

# CANADIAN FIREARMS JOURNAL

JULY/AUGUST 2022

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# CANADIAN ***FIREARMS JOURNAL***

JULY/AUGUST 2022



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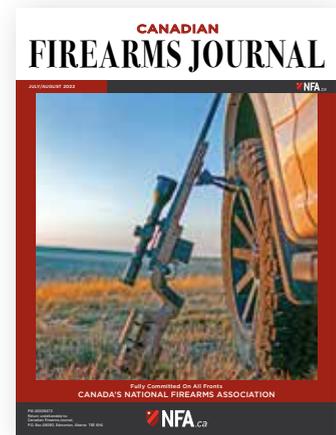
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## MISSION STATEMENT

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

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# On the Cover

The image on this month's cover comes from the camera of Justin Foster. The rifle pictured is a Remington 700 with a 26-inch Varmint contour barrel chambered in 308 Win. It's nestled in an MDT XRS chassis and topped with a Riton X7 Conquer 4-32x56 scope. This photo was taken after a long day of shooting steel out to 825 metres on a private range. Handloads pushing Hornady's 178-grain BTHPs made this a trouble-free task. 



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# From The Editor's Desk

Al Voht

## Keeping Up With The News

So much is happening around here on the firearms front, it's hard to know where to begin. Most of it is bad news, but there's also some good things to report.

Locally, several gun clubs are dealing with either full or limited shutdowns, with the reasons ranging from county permitting issues to safety concerns. But clubs don't just roll over and give in anymore. It's encouraging to see them stand their ground and fight for their right to exist.

Ammunition is in such short supply, some industry promotional events have been cancelled. What you read in these pages is even being affected, as writers are having problems sourcing some guns and ammunition. As an example, I've been looking for 410 Bore ammunition for almost two weeks now, so I can review some shotguns, but with no success.

Of course, the fight against the May 1, 2020, OIC is ongoing. And as I write this, the implementation of the C-71 provision requiring a reference number to transfer any non-restricted firearm is just days away. How efficiently that will work is anyone's guess at this point, but by the time you read this I suspect we'll have a new definition of dysfunctional. After all, this government's reputation for customer service is abysmal. Witness recent disasters such as security clearance lines at airports, passport application delays and the failure to process legitimate refugees in a timely manner.



It's also bad news that the Russia/Ukraine war is ongoing. But it is encouraging to see how well the Ukrainians are doing with limited resources. It's also good to see firearm and ammunition companies stepping up to help protect that country's freedom. Vista Outdoors, the owners of Remington, Federal and other brands, recently donated \$100,000 to Ukraine's war effort, much of it raised through the sale of T-shirts to North American gun owners. Other companies like Leupold, Proof Research, Rise Armament, Radian Weapons, Luth AR, Hornady and Adams Arms have all donated product to the fight. The US firm Ammunition Inc. recently donated one million rounds of ammunition. Here, the Canadian

industry group Canadian Sporting Arms and Ammunition Association is running a sticker sale raffle for a Weatherby rifle to raise money for Ukrainian kids affected by the conflict. And I'm sure there are many other firearm industry efforts underway which I'm not aware of.

Our own government is supporting Ukraine's freedom fighters as well, but apparently sees no hypocrisy in trying to discourage Canadians from owning firearms and becoming proficient with them; something which would certainly add another layer to our national defensive capabilities. And God knows our military needs all the help they can get. This most recent conflict has shown just

how low our military stockpiles and resources are. One would almost think the government wants to turn them into a national emergency response department to assist during snowstorms, floods and wildfires instead of a real fighting force capable of defending the country. Years of neglect are now allowing us to see how unprepared we are for that eventuality. This seems to be a lesson we are doomed to relearn every generation or so.

Yes, the bad news is out there, but don't let it drag you down. It's summer. Turn off your phone, get outdoors, hit the shooting ranges and participate in a little trigger therapy. In a few more months, it'll be fall and hunting season, the best time of the year.



# President's Message

Rick Igercich

## Changes & The Road Ahead

**G**reetings. I hope everyone is well and enjoying the warmer weather. It is the time of year to get back onto the ranges, participate in shooting competitions and enjoy the many gun shows across the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to share some recent NFA news and update you on the work that lies ahead.

First, the NFA's 2022 annual general meeting took place in a virtual format on Saturday, May 7. I have been elected to take on the role of national president. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to work on behalf of the NFA membership in this new role and I am privileged to work alongside an exceptional and experienced board of directors. A big thank to Blair Hagen, who took the helm as interim president and kept our agenda on course. Blair will be resuming his previous position as executive vice-president, communications.

For the coming year, the executive secretary position will be held by Donald Feltham from Newfoundland. Donald is taking over from Jerrold Lundgard, who had served in this role for many years. Jerrold will continue being a strong voice on the board. Bill Rantz will remain in the position as treasurer. A big shout out to Bill and Jerrold for their many years of service to the NFA. Their experience and wisdom make them valuable members of the board. Jordan Vandenhoff will remain as the executive director, digital, social, managing all NFA social media platforms and creating content that informs and engages members

and the public.

The remainder of the board is composed of individuals from across the country who are passionate about firearms and dedicated to working for the rights and freedoms of gun owners. The board of directors are as follows: British Columbia: Blair Hagen and Hardy Staub (interim); Alberta: Jerrold Lundgard and Dwayne Gorniak; Ontario: Rick Igercich and Jordan Vandenhoff; Quebec: Chuck Cote and Joe Esteves; Atlantic provinces: Donald Feltham and Robert Bracken.

We know that the months ahead will be filled with challenges for gun owners. As of this writing, the Liberals have implemented specific sections of Bill C-71, specifically those that will require sellers of non-restricted firearms to call the Canadian Firearms Centre to obtain a transfer authorization number to complete a sale. The process for obtaining this authorization number is nothing short of ridiculous. Businesses will be required by law, upon sale, to keep a detailed record and description of all non-restricted firearms sold, along with the buyer's license information. Those records can be requested at any time by the provincial CFO.

Private sellers of non-restricted firearms will be asked for the buyer's and seller's license information to initiate a transfer. The seller, by law, must keep a detailed record of the firearm sold and the buyers license information, which can also be requested by the provincial CFO at any time.

In effect, the Canadian government is resurrecting the long-dead long gun registry into what will be a digital

format, making businesses and individual sellers keep records for them. This is simply a subversive way to create a firearms database, which will inevitably lead to a permanent record of firearms owned by law-abiding firearm owners. The NFA is carefully monitoring government attempts to undermine our rights and will work tirelessly to reverse these unreasonable laws.

By the time you read this, the Ontario provincial election will have happened. The Liberals have announced that, if elected, they will be seeking a provincial handgun ban. If this happens, know that the NFA is fully prepared to lobby officials and file legal proceedings against the province. We are a strong, well-supported voice and will not be ignored.

The federal Conservative Party of Canada is also looking to place someone in the leadership position. We will be providing members with information about every candidate so that firearm owners can be well informed in deciding who would be the best candidate for the job. The hope is that the new CPC leader will reflect on the missteps of Erin O'Toole and put an end to some of the preposterous legislation that has been dropped on legal gun owners over the past few years.

In closing, I would like to thank you, our members, for your continued support. Along with your board of directors, I am committed to never giving up the fight for the rights and freedoms of gun owners. We at the NFA are in this for the long run and, with your generous support, we will make a difference.

# Message du Président

Rick Igercich

## Le Printemps Du Canada

**B**onjour, J'espère que vous allez bien et que vous profitez bien du réchauffement printanier. C'est le moment de nous retrouver dans les champs de tir, de participer à des compétitions et de profiter des expositions d'armes à travers le pays.

J'aimerais profiter de cette occasion pour vous partager des nouvelles de la part de la NFA et vous parler du travail qui nous attends.

Premièrement, notre réunion générale annuelle a eu lieu virtuellement samedi le 7 mai. J'ai été élu Président National. Je suis reconnaissant d'avoir l'opportunité de continuer de travailler au nom de tous les membres de la NFA dans cette nouvelle fonction et suis privilégié de travailler avec un conseil de direction exceptionnel et débordant d'expérience. Je tiens à remercier Blair Hagen qui a occupé le poste de Président intérimaire gardant le cap pendant ce temps. Blair va reprendre son ancien poste de Vice-Président Exécutif des communications.

Le poste de Secrétaire Exécutif sera occupé par Donald Feltham de Terre-Neuve pendant cette année. Donald relève Jerrold Lundgard qui a occupé ce poste pendant plusieurs années. Jerrold continuera à être un atout important dans le conseil de direction. Bill Rantz conserve son poste de trésorier. Je félicite Bill et Jerrold pour leurs années au service de la NFA. Leur expérience et leur sagesse font qu'ils sont des membres de grande valeur pour la direction. Jordan Vandenhoff demeure Directeur Exécutif, Numérique, Social. Il gère tous les médias sociaux de la NFA et crée du contenu pour intéresser et informer les membres ainsi que le public.

Le reste de la direction est composé

d'individus venant d'à travers le pays qui sont passionnés des armes à feu et qui sont dédiés à se battre pour les droits et libertés des propriétaires d'armes à feu. Voici les membres du conseil de direction: Pour la Colombie-Britannique - Blair Hagen et Hardy Staub (intérim); pour l'Alberta - Jerrold Lundgard et Dwayne Gorniak; pour l'Ontario - Rick Igercich et Jordan Vandenhoff; pour le Québec - Chuck Coté et Joe Esteves; pour les provinces Atlantiques - Donald Feltham et Robert Bracken.

Nous savons que les propriétaires d'armes à feu devront faire face à plusieurs défis dans les mois qui suivent. Au moment d'écrire ces lignes les Libéraux ont mis en force certains articles spécifiques du projet de loi C-71. En particulier ceux qui obligent les vendeurs d'armes sans restrictions à communiquer avec le Centre Canadien des Armes à Feu pour obtenir un numéro d'autorisation pour compléter la transaction. Le processus pour obtenir ce numéro d'autorisation est ridicule. De plus, les commerces devront, lorsqu'ils vendront une arme sans restriction, garder un registre détaillé incluant la description de l'arme et le numéro de permis de l'acheteur. Le registraire provincial pourra exiger de voir ces registres à tout moment.

Les particuliers qui voudront vendre des armes sans restrictions devront fournir le numéro de permis du vendeur et de l'acheteur pour initier une cession. Le vendeur devra, selon la loi, garder un registre de l'arme vendue et l'information du permis de l'acheteur. Ceci pourra être exigé par le registraire provincial en tout temps.

En effet, le gouvernement Canadien ressuscite le registre des armes

longues depuis longtemps défunt. Ils en font une version numérique en obligeant les commerces et les particuliers de garder les registres des ventes à leur place. C'est une manière détournée de créer une banque de données d'armes à feu, qui deviendra permanente et qui contiendra toutes les armes possédées par les citoyens respectueux des lois. La NFA surveille attentivement les tentatives du gouvernement qui veut diminuer nos droits et travaille sans relâche pour renverser ces lois déraisonnables.

Quand vous lirez ces lignes, l'élection provinciale de l'Ontario sera derrière nous. Les Libéraux ont promis qu'ils interdiraient les armes de poings s'ils sont élus. Sachez que si tel est le cas, la NFA est totalement prête à faire du lobbying et à poursuivre la province. Nous sommes une voix forte et bien reconnue qui ne sera pas ignorée.

Les Conservateurs fédéraux cherchent à élire un nouveau chef. Nous fournirons aux membres de l'information à propos de chaque candidat pour qu'ils soient bien informés et puisse choisir un chef qui a nos intérêts à coeur. Nous souhaitons que le nouveau chef du PCC réfléchisse sur les erreurs d'Erin O'Toole et que le parti élimine les lois grotesques qui ont été injustement imposées aux propriétaires d'armes à feu depuis plusieurs années.

En terminant j'aimerais remercier nos membres pour leur appui constant. Moi-même et le conseil de direction sommes engagés à ne jamais cesser de nous battre pour les droits et libertés des propriétaires d'armes à feu. La NFA est engagée à long terme et avec votre appui généreux nous allons faire une différence. 



# Vice-president's Message

By Blair Hagen

## Data, Details & Disarmament

**Y**ou, I and most Canadians who are not independently wealthy, which is most of us, are suffering the crippling economic ramifications of the dangerous and deliberate economic decisions of Justin's Liberal government. We're earning less, keeping less of what we earn and paying more for things we buy, all while Justin's government is taking more of our earnings for redistribution to their pet causes, ideologies and bureaucracies. That's scary.

The majority of Canadians now enjoy a lower standard of living than our parents' generation, and if you have kids, when they are working adults, they will enjoy an even lower standard of living than you and I. Justin recently declared that anyone not in sync with his government is a "racist, sexist, fringe minority" who will be ignored.

In order to put ourselves in a position to recreate a better Canada and a better economy which might put our children in a stronger position to enjoy a better standard of living, Justin's Liberal government must be defeated. That is also the only solution to stop the Liberal civil disarmament agenda. We live in a much poorer, less free and divisive Canada under Justin Trudeau's Kakistocracy. Look it up.

One of the worst offenses perpetrated against the right and property of Canadians is the Trudeau government's May 2020 OIC, which promises to confiscate the property of thousands of Canadians if allowed to reach its conclusion.

That May 2020 OIC really showed the Liberal's hand. Those who held registrations for OIC firearms were notified of the impending confiscation of that property. Those who participated in the previous ill-fated



**As of May 18, 2022, the transfer of a firearm to another person requires a government-issued reference number.**

Liberal gun registry and held pre-2012 registrations for OIC firearms were also notified the government still had a record of that registration and if they still possessed the firearm, they had better comply with the confiscation. Or else.

However, there is some good news, if you can call it that. The deadline to deal with May 2020 OIC firearms has been extended to October 2023. And there's more.

The May 2020 OIC firearms regulations were long on civil disarmament ideology, but short on details regarding simple, everyday situations such as changing one's address. If you own restricted or prohibited firearms, you know that an authorization is legally required to transport your firearms to a new address when you move.

Those May 2020 OIC regulations didn't provide for that. Since registrations were "cancelled," no authorizations were to be provided to facilitate

this, and therefore thousands of owners of OIC firearms were put in a legally precarious situation when they had to change addresses. Various provincial chief firearms officers (CFOs) gave vague and confusing verbal advisories, including encouraging firearms license holders to simply move without authorization, but they refused to formally authorize owners who found themselves between this rock and a hard place.

Likewise, many owners who found they could not continue to store OIC firearms at their registered address (the only place they were authorized to be stored), those who had to leave Canada to work or immigrate and those who simply could not maintain an address were forced to hand over their property to law enforcement agencies when circumstances dictated they could not store the firearms according to the insane OIC regulations. There were no legal alternatives available. Many individuals lost their property because of this deliberate and punitive malfeasance on the part of Liberals and their bureaucracy.

Remember that and don't forget it. These built-in catch 22s of the May 2020 OIC enabled the unavoidable self-criminalization of individuals and ultimate loss of property.

However, OIC regulations have now been amended to allow provincial CFOs to authorize transportation for change of address and to authorize alternative storage at an address other than that of the firearms license holder. All done over two years after the fact. Two years!

And now for the latest attempt to deprive you of your rights and property, the C-71 Liberal gun registry, imposed on May 18, 2022.

From that date forward, all rifles and

shotguns will be registered on transfer by reference number, and the data collected by businesses and individuals who are doing the buying, selling and transferring.

Although make, model and serial number may not be tied to the initial transfer of a firearm, it is tied to the firearm at point of purchase and between individuals, and that information is subject to demand by a CFO. If that data is collected and stored digitally, as is the case with many licensed firearms businesses in Canada in 2022, transfer on demand to CFP/CFO becomes more logistically possible than in the past, and if a province passes legislation constructing a provincial gun registry, that data is ready and available to aid in its construction.

Does that sound paranoid? Sounds that way to me too, but stay with me here.

There are several ways this can transpire. Upon the passage of Bill C-19 in 2012, the ending of the first long gun registry in Canada, the National Firearms Association warned the

Conservative government that the bill would not preclude the maintenance of registration records and the acquisition of further data by CFP/CFO in order to maintain some semblance of a registry which could facilitate the confiscation of property in the future.

To the credit of that government, they added a component to the bill that demanded the registrar of firearms destroy all data relating to long gun registration after the bill passed. We now know this was not done, that various government bureaucracies and actors secured that data in defiance of parliament, and that to this day the current Liberal government uses it for their own nefarious purposes and offenses against the rights and property of Canadians.

Even after this component became part of Bill C-19, and the legislation was passed by parliament, CFOs quietly began preparations to collect data on firearm transfers within their own provincial jurisdictions. Again, Canada's National Firearms Association warned the Conservative government this was transpiring, and

that government had to warn CFOs to cease their bureaucratic machinations and conform to the spirit of the legislation.

Data is an interesting thing. Data can be used to manufacture and create statistics to support regulatory and legislative agendas and can be used to target and confiscate property. There are devils in data, and those devils come out and play with the vampires, werewolves and Frankenstein monsters that lurk in the Firearms Act and the firearms program.

In a sane world, data can even be used for legitimate purposes to secure public safety and save lives. We do not live in a sane world, or a sane Canada, and public safety is not the goal of this program. Civil disarmament is. Tell me I am wrong.

Canada's National Firearms Association will continue to work to elect a government that will legislate firearms law reforms which respect the rights and property of Canadians and will work to ensure that any data collected by the new Liberal gun registry is ultimately destroyed. 



**NFA**

FREEDOM.  
SAFETY.  
RESPONSIBILITY.



# Politics & Guns

Bruce Gold

## Fighting For Our Rights

It has become painfully clear that preserving our rights means contending with politicians who despise our Canadian culture, historic identity and traditional liberties. No occasion passes without an apology for some old wrong or current failing, with no trace of context or even historical accuracy to temper the blow. The historic firearms culture of a free people is very much on the firing line. The careful crafting of language to shape perception is perhaps the major weapon in this assault. The real-world context of human imperfections, the limitations of time, place and circumstance are glossed over or entirely ignored against implied comparisons to imagined utopias that never have or will exist. Semi-automatic firearms in safe and lawful use by the hundreds of thousands for more than half a century are re-imagined as “assault-style weapons” whose only purpose is killing people. Language and using constructed narratives to shape our perceptions is now a major battleground in the struggle for our future.

Not surprisingly, Trudeau and the Liberals package their agenda in platitudes and righteous word pictures that are long on image and amazingly short on the hard specifics of the actual doing.

To quote Orwell’s take on political speeches, “The mixture of vagueness and sheer incompetence is the most marked characteristic of modern English prose, and especially of any kind of political writing. It consists in gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else and making the results presentable by sheer humbug. Thus, political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness.”

One could also add “hate speech” to the mix, with Trudeau’s vicious spin against the Freedom Convoy to demonize political opposition. In case this assessment seems too extreme, let

us examine the words of Chief Justice Dickson who spoke for the Supreme Court when he stated that, “Hatred is predicated on destruction, and hatred against identifiable groups therefore thrives on insensitivity, bigotry and destruction of both the target group and of the values of our society. Hatred in this sense is a most extreme emotion that belies reason; an emotion that, if exercised against members of an identifiable group, implies that those individuals are to be despised, scorned, denied respect and made subject to ill-treatment on the basis of group affiliation.” (R. v. Keegstra)

Now apply this standard to Trudeau’s speeches in Parliament and his attack on those that dared to question his policies. On the Freedom Convoy, he said, “They are extremists who don’t believe in science, they’re often misogynists, also often racists.” Further, our philosopher king has denounced the Freedom Convoy as a “small, fringe minority” that expressed “unacceptable views.” Since when did our elected government dictate what views Canadian citizens must or must not have?

Minister Blair made the same sort of hate speech attack on gun owners when he said the “gun lobby” is comprised of “violent extremists” who advocate for violence against women, religious minorities, Islamists, etc. This hate-inciting behaviour needs to stop. Or his pronouncement that, “Not every person who is in the gun lobby is an extremist, but anybody extremist is in the gun lobby.”

Not surprisingly, the Liberals also roll out verbiage to convince us we should believe their narrative and not our lying eyes. For example, Blair stated that he wanted “to assure hunters, farmers and target shooters in this country that nothing that we are doing today or will do in the future is intended to interfere with this lawful, responsible and legal activity.” I suppose this could be regarded as an intelligence test. Does the

confiscation of hundreds of thousands of popular hunting and target rifles interfere with hunting and target activity?

### SOME OBSERVATIONS

As events have demonstrated, the firearm’s community is not the only target, though one could make the argument that gun owners are often targeted to set precedents and test the public’s reaction.

Creatively constructed categories and labels are carefully built into a narrative that will bias the debate before it even begins. For example, ordinary semi-automatic rifles became “assault-style weapons” (no legal definition). Sporting rifles that are so seldom used in crime that they have never been given their own statistical or law enforcement category are now super death weapons whose only purpose is homicide. One wonders why anyone but a fool or an idiot would enter a debate using terminology their opposition imposed to pre-determine the result.

The Liberal’s pronouncements are often layered. For example, in his infamous speech about admiring the murderous Chinese dictatorship because they could “turn the economy on a dime,” there are at least two layers. The first layer is the obvious scandal of a Canadian PM openly admiring a brutal dictatorship. The second, less obvious, layer is the assertion that the Chinese dictatorship is especially efficient and top-down elitist control is a thing of desirable utility. The reality, of course, is that the communist government’s top-down control has caused millions of deaths and their “turn on a dime” response to climate change (the issue he was addressing) amounts to little more than posturing and a third-world standard of pollution.

Another lesson is the ponderous way the Liberals prepare the ground for their policies long in advance, and how rarely they have any original ideas. Consider the “gun debate” in the last

election. The Liberals have a 40-year history of using guns as a wedge issue. They had already manufactured press releases claiming that the law-abiding were now the major source of crime guns. (Most crime guns are never recovered or their origins identified). This stage setting as a preliminary to political debate was blatant, yet somehow the Conservatives were completely unprepared. At a loss for easily available facts or coherent counter arguments, they defaulted to a pathetic “me too” of surrender.

The tactics noted above are inseparable from the Liberal’s deep-seated belief that the public is so inattentive and the press so friendly that governance by press release is viable. The May 1 OIC confiscation of semi-automatic sporting rifles is a good example. The confiscation announcement was loudly and repeatedly used to drive political advantage. However, the actual confiscation, with all its serious legal and logistical difficulties, was a clown show. The urgent intervention to preserve public safety now has an 18-month extension on top of a two-year amnesty, with no actual plan in place.

### CONCLUSION

The firearms community is just one part of traditional, historic Canada that is under attack by ideologues who want a post-national country, a blank slate which they can shape as they please. Clearly, we are part of a larger struggle that will create some unexpected alliances and hopefully real debate. We need to recognize that Trudeau and his supporters are completely unrestrained by facts or traditional liberties. Power in the form of electoral success has become the Liberal’s only principle and they will say or do anything they think will pay off in votes. This does not stop with hate speech, misrepresenting our history or sowing racial and ethnic divisions.

As we have seen with the May 1 OIC gun confiscation (saying “buy back” is submitting to their spin), the rule of law itself is something they are happy to reject. Canadian citizens’ legal right to a reclassification review after a change of firearms classification was created by parliament and written into law. Nullification is an attempt to remove a legal right by proclamation, as if we were some

third-world dictatorship. Nullification is an abuse of power that sets the government above the law. It rejects the principle that the government must also obey the law, a principle established by Magna Carta Libertatum (1215). An act very much in line with an arrogant PM who, like a Stuart King, simply dissolves parliament (WE Charity scandal) when the scandal got too close to revelation.

One wonders if there are any firearms owners left who are so politically naive or willfully unobservant that they still think the Liberals view them as anything other than “a small, fringe minority” who hold “unacceptable views.” To win, we must recognize the Liberal’s strategies and prepare effective responses. We also need to reach out to other Canadians who are under attack for their legitimate but now “unacceptable views.”

### Reference:

Politics and the English Language. George Orwell. 1946.

Nathaniel Milijour



# Preserving Our Firearms Heritage

Gary K. Kangas

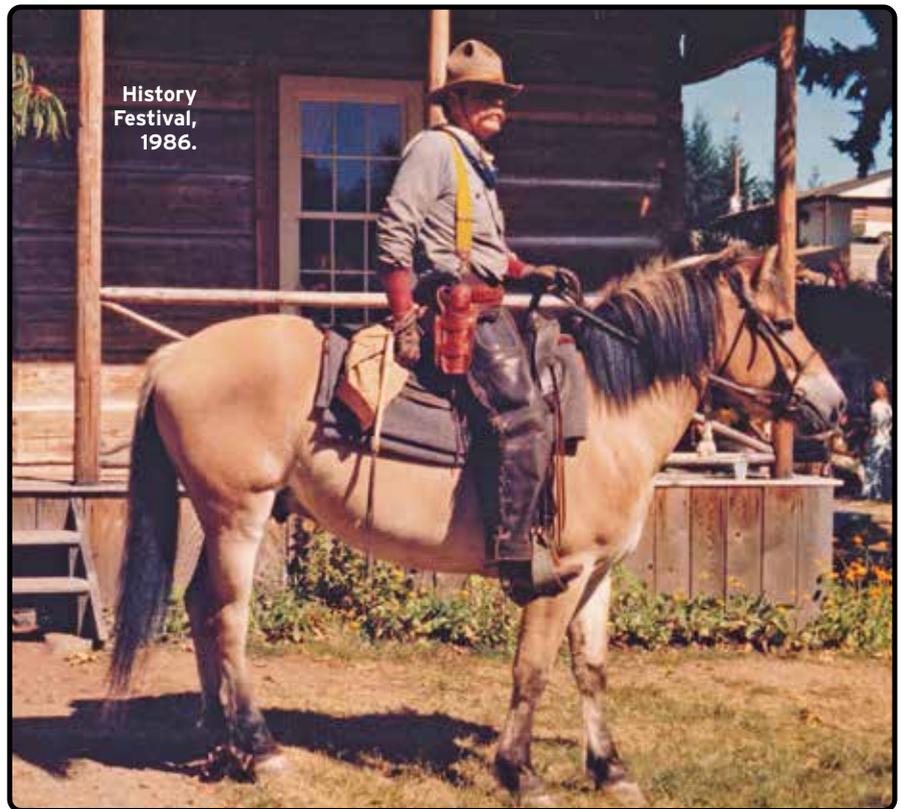
## Canada & Guns - A Historic Perspective Part Two

As the 20th century unfolds, Canada welcomes immigrants from oppressed countries. Both sets of my grandparents came to Canada in 1910 and 1912, when Europe was in upheaval, and they escaped Russian oppression. The massive empires were crumbling; the Russian Empire was on the cusp of revolution, having oppressed many different nations. The Ottoman Empire was also feeling social pressures from ethnic groups. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was challenged by change. Major cracks were appearing in the British Empire.

The individuals fleeing this turbulent era chose Canada as their destination. Travel books were written in Europe describing the freedom and opportunity in Canada. Ethnic groups leaving the Mediterranean chose the US, seeking climates like their homelands. The central and northern Europeans were drawn to the vast flatlands of Canada. Those leaving the Ukraine migrated in large part to Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, as did many Nordics. Other ethnic groups, such as Scots and the Irish, largely immigrated to central Canada and the Maritimes.

These migrants were seeking stability, safety and freedom. The first things many of these immigrants acquired was firearms, as my family did. They were not about to be oppressed and brutalized any longer. Canada was one of the most prosperous world economies between 1896 and 1914, with the world's fastest growing economy, and wheat as the golden crop. Sixty per cent of the population were rural dwellers, most of them farmers, and they all had guns. Those who worked in outdoor occupations, cowboys, prospectors, trappers, timber cruisers, geologists, surveyors and many more, all carried guns.

Gun laws were designed to combat crime and criminals, not focused on law-abiding citizens who do not com-



mit crime. In 1900, the veterans who served in mounted units during the Boer War were allowed to keep their Long Lee rifles and their 1878 Colt revolvers. Canada trusted its citizens.

The shooting sports prospered, then the First World War brought more unsettled conditions, adding to the number of immigrants arriving in North America. After the First World War, North America saw great prosperity, then in 1929 the Great Depression caused a great deal of issues and a major upsurge in crime, attributed to unemployment and poverty. This precipitated handgun registration in Canada coming into force in 1934. Then the Second World War erupted, and registration of all firearms was put in place, then rescinded when the war ended. Government still trusted

its citizens. The Pacific Coast Militia Rangers were invited to purchase their issue Winchesters for \$5. These gun laws were implemented during the Liberal regime as a solution to gun crime. These laws never curtailed gun crime, it just looked good; pure political optics.

To cure real threats by criminals, the Liberals always turn to restricting the ownership of firearms owned by those who do not commit crimes. None of these restrictions have ever prevented gun crime.

After the Second World War, Canada had a surge of prosperity, gun clubs, hunting and shooting sports expanded and new gun clubs were formed. By the 1960s, Victoria, BC, and area had five ranges: the North Saanich Rod & Gun Club, the Victoria Fish & Game, Juan

de Fuca Gun Club, the Victoria Shotgun Club and the Victoria City Police Pistol Club. When I lived in the suburb of Victoria called the Highlands, I would ride my horse to the Victoria City Police Range in Thetis Lake Park. The VPD members were always interested in my 1873 Colt .45 single-action revolver shooting black powder ammunition.

In the 1970s, the Liberal government of the time was apprehensive of the growth in civilian firearms ownership and brought in various acts to ban certain types of firearms. In 1977, the Liberals enacted Bill C-51 to license firearms owners and criminalize ownership through new definitions, none of this being directed at criminals. These regulations did not appear to be too onerous, as the police were not yet programmed to persecute legal owners, but this would come later.

In the summer of 1986, I rode my horse to a history festival at a heritage site in the Highlands with an antique revolver on my hip. There was no “man with a gun” call, the police drove by and waved. The real Liberal anti-gun frenzy had not yet started. Even in 2008, our re-enactment group had 1850s interpreters dressed in period clothes, armed to entertain tourists at the tall ships display in Victoria’s inner harbour. I was kitted out as a British sailor with a P58 musket and cutlass escorting a gentle lady around the docks. The police were informed by our group regarding the event and again there was “no man with a gun” call.

We now enter the 1990s, and the Liberal government in power shows its true colours. Manic furor. Their anti-gun mania shows no bounds. Every news cast portrays legal owners of firearms to be demons. Then in 1995, the Liberals passed Bill C-68 to criminalize all legal use of sporting and target firearms. To do the crime, all firearms owners were required to have a license, the stage was set, the Liberal government of the era began to marginalize, demonize and criminalize the use of all legal firearms through a list of useless paper crimes



Tall Ships Festival, 2008.

they invented. The ultimate goal: banning and confiscating all firearms in Canada. In 2002, the Liberal government paid an anti-gun lobbyist \$380,600 to lobby themselves for gun control.

The Conservative government elected in 2009 to 2014 attempted valiantly to reverse the trend, overturning universal registration in 2012, and doing away with useless paperwork that did not restrict criminals. When the Canadian Rangers were issued new rifles in 2014, the Conservatives allowed the Canadian Ranger members to keep their Lee Enfields.

Personally, I’m a firm believer and proponent of certification for the use of firearms, not licensing their ownership. Licensing must be about proficiency with items which are hazardous to operate. To drive a car you need a license, to fly a plane you need a license, to drive a big truck, to operate a power boat you need a license. You don’t need a license to own them. To operate these machines, you must take a proper course of instruction. Firearms are no different! The finest example is hunter licenses and training. When this program was implemented, hunting accidents and fatalities plummeted! Hunting statistics today reveal there are few hunting accidents and almost

none which are lethal. The current firearms course is political theater with deactivated firearms. In my opinion, the firearms course should be a rigorous training exercise in firearms safety, handling and live fire with real guns.

The Liberal regime has a relentless public relations campaign to demonize and criminalize hunters and sport shooters, while gangsters and drug dealers rule our streets. The Liberal governments since the mid-1990s have spent an estimated \$7 billion on gun control of legal, licensed, RCMP-vetted firearms owners who do not commit gun crime. Absolutely no gun violence and gang shootings have been stopped by these laws, the net effect has been zero.

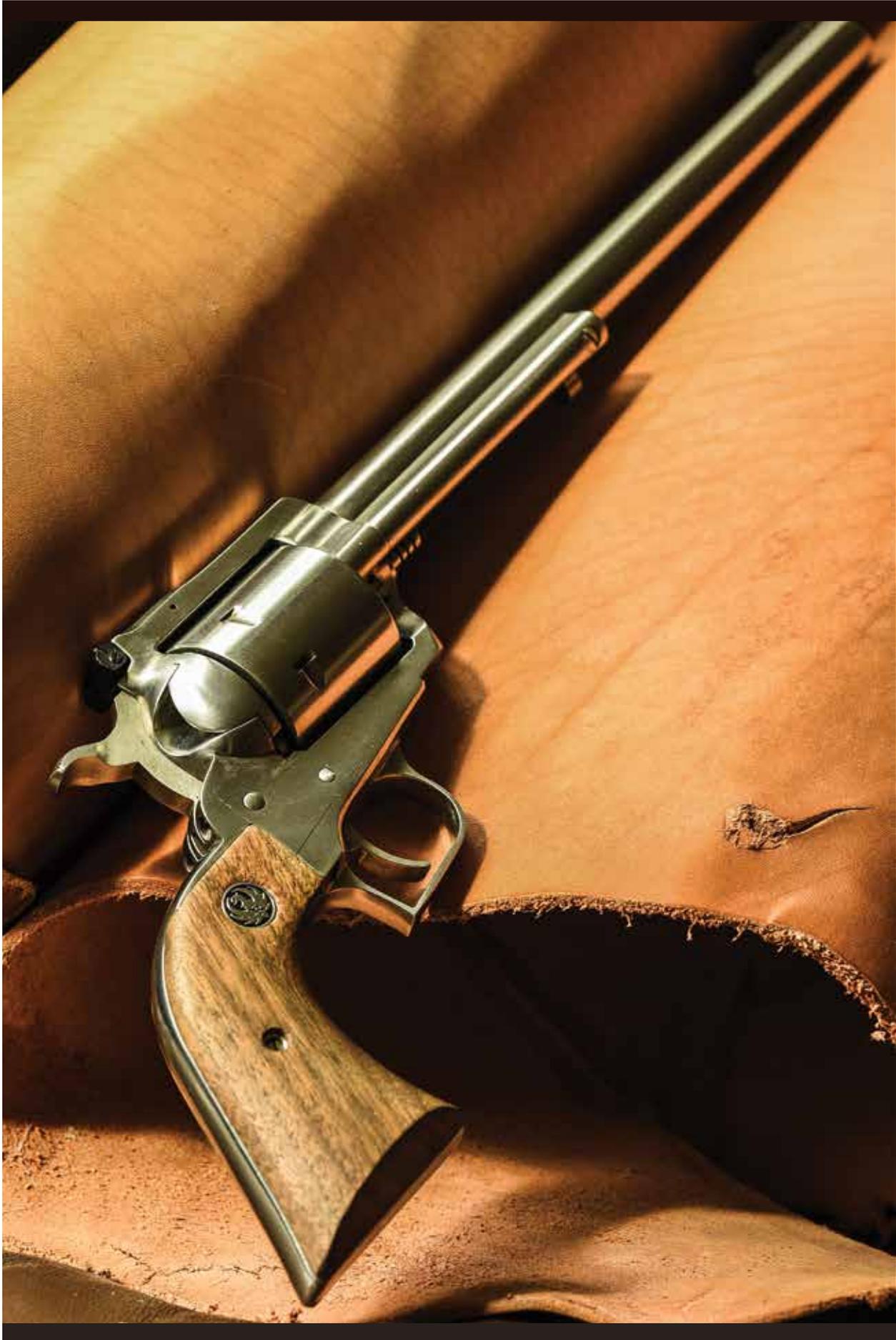
Justin Trudeau adores the Chinese communist dictatorship form of government and has stated so publicly. His eulogy of Fidel Castro was loving. We in Canada are on a slippery slope toward a totalitarian government. In 2017, he provided financial grants to print media to publish news about Liberal policy. In 2022, they proposed licensing of electronic media outlets which are trusted by the Liberal government to promote their agenda. And now we have proposed legislation to limit free speech on the Internet.

Legal, licensed firearms owners in Canada are 30 per cent less likely to commit a crime than the general population. Homicides by legally owned firearms numbered 31 in 2021. Homicide by illegally owned firearms in Canada in 2021 was 231.

Every time there is a crisis, Justin Trudeau pulls the gun control rabbit out of his magic hat to distract Canadians from the real issues. All his initiatives are to extinguish our Canadian firearms heritage. 🇨🇦

#### Sources:

Wikipedia, Stats Canada, World Population Review, Gary Mauser, Grant Rombough



# GUN LEATHER

Leather basics for gun owners

BY LOWELL STRAUSS



Leather is a durable material. Shown here is the author's trusty gun sling of 35 years.

Rifles come, and rifles go, yet I've faithfully used the same leather sling for the past 35 years of hunting. And I don't plan to switch it up anytime soon! Sure, modern synthetic materials eclipse leather's performance in many ways; however, it's hard to beat the functional, timeless look of quality gun leather. Apparently beauty really is skin deep.

Today, we'll explore gun leather -- from tanning methods to types and terminology, to decorations and options for hand-crafted satisfaction.

## LEATHER IN THE SHOOTING SPORTS FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Leather has a long and rich association with firearms and has been the mainstay for holsters, slings, ammunition belts, possible bags and a myriad of other accessories. Cowboy action shooters and traditional muzzleloader hunters love their authentic leather gear. And it's hard to beat leather for duty holsters and the practical shooting sports.

## LEATHER

Leather is a strong, flexible material created from the cured skin of animals. Treating the hide with chemicals prevents decay and produces desirable properties. The most common leather comes from cattle and bison, though sheep, goats, deer, pigs and exotic skins like alligators are also used.

The chemicals for turning an animal hide into useable leather range

A custom sling and buttstock cover made by Appaloosa Leather.

widely, from the original and effective method of using animal brains to plant tannins (veg-tanned) and chromium sulphate. Each method produces leather with different properties, and each has its pros and cons for use. Veg-tan leather is commonly sold in leather shops and is well suited for carving (tooling) into decorative patterns.

Tandy Leather's website ([tandy-leather.ca](http://tandy-leather.ca)) has a leather education section, a valuable resource for beginner leathercrafters. Tandy's Leather Buying Guide discusses parts of the hide and thickness – two key components in selecting the right type of leather for your needs. The shoulder area and bends (rear portion) of a leather side, for example, are the best quality leather, have the fewest scars (bug bites, cuts, brand marks) and are well suited to carving. Conversely, the belly leather is softer and stretchier than other areas of the hide. Belly leather is not considered premium leather for large pieces, but it is fine for smaller leather projects where strength and texture are not an issue.

Leather is sold by weight per square foot, which roughly translates to thickness. Typical gun leather for holsters and slings is eight to 10 ounces (or



3.2 to 4.0 millimetres thick). Sonia from Appaloosa Leather, a BC-based custom leather shop, told me, "Our rifle slings use 10-ounce leather. This weight strikes a balance between strength and thickness. Lighter leather is selected for decorative pieces like buttstock covers, cartridge/shell holders and wallets where thinner leather looks and functions better."

#### TECHNICAL TERMS

Common leather terminology is helpful to know when shopping for leather or leather goods. It explains the leather's quality and usefulness for a specific item or project.

The term full-grain leather is commonly seen on leather products like boots, baseball gloves and gun leather. Full-grain leather has not been altered beyond hair removal and provides the strongest, most durable leather available. It is the most authentic leather, retaining the hide's original texture and markings.

Top grain leather looks smoother than full-grain because it's sanded, removing imperfections; however, sanding also removes the strongest fibres of the leather.

Corrected grain leather is created by further sanding and is the weakest. By stamping an artificial grain into this leather, it looks more authentic. Multiple layers of this leather are often sandwiched together, or with a piece of cardboard between them, to create stiffness. Remember that cheap belt you regretted buying because it stretched, cracked and tore? It was probably a corrected grain leather.



A custom shotshell box holder with wildlife colour carving made by Appaloosa Leather.

Appaloosa Leather customizes their leather products with carving. In this case, a leather panel with a western floral design and basket weave pattern. Notice the leatherworking tools in the background.



Split leather and bonded leather are two other types. Leather can be split several times, depending on the thickness of the hide. Suede is a type of split leather with an almost fuzzy nap and has useful applications in making gun accessories. Bonded leather is more like particle board, made of leather scraps and glue. It has little strength and durability and is not typically used for shooting accessories.

#### ENHANCING LEATHER

Carving and tooling leather creates a custom product enriched with patterns and designs. The tooling may be simply a repeating pattern, such as a basket weave, or complex carvings of wildlife, flowers and the like. Amazing results are possible from a skilled leather carver.

Designs are further enriched with paints and dyes, which can bring out life-like details. Acrylic paints are brighter but less durable than oil-based paints. Sonia told me that both kinds of paints last a long time if the leather is cared for properly.

Stitching serves several purposes in leatherwork. Its primary function is holding two pieces of leather together. Stitching also adds decorative flair. Sometimes a contrasting thread is stitched around the border of a leather piece purely for aesthetics. It also prevents stretching to a lesser degree. If stretching is a concern, like on a rifle sling, it's better to use heavier leather.

Suede's fuzzy nature adds texture, and when used as a lining, it adds traction for items like gun slings where the user doesn't want them sliding off their shoulder. Padding may also be added under a suede backer, which increases user comfort.

Holsters may require custom leatherwork for the best fit. By moulding the leather around the actual gun, the results are perfect. However, 3-D-printed

copies of specific models can produce a great fit too, without the actual gun in hand. In this way, high-volume makers produce a well-fitted holster for duty and competition out of the box.

#### LEATHER CARE

From the store, leather products include a protective finish, but with time the leather will need conditioning to keep it supple. Sonia said, "Many of our leather products are treated with finishing oil, creating a water-resistant, protective topcoat. For the customer, I recommend a wax-based conditioner; it's a milder product that's easier on the stitching." To condition, first clean it well using saddle soap, followed by a soft, damp cloth, and finally apply the conditioner.

"Treat leather like your skin. A shower removes protective oils from our skin, so after we are dry, applying lotion prevents drying and cracking – the same is true for leather," noted Sonia. It's a good idea, when using cleaning or conditioning products, to test it on a small spot first in case it causes an unwanted colour change.

Most leather doesn't do well getting wet. If it does, lay it on a flat surface and allow it to air dry, and then re-condition it. Sun and intense

heat (like from a wood stove) dry out leather, making it brittle. Extremely dry and cracked leather can break under a load, rendering it useless.

Just like ammunition, leather is best stored in a cool, dry place. In humid environments, leather can mildew. Sonia also recommends keeping leather products in a soft bag to prevent scuffs and scratches. "A pillowcase makes a great DIY storage bag."

#### FINAL THOUGHTS

Humans have used leather for millennia, and I doubt it'll fall out of style any time soon. Leather is a renewable resource and a tough, beautiful, natural material. Many shooters have an affinity for leather; I know I sure do.

Want some of your own? Check your local retailer, custom shop or even consider making your own gun leather gear. 🏹

#### Resources

##### CUSTOM GUN LEATHER:

Appaloosa Leather  
[www.appaloosaleather.com](http://www.appaloosaleather.com)

##### LEATHER SUPPLY:

Tandy Leather  
[www.tandy-leather.ca](http://www.tandy-leather.ca)

# NEW GUN GEAR

2022 products you can't live without  
BY LOWELL STRAUSS



**HOWARD LEIGHT IMPACT SPORT IN-EAR** hear-through protection models with amplification or Bluetooth is designed for hunters and sport shooters who want comfortable, lightweight, high-NRR in-ear hearing protection that allows them to easily hear or amplify what's going on around them. Both models feature a 29dB NRR, with eight increments of a hear-through volume control for up to 6X sound enhancement. The amplification stops when loud impulse sounds exceed 85d. A rechargeable 200 mAh lithium battery powers the Impact Sport In-Ear, delivering up to 50 hours of run time on a full, two-hour charge. The package includes three pairs of foam ear tips (small, medium and large) and flexible, mouldable ear hooks that provide a customized and secure fit for any wearer. The Bluetooth model has the added advantage of wireless audio streaming.

MSRP: \$120 to \$165 USD  
[howardleightshootingsports.com](http://howardleightshootingsports.com)

**THE SMITH FRONTMAN ELITE BALLISTIC EYEWEAR** is both stylish and designed for safety. Smith optics is an industry leader in sports optics and created its Elite collection for shooters. It's a full line of UV and ballistic eye protection sunglasses, including one of the most popular designs in the collection, the Frontman Elite. Some models use Smith's advanced ChromaPop technology that allows the eyes to see true colours, which translates into a better shooter experience, less eye fatigue and improved performance. The Frontman Elite has a medium-large fit (matte black or black) nylon frame and features high-impact lenses that are both ANSI Z87.1 compliant and meet MIL-PRF-31013 (clause 3.5.1.1) rating. Hydrophilic temples and nose pads provide comfort for all users. Lens choices include four polarized with ChromaPop, two polarized, grey and clear; all are prescription compatible.

MSRP: \$119 to \$239  
[smithoptics.com](http://smithoptics.com)



**FIX IT STICKS Compact Ratcheting Multi-Tool Kit** bundles essential gun tools into a moulded, polymer tool holder for field-expedient repairs. It's the perfect toolkit for hunters and shooters of all disciplines. The new kit features the Fix It Sticks ratcheting T-way wrench that breaks down for storage, 15 hex bits (hex: 3mm, 4mm, 5mm, 5/64, 5/32, 3/32; torx: T6, T8, T10, T15, T20, T25; slotted: 5mm; Phillips: #1, #2) and a mini pry bar. Thanks to its size and form, the toolkit easily slides into a range bag, emergency kit, vehicle glove box or ATV compartment. This selection of components can handle many common maintenance and repair needs on guns and gear. The Compact Ratcheting Multi-Tool Kit builds on the Fix It Sticks' innovative line of modular firearms maintenance tools and torque limiters.

MSRP: \$120  
[fixitsticks.com](http://fixitsticks.com)



**5.11 RANGE READY TRAINER BAG** holds the essentials for a day at the range. It features fully padded construction with tough 600-denier polyester, reliable YKK lockable zippers, a ridged PE board base, external MOLLE webbing for extras and removable internal dividers to stay organized. On the front panel, a large loop area holds patches or ID. A left-side pull-down pouch with name tape and dual rear zippered pouches provides additional gear storage and organizing options. The trainer bag includes a quick access front internal elastic mag/accessory panel and lid underside elastic bands. Dual top carry handles and a removable shoulder strap make transport easy no matter how much gear you load in it.

MSRP: \$145 USD  
[511tactical.com](http://511tactical.com)



**MANTIS LASER ACADEMY TRAINING KIT** allows training at home for rapidly improving shooting skills. It offers real-time results with dry fire training drills using your gun, phone, laser and paper training targets. A laser training cartridge drops into the chamber of your firearm, sending a laser beam down the barrel every time the firing pin strikes the round. The user 'shoots' at paper targets and the phone or other smart device scores the laser hits. Inside the app, the basic training modes include single target, one-shot from low ready, duelling mode and bullseye (five shots). Ten additional advanced training modes improve specific pistol skills. The kit includes online access to the Mantis Laser Academy, two complete sets of training targets, a mini and large tripod with a cell phone holder, a laser cartridge extraction stick, target stand holders, a portable carrying case and a cartridge-specific laser for popular pistol cartridges like 9mm, 40 S&W, 45 ACP and more. Mantis also sells a .223/5.56 kit.

**MSRP: \$149 USD**  
[mantisx.com](http://mantisx.com)



**HAWKE REFLEX SIGHT Wide View** is an ideal sight for close-range targets. With a parallax-free sight picture and multi-function dot/circle reticle, the sight works well on all rifles, pistols and shotguns. The optic has a 25-layer, fully multi-coated lens with a red, illuminated, two MOA dot and 35 MOA circle reticle, with eight brightness settings. The reticle allows fast target acquisition with the circle and pinpoint accuracy from the small centre dot. It uses a common CR2032 battery and will enter a standby mode if no movement is detected for five minutes, conserving its battery. Including its built-in Weaver rail mount and aluminum chassis, the sight only weighs 85 grams (three ounces). The overall sight length is 58 millimetres (2.3 inches) and 38 millimetres (1.5 inches) wide. It's a feature-filled reflex sight at an affordable price.

**MSRP: \$235**  
[ca.hawkeoptics.com](http://ca.hawkeoptics.com)

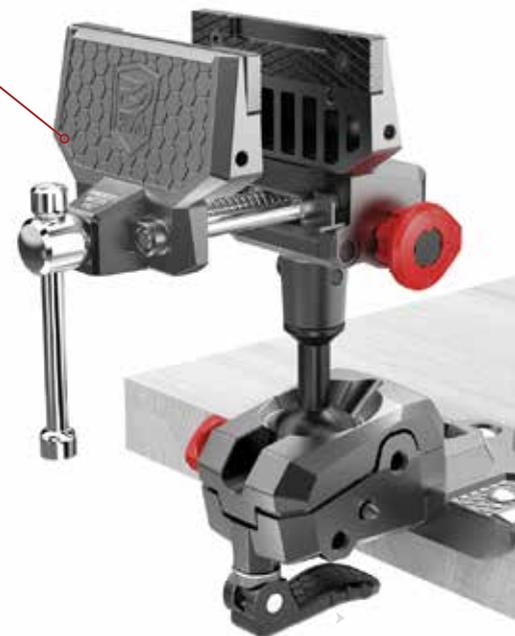


**SWAGGER SRF-10 BIPOD:** Precision shooting starts with a rock-solid rest. And because every shooting situation is unique, Swagger designed a bipod that quickly and easily conforms to any surface. The SFR-10 bipod uses Swagger's patented modular leg technology. Each leg twists independently, creating a range of motion called leg tension for fine-tuning the platform. Open tension provides the most flexibility in any shooting situation. The midpoint is balanced tension. With the legs fully turned in, the closed tension position forms a ridged platform for long-range shooting. The SFR-10 attaches using a quick-detach Picatinny rail mount. By setting the legs at a 45-degree angle, the shooter creates an extra-low shooting position; however, for most shooting, the bipod adjusts from six to 10.5 inches. The SRF-10 weighs less than one pound, so it won't bog you down in the field.

**MSRP: \$249 USD**  
[swaggerbipods.com](http://swaggerbipods.com)

**THE REAL AVID MASTER GUN VISE** is made exclusively for working on guns. Whether you're building, customizing, repairing, cleaning or mounting scopes and accessories, this bench-mounted vise holds guns in just the right spot. The vise's base has an articulating ball and socket joint, with an adjustable cam lever that applies pressure to the joint, allowing the vise and gun to be positioned and repositioned without ever removing it from the vise. For applying heavy torque, like when tightening a barrel nut, the vise includes a heavy-duty pin that locks the ball in place. Removable and reversible jaw sleeves allow precise gun grip on any gun. On one side, foam-padded jaws protect fine firearms, while the flip side has nylon jaws which are specially designed for gripping barrels, Picatinny rails and more. The Master Gun Vise has optional mounting accessories for holding receivers and barrels of AR-type firearms. Finally, a levelling knob simplifies scope mounting by rotating the gun three degrees in either direction for a perfectly level reticle every time.

**MSRP: \$385.49**  
[realavid.com](http://realavid.com)



# GIRLS, GUNS & PHEASANTS

Introducing youth to the shooting sports

*BY TIMOTHY FOWLER*



**RIGHT: Instructors have a gentle and safety-focused hand on the instruction process for novices.**



**G**ood parents want the best for their kids. For Troy Flasch, this means teaching his girls to safely handle firearms, including safe storage, maintenance, handling and shooting at targets or game animals. Flasch's goal is to provide solid foundational firearms training for his girls. They will have the opportunity to hunt. Whether the girls end up enjoying shooting sports or hunting in the future is completely up to them, but they will learn how to handle guns and shoot properly.

Flasch is the sales manager with Korth Group, an Alberta-based company that imports firearms, ammunition, outdoor gear and a myriad of other cool products into Canada. Flasch is a late-onset gun guy and hunter, accelerated into the gun world in the last decade by his role with Korth. Flasch says that, growing up, he did shoot a pellet gun at pop cans, but his family never hunted. The tradition of hunting skipped his generation. Now he wants his kids to have the opportunity he missed. Last year, he was with his daughter when she harvested her first deer.

#### **THE IDEAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITY**

The perfect on-ramp for novice shooters is Alberta Conservation Association's (ACA) Taber Pheasant Festival,

where they partner with the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association (AHEIA) to provide hands-on instruction to complete novices. Over the course of two days, they take new shooters from introduction to hunt and harvest. For 25 years, ACA has enhanced and encouraged outdoor activities, from fishing and berry picking to waterfowl, upland and big game hunting. The Taber Pheasant Festival is one of their premier annual events, where hunters can apply to participate in an organized pheasant hunt. The first two days of this hunt are reserved for the novice shoot. During these two days, a person who has never handled a firearm will safely learn every step of handling a shotgun, starting with shooting clay targets, and then having a chance to harvest a pheasant. The folks at the festival close the circle by demonstrating how to dress and prepare pheasants for legal transport, followed by an opportunity to eat some of the pheasant harvests.

Ken Kranrod, vice-president of the ACA, said, "Right from the very first Taber Pheasant Festival, we held the novice shoot, because we all understood that youth are the most important aspect of hunting and angling. If you want to keep any tradition going, you must have new people coming >



**ABOVE: Novices learn how to field dress their bird and prepare it for a meal.**

into the activity. We wanted to give the kids or other first-timers a quality experience, where they have a good, comfortable experience with a firearm. And we wanted participants to be able to take a bird. Any hunter will tell you that it's only the exception when you go out and harvest an animal. That's why they call it hunting, not shooting."

Flasch recognizes that the whole process of learning how to safely handle firearms can be intimidating. He was looking for the right situation for his eldest to learn more about firearms. Safety is the most important thing when talking about firearms. He said this about the upcoming novice hunt, "I think the ACA opportunity with the pheasant hunt is brilliant. I admire their respect for safety and the knowledge that they pass on to us. I appreciate their encouragement and desire to understand participants' needs. The process is kind of holding [the novice's] hand softly, to take them to the next level. That [novice hunt] program specifically is set up for so much success. You've got the morning

training, you've got target shooting, you've got pretty much professional dog handlers and bird shooters who are very experienced. And then they set you up in a very nice environment. I just think it's a perfect situation to bring in someone new."

Already, Flasch's eldest can safely handle a firearm. "I have spent a ton of time on safety. I'm very confident in the bush with her walking behind me with a loaded gun. Her conscientiousness is probably better than mine. She's amazingly disciplined at keeping her finger off the trigger."

#### **KEEP IT SAFE, MAKE IT FUN**

ACA builds on the safety aspect of firearms by bringing in experts from AHEIA, Kranrod said. "We engaged AHEIA in the festival because that's what they do and they're the best at it. They have the [gun safety] curriculum, they have the equipment and, most importantly, they have a body of skilled and excellent instructors who are the best at taking youth and novices and getting them introduced to shooting. From the start, we engaged

AHEIA in the event with a novice shoot, and they were excited as well to be part of it. It wouldn't happen without them. The overarching theme is safety. It's all about that. ACA's goal is to introduce youth and novices to shooting and pheasant hunting so they have a meaningful, quality experience, where safety is paramount."

If you are reading the Canadian Firearms Journal, the chances are high that you own and use firearms.



As a firearm owner and hunter, I do get questions from non-shooters and non-hunters. "Why bother?" And, "What's the big deal about guns?"

Kranrod has a great answer to these questions. He said, "There's that element of hunting and angling that's hard to put into words. It's being out there in the elements. Sometimes it all comes together, it could be an early morning, it could be in the middle of the afternoon or late in the evening. You never know, right? When it happens, it's just that you feel alive and you're so glad to be out there. Especially now when we're living lives which are plugged in every which way and inundated with technology and noise and opinions. Getting out, just you in the outdoors, takes you back to your primal beginnings, and it resonates with almost everybody. Anybody who's ever been hunting or fishing know they've experienced that. And it's different from going out canoeing or hiking, which are all great pursuits. But hunting and fishing are fundamentally different. When you're in pursuit of something, there's an-

other element to it. You experience it, and if you get your kids out there too, they can see it that way. The [Taber Pheasant Festival novice shoot] events have this intangible element that we all know and love. We want it to convey that to the public."

Flasch said, "I hope when my daughters leave home, they carry on as firearm owners. I told them the guns they have now are theirs forever. What you do with them after you leave home is up to you." In the meantime, they can store their firearms safely at Mom and Dad's. And Dad does hope that the girls continue hunting. He said, "I missed that when I was a kid and I want to be part of it again." And then he said, "My daughter, she's pretty proud."

Sounds to me like Dad is proud too. Good job, Dad. And good job ACA. And thanks to the myriad of volunteers who work diligently to bring novice shooters safely into the realm of experienced shooters.

What are your plans to help bring along the novice shooters in your world? 🦌

**TOP:** Pheasants are the quarry at the Taber, Alta., Pheasant Festival.

**BOTTOM:** At the Taber Pheasant Festival, a person who has never handled a firearm will safely learn every step of handling a shotgun, starting with shooting clay targets, and then having a chance to harvest a pheasant.

# FIERCE VARMINT FUN

Hot shooting in the summer heat  
*BY JEFF SMITH*



**M**y truck bounced along the dusty dirt trail enroute to the field where my friend and shooting companion, Kaelee Sorensen, and I were headed in search of the varmints I had located a few days prior. Our heads were on a constant swivel for other fields full of gophers as we talked about the fun shoot ahead of us. The piece of publicly accessible land we were on is over-run with these cattle leg-breaking critters, and we spotted a few possible fields for return visits. The weather was hot and dry, with a thick cloud of smoke covering the sky, as it had been for several weeks due to forest and grass fires. Shortly after, we arrived at our destination and quickly set up a shooting stand.

In addition to the usual selection of .22 calibre rimfire rifles we use, I had brought along a new rifle and scope to trial. The rifle is the Fierce Firearms CT Edge chambered in 22-250 Remington and fitted with a 24-inch barrel with a one-in-12 twist. While the .22s were meant for work out to 100 metres, the CT Edge was going to be worked at ranges out to 500 metres or more, we hoped. However, due to the thick smoke and heat mirages, we were only able to work out to a rangefinder-confirmed distance of 428 metres, with multiple kills at that range.

#### THE RIFLE

A quick bit of company background is in order. Fierce Firearms, based in Redmond Utah, was established in 2012. Their first rifle, the bolt-action Edge, hit the market in 2014. During the ensuing years, they have expanded with a number of popular models and action styles.

The Fierce CT Edge is a lightweight rifle that is available in several hunting calibres up to 375 H&H. These rifles gain their light weight and accuracy by being constructed with space-age materials and utilizing the latest CNC milling processes. The heart of the rifle, its action, is created from titanium. These strong actions feature a 70-degree bolt throw, making it fast to chamber the next shot. Their barrels are C3 carbon, which is cryogenically treated. This treatment relieves stress in the relatively thin barrel. The barrel is then wrapped with carbon fiber, which gives it added strength while keeping the weight down. Another benefit the carbon fiber wrap provides is in providing these barrels the ability to cool faster than steel ones, giving the barrel a longer lifespan. This is of particular importance when firing fast-moving bullets in prolonged shooting sessions. Of course, one should still take breaks to allow for barrel cooling. Addition- >

Fierce Firearm's CT Edge is available in chamberings ranging from 22-250 Rem to 375 H&H.



ally, these barrels are more accurate due to less vibration and warping while being fired.

Both the titanium action and synthetic or carbon fiber stocks are available in some cool finishes. Another feature is that the muzzle is threaded for the addition of a brake, regardless of chambering, including the 22-250 Remington. More on that later. No iron sights are mounted; however, each rifle includes 30-millimetre Talley rings mounted to proprietary bases.

Ammunition is fed from a metal, detachable box magazine. Each rifle comes with an 0.5 MOA guarantee and includes a target as proof. The trigger breaks at a crisp 2.54 pounds, as measured with my Lyman trigger pull gauge.

### THE OPTIC

My rifle came with a Zeiss Conquest V6 3-18X50 scope pre-mounted on it. This fine scope has a 30-millimetre tube. The reticle is their non-illuminated Reticle 6, which is a traditional hunting reticle with the side and bottom crosshairs starting out thick with a fine centre, also known as plex style. I must admit, I prefer this type of reticle for most of my shooting activities. Eye relief is a comfortable 3.54 inches. The excellent German glass allows 92 per cent light transmission for a nice, bright view, something especially useful when your target is only four inches high and brown. Parallax is adjustable from 50 yards to infinity. Windage and elevation adjustments move point of impact a quarter MOA with each click. At just over 13 inches in length and weighing only 22.2 ounces, this scope is ideal for use on a lightweight rifle. The Zeiss website indicates this scope is ideal for hunting from elevated stands, medium-long range and alpine hunting. I found it well suited to hunting the open prairie.

### TRIGGER TIME

When I first received the rifle, I proceeded to a local range where I sighted it in. In anticipation of receiving this rifle for testing, I was fortunate in that I was able to acquire a variety of ammunition for it. While most provided relatively good accuracy, a few products stood out. These included Federal Fusion 55-grain, Browning BVX 50-grain and Hornady Superformance 50-grain V-MAX, with each of



Adjustments on the Zeiss Conquest V6 scope proved to be accurate and repeatable.

them giving MOA or less results.

The Winchester white box 45-grain JHP I had on hand did not provide the greatest accuracy on paper; however, in the field, it proved deadly on the gophers out to 300-plus yards. It was worth trying, as it's an affordable round. The best performance was with the Hornady Superformance 50-grain V-MAX. Rather expensive for recreational gopher popping, but it's an excellent choice for coyotes. Another excellent choice for coyotes and other large varmints is the Hornady 55-grain V-MAX, where I also found particularly good accuracy. These results were garnered without the muzzle brake installed. Installing the brake over the winter for coyote hunting allowed for tighter groups with the Fusion and Browning ammunition. The Hornady loads remained unchanged. This intrigued me, so I weighed the muzzle cap and the brake on my Hornady G2 1500 electronic scale. The cap weighs 20.615 grams, the brake 52.925 grams. This leads me to conclude that a bit of extra weight was enough to change the barrel harmonics.

Shooting the rifle in the field was pure pleasure. Given I had been shooting it for a few weeks with excellent results, the next couple of

trips I asked Kaelee to do most of the shooting, as I wanted to get a female perspective on this rifle and scope combo. She is an avid deer hunter and having grown-up a country girl, she loves hunting gophers and is a darn good shot. As we first looked over the rifle together and I explained the various features, I could see the excitement building in her eyes. Immediate comments included how light the rifle felt and how intuitive the features on both the rifle and scope were to operate. Once we arrived at the hunting field, she quickly loaded the magazine, placed the rifle on a set of shooting sticks and settled in behind the rifle where she focused the scope to her satisfaction as I scanned for targets. It did not take long for her to log her first kill at over 260 yards.

Over the next few hours, she fired the rifle from standing, kneeling and sitting positions, in addition to using the sticks. Ammunition included mainly Winchester white box and Hornady V-MAX varmint loads, with a few other brands thrown in. Most every shot was a kill, including several well past 400 yards. Due to the heat, we were forced to take breaks after every 10 shots to allow the barrel to cool. Being mid-

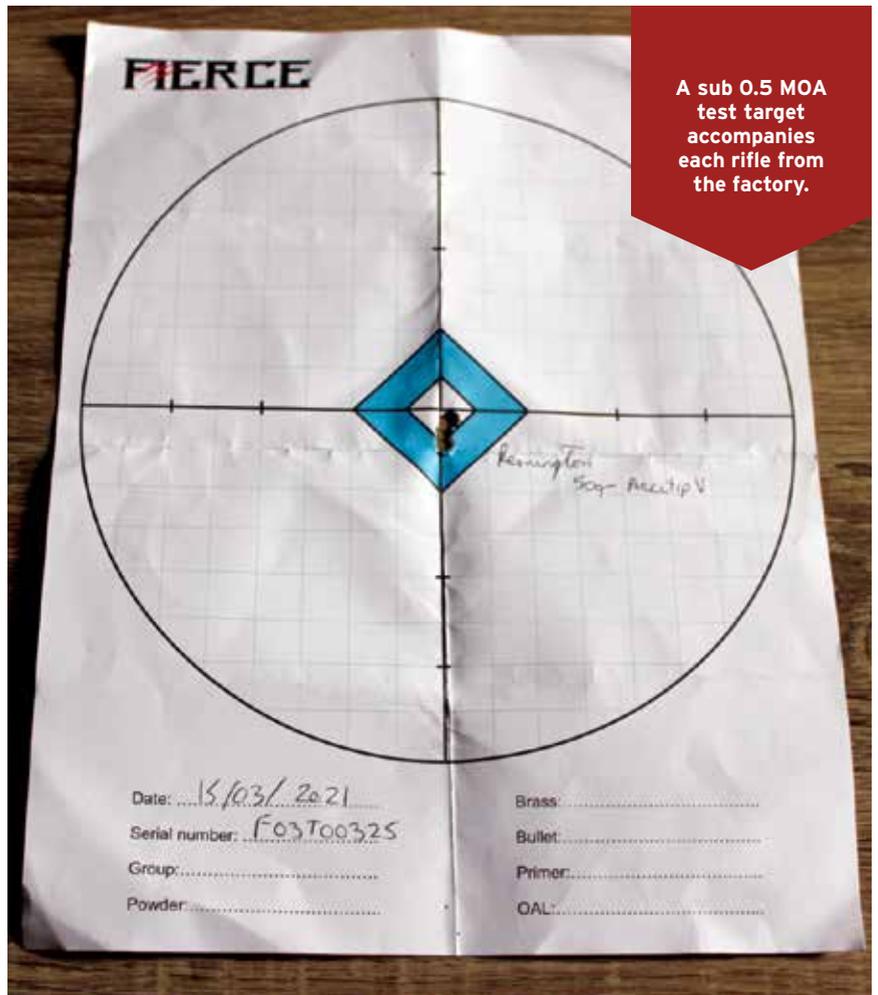
The rifle is supplied with a muzzle brake and a cap to protect the threads when the brake is removed.



August, it was well over 35 degrees Celsius. While she was shooting, I closely watched her style. I noted and she agreed that this rifle fit her well and was comfortable to shoot. While I am unable to use the scope at 16 or 18 power due to an old eye injury, she found it extremely easy to hit targets at that setting. I am good to 14X. As we cleaned up the brass, she commented that I should buy the rifle so she could shoot it regularly! Friends, right? I took it as high praise for a cool shooting system.

If you choose to install the muzzle brake, installation is simple. I used a set of padded shotgun magazine tube pliers to grasp the muzzle cap and unscrew it. The same tool was used to install the brake hand tight. Use of these pliers ensured there was no damage to the finish of the cap or brake due to slippage. A thin coat of Brownells Action Lube on the muzzle threads was used to alleviate potential binding of the threads, similar to installing a shotgun choke tube.

The CT Edge is a fine piece of shooting gear that demands quality optics. Both come at a certain price point, but they are well worth it for the serious shooter. 🏆



A sub 0.5 MOA test target accompanies each rifle from the factory.



MARLIN FIREARMS

# BEAR DEFENSE GUNS

Thoughts from a problem wildlife specialist

*BY KEVIN WILSON*



**The author's Winchester 12-gauge Model 1300 Defender pump-action shotgun has seen a lot of time in the bear woods.**

**W**ith increasing bear populations across North America, we're seeing a correlated increase in the number of human encounters, attacks and even fatalities. In turn, bear defense is becoming a necessity for those who work and play in the backcountry. While bear spray is effective, skilled firearm users would often rather rely on a gun. Still, the popular question stands – what's the best firearm for bear defense?

For the most part, bears want nothing to do with people. Every now and again though, one steps out of line and either responds defensively or, on rare occasions, in a predatory manner.

Before we discuss firepower, it's important to define the necessity to defend oneself against a bear. Simplistically, a defensive charge, or attack, occurs when a bear is protecting its food, its young or its territory. Most grizzly attacks are defensive in nature. Black bears, though, are a bit different. A considerably higher number of predatory black bears are responsible for attacks and fatalities. Biologists have confirmed through necropsies that most of these black bears – albeit a presumably low number – have some form of encephalitis. The big question is, how many of them are there? Is it one in 10, one in 100, one in a 1,000? We just don't know.

In the end though, if you spend >

time in the woods, it's good to know that most problem bears are often food conditioned. Usually, they are younger bears looking for an easy meal. Instead of fearing humans, they brazenly approach with no apparent concern. This doesn't automatically mean they're a threat, and we should never assume that shooting them is the only solution. This is where interpreting stress behaviours becomes key. Then again, get between that bear and its food source, between a sow and her cubs or corner a bear, and you could find yourself in a situation where you need to defend yourself, and potentially with lethal force.

In extreme situations, measures must be taken to ensure your personal safety. This is where a firearm can be a lifesaver. Indeed, for as long as firearms have existed, man has used them for personal defense. Even with all of today's technology in calibres and ammunition, the verdict is still out on which is the best bear defense gun. In turn, some of the following may surprise you.

#### LETHAL BEAR DEFENSE

When we talk about bear defense guns, we're referring to efficacy; in other words, practicality and lethality. This is a big deal, both from a hands-on perspective and from a legal standpoint. No one should ever raise or shoulder a firearm on a bear, or any other target for that matter, unless they have the wherewithal to

**No one ever plans to have a bad bear encounter, but when it happens, having the right firearm matters.**

use it. From a defensive posture, much needs to be understood about provincial wildlife acts, regulations and your own ability to interpret and respond to the threat. In most situations, as a wildlife conflict specialist, I strongly encourage people to utilize non-lethal deterrents whenever possible. That said, if you're facing imminent threat to your person or property, you could be confronted with the decision to shoot in self-defense. In other words, lethal defense should be considered a last resort.

For those what-if situations, your bear gun of choice should be a matter of personal preference, comfort and confidence. Accessibility, transport, lethality and availability of ammunition should be primary considerations. The rest is up to you. Practice well with

whatever firearm you choose to use, keep it close and know when and how to use it.

#### CENTREFIRE

Query mountain guides in the Northwest Territories or Yukon about which is the best bear defense gun, and the answer will most often be a lever-action 45-70 Gov't. Why? Generally, they have a shorter barrel length, the action is fast and easy to work and it launches big bullets.

A classic example is found in Marlin rifles, with the current version being the first Ruger-manufactured Marlin, the 1895 SBL. If you find one in a gun store, you best snap it up as this rifle is one hot commodity. Its stainless barrel and exceptional woodwork is easy on the eyes, but most critically,





**The author's Winchester 12-gauge Model 1300 Defender pump-action shotgun has seen a lot of time in the bear woods.**

it's comfortable to shoulder and it's a hard-hitting powerhouse. It has become my number one centrefire choice for bear defense.

Placing my own preferences aside, I surveyed a handful of professional hunting guides from Alaska, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, British Columbia and Alberta. When I asked them about centerfires, indeed the majority confirmed the 45-70 Gov't as a popular choice, but a few qualified their response, reinforcing that it's most important to have a calibre and action that you're most comfortable shooting. Each one further stressed the importance of using the right cartridge and bullet. I know one long-time guide who really likes the Marlin Model 444. It's part of Marlin's big-bore (1895) line-up, but instead of the 45-70 Gov't cartridge, it takes the 444 Marlin. Although I've not shot this rifle myself, I'm told that under 100 yards, it's a tough-to-beat alternative.

I've only taken one grizzly myself, and I killed it with a 7mm Rem Mag at 60 yards. It broke the bear down instantly. In terms of killing power, as a guideline, a big .30 calibre, or a .338, or .375 calibre cartridge is a good choice. The important thing to remember is that your choice in a bear defense gun will likely be different than a hunting rifle. You should anticipate a close-range threatening situation, where a bear is acting aggressively – certainly inside of 40 yards. More than likely you won't get a broadside or quartering-away shot at the vitals, so you'll be aiming at the head/face and front view of the chest.

## SHOTGUN

Shotguns are extremely versatile. They're lightweight and easy to carry, especially short-barrel, tactical-style guns. Talk to most black bear guides, especially in Alberta, and they'll tell you a pump-action 12-gauge is their bear defense gun of choice. Why pump action? Essentially, because they're relatively trouble-free and reliable.

I own and use a Winchester 12-gauge Model 1300 Defender pump-action shotgun, both for work and recreation. With an 18-inch cylinder choke barrel, it's versatile and easy to handle in tight, close-encounter situations where fast reactions and quick aiming is a necessity. One of the most valuable features on my Defender is a fluorescent TRUGLO fiber optic front sight. It's an ideal guide's gun when pursuing a wounded black bear, in thick, dark cover. This can mean low-light conditions, and the fiber optic sight is perfect in these situations.

Other manufacturers also make good short-barrel 12-gauge options. Mossberg, for one, leads the way in the affordable and practical category with their respective shorter barrel defense shotguns. The biggest problem with these shorter-barrel options is finding one that is now in compliance with Canada's newest regulations. For instance, Mossberg's new optic-ready 940 Pro Tactical Autoloader is a sweet gun that would be perfect for bear defense, but it's currently not approved for use in Canada.

As a bear guide myself, I've put down numerous black bears in precarious situations, from standing and facing, to bears on a full-out run. My 12-gauge performed flawlessly and, in each situation, collapsed the bears instantly. Personally, I'm still comfortable using one in close quarters (i.e., under 20 yards) on an inland grizzly. If, however, we're dealing with a mature coastal brown bear, or a larger polar bear, it would definitely not be my first choice for a defense gun.

Overall, the key with using a shotgun for bear defense is to first understand its capabilities and limitations. Second, choose the right ammunition for the job. In other words, a 12-gauge rifled barrel with suitable ammunition is key. Again, if you're carrying a shotgun for bear defense, think 20 yards or

With increasing bear populations across North America, we're seeing a correlated increase in the number of human encounters, attacks and even fatalities.

less. It's a close-range firearm. We'll address ammunition choice shortly.

### HANDGUN

A lot has been published, mostly in the United States, around the efficacy of handguns for bear defense. Given that our readers are predominantly Canadian, this is a contentious issue. It wouldn't be a stretch to say most of us, as gun owners and backcountry users, feel strongly that we should have the right to carry handguns for wildlife defense. Unfortunately, to do so in Canada, a handgun owner must meet a series of strict qualifications in order to get such a permit.

Even still, as one who holds a wilderness authorization to carry (ATC) permit for work, I would rarely, if ever, choose a handgun over a long gun for bear defense. That said, there are certainly circumstances where a handgun is ideal in the hands of someone capable of navigating the intensity of an aggressive bear encounter or attack. Bottom line, if you're able to secure the proper licensing, it's imperative to understand the pros and cons of pistols versus revolvers, and the various calibre choices available.

As far as platforms go, there are two schools of thought when it comes to bear defense. Some proponents are adamant that a revolver is best, mostly because of reliability. Honestly, it's tough to argue against that premise. Look no further than most brown bear guides in Alaska, and they've historically carried the 44 Magnum. With the introduction of some of the newer, bigger calibres like the 454 Casull and the 500 Magnum, some are opting to go bigger. Again though, it's important to remember that, while these bigger handguns pack a heavier punch, they are tougher to handle and shoot with accuracy, especially in the heat of the moment.

Then there's the other side, those who believe in the practicality, functionality and size of a semi-auto pistol.

Yes, a jam is always top of mind, but keeping your handgun clean and well lubricated can help avoid this problem. Generally smaller, lighter, and in many respects easier to carry, it's tough to beat either a 10mm or a 45 ACP for close-range bear defense. After a lot of research and shooting, for my own liking I decided on the 45 ACP. Specifically, I've become partial to the 1911. I like the weight, I like the feel and I shoot them well. In the end, it's about what you shoot and handle best.

### AMMUNITION

Ammunition has advanced so much over the last decade, it's difficult to keep up. That said, when it comes to close-range bear defense, size and bullet configuration matters. For defense, I believe in the principle that bigger is better. In general terms, I'll touch briefly on 45-70 Gov't, 12 gauge and 45 Auto to give you an idea.

For the 45-70 Gov't, a heavy round like Hornady's 325-grain FTX LEVERevolution cartridge is a solid choice.

For 12 gauge, some believe in buckshot, but I don't. My ammunition of choice is Federal Premium Truball Deep Penetrator. It's a one-ounce, 2 3/4-inch rifled slug designed for peak performance on bears. I've also used hollow points with really good results.

Bear defense ammunition choices for my .45 ACP are limited, particularly for what's available in Canada. After a bunch of research, I settled on a Winchester 230-grain jacketed hollow point. Like shotgun ammunition, the biggest problem with handgun ammunition is its limited muzzle velocity.

After all of this, it's important to consider the area you're in. Your decision should consider whether the area holds black bear, brown (grizzly) or even polar bear. It should also recognize legal considerations around what firearm(s) can and cannot be used. In the end, the best firearm for bear defense will ultimately be the one you are most comfortable and familiar with, handle well and can shoot accurately under a variety of conditions. 🐾



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# NFA

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# NEW ARMY ARMAMENT

New guns for the US & potentially NATO

*BY AL VOTH*



**ABOVE: The 6.8x51mm cartridge will be available in a linked belt for use in the M250 machine gun.**

Whenever a major branch of the American military announces the acquisition of a new firearm, calibre or optic, it's big news for the firearm industry in North America. And in April of 2022, the industry was treated to the news that the US Army has decided to acquire new versions of all three of those items. Specifically, these are a new rifle, a new optic and a new cartridge to feed into the system. Combined, it's a major shakeup in the western military world, with a significant ripple effect for civilian shooters.

This major development came about as the result of the US Army's search for what they labeled the Next Generation Squad Weapon Program. This was begun in 2019 as a search for a firearm to replace the Army's current M4 carbine and a couple of light machine guns. Industry was invited to submit proposals and eventually prototypes from a list of specifications, including length, weight, calibre, sighting systems and a host of other requirements.

The testing has been completed and SIG has been awarded the contract to produce the army's new rifle. Vortex is to supply the new optic, and Winchester will manufacture the ammunition, although it was initially developed by SIG. You may recall that in 2017, SIG was also awarded the contract to supply the Army's new handgun, the M17, which replaced the Beretta M9. Obviously, SIG is on a roll.

#### NEW CARTRIDGE

Before diving into the new rifle, let's look at the ammunition, which, as I mentioned, is entirely new. The 5.56x45 (223 Remington) and the M4 rifle it's used in will be around for a long time yet, but it may be eventually gone. Its replacement is the 6.8x51mm, 277 SIG FURY. If those metric dimensions sound familiar, they should. The 51-millimetre case length is the same as the 308 Win, and 6.8 is the metric designation for the .270 calibre. If you want a mental picture of what the round looks like, just picture a 308 Win necked down to accept a bullet diameter of .277 inches.

Of course, there will be many kinds of ammunition produced for the military, including blanks, limited-range rounds and tracer, but the figures I've found indicate the following as standard loads and performance from a 16-inch barrel. However, the rifle is issued with a 13-inch barrel. While I haven't been able to source velocities from that stubby barrel, I expect a velocity loss of about 100 feet per second.

135-grain bullet – 3,000 feet per second

140-grain bullet – 2,950 feet per second

150-grain bullet – 2,830 feet per second (3,120 feet per second from a 24-inch barrel)

If that sounds a lot like the performance from a classic 270 Winchester, you're bang on. However, what the 277 FURY produces from a 16-inch barrel requires a 270 WIN with 24 inches of barrel. Give the FURY the extra barrel length and it easily surpasses Jack O'Conner's favourite cartridge. The difference is due to the maximum operating pressure of the cartridge.

The 277 SIG FURY has a maximum average chamber pressure of 80,000 psi, while the 270 WIN runs at a maximum of 65,000 psi. That's a large pressure difference and the only reason the SIG cartridge can work with these higher pressures is its unique three-part case design. While the body of the case looks to be of standard brass construction, the case head is stainless steel, with the two pieces held together in a mechanical lock via a locking washer. That reinforced case head and a rifle built to handle the pressures gives the extra performance.

**RIGHT: The Army's new rifle uses a new 6.8x51mm cartridge with a unique case construction.**



#### NEW RIFLE

The Army's new rifle is currently designated as the XM5, but once it's formally issued the 'X' will be dropped and it'll be officially known as the M5. SIG developed it from their civilian version of the rifle, which they call the MCX SPEAR. If you think you'd like to pick up this state-of-the-art rifle in its civilian dress for your collection, forget it. The MCX SPEAR is prohibited. Besides, suggested list price in the US, complete with suppressor, is \$8,000.

As you'd expect, the military version of the rifle is select fire, gas operated and piston driven. It'll be issued to what the Army calls their close-combat forces, which includes infantry, cavalry scouts, combat engineers, combat medics and forward observers. The Army will continue to field the M4 to units outside of the close-combat force.

That suppressor is not an extra feature, in that the rifle is designed and intended to be used with it. This marks the first time a suppressor has been issued as a standard piece of



**ABOVE: Left side views of the US Army's new rifle, the M5.**

kit with a general-issue rifle. It has a quick-detach feature, but considering the standard barrel length is 13 inches, I certainly wouldn't want to fire it without a suppressor or doubled up on hearing protection.

Other XM5 features include a non-reciprocating side charging handle, a six-position folding/collapsing stock, ambidextrous fire control, bolt catch and magazine release, one-in-seven-

inch barrel twist rate, 8.4-pound weight and an overall length of less than 35 inches. I note that SIG calls it an AR platform, and it's not hard to see the similarities to an AR-10 in the images. This should make training simple for the military, as anyone used to the running the M4 should be able to transition to this new rifle quickly. Training on the new optic, however, will be another matter.



**TOP: Right side views of the US Army's new rifle, the M5.**

#### NEW OPTIC

The Army's new optic is unlike anything they have fielded before, in that it's a highly integrated fire control system. Developed by Vortex and designated the XM157 Fire Control Optic, it is a ruggedized fire control system that promises to increase accuracy and lethality for the users of the M5 rifle. The XM157 integrates several advanced technologies, including a variable magnification optic (1-8X), day and night lasers, ballistic calculator, atmospheric sensor suite, laser rangefinder, compass and intra-soldier communication. Initially going to close-combat forces only, this unit is adaptable to other weapon systems, including the existing M4 rifle. We already have rifle scopes on the commercial market with many of these features, so the technology is certainly available. However, packing all of it into one unit and making it soldier-proof is a huge achievement.

Built around a conventional 1-8x30mm scope, it is fully functional as such even if all power is lost, with that power supplied by two CR123A batteries. Vortex says that, using Army-supplied testing processes, they have found battery life can be mea-

sured in weeks. There are essentially two reticles available to the shooter: a conventional etched reticle and an active digital reticle. On command, the digital reticle displays the range to target, as well as an adjusted aiming point and potential wind holds. Switching to 1X automatically displays a red circle type of reticle, which is much more suitable for close quarters work. At 2X and higher, the etched reticle takes over.

There's a box-like unit which sits on top of the optic and connects to one of three contact points built into the scope. This box is removeable and houses the laser rangefinder, as well as a visible aiming laser and an infrared aiming laser for night work. Since it's removeable, the box can be swapped out for upgrades, repair or modification. All these features, combined with an integrated wireless chip, will allow soldiers to "tag" targets and send those reference points to other soldiers, potentially displaying it on visors, phones or other optics. This makes the sight not just an optic but part of the communications system.

**RIGHT: Currently designated the XM157, this Vortex-supplied optic will be supplied with every rifle. The rifle pictured here is not SIG's XM5.**



### THE FUTURE

History tells us that any cartridge with a long military history will be popular in the commercial market as well. The 30-06 SPRG, 308 WIN, 7.62x39mm, 303 British and 223 REM all bear witness to this. If the 277 SIG FURY lasts in military use, we can expect the same from it. However, I'll predict that because of its unusual case design and a reluctance by firearm manufacturers to chamber existing rifle designs for an 80,000-psi cartridge, it's going to take some time for it to reach popularity in the civilian market. Shooters may just reach for Winchester's new 6.8 Western or a similar magnum .270 calibre cartridge to get performance similar to this new military round.

I'm told the three-part cartridge case is completely reloadable and may even last longer than a conventional brass case because the problem of expanding primer pockets could be reduced or even eliminated. If that's the case, annealing the necks on a regular basis could provide extremely long case life. There is some potential for this to become the case design of the future.

SIG is offering their Cross bolt-action rifle chambered for the new cartridge, but it's the only one I'm aware of so far. I have no doubt there are already some semi-custom actions strong enough to handle the round, with some of the beefier CADEX actions probably being lead contenders here in Canada. I'll predict that a non-restricted semi-auto rifle chambered in this round will never happen. I hope I'm wrong.

As for Vortex's optical wonder-sight, Vortex says the immediate priority is to fulfill the Army's needs, with the potential to see a similar commercial product far in the future. I suspect we may see parts of the technology appear in other Vortex products in the interim; perhaps something like a smart scope for hunters, similar to the Burris Eliminator.

No doubt the Army has done a thorough job of evaluating all this equipment and found it to be reliable. However, I expect it'll be no different than any other complicated piece of gear, in that once it's produced in huge quantities and fielded in a broad array of hostile environments, problems will surface. Adjustments and modifications will have to be made and we'll see second and third-generation products appear to address shortcomings.

Eventually, the products will reach a mature stage where they work extremely well for the military. How many years that will take is anyone's guess. The M-16 rifle it's replacing started out in 1965, and its design, ammunition and sighting systems have changed significantly. This new cartridge might eventually become a NATO standard and see use by Canadian Forces, but considering how long it takes to update our military, I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for it. There's not much doubt we civilians will have bolt-action rifles chambered for the 6.8x51mm cartridge, and a dumbed down version of the optic long before our military does. 



# ONE OF A KIND

A rifle of the Yukon Field Force  
*BY JOHN G. TAYLOR*

In 1896, Canada received 40,000 Lee Enfield service rifles from the British government. This was to modernize our regular forces with a .303 calibre magazine rifle that had a significant magazine capacity and, thanks to smokeless powder, better long-range ability.

Bayonets, scabbards and brass muzzle covers were supplied with the rifles.

That same year, gold was discovered in the Yukon. It took until 1897 for the newspapers at the time to obtain information to sensationalize the event,

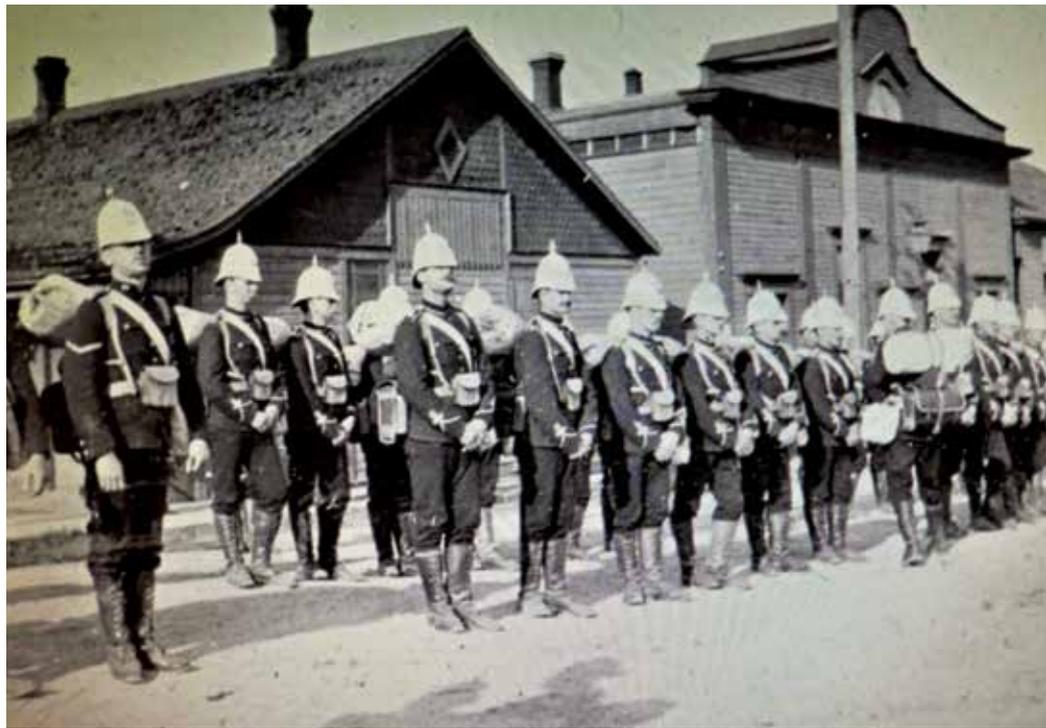
and this started the Klondike Gold Rush. Canada instituted equipment requirements that had to be fulfilled by the incoming prospectors, as the huge migration of dreamers started pouring in during the spring of 1898. Some came down from Alaska, while most took boats north up the coast. It was estimated that the population of Dawson City was 500 in 1896 and swelled to 30,000 in 1898, which forced the local First Nation people to a reserve out of town. The small RNWMP

force, located mostly at Dawson City and Selkirk, were severely undermanned for keeping all the ruffians in some semblance of civility. The nearest police garrison was in Winnipeg, over 3,000 kilometres away.

Frederic Borden, Minister of Militia and Defence, obtained an Order in Council to assemble volunteers from the regular force to trek north to reinforce the RNWMP. A force of 203 soldiers (many from the Royal Canadian Regiment), some artillery



**ABOVE RIGHT:** The Yukon Field Force assembled in Vancouver in 1898, prior to disembarkation. Apparently, they were quite a sight with their new red tunic summer uniforms and white spike top pith helmets. Notice only one cartridge pouch on the belt in front for loose cartridges.



**BELOW:** The action of the rifle with a dust cover on the bolt and a link attached to the 10-round magazine to prevent loss. Safety lever is on the cocking piece. Magazine cut off to hold the cartridges in reserve until needed.

men, some civil servants and even four ladies from the Victorian Order of Nurses assembled in Vancouver as the Yukon Field Force. There was even a medical unit with two surgeons and a journalist, Faith Fenton, from the Toronto Globe. Their job was to not only augment the police, but also to collect taxes, guard bank gold deposits, support local government and control the whiskey trade. Also, there was a concern in Ottawa of annexation of the territory by the United

States, so Canadian sovereignty had to be protected. The Force was split between two ships. One went with supplies to Dawson City, while the other with the bulk of personnel and supplies went to Glenora, BC. The Force was commanded by Colonel T. Evans, Royal Canadian Dragoons. This Glenora group was again split, as an advance party left to build barracks and the balance would trek up to Fort Selkirk, an old Hudson's Bay trading post. It





**ABOVE LEFT:** Close up of the body markings: Crown VR (Victoria Regis), date of manufacture 1896, and Lee Enfield Mark I.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Butt markings of the only known Yukon Field Force rifle. The M&D (Militia and Defence Department) stamp put on in 1896 when the rifles were received in Canada, overtop the Enfield factory roundel and the Mark I Class 1 which was stamped upon passing inspection at Enfield. The C Broad Arrow mark stamped at the bottom was added when the RNWP turned the rifles back in to the Department of Militia and Defence July 16, 1912.

was an arduous ordeal of almost 900 kilometres by mule and by scow, and saw them arriving Sept. 11, 1898.

The rifles were new issue, which the garrison had no experience with. Rifles were all made in 1896 by Enfield or London Small Arms Co. or BSA Co. The cleaning rods in the rifles were half-length, requiring two rods to be screwed together to enable a decent size. The bayonet frogs were of a new Canadian design and had an extra left pocket. It has been surmised that the extra pocket was intended for an entrenching tool, but none appeared in Canadian service until the First World War as the helve. A rifle range was constructed, as well as a significant barracks at their headquarters at Fort Selkirk, but 50 men were forwarded on to Dawson City to maintain a presence there. Apparently, there were two Gatling guns that went with the Yukon Field Force. My speculation would be .45-70 Gov't calibre. It is rumoured that one of those guns was lost when the Force was fording a river.

The Yukon Field Force was withdrawn from the Yukon in September 1899. The rifles were left up there with the Dawson City Rifle Company, a volun-

tary local unit. The two seven-pounder field guns were also left and are still in a museum at Selkirk. When the rifles were returned to the Department of Militia and Defence on July 16, 1912, by the RNWMP, their serial numbers were recorded, which validates the illustrated example. The list of serials is in appendix I, page 142, of David Edgecombe's book *Defending the Dominion*, Service Publications, 2003. The example pictured here is the only known Yukon Field Force rifle in existence.

As an interesting fact, Kate Ryan was one of the four Victorian Order of Nurses that joined the Yukon Field Force. At age 33, she became the first female special constable of the RNWMP, as appointed by the commissioner in 1902. Her station was H Division in Whitehorse. Often, she was required to inspect an outgoing prospector's wife for attempts to smuggle gold dust in their clothing and luggage. It also may be of interest to note that wives of the RNWMP officers would assume many of the police duties when their husbands were on long patrols. So, a woman in the Yukon was often well respected and Kate was beloved. 🇨🇦



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# TURKISH TACTICAL

Reviewing the Hima Arms HG-105

BY TYSON SOMMERVILLE



**H**ima Arms does something that every company should do: they include a manual, a magazine, chokes, a choke wrench, a nice case and a set of sights. Maybe I'm old fashioned, but it's always bugged me how many firearms come sans-sights, with even my \$1,500 CZ arriving unceremoniously in a cardboard box. Nice extras are common from Turkish gun companies and the Hima HG-105 bullpup 12 gauge is no exception.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The look-cool factor is through the roof with this gun. It's a tactical shotgun and boy does it look the part; all black, venting around the barrel, and equipped with an upper and lower rail. As a bonus, an angled foregrip is included, which after holding and shooting this gun I consider an essential.

At first, the gun feels a bit odd to hold; shouldering it feels like crossing my arms the other way -- not bad or uncomfortable, just unfamiliar. I've never really liked bullpups, and I like hunting guns more than tactical guns, so all that combines to make this gun feel weird initially. It also results in a review which an optimist would call an outside perspective, a pessimist would call a biased review, and what a realist would call an uninformed opinion. Take your pick, but the following are my thoughts on this interesting gun.

The charging handle of this gun can be swapped from side to side, and as a right-hander I find the left side to be my preference. The AR-style safety on the left side had my thumb daydreaming of the pre OIC days, and the magazine and bolt release on the rear left-hand

side are big and easy to hit in a rush. Overall, once I got a bit more familiar, I really liked the feel of this gun. The magazine went in and out of the gun easily, just a straight insert. No rocking motion required. I found the magazine hard to load because of a stiff spring, and initially had difficulty with the rim of the shells hanging up on the top of the brass of the shell below it. Using high brass shells prevented this, and with a bit of practice this problem went away, but still it wasn't something I could do quickly.

## SHOOTING

I was surprised at how much pep this little gun had with just target loads, as the recoil of the first shot surprised me a bit. In another odd twist, I found buckshot and slugs had about the same punch on my shoulder, which was far less than I expected. The trigger felt okay, by shotgun standards, but I don't know the pull weight because my gauge only goes up to eight pounds, which had me testing the gauge on other guns in fear it was broken. With shotguns, I tend to wrap my finger around the trigger and pull it, as opposed to squeeze it, so its easy for a stiff trigger to feel fine.

The noise levels felt about the same as any other shotgun, which is good considering bullpups have a reputation for noise. The sights lined up naturally when shouldered and the adjustable cheek piece means it always will no matter the optic. As for reliability, I found it wouldn't fully eject Federal target loads, but had zero issues with Winchester AA target, slugs or buckshot. Reading online about other's experiences with this gun suggests a bit more break-in would smooth out this problem and, honestly, with cheaper ammunition it's not unusual for guns to hate certain brands. My 870, for example, hates Winchester ammunition.

I never did have any fail-to-feeds, double feeds or rim lock, which is always a concern with trying to load flat-faced, rimmed ammunition via a magazine. Cleaning seemed rather intimidating initially, but it was just a matter of taking a few nuts off the front with my hands and the barrel came right off, plenty for a quick clean and lube. Of course, a detailed disassembly should be done with patience at home, not in a rush in the field.

**RIGHT**  
Controls are well thought out, and as you'd expect from a bullpup design, best suited for a right-hand shooter.

**BOTTOM:** The HG-105 comes with a manual, magazine, chokes, choke wrench, excellent case, angled foregrip and a set of sights.



## USES

I think the easiest way to justify this purchase to your significant other, or debt collector, is its value in shooting competitions such as 3-gun. Its short overall length makes it maneuverable and, with a bit of practice, reloading can be done quickly. Just be warned, using a magazine-fed shotgun puts you in open class, so you'll want to buy a new optics-ready pistol, as well as a scope and red dot for your rifle. In theory, if that sort of thing were allowed, I could see the merit in using it for home defense for the same reasons it would work in competition: it's easy to move in tight spaces and with proper ammunition it is plenty reliable.

The case and magazine do make it a contender for a good truck gun. As far as using it for something like

hunting, with a weight over eight pounds it seems a lot to carry to chase upland game. Being short makes it hard to prop up against the front rail of a goose blind or lay in a coffin blind without it pointing at your thigh, but I could see how some folks just might like it. The gun does have a tree-inch chamber, so heavy game loads are an option. Overall, I think this is a gun that you're going to love or hate as soon as you hold it. I'm thinking it won't let you down if you're willing to try a brand or two of ammunition in it and at a \$700 MSRP via Tactical Imports, it's well worth the money if you're looking for

a 12-gauge bullpup, especially considering the extras included in the purchase. 

## SPECIFICATIONS

**CALIBRE:** 12-gauge, 3-inch & 2.75-inch

**CHOKE:** Interchangeable: full, modified, cylinder

**MAGAZINE CAPACITY:** Five shots (detachable)

**METHOD OF OPERATION:** Semi-auto

**LENGTH:** 721 millimetres (28.39 inches)

**RAILS:** Top & bottom Picatinny

**SIGHTS:** Flip-up, Picatinny mounted

**BARREL LENGTH:** 470 millimetres (18.5 inches)

**WEIGHT:** 3,700 grams (8.16 pounds)





# LEATHER STOCK WRAP

An easy leather-working project for beginners  
*BY LOWELL STRAUSS*

**G**un leather smells good and looks great, and yes, you can use it for DIY projects. I started leather tooling in my teens, creating key holders, wallets and knife sheaths from pre-cut kits. Those early projects gave me an appreciation for quality leather products. It taught me how to tool, stitch and finish leather -- valuable skills in my personal toolbox. Later, I started exploring my own designs. Leather working is a hobby that brings a great deal of personal satisfaction and is well within the capability of most people.

Leathercraft is relatively easy to learn, though tricky to master. With creativity, making one-of-a-kind leather projects is limited only by your imagination. Today, I'll walk you through the basics of creating and customizing a leather stock wrap.

Leathercrafting consists of two parts: sourcing the leather pieces and customizing them. Leathercraft stores sell both large sheets of different qualities of leather and pre-cut kits for items like cell phone holders, journal covers and stool seats. Kits exist for gun leather too, with holster and sling kits as fun projects. A kit is a great way to start exploring leather tooling -- the art of cutting and stamping decorative designs into the leather with special tools. Over time, we all reach a point where we have enough experience to make our own designs.

My DIY leather stock wrap is for a no-frills Ruger 10/22. I kept it simple, learned the process and worked out



**1]** A paper template that wraps around the stock helps during the design phase to provide size and shape confirmation.



**2]** A skiver shaves leather from the back of the wrap, making it easier to fold and conform to the stock.



**3]** Soaking the leather in water makes it easier to work and tool.

the bugs. Later, I will make fancier wraps for my favourite old rifles and shotguns, perhaps by adding a cartridge holder to the wrap.

The first step in designing a stock wrap was creating a template from a sheet of paper. I traced the outline on the paper, adding a few centimetres of buffer to account for the stiff leather. I folded the paper, so the sides met along the far edge, and cut the paper template, ensuring a mirror copy of the two sides.

I used a pencil to transfer the pattern to the leather and then cut it out using scissors and my template. A test fit of the dry leather assured me the size was perfect. The leather stock I had on hand was thicker than I liked, so I used a skiver (a special knife for thinning leather) to shave leather from the underside centre of the wrap, allowing it to flex over the comb of the stock.

Then it was time to dress it up with some leather tooling. Inspired by my best hunting buddy, my yellow lab, I drew a paw print on a piece of tracing paper. Soaking leather in water softens it and makes marking and tooling easier. The footprint design was transferred to the leather using a stylus. Cutting through the top layer of leather, I delineated the paw using a swivel knife. In the wild, a paw print presses into the dirt, so my next step was to add 3-D flare and realism by indenting the leather inside the paw with a shader stamp tool. I worked the leather slowly until I was satisfied with the results. Dozens of stamps are available for adding textured backgrounds and borders. Other personalizing stamps include letters, numbers, animal shapes and more.

Leather sands easily, so that's a good way of smoothing out the edges. Then a final burnish smooths and rounds loose edge fibres.

The wrap needs a leather lace to tighten it on the stock. I punched five holes along the bottom edge for threading in the lacing. Snugging the lace tight prevents the leather from shifting on the stock.

I like to dye my leather projects and finish them with wax. The dye darkens the tooling cuts, adding a nice depth and contrast while darkening the leather. The wax conditions and protects the leather, keeping it soft and supple. 🐾

4]



4] A stylus is used to transfer the hand-drawn paper pattern onto the wet leather. It is now ready for cutting and tooling.

5]



5] A swivel knife is a special leather tool for cutting patterns through the top layer of the leather.

6]



6] Stamping tools add a 3-D look and realism to the leather design. plastic ring.

#### TOOLS

- Paper large enough to create a template
- Pencil
- Utility knife or heavy-duty scissors for cutting leather
- Stylus
- Swivel knife
- Basic tooling stamps
- Hammer (rawhide or nylon are best)
- Leather dye and leather wax
- Leather
- Suede lacing
- Skiver (optional, but nice to have if the leather is too thick)

**OPTIONAL:** lacing, contrasting thread for the border, extra stamping tools.

A stock wrap is a relatively simple project, but it builds the foundation for larger and more complex projects. Don't overlook leather project kits, especially when getting started. They offer a great option for learning skills and often include patterns and detailed instructions on how to complete them. Leather stores like Tandy Leather ([tandy-leather.ca](http://tandy-leather.ca)) have online tutorials or search for leathercrafting videos on YouTube for inspiration and education. Leathercrafting is a fun and rewarding hobby, well suited to making shooting gear. And the satisfying smell of the leather is just one of the perks.



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# Legal corner

Guy Lavergne, Attorney at Law

## Two Years Into The Gun Ban: Where Do We Stand?



The May 1, 2020, ban of modern sporting rifles was implemented through an Order In Council.

La prohibition de certaines carabines contemporaines a eu lieu par décret le 1er mai 2020.

**O**n May 1, 2020, the Canadian federal government implemented a wholesale prohibition of over 1,500 models of hunting and sporting rifles, calling them “military-type assault rifles.” Simultaneously, the government also banned firearms with a bore diameter of 20 millimetres or greater, as well as firearms that fire projectiles that carry more than 10,000 joules of kinetic energy at the muzzle (e.g., 375 Cheytac, 50 BMG).

### THE TIMING OF THE BAN

The ban had immediate effect. There was no buffer period or prior announcement that a change was to be effective on that date.

In truth, there had been advance warning, but nothing specific. For years, the Liberals had in their

electoral platform a promise that they “would take the assault rifles off the streets.” Only they knew what that meant, since the 1,500 firearm models in question are not assault rifles, and none of them were out on the streets.

There was also an expectation that any ban would entail grandfathering, especially since provisions to that effect had recently been added to the Firearms Act (i.e., Paragraph 12(9), etc.) through Bill C-71. In that respect, the government chose to ignore the legislation that parliament had passed (at their own initiative) mere months beforehand.

The gun ban was announced and took effect days after the Nova Scotia killing rampage, in which Gabriel Wortman killed 22 people over two days. The timing of the ban was likely

meant to be perceived by the public and media as the federal government’s response to that killing spree. Of course, Wortman had acquired all his firearms illegally (i.e., through illegal transfers, smuggling and theft), and most of them had also been smuggled into Canada. The government is oblivious to the fact that its “response,” had it been implemented earlier, would not have prevented any of Wortman’s actions. I will let you be the judge of whether that “response” was meant to take the public and the media’s attention away from the BSA and RCMP’s own failures that contributed to the tragedy.

### THE MEANS USED

The gun ban was implemented through an Order In Council (OIC).

An OIC is an instrument that reflects a decision of the federal cabinet. To be valid, it must be based upon a statutory power, or the common law. In the instant case, the government's position is that it could do so pursuant to its power to prescribe (i.e., regulate) certain firearms as being unfit for sporting or hunting usage in Canada.

#### THE OBVIOUS LACK OF PREPARATION

The OIC contemplates a so-called buy-back program. "Forced confiscation" or "expropriation" would have been better terms, since the government never owned the newly banned firearms in the first place. In any event, it is contemplated that the banned firearms will have to be turned over to the government and that some financial compensation will be paid to the owners thereof.

Two years after the OIC, no legislation relating to that expropriation/compensation program has been filed before parliament, much less enacted. It is still unknown whether compensation would be at fair market value or on a different basis.

To my knowledge, the only concrete steps taken thus far have been a call for tenders to devise/manage the compensation program, as well as a solicitation of firearms dealers to volunteer to collect and/or deactivate the banned firearms. Unsurprisingly, there have been very few, if any, volunteers for the latter task.

#### THE LEGAL CHALLENGES

Within weeks of the enactment of the ban, multiple parties filed legal challenges of the OIC before the Federal Court of Canada.

The first parties to file a challenge were Cassandra Parker and her company, KKS Tactical Supplies (federal court case T-569-20). That

challenge is sponsored by the NFA. The NFA itself filed a motion for leave to intervene as a party in that challenge. The court will adjudicate that motion and other similar motions by would-be interveners in the fall of 2022.

A total of five such challenges are currently pending before the federal court, and they will all be heard together towards the end of this year or early in 2023.

#### THE AMNESTY PERIOD

Since the ban was enacted with immediate effect, the government had no choice but to also enact a general amnesty in favour of the individuals and businesses that were legally in possession of the banned firearms at the time of enactment. This was also necessary because the OIC, while prohibiting use and transfer, specifically provided that current owners were to retain possession of their newly prohibited firearms until the buy-back scheme is implemented. The government could not, on the one hand, allow owners to retain their firearms, but on the other hand make them liable to criminal prosecution for doing so.

The original amnesty period had a duration of two years. In the fall of 2021, it became increasingly clear that the two-year amnesty period would not suffice. Indeed, the government had not followed through on its plan to implement a buy-back program and there was little to no chance that it was going to be implemented before the expiry of the two-year amnesty period.

At a case management conference between the attorneys for the litigants, the federal court's associate chief justice took the initiative of booking a temporary injunction hearing for April 11, 2022, even though no party

had yet made a motion for such relief, as it had become obvious that without a court order staying some aspects of the OIC, a large number of Canadian gun owners were at risk of becoming liable to criminal prosecution upon expiry of the then current two-year amnesty period.

That April 11 hearing never took place. Instead of getting a legal slap in the face from the federal court, which looked like a near certainty, the government chose to extend the amnesty period for an extra 18 months, pretexting that gun owners needed additional time to comply with the ban. That is of course a fallacy, meant to hide the government's own shortcomings and lack of preparedness. Given the current pace of things, a further extension of the amnesty period is far from impossible.

#### NOW WHAT?

Seeing that the current Liberal government has yet to even file proposed legislation to support a buy-back program, it seems likely that the federal court will hear and decide upon the validity of the OIC before any such legislation comes into effect.

A decision favourable to gun owners would have immediate effect but could be stayed by the Federal Court of Appeal.

The government could also be waiting for a court decision on purpose, to remedy any issues that make the OIC invalid through legislation. Indeed, if the federal court finds the OIC to be invalid, parliament could then remedy the underlying invalidity through statute, if the reason for the invalidity is not a constitutional one.

In other words, the only certainty at this point is that the future is uncertain. 🍀



# Rubrique Juridique

Guy Lavergne, avocat

## Le Décret Prohibant De Nombreuses Armes À Feu : Où En Sommes-Nous?



The Liberal government's OIC contemplates a so-called buy-back program.

Le gouvernement du Parti libéral entend procéder à un soi-disant rachat.

**L**e 1er mai 2020, le gouvernement fédéral canadien a soudainement prohibé plus de 1500 modèles d'armes à feu de chasse et de sport, en les affublant de l'appellation « fusils d'assaut de type militaire ». Simultanément, le gouvernement a également interdit les armes à feu dont le canon a un diamètre intérieur de 20 mm ou plus, ainsi que les armes à feu qui tirent des projectiles ayant plus de 10 000 joules d'énergie cinétique à la bouche du canon (par exemple, celles de calibre 375 Cheytac, 50 BMG, etc.)

### LE MOMENT CHOISI POUR LA PROHIBITION

La prohibition est entrée en vigueur de façon immédiate. Il n'y a pas eu de période tampon ou d'annonce préalable qu'un changement devait entrer en vigueur à cette date.

En fait, il y avait eu de nombreux signes avant-coureurs, mais rien de spécifique. Pendant des années, les libéraux ont eu, dans leur programme électoral, la promesse qu'ils « retireraient les fusils d'assaut des rues ». Eux seuls savaient ce que cela signifiait, puisque les 1500 modèles d'armes à feu en question ne sont pas des fusils d'assaut, et qu'aucun d'entre eux n'était dans la rue.

On était également en droit de s'attendre à ce que toute prohibition soit accompagnée de la reconnaissance des droits acquis, d'autant plus que des dispositions à cet effet avaient été ajoutées à la Loi sur les armes à feu (c.-à-d. le paragraphe 12(9), etc.) par le projet de loi C-71. À cet égard, le Gouvernement a choisi d'ignorer

les dispositions législatives que le Parlement avait adoptées (à sa propre initiative) quelques mois auparavant.

La prohibition de ces armes à feu a été annoncée et est entrée en vigueur quelques jours seulement après les meurtres en série commis en Nouvelle-Écosse par Gabriel Wortman, qui a tué 22 personnes en deux jours. Le moment choisi pour annoncer l'interdiction a vraisemblablement été choisi pour qu'il soit perçu comme la réponse du gouvernement fédéral à cette folie meurtrière. Bien sûr, Wortman avait acquis toutes ses armes à feu illégalement et, pour la plupart, elles avaient été introduites clandestinement au Canada. Le gouvernement fait preuve d'aveuglement volontaire, puisque

sa « réponse », si elle avait été mise en œuvre plus tôt, n'aurait empêché aucun des actes de Wortman. Je vous laisse juger s'il s'agit d'un geste destiné à détourner l'attention du public et des médias des carences des agences gouvernementales (Services frontaliers et GRC) qui ont contribué à la tragédie.

#### LE MODUS VIVENDI

L'interdiction de ces armes à feu a été mise en œuvre par le biais d'un décret. Un décret est un instrument qui reflète une décision du Cabinet fédéral. Pour être valide, il doit être fondé sur un pouvoir législatif ou sur la common law. En l'espèce, la position du gouvernement est qu'il pouvait le faire en vertu de son pouvoir de prescrire (c.-à-d. réglementer) certaines armes à feu comme étant impropres à l'usage sportif ou à la chasse au Canada.

#### LE MANQUE ÉVIDENT DE PRÉPARATION

Le décret qui met en œuvre l'interdiction envisage un programme dit de « rachat ». « Confiscation forcée » ou « expropriation » auraient été de meilleures appellations, puisque le Gouvernement n'a jamais été propriétaire des armes à feu nouvellement interdites. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est envisagé que les armes à feu interdites devront être remises au gouvernement et qu'une certaine forme de compensation financière sera versée à leurs propriétaires.

Deux ans après le décret, aucune loi relative à ce programme d'expropriation et d'indemnisation n'a été déposée devant le Parlement, et encore moins promulguée. On ne sait toujours pas si la compensation se ferait à la juste valeur marchande ou sur une base différente.

À ma connaissance, les seules mesures concrètes prises jusqu'à présent ont été un appel d'offres pour concevoir/gérer le programme d'indemnisation, ainsi qu'une sollicitation auprès de marchands d'armes à feu pour qu'ils se portent volontaires pour faire la collecte et/ou désactiver les armes à feu interdites. Sans grande surprise, il y a eu très peu ou pas de volontaires pour cette dernière tâche.

#### LES CONTESTATIONS JUDICIAIRES

Dans les semaines qui ont suivi

la promulgation de l'interdiction, plusieurs parties ont déposé des contestations judiciaires du décret devant la Cour fédérale du Canada.

Les premières parties à déposer une contestation ont été Cassandra Parker et sa société, KKS Tactical Supplies (dossier T-569-20 de la Cour fédérale). Ce dossier est parrainé par la NFA. La NFA elle-même a déposé une requête en autorisation d'intervenir en tant que partie dans cette contestation. La Cour se prononcera sur cette requête et d'autres requêtes similaires présentées par des intervenants potentiels à l'automne 2022.

Au total, cinq (5) contestations de ce type sont actuellement pendantes devant la Cour fédérale, et elles seront toutes entendues simultanément, vers la fin de cette année ou au début de 2023.

#### LA PÉRIODE D'AMNISTIE

Étant donné que l'interdiction a été promulguée avec effet immédiat et sans droits acquis, le Gouvernement n'a pas eu d'autre choix que de décréter une amnistie générale en faveur des particuliers et des entreprises qui étaient légalement en possession des armes à feu interdites au moment de la promulgation. Cela était également nécessaire parce que le décret, tout en interdisant l'utilisation et le transfert, prévoyait spécifiquement que les propriétaires actuels devaient conserver la possession de leurs armes à feu nouvellement prohibées jusqu'à ce que le programme de « rachat » soit mis en œuvre. Le Gouvernement ne pouvait pas, d'une part, permettre aux propriétaires de conserver leurs armes à feu, et d'autre part, les exposer à des poursuites pénales pour cela.

La période d'amnistie initiale avait une durée de deux (2) ans. À l'automne 2021, il est devenu de plus en plus clair que la période d'amnistie de deux (2) ans ne suffirait pas. En effet, le Gouvernement n'avait pas donné suite à son « plan » de mise en œuvre d'un programme de rachat et il y avait peu ou pas de chance qu'il soit mis en œuvre avant l'expiration de la période d'amnistie de deux ans.

Lors d'une conférence de gestion de l'affaire entre les avocats des plaideurs, le juge en chef adjoint de

la Cour fédérale a pris l'initiative de réserver une audience d'injonction temporaire pour le 11 avril 2022, même si aucune partie n'avait encore présenté de requête en ce sens, car il était devenu évident que, sans ordonnance du tribunal suspendant certains aspects du décret, un grand nombre de propriétaires d'armes à feu canadiens risquaient de faire l'objet de poursuites criminelles à l'expiration de la période d'amnistie de deux ans qui était alors en vigueur. Cette audience du 11 avril n'a jamais eu lieu. Au lieu d'obtenir une « gifle juridique » de la Cour fédérale (ce qui semblait presque certain), le gouvernement a choisi de prolonger la période d'amnistie de 18 mois supplémentaires, sous prétexte que les propriétaires d'armes à feu avaient besoin de « plus de temps pour se conformer » à l'interdiction. C'est bien entendu une affirmation fallacieuse, destinée à cacher le manque de préparation du Gouvernement.

Compte tenu du rythme actuel des choses, une nouvelle prolongation de la période d'amnistie est loin d'être impossible.

#### ET MAINTENANT, QU'ARRIVE-T-IL ?

Étant donné que le gouvernement libéral actuel n'a même pas encore déposé de projet de loi pour appuyer un programme de « rachat », il semble probable que la Cour fédérale entendra et décidera probablement de la validité du décret avant l'entrée en vigueur d'une telle loi.

Une décision favorable aux propriétaires d'armes à feu aurait un effet immédiat, mais pourrait être suspendue par la Cour d'appel fédérale.

Le gouvernement pourrait également attendre une décision de justice à dessein, afin de remédier à tout « problème » qui rend le décret invalide, par voie législative. En effet, dans l'éventualité où la Cour fédérale jugerait le décret invalide, le Parlement pourrait alors remédier à l'invalidité sous-jacente par voie législative, à condition que la cause de l'invalidité ne soit pas constitutionnelle.

En d'autres termes, la seule certitude à ce stade est que l'avenir est incertain. 



# Made in Canada

Al Voth

## Prestigious Wood Stocks



Surplus military rifles of the 20th century are popular items to collect and shoot, with values of specimens in original, as-issued condition rising sharply. Unfortunately, it's often easier to find sporterized versions of these guns than it is unmodified versions. This is particularly true for the various editions of the Lee Enfield, so common in Canada. Many hobbyists, myself included, have looked longingly at these cheap and plentiful cut-up rifles and wished the parts were available to restore them to their original glory.

That call was heard by Jesse Towne, a master fabricator, when a friend asked him to help with just that kind of project. Not one to back down from a challenge, Jesse dove in and made a stock for his buddy. Then word got out about what he could do, and he soon found himself neck-deep in a thriving business making replacement stocks and parts for a variety of 20th century military surplus rifles.

The business is Prestigious Wood Stocks and if you're in need of the various wood pieces to restore a Lee-Enfield, Krag, P-14, P-17 or Swedish Mauser, there's a good chance you'll find what's needed in their online store. And not just wood products either, as Jesse has started building some of the small metal parts, like nose caps and spring clips for the SMLE. When I recently visited



the shop in Drayton Valley, Alta., he was prototyping a stock for the K-98 Mauser, with plans to add other designs, including for some modern rifles.

The company shop is filled with computer-driven machines which do much of the final shaping needed to create wood pieces of consistent quality. But it also takes a dedicated workforce to do the initial layout and sawing to get the big blanks of American walnut, European beech and Queensland maple ready for the CNC machines. Each new design requires hours of CAD work to write the programs, which allow the machines to work their magic. Many of the jigs, fixtures, tooling and even some machines have been designed and built by Jesse to accomplish the tasks needed to make these stocks. Drilling the

holes for buttstock through-bolts and those for cleaning rods which fit into the forestock are just two examples of challenging processes which require ingenious solutions to achieve precise, consistent results.

The company ships its products all over the world, with free shipping in North America. I recommend signing up for their email newsletter to keep informed on when new products are available. Expect new metal parts soon, as a five-axis CNC milling machine and an automatic screw machine are recent additions to the shop. All business is done through the website at [www.prestigiouswoodstocks.com](http://www.prestigiouswoodstocks.com), but you'll also occasionally find them at gun shows. If you have a veteran military rifle in your collection that needs a makeover, this is your first stop.

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