Mr. Sorbie appears to be a man who holds strong, sometimes controversial opinions and is not afraid to share them with others on social media. He comes across as the exact opposite of politically correct.

What got him in trouble are statements and pictures that he posted on Facebook, which were obviously meant as sarcasm, at least to anyone with a basic understanding of firearms. The posts included pictures of Mr. Sorbie holding unspecified restricted firearms, and the following statement: "The Libtard is strong on MSM (mainstream media) at the moment. I'm going to buy myself one of those fully semi-automatic assault rifles that can fire 3,000 bullets at each trigger press and kill everyone in the room in seconds. I already have some 5,000 bullet clips."

As a result of these posts, an anonymous caller made a report to police, who in turn applied for a search warrant based on alleged threats made by Mr. Sorbie. A judge granted the warrant, based upon the threat allegations. The police then proceeded to search Mr. Sorbie's home and seized his firearms.

Obviously, no fully semi-automatic rifles or 5,000-round clips were found. As a matter of fact, there was no evidence of any crime, and no charges were laid. As the judge rightly points out, "To anyone with a basic understanding of firearms (or, indeed, grammar. "Fully semi-automatic?"), this is clearly utter non-sense. To anyone trained in firearms, such as a police officer or anyone who holds a firearms acquisition license for either restricted or non-restricted weapons, this utter nonsense clearly appears to be tongue-in-cheek or, as put by the respondent, sarcastic."

THE PROCEEDINGS

Despite the obvious sarcasm, the police nevertheless sought and obtained a warrant, searched Mr. Sorbie's home and seized his firearms. Even worse, within 24 hours, and in spite of the fact no charges were laid, they applied for a disposition order and a prohibition order. If successful, that application would have resulted in the forfeiture of Mr. Sorbie's firearms, as well as his inability to possess firearms for five years.

At the disposition/prohibition order hearing, the Crown/police presented extensive evidence of Mr. Sorbie's social media activity in both the United Kingdom and Canada. What is troubling is that although police/Crown knew or should have known that the alleged threat had

no substance whatsoever, they nevertheless pursued the matter, because they appear not to have liked (no pun intended) what Mr. Sorbie stood for. Amongst his "controversial statements" were references to British immigration policies, to Islam as a source of terrorism, to the treatment of women by Arab/Muslim countries, to "libtards," to "snowflakes," to gender identity, to the Coulton Boushie matter and to one's right to use firearms in a self-defense situation. The police appear to have gone to great lengths to find as much controversial material as they could on Mr. Sorbie, including some posts on the Canadiangunnutz online forum that you are likely familiar with.

"Under Canadian firearms law, as it currently stands, access to firearms is deemed to be a privilege, as opposed to a right². Chief firearms officers and police often refer to that saying as justification to revoke or deny licences somewhat capriciously."

THE UNDERLYING LEGAL ISSUES

At issue was whether a person who held politically incorrect views ought to be allowed access to firearms. As the judge put it: "The Crown is arguing that (Mr. Sorbie's) comments did not show the restraint necessary to (sic) a gun owner because his comment did not appreciate what this phrasing might mean to someone utterly ignorant of firearms and, perhaps, devoid of the common sense that might suggest you learn something about a subject before complaining to the state."

Under Canadian firearms law, as it currently stands, access to firearms is deemed to be a privilege, as opposed to a right². Chief firearms officers and police often refer to that saying as justification to revoke or deny licences somewhat capriciously. In the Sorbie case, the Crown used that argument to confiscate Mr. Sorbie's firearms and make him subject to a

prohibition order, although there was no objective evidence that he was a threat to public safety. Fortunately, the presiding judge would have none of that.

THE OUTCOME

In a long-winded decision, the judge emphasized that although access to firearms may be viewed as a privilege, it is a privilege that is rooted in common law and not one that may be taken away capriciously and/or without due process. He concluded that one's exercise of his freedom of expression, through fair comments and participation in public or political debate, albeit offensive to some, is not a bar to access to firearms in the absence of an objective threat to public safety.

So, in the end, Mr. Sorbie prevailed. He got his guns and his licence back. No prohibition order was issued. Unfortunately for him, he probably also incurred a very substantial legal bill, which likely will forever be a stern reminder that we now live in a society that is becoming less and less tolerant of speech and points of view that are politically incorrect.

One thing that stands out from the Sorbie case is the extent to which the Crown and police went to find damaging information about Mr. Sorbie on the Internet. This reminded me of a recent case of mine, where a CFO used the fact that a friend of a firearms licensee (as opposed to the licensee himself) had "liked" a photograph depicting a member of the Hell's Angels on Facebook, as part of their evidence to support a licence revocation.

Discussion forums and social media are indeed monitored by police and chief firearms officers. Social media is not private. Nothing that you say, write or post on social media is protected by privacy rights. Keep that in mind the next time you feel like trolling, using sarcasm or simply posting something that may come back to haunt you; unless, of course, you want to be the next Jim Sorbie. 🚩

References

¹Court file # 3811-998-18-1934

²See R. v. Wiles, (2005) 3 S.C.R.. 1378



Rubrique Juridique

Guy Lavergne, avocat

Une Bouffée D'Air Frais Et Un Rappel À L'Ordre



Firearms ownership may not be taken away capriciously and/or without due process./L'accès aux armes à feu ne peut être révoqué arbitrairement ou sans respecter les principes de justice fondamentaux.

Il y a de cela un certain temps, à une époque où cette chronique était publiée en anglais seulement, je commentais les dangers associés à l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux lorsque l'on est un propriétaire d'arme à feu. Une décision récente (R. v. Sorbie¹) d'une cour de justice ontarienne illustre certains de ces dangers et nous rappelle à quel point ces dangers sont bien réels.

CONTEXTE

L'Intimé, Jim Sorbie est un vétéran

des forces armées britanniques. Il a la double citoyenneté, canadienne et britannique. Il réside au Canada. Au moment des faits en cause, il n'a pas de dossier criminel et n'est pas connu des milieux policiers. Dans le cadre de ses activités militaires, il est devenu un expert et un instructeur en matière d'utilisation des armes à feu, d'usage de la force, et des règles d'engagement.

M. Sorbie a des opinions tranchées, parfois controversées, et il n'a aucune hésitation à les partager avec autrui sur les médias sociaux. On pourrait

le décrire comme étant tout, sauf politiquement correct.

L'évènement à l'origine des problèmes de M. Sorbie est un texte publié sur Facebook, accompagné d'une photo de M. Sorbie tenant une arme à feu à autorisation restreinte. Le texte était à l'effet suivant :

« Traduction : Les « libtards » dominant les médias traditionnels en ce moment. Je vais m'acheter une arme d'assaut pleinement semi-automatique capable de tirer 3000 balles à chaque fois que je presse la détente et je

vais tuer tous les gens dans la pièce en quelques secondes. J'ai déjà des chargeurs contenant 5000 balles chacun. »

Suite à ces publications, un dénonciateur anonyme fit un appel aux forces de l'ordre, lesquelles s'empressèrent d'obtenir un mandat de perquisition sur la foi des menaces supposément proférées par M. Sorbie. Un juge émit le mandat, sur la foi des informations policières. Les forces policières procédèrent ensuite à une perquisition du domicile de M. Sorbie et à la saisie de ses armes à feu.

Evidemment, les policiers ne trouvèrent aucune arme « pleinement semi-automatique » ou de « chargeur de 5000 cartouches ». En fait, ils ne constatèrent aucune infraction et aucune accusation ne fut portée. Comme le fit remarquer à juste titre le juge ayant rendu la décision, « pour quiconque ayant une connaissance adéquate des armes à feu (ou de la grammaire), comme par exemple un policier ou quiconque détient un permis d'arme à feu sans restrictions ou à autorisation restreinte, cet énoncé loufoque est de toute évidence une (mauvaise) blague ou, pour reprendre les propos de l'Intimé, du sarcasme. »

LES PROCÉDURES JUDICIAIRES

Malgré le sarcasme évident, les forces policières ont néanmoins obtenu un mandat de perquisition, perquisitionné et procédé à la saisie des armes à feu de M. Sorbie. Pire encore, dans les 24 heures qui suivirent et malgré l'absence d'accusations, ils demandèrent des ordonnances de confiscation et d'interdiction de possession d'armes à feu, à titre préventif. Ces demandes eussent-elles été accueillies, les armes de M. Sorbie auraient été confisquées et il aurait été interdit de possession d'arme à feu pour une période pouvant aller jusqu'à 5 ans.

Lors de l'audition des demandes d'ordonnances susmentionnées, la couronne présenta une preuve substantielle constituée presque en totalité d'écrits et autres publications sur les réseaux sociaux canadiens et britanniques attribuées à l'Intimé Sorbie. Ce qui est troublant est que malgré que les forces policières et, vraisemblablement la Couronne, aient su que les supposées menaces étaient sans substance, ils semblent avoir décidé néanmoins de pousser l'affaire,

parce qu'ils étaient en désaccord avec certaines des positions adoptées par l'Intimé Sorbie. Parmi ses déclarations controversées, il y avait des propos touchant aux politiques d'immigration britanniques, aux liens entre l'Islam et le terrorisme, au traitement des femmes dans les pays musulmans, aux « libtards (i.e. libéral attardé) », aux « snowflakes » (i.e. âmes hypersensibles), au débat sur l'identité de genre, à l'affaire Coulton Boushie et au droit à l'utilisation d'une arme à feu dans un cadre d'auto défense. Les policiers semblent avoir déployé des efforts considérables afin de trouver autant d'écrits controversés que faire se peut attribuables à M. Sorbie, y compris des écrits sur le forum Canadiangunnutz, avec lequel vous êtes probablement familiers.

LES QUESTIONS EN LITIGE

La question que devait trancher le juge est de savoir si une personne dont les propos sont politiquement incorrects devrait avoir accès à des armes à feu. Selon le juge : « La Couronne prétend que les commentaires (de M. Sorbie) ne démontrent pas le niveau de retenue auquel l'on s'attend de la part d'un propriétaire d'arme à feu, puisque ses propos ont démontré qu'il était incapable d'apprécier la réaction qu'ils pourraient provoquer chez une personne qui ignore tout des armes à feu et potentiellement dénuée du bon sens élémentaire qui devrait la pousser à tenter de comprendre un sujet, avant de porter plainte aux autorités. »

Le droit canadien, dans son état actuel, est à l'effet que l'accès aux armes à feu est vu comme un privilège et non un droit¹. Tant les Contrôleurs des armes à feu que les policiers se servent abondamment de ce principe afin de justifier la révocation ou le refus d'un permis d'armes à feu, parfois de façon plus ou moins arbitraire. Dans l'affaire Sorbie, la Couronne utilisait cet argument afin de confisquer les armes à feu de l'Intimé Sorbie, et l'assujettir à une ordonnance d'interdiction, bien qu'il n'y ait eu aucune preuve objective qu'il constituait un danger pour la sécurité publique. Heureusement, le juge voyait les choses différemment.

LE DÉNOUEMENT

Dans ses motifs de jugement fort étoffés, le juge met l'accent sur le fait

que bien que l'accès aux armes à feu soit réputé être un privilège, il s'agit d'un privilège dont les origines sont fermement ancrées dans la loi et qui ne peut être révoqué arbitrairement ou sans respecter les principes de justice fondamentaux. Il conclut que l'exercice de la liberté d'expression, soit par des commentaires ou le fait de prendre part à un débat politique, malgré que les propos tenus puissent être jugés offensants par certains, ne devrait pas avoir pour résultante la négation de l'accès aux armes à feu, en l'absence de preuves de dangerosité.

Donc, M. Sorbie eut gain de cause. Il récupéra ses armes à feu et son permis. Aucune ordonnance d'interdiction ne fut prononcée. Malheureusement pour lui, le compte d'honoraires de son avocat fut probablement très salé, qui lui rappellera à tout jamais que nous vivons dorénavant dans une société qui est de moins en moins tolérante à l'égard des discours et des opinions qui ne sont pas politiquement corrects.

Ce qui me frappe de cette affaire est l'énergie et les efforts déployés, tant par la Couronne que par les corps policiers, afin de trouver des informations sur l'Internet qui feraient mal paraître l'Intimé Sorbie. Cela me rappelle un dossier récent où, pour justifier la révocation d'un permis d'arme à feu, on a fait la preuve qu'un ami d'un détenteur de permis (et non pas le détenteur lui-même) avait « liké » sur Facebook une photo sur laquelle on voyait un membre des Hell's Angels.

Les forums de discussion et les médias sociaux font bel et bien l'objet d'une surveillance policière. Il ne s'agit pas de forums privés. Rien de ce que vous écrivez ou publiez sur l'Internet n'est protégé par votre droit à la vie privée. Gardez cela en tête lorsque vous prendra l'envie d'être un troll, de tenir des propos sarcastiques, ou simplement d'écrire quelque chose qui pourrait venir vous hanter par la suite, à moins bien entendu que vous ne vouliez suivre les traces de Jim Sorbie. 🚩

References

¹Court file # 3811-998-18-1934

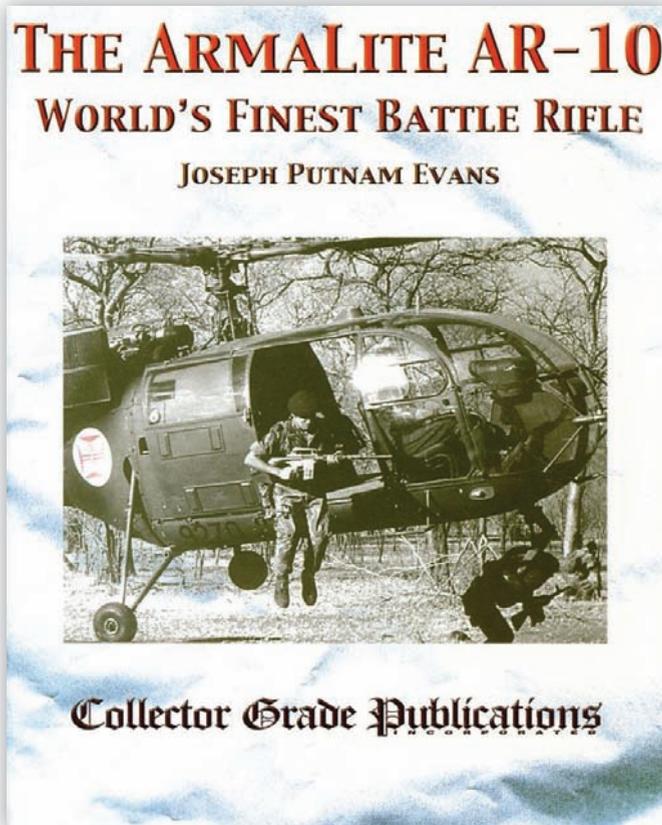
²See R. v. Wiles, (2005) 3 S.C.R.. 1378



NFA Book Shelf

Dean Roxby

The ArmaLite AR-10 – World’s Finest Battle Rifle



only to lose the order. When they refused to allow licensed production in Austria or Germany, they lost out to the FN-FAL.

The book is divided into two parts (Part I: The Hollywood Years, and Part II: The “Prime Time” AR-10), 13 chapters and many sub-chapters. One thing that does stand out is how much the author showers the AR-10 system with glowing praise. The author freely admits this, stating, “This author so often lavishes hyperbolic praise on this masterful battle rifle.”

The final chapter explores the recent resurgence of Knight’s Armament SR-25. This is an appropriate ending, as both the US Army and Navy have now adopted the SR-25 for sniping duty. Also, a brief look is given to the AR-16 prototype and the related AR-18/180 series.

Thoroughly researched, featuring many images of rare variants and presented with the quality that Collector Grade Publications is known for, this title will appeal to anyone interested in the AR-10 battle rifle. 

Collector Grade Publications is well known for producing high-quality firearms books, and this title does not disappoint. Author Joseph Evans does a fine job of detailing the history of the AR-10, from the earliest days of ArmaLite through to its use in actual combat in various hotspots.

Beginning with the formation of S-F Projects Company, by brothers-in-law George Sullivan and Charles Dorchester, through the acquisition by Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation, and the chance meeting of Sullivan and Eugene Stoner at a local gun range, the history of ArmaLite is well documented.

Several early prototypes from the fertile mind of Eugene Stoner are also profiled. While far removed from the final product, the origins of the AR-10

family can clearly be seen with these prototypes. It is interesting to see how the lineage progresses towards what we all recognize as the typical AR-10.

Chapter three covers the testing of the AR-10B rifles submitted to Springfield Armory in 1956/1957. As the book explains, there was a blatant hate-on for this unorthodox-looking rifle. Not only did it not look like what a real wood-and-steel rifle should be, it was “Not invented here,” so the AR-10B lost out to the M-14 rifle.

This book also covers the often-complex process involved in choosing a service rifle. Much historical background is given to the selection process and criteria various countries went through to replace their Second World War-era rifles. Often, the AR-10 came out ahead of the competition,

Title: The ArmaLite AR-10
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Author: By Joseph Putnam Evans

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