

CANADIAN

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MAY/JUNE 2021

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CANADIAN ***FIREARMS JOURNAL***

May/June 2021



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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

This issue's cover shows a typical Canadian youngster learning marksmanship, safety and self-discipline while shooting a Crosman Raven break-action .177 pellet rifle. Unfortunately for her, the Liberal government of Justin Trudeau, via Bill C-21, is trying to turn the rifle she's using into a prohibited device. Like most youth airguns, it drives pellets at less than 500 feet per second. However, there's an American version of the same rifle which operates at 600 feet per second. The two are exactly the same, except for an internal valve manufacturers call the Canadian valve, which keeps velocities lower for us Canucks. According to the proposed legislation of Bill C-21, that makes this girl's rifle a replica, and therefore it will become prohibited. She's not impressed.



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From The Editor's Desk

Al Voth

Liberal Hypocrisy

The Liberal's next step in their march to a "utopia" where only the government has guns is Bill C-21. It was tabled shortly before the content of this magazine had to be locked in to meet our publishing schedule, so you won't find much content about C-21 here. However, since this page is the last thing written, I can make a few comments about it.

One issue I find particularly egregious is that the Liberals not only want to control our guns, but our speech as well. C-21 makes it an offence to advertise a firearm "in a manner that depicts, counsels or promotes violence against a person." While there is uncertainty as to how the courts will interpret this, it would certainly be unwise to advertise a gun as being good for self-defence. In a worst-case scenario, it will be interpreted to include advertising guns as suitable for IDPA, IPSC or any of the action shooting sports, because a judge might rule these sports simulate violence against people.

Notably, there is no exemption for advertising firearms to the police or military. A salesperson pitching a firearm product to a government agency will be prohibited from talking about how effective it is at stopping a human threat. They will be relegated to pitching a sniper rifle or a light machine gun as "highly effective at stopping rabid kittens." However, when it comes to hand grenades, they'll be able to talk freely about dismembering humans, because grenades are not firearms and therefore exempt.

Additionally, as has been widely reported by now, many common airguns will become prohibited, as will airsoft



guns, apparently because they are "gateway guns" to children. The theory (without any scientific basis) is that early exposure to such instruments of simulated violence will cause people to become killers. Therefore, the population must be protected from this glorification of violence.

Shortly after C-21 was made public, I watched the latest movie in the Sniper series. This 2020 movie is called Sniper: Assassin's End, and it follows the usual formula for this series, with lots of impossible long-range shooting, gory head shots, gratuitous violence and a staggering body count. As a bonus, the plot unfolds almost entirely in Vancouver, BC, where it was filmed. So, I watched

through the credits to see if I know the folks who supplied the guns and firearms training for the actors. However, I was stopped cold by another credit. This credit said the movie was produced "With the participation of the government of Canada." The official Canadian wordmark even appears on the screen.

So, let's see if I have this right; it's not okay for anyone in this country to say a gun is suitable for self-defence, and we need to keep airguns out of the hands of children, but it's fine for the government to provide financial assistance for a blood-drenched movie which depicts and glorifies the use of firearms as instruments of death. The hypocrisy is off the charts. 🇨🇦

ERRATA

The text in the *Handloading Secrets* article of the January/February CFJ, on page 34, when referencing Bob Raymond, reads: "He is a chief firearms instructor for Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario..." It should have read: "He was a firearms instructor for Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario, a safety officer for his range and was chief instructor of the Ontario Rifle Association for a lot of years."



President's Message

Sheldon Clare

Bill C-21 & More

If anyone ever had any doubts about the Liberal left's gun control goals, then one needs look no further than Bill C-21. Airsoft, pellet and BB guns, paintball markers and crossbows all get the attention of the gun-grabbing Liberals in this bill. And in yet another bizarre twist, the British Columbia NDP government has introduced legislation with the stated aim of going after gangs and guns, yet it clearly would have a huge effect on ordinary firearm owners and shooting clubs. I was consulted on this proposed legislation when the government was the BC Liberals. I vigorously opposed every clause, pointing out redundancies and effects upon ordinary people and shooting clubs. Apparently, such consultations are pro-forma, and firearms rights advocacy is just another box to be ticked.

Well, I am ticked, and you should be too. It is easy to believe more gun control is simply a virtue signaling exercise, aimed at getting votes from the woke left. Unfortunately, it is much more than that. Gun control is now and always has been about civil disarmament, and it is not about curbing violence. The red herring of public safety is always thrown around to calm people who express legitimate concerns about increasing authoritarian control over all aspects of peoples' lives. Successive Canadian gun control laws over several decades have met with increasing levels of non-compliance, and there is no doubt this situation will continue in the face of the May 1, 2020, Order in Council and Bill C-21.

Our legal and lobbying efforts are moving along well, albeit slowly.

Fortunately, we didn't waste your donations on an expensive and poorly executed attempt to gain more time, when such a case was neither compelling, nor an appropriate arena to raise arguments pertinent to the main case. Our efforts in Parker (Premack) and KKS Tactical vs. Canada are narrowly focused and provide the best chance of success. Even so, it is the next election which is critical. The Liberals must be resoundingly turfed from office for all their crimes, and not just those directed at firearm owners.

It is not okay for government to steal our property, and it is highly offensive to insult us with talk of "buying back" something that gun-grabbers never owned. It is simply legislated theft, using tax dollars to do it. In the face of a mounting federal deficit exceeding \$1 trillion, it is neither ethical nor responsible to be carrying out such actions. There is a name for such action, and I dare call it tyranny.

Recently, the bully pulpit of the Liberal left-dominated Public Safety Committee condemned me, the NFA, and by extension you, for referring to a conversation I had with someone who was justifiably angry about these unreasonable, unnecessary gun grab laws. My blunt response is that if politicians don't want to be called out as tyrants, then they should quit acting like them. Unlike some who have fully embraced 50 years of bad gun laws, the NFA does not. The firearms license of Bill C-68, firearms registration and growing classification lists are bad laws that have no effect upon criminal activity. The federal and provincial crime stats are clear on that point.

Certainly, those very few people engaged in violent criminal behaviour need to be tried and appropriately punished for their malfeasance, with all circumstances considered by a competent court. But going after the rights and freedoms of large swaths of society in the name of an illusory and fictional claim of public safety is divisive and unacceptable tyranny.

It is not acceptable to claim that the license is an acceptable means of gaining some security at the expense of some freedoms. First, it provides no security, it is merely a barrier to lawful ownership. It has nothing whatsoever to do with preventing illicit ownership or subsequent bad choices. Second, licenses were only ever intended as a provincial tax measure to raise revenues, not as the heavy-handed control mechanism they have become – especially in relation to firearms ownership and use. Third, licensing is in no way anything but administrative law masquerading as criminal law. Both the license and the firearms registration system are nothing less than bullying people into surrendering their heritage and culture by denying the ability to use firearms responsibly for defense or any other purpose desired by free people in an ostensibly free country. The recent and all past gun grabber laws serve no purpose but taking away your property and limiting your enjoyment of it.

The Liberal left wants all your guns eventually. Don't accept any of it. Not magazine restrictions, not firearm prohibitions and not attacks on your use and ownership of firearms. Never give up your guns. 🚩

Message du Président

Sheldon Clare

Le Projet De Loi C-21 Entre Autres

S'il restait quelque doute à propos des objectifs de contrôle des armes de la gauche libérale, le projet de loi C-21 en est un fleuron rayonnant. Les carabines et pistolets à plomb, les airsofts, les paintballs et les arbalètes se trouvent tous dans la mire des libéraux qui veulent les éliminer. De plus, le gouvernement NPD en Colombie-Britannique a adopté une loi qui prétend viser les gangs et leurs armes mais elle aura plutôt un effet dévastateur sur les propriétaires légitimes d'armes à feu et les clubs de tir. Lorsque les Libéraux étaient au pouvoir en Colombie-Britannique ils m'avaient consulté à propos de ce projet de loi. Je m'y suis opposé à chaque article en soulevant des redondances et les effets néfastes qu'elles auraient eu sur les gens ordinaires et les clubs de tir. Ces consultations semblent être faites uniquement pro-forma, et les lobbyistes pro-armes font parti d'une liste à laquelle il ne faut qu'apposer un crochet.

Ceci me choque fortement et ça devrait vous choquer aussi. C'est facile de croire que d'augmenter le contrôle des armes n'est qu'un exercice pour nous faire la morale et gagner le vote de la gauche. Il s'agit malheureusement de beaucoup plus que cela. L'objectif ultime du contrôle des armes a toujours été et est encore le désarmement civil et non la diminution de la violence. La prétention d'augmenter la sécurité publique est toujours utilisée pour calmer les gens qui expriment des inquiétudes bien fondées à propos des contrôles gouvernementaux autoritaires qui augmentent sans cesse dans tous les aspects de la vie des gens. Les lois sur le contrôle des armes qui ont été adoptées successivement durant plusieurs décennies ont fait face à de la résistance grandissante de la part des citoyens, le décret du 1er mai 2020 et le projet de loi C-21 n'en feront pas exception.

Nos poursuites devant les tribunaux et notre lobbying avancent bien, lentement mais sûrement. Heureusement nous n'avons pas gaspillé vos dons dans une tentative mal exécutée et coûteuse pour essayer de gagner du temps. Une poursuite de la sorte n'aurait pas été convaincante ni appropriée pour apporter des arguments pertinents à la cause principale. Notre poursuite Parker (Premack) et KKS Tactical vs. Canada est ciblée avec précision et offre les meilleures chances de réussite. Mais malgré ça, c'est la prochaine élection qui est d'importance cruciale. Les Libéraux doivent être expulsés sans équivoque comme conséquences de leurs crimes et pas seulement ceux commis envers les propriétaires d'armes à feu.

Ce n'est pas correcte que le gouvernement vole notre propriété et c'est un insulte odieuse d'instaurer un programme de rachat quand ces biens ne leurs ont jamais appartenu. C'est tout simplement du vol par législation en utilisant l'argent des contribuables. Alors que le déficit du pays dépasse le trillion, c'est un manque d'éthique et c'est irresponsable d'agir de la sorte. Ce comportement a un nom que j'ose nommer, c'est la tyrannie.

Récemment, le comité sur la sécurité publique qui sert surtout de chaire pour intimider et qui est bourré de gauchistes libéraux m'a condamné, a condamné l'ACAF et par conséquent vous aussi. Ils se réfèrent à une conversation que j'ai eu avec une personne qui était furieuse avec raison, contre ces lois déraisonnables et inutiles. J'ai dit que si les politiciens ne veulent pas se faire traiter de tyrans, ils n'ont qu'à arrêter d'agir en tyrans. Contrairement à ceux qui ont accepté d'emblée les mauvaises lois sur les armes à feu depuis les cinquante dernières années, l'ACAF ne les a pas acceptés. Le

permis d'armes à feu issu du projet de loi C-68, l'enregistrement des armes à feu et la liste toujours grandissante de classifications sont de mauvaises lois qui n'ont aucun effet sur la criminalité. Les statistiques fédérales et provinciales sont claires sur ce point.

Il est certain que le petit nombre de personnes qui ont commis des crimes violents doivent être poursuivis devant un tribunal compétent et recevoir la sentence appropriée en considérant les circonstances entourant leur crime. Mais de s'attaquer aux droits et libertés d'une partie importante de la société au nom d'une prétention illusoire de sécurité publique ne fait que créer des divisions et devient de la tyrannie.

Il est inacceptable de prétendre qu'un permis puisse fournir une certaine sécurité lorsqu'on le mesure avec la perte de liberté qu'il cause. Premièrement, il n'apporte aucune sécurité - il n'est qu'une barrière à la possession légitime d'armes à feu - et il n'a aucun pouvoir de prévenir la possession illégale et toutes mauvaises actions subséquentes. Deuxièmement, les permis existent seulement dans le but de créer un système de taxation provincial comme source de revenu - et non le lourd contrôle de l'état qu'ils sont devenus - en particulier par rapport à l'usage et la possession d'armes à feu. Troisièmement, le système de permis n'est que de l'administration qui fait semblant d'être du droit criminel. Les deux systèmes de permis et d'enregistrement des armes à feu ne sont que des moyens d'intimidation pour que les gens abandonnent leur patrimoine et leur culture en leurs interdisant d'utiliser les armes à feu de manière responsable pour se défendre ou toute autre fin désirée par un peuple libre dans un pays manifestement libre. Les lois passées et actuelles sont conçues pour vous dérober vos armes, vous enlever vos biens et de vous en limiter la jouissance.

La gauche libérale veut avoir toutes vos armes éventuellement. Refusez toutes leurs propositions. N'acceptez aucune limite sur la capacité des chargeurs, aucune prohibitions et aucune attaque envers votre possession ou utilisation d'armes à feu. N'abandonnez jamais vos armes. 



Vice-President's Message

Blair Hagen

Cancel Culture

As many of you are aware, comments made by NFA President Sheldon Clare, in relating a conversation he had with another Canadian regarding this Liberal government's renewed civil disarmament agenda, resulted in an official condemnation by the Liberal-dominated Public Safety Committee that pretends to take the interests of Canadians seriously.

Sheldon related the following story in an episode of NFA Talk on this organization's electronic social media.

Sheldon Clare: "I had a call from a person today who suggested that we needed to revisit their old wood-working and metalworking skills and construct guillotines again (laughter). That would really be the best kind of committee of public safety to get this re-established. If they want to make it about public safety, that was the way. That's what the person told me, and I thought to myself, you know, the sound of this person's voice is not one that is joking. He was not joking. I don't think they understand that this is not New Zealand, this is not the United Kingdom, this is not Australia. This is a country made up of people who have been here for thousands of years, our Aboriginal people, immigrants from Europe who fled tyranny, who fought against tyranny and have no truck with tyranny, and they know tyranny when they see it. And this, my friends, is tyranny."

To you, I and Sheldon, this simply represented the opinions of someone passionate about the issue, but it resulted in some Olympic-grade pearl clutching by Liberal MP Pam Damoff who sits on that committee, and who demanded they officially condemn Canada's National Firearms Association. Gadzooks!

Yes, this kind of juvenile political drama poses as serious national politics today in Ottawa, demonstrating that not only have the Liberals lost their way, but they have also lost their minds.

In Liberal land, violence is everywhere. So, I guess any questioning of their civil disarmament agenda constitutes actual violence. It's just clown shoes, clown show, feigned outrage and fake controversy.

The term for this, for the benefit of those who may not have heard it, is cancel culture. Target and demonize your opponents with your own projection in an attempt to marginalize and ostracize them. It's extremely popular these days with a certain segment of the political class.

We in the NFA are rather honored and amused by it. Pam gets the golden snowflake award with oak leaf cluster for that little stupid, petty outburst. Hopefully, Canadians got a chuckle out of the whole affair, most of all Sheldon Clare, who never regrets the opportunity to use faux Liberal outrage and perfidy to demonstrate the total and complete failure of their firearms laws.

So, the Liberals are sending the NFA to bed without any supper. That's okay, because there are many Canadians going to bed tonight alone and without supper because of irresponsible Liberal economic and social policies which have wreaked havoc on the very fabric of our society. Stripped of their majority government in the last federal election, the Liberals struggle along scandal after scandal, failure after failure. Canadians will soon have the opportunity to drive the last nail into their political coffin.

This Liberal government has per-

formed so poorly, has hurt Canadians so badly, and has saddled future Canadians with so much debt, economic and social instability it needs straw men to divert the public's attention away from its continuing failures and controversies. We are those straw people, to be targeted and demonized for the pleasure of Liberal politicians, simply because we have chosen to celebrate their Canadian right and cultural tradition of firearms ownership and use.

I think of the millions of Canadians who have died in the past in foreign wars to defend not only the right to keep arms, but also to defend freedom of speech. Also, those Canadians of today who put their lives on the line so that Pam has the luxury and privilege of engaging in her childish political thumb sucking. Tyranny doesn't always march around in jackboots carrying torches.

Tyranny based on bad law or regulation that destroys the rights, freedoms and property of Canadians is tyranny nonetheless and deserves the strongest verbal and written rebuke possible.

The type of violence we do in Canada is through the electoral process, in removing and replacing failed and irresponsible politicians and governments. The Liberals should know this as they've suffered the Canadian voter's wrath in the recent past. We've defeated the Liberals over their un-Canadian civil disarmament agenda before and we will do it again. If Pam thinks that's a violent threat, she can call the RCMP and have me charged, I'll be happy to answer for it in a court.

Canada's not so far gone that we cannot label tyrants for what they are. 



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POINT BLANK

Chris McGarry

Will Trudeau Learn From New Zealand's Failure?

The New Zealand Royal Commission eviscerated Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's justification for her radical new gun laws. Ardern had claimed these new laws were needed because the Christchurch killer obtained his guns legally. The facts say otherwise. If PM Justin Trudeau is concerned about public safety and good government, the Liberal government should heed these warnings.

Immediately after the terrorist attacks in Christchurch in March 2019, Ardern responded by launching a buyback of scary-looking guns (i.e., military-style semi-automatic firearms) through an Order in Council. After confiscating tens of thousands of lawfully held firearms in 2019, her socialist government transformed New Zealand's gun laws and radically expanded government powers. Earlier, Ardern's buyback had been exposed by New Zealand's auditor general as costing twice as much as budgeted but failing to get more than one-third of the targeted firearms (as was previously reported in the September/October issue of the *Canadian Firearms Journal*).

In December 2020, the New Zealand Royal Commission finally released their report about the 2019 terrorist attack in Christchurch. The findings critically undermine the government's justifications for the Draconian firearms laws. The Royal Commission found that better police administrative practices were needed, not sweeping new laws. The police admitted their negligence allowed the terrorist, a racist environmentalist, to get his firearms licence and buy his guns. What the Royal Commission didn't report is that Ardern had earlier been instrumental in weakening the police's ability to vet licence applicants. The Commission documented how police mismanagement was responsible, "The guidance given by the New Zealand Police to licensing staff was inadequate, as was their training." Had the police followed proper guidelines, the terrorist would not have been allowed to buy firearms. The police reacted by apologizing and demanding greater powers.

In the words of the Royal Commission, "Known risks and deficiencies in the firearms licensing system were not addressed." Instead of focusing on improving police management, Ardern exploited New Zealand's shock at the terrorist attack to blame easy access to firearms, particularly military-style semi-automatic rifles, in order to vastly expand government powers. Her promises to change the gun laws, made immediately after the terrorist attack, were backed by the police and opposition parties.

NEVER LET A CRISIS GO TO WASTE

Following the attack, Prime Minister Ardern promised, "Our gun laws will change," going on to impose a wide range of new firearms restrictions. Ardern exploited public horror to expand government powers, following the plans she and the police had started before the terrorist attack. She did so without waiting for the report from the Royal Commission of Inquiry she had set up "to investigate whether public sector agencies had done all they could to protect the people of New Zealand from terrorist attacks and whether more could be done." Ardern's decision to focus on firearms was blatantly self-serving and was done despite official recognition there was no evidence that banning semi-automatic firearms would have any effect on violent crime or gun deaths.

Ardern followed up the buyback with a flurry of new gun restrictions. Two tranches of firearms restrictions were hustled through parliament, first in 2019, and then another in early 2020. The first tranche, The Arms (Prohibited Firearms, Magazines and Parts) Amendment Bill, banned a large number of semi-automatic and military-style weapons, such as those used during the Christchurch terrorist attack. The second tranche imposed a universal firearms registry, among other radical changes. The new restrictions include reducing the 10-year firearms licence to five years, barring visitors to New Zealand from purchasing firearms, increasing the powers of police to take guns, requiring a firearm licence for

purchasing ammunition and parts and registering the country's estimated 260 gun clubs. Applicants will now be required to include the name of a health practitioner as a reference who the police can consult before issuing a licence.

APOLOGIES WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY

Publication of the Royal Commission's report in December forced both Prime Minister Ardern and the police commissioner to publicly apologize. Ardern apologized on behalf of the government and directly to the Muslim community in New Zealand. Not to be outdone, the police apologized for their failures in issuing a gun licence to the terrorist. Unfortunately, Ardern did not apologize for her personal responsibility for changing, perhaps weakening, the gun laws prior to the terrorist getting his guns, nor did she apologize for introducing unnecessary and ineffective gun laws. Instead, she expressed regret for not expanding government sufficiently to "keep everyone safe."

Prior to the publication of the Royal Commission's report, Ardern had promised accountability, but afterwards, despite apologies, no one was held to blame. In addition to recommending vastly expanding powers of government agencies, the Royal Commission reminded all New Zealanders of their responsibilities for making the country "safe and inclusive"—primarily by promoting the benefits of diversity.

Everyone has apologized but no one is to blame. Ardern and her government officials made it clear that the Royal Commission exonerated them, "The Royal Commission found no failures within any government agencies that would have allowed the individual's planning and preparation to have been detected but did identify many lessons to be learned and significant areas needing change." To date, no ministers resigned, and no police personnel were fired. Despite singling out police incompetence, the Royal Commission makes excuses for police oversights and sloppy investigations. However, the

Commission did blame parliament for not providing sufficient funding.

“The Royal Commission paints a picture of various arms of the state, health, security and police, each having fragments of information but no way to piece together the whole,” Security and Intelligence Service Director-General Rebecca Kitteridge announced. The December report did not satisfy everyone. Both the Muslim community and the firearms owner’s organizations such as COLFO were disappointed.

The Royal Commission worked hard to find excuses for government failings. Even going so far as to abandon the possibility of accurately identifying applicants who are “fit and proper,” in the New Zealand legal terminology. The Royal Commission speculated there was no way to predict the terrorist’s violent actions from the information available, then or now. Despite finding many signs that suggested the applicant was violent, the Commission asserted that the Christchurch terrorist could only have been stopped “by chance.” Despite this admission of government powerlessness, the Royal Commission did not abandon the principle that the government is responsible for public safety. Indeed, the Commission recommended vastly expanding the powers of police and security agencies.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Royal Commission’s finding that poor administration of existing legislation allowed a violent terrorist to arm himself critically undermines Ardern’s justification that the sweeping new firearms laws brought in following the attacks in Christchurch was required.

The government claimed the buyback

was a success, but the auditor general’s report was less positive, finding the total cost of the buyback was close to \$200 million (NZD), including more than \$35 million (NZD) to administer, as well as at least \$120 million for compensation for the surrendered firearms. Other New Zealanders questioned the buyback’s success. Despite setting up over 600 local collection events, the buyback failed to collect more than one third of the newly prohibited firearms. Canada’s buyback will cost taxpayers even more given the size difference. Costs could easily balloon into another multi-billion-dollar boondoggle.

Unsurprisingly, the new firearms laws and buyback did not reduce gang crime in New Zealand. Admitting that the new restrictions have not improved public safety, Prime Minister Ardern said that this merely strengthens her resolve to introduce further firearms reform.

Despite the Royal Commission revealing the government’s failings for the terrorist attack, the Commission maintained its commitment to strong government. Ardern claimed that safety was the responsibility of the government, “Our duty is to keep everyone here safe. We have failed here, and questions will be asked.” Even if the government admits it cannot protect the public, citizens have no role in providing safety. The New Zealand government treats citizens as mothers would young children. Worse: all evidence presented to the Royal Commission is suppressed for 30 years.

The Canadian government would be wise to learn from this fiasco. Instead of imposing a buyback of semi-automatic “assault-style” firearms, the government should focus on strengthening border enforcement and anti-smuggling efforts,

improve efforts to reduce suicide, particularly in the north, reforming prisons and cracking down on violent criminals. 

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 @NATIONAL_FIREARMS_ASSOCIATION

Nathaniel Milljour



Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas & Daryl Drew

Shooting Down COVID



Physical distancing being practiced during a vintage rifle match.

We are living in trying times, caught in a pandemic which has its grip on the entire population. Separations, masks, lock downs and little social interaction are now the principals of daily life. However, there is a bright side, and it's the outdoor shooting sports. These include trap, skeet, bullseye, practical pistol, cowboy action shooting, action rifle events, various precision events, silhouette and many more. These are all events where the outdoors can be enjoyed while practicing safe physical distancing, all without the transmission of any infection!

During these times, shooting ranges in British Columbia became concerned with being a place where people gathered, with some we know of voluntarily closing. The Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association is the primary club we are members of, and the board of directors there requested that vari-

ous disciplines voluntarily cancel their events. Our response was to have a thoughtful discussion on how to field events and not expose or endanger the participants to the pandemic. We are cowboy action shooting competitors and have been for 37 years, having introduced cowboy action shooting to western Canada in 1986. We accomplished this after attending a number of cowboy action events in the early 1980s at various venues in the United States. While participating in these action shooting competitions, we learned the rules and regulations, were involved in courses, in training and attained the position of range officers.

In early 2020, as COVID began to grow, we sat down and evaluated the situation, eventually developing a protocol which we then had vetted by board members of the Victoria Frontier Shootists. They then added some finer

points, and the draft was presented to the board of directors of the Victoria Fish and Game Protective Association, where it was unanimously accepted. The various disciplines were then encouraged to re-open with the provision that they aggressively follow the protocol. We also sent the protocol to the organization in the United States that manages cowboy action shooting, the Single Action Shooting Society, they published it and it has spread to many other clubs and associations.

The protocol is based on separating the participants six feet apart and limiting the number in a bay at one time. The example we used was in the discipline we know best, which is cowboy action shooting. Only six individuals in a bay at one time, consisting of the



TOP: Shotgun competition is great as trap shooters are automatically separated.

MIDDLE: Even group photos are possible by separating the shooters in front and rear ranks.

LEFT: Cowboy action competition is possible when limited to six persons to a shooting bay.

 GARY KANGAS (TOP IMAGE), ERIK BUTTERFIELD (MIDDLE IMAGE), KAREN THORBURN (BOTTOM IMAGE)

primary competitor accompanied by a range officer six feet behind, three spotters spaced six feet apart and six feet behind the competitor and range officer with one spotter designated as unloading safety officer to inspect cleared firearms when the competitor has completed the course of fire. The sixth person in the bay is the next competitor who is preparing to compete by loading their firearms at the designated safe loading table spaced six feet from the others in the bay.

The various practical pistol and three-gun disciplines have adopted the protocol, as well as action rifle events, precision rifle and pistol events and muzzle-loading competitions. The Victoria Fish and Game Protective As-

sociation stipulates the requirement that at the rifle/pistol range only every second bench can be used so that participants are properly distanced. The rules also require that when in the shooting shed, everyone must be masked. The Victoria Fish and Game ranges being all the shotgun ranges, the rifle/pistol range, archery, airsoft and the multi-purpose range where the separate bays are bermed and the action events are held. These have been a beehive of activity since, with physical distancing the key. Various disciplines have thus been re-activated, including trap and skeet, which are prime examples of easy social spacing as everyone is shooting six feet apart.

Since the shooting sports are held

outside in the fresh air, they are ideally suited to the physical distancing requirements of a COVID protocol. Even the group photos regularly taken at competitions provide an opportunity that lends itself to proper spacing. The front rank of participants is spaced six feet apart and the rear rank spaced six feet behind and six feet apart; when viewed in total, the participants are all highly visible and can be seen with ease.

Conducting our affairs is a simple, responsible business, all that's necessary is to do it thoughtfully and safely. There are times when we are caught up in a situation where we have to take control to safely enhance preserving our firearms heritage. This is one of those times. 



Politics & Guns

Bruce Gold

Righteous Ignorance



Nothing is more impervious to facts than the belief that everything important is already known.

Nothing is more impervious to facts than the belief that everything important is already known. When the known is politically advantageous and a solid basis for self-congratulatory virtue signaling, it armor plates this resistance to facts. It is a bedrock belief of the Liberal Party that restricting legal ownership of firearms and micromanaging all aspects of firearms is somehow an effective method of reducing criminal violence. The fact that firearms are sometimes used in violent crime (1.35 per cent of violent crimes, 1998 to 2016) gives this belief a superficial logic. The high rates of violent crime in the US, which also has the highest firearms ownership rate, is the debate-ending go-to fact used to support this belief. It has even been implied that the US has violence in its DNA and the high gun ownership rates are a major factor.

REALITY INTRUDES

We can begin with the high US homicide rates. This is usually where the gun control debate ends or is ended. However, a closer examination reveals a very different picture. The construction of this homicide causation argument begins by separating firearm homicide statistics in the belief (usually implied) that this is a special and a very different thing from knife homicides or blunt trauma homicides. This distinction is dubious, since dead is usually dead, but it serves a political purpose. The second statistical manoeuvre is to limit investigation

to “similar countries.”

Accordingly, the “universal law” that more guns equal more homicides is somehow only applicable to a few selected countries. The technical term for this is cherry picking. The reason for this becomes clear when we examine UN statistics, and we find that 85 countries have higher homicide rates (per hundred thousand) than the US. Some 18 countries have rates four times as high, with the highest being El Salvador at 82 per hundred thousand; 41 countries have rates more than twice as high as the US. The world average homicide rate is 7.5 per hundred thousand, significantly above the US rate of 5.3. Every single one of these 85 countries has gun ownership rates far lower than the US. This is the reality behind the more guns equals more death talking point.

We can also note that an anti-violence agenda pursued with vigor against a demographic which has almost no involvement in violent crime is unlikely to achieve any crime reduction. If we look at a Statistics Canada table produced for Professor Mauser, we find that between 1997 and 2005,

only 2.27 per cent (118 or eight per year) of homicides were committed with a registered gun. Only 2.14 per cent (111 or 14 per year) were committed by a person with a valid firearms license. From this we can calculate the return on investment for both gun registration and firearms licensing.

Of the 7.1 million guns registered (2006), only eight were used in a homicide. Calculating the “help the police solve crimes” return for our efforts, we find that registration might help in eight cases or about one in a million registrations. Of 1,908,011 (2006) licensed owners, some 14 committed a homicide. Our “help the police solve crimes” return per year is about seven cases per million licensed gun owners. When the Liberals talk about the necessity of tightening up gun laws, this is the tiny sliver they are focusing hundreds of millions of dollars on.

It can, of course, still be argued that the Firearms Act fights crime. If we look at the 2012 report by Statistics Canada, Firearms and Violent Crime in Canada, we find there where 5,575 firearm-related violent crimes (there was a gun somewhere in the vicin-

ity), but firearms were only used 1,325 times to actually injure someone. However, there were 12,320 administrative firearms violations in Canada (not including Quebec). Since violent crime is mostly covered by other parts of the Criminal Code, the numbers reveal that the Firearms Act actually creates crime with a maze of micro-managed administrative offenses.

If we look for the official cost/effectiveness studies behind our firearms law, we find it's not possible because the government report on cost/effectiveness from 1995 is still a Cabinet secret. The studies that led to the 2020 Order in Council gun grab are also Cabinet secrets.

WILLFUL IGNORANCE

The Firearms Centre has a mandate to provide "clear and accurate reporting of program performance and resource management." A mandate they pursue with bureaucratic vigor. For example, in 2019 there were 18,565 Canadian Firearms Registry online queries per day by law enforcement. Wow! Just wow! Are you suitably impressed? How many of these were actual inquires and how many were added automatically by an inquiry into something else? The RCMP doesn't record that and has no idea how many actual firearms inquires were made. How many times did this help officer safety? The RCMP does not record outcomes and does not know. How many times did this decrease officer safety because of a gun that was not in the system, giving the officer a dangerously false sense of security? The RCMP does not record this or even inquire, so they have no idea how many times they gratuitously endangered an RCMP officer. How many times has an RCMP officer been killed or injured after being told there were no guns? The RCMP does not know and can't be bothered to find out. Welcome to "clear and accurate reporting" of administrative churn without the slightest interest in outcomes. The love affair with easy-to-produce administrative churn statistics over outcome statistics is indicative of the bureaucratic mindset of the Firearms Centre, which to be fair is an accurate reflection of the intent of the Liberal Party's *Firearms Act*.

The pattern so easily identified here

PARTY'S FIREARMS ACT. NEW FIREARMS REFERENCE TABLE ENTRIES: 3,138 (2019 Commissioner of Firearms Report)

THE NUMBERS AND TYPES OF GUNS USED IN CRIME: unknown

PIECES OF INCOMING MAIL: 385,170

WHERE THE CRIME GUNS CAME FROM: unknown

PHONE CALLS RECEIVED: 743,220

NUMBER OF CRIME GUNS THAT WERE REGISTERED AND UNREGISTERED: unknown

FIREARMS LICENCE RENEWAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED: 329,456

THE NUMBER OF LICENSED GUN OWNERS THAT WERE CHARGED WITH
THE CRIME COMMITTED WITH THE CRIME GUN OR FOR PROVIDING
THE CRIME GUN TO THE PERPETRATOR: unknown

EMAIL INQUIRIES RECEIVED: 15,485

THE NUMBER OF CRIME GUNS THAT WERE LOCATED AND IDENTIFIED USING
THE CANADIAN FIREARMS INFORMATION SYSTEM: unknown

FIREARMS SEIZED BY PUBLIC AGENCIES IN 2019: 26,351

FIREARMS TRACED BY THE CANADIAN NATIONAL FIREARMS
TRACING CENTRE: 1,768 or 7 per cent

is one of willful ignorance and folly. The root causes can be found in the magical thinking of the perpetrators. Guns, inanimate objects, have been demonized as if they had some mysterious power over people (the bizarre Weapons Effect Theory). The public (Canadian citizens) are seen as inferior to their intellectual and moral superiors in government, an attitude which our righteous philosopher king Trudeau has only deepened. The Order in Council gun grab, a return to the absolutism of direct rule by the prime minister's personally chosen council, is a chilling example of how ingrained the contempt for the little people is.

The justification for their attack on firearms owners is "our failure," as exemplified by the mass shootings of the Montreal Massacre and in Nova Scotia. Clearly, we cannot be trusted and must be controlled and indoctrinated into submission. Meanwhile, behind the righteous ignorance and posturing is the hard fact that both atrocities rest firmly on explicit official failures. The body count in the Montreal Massacre was caused by the police just standing outside and not lifting a finger to even inconvenience the killer. The Nova Scotia killing was enabled by the RCMP's repeated and absolute refusal

to do anything about a violent man known to be illegally armed.

Faced with the politically awkward truth of deadly official failure, it is small wonder that the federal government, with the help of some political activists, changed the debate from official conduct to inanimate objects. This in turn demanded that they focus the reports of their efforts on administrative churn with a rigorous disregard for outcomes. This is based on the clear knowledge that improvements in public safety could never come from attacking where the problem wasn't. Small wonder the Liberals have an unwavering desire for ignorance over facts. 

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SUMMER PRACTICE

Using training drills to improve your shooting

BY AL VOTH

We are entering that time of year when the weather is at its best in our northern nation, making this the season when more people than ever want to get out and give their guns some exercise. This means the competition season is in full swing (as allowed by COVID rules), hunters are hopefully practicing for the fall season and casual shooters are anticipating turning tin cans into metal lace, busting clays and shredding paper targets.

The variety of activities available to the sport shooter is fantastic, but all the different pursuits have one common factor -- every shooter wants to improve their skills. But, too often, in our consumer-oriented society, we get stuck on the idea we can buy that skill improvement. A better rifle scope, a new shotgun or a new handgun become the solution to shooting better.

While new gear is always enjoyable, and it may even improve our shooting slightly, the real solution to better shooting is practice.

Serious shooters call it training, and if you're serious about improving at any undertaking, it's what you'll do. But shooting is a complicated skill, and a key part of improving performance at any complicated skill is the training drill. This is simply the process of training or teaching by the continued repetition of an exercise. If you've ever participated in hockey, soccer, baseball or any of the martial arts, you've done training drills. Watch the training sessions of any professional sports team and you'll see them running drills not much different from what pee-wee teams are doing. They are taking a complicated task, breaking it into individual components and practicing

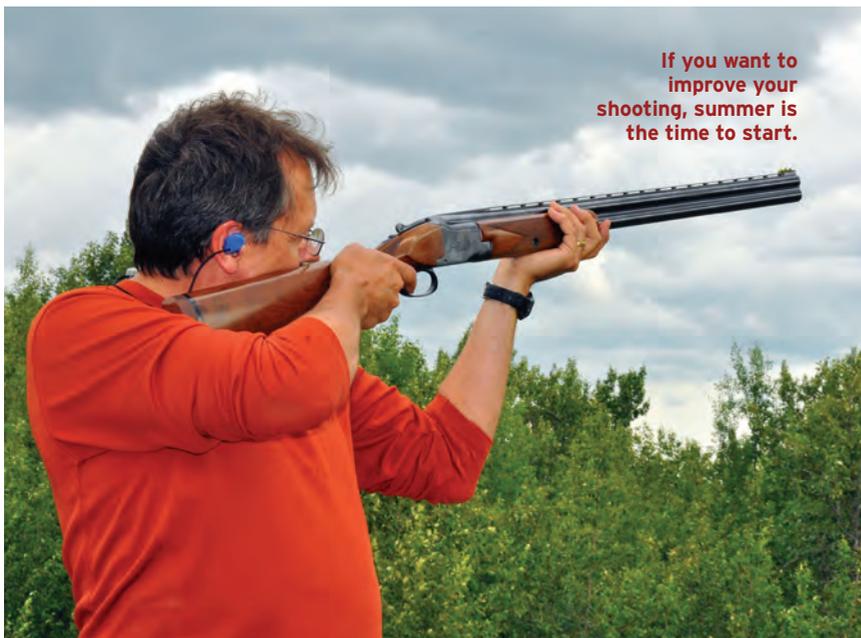
those, with everything assembling itself into cohesive action on game day.

Competitive shooters use training drills all the time, and exercises like El Presidente and the Bill Drill have become standards against which handgun competitors measure their performance. But what about non-competitors like hunters or people who just want to improve their shooting? Are there training drills they can use to measure and improve their shooting performance? In my experience, training drills for these kinds of people are rare, but that doesn't mean we can't create our own and reap the benefit of using them. If you want to improve your shooting, the warm days of summer are the perfect time to start. And for hunters, it'll mean they are in top form when hunting season rolls around.

A good firearms training drill requires little in the way of equipment, is simple to replicate anywhere, has both a time and an accuracy component and produces measureable results. Following are a few drill suggestions for rifle, shotgun and handgun. Feel free to try them all, modifying each one based on the type of shooting or hunting you do and the facilities you have available. Competition shooters, of course, will have their own highly focused drills, these are not necessarily for you. These drills are intended to challenge the average non-competitor and help them improve.

SHOTGUN

Equipment: Clay targets, hand thrower, shotgun, ammunition, eye and ear protection. >



PROCEDURE: Have a friend stand slightly behind and safely to the side of the shooter. Throw five targets going straight away from the shooter. Then have the thrower move 15 to 20 yards to the right of the shooter and throw five targets quartering across the shooter's front. When finished, the thrower moves the same distance to the left and throws five targets quartering in the other direction.

SCORE: A perfect score is 15.

COMMENTS: This drill takes 15 rounds of ammunition and the same number of clay targets. Using cheap target ammunition and buying birds by the case, it will cost about \$7 to \$8 to shoot once. Since it takes two people to shoot this drill anyway, you might as well make a competition out of it and have the loser buy lunch.

VARIATIONS: For safety reasons, a human thrower should never be positioned in front of the shooter; however, serious shotgunners should consider purchasing a remotely controlled launcher capable of being positioned ahead of the shooter and safely tossing crossing and incoming targets.

RIFLE

EQUIPMENT: Eight-and-a-half-inch by 11-inch cardstock paper, a shot timer (preferably) but the timer function on your smart phone or a stopwatch will work, spotting scope, rifle, ammunition, eye and ear protection.

PROCEDURE: Pin a blank sheet of brightly coloured office paper at 200 yards. Shoot two rounds at it from each of four positions. Give yourself unlimited time to shoot the first round, but the second one must be fired within five seconds of the first. This gives a shooter the opportunity for one careful deliberate shot, followed by one quick "snap" shot. It's a realistic hunting scenario when that first shot doesn't quite do the job. Feel free to use sling, pack or bipod for support, but only if it's what you'd normally have with you in the field.

STAGE 1: Prone – two shots. Check your hits. This stage serves to con-



A good firearms training drill requires little in the way of equipment, is simple to replicate anywhere, has both a time and an accuracy component and produces measurable results.

firm the zero on your rifle.

STAGE 2: Sitting – two shots. If you ever wait in ambush for game, you'll likely be shooting from this position.

STAGE 3: Kneeling – two shots. This is fastest way to get low and pick up some support, whether it's just from your own knee or from a nearby object.

STAGE 4: Standing – two shots. Nobody prefers to shoot standing, but with some assistance from a handy tree or fencepost it is doable, and sometimes it's the only option.

SCORE: A perfect score is eight. Any follow up shots not made within the five second time limit are scored as a miss.

COMMENTS: For hunters, the eight-and-a-half-inch by 11-inch cardstock target is a reasonable representation of a deer's vital zone. When possible, put a larger sheet of paper behind this target. It will reveal in which direction the misses went and allow effective analysis of what's needed to improve. This drill requires only eight rounds, so it can be run twice with a single box of ammunition. Cost is, of course, variable. Check the target after each two-round stage to identify where additional training is needed.

VARIATIONS: Practicing this drill with a rimfire at 100 yards is fine, but you

should reduce the target size by half if you do. However, if you are a hunter, it must eventually be shot with a hunting rifle and full power ammunition -- yes, even with your Super-Ultra-Maxi-Mega-Magnum. If you hunt with it, practice with it. If you can shoot a perfect score at 200, move the target further away or reduce it in size and test your limits.

HANDGUN

EQUIPMENT: Eight-and-a-half-inch by 11-inch cardstock paper, a shot timer (preferably) but the timer function on your smart phone or a stopwatch will work, handgun, ammunition, eye and ear protection. A holster is optional if trained in the use of one.

PROCEDURE: To avoid moving back and forth and disrupting what may be a busy range's firing line, all shooting is done at 10 metres, but the target is either full-size or cut in quarters. Start position is always standing, with the handgun loaded and held at the low ready.

STAGE 1: Fire five rounds at the quarter-size target in 20 seconds. This is lots of time and serves to check zero and baseline accuracy.

STAGE 2: Fire five rounds at the full-size target in 10 seconds, thus adding some time pressure.



ABOVE: One full-size and one quarter-size piece of bright coloured cardstock make cheap and effective targets.

LEFT: Serious shotgunners may want to invest in a remote-controlled thrower.

STAGE 3: Fire ten rounds, alternating between the quarter-size target and the full-size target, with a mandatory reload performed somewhere in the stage, while on the clock. Try using the following as time standards: semi-auto 15 seconds, double-action revolver 20 seconds, single-action revolver 40 seconds.

SCORE: Scoring is simply hit or miss, with a perfect score being 20.

COMMENTS: If you're an ace handgunner, this will be far too easy, while a beginner might find it impossible. Because handgun skill varies so widely, adjust things as needed to challenge yourself, including time allowed, tar-

get size and distance. However, never try and go faster than your ability to handle the handgun safely. Safety is paramount.

VARIATIONS: If you have a suitable holster and have been trained in its use, then by all means start with the gun in the holster rather than from the low ready position.

These drills are all relatively short and while they do provide training on their own, I think another valuable aspect is the identification of problem areas and personal limitations. For example, if, in the shotgun drill, birds crossing left to right are generally unscathed, but everything else is get-

ting hit, some extra experimentation and practice is needed on targets flying in that direction. Likewise in the rifle drill. An inability to hit from the kneeling position means more practice is needed there. And until those hits become a reality, the ethical hunter will refrain from making shots in the field which haven't already been mastered in practice. After all, there's no reason to believe a shot which can't consistently be made on paper will somehow magically be possible on a warm target. If you have more than one hunting rifle or shotgun, try running drills with each gun, keeping careful track of your score. You may find one shotgun or rifle much easier to hit with than another, and repeating the drills with different firearms could change the gun you take afield this fall.

When you can't get outside to practice, remember that a lot of good training can happen in your basement, with no ammunition. Dry firing a rifle or handgun at a dot on the wall, from positions you're likely to use while hunting, is always great practice. And shotgun trainers tell me that an improper gun mount is a major reason for missing aerial targets. Try slipping a slim flashlight down the barrel of your 12 gauge, and then repeatedly mounting the gun to your shoulder so the narrow light beam hits the corner joint of walls and ceiling at the same time the gun hits your shoulder. Then track the beam in both directions along the wall/ceiling junction. There's no need to dry fire. Just mount and track for five minutes a day. You'll build a consistent gun mount in the process.

Training drills are a great way to improve skills and are fun to try, especially when challenging friends. They can give your trip to the range a focus, something which is badly needed for many recreational shooters. Modify them as necessary to suit your circumstances, shoot them often and you'll become a better shooter as a result. If you don't care for the ones I've outlined here, do an Internet search. The web is full of training drills, and you'll get a blizzard of other ideas. The important thing is to use the summer months to build your skills and enjoy the process. 🗡️

MEASURING SPEED

The basics of ballistic chronographs
BY JEFF SMITH





A Doppler system, like this LabRadar, can be set up behind the muzzle.

Have you ever wondered just how accurate the muzzle velocity claims made by ammunition companies really are? Or, as a handloader, are you within the safe parameters listed in your preferred manual?

Fortunately, there is a tool readily available to shooters which can help answer those questions. At one time the exclusive territory of the ammunition manufacturer and military department, ballistic chronographs have now found their way onto the equipment list of many shooters.

So, what is a ballistic chronograph exactly? They are simply sensitive instruments which measure the speed or velocity of a projectile in flight. Ballisticians have been interested in measuring this velocity almost as long as firearms have been around. However, it wasn't until the mid-1700s that ballisticians were able to crudely accomplish it, thanks to Benjamin Robins and his ballistic pendulum. Through a series of mathematical formulas and good old physics, he determined that measuring how far a speeding bullet moved a pendulum of known mass allowed the calculation of both velocity and kinetic energy. His findings were published in 1742 in *New Principles of Gunnery*.

The next significant development came about in 1765 with the invention of the wheel chronograph. It worked by firing a bullet across a horizontal wheel, with slips of paper mounted vertically. As the

wheel turned, the bullet would pass through the papers directly across from each other. The velocity was calculated using the rotational speed of the wheel and the angular difference of the papers, both of which are known factors. Over the ensuing years, research and development of both the chronograph and ammunition continued, much of it for military applications. Fortunately for hunters and sport shooters, these improvements spilled over into our market.

By the 1950s, the first true electronic chronograph was created, the forerunner of the tools available today. Until the 1970s, these chronographs were only used by the ammunition companies in shooting tunnels and in ballistic laboratories. But thanks to Dr. Ken Oehler, a chronograph was developed which was portable enough to be taken to the range by the average shooter. The information provided by Dr. Oehler's consumer-grade device opened a brand-new world of data to shooters! No longer were shooters at the mercy of ammunition companies to provide accurate velocity data. And, luckily for us, today's gear performs all the mathematical computation for us! If someone had told me 45 years ago that I would become interested in ballistics, I might have paid more attention in math class.

WHY A CHRONOGRAPH?

So, why should a shooter own one of these tools? Why is it important to

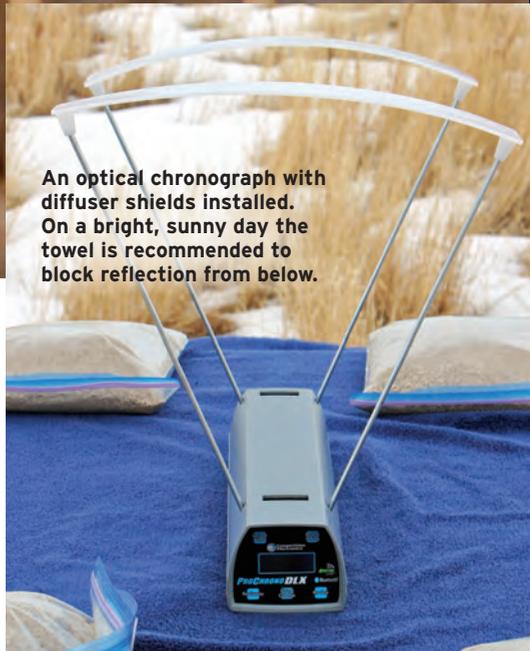
know velocity? As already mentioned, chronographs can confirm or refute the velocity numbers published by ammunition manufacturers. For rifle shooters needing to calculate bullet trajectory over long distances, accurate muzzle velocities are critical. And the longer the distance, the more critical these numbers become. Also, average muzzle velocity is just one important number for these shooters. Equally important is the velocity variation between shots, because as this variation increases, so does vertical spread at the target. Handloaders work hard to narrow this spread, and the only tool which measures it is the chronograph.

Handgunners need accurate velocity data too, especially those who compete in the action shooting sports. There are minimum and maximum velocities and power levels allowed in these competitions, and again, a chronograph is the only tool capable of establishing velocity. Shotgunners can also use a chronograph to check muzzle velocity of both birdshot and slugs. And all handloaders, whether for shotgun, handgun or rifle, can use a chronograph to help establish their handloads are safe and within SAAMI specifications.

Others who can benefit from a chronograph include air gunners, particularly those working with the new class of hunting air guns. And let's not forget that the legal classification of an airgun changes in Canada based >



Most action handgun sports have either minimum or maximum allowed velocities, sometimes both.



An optical chronograph with diffuser shields installed. On a bright, sunny day the towel is recommended to block reflection from below.

on its muzzle velocity. Additionally, archers, shooting the entire spectrum of bows, can test various bow adjustments and arrow shaft/broadhead combinations while monitoring their affect on velocity.

CHRONOGRAPH TYPES

Until recently, there was only one type of chronograph available. Today, there are three different options for consumers: the optical, electromagnetic and Doppler systems. Let's look at each type, but in the name of transparency, I must report that I don't have much hands-on experience with the electromagnetic chronograph. Therefore, my information on these is based on the manufacturer's data and information obtained from users. I do however own and use the other two types.

OPTICAL CHRONOGRAPHS

Optical chronographs are, in my opinion, the most common chronograph type. They have been in use since the early 1970s when Dr. Oehler designed the first one. In use, a bullet is fired over two optical sensors spaced a precise distance apart. These sensors "see" the bullet's passage and

measure the amount of time it takes to make the trip over this known distance. There are a variety of different setups, with most built so projectiles must pass above the instrument. But at least one maker has a model where you shoot under the device.

PROS: Optical chronographs are accurate, affordable and easily transported to the range. Many of the newer models have Bluetooth capability so you can glance at your phone or tablet to get readings. They can be the least expensive type, starting at around \$100, with prices going up depending on features and quality. They typically measure all types of projectiles, including airguns and shotguns, even with shot loads when appropriate precautions are taken and proper setup is done.

CONS: Because they are set-up downrange of the gun's muzzle, it's easy to accidentally shoot the instrument, especially if using a scope or flinching. They also allow the shooting of groups to evaluate accuracy while measuring velocity. Unfortunately, they can be affected by light conditions and are best used on dull days or placed in the shade. To alleviate the lighting problem, they typically come with

overhead light diffusers. If shooting at a formal range, they require calling a cease fire to set up and take down, sometimes drawing the ire of other shooters because of the time required.

DOPPLER CHRONOGRAPHS

Doppler systems work by transmitting a radar signal downrange, which is bounced off the rear of the speeding bullet and reflected back to the instrument. The change in frequency detected is called a Doppler shift and some high-level computing power converts it into velocity. This type of chronograph has been around for many years but was far too expensive for individual purchase. The Canadian company Infinition Inc., a long-time



The MagnetoSpeed senses the bullet's passage as it passes a bayonet-like attachment affixed to the rifle's barrel or handguard.

manufacturer of these industrial/military units, changed the chronograph landscape by developing a consumer-grade product, and they now own this segment of the market with their LabRadar unit.

PROS: The LabRadar product is Bluetooth and SD card capable and can be used under all lighting conditions. It measures bullets, shotgun slugs, airgun pellets and arrows. Since it is positioned behind the muzzle, there's no danger of assassinating it with an errant shot. With the SD card installed, the results can be downloaded and evaluated at home. It can track the projectile and will deliver downrange velocities to 100 metres, as well as muzzle velocity. This allows the calculation of ballistic coefficient.

CONS: This is an expensive tool, pushing \$1,000 CAD, and requires extra accessories to measure airgun and archery projectiles. It can't measure birdshot velocities. If there are nearby shooters, their shots might interfere with readings unless the internal settings are changed to account for this.

ELECTROMAGNETIC CHRONOGRAPHS

In the same way LabRadar owns the Doppler chronograph market, MagnetoSpeed owns the electromagnetic corner of the chronograph trade. This chronograph attaches to the firearm by mounting directly to the barrel by means of a strap system. When the gun is fired, special patented elec-



Hunters need accurate velocity data to predict trajectories at long distances

tromagnets placed as sensors along the bayonet-shaped tool measure the projectile's velocity. A display unit attached to the "bayonet" controls functions and displays results. Price starts around \$300 CAD, plus accessories.

PROS: These units are not affected by light conditions, and they are compact and easy to travel with. Set up properly, they will work with airguns and shotgun loads using #7 shot or larger. No downrange setup is required, as everything is located at the firing line.

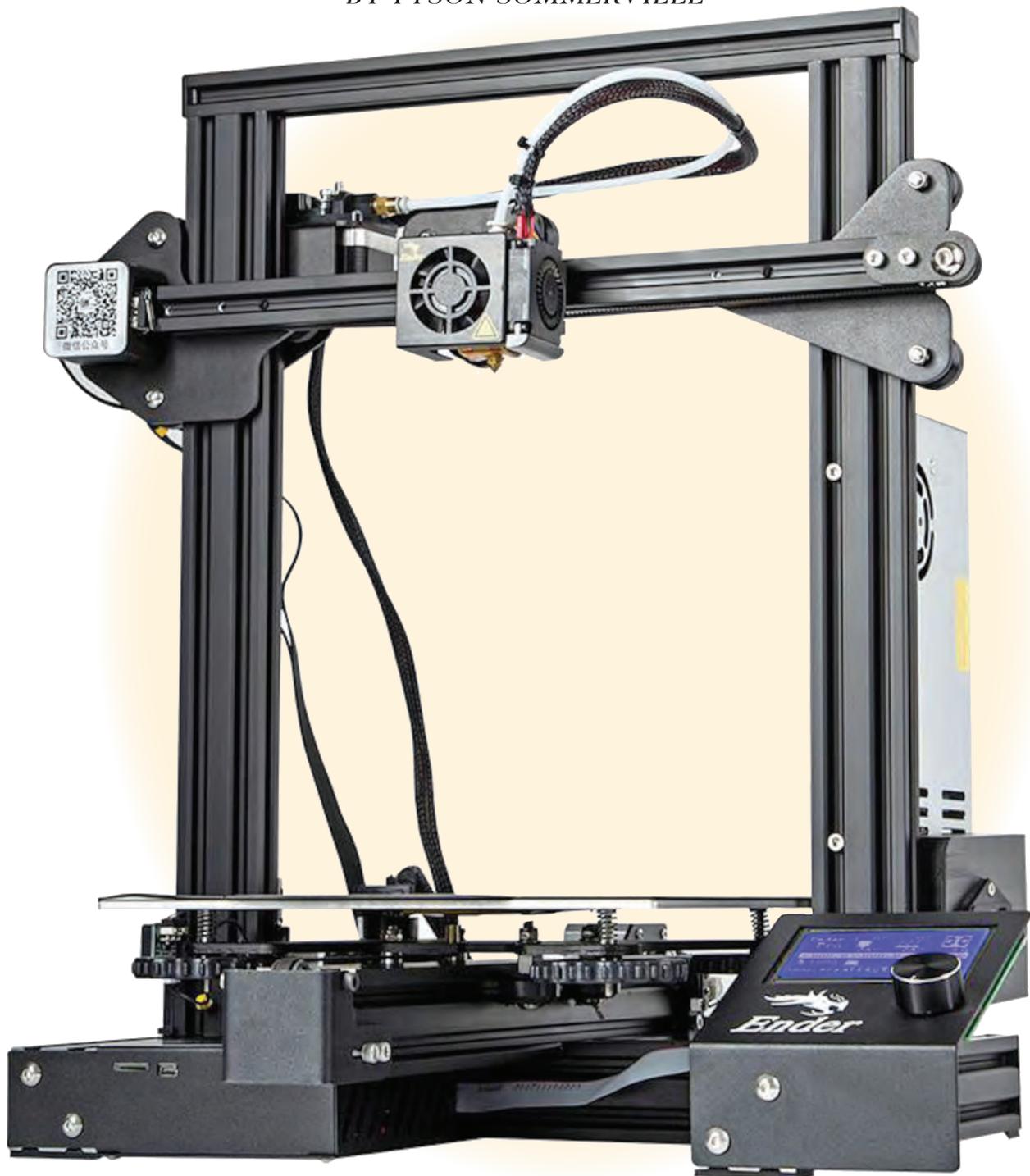
CONS: Being attached to the muzzle, there is potential for the unit to alter

barrel harmonics of a rifle, making accuracy testing and velocity measuring two separate activities. They cannot be used with typical handguns or archery gear.

With the wide variety of good, affordable and accurate chronographs available to the Canadian shooter, everyone should have one in their toolbox. They will go a long way towards making you a well-educated hunter, shooter and handloader. If nothing else, you will have fun learning new information about your handloads or chosen factory ammunition. 

MAKE YOUR OWN

3D printing for gun owners
BY TYSON SOMMERVILLE





3D printing can produce some unconventional colours, like these magazine pouches for the 1911 pistol.

In recent years, 3D printing has been gaining wildly in popularity. It seems hobbyists of all kinds are seeing its value and are adding printers to their work rooms because of the opportunities they provide for quick fixes and outright creations. Gun owners are hobbyists too and can absolutely benefit from these machines.

A basic FDM (Fusion Deposition Modeling) 3D printer can be had for under \$400 any day of the week, and if you're patient, they can be found for under \$300 on sale. The quick version of how they work is material, called filament (typically a plastic called

PLA), is heated and forced through a nozzle, much like a miniature hot glue gun. This plastic is then layered over and over to create the desired shape. The cost of one kilogram of filament is about \$25 and goes a long way, so it's relatively inexpensive once you are up and running. You can design your own models with a variety of free software, or you can download and print other models people have created, usually for free. The only real limitations are your own designing ability and the tensile strength of the materials you print in.

I personally run a Creality Ender 3 printer, typically regarded as entry lev-

el, and print primarily in PLA, which is the easiest but weakest material to print with. I have found that quite a bit can be done with such a modest setup. Using other people's designs, I am currently printing a light-duty vice for my reloading bench. Once completed, its first task will be to hold my 1911 slide while I paint the sights. Using my own design ability, I have made a lot of odds and ends for my 3-Gun competition shooting, the most useful being a side-mounted shotgun shell holder.

I have also had success printing my own magazine pouches and magazine extensions. The extension simply replaces the existing base pad, making the magazine longer and therefore easier to pull out of a pouch and load into my firearm. Sadly, for legal reasons, they don't add any capacity. Some companies, such as Taccom3g.com, also offer free downloads of some of their products for you to print at home.

A quick search of Thingiverse.com, a website that hosts STL files, shows a variety of reloading accessories as well. Everything from ammo trays to press-specific primer catch systems. Most of these are things which can just be purchased if you want them, but it's nice to be able to customize them to your liking. And given the cost of filament, these items are far cheaper to print, if you don't count the cost of the printer itself.

As for things you cannot buy, I had a friend with an old Sako rifle that was missing the magazine. He said he simply could not find a replacement. With a bit of measuring and design, I was able to print him a filler block to replace the magazine. This was just a block that fit in the magazine well, allowing the rifle to be used as a single shot. My friend was quite satisfied with the result. I have also recently designed and printed an insert that converts an old cigar box into an ammo box for my 38 S&W. Custom ammunition boxes are one of the more common things you will see printed, either for odd ball calibres or just to add some flair to the design, like the owner's name on the lid.

Certainly, 3D printers aren't for everyone; like any technology, they can be temperamental and have you pulling hair out when all it wants to print

is what appears to be spaghetti. Like most things, as time goes on, they will get increasingly user friendly and cheaper. I would not be shocked if, far down the road, they become nearly as popular as reloading presses in the gun community. Assuming the gun community still exists in the future... sorry, C-21 has got me down.

As for the elephant in the room, though it is technically possible to 3D print firearms, it is illegal in Canada, according to my provincial CFO. I phoned the CFO's office and was told it used to be allowed, if you had the appropriate license for the firearm

you were printing. That changed when someone reread the laws and decided to reinterpret it as illegal. I'm told it somehow falls under trafficking. (Editor's note: We're going to have Guy Lavergne address this question in a future Legal Corner column).

That said, beyond basic proof of concept, I just don't see the appeal for the average person yet. Make no mistake, there are people online doing amazing feats of home engineering to build functioning firearms, but they are far ahead of what most of us could do in our garage, and simply



ABOVE: An ammunition box insert, ready to come off the printer.

INSET: The custom ammunition box ready for use.



TOP AND LEFT: Magazine slam pads can be 3D printed, complete with letters, names or numbers.

not as good as what can be bought in store. For the rest of us, who are likely more interested in “print and assemble” guns, here’s a summary of what I’ve learned based on my online searching. I’m probably on a watch list now.

Printing something like an AR-15 still requires a metal upper receiver, internals and barrel, also the printed lower is prone to cracking at stress points (there’s a reason most of them are made of metal). As for something like printing a Glock frame, it requires metal inserts that will run you about \$100 by the time it’s landed, and the frame itself only has a life span of a few thousand rounds, at best. Meanwhile \$200 will buy you a stripped Polymer80 frame that is of stronger material which will last longer. However, they were recently raided by the ATF.

Before I found out it was illegal, I was pricing parts to see about printing and making one just as proof of concept for an article. The cheapest way I could do it was to buy a complete Glock and strip it for parts, essentially a frame swap. Using take offs and cheap aftermarket parts, I was well over \$1,000 for the cheapest thing I could cobble together.

Remington proved in 1959 with the

Nylon 66 that synthetics were a viable option for firearms manufacture, with polymer AR lowers and pistol frames existing for decades. Even now, with enough modification, you can print in nylon, but if you are that dedicated, learning to run a CNC mill seems a more effective way to manufacture. Technology is quickly progressing and I’m sure we are not far away from easy access to more viable printing materials. Even metal 3D printing is becoming available, but sadly, looking online I cannot find a price, only a “get a quote” button, which tells me I can’t afford it. In 10 years, that may not be the case. Right now, in my opinion, printing of firearms is a niche because-it-can-be-done hobby, not a way to grow a

collection and certainly not a public safety concern.

In summary, 3D printing, similar to handloading, seems like a money saver until you start upgrading things and buying fun accessories. It also opens the door to everyone you know asking you to make them something, and your hilarious family members asking if you’re printing guns yet. But maybe it’s just my family asking because my COVID hair is getting shaggy, and I keep monologuing about government overreach. At any rate, I highly recommend 3D printers, just make mental, physical and financial room for another hobby in your life because I have yet to meet a 3D printer owner who is casual about it. 🍷

PRACTICAL RIMFIRE ACCURACY

Feeding your rimfire for a summer of shooting
BY LOWELL STRAUSS





ABOVE: Matching the type of shooting to be done with ammunition designed for that purpose is important.

“Find what your gun likes and feed it that” is sage advice I received from my shooting mentor. “Every firearm has its favourite ammunition, so test different kinds and when you find something accurate, stick with it.” This pearl of wisdom is true, especially with rimfire shooters who are at the mercy of the factory ammunition gods. A dizzying array of ammunition brands and types are available, but thankfully, the selection guarantees suitable ammunition for the task at hand.

The first rimfire cartridge, invented in France in 1845, was the 22 BB Cap or 6mm Flobert, named after its inventor, Louis-Nicolas Flobert. Modern rimfire calibres include the .17 calibres, such as the 17 Mach 2, 17 Hornady Magnum Rimfire and 17 Winchester Super Magnum; the .22 calibres include the 22 Short, 22 Long Rifle (22 LR) and 22 Winchester Magnum Rimfire. Introduced in 1887, the 22 Long Rifle is hands down the most popular rimfire cartridge of all time and the focus of this article.

TYPES OF 22 LR AMMUNITION

Ammunition makers create purpose-built ammunition for rifles and pistols, semi-autos, target shooting, hunting and even cold weather. Today, the

proliferation of extreme long-range rimfire shooting pushes the 22 LR ammunition performance envelope well beyond the traditional 100 yards to 300 metres and more.

Rimfire ammunition is further categorized by velocity (subsonic, standard velocity, high velocity and hyper velocity) and nose type (solid point and hollow point). A typical 22 LR bullet weighs 40 grains, but this can vary considerably; lighter bullets are used for higher-velocity loads and heavy bullets for subsonic ammunition. The standard 1:16 rifling twist found in most rifles shoots the full range of common factory ammunition.

NUTS & BOLTS OF RIFMIRE

Here is a quick refresh of the basics. The priming compound is located inside the hollow rim of the rimfire case. The firing pin strikes the rim, crushing it, which ignites the primer and starts the chain reaction that ends with the bullet exiting the muzzle and flying downrange. To prime a case, most companies drop liquid priming compound into the case and spin it, forcing the liquid primer into the rim. In budget-priced bulk 22 LR ammunition, that process is far from perfect, and sometimes primer is not spread evenly to

all parts of the rim. If you've shot more than a box or two of 'plinking' ammunition, I'm sure you've encountered a misfire -- a cartridge which doesn't fire when struck by the firing pin. Many times, if that same cartridge is loaded a second time and the firing pin strikes a different part of the rim, it'll fire.

PERFORMANCE VARIABLES

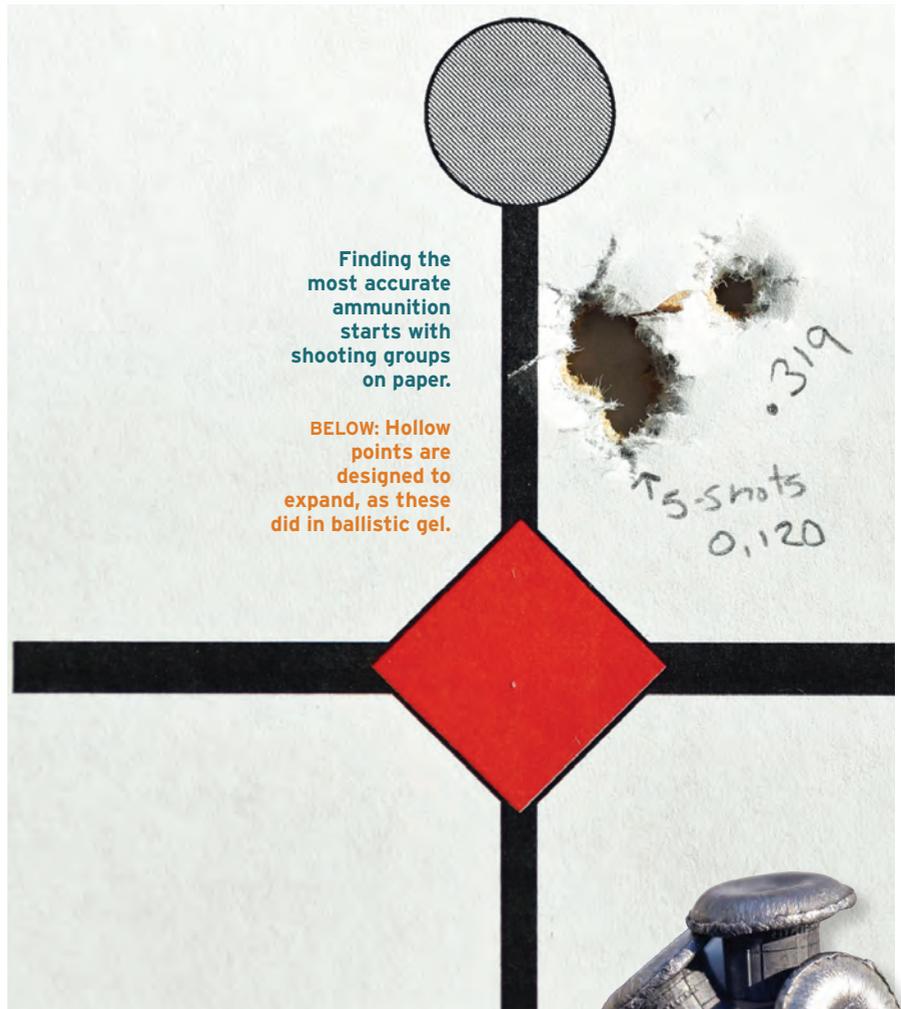
It's a mystery: why do some types of ammunition group well from one gun and scatter from the next? Even two guns of the same make and model may prefer different ammunition. Why? Variables like barrel length, chamber size, bore diameter, type of rifling, action screw torque and many more factors come into play. I like to take a scientific approach, narrowing down or eliminating variables one by one when optimizing my firearm's ammunition.

As shooters, we each must determine what practical level of performance is needed. What are you asking your gun and ammunition to do? And perhaps most importantly, what's your budget? These two factors help narrow down the choices on the road to accuracy.

PLINKING AMMUNITION (PRICE: \$)

It's hard to beat an afternoon out with the kids shooting steel spinning targets or rattling tin cans with a rimfire. If this is your idea of fun, you probably don't need to break the bank buying premium ammunition. To me, plinking ammunition is characterized by bulk packaging of about 300 to 500 rounds per carton. Sometimes there are damaged rounds that may not be shootable, but that's expected for the price. My only caveat with a budget box is dependability. There's nothing more frustrating than cartridges that misfire, jam or otherwise ruin the experience. Budget ammunition can be dirty, too, causing fouling. Semi-autos may balk when fed too much of the cheap stuff without frequent cleaning.

Beyond basic reliability, I don't set the accuracy bar high when it comes to bulk ammunition. Plinking distances tend to be close, often less than 25 metres, and even mediocre accuracy is typically acceptable. Still, I like to test fire bulk ammunition on paper as a baseline measure of its accuracy and number of fliers. I've had some budget boxes that impressed me; others disappointed me.



Finding the most accurate ammunition starts with shooting groups on paper.

BELOW: Hollow points are designed to expand, as these did in ballistic gel.

BASIC MARKSMANSHIP & PRACTICE AMMUNITION (PRICE: \$\$)

You may have heard the saying, "It takes a lot of skill to outshoot your gun," but what exactly does it mean? For many of us, the results on paper are more indicative of the shooter's skill than the rifle or ammunition's accuracy. Get a beginner to shoot two 10-shot targets, one with Eley Tenex (expensive precision ammunition) and the other with Federal Champion (inexpensive plinking ammunition), and I'll bet you'll be hard-pressed to tell the difference between the groups. But drop that rifle on a Caldwell Lead Sled and the premium ammunition will be the clear winner.

Training ammunition doesn't need to break the bank and shouldn't, but for this type of shooting, I prefer a step up in price from plinking ammunition. Not only does it run cleaner, on average it shoots tighter groups with fewer flyers, well worth the few

extra bucks for skills improvement. In this category, there are many options and multiple price points. Test a few trusted brands to find one that works best. I use this ammunition in a variety of target shooting activities from 10 metres to 100 metres.

HUNTING (PRICE: \$ TO \$\$\$)

Hunting ammunition is characterized by a hollow-point bullet. There are two types of hunting ammunition. One is designed for varmint/pest hunting, where maximum expansion is desired. The second is better suited for small game and bird hunting for food. Ideal game bullets offer good expansion at lower velocities, which lessens meat damage.

Hunting ammunition is available in

inexpensive bulk packs with a quality similar to plinking ammunition mentioned previously, as well as individual boxes of subsonic to hyper-velocity loads at several price points. In my testing, I've found that price is not always the best indicator of performance. I've tested bullet expansion and penetration in Clear Ballistics gelatin or wet newspaper. These controlled ballistics tests confirmed my observations on game and varmint. Do your range work with your specific firearm for outstanding outcomes.

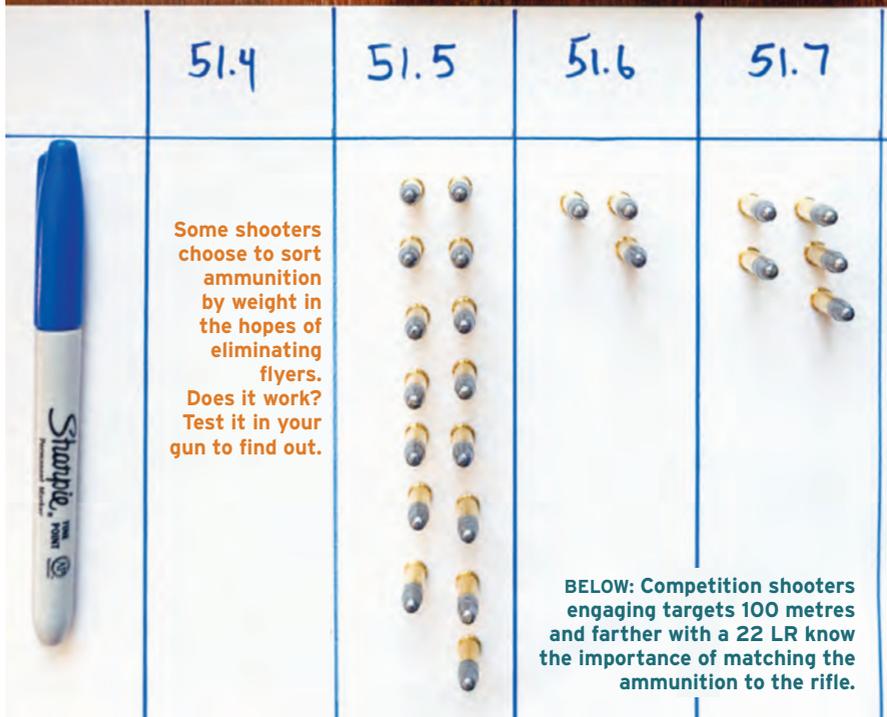
Hunting distances are typically from five metres to 50 metres. Small critters offer a challenging target. Headshots, which equals a four-centimetres or smaller target, are preferred for game animals to prevent meat damage. Chest shots on varmints provide a slightly bigger target yet deliver a quick kill.

COMPETITION (PRICE: \$\$\$ TO \$\$\$\$)

In elite-level competition and high-stakes matches, when medals, cash or prizes are on the line, shooters look for any advantage that will help get them on the podium. Pairing a competition gun with high-quality ammunition is a winning combination. At this level, shooters choose performance over budget.

Choosing the best ammunition depends on the sport, target distances and environmental conditions. Olympic target shooters and benchrest shooters demand the highest level of accuracy. Biathlon ammunition must shoot accurately and reliably in the cold. Long-range shooters want accurate ammunition beyond 100 metres. In ISSF 25-metre Rapid Fire pistol, competitors need clean-burning, fast-cycling ammunition for their semi-auto competition pistols.

I spoke with Rick Katigbak, founder of the Canadian Rimfire Precision Series, on getting started in the popular long-range shooting sport. He said, "New shooters can easily compete with a heavy-barrel factory rifle," adding, "Hitting targets at 300 metres requires matching ammunition to the rifle's harmonics. Select a handful of different ammunition brands in your budget, testing each for accuracy at 50 to 100 yards. Start by shooting ten fouling shots and then four 10-shot groups for each ammunition type, measuring group sizes." Once shooters find ammunition that works well, they typically buy enough ammunition of that specific lot



for the season (there can be differences between lots). "CCI Standard Velocity shoots okay in most production rifles and is a good starting point," noted Katigbak. "As skills improve, many top shooters switch to high-performance ammunition by Eley, Lapua and SK for a competitive edge."

ADVANCED ACCURACY

If you want to get into the weeds, consider some advanced techniques. Most are time-consuming, and unless your equipment and shooting skills are spot-on, most shooters will never see the difference on paper -- I certainly cannot (remember that the old saying about outshooting your gun?) But as another saying goes, "If you think it



improves your shooting, it improves your shooting!" After you've learned the marksmanship principles, much of competitive shooting is a mental game.

In theory, sorting ammunition by rim thickness into similar groups improves accuracy. Hornady's Lock-N-Load 17-22 rim thickness gauge is one of several devices used to measure case rims. Some shooters report the biggest



ABOVE: Even shooters doing pest control should test their ammunition and tune their rifles.

ADVANCED RIMFIRE EDUCATION

Project Mapleseed is a one-day shooting clinic, open to all ages, focusing on teaching basic marksmanship from standing, sitting/kneeling and prone positions. It's a non-profit, volunteer-run organization for helping Canadians develop fundamental marksmanship skills and safe firearms handling. Project Mapleseed is challenging, educational, engaging and fun! Project Mapleseed hopes to preserve our firearms heritage and freedoms in Canada. For more information and upcoming training events across Canada, visit <https://mapleseedrifleman.com/>.

Canadian Rimfire Precision Series (CRPS) provides shooters across Canada with a challenging environment to test their precision and positional shooting skills using 22 LR rifles. Competitions are divided into three divisions: youth (under 18), production and open. Each division tests shooters' skills and equipment under demanding conditions. Using a PRS-style match format, competitors engage one to five, half-inch to nine-inch steel targets from 50 metres to 300 metres. Competitors shoot targets from a variety of positions and platforms. For more info, visit <https://rimfireprecision.ca/>.

RESOURCES

Ultimatum Precision
Canadian manufacturer of the Deuce barreled action. www.ultimatumprecision.ca
Korth Group - Eley Ammunition Testing
Using Eley's Gemini test rig and patented software, Korth will identify the best ammunition for your barrel. www.korthgroup.com/eley

gains from sorting bulk/budget ammunition in a factory rifle. A match rifle with match ammunition likely won't see much improvement by sorting; match ammunition is held to a higher standard already. Forging out the extra money for better ammunition saves this step.

Long-range competition creates a demand for precision actions and rifles capable of superb accuracy. Ultimatum's new Deuce barreled action (trigger and stock purchased separately) features user-adjustable headspace to optimize performance with your ammunition, and adjustable firing pin protrusion to complement the adjustable headspace. Measuring rim thickness may be a benefit in this rifle platform.

When handloading centrefire ammunition, weight-sorting components is a proven method to improve accuracy. Theoretically, sorting rimfire cartridges by weight should improve group size and reduce the number of flyers. But there are many variables at play here -- the bullet, powder charge, amount of priming compound and the weight of the brass case itself. A rimfire cartridge with a 40-grain bullet weighs approximately 51.5 grains. Occasionally, I find a cartridge weighing up to 0.4 grains more, or less, than the average. Some shooters report this as a method of finding and removing group-destroy-

ing fliers. In my own shooting, I have not noticed a difference on paper yet.

Elite competition shooters using Eley Tenex can identify the best ammunition lot for their barrel using Eley's test rig and patented software at the Korth Group's Alberta facilities. Mounting the competition gun in a special fixture eliminates shooter-induced movement error, allowing a precise ammunition test. Groups from different lots of ammunition are shot and compared, reporting the lot number for the best groups. The savvy shooter buys enough of the best lot number to see them through a training/competition cycle.

In summary, the fastest way to finding the best 22 LR ammunition for your gun and type of shooting is to buy a sample of ammunition and test it. Start at 50 yards and confirm at the farthest practical distance. Some dealers sell 22 LR sample packs based on your budget (mid-range or high-end). This gives a shooter a single box of different brands/types of ammunition to test, to see what your rifle or pistol prefers.

Testing ammunition is part of the process of being an accomplished shooter. And for a student of the gun, it's half the fun. 🍀

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LADDERS & LEVERS

Skinner's ladder sight for lever-actions

BY BOB CAMPBELL





While the graduations on the Skinner 1894 ladder sight are unmarked, they are precise.

Lever-action rifles are reliable, handy, accurate enough for most chores and chambered for powerful and useful cartridges. For hunting game at modest ranges, the problem with lever-action rifles, like most rifles, has always been shot placement rather than power. The factory iron sights on these rifles are none too advanced in most cases, and when you reach 60-plus years as I have, these old sights just don't cut it anymore. All the same, I find the 30-30 Winchester, 35 Remington and even the 45 Colt to be useful cartridges in lever-action rifles, with their recreation value being off the scale.

I have met old timers who could make good use of the original open sights of the Winchester even at a long 150 yards. They understood when to place the front sight at the bottom of the notch and when to place it at the top of the open rear sight. I am not one of them, so that sent me on a hunt to find some better sighting equipment for my lever guns.

SOMETHING BETTER

Among the first iron sights I used as improvements were the tang sights offered by Lyman and other companies. These are okay and they certainly look pretty on a rifle. But they must be flipped up to be used, can interfere with the grip, and in many ways don't work as well as receiver sights. My

experiments with tang sights were interesting, but eventually I concluded they are fine for range use but not so much for field use. I know, some people are of a different opinion.

My search eventually led me to the Skinner ladder sight for lever-action rifles. My first impression, as has been the case for all the Skinner sights I've ever examined, is one of overwhelming quality. They are simply first class in fit and finish, with this sight continuing that tradition.

INSTALLATION

This ladder-type sight is similar to the Buffington sight developed for the Springfield 45-70 Gov't service rifle and requires removal of the old open notch rear sight. The Skinner ladder sight is then installed by tapping the sight base into the original sight notch in the barrel. The Skinner may be a little oversized, as it is manufactured to account for sight notch size variations. Also, the dovetail notches of old guns are often burred or damaged from long use. I used a small file to clean up

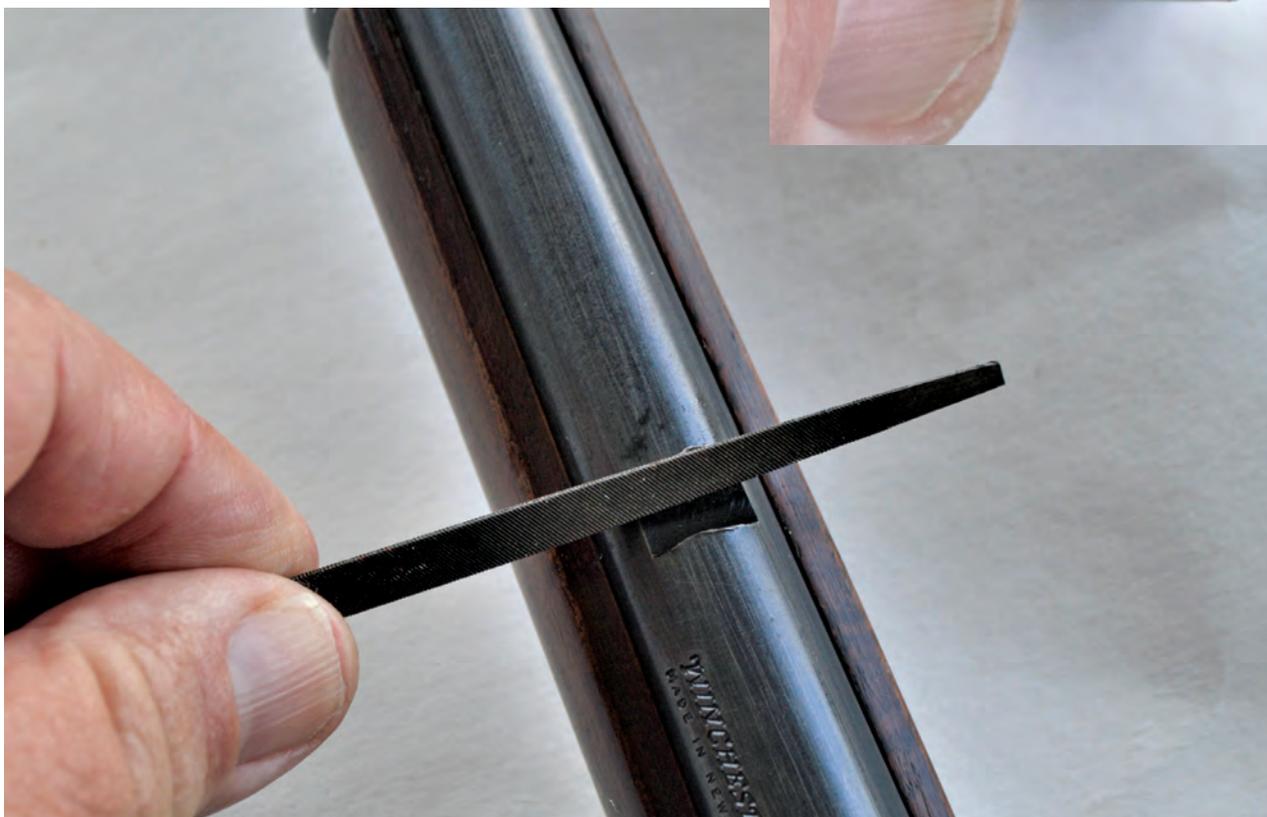
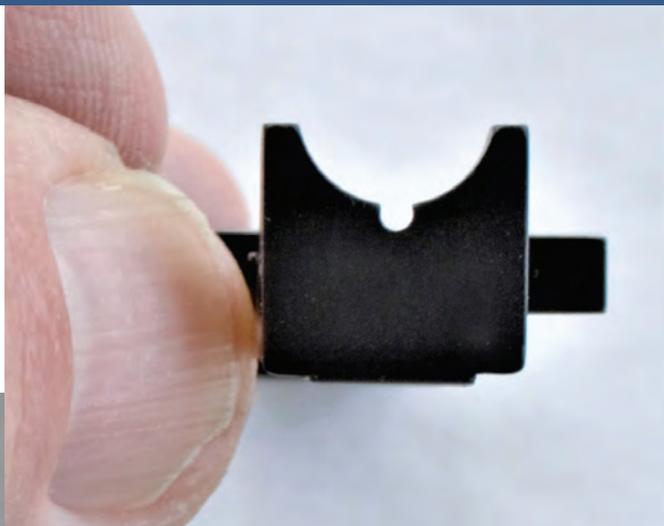
the damaged dovetail on my rifle. With plenty of lubricant, I tapped the Skinner sight in from left to right as neatly and cleanly as possible. This required placing the rifle in a heavily padded vise and cranking it down tight so there was no movement. A locking screw, which bottoms out in the barrel's dovetail cut, ensures the sight doesn't move.

SHOOTING

The sight features graduations marked on the elevation bar, but there are no reference numbers on these marks. This may seem unusual at first but is eminently practical. I have often dealt with iron sights marked in metres and in yards, with most being highly optimistic and intended to give a soldier a chance of striking out at massed troops, via volley fire, at 1,000 yards or more. For hunting use, this is not practical. With the Skinner sight, the lines marked on the sight are still there for reference and for returning to a specific setting, but the lack of numbers recognizes the fact shooters will use these sights in a wide variety of guns, shooting a broad assort-

RIGHT: This sight features a nice, tight, clearly defined rear notch.

BOTTOM: A modest amount of file work was needed to prepare the dovetail sight for installation.



ment of calibres, bullet weights and velocities. What this means is the shooter will have to do some range work to establish sight sighting with a favoured load and then mark those settings down for future reference. Since I own more than one rifle, I use a notebook to keep track of these settings.

Sighting in rifles equipped with optics to strike two inches high at 100 yards isn't difficult, but it does require some care and attention to detail, so the lever-action shooter should also expect to do a little work in establishing sight settings with iron sights. Fortunately, the Skinner sight makes these adjustments easy with a wide, knurled and easy-to-use sight adjustment knob. I also find the rear sight notch is better defined

than the original factory sights, making for a big step up in precision.

My Winchester rifle is normally accurate enough for a 200-yard shot, with 150 yards being a more realistic limit. This ladder sight is moved up two notches for the 150-yard distance, but by moving the sight to the third notch I am pretty much on the money at 200 yards, a new realistic limit for the rifle under perfect conditions. Naturally, the point of impact will differ with different rifles and a range of bullet weights. However, the Skinner sight offers plenty of adjustment, and with a modest amount of ammunition fired the competent shooter will be on the mark quickly and enjoying the rifle much more.

I should stress that this is a sight for use with accurate rifles. I would never say it is well suited to extending the range or mechanical accuracy of a rifle, but it will enhance the practiced shooting ability of the competent rifleman. In my opinion, this is as good as it gets with a lever-action rifle and open sights, and that may be up to 200 yards or so.

After some evaluation, I found the Skinner ladder sight for the Winchester 1894 an excellent investment. Installation is simple enough if some care is taken. This sight is a class act, well worth your time and effort to explore. There's more information on their website at www.skinnersights.com. 



AFFORDABLE SINGLE-ACTIONS

Heritage Manufacturing's \$200 (CAD) revolver

BY TIMOTHY FOWLER



Heritage revolvers feature a safety just left of the hammer.

Ever since my mother made me put away my cap guns and holsters, I've wanted a pair of proper six-shooters. A brace of new guns is tough to justify at the best of times, but it gets considerably easier when the price is \$200 each. Enter Heritage Manufacturing and their line of affordable rimfire single-action revolvers. Finally, I got those proper six-shooters I've been waiting for.

THE GUNS

I snagged two different revolvers for evaluation: a Model RM22MB4, a 4¾-inch barrelled single-action revolver with both 22 LR and 22 WMR cylinders and the RR22B6 a six-inch barrelled revolver in 22 LR only. Both are blued steel guns with cocobolo wood grips, fixed rear sights and six-round cylinders, although they do make a nine-round version. This pair of revolvers was used in three separate range days to send several hundred rimfire rounds downrange at distances ranging from 10 metres to 50 metres.

ECONOMICAL SINGLE-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

As I was writing up this report, I spoke with Michael, at Wolverine Supplies in Virden, Man., who confirmed they were sold out of the six-inch version but had many more on order. Retail for this revolver is \$199.99, plus you can add the second cylinder in 22 WMR for an additional \$75. Just take a minute and let that sink in -- \$200 for a decent single-action rimfire revolver and the option to swap out a cylinder.

Mark Sidelinger, of Media Direct Creative, the media agency for Heritage Manufacturing, said, "I think one of the things it boils down to is that the Heritage revolver is an affordable alternative to some of the other products out there. Because of the engineering and the manufacturing processes, Heritage has become very efficient."

SAFETY & FUNCTION

There are a few things which determine the safe function and accuracy of a single-action revolver. How the hammer and cylinder work

together through cocking, cylinder rotation and cylinder lock-up are critical, as are the alignment of the chamber to the firearm's bore and how tightly the cylinder fits into the frame of the firearm. I did not have a proper range rod to check barrel/cylinder alignment, but the accuracy of the guns was good, with no excessive debris spitting from the barrel/cylinder gap, all suggesting good alignment.

I did measure cylinder end-shake, which is a measure of the fore-and-aft play of the cylinder when the gun is uncocked. On expensive revolvers, this should be about .001 inch, but we can't expect that level of fit on a revolver in this price range. The short-barrelled gun, for example, measured .008 inch, and that of course varied the barrel/cylinder gap by an equal amount. That's a little more than I'd like to see, >

but it seemed to have no effect on reliability or function. So, if you want a tighter fit, it looks like you'll have to spend a bunch more money.

It's worth noting that these revolvers have a manual safety, something that's unusual on single-action revolvers. I asked Sidelinger about this, and he said, "The purists involved with the Single Action Army poopoo the fact that Heritage puts a safety on these guns. But these guns are built to reassure family members and all shooters that we have something designed to be safe."

ACCURACY

To evaluate these guns for accuracy, a friend and I shot a number of six-shot groups at 10 metres. My first three shots clustered into half an inch, arranging themselves into a perfect vertical line, indicating the sights were centered perfectly. My friend's groups were likewise centered for windage. This is incredibly important on fixed sight guns like this, and it was encouraging to see Heritage is ensuring the sights are well regulated. I was reminded how difficult it is to shoot short barrelled handguns accurately—even at 10 metres. We put up some decent groups, but clearly, I need to spend more time at the range with handguns, which I can do now that I have a cheap-to-shoot rimfire revolver!

Overall, the guns functioned well, but after a couple of hundred rounds, the shorter barrel was beginning to foul and required a good cleaning.

TRIGGERS: SUBJECTIVE & OBJECTIVE

Opinions about trigger quality are mostly subjective, either the trigger feels right or not. But one of the objective measures of trigger performance is the force required to discharge the gun. The long-barrelled revolver averaged out at two pounds, 0.8 ounces, over five trigger breaks. And at the range, both triggers feel fine. Single-actions do tend to have lighter triggers because the function of cocking is done separately.

USEFULNESS

Carlos Vasques-Pusa, Heritage Manufacturing's Vice President of Sales, told me, "Our business really thrives on the rimfire business provided by the 22 Long Rifle and 22 Win Mag.



ABOVE: Heritage revolvers come with a lock and an extra cylinder, when specified.

Why have we stuck to a single-action? We've become a company that's well known for building those rimfire guns, because we've become very good and very efficient at producing them. But, you know, the quality isn't relatable to the price these are sold for. Because of the high quality, we don't get many returns on Heritage products.

"Our target customer for this, honestly, is pretty much anyone, because at the price these are available for, it makes pretty much everyone a customer. We have a lot of folks who carry high-end revolvers, but who have a Heritage for plinking or shooting small game."

In Canada, handgun use is restricted to shooting at a legal range, but shooting a single-action revolver in 22 Long Rifle and 22 Winchester Rimfire Magnum reminds me how badly I would love to have a revolver like this on my hip when I am in the woods. This gun is perfect for rabbits, grouse, and small game -- none of which are available or legal at my local range. Still, it is a pleasure to shoot these revolvers.

The rimfire single-action revolver is a great way to start a new handgun shooter. The single-action is easy to load and unload, rimfire ammunition

is inexpensive and the guns are simple to shoot. This kind of revolver provides good shooting practice for beginners and old hands alike. Heritage's price point makes these revolvers a great introduction gun, and it's a nice build-out to your gun collection without breaking the bank. Really, no matter what you shoot, adding a Heritage rimfire seems sensible.

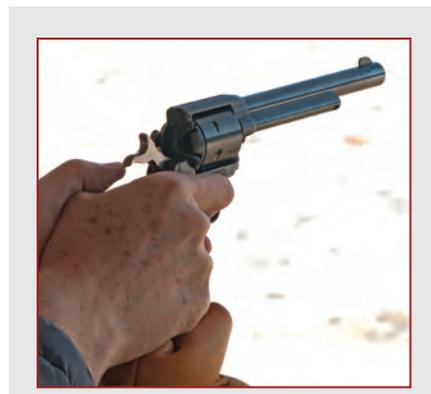
I am a strong proponent of matching a rimfire to whatever your centrefire platforms are, whether it's your deer gun, a 1911, double-action revolver or your single-action cowboy gun. A rimfire in a similar platform gives you more range and trigger time and saves you significant ammunition costs per trigger pull, as well as reducing the negative effects of recoil. If you are a single-action revolver shooter, these rimfires make perfect sense to add alongside your 45 Colt or 357 Magnum.

I'm told there is a long-barrelled rifle in the works, which will eventually be imported into Canada, and some specialty revolvers coming later in the year. Watch Wolverine's website for these. Vasques-Pusa also said, "I think one of our successes is that we're very quick to address what consumers are looking for. And we do have some new



RIGHT: Single-action revolvers make for a fun day at the range.

BELOW: The fixed sights of the Heritage revolvers were both well regulated.



PROPER GRIP

One of my range days uncovered a bad habit I had developed with these little revolvers, and it's a lesson worth passing on. My shooting partner noticed I was letting my support hand fore-finger extend along the side of the cylinder, creeping out far enough to expose it to the barrel/cylinder gap. What followed was a reminder on how to hold a revolver and a story about a guy now missing a fingertip due to firing a 44 Remington Magnum with the same hold I was using. Great lesson. Keep your fingers away from the barrel/cylinder gap! Those bad habits will transfer to your other revolvers and that won't end well.

The proper way to shoot a single-action two-handed (see photos) is to hold the butt of the gun in your strong hand and cock the hammer with your weak hand thumb while keeping all four fingers of the weak hand under the trigger guard. Keep those fingers away from the barrel/cylinder gap. Practice until this grip is automatic. The penalty for ignoring this advice is stiff indeed.

products coming out in 2021. We're not quite ready to talk about them yet, but it's innovation which goes beyond just changing the grip or something similar. We like to look at guns that were used in the Old West and have a story behind them, then build on that. When you're giving the consumer

what they're looking for, your [sales] job gets easy."

Heritage Manufacturing's rimfire single-action revolvers are an affordable entry point to single-action shooting and these revolvers make a great addition to augment your cowboy action practice. 🍷



300 yards

A CROSSOVER RIFLE

Reviewing the Sako S20

BY T.J. SCHWANKY

Sako made it known in late 2019 that they had something big coming in 2020, originally planning to launch it at the SHOT Show in Las Vegas in January. However, they decided to wait for the IWA Show in Nuremberg in March, a decision that, in hindsight, came back to haunt them. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 IWA Outdoor Classic was cancelled, taking the thunder out of Sako's big reveal. They did give attendees a teasing glimpse of the new rifle behind smoked glass at the SHOT Show, but when the actual launch happened, there was little thunder. One of the most unique rifles to ever come out of the Sako plant was relegated to a social media release.

STOCK FEATURES

While Sako devotees followed the launch with keen interest, most gun owners had no idea Sako dropped the A7 from its lineup and launched the S20. It wasn't until some of the rifles began getting out to the public, which also saw delays due to COVID-19, that

interest began to swell. I was hoping to have one for the 2020 hunting season, but mine never arrived until late December, but that hasn't prevented me from giving it a thorough testing.

The most noticeable feature of the S20 is its almost futuristic look, unlike anything Sako has produced in the past, other than the TRG perhaps. The S20 is best described as a hybrid and easily switches between a tactical precision rifle and a hunting rifle by swapping out the rear stock and fore stock. Both versions feature an adjustable comb and spacers to alter the length of pull. The tactical stock also permits the recoil pad to be adjusted for height and angle, a desirable trait for competition shooters. The tactical stock features M-Lok placements both front and rear, and both stocks feature QD sling swivel placement on both sides. The hunter stock has the traditional QD mounts on the bottom of the front and rear stock, as well. Sako really thought of everything to appeal to both target shooters and hunters in both Europe and North America.

I have fairly large hands and I'm typically not a big fan of thumbhole-style stocks, but I have to say the hunter stock on the S20 is the most comfortable I've ever tried. The angle and offset of the pistol grip forces my hand into the perfect grip position, rather than having to search for it, as with many thumbholes I've shot. The hunter and tactical stocks have different grips which are molded as one separate piece, rather than as part of the stock, to avoid any molding lines or gaps on the front of the grip. While a small thing, it does speak to the quality and design that went into this stock. Also, the textured surface on the grip and forend are definitely welcome in wet conditions.

ACTION & BARREL

At the heart of the S20 is a rigid aluminum chassis, to which the receiver is attached via a V-bedding system. This system is utilized by many high-end precision rifle manufacturers but to this point has only been found in Sako's TRG line. Unlike most rifles, >

which have only two action screws to attach the receiver to stock, the S20 employs a design feature from the TRG that utilizes three screws to secure it to the spine of the frame. Another feature once unique to the TRG but now found on the S20 is the recoil lug. Rather than a recoil lug that is integral to the action, the S20 uses a steel insert embedded in the aluminum spine, which fits into a recess within the S20 action. All these features work together to provide the type of accuracy required in precision rifles and typically only found on much more expensive rifles.

While the action does share similar characteristics with the Tikka, this is most definitely not a rebranded Tikka action. Like the Tikka, it only comes in one action length, long, but the mass production capability this provides aids in keeping the price down. While bolt and extractor resemble that of a Tikka much more than a Sako 85, the S20 shares the same three-lug design with Sako versus the two lugs of the Tikka. This is truly a unique action.

Another feature shooters are applauding on the S20 is the integrated picatinny rail, which permits the use of commonly available rings. Like the Tikka, the S20 utilizes a single point release, polymer magazine and comes standard with a five-round (three in magnum chamberings) magazine, with a 10-round (seven in magnum calibres) magazine also available. The final trick Sako has up their sleeve with the S20 is a trigger which is not only adjustable for weight (two to four pounds) but can also be moved forward or rearward to perfectly fit the shooter's hand. It can also be ordered with a two-stage trigger for the ultimate in precision. Like other Sako models, the S20 has a cold hammer-forged barrel and is threaded for use with a muzzle brake. It is available in blackened carbon steel or stainless with a Cerakote application.

The S20 is available in 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.5 PRC, 270 Win, 7mm RM, 308 Win, 30-06 Sprg and 300WM. Sako is typically slow to embrace new cartridges



The S20 rifle tested here was chambered in 6.5 PRC.



The magazine of the S20 is constructed of glass-filled polymer and comes in various capacities.

into their line up, so it was a pleasant surprise to see the 6.5 PRC as an option, which is what I ordered mine chambered in. I opted for the hunter model with a 24-inch, stainless, Cerakote-treated, fluted barrel and a single-stage trigger. I topped it off with a Zeiss V6 3-18x50 with a custom-burned Ballistix elevation turret.

RANGE WORK

Immediately apparent upon picking up the S20 is that it's not a lightweight. Published weight for the bare rifle is 8.25 pounds, and mine with scope and rings is right on 10 pounds. While

heavy, this is certainly not excessive for a hunting rifle, especially one designed for precision long-range shooting. On our first trip to the range, I did a quick boresight by removing the bolt and looking down the barrel at 100 yards. This had the rifle on paper for the first shot and after a quick adjustment, shots two through six were all within less than an inch of each other. It was a cold day with a variable wind and our bench wasn't super solid, so to say I was impressed was an understatement, and it made me want to get back out under better conditions to see what the rifle could really do.



This is the Sako S20 in its Hunter configuration. The Precision version has a significantly different stock.



The S20 comes with an MOA accuracy guarantee, and lived up to that with Hornady 143-grain ELD-X ammunition.

Conditions were much better on the second trip to the range and both Vanessa and I easily shot sub-MOA groups. The tightest was .67 inches. We then moved out to 300 yards and shot right at .50 MOA. I'd hoped to shoot it at longer range, but deep snow prevented us from getting to our 800-yard range. We were shooting factory Hornady Precision Hunter ammunition with the 143-grain ELD-X, and the 1:8-barrel twist seemed to stabilize them very well. It's been a while since I shot a rifle with an aluminum chassis and I'd forgotten how different they feel under recoil. I have no doubt the extra weight plays a role too, but the rifle just somehow seems more



The S20's thumbhole stock proved easy to shoot and handled recoil well, staying on target easily.

rigid and solid than a typical bolt-action with the receiver attached directly to the stock. I'm not sure I've ever shot a rifle that I was so quick to acquire the target with and to stay on target through the trigger squeeze. There's little question you are shooting a precision-style rifle when you squeeze the trigger on the S20.

I must admit going into this test almost not wanting to like this strange-looking rifle, but it really impressed me and when you consider the features it shares with the TRG, yet comes in at about half the price, it's downright impressive. If you are looking for a new mountain rifle, this isn't it, but if you want a super accurate rig for flatter country, it's definitely worth a look. And if you are looking to test the waters of competition shooting, you need look no further. For around \$2,000, this is a lot of gun! 🎯





UPGRADING THE INSTINCT

Franchi's Instinct Sporting II shotgun

BY JEFF HELSDON

I remember the first time I shot a Franchi Instinct shotgun, a 20 gauge, shortly after the gun was introduced in 2011. My experience was limited to the skeet range, but I was impressed enough that I decided if I were ever in the market for replacing the 20 gauge over/under I currently owned, this would be it. For this reason, the prospect of testing the Instinct Sporting II had a heightened level of excitement. It didn't disappoint.

For those not familiar with the Instinct, it's the latest version of Franchi's over/under line. Although Franchi guns have been gaining popularity the last decade due to the redesign of their line-up, including the introduction of the Instinct, the company has been around since 1868. Franchi started in Brescia, Italy, and continues to manufacture guns in Urbino, Italy. The company is now part of the Beretta Group, and more specifically part of the Benelli family.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The gun comes in a plastic case designed to hold it broken down. After taking it out of the box and assembling it, I shouldered the gun and found it fit well. Assembly was easy, following the typical method on most stack-barrel designs. Although I don't always do this first, I tested the balance, finding it was indeed well balanced with the centre being mid-way through the receiver. That was already one positive. The Sporting version of the Instinct was introduced after the main launch,

and the Sporting II followed in 2019. The main improvements of that second model were an adjustable comb, ported barrels and a longer fibre optic sight. Other differences from the field version include a wide vented rib, silver extended chokes and a pistol grip instead of the Prince of Wales grip. Another difference is the safety on the field version automatically engages after opening the gun, while on the Sporting II it does not.

The stock is grade A walnut with a satin finish. Checkering on the pistol grip and Schnabel forend is well executed, and I couldn't see any flaws with a magnifying glass. The checkering pattern on the stock and forend is classy, a step above a simple typical rectangular grip. The lines of the gun are modern yet also classical. Wood-to-metal finish is tight with no spaces, with the wood raised slightly proud of the metal all the way around.

DETAILS

The safety is a typical tang safety that slides straight forward and straight back. Instead of a safety which moves into two different offset positions for selecting the barrels, the Instinct has a switch that moves 90 degrees side-to-side for barrel selection.

The gold-finish trigger is not adjustable for pull weight, but it does have adjustment forward and back to accommodate the shooter's reach. The trigger broke crisply, although there was a little creep, but this is a shotgun not a rifle and it wasn't objection- >



able. There was some difference in pull weights between the two barrels, which is often seen in twin-barrelled guns. In this case, the top barrel broke about a half-pound more at 4.5 pounds, and the bottom barrel at 3.7 pounds. The guard protecting those triggers is roomy and finished with a gold "F" on the bottom.

The receiver is steel with a silver finish. The only engraving other than "Instinct" on the lower right side of the receiver and the Franchi logo on the bottom is where the hinge pins meet the receiver, where a geometric round floral design is placed. Metal finish on both the barrels and receiver is good, with no machining marks. Breaking the gun open reveals a jewelled finish on the block and ejectors. Barrels are chrome lined and smooth with standard forcing cones.

Technically speaking, the Franchi receiver is simple, with the barrel block rotating on trunions machined into the side of the receiver. The action is designed to self-tighten to keep it operating smoothly as the gun wears. Opening the gun engages the ejectors and recocks the trigger. The trigger is mechanical, which means if the shell in the first barrel doesn't fire, the second barrel can still be fired with a second trigger pull.

The gun comes with three choke tubes: full, modified and improved cylinder. Franchi makes three additional constrictions, improved modified, skeet and cylinder, which are available as after-market purchases. At the other end of the gun there's a plain black recoil pad about a half-inch in thickness. The gun I received was a 12 gauge with 30-inch barrels. It weighs in at 7.85 pounds. A 20-gauge model weighing 7.45 pounds is also available. "We're seeing a lot of interest in the sub-gauge market for sporting, and not just Franchi, but Beretta as well," said



TOP: Although not classified as a trap gun, the Sporting II is one of those multiple purpose guns that would work at any clays game.

ABOVE: The safety is a standard tang type with a switch that moves left or right for barrel selection.

George Wallace of Stoeger Canada, the Canadian importer for Beretta brands.

BUSTING CLAYS

Taking the Instinct II to the range, I found the gun was initially very stiff on opening, as many break-actions are. A little oil and a couple more boxes of shells loosened things up, but it was still tight. I fully expect in the long term, the gun will close with little effort but still lock tightly.

The gun fit seemed intuitive as I lifted it to my shoulder. Starting at station three of the trap range, I found I had to completely cover straight-aways to break them. Although the hard lefts and rights are usually the challenging targets, I found them easy to break with this gun.

Recoil with one-ounce target loads was quite manageable while shooting in the winter with a heavy coat on. At just under eight pounds, the Instinct is lighter than many sporting guns so there is less weight to help with the recoil. It will be interesting to see what

the recoil is like in short sleeves.

I found the recoil pad was stiff as opposed to the sponginess of after-market pads designed to lessen recoil and the pad on my Beretta A400. It has the same stiffness as a Benelli Nova, but harder than on either a Weatherby or Mossberg. An upgraded recoil pad would be one of the few things on my want list for this gun, and I wonder why it wasn't part of the upgrade in the second version of the Sporting edition. This is an easy fix though with aftermarket pads.

One of the nice things about the adjustable comb is that raising it allows the shooter to see the targets break. This was an easy adjustment with the supplied Allen key, and I found raising it a quarter inch allowed me to see targets break. I found the modified choke smoked targets from the 16-yard trap line, and the full choke obliterated them.

At the patterning board, I tried the modified choke at 30 yards and full at 40. Instead of counting pellets, I looked at the distribution of the pattern and how large a distance it covered without allowing a hole for a clay target. The modified was surprisingly more concentrated in the centre than the full choke with my test Challenger shells. The full, however, covered a larger spread. Modified had a 23-inch spread with no holes to allow a clay



ABOVE: The adjustable comb on the Instinct Sporting II is one of the improvements made from the original version.

RIGHT: Surprisingly, the Instinct's modified choke at 30 yards created a denser pattern than the full choke at 40 yards.



target through, while the full choke measured 21 inches. The actual spread where it would break a moving target would be larger.

This is a sporting gun, not a trap gun, and I wanted to try this gun at either sporting clays, 5-stand or skeet, but COVID-19 restrictions leading up to the deadline didn't allow that to occur. With its intuitive handling, I have a feeling the gun will really shine at these sports.

OVERVIEW

At an MSRP of \$2,700, and often for sale at retailers for \$2,500, the Instinct Sporting II presents a good compromise between lower cost guns and the starting point of the Beretta and Browning guns.

"From a price point and value perception, we see an increased interest in the Franchi line," Wallace said. "It meets a price point that is palatable at the consumer level."

When talking to Wallace about the Instinct Sporting II, I asked how it compared to the lower-end Berettas. "The

quality is there," he said. "We haven't had any issues with it." Do keep in mind, with Stoeger Canada not only being the importer but also providing warranty service, Wallace has a good grasp on this.

He didn't know of a rating as to how many shells the gun could take before wearing out, but he did note the average shooter is not going to wear out a shotgun like this. However, a competitive shooter might. Those shooting that kind of volume, though, are found shooting the higher-end Berettas. And for those concerned about the longev-

ity of the gun, Franchi's seven-year warranty should help alleviate some of those fears.

While the dedicated trap shooter desires a gun with a higher point of impact, there is a need in the market for a sporting gun that will fit the bill for trap, sporting clays and skeet. Some will even want to use it for upland birds as well. For these shooters, a flatter-shooting sporting gun with a wider rib is a good compromise. The Franchi Instinct Sporting II is a solid option for those in the market for such a shotgun. 

BOYT'S H51 DOUBLE GUN CASE

Don't travel without it
BY TIMOTHY FOWLER



If you participate in hunting or the shooting sports, you travel with firearms. Whether you're a three-gunner, mountain mule hunter, clays competitor or just heading to the range for a day of shooting, you need a gun case that will stand up to the rigors of travel, while protecting your guns and optics in transit. Airlines, in particular, have a reputation for being tough on guns unless protected in sturdy luggage-type cases. Lately, I've been working with the Boyt Harness Company's H51 Double Long Gun Case and am impressed with how it protects valuable firearms, whether in the belly of a 737 or the back of a pickup.

The H51 is their top tier rolling hard-sided case for traveling hunters and shooters. This case is a beast, constructed of high 120D no-break polypropylene. The handles, the closures, the rolling gear are all heavy duty and meant to be used. The powder-coated steel draw latches rotate to close the case against the full-length, dustproof O-ring gasket. Both handles fold flat

against the case, and internal dimensions are 129.5 centimetres by 38 centimetres by 15 centimetres. External dimensions are 136 centimetres by 44 centimetres by 18 centimetres, and the case weighs 10.9 kilograms. The case is padlock compatible.

The middle layer of foam can be custom cut to perfectly cradle a fine pair of sporting or hunting guns. I cut mine using a fresh blade in an Olfa utility knife, after outlining my rifles with chalk. Cut inside the chalk line for a tight fit. The foam can be glued to the inside of the case if you wish. And should you decide to switch the guns dedicated to this case after cutting the foam, you can glue the foam you cut out back in place and cut it out in a new profile. Boyt also offers replacement foam so you can start fresh.

I regularly travel with a matched pair of centrefire rifles, and this is the toughest case I own. It makes me feel confident every time I pack up my guns for another adventure, and I feel even better when they arrive safely at my destination. 🗡️





Legal corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney at Law

When Things Take An Unexpected Turn

This month's column is about a story that could have happened to any of us or to anyone we know. It could also have been titled: When the proverbial \$--t hits the fan! Hopefully, it will provoke some sobering thoughts!

CONTEXT

Raphaël Lecours is a young man from a rural area of Quebec. He has handled firearms since the age of six (under parental supervision, of course.) At the time of these events, in December 2019, he was 21. He had a licence to possess restricted firearms, he was a lifetime hunter and he owned one handgun.

One day, in December 2019, he gave in to the request of two other young men to take them out to try his handgun. Of the two other young men, one was a friend, and the other was an acquaintance named Joseph Raphaël, whom he barely knew.

Since the range where Lecours was a member was closed on that day, they went to a quiet road that is not maintained in the wintertime, where they thought that they were unlikely to run into anyone, much less law enforcement personnel. It probably did not dawn on them that doing so was, in and of itself, illegal. Indeed, handguns may only be fired at approved ranges.

Upon arriving at the chosen location, Lecours showed the other two young men how to operate the handgun. They then started shooting the handgun, using a road sign as their target.

When Raphaël's turn to shoot came up, he shot at the sign twice, and then inserted the gun in his mouth and shot himself. When this occurred, Lecours was apparently standing about 10 metres away. Neither of the other two young men could intervene on time. They put the handgun away and called the police. Raphaël was dead. A suicide letter was found in his pocket.

CHARGES & CONSEQUENCES

Both survivors were arrested and charged with public mischief (for



Your duty to closely supervise someone who does not have the appropriate firearms licence is not to be taken lightly.

Votre devoir de supervision à l'égard des personnes qui n'ont pas de permis ne doit pas être pris à la légère.

using the road sign as a target), and with possession of a loaded handgun at a place not authorized by a chief firearms officer (for loading and discharging a handgun at a place other than an authorized range). Additionally, Lecours was also charged with negligent usage of a firearm under Section 86(1) of the Criminal Code.

Lecours did indeed plead guilty to all three charges. That is puzzling to me as far as the third charge is concerned; but more on that later. He was assisted by counsel, and the judge accepted the plea. Sentencing has not yet taken place. The defence is asking for a conditional discharge. The Crown is asking for a two-year suspended sentence, and 240 hours of community work. The decision is pending.

It goes without saying that Mr. Lecours' firearms license was promptly revoked by the chief firearms officer and is unlikely to ever be re-instated.

THE PUZZLING ASPECT

The charge of negligent usage of a firearm is somewhat puzzling in the

circumstances and, in my opinion, was not the correct charge. The Crown's narrative is that Lecours was negligent in putting the other two young men in possession of the firearm, without supervising them. In my humble estimation, a charge of illegal transfer of a firearm (Section 101 of the Criminal Code) would have been more fitting of the circumstances. Indeed, for the purpose of Section 101 (transfer without authority), a "transfer" includes the action of "lending" a firearm. When a firearm is lent to an unlicensed person, the Criminal Code requires that a licensed person exercise direct and immediate supervision of the unlicensed possessor. There is little, if no, case law on this subject matter. However, in the context of the Canadian Firearms Safety Course, we are taught that it means standing close enough and in such a manner as to be able to intervene at any time. This is also colloquially known as "standing at arm's length." Obviously, standing 10 metres away does not meet that standard.

Further, the charge of negligent



usage, like any other charge of criminal negligence, requires the demonstration of a “marked departure” from an accepted standard of conduct. There was no evidence that Lecours knew or suspected that the victim was suicidal. Had that been the case, the charge of negligent usage might have been more appropriate, although it was the victim’s and not the accused’s usage of the firearm that led to the victim’s death.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

Those legal considerations aside, there are lessons to be learned from this story:

A lot of gun owners are not conscious that the non-observance, to any extent, of any of the statutory and regulatory rules and requirements for handling, possessing, transferring, storing and transporting firearms may result in criminal charges, even if there is no victim or resulting harm. One of these rules is that handguns and other restricted firearms can

only be used at approved ranges. As tempting as it might be to engage in harmless recreational shooting of a handgun at a quiet and otherwise safe location when no one, much less cops, are around, it is an extremely bad idea and a criminal infraction to do so.

In general, neither police, nor the Crown, are willing to look the other way or put up with technical violations of rules governing the use, transportation, storage or handling of firearms. In other words, if you do not follow the rules, do not count on police to give you a break just because no one was hurt. Quite the opposite, expect the police and the Crown to throw the book at you.

When harm does indeed occur, the attitude of the Crown may be to hold the firearm owner accountable for any harm that resulted from the use of their firearm, even though they did nothing that was morally wrong or reprehensible. We see it in cases where firearms are stolen and the owner gets charged with unsafe storage, and

we saw it in this case, where the gun owner was blamed for providing the tool for the suicide, even though he had no reason to suspect that it could happen. In other words, you are as likely to be held accountable for what you did as you are for what you did not do, but the Crown or police say you should have done.

Even at a range, you may be taking a gamble if you lend one of your firearms to a person you do not know; even more so if that person is not a firearms license holder. In the latter case, your duty to supervise and intervene is not something to be taken lightly. Indeed, when lending a firearm to a non-license holder, you should always remain near that person, and ensure that you are able to intervene and establish control of the firearm at a moment’s notice if any unsafe conduct is detected or anticipated.

You should never lend a firearm to or leave a firearm accessible to a person whom you know or suspect to be mentally ill or unstable. 



Rubrique Juridique

Guy Lavergne, avocat

Quand Les Évènements Prennent Une Tournure Inattendue

La chronique de ce mois-ci porte sur un événement qui aurait pu arriver à l’un d’entre nous ou à quelqu’un que nous connaissons. Il aurait également pu être intitulé: Quand la m... revole ! J’espère qu’il provoquera quelques réflexions!

LE CONTEXTE

Raphaël Lecours est un jeune homme d’une région rurale du Québec. Il manipule des armes à feu depuis l’âge de 6 ans (sous supervision parentale pendant sa minorité, bien entendu). Au moment des événements en question, soit en décembre 2019, il était âgé de 21 ans. Il avait un permis de possession d’armes à feu à autorisation restreinte; il avait chassé toute sa vie et possédait une arme de poing.

Un jour, il a cédé à la demande de deux autres jeunes hommes, de leur faire essayer son arme de poing. Des deux autres jeunes hommes, l’un était un ami, et l’autre était une connaissance nommée Joseph Raphaël, que Monsieur Lecours connaissait à peine.

Comme le club de tir où M. Lecours était membre était fermée ce jour-là, les trois jeunes hommes se sont dirigés vers une route tranquille qui n’est pas entretenue en hiver, où ils pensaient qu’il était peu probable qu’ils rencontrent quelqu’un, et encore moins des policiers. Il ne leur est probablement pas venu à l’esprit que cela était, en soi, illégal. En effet, les armes de poing ne peuvent être utilisées que sur des champs de



Handguns and other restricted firearms can only be used at approved ranges.

Les armes de poing et autres armes à feu à autorisation restreinte ne peuvent être utilisées qu’à un champ de tir agréé.

tir accrédités.

En arrivant à l'endroit choisi, M. Lecours a montré aux deux autres jeunes hommes comment utiliser l'arme de poing. Ils ont ensuite commencé à tirer, en utilisant un panneau routier comme cible.

Au moment où ce fut le tour de Joseph Raphaël, il tira deux fois sur le panneau, puis inséra l'arme dans sa bouche et se tira une balle dans la tête. Raphaël Lecours se trouvait alors à environ 10 mètres de la victime. Aucun des deux autres jeunes hommes n'a pu intervenir à temps. Ils ont mis l'arme de poing de côté et ont appelé la police. Joseph Raphaël était mort. Une lettre de suicide fut retrouvée dans sa poche.

LES ACCUSATIONS ET LEURS CONSÉQUENCES

Les deux survivants ont été arrêtés et accusés de méfait public (pour avoir utilisé le panneau routier comme cible) et de possession d'une arme de poing chargée à un endroit non autorisé (pour le chargement et le déchargement d'une arme de poing à un endroit autre qu'un champ de tir autorisé). De plus, Raphaël Lecours a également été accusé d'utilisation négligente d'une arme à feu en vertu de l'article 86 (1) CC.

Raphaël Lecours a par ailleurs plaidé coupable aux trois chefs d'accusation. Cela est déroutant pour moi en ce qui concerne la troisième accusation; j'y reviendrai plus tard! Il a été assisté par un avocat, et le juge a accepté le plaidoyer. La détermination de la peine n'a pas encore eu lieu. La défense demande une absolution conditionnelle. Le ministère public demande une peine de deux ans avec sursis et 240 heures de travaux communautaires. La décision est en instance.

Il va sans dire que le permis d'armes à feu de M. Lecours a été rapidement révoqué par le contrôleur des armes à feu et qu'il est peu probable que Monsieur Lecours en obtienne jamais un autre.

L'ASPECT DÉROUTANT

L'accusation d'utilisation négligente d'une arme à feu est quelque peu déroutante dans les circonstances et, à mon humble avis, ce n'était pas la bonne accusation. Le ministère public a allégué que Raphaël Lecours avait fait preuve de négligence en mettant les deux autres jeunes hommes en

possession de l'arme à feu, sans les superviser. À mon humble avis, une accusation de transfert illégal d'une arme à feu (p. 101 CC) aurait été plus appropriée aux circonstances. En effet, aux fins de l'article 101 CC (transfert sans autorisation), un « transfert » comprend l'action de « prêter » une arme à feu. Lorsqu'une arme à feu est prêtée à une personne sans permis, le Code criminel exige qu'une personne titulaire d'un permis exerce une surveillance directe et immédiate du possesseur sans permis. Il n'y a que peu ou pas de jurisprudence à ce sujet. Toutefois, dans le contexte du Cours canadien sur la sécurité des armes à feu, on nous enseigne qu'il s'agit de se tenir assez près, de façon à pouvoir intervenir à tout moment. C'est aussi familièrement connu sous le nom de « à distance de bras ». Évidemment, se tenir à 10 mètres ne répond pas à cette norme.

De plus, l'accusation d'utilisation négligente, comme toute autre accusation de négligence criminelle, exige la démonstration d'un « écart marqué » par rapport à une norme de conduite acceptée. Rien n'indique que M. Lecours savait ou soupçonnait que la victime était suicidaire. Si cela avait été le cas, l'accusation d'utilisation négligente aurait pu être plus appropriée, même si c'est l'utilisation de l'arme à feu par la victime et non par l'accusé qui a mené à la mort de la victime.

LES LEÇONS À TIRER DE CETTE HISTOIRE

Ces considérations juridiques mises à part, il y a des leçons à tirer de cette histoire:

Beaucoup de propriétaires d'armes à feu ne sont pas conscients que le non-respect, dans quelque mesure que ce soit, de l'une ou l'autre des règles et exigences législatives et réglementaires pour le maniement, la possession, le transfert, l'entreposage et le transport d'armes à feu peut entraîner des accusations criminelles même s'il n'y a pas de victime ou de préjudice qui en résulte. L'une de ces règles est que les armes de poing et autres armes à feu à autorisation restreinte ne peuvent être utilisées qu'aux champs de tir accrédités. Aussi tentant que cela puisse être de se livrer à du tir récréatif avec une arme de poing à un endroit calme et autrement sûr quand personne, et encore moins les

policiers, sont aux alentours, c'est une très mauvaise idée et une infraction criminelle de le faire.

En général, ni la police, ni la Couronne ne sont disposées à faire des compromis ou à accepter des infractions techniques aux règles régissant l'utilisation, le transport, l'entreposage ou le maniement des armes à feu. En d'autres termes, si vous ne suivez pas les règles, ne comptez pas sur la police pour vous donner une pause, simplement parce que personne n'a été blessé. Bien au contraire, attendez-vous à ce que la police et la Couronne y mettent toute la gomme.

Lorsqu'il y a effectivement préjudice, le ministère public peut avoir l'attitude de tenir le propriétaire d'une arme à feu responsable de tout préjudice causé par l'utilisation de son arme à feu, même s'il n'a rien fait de moralement répréhensible. Nous le voyons dans les cas où des armes à feu sont volées et où le propriétaire est accusé d'entreposage non sécuritaire, et nous l'avons vu dans ce cas, où le propriétaire de l'arme à feu a été blâmé pour avoir fourni l'outil utilisé pour le suicide, même s'il n'avait aucune raison de soupçonner que cela pouvait se produire. En d'autres termes, vous êtes aussi susceptible d'être tenu responsable de ce que vous avez effectivement fait que vous l'êtes pour ce que vous n'avez pas fait, mais que la Couronne ou la police disent que vous auriez dû faire.

Même au champ de tir, il peut être risqué de prêter une de vos armes à feu à une personne que vous ne connaissez pas; et ce l'est encore davantage si cette personne n'est pas titulaire d'un permis d'armes à feu. Dans ce dernier cas, votre devoir de superviser et d'intervenir n'est pas quelque chose à prendre à la légère. En effet, lorsque vous prêtez une arme à feu à un non-titulaire de permis, vous devez toujours rester près de cette personne, et vous assurer que vous êtes en mesure d'intervenir et de prendre le contrôle de l'arme à feu à tout moment si une conduite dangereuse est détectée ou prévue.

Vous ne devez jamais prêter une arme à feu ou laisser une arme à feu accessible à une personne que vous connaissez ou soupçonnez d'être atteinte de maladie mentale ou d'être instable. 🚫



NFA Book Shelf

Bill Rantz

THE STEN – The Legendary World War II British Submachine Gun

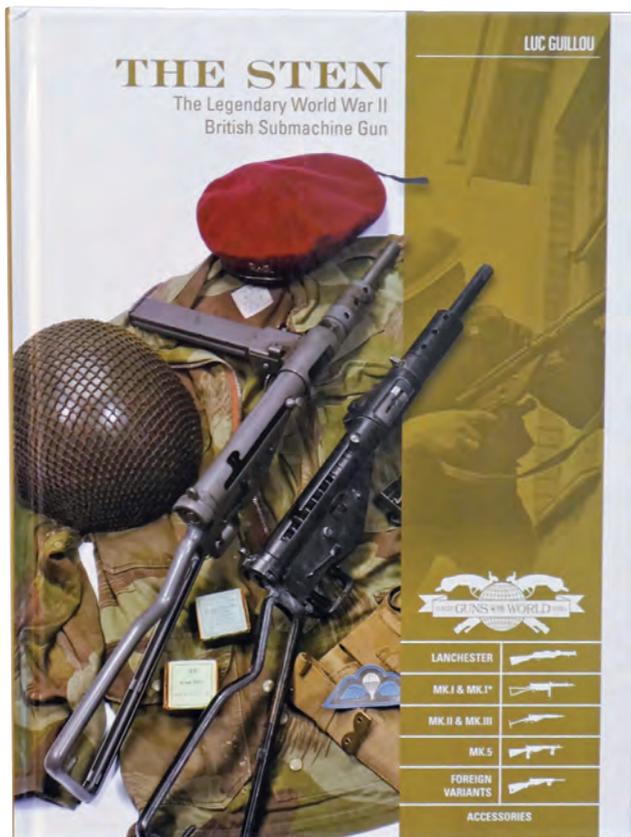
Recently, while browsing the Internet looking for a suitable book to review for the *CFJ*, I noticed a cover photo of *THE STEN*. Instantly, my memory recalled early TV shows, such as *Combat* and one of my favourite movies, *The Guns of Navarone*. I recall battle-hardened soldiers firing Stens full auto as they fought bravely from building to building in some unknown European city. They stopped only to hide behind a stone wall long enough to hastily replace an empty magazine with a loaded one.

Thinking back over my years of collecting firearms and attending gun shows, I could not recall ever seeing an actual Sten submachine gun. So, I ordered a copy of *THE STEN* to satisfy my curiosity regarding the function, variations and history of this famous firearm.

I found simply scanning through the pages of *THE STEN* is an education itself. There are hundreds of eye-catching, archive-quality, black-and-white photographs taken during the Second World War showing the Sten in the hands of soldiers and resistance fighters. The intended use of the Sten was clearly to establish freedom from enemy aggression and occupation. Even today, the Sten is a symbol of resistance in France.

Elsewhere, high-quality colour photographs show variations of the Sten, ranging from major differences between models Mk. I to Mk. 5, plus less noticeable features and markings. Every photograph is accompanied by a short note from the author explaining its significance.

The title page lists five chapters,



with topics including Britain's need for the Sten, the Sten's predecessors, development, features and history. Each chapter is easy to read and contains a wealth of information. I found it amazing that Britain's initial cash purchase of Stens from the US almost broke the British treasury. Unfortunately, an estimated two-thirds were lost at sea due to German U-boat activity.

The Sten is a lightweight, compact select-fire submachine gun containing just 35 parts. It was fed from a magazine holding 32 rounds of 9mm Parabellum cartridges specifically loaded for submachine guns. Lower pressure handgun loads could apparently cause it to accidentally fire in full auto.

As it was relatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture, over

four million Sten submachine guns were produced. Mk. II Stens account for 2,600,000 of that total. A variety of companies produced these firearms, including Canada's Long Branch Arsenal, which provided 133,947.

Collecting Stens would be an interesting but challenging hobby, as large numbers were apparently destroyed after the Second World War. Most of the Stens photographed for this publication are courtesy of European museum collections. Of course, Canadian gun laws have defined this historic firearm as prohibited, thus severely limiting legal ownership.

THE STEN is a great addition to the library of any firearm or historian. It is part of Schiffer's *Classic Guns of the World Series*, which includes a variety of titles, such as the M1 Grand, Mauser Rifles, Walther P.38, and German Submachine Guns. Copies may be found online for about \$25 USD each, but please support your local retailer if possible. 🇨🇦

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