



KOLSKOOT

JOU GIDS VIR RAAK SKIET

JONG JAGTERS

Wanneer is 'n kind
oud genoeg?

GEWERE EN KALIBERS

Bosveldgewere
en -kalibers

**Daardie tyd
van die jaar**

**Three-hundred-yard
rifles and cartridges**

Springbok, jou lekker ding!

**Ammunition for dangerous
game – a different proposition**

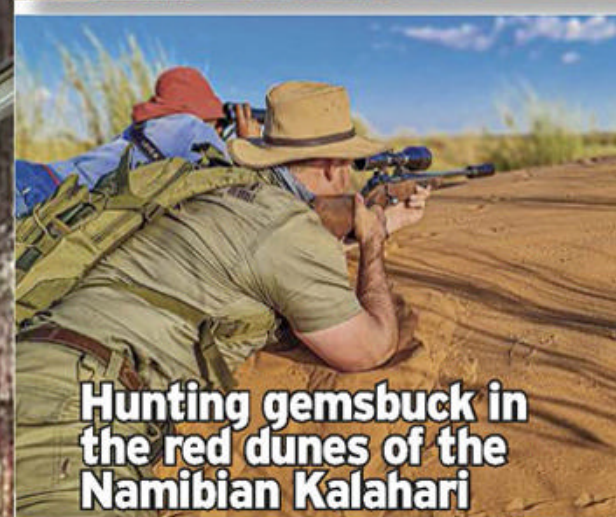
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express rifle – timeless quality**

Teleskoop of oop visier?

**Why wingshooting?
It's all about the dogs...**



Vlaktejag



**Hunting gemsbuck in
the red dunes of the
Namibian Kalahari**



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Hoe om kinders te leer skiet

Die tydverdryf van prinse en konings

Daar is min twyfel dat jag vir talle van ons nie net 'n sport is nie, maar eerder 'n lewenstyl. Dis as't ware deel van ons DNS, en saam met die jag self gaan die voorbereiding vir elke jagseisoen. Is my teleskoop nog opgewasse vir die taak? Het ek die regte kaliber vir 'n bepaalde jag? Het ek al die toerusting wat ek gaan nodig kry? Die kersie op die koek is die uitsien en verlange na die jagveld – die warm koffie op 'n koue oggend langs gisteraand se kampvuur, die stap langs die spore en die eerste sien van die skelm koe-doebul in die digte bosse. Ja, jag gaan voorwaar oor baie meer as net die sneller druk!

In hierdie uitgawe van

KOLSKOOT het die SA JAGTER/HUNTER-span gepoog om 'n wye reeks jagaspekte te dek. Ons fokus op kinders wat jag (en ook wanneer hulle gereed is om te begin jag) en hul opleiding. Ons kyk ook na kalibers vir die bos en vlaktes, sowel as geskikte teleskope vir 'n verskeidenheid toepassings.

Vir die kranige haelgeveerskuts is hier ook pitkos te vinde. Prof Brian Reilly verduidelik waarna om op te let as jy na jou eerste haelgeweer op soek is, en Kobus de Kock vertel waarom sy liefde vir voëljag onlosmaaklik aan sy liefde vir jaghonde gekoppel is. Andrew Tonkin deel 'n kykie in 'n vervloë era met ons en vertel meer oor sy voorliefde

en waardering vir klassieke Britse swartkruitgewere.

In hierdie uitgawe bring ons julle ook handige herlaaiwenke, jagstories en -wenke. Richard Sowry, 'n deurwinterde veldwagter en bewaarder, bied ook stof tot nadenke wat betref bewaring en die rol van die etiese jagter in die groter opset. As pasmaakgewere jou interesseer, veral as die twee praggewere op die voorblad dalk jou oog gevang het, sal hierdie uitgawe jou van die eerste tot die laaste bladsy boei.

Ek vertrou dat julle hierdie uitgawe van KOLSKOOT terdeë sal geniet. Mag julle 'n paar antwoorde op jul vrae vind en mag dit julle opnuut inspireer om met jul geliefkoos-



de geweer julle passie op die skietbaan of in die jagveld uit te leef. Ondanks die sweterjoel uitdagings wat 2020 en 2021 meegebring het, kon ons darem steeds in die sport van prinse en konings deel. Soos iemand tereg opgemerk het – tyd in die jagveld is altyd kosbaar!

Sien jou by die jagkamp!

J. v. a.

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BY JOHAN VAN WYK

Custom-defined

FOR SOME, ONLY THE BEST WILL DO.

Our two cover rifles: the .375 H&H (**top**) is made on a pre-'64 Winchester Model 70 action, while the 7x64 Brenneke (**below**) is built on an M98 Mauser action.

Factory-made rifles have certainly come a long way in the last few decades. It is hard to imagine an application for which a ready-made rifle, as well as the other necessary accessories such as scopes, ammunition and the like, is not readily available. Add to this the fact that almost every firearm manufacturer is constantly refining its products to keep up with not only ever-evolving tastes but also its competition. It is thus fair to say that we, the gun-buying public, has never been so spoilt for choice.

For some, however, a factory rifle lacks something. In most instances, that "something" is an individual touch, most likely brought on by the hankering to own something unique and personal, something nobody else has and can be cherished and enjoyed for seasons to come. I believe it is for this very reason that custom-rifle builders are kept busy churning out fine rifles for discerning individuals.

A LOOK BACK IN TIME

Having a custom firearm made is nothing new, how-



Most of the masterpieces by the various British gunmakers were created as custom projects made according to individual customers' specifications. This .500 Jeffery by London gunmakers Watson Bros is the only rifle in this calibre that the firm ever produced.

ever. History is full of examples of firearms made to individual specifications for individual owners, and examples of these date back to the earliest days of firearms.

Winding the clock forward, we probably reached the apogee of fine gunmaking in the period from 1880 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914 in Britain. At the time, the best that the British trade could offer was available to whomever had the means to engage their services. It was during this period that firms such as Holland & Holland, Purdey, Boss and Woodward established their fame. During this era, the British trade's best customers were the Indian nobility of the day, and many a maharajah squandered a fortune in London's West End in pursuit of the finest firearms of the period.

Thankfully, a lot of these fine custom guns are still with us today. Although many of the famous old firms either don't exist anymore or have been forced back to a shadow



A fine example of a vintage German-made Suhl Mauser rifle. This 8x57J was made for Stahl & Berger, a German department store, and is well crafted indeed. A commercial Oberndorf-made M98 Mauser action dating from 1912 was used to build this extremely neat rifle.

of their former selves, the guns and rifles they produced are still around. However, nowadays, these old firearms are mostly limited to the vaults of serious, well-to-do collectors and exclusive auction houses.

It is a fairly common misconception that the more toffee-nosed British makers turned out firearms according to generic specifications. This is by and large not so. Makers

such as Holland & Holland or Purdey generally spent considerable time measuring and fitting a client for a firearm and then went to great pains to produce the finished product to the desired specifications. Other aspects that were largely the client's prerogative included barrel length, choke (in the case of shotguns), ejectors or not, special-order engraving, and the like. Many of the gun specifications in these old-time

makers' order books make for interesting reading, especially since some clients were *very* demanding in specifying what they wanted!

Across the Channel, things were much the same, and the city of Suhl was the German centre of gunmaking where many great gunmakers plied their trade. Guns and rifles made in Suhl can vary considerably in quality but suffice to say that the best the Suhl »



TOP: A close-up of the 7x64 Brenneke's action. Note the two crossbolts fitted to the stock, as well as the fine chequering and engraving.



LEFT: The quarter-rib and rear sight fitted to the .375 H&H.

TOP RIGHT: Fine engraving is almost always a good way to enhance a beautiful rifle.

BOTTOM RIGHT: The .375 H&H's scope mounts were custom-made by gunmaker Danie Joubert.

» gunmakers were capable of was very good indeed. In other places like St Etienne in France and Liege in Belgium, the situation was much the same, and many outstanding firearms were produced here over the years.

THE SITUATION TODAY

As far as I could ascertain, custom riflemaking in South Africa received a huge boost with the opening of the old Bloemfontein Musgrave's custom shop in the early 1980s. My father ordered several rifles from them, and their quality was always good and their prices were reasonable. In addition, many ex-Musgrave workmen went on to do their own thing and do it well.

Today, a few talented craftsmen still ply their trade in

South Africa and, depending on your budget, the sky is literally the limit. The options range from converted and customised factory rifles all the way to one-off builds on custom actions and barrels with the finest walnut from destinations such as Turkey, France, New Zealand, Australia and Syria.

CHOICES, CHOICES...

The chambering and intended application of each individual custom rifle usually dictate the choice of action. If the intended quarry for the rifle is dangerous game such as elephant and buffalo, and the cartridge of choice happens to be one of the classics of yesteryear, such as the .416 Rigby or .505 Magnum, a magnum-length action is called for. The

Czech-made Brno 602 and CZ 550 actions have been used for such builds on many occasions. However, if needed, an expensive Granite Mountain Arms or Mayfair Engineering action, complete with custom magazine boxes and scope mounts, may be on the menu. The use of one of the latter two actions usually adds considerably to the overall cost of the custom rifle. As mentioned, however, using the very best appeals to some, and they are usually willing to spend hard-earned money in this pursuit. Although they are literally rarer than hen's teeth these days, the odd Mauser





TOP: These two custom rifles were both made in South Africa. At the top is a 7x57, built along the lines of a classic British stalking rifle on a rare Intermediate-length M98 Mauser action originally made for the Peruvian military. The bottom rifle is a neat little .250 Savage on a very rare Kurz action.

LEFT: Quite often, a superb walnut blank such as this exhibition-quality blank from Turkey is the inspiration for a custom project.

M98 Magnum or even rarer Kurz action do surface from time to time. They certainly command a premium, but they are as fine a choice for a fine, once-in-a-lifetime custom rifle as they were 90 years ago.

Other options are newly made actions such as the Remington 700 or Winchester Model 70, provided a suitable candidate can be sourced without resorting to cannibalising a complete rifle, or perhaps a vintage Mauser M98 of an even rarer Winchester pre-'64 Model 70 action. Many gunsmiths have made an art form of transforming ex-military M98 actions into works of art, complete with replacement triggers, magazine boxes, safe-

ty catches, firing pins, and almost everything imaginable. If done well, such treatment really turns an old Mauser action into a masterpiece.

Quality wood, almost always walnut (*Juglans regia*), is another must-have for many. Unfortunately, good walnut is in finite supply these days and comes at a premium. Still, a beautiful stock crafted from a fine piece of walnut is one of the best enhancements for any rifle. Inevitably, it not only adds to the cost but also to the rifle's desirability at the end of the day.

Fine inletting and chequering, coupled with a good oil finish, as well as other custom touches such as steel grip

caps, well-fitted recoil pads or even butt plates, complete a first-class walnut stock like few other things. A custom rifle without these touches seems almost unfinished by comparison.

Engraving is another subject where personal taste and preference rule supreme. Some prefer bold, colourful carvings and gold inlays, while others opt for a more subdued appearance. Regardless, well-executed engraving is a thing of beauty to behold and cherish.

OUR TWO COVER RIFLES

The rifles on the cover of this edition are prime examples of the customer's tastes being translated into reality by a

handful of talented craftsmen. The first rifle is chambered for the .375 H&H Magnum cartridge and was crafted around a vintage, though heavily modified, pre-'64 Winchester Model 70 action.

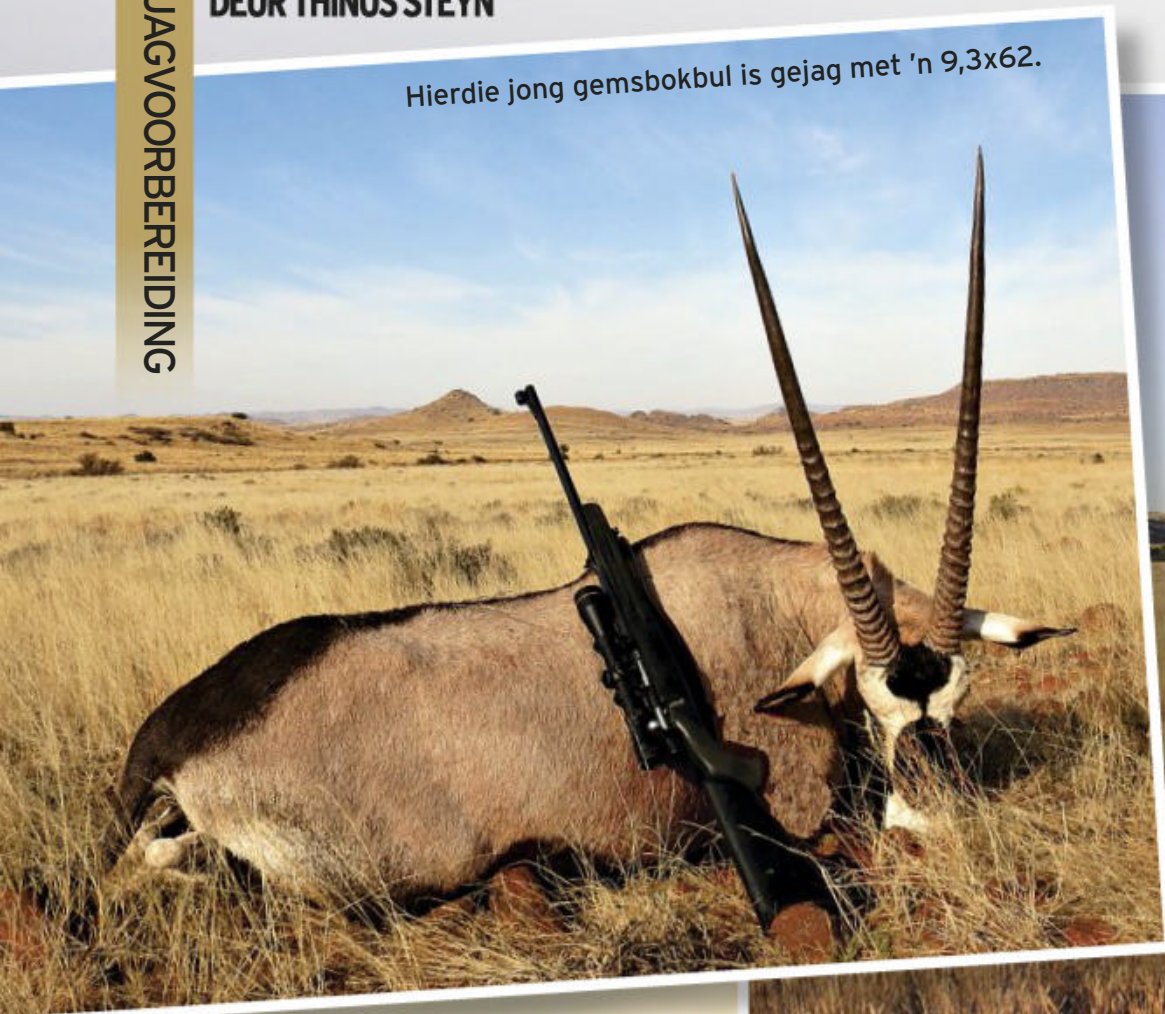
The action was blueprinted (in short, this means that all surfaces are trued and polished to ensure perfect function and reliability) before being fitted with a Krieger barrel, custom-made quarter-rib and front sight, Sunny Hill magazine box (imported from the US), and one-off, custom-made telescope mounts. Before finishing, the barrelled action and scope mounts were beautifully engraved by Jonathan Knoessen. Danie Joubert from Pretoria did the metalwork. Faan de Vos stocked the rifle with a fine piece of Turkish walnut, also according to the customer's specifications. The end result is a true work of art that is sure to provide the owner with many years of satisfaction – a rifle to be proud of indeed!

The second rifle, made around a highly modified, ex-military Mauser M98 action, is chambered for the 7x64 Brenneke cartridge.

Like the .375 referred to above, it is fitted with a Krieger barrel, and custom-made sights and magazine box. The Swarovski scope is mounted in customised Talley mounts. Faan de Vos did the stocking and Johnathan Knoessen the engraving, as is the case for the first rifle.

When all is said and done, a custom-made firearm is as much a reflection of the owner's taste as it is of the builders' workmanship. South Africa is truly blessed with a number of superlative riflemakers, and the rifles they craft are, by and large, works of art that will hopefully endure for generations to come. ☸

Hierdie jong gemsbokbul is gejag met 'n 9,3x62.



Jagter en gids op die vlaktes.

Vlaktejag

MET GOEIE VOORBEREIDING HOEF JY NIE OP MOEDVERLOOR SE VLAKTE TE SIT OM SUKSESVOL DAAR TE JAG NIE.

Vir 'n jagter wat gewoond is aan bosveldjag, lyk vlaktejag soms na 'n reuse-uitdaging. Met die regte voorbereiding, toerusting en benadering is dit egter glad nie so moeilik as wat baie mense glo nie.

VOORBEREIDING

Ek kan nie die belangrikheid van voorbereiding, veral toepaslike oefening met jou toerusting, genoeg beklemtoon nie.

Nadat jou geweer ingestel is (200 meter is 'n goeie afstand), beweeg weg van die skiettafel en oefen vanaf die rus wat jy in die veld gaan gebruik. Oefen uit verskillende posisies met jou skietstokke en/of tweepootrus.

Hoe vinniger jy 'n akkurate skoot kan afvuur, hoe beter gaan jou kanse wees om vleis huis toe te bring. Oefen dus teen tyd. Een van die grootste redes waarom jagters sukkel,



HOOFFOTO: 'n Gemsbokbul kort ná sonop - 'n goeie tyd om in die veld te wees.

is dat hulle te lank neem om te skiet. Maak 'n gewoonte daarvan om onmiddellik te herlaai nadat jy geskiet het en dadelik weer op teiken te kom.

Toets jou jagammunisie tot op die maksimum afstand wat jy beplan om te jag.

Raak vertrouwd met jou skietstokke of tweepootrus en leer om hulle so vinnig en met so min beweging en lawaai as moontlik te ontplooi. Wildsbokke gaan nie rustig staan en kyk terwyl jy kamp opslaan met die skietstokke of 'n kitaar-solo speel op die spiraalvere van jou tweepoot nie.

Oefen met jou teleskoop totdat jy ten volle daarmee vertrouwd is. Dit is belangrik dat jy kan in- en uitzoem sonder om te wonder in watter rigting om die vergrotingring te draai. Hou in gedagte dat die meeste jagteleskope se ballistiese kruishaar vir die maksimum vergroting gekalibreer is. Met 'n 200 meter-zero gaan jy net op afstande van 250 meter en verder hoef af te mik. Leer watter afmik-

merkies jy moet gebruik vir 250 en 300 meter. Indien nodig, maak 'n kaartjie met afmikdata en plak dit teen jou geweerkolf vas. Dit is goed om 'n ballistiese program op jou slimfoon te hê, maar in die jagveld gaan jy waarskynlik

nie tyd hê om dié klein blikbrein te raadpleeg nie.

Oefen om die teiken vinnig in die teleskoop te vind. Onvermoë om dit te doen, is een van die hoofredes waarom jagters sukkel om die koeël en die bok bymekaar te kry.

Raak vertrouwd met jou verkyker en afstandmeter, die hantering en werking daarvan, asook hoe jy dit in die veld gaan dra.

'n GPS is baie handig vir die vlaktejagter, selfs vir dié wat nie maklik verdwaal nie.»



'n Elandbul – ons grootste vlaktewild.

» Die vermoë om die posisie van waar jy geskiet het, asook die diere wat jy geskiet het, te kan merk op 'n vlakke sonder kenmerkende bakens, kan jou baie tyd bespaar. Dra ekstra batterye vir jou afstandmeter en GPS saam.

Jy hoef nie 'n marathon te kan hardloop om suksesvol op die vlaktes te jag nie, maar indien jy stapfiks is, gaan jy jou jag soveel meer geniet.

GEWERE EN KALIBERS

Vir die doel van hierdie artikel gaan ek 300 meter as die mak-

simum skietafstand beskou en aanvaar dat hart/long-skote geneem gaan word. Ek is volkome bewus daarvan dat sommige jagters op dubbel of selfs drie maal hierdie afstand op wild skiet, maar dit is 'n debat vir 'n ander dag. Kopskote op langer afstande vereis ook 'n stabiele rus, goeie toerusting en bogemiddelde skietvernuf.

'n Vlaktegeweel moet meer akkuraat as 'n bosveldgeweel wees, maar *benchrest*-akkuraatheid is nie 'n vereiste nie. 'n Geweel wat binne 1 MOA

Hierdie blesbok is met 'n 6,5 Creedmoor gejag.



HOOFFOTO: Vroegoggend op die Suid-Vrystaatse vlaktes.
LINKS: Steenbokram.

REGS: 'n Baie jong springboklam. Tydens 'n stapjag in die vlaktewêreld sien 'n jagter dinge wat 'n bakkiejagter selde kans kry om te beleef.



'n Springbokram wat gejag is met 'n 7x57.

op 300 meter kan groepeer, is meer as akkuraat genoeg vir jag tot op daardie afstand. Hou ook in gedagte dat die akkuraatheid van die eerste skoot uit 'n koue loop (en hier in die Vrystaat is daardie loop soms baie koud) belangriker is as die grootte van 'n drie-skoot- of vyf-skoot-groepeer.

Met hulpmiddels soos afstandmeters en teleskope wat 'n jagter in staat stel om vir koeëlval oor langer afstande te kompenseer, het die kaliber wat jy gebruik minder belangrik geword as in die verlede. Vir meer algemene vlaktes-wild soos springbokke, blesbokke, rooihartbeeste, swart-wildebeeste en gemsbokke, werk die meeste kalibers vanaf die 6,5mm tot .308 baie effektief, solank die spesifieke patroon 'n koeël met 'n goeie BK (ballistiese koëffisiënt) teen 2 600 vps of vinniger kan lanseer. Persoonlik gebruik ek die 6,5mm Creedmoor, 6,5x55, 7x57 en .300 Winchester Magnum met sukses. Ander goeie keuses is die .260 Remington, .270 Winchester, 7x64, .280 Remington, en .30-06 Springfield.

Indien jy jou tot blesbokke en kleiner wild gaan beperk, werk die 6mm-kalibers goed. Indien jy egter met net een vlaktegeweef oor die weg moet kom, is 'n 6,5 van soorte die minimum wat ek sou aanbeveel. Sou 'n groot elandbul op die spyskaart wees, sal ek 'n

minimum kaliber van .308 met 'n premiumkoeël aanbeveel.

Vir stapjag is 'n goeie geweef belangrik. Maak ook seker dat jy voldoende ammunisie saamdra. Tien ekstra patrone in 'n sakkie aan jou belt is voldoende. Indien jy die ekstra ammunisie in jou

sakke wil dra, sorg dat die patrone nie teen mekaar klink nie. Op die vlaktes hoef jy nie heeltemal so stil soos in die bos te wees nie, maar jy wil darem ook nie soos 'n roomyskarretjie klink nie.

KOEËLKEUSE

Aangesien die afstande oor die algemeen verder is as tydens bosveldjagte en die koeël se impaksnelheid dus laer is, is koeëlkonstruksie minder belangrik as in die bos. 'n Koeël met 'n hoë BK gaan tot jou voordeel strek op die vlaktes, maar wees versigtig vir skyfskietkoeëls. Sommige skyfskietkoeëls reageer onvoorspelbaar op wild en breek óf op óf klink glad nie om nie.

Die Barnes TSX en TTSX, Hornady InterLock, InterBond en GMX, Sierra GameKing, Nosler AccuBond en Partition, Peregrine VLR4 en Ballistix TacHunt is koeëls wat ek suksesvol vir vlaktejag gebruik het. Indien een van die monometaalkoeëls gebruik word, is dit raadsaam »



Jon en Tami Barbee van Noord-Carolina met 'n springbokram wat Jon met 'n .300 Winchester Magnum platgetrek het.

Dié jagter het hierdie blesbokram met 'n 6,5 Creedmoor platgetrek.



» om vir 'n trompsnelheid van 2 750 vps of vinniger te mik.

Skootplasing is egter, binne redelike perke, belangriker as die koeël waarmee jy skiet.

TELESKOPE

Baie jagters is geneig om soveel as moontlik aan hul geweer te spandeer en dan 'n afskepteleskoop daarop te monteer. Dit is die verkeerde benadering vir enige jag, maar

veral vir vlaktejag. Dit is beter om 'n standaard-, akkurate geweer met 'n goeie teleskoop te hê as andersom. Indien jy ekstra geld het, bestee dit eerder aan 'n beter teleskoop.

Indien jy die teleskoop slegs gaan aanwend vir vlaktejag en oefen tot en met 300 meter, is 'n teleskoop met 'n maksimum vergroting tussen 12x en 16x en 'n ballistiese kruisdraad heeltemal voldoende.

Die kruishaar hoef nie soos 'n Krismisboom te lyk vir gewone vlaktejag nie – die sentrale kruis plus twee of drie ekstra afmikmerkies is voldoende. Dieselfde teleskoop kan dan ook vir bosveldjag gebruik word.

Indien jou begroting beperk is, koop liever 'n teleskoop van beter gehalte met minder funksies as 'n goedkoop een met onnodige funksies.

VERKYKERS EN AFSTANDMETERS

Soos met teleskope, is dit beter om die beste verkyker te koop wat jy kan bekostig, en net soos met teleskope, is die grootste vergrotings nie noodwendig die beste nie. Vir vlaktejag verkies ek 'n 10x-verkyker, maar 'n 8x werk ook, veral as jy nie trofeë jag nie. Daar is egter heelwat jagters wat 12x of selfs groter vergrotings verkies. Hoe groter die vergroting, hoe moeiliker is dit egter om die verkyker stil te hou. Die verkyker gaan hoofsaaklik gebruik word om wild te vind en die dier wat jy wil skiet, te identifiseer. Jou teleskoop kan ook hiervoor gebruik word, maar ek vind dat 'n verkyker makliker werk. Indien jy wel die teleskoop op jou geweer gaan gebruik om wild te soek, maak seker jy weet waar jou geweer se tromp is. Jou gids of jagmaat gaan baie gou omgekras raak as jou geweer se loop heeltyd langs sy oor rondsweef.

Afstandmeters (*rangefinders*) se pryse wissel baie en ongelukkig kry jy waarvoor jy

'n Misbank hang vroegoggend oor die vlaktes.



'n Stewie skietstok en 'n tweekoot aan jou geweer is 'n goeie kombinasie vir vlaktejag.

betaal – koop dus die beste wat jy kan bekostig.

Die eerste prys is 'n verkyker/afstandmeter-kombinasie, maar die goeies is bitter duur. Weereens, koop eerder 'n beter fabrikaat met minder funksies. Twee jagters wat saamwerk, maak dinge makliker as jy op die vlaktes jag – die een meet afstand en hou die bok dop, terwyl die ander een skiet. Indien twee vriende saamjag, kan hulle 'n afstandmeter deel.

SKIETSTOKKE EN TWEEPOTE

Maak seker die stokke wat jy koop of bou, kan prakties aangewend word in jagtoestande en dat hulle lig genoeg is om heeldag te dra. Hou in gedagte dat jy die stokke heel moontlik gaan gebruik op ongelyke plekke tussen klippe en graspolle. Skietstokke wat uit staan- sowel as sitposisies gebruik kan word, is die beste, maar goeie staanhoogte stokke is voldoende vir vlaktejag. Skietstokke is ook 'n handige hulpmiddel om jou verkyker



'n Verkyker, afstandmeter en GPS maak 'n vlaktejagter se lewe heelwat makliker. Elke jagter het ook spaarammunisie en 'n skerp mes nodig.

of afstandmeter stil te hou.

Tweekote wat hoog genoeg is dat jy uit 'n sitposisie kan skiet, is beter vir vlaktejag as die heel kort modelle. 'n Kombinasie van 'n kort tweekoot en skietstokke is baie doeltreffend.

KLEREDRAG

Kom ons begin onder. Ge-

maklike stapstewels (verkieslik waterdig vir daardie oggende wanneer die ryp wit lê) is 'n vereiste vir stapjag en 'n goeie idee vir voorsit- en selfs bakkiejag. Saam met die stewels gaan dik, gemaklike sokkies en kamaste om die grassade uit die sokkies te hou. Daar is min dinge wat so on-

gemaklik is as steekgras in jou kouse.

Enige sterk klere met baie sakke in dowwe kakie, groen/bruin of dowwe kamoefleer-kleure werk goed.

Vroegoggend op die vlaktes is koud, maar die temperatuur klim gewoonlik deur die dag. Trek in lae aan. 'n Klein rug-sak is handig om die klere wat jy deur die dag uittrek, in te dra. 'n Hoed, verkieslik een wat jou ore en nek teen die son beskerm, is noodsaaklik. Vroegoggend is 'n mus, handskoene en 'n buff welkom.

VLAKTEWILD

Vlaktewild wissel van steenbok- tot elandgrootte. Die algemeenste spesies op die vlaktes van die Vrystaat en Karoo is springbokke, blesbokke, rooihartbeeste, gemsbokke, swart- en blouwildebeeste en elande. Vlakvarke kom ook deesdae algemeen in baie van hierdie gebiede voor.

Doen navorsing oor die spesies wat jy gaan jag. Hoe meer jy van jou prooi weet, hoe interessanter en makliker gaan jou jag wees. Dit maak die jagter se taak heelwat eenvoudiger indien hy self kan onderskei tussen manlike en vroulike, asook volwasse en onvolwasse diere van dieselfde spesie. Met sommige spesies soos byvoorbeeld gemsbokke is dit nie maklik nie. Bestudeer ook die dier se anatomie en die beste skootplasing vir dié spesifieke spesie.

KOM ERVAAR DIE VÊR, VERLATE VLAKTES

Suid-Afrika bied die geleentheid om 'n wye verskeidenheid wild in asemrowend mooi natuurskoon te jag. Bewys jouself 'n guns en ervaar 'n jag op dié vêr, verlate vlaktes. Hierdie harde wêreld bied baie meer as wat dit op die oog af lyk en kruip gou diep in jou hart in. 🌿

Three-hundred-yard rifles and cartridges

WHICH IS THE PERFECT CARTRIDGE/RIFLE COMBINATION FOR 300-YARD SHOTS? LET THE FACTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Which commonly hunted species frequent areas where 300-yard shots are required? Definitely

springbuck, blesbuck and reedbuck. They all weigh under ± 70 kg on the hoof. At the upper end, there are red hartebeest, black wildebeest and

gemsbuck, which can be regarded as sub-200 kg species. These animals succumb to well-placed shots with quality bullets from rifles smaller than .308" calibre.



A blesbuck ram hunted in the Natal Midlands.

WHAT TO BUY

So, if a trusting youngster without a bottomless wallet ends up on the other side of the counter and asks for advice, what should you tell him to buy? Let us start with the rifles. The most affordable ones start at around R12000-R15 000 (Howa), then jump to about R20 000 (CZ, Remington and Sauer 100), and then to about R28 000 (Musgrave, Tikka and Ruger). Beyond that, we enter the realm of expensive rifles. Most manufacturers now offer entry-level rifles, but at the risk of being assassinated, I'm not impressed with many of these. Therefore, my advice would hinge around the Howa, CZ, Remington M-700, Musgrave, Tikka, Winchester Model 70 and Ruger.

Scope-wise, I have a habit of selecting 1x extra magnification for every 25 yards, and even for extreme range shooting at paper targets and steel gongs, my cut-off magnification is in the region of 16x to 18x. A distance of 300 yards

takes me up to a 12x magnification, which is ample. On a rifle that will most likely be used more often at ranges closer than 300 yards, a scope without parallax adjustment with a relatively simple reticle is recommended. Since we do not really hunt antelope in poor light in South Africa, an objective lens of 40-44 mm will suffice. A 300-yard distance does not require great adjustment for elevation or wind. This means there is no need for a scope tube exceeding 25,4 mm/1,0".

Let's look at the cartridges. I have sat at many a campfire where the guys argued about cartridges. The later old Olof Berg was "kept awake", the more opinionated the views became, until the arguments were all opinion and no fact. Therefore, I've decided that instead of sharing my opinion in this article, I will compare cartridges in terms of several criteria. For the purposes of this article, any differences between the 6,5 Creedmoor, .260 Re-

mington and 6,5x55 Swedish are so slight that I only include one of them as representative of that gang of peers.

I selected a range of cartridges relatively common and popular in South Africa at present. I also checked that factory ammunition is currently widely available for these cartridges because the hunter may not necessarily be a reloader.

Availability is dynamic, so one must accept that the selection may not hold true forever. The cartridges are listed in **Table 1**.

All measurements used are imperial and muzzle velocities are for handloads. This is because handloads are actually more consistent than factory ammunition with regard to maximum muzzle velocity parameter. »



This Nordiske 4-32x56 scope is a handy tool for the open plains. Many hunters prefer scopes with less magnification, but every now and then high-magnification scopes come in handy.

TABLE 1

CARTRIDGE NAME	BULLET WEIGHT	BRAND AND TYPE	MUZZLE VELOCITY	150 YD	200 YD	250 YD	300 YD	RECOIL FT-LBS	DRIFT 15 MPH
.243 Winchester	100	Nosler S-Base	3 100	0,6	2,3	5,3	9,6	8,9	3,16
.243 Winchester	90	Nosler B-Tip	3 225	0,4	2,0	4,7	8,7	8,6	3,27
.25-06 Remington	120	Speer BTSP	3 075	0,5	2,2	5,1	9,3	13,8	2,56
.25-06 Remington	110	Nosler A-Bond	3 200	0,4	2,0	4,7	8,6	13,3	2,86
6,5 Creedmoor	140	Nosler B-Tip	2 800	0,8	3,0	6,6	11,8	10,3	2,71
6,5 Creedmoor	129	Nosler A-Bond LR	2 900	0,7	2,7	5,9	10,5	10,0	2,32
.270 Winchester	150	Nosler B-Tip	2 975	0,6	2,5	5,6	10,0	17,1	2,56
.270 Winchester	130	Nosler A-Bond	3 150	0,5	2,1	4,9	8,9	16,1	2,78
7x64mm Brenneke	160	Nosler A-Bond	2 850	0,8	2,8	6,2	11,1	18,0	2,50
7x64mm Brenneke	140	Nosler B-Tip	3 025	0,6	2,4	5,4	9,7	15,9	2,56
.308 Winchester	165	Nosler B-Tip	2 825	0,8	3,0	6,5	11,7	17,4	2,87
.308 Winchester	150	Nosler B-Tip	2 975	0,7	2,6	5,8	10,4	16,5	2,94
.30-06 Springfield	165	Nosler B-Tip	2 925	0,7	2,7	5,9	10,6	21,0	2,72
.30-06 Springfield	150	Nosler B-Tip	3 050	0,6	2,4	5,4	9,7	19,6	2,84
.300 Win Mag	165	Nosler B-Tip	3 200	0,4	1,9	4,5	8,3	29,3	2,46
.300 Win Mag	150	Nosler B-Tip	3 300	0,3	1,8	4,1	7,7	26,7	2,62

» **BULLET DROP COMPARISON**

The winner is the .300 Winchester Magnum with the 150-grain bullet. This comes as no surprise because the muzzle velocity is high, and the bullet is heavy enough to retain momentum.

The loser in this singular comparison is the 6,5 Creedmoor with a 140-grain bullet. The starting velocity is much slower, and the bullet is roughly 15% lighter, while the bullet shapes are comparable.

But let us view this in per-

spective: The difference in total drop between the winner and loser is a mere 4,1" (104 mm), with all the other cartridges lying in between. Given the reality that most shots will be taken at lesser ranges, this is not very significant.

Even at 250 yards, the difference in drop between the winner and loser is only 2,5" (63,5 mm), or about three fingers, with all the others positioned in between – half the approximate heart height of the animals in question and a

fraction of the height of the vitals. In practice, the outcome will most likely be more dependent on other factors than the difference in bullet drop. Also, bear in mind that the difference in drop between the other bullet weights listed for these cartridges is just 2,2" (55,9 mm).

CALIBRE COMPARISON

We can speculate about killing power as much as we like, but in the end, death is caused by the termination of brain function. This is done either through the destruction of the brain, which causes immediate death, or through induction of haemorrhaging, which leads to the eventual termination of brain function. Death through haemorrhaging may be rapid, but it is not immediate. All else being identical, the larger the expanded calibre of

the bullet and the deeper the penetration, the more blood vessels are destroyed, the faster haemorrhaging takes place, and the quicker death occurs.

A comparison of bullet diameter places the .30"-calibre cartridges at the top of the list, with every other calibre in its proper pecking order strictly according to bullet girth. In **Table 3**, I have awarded the three .308 cartridges the same respective position for bullet diameter. However, this is not 100% correct because impact velocity and terminal-phase momentum do influence actual expansion, and these three will most probably not expand identically. Even so, this is not a treatise on terminal bullet performance analytics but rather cartridge suitability. That makes the table positioning sufficiently valid.

TABLE 2

CARTRIDGE NAME	BULLET WEIGHT	150 YD	200 YD	250 YD	300 YD
6,5 Creedmoor	140	0,8	3,0	6,6	11,8
.300 Win Mag	150	0,3	1,8	4,1	7,7
Difference		0,5	1,2	2,5	4,1



A lone red hartebeest out on an open plain on South Africa's Highveld. This is typical of the kind of shots that the open-plains rifle will be called upon to undertake.



A selection of cartridges that will deliver the goods on the open plains. L-R: .243 Winchester, .25-06 Remington, .270 Winchester, 7mm Remington Magnum, .300 H&H Magnum, .308 Norma Magnum, .300 Weatherby Magnum, 8x68S. On the right is a .375 H&H cartridge for scale.

There are 16 cartridge combinations in the table. The winner gets 16 points and the loser only 1. If combinations have the same value, all the identical ones are awarded the same value. The .300 Winchester Magnum occupies the first

(value 16) and second (value 15) place, based on expansion and velocity, the .30-06 scores 27, and the .308 Winchester gets 23.

Add it all up, divide it by six, and you get 13,5. **Table 3** should therefore be self-explanatory.

RECOIL COMPARISON

It is a fact that recoil affects most shooters. The more the recoil, the less the accuracy and precision. That is why the .500 Jeffery does not hold any world precision records. Beating recoil takes effort and we

do not all have that time, so it will affect the non-regular shooters more than the regulars. Nonetheless, we cannot discount it.

When comparing recoil, the .243 Winchester becomes the winner and the .300 Winchester Magnum the loser, taking the last two places. The relative recoil positioning of the 16 combinations can be derived from Table 1. The figures are based on 8,0 lb (3,63 kg) platforms. None of the compared combinations are hard recoilers and they all are eminently useable out to 300 yards. HOWEVER, some cartridges generate more than three times as much recoil as others. We must add perspective – felt recoil is not just pure energy or recoil velocity but how well a rifle fits the user. But that is a topic for another day.

WIND DRIFT COMPARISON

For purposes of wind drift, I assumed a 90° crosswind »

TABLE 3

CARTRIDGE NAME	BULLET WEIGHT	BULLET SCORE
.300 Win Mag	150	13,5
.300 Win Mag	165	13,5
.30-06 Springfield	150	13,5
.308 Winchester	150	13,5
.30-06 Springfield	165	13,5
.308 Winchester	165	13,5
7x64mm Brenneke	140	9,5
7x64mm Brenneke	160	9,5
.270 Winchester	130	7,5
.270 Winchester	150	7,5
6,5 Creedmoor	129	5,5
6,5 Creedmoor	140	5,5
.25-06 Remington	110	3,5
.25-06 Remington	120	3,5
.243 Winchester	90	1,5
.243 Winchester	100	1,5



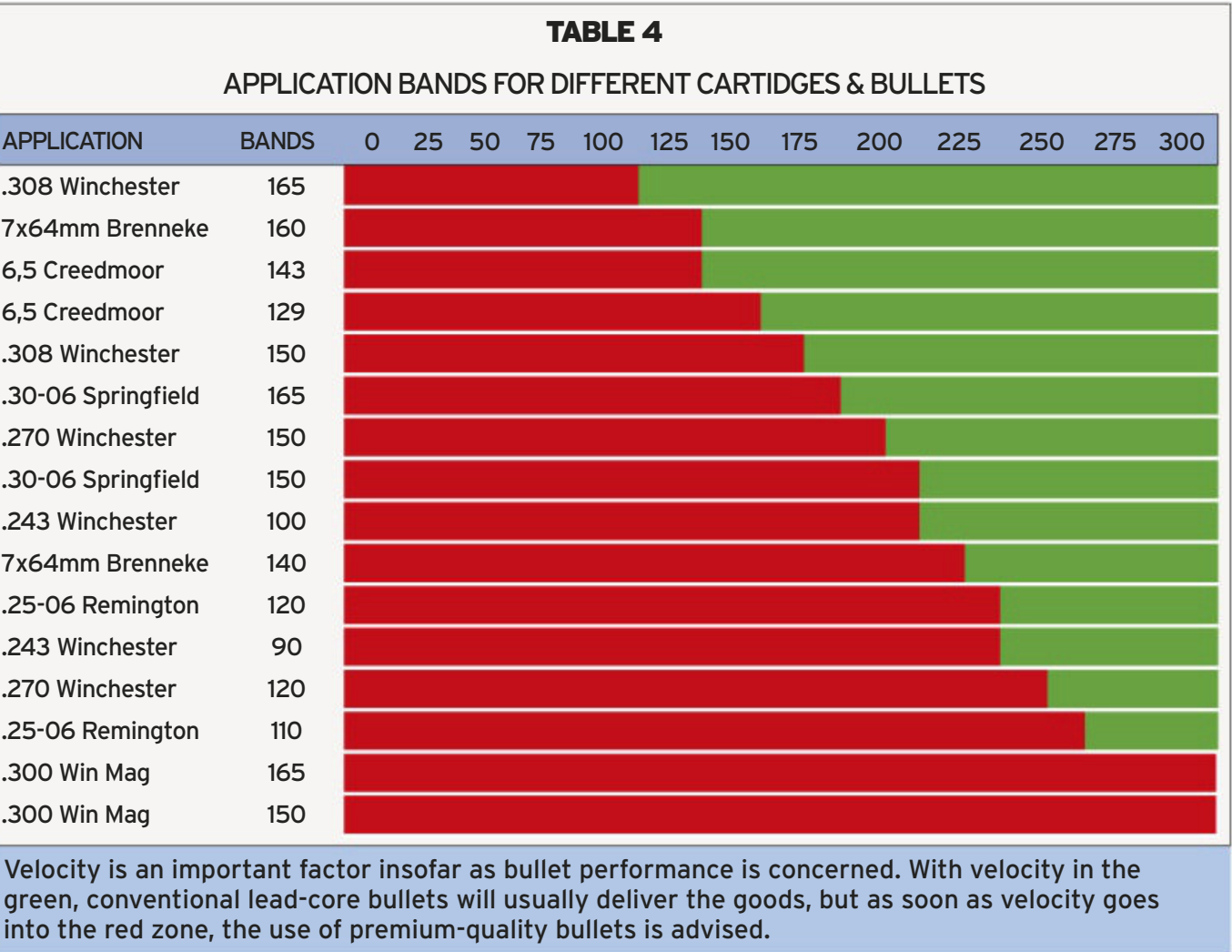
Two springbuck rams taken cleanly on the open plains with a Tikka T3 rifle in 6,5x55 Swedish – a good choice.

» blowing at 24 km/h. Even at 300 yards, the difference in effect between the cartridges is sufficiently negligible to be ignored on body shots. The 6,5 Creedmoor (129 grain) beats the .300 Winchester Magnum into second place by 0,14” (3,6 mm). The loser is the .243 Winchester, which yields 0,95” (24,1 mm) to the Creedmoor. Heck – that is not much.

GREEN BAND COMPARISONS
Which cartridge combination comes out on top with the largest application range spectrum, assuming normal expanding jacketed bullet performance projections? Let **Table 4** speak for itself.

CONCLUSION

The advice I would give the young man behind the counter is summarised in **Table 5**. A cartridge is only as good as its user, and a good shot can perform wonders with a somewhat unsuitable cartridge. However, it doesn’t work the other way round. The buyer must make the choice himself, because not all cartridges are available in



all rifles. We haven’t considered the buyer’s budget, cartridge economy and barrel life because space does not allow for it in this article. Even so, we have

covered the bases, and the facts speak for themselves.
What should the young man buy? **Table 5** offers an objective comparison but does not

incorporate the personal needs of the buyer. He must do that himself. Nevertheless, he could not go wrong by buying any of the top five. 🎯

TABLE 5 - SCORECARD

CARTRIDGE NAME	BULLET WEIGHT	BRAND AND TYPE	MUZZLE VELOCITY	DROP SCORE	CALIBRE SCORE	RECOIL SCORE	DRIFT SCORE	G-BAND	PODIUM
6,5 Creedmoor	129	Nosler A-Bond LR	2 900	5	5,5	14	16	13,0	54
7x64 Brenneke	140	Nosler B-Tip	3 025	9	9,5	10	12	7,0	48
.300 Win Mag	165	Nosler B-Tip	3 200	15	13,5	1	15	1,5	46
7x64 Brenneke	160	Nosler A-Bond	2 850	3	9,5	5	14	14,5	46
.270 Winchester	150	Nosler B-Tip	2 975	7	7,5	7	12	10,0	44
.300 Win Mag	150	Nosler B-Tip	3 300	16	13,5	2	10	1,5	43
.308 Winchester	150	Nosler B-Tip	2 975	6	13,5	8	3	12,0	43
6,5 Creedmoor	140	Nosler B-Tip	2 800	1	5,5	13	9	14,5	43
.25-06 Remington	120	Speer BTSP	3 075	11	3,5	11	12	5,5	43
.308 Winchester	165	Nosler B-Tip	2 825	2	13,5	6	4	16,0	42
.30-06 Springfield	165	Nosler B-Tip	2 925	4	13,5	3	8	11,0	40
.30-06 Springfield	150	Nosler B-Tip	3 050	8	13,5	4	6	8,5	40
.270 Winchester	130	Nosler A-Bond	3 150	12	7,5	9	7	4,0	40
.25-06 Remington	110	Nosler A-Bond	3 200	14	3,5	12	5	3,0	38
.243 Winchester	100	Nosler S-Base	3 100	10	1,5	15	2	8,5	37
.243 Winchester	90	Nosler B-Tip	3 225	13	1,5	16	1	5,5	37



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Ammunition for dangerous game – a different proposition

IF THE BUG BITES WITH THE BIG STUFF, YOU WILL BE HOOKED FOR LIFE.

I may as well admit it right now: Hunting dangerous game is one of the most exciting and addictive pas-

times I have ever indulged in. Few things in life can compare to the feeling that goes through your bones when

sighting the first big tracks crossing the road and closing the bolt on a big cartridge after a nod from your professional

hunter. As you shoulder your rifle to follow the tracks into the mopane thicket, you suddenly become aware of a slight



Buffalo. Photo: Johan van Wyk



This photo amply illustrates why proper functioning and good ammunition are two of the prime ingredients of a dangerous-game rifle. This Zimbabwean buffalo bull was unimpressed with a perfect broadside heart/lung shot from a .375 H&H (300-grain Swift A-Frame). Instead, he took off and headed for a thick patch of bush after being hit. The exit wounds in the photograph were made by two 300-grain solid bullets, fired as quick backup shots at the fleeing animal, which caused the bull to break his stride and succumb.

metallic aftertaste in your mouth, and the rifle that felt so heavy and cumbersome on the range back home suddenly feels completely inadequate. It's a feeling like no other – the kind that makes you happy to be alive.

Prior to getting off the Land Cruiser and throwing a big rifle over your shoulder, however, several things must happen to make that long-anticipated dream hunt a success. An animal like a buffalo or an elephant is fully capable of injuring or killing a careless hunter. Therefore, the hunter's choice of equipment is of considerable importance to ensure success.

MANY CHOICES AVAILABLE

Venturing afield in search of



Two expanded North Fork Cup-Nose solids. Both were recovered from buffalo. On the left is a 400-grain .416 fired from a .416 Rigby. The bullet on the right is a 500-grain .458 fired from a .450 NE. The Cup-Nose is typical of the latest generation of bullets for dangerous game.

dangerous game, today's hunter is blessed with a wider choice of ammunition and premium-quality bullets than ever before. Fine-quality, factory-loaded ammunition suitable for thick-skinned dangerous game is available from various manufacturers such as Federal, Norma and others, and is generally loaded with bullets that yesteryear's hunters never dreamt of. In addition, today's factory-loaded ammunition is usually wonderfully reliable and accurate, and designed to deliver optimum terminal performance on the dangerous beasts of Africa.

For us South Africans, however, the fly in the ointment is that factory-loaded ammunition for the larger cartridges commonly used for hunting dangerous game is not always freely available, and when available, it tends to be prohibitively expensive. Unfortunately, due to the fluctuating exchange rate of the rand against foreign currencies, and other factors such as excessive difficulties in importing the stuff in the first place, this situation is not likely to change anytime soon. As a result, reloading is the most affordable option for most of us.

When preparing for dangerous-game hunts in the past, I always endeavoured to obtain the best possible components to ensure that my handloads were up to the task when the moment of truth arrived. One of the prerequisites of a bullet for dangerous game is the ability to penetrate deeply and in a straight line. For elephant, only solid, non-expanding bullets are used. There are some very fine solid bullets out there that can do the job, such as the Woodleigh full metal jacket»

» (designed along the same lines as the vintage Kynoch solids of bygone times, but with the addition of a thick steel jacket to avoid deformation), Barnes Super Solid, and the South African-designed and -manufactured Dzombo. All of these, as well as a couple of bullets by other manufacturers not mentioned here, will do a fine job, and they are all available in component form for the handloader.

MODERN EXPANDING BULLETS

When it comes to proper expanding bullets for animals such as buffalo, today's handloader is even more spoilt for



A selection of some of the dangerous-game bullets available to the handloader today. **L to R:** 400-grain .416 North Fork Cup-Nose, 300-grain .375 Woodleigh FMJ solid, 300-grain .375 Swift A-Frame, 300-grain Woodleigh Heavy Duty soft-nose, and lastly, a 300-grain Woodleigh Hydrostatically Stabilised bullet. The plastic nose cup on the Woodleigh Hydro eases feeding in magazine rifles.



Today's premium-quality, expanding bullets work to perfection on buffalo in adequate calibres. They penetrate deeply but usually do not exit, potentially wounding another animal.



Another good illustration of why good bullets with excellent penetration capabilities are an absolute necessity for dangerous game. Here, Zimbabwean professional hunter Barry Style is supervising the skinning and slaughtering of a downed buffalo. Note the animal's massive size and voluminous paunch. Solid bullets must often penetrate deeply through an animal to reach the vital areas.

choice. A few decades ago, solid bullets were regarded as the only really viable choice for thick-skinned dangerous game and hunters were routinely advised to load with solids only, despite the potential risk of overpenetration. On broadside shots, many of the modern expanding bullets work to perfection on buffalo, holding together and penetrating through both shoulders with lethal effect, even with relatively mild cartridges such as the 9,3x62.

In terms of premium-quality expanding bullets, there is a myriad of good candidates out there, as well as several reliable sources on the internet and in print that are readily available. The necessary re-

search is thus easy to conduct, and it makes for interesting reading. Choose a bullet that will hold together, penetrate in a straight line, retain as much weight as possible after expansion, and shoot accurately enough in your rifle. Most importantly, when the moment of truth arrives, shoot straight. It is a recipe that has been proven to work for decades.

A NEW DEVELOPMENT

A relatively new development is the so-called Cup-Nose solid, introduced by the bullet makers North Fork. The Cup-Nose is essentially a mono-metal solid with a short nose section that expands to roughly just over calibre diameter. I haven't tried them myself, but a friend

of mine has done so extensively. He has used them in various calibres on elephant, hippo and buffalo, and claims they deliver tremendous straight-line penetration, coupled with lethal terminal performance.

Another fairly recent development is the Woodleigh hydrostatically stabilised bullet, designed by Australian metallurgist John Marozzi, and marketed by Woodleigh. At first glance, it is a weird-looking bullet with a cup-shaped hollow at the front end that resembles the mouth of a jellyfish. A thorough explanation of exactly how the hydro bullets work would require an article in its own right, but suffice to say that they penetrate like crazy, leave a wound channel

considerably wider than that of a conventional full metal jacket (FMJ) solid, and they are safe to use in older rifles with barrels made from softer steel. I have shot several animals with Woodleigh hydros, including a water buffalo bull with a vintage .500/450 NE double in Australia's Northern Territories in 2014, and I have yet to recover a bullet.

LOAD DEVELOPMENT

When doing load development for loading solid bullets, I generally take a conservative approach. As a rule, solids are slightly longer in length than their soft-nose, expanding counterparts. Therefore, they tend to take up more room (and hence space for pro-»

» pellant) in a loaded cartridge when loaded to fit into the magazine of a rifle. Consequently, I try to find cases with slightly thinner case walls to avoid sacrificing powder capacity unnecessarily. Due to their construction, solids generally also tend to produce higher chamber pressure. It is thus prudent to start at the lower end of the

reloading tables when developing loads for them and to work up carefully.

In the .375 H&H, I have used a load of 75 grains of S-365 propellant behind a 300-grain soft-nose bullet for the past ten years – and yes, I know it is not in the Somchem reloading manual, but S-365 actually is a fine propel-

lant for the .375 H&H and 300-grain bullets. When loaded in the Winchester, Remington or Norma cases that I use, this load gives just over 2 500 fps at the muzzle with no signs of excessive pressure whatsoever, and it fills the case nicely with very little space between the propellant and the base of the bullet. However, when

loading solids, I drop the load by a full 2 grains to compensate for the Woodleigh's longer length and hard steel jacket. Even with the slightly reduced load, muzzle velocity is just about the same, and both the solid and my preferred expanding bullet of choice, the 300-grain Swift A-Frame, shoot to virtually the same point of



On elephant, only solid, non-expanding bullets must be used to ensure adequate penetration through the skull and body.

impact at 100 metres from my rifle. This combination has served me very well in the field on numerous occasions.

CASE PREPARATION AND LOADING

With regard to case preparation, I prefer to full-length size the cases of the ammunition I intend to take along on the hunt. The reason for this is simple: Ammunition loaded with full-length-sized cases chambers easily and slickly and is one less potential hindrance to worry about. Yes, sizing cases in this way lessens case life, but buying a new batch of brass every now and then seems like cheap insurance against disaster. I also try and avoid hunting with cases that have been sized more than once in the big calibres to avoid potential case-head separations.

Opinion also seems to be divided on the subject of crimping. I must admit that I have never encountered the problem of bullets being pushed into cases due to the hammering received from recoil while loaded in the bottom of a rifle's magazine. However, others have had this problem, and I certainly have no argument with anyone who prefers to apply a firm crimp to the case mouths of loaded ammunition. As I matter of fact, I do so routinely myself in any event, just to be on the safe side. I own Lee factory crimp dies for several cartridges for just this purpose. They are relatively inexpensive and work as advertised.

One of my favourite pastimes is observing some of my fellow competitors when taking part in big-bore shooting competitions. It is sometimes highly enlightening to watch the antics of some shooters as they attempt to load badly tuned rifles under pressure or extract stuck cases from cham-

bers. Sorting out a misfeeding rifle is all in a day's work for a competent gunsmith, but there is simply no excuse for ammunition loaded to excessive pressure levels. When facing an animal that can defend itself, it can also be downright lethal. Therefore, my advice is to load your ammo with ease of extraction primarily in mind. Much of the dangerous-game hunting in today's Africa takes place in very hot climates, and ammunition loaded to maximum pressure levels is thus just another potential liability. Furthermore, a big part of the fun inherent to the pursuit of dangerous game is getting as close to the big ani-

shot rifles, but with one or two notable exceptions.

Firstly, the double lacks the bolt-action's camming power and the falling-block single-shot's brute strength. It relies largely on ammunition loaded to modest pressure levels for primary extraction and regulation. Generally, a double rifle also doesn't respond well to different types of ammunition or bullets of different weights. It is thus essential for the hand-loader to duplicate the muzzle velocity and pressure level of the ammunition that the double rifle in question was regulated with to ensure proper functioning ("regulation" in this context refers to the process

While most of us must make do with bolt-action rifles for dangerous-game hunting, there are a fair number of hunters these days who rely on double rifles instead.

mals as possible before commencing hostilities. For that reason, there is very little to be gained by trying to turn your .375 or .458 into a flat-shooter instead of a close-range fight-stopper. So, do the smart thing and keep chamber pressure well within reason to ensure proper function.

LOADING FOR DOUBLES

While most of us must make do with bolt-action rifles for dangerous-game hunting, there are a fair number of hunters these days who rely on double rifles instead. Although reloading for double rifles, especially of the vintage variety, can sometimes be a black art that requires a combination of wisdom, patience and luck, the handloading rules for double rifles are essentially the same as for bolt-action or single-

whereby the two barrels are made to shoot an acceptable group at a given distance by the manufacturer of the rifle).

To add to the mix, most vintage doubles were regulated during times gone by with British-made Kynoch ammunition, which was loaded with cordite, a very bulky propellant no longer being manufactured. In the roomy cases of most of the Nitro-Express cartridges, it can sometimes be difficult to replicate the cartridge's original ballistics with modern propellants. Consequently, the use of filling material such as a foam or Dacron wad to take up empty space is often called for.

In the case of a double rifle of modern manufacture, it will most likely have been regulated at the factory with ammunition by Hornady,

Federal or one or two of the other manufacturers turning out ammunition for the big double-rifle cartridges. The use of modern propellants greatly eases any potential reloading pains, and the few modern double rifles of my acquaintance have all been relatively easy to get to shoot to an acceptable level of accuracy.

After all the ammunition required for the hunt has been assembled, I do a few final checks to ensure that there are no hiccups. The first is a thorough visual inspection of every individual cartridge for any cracks, dents or burrs. Obviously, any defect automatically relegates that particular cartridge to the shooting range where a misfeed or jam is a mere inconvenience and not a potential disaster. Secondly, I cycle each cartridge I intend to take on the hunt through my rifle to ensure that they all feed and chamber perfectly (with a double, dropping the cartridges into the chambers will suffice). This is a potentially dangerous practice, so the safety catch between your ears must be firmly in the "on" position before you start loading cartridges. From personal experience, I can attest to the fact that a .300 Magnum makes a tremendous amount of noise when fired in a small space, and that filling the hole in the concrete floor afterwards can be a real hassle as well. Therefore, perform this simple yet vital test where it is safe to do so, such as on the shooting range, with the rifle pointed in a safe direction.

With a bit of proper planning and preparation, loading your own ammunition for your dangerous-game hunt is not only a very rewarding and satisfying experience but adds spice to the hunt itself. I can highly recommend it! 🎯

DEUR FRANCOIS VAN EMMENES

Springbok, jou lekker ding!

DIÉ BOK BLY DIE PRINS VAN DIE VLAKTES



Springbokjag – net die woorde laat my hart vinniger klop, my oë helder skyn en my mond water... Ek vermoed ek is nie die enigste jagter wat só voel nie. Springbokjag is so deel van Suid-Afrika en Na-

mibië se kultuur soos rugby en braaivleis en dit is nie moeilik om te verstaan hoekom nie.

Springbokke is beide volop en wydverspreid in hierdie twee lande, hoewel droogtes en siektes die afgelope paar jaar hul tol geëis het onder

kuddes van gedeeltes van die Kalahari en die Karoo. Al het hulle nie histories daar voorgekom nie, is springbokke ook al jare gelede in die Bosveld gevestig en vaar baie goed op sekere plase in die noorde wat oor die regte habi-

tat beskik. Hartwater sal gou 'n springboktrop uitwis in die Bosveld, waar die bontbosluis voorkom wat dié siekte versprei. Slegs springbokke wat teen hartwater bestand is, moet dus hier aangehou word.

“Hartwaterbokke,” soos dit



BO: 'n Ram wat ek in 2006 by Chris te voet geskiet het. Sniper se Grassland-kamouflaerdrag werk fantasties in die geel gras van die Kalahari.

HOOFOTO: Drie pragtige ramme, afge- neem deur my swaer, Hennie Lacock, in Etosha.

ONDER: 'n Prag-springbokram in die Kalahari.



in die volksmond bekend staan, is natuurlik ook duurder op wildveilings as gevolg hiervan. Of dit nou reg of verkeerd is om springbokke en ander wild buite hul natuurlike/historiese gebiede te vestig, is 'n vraag vir 'n ander dag.

Wat ek wel weet, is dat baie jagters dankbaar daarvoor is dat die prins van die vlaktes naby Gauteng gejag kan word.

Met verskeie meningsopnames was springbokke bo-aan die lys van plaaslike biltongjagters as die gewildste spesie

om te jag. Hulle is nog bekostigbaar, afhangend van waar jy jag, maar volgens my ondervinding wissel die pryse aansienlik na gelang van die reën wat geval het, al dan nie. Net onlangs het ons R1 500 per bok betaal in die Kalahari toe

die reën min was en die bokke skaars. Vanjaar het dieselfde boer ons sy bokke vir R1 200 aangebied, nadat ons 'n prys van meer as R1 800 verwag het. Die "bosveldbokke" is gewoonlik duurder, maar jy ry nie so ver om hulle te skiet nie.»



BO: Hier haal ek 'n bok se binnegoed uit agter op die klap van Chris "Whiskey" se Cruiser. Hy het baie daarvan gehou om dit self te doen en jy moes hom amper uit die pad stoot om ook 'n kans te kry om jou bok te versorg. Vriend Robert Steyn kyk toe.

ONDER: Die slagplek op Chris se plaas. 'n Koelkamer is nie nodig nie – die bokke word yskoud in die aand en vroeg die oggend word hulle afgehaal, in die stoor op 'n seil uitgepak en weer toegemaak. Die aand word hulle dan weer opgehang as die vlieë gaan slaap het.



» VERSKILLENDIGE JAGAREAS

Springbokke uit die Karoo, een van hul vastrapplekke, is gewoonlik nie so groot van lyf nie en het nie horings soos dié uit die Kalahari en Namibië nie, maar daar is uitsonderings. Julian Theron boer naby De Aar met duisende springbokke en het oor die jare topgenetika geskep. Sy spogramme is iets om te aanskou en het al die rekords laat spat op wildveilings. In die Karoo is dit algemeen om 'n prys per kilogram te vra – gewoonlik gemeet met die kop en vel aan en die binnegoed uit. Ek hou van hierdie reëling om twee redes: Eerstens laat dit 'n jagter toe om meer van die jonger ramme en veral ooie te skiet vir beter tafelvleis, en in terme van gewig kry jy waarvoor jy betaal. Tweedens haal dit die druk van die groot ramme af wat gewoonlik 'n trofeeprys haal – dit is nou maar net menslik om die meeste vir jou hardverdiende rande te probeer kry, en as 'n mens een prys deur die bank betaal, sal almal wil ramme skiet.

Jagmetodes wissel na gelang van die terrein en area. In die Kalahari is dit omtrent 'n uitgemaakte saak dat jy van die bakkie af skiet. Hier is die kampe so groot soos plase en 'n voetjagter se kanse om genoeg bokke binne die bestek van 'n dag te skiet (om dit vir die boer die moeite werd te maak) is maar klein, maar dit kan gedoen word. Meer hieroor later.

In die Karoo en Noord-Kaap is voorsitjag baie gewild. Die jagspan word uitgesit op vooraf bepaalde plekke met 'n skietstoel wat 360 grade in die rondte kan draai. Jy wag dan jou bokke in, wat gewoonlik geroer word deur manne op perde of selfs met bakkies. Die idee is nie om die bokke te jaag in die jagter se rigting nie, maar om hulle net te laat aan-

hou beweeg totdat hulle naby aan 'n jagter kom. Jy skiet dan jou bok, bloei hom uit, merk hom met die ooreengekome metode, en die ruiter of die bakkie laai hom vir jou op.

In die Bosveld moet jy maar gewoonlik loop en bekruip, en in die Oos-Kaap, Vrystaat en Wes-Kaap word omtrent alle metodes gebruik. Ek is bevoorreg om al springbokke te gejag het in al die provinsies in Suid-Afrika behalwe Mpumalanga en KwaZulu-Natal. Dit is nie vir my moeilik om uit te sonder wat die lekkerste is nie – die Kalahari en sy rooi duine staan kop en skouers uit bo die res.

JAG IN DIE KALAHARI

Ek het vir amper 20 jaar by Chris “Whiskey” Steenkamp op sy plaas Chalmers Puts saam met my jagspan springbokke en gemsbokke gaan jag, partymaal twee of selfs drie keer per jaar. Die plaas is geleë tussen Vanzylsrus en Askham en lê teenaan die Botswana-grens. Dit was altyd 'n besondere belewenis – die uniekheid en skoonheid van die landskap, die koue wintersaande (en soms dae), die kameeldoringkampvure, die stille opgewondenheid onder die manne wanneer die Cruiser sy neus oor die duin steek en ons gewaar 'n trop springbokke teen die oorkantste duin...

Chris sou dan oudergewoonte rustig sy Swarovski-verkyker na sy oë bring en saggies praat: “Manne, tweede van links staan 'n mooi ram. Hy het nie baie groot horings nie, maar hy het 'n groot lyf. Julle kan hom maar skiet.” As die skoot nie binne drie sekondes klap nie, sou hy op 'n meer dringende wyse vra: “Manne, hoekom skiet julle nie?” As die skoot dan weer nie vinnig genoeg loop nie, sou hy jou toesnou met: “Nou wat de hel maak julle, man-

ne? Is julle hier om te jag of te speel?” Die goeie ou dae.

Teen so 12:00 sou ons begin hout optel (net kameeldoring, want witgathout ruik maar sleg as dit brand) en 'n lekker groot boom gaan soek om onder te braai. Die bokke wat die mooiste geskiet was, se hart, lewer en niertjies is uitgehaal en met water afgespoel. Dit is dan gebraaie en saam met 'n broodrolletjie deur die honger span verslind. Die manne het lootjies getrek oor wie eerste skiet en die reël staan ná jare nog steeds, naamlik dat jy net twee skote kry. Sou jy mis skiet (soms moes ons ver skiet of die wind het sterk gewaai), kon jy weer probeer, maar daarna was dit die volgende man se beurt. Só het dit ook gebeur dat omtrent al my jagmaats al 'n trofeebok

by Chris geskiet het, behalwe ek. Die Engelse noem dit “*the luck of the draw*”.

My gunsteling-herinneringe is die tye wat ek by Chris alleen te voet in die duine kon jag – 'n spesiale vergunning wat hy omtrent net aan my gemaak het. Ek het altyd my springbokke gekry en partykeer somer amper my hele kwota vir die jag – dis makliker as wat die meeste jagters dink.

KAROOJAG EN -KUIER

In die Karoo het ek ook gereeld by Julian Theron gaan voorsitjag. Oudregter Hennie Lacock, my skoonpa, en Julian is al dekades lank vriende en Skoonpa het elke jaar “Lacock se span” soontoe geneem en sy seun en skoonseuns saamgenooi.

Die ander lede van die span

was almal prokureurs en advokate van Kimberley se wêreld, ook 'n wynboer uit die Kaap (wat sy bokke met kaste wyn betaal het) en 'n dokter van Durban, almal pelle van Skoonpa.

Oudergewoonte was dit eers inskiet vir die manne en dan veld toe as dit nie meer so baie koud was nie. Ons is op plekke in die betrokke kamp afgelaai waar ons sou jag op die nommer wat die vorige aand getrek is. Op een of ander manier het ek omtrent altyd die “beste” plek gekry – ek vermoed Skoonpa het agteraf met Julian gekonkel om op só 'n manier sy skoonseun te bederf. Jammer, swarries! Martisan, Julian se vrou, het gesorg dat elke jagter 'n klein koelboksie kry met droëwors, biltong, 'n toebroodjie, 'n “swietie”, »



Ek en skoonpa Hennie in die Kalahari in 2004. Ek het daardie jaar my .30-06 gebruik en die trajek van die 165 grein InterBond-koeël op die kolf geplak.

» vrugte en 'n sappie – net die regte medisyne as die wurms begin knaag.

POETSE, SKERTSERY EN HOF SITTINGS

Soms was sekere jagters gelukkig, maar ander kere het daar min of geen bokke nie verby sekere manne gekom. Ander weer het sommer vroegdag hul kwota bokke klaar geskiet en dan het Julian hulle opgetel en die manne se plekke geruil om elkeen 'n goeie kans te gee. Die skertsery en beentrekery by die slagplek in die veld was iets om te beleef en sal my altyd bybly. Skote, goed of sleg, is bekyk, groot bokke bewonder en klein bokkies is bespot met “Maar hierdie een het dan nog melk om sy bek!” Groot-horingramme het jou 'n klop op die skouer laat kry.

Die laaste aand van die jag was daar altyd 'n “hofsitting”.

Die regtersbank het uit drie van die ou advokate bestaan en een van die prokureurs het namens die staat aangekla. Hofprosedures is tot op die letter nagevolg. 'n Onvergeetlike straf is uitgedeel aan die jagter wat een van Julian se tag-bokke (teelbokke gemerk met 'n geel plaatjie in die oor) sou skiet. (Dit het natuurlik amper elke jaar gebeur, veral onder die manne wat nie so gereeld gejag het nie.) Ander wangedrag is ook straf opgelê, en die jonger manne (veral ons swaers) het maar erg deurgeloop onder Skoonpa se pelle op die “bank”, veral as jy die geringste minagting van die hof sou toon.

Daar was elke jaar ook dieselfde toekennings – “De Kopskoot” vir die beste skoot, “De Gatskoot” vir, ja, ek hoef seker nie te verduidelik nie... en “De Meneer” vir die swaarste bok. As jy gelukkig was, het jy

met 'n nuwe Joseph Rogers-knipmes weggestap vir jou goeie, of dalk slegte dade in die drie kategorieë.

Julian het my een jaar, nadat hy my kom optel het, gevra om een van sy tag-bokke wat ons raakgeloop het, dood te skiet, aangesien die ram nie aan sy standarde voldoen het nie. Toe ons by die slagplek aankom en Skoonpa die tag gewaar, kon ek sien hoe sy bloeddruk styg. Ná 'n paar sekondes het hy my op en af bekyk en met stywe lippe gevra: “Nou mannetjie, wat het jy nou aangevang?” Julian het saamgespeel en kwaai opgetree, wat natuurlik vir Skoonpa nog verder vies gemaak het. Gelukkig vir my, het Julian se kenmerkende glimlag die ys gebreek en hy het Skoonpa die waarheid vertel.

VELDVLEIS, TAFELVLEIS

Springbokvleis is van die lek-

kerste wat daar is en tensy jy met hulle boer en elke week vir jouself een kan skiet, is dit amper 'n sonde om hulle op te sny vir biltong en droëwors, al is beide bitter lekker. Ons gesin gebruik die binnefilette vir sosaties, die rugstringe vir *beef wellington* of schnitzel, die nek en skenkels vir bredies of potjiekos en die heel blaai vir stadig kook of opgesny in tjops vir bredies. Van die kruis (*rump*) maak ons sosaties, ghoelasj-blokkies en pasteivleis. Die res is vir braaiwors en word hier en daar met een van die ander snitte aangevul as daar nie genoeg is nie. Ek deel nie sommer springbokvleis uit nie – net my gunsteling-oom, Attie, kry elke jaar sy deel.

Ek vermoed springbok sal vir nog baie jare een van die gunsteling bly – lekker om te jag en lekker om te eet. Springbok, jou lekker ding! 🍖



Ek en vriend Robert by sy voetjag-bok in die Kalahari in Junie 2008. Hy het die bok vanaf die duin in die agtergrond geskiet ná 'n lang bekruipery.

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CONSERVATION

The real threat to wildlife - the facts from a game ranger

THE FACTS, STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH



Game rangers observing buffalo.

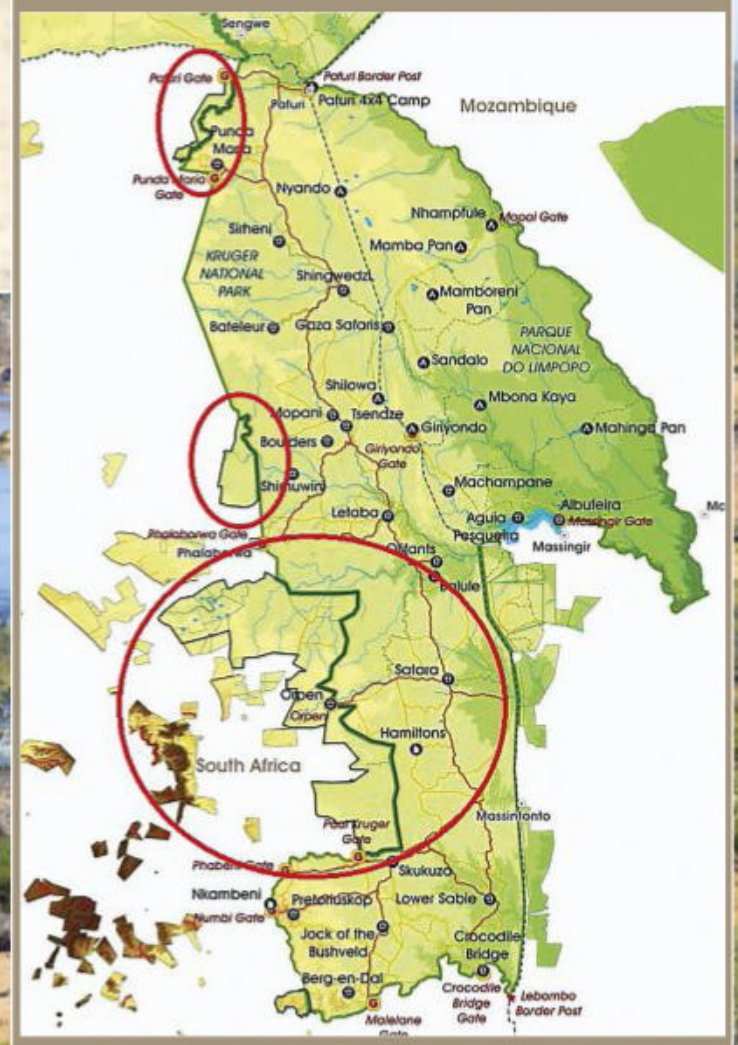


Breathtaking beauty of the Kruger National Park.



TOP: Protected areas in Africa in the World Database on Protected Areas. The three destinations of choice are circled.

BOTTOM: Greater Kruger: In the wildlife areas adjacent to the Kruger National Park on the western side, starting in the south, we have the highly productive Sabi Sands Game Reserve, where photographic and game-viewing tourism is huge. However, as one progresses further north, photographic tourism starts to dovetail, with hunting as the most responsible resource use.



A CAREER IN CONSERVATION

I started my career in conservation with a BSc qualification, majoring in Grassland Science and Zoology, followed by an honours degree in Wildlife Management at the University of Pretoria. After completing my honours degree, I went on to work for Conservation Corporation Africa, which is now known as &Beyond. For two years, I worked as a field guide at their Londolozi and Singita Lodges in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve, adjoining the Kruger National Park (KNP). I was one of the first guides to qualify in the then newly established Field Guides Association of

Southern Africa (FGASA) Level 3, SKS Dangerous Animals category, and went on to work as a KNP wilderness trails ranger.

My first position in wildlife management was as the assistant warden in Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, which borders KNP. I worked there for a year and experienced a different side of wildlife management, learning the facets of the more intensely managed wildlife areas. Since 2002, I have worked for South African National Parks (SANParks) as a “section ranger”, known in other areas of the world as a “game warden”, “park ranger” or just plain “game ranger”.

I have been based at Kingfisherspruit Section, situated centrally in KNP, 7 km from Orpen Rest Camp. I have been responsible for a 95 000-hectare portion of KNP, along the western border, halfway between Skukuza and the Olifants River. It adjoins and is open to the Timbavati and Manyeleti Game Reserves to the west.

A section ranger’s job is basically the custodianship of the environment. I have been very fortunate to be based at Kingfisherspruit, where my duties include not only anti-poaching and wildlife management but also the environmental management of two

game-viewing/photographic concession areas. I have been involved from the beginning in the development of a new concession, the Imbali Safari Lodge. The second was an existing operation situated in the Contractual National Park portion of my section, known as Kempiana. The lodge is called Ngala Private Game Reserve. In the southern portion of Kempiana, the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC) is also situated, which accommodates up to 200 students at a time. Both Ngala’s and the SAWC’s operations were based on older models and required transformation to the best-practice principles of the National Parks Concessions Operations Model, which was the model used to develop Imbali.

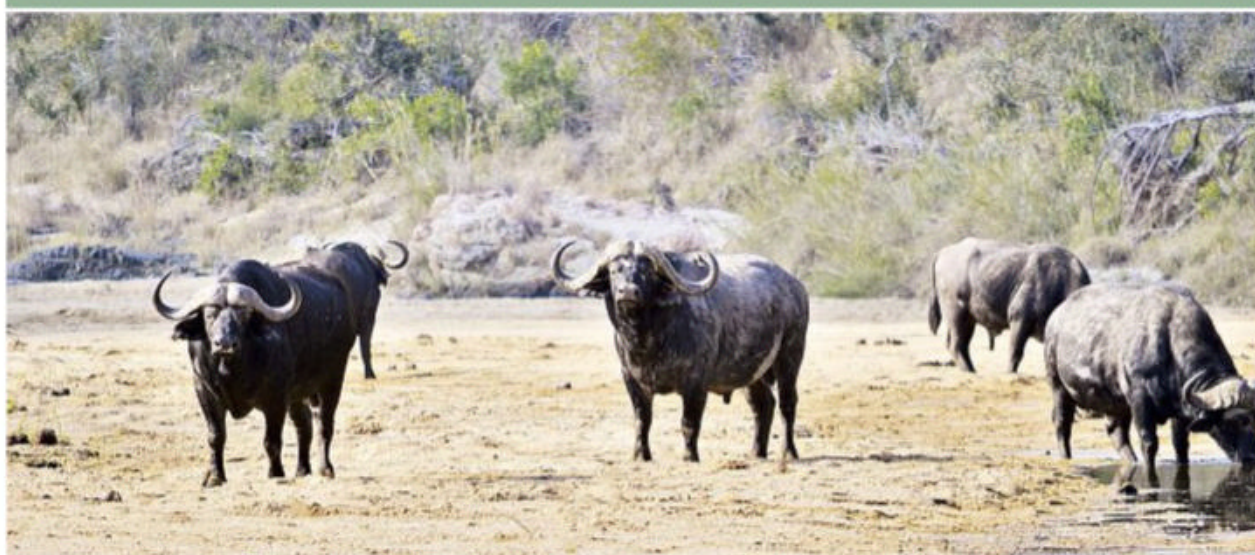
As a neighbour and open to the Timbavati Private Game Reserve, I have also been involved in the joint management committee of the Associated Private Nature Reserves (APNR). It was here that I gained exposure to the other side of conservation’s revenue generator, namely the hunting safari business.

In the nearly 20 years I’ve spent here, I have had unrivalled exposure to all sides of the wildlife management and tourism industry. As a result, I have learned an amazing amount about the impacts, both positive and negative, of the photographic/gameviewing and the safari hunting industries. Therefore, I believe that I am well qualified to voice an opinion on a comparison of the two. I’ve learned that it is not which of the two you favour, but rather how you make the choice.

When I started my career in professional conservation in the 1990s, wildlife was thriving in South Africa. It was growing in value and, because of this,»



Poaching poses a significant threat to Africa’s wildlife and has resulted in a drastic decline in rhino populations. (Photo: Nic de Bruine)



The value of a Cape buffalo hunted as meat is about R10 000, compared to R350 000 when hunted as a trophy. As a wildlife manager, which income would you rather receive for the utilisation of one buffalo? (Photo: Johan van Wyk)

» was expanding in distribution across the country. In those days, the most obvious threat to wildlife was poaching. Now, bear with me here as it is necessary to understand why poaching is a threat, because most people are unaware of the most important and real reasons.

Poaching is a threat simply because it's unsustainable.

SUSTAINABILITY

The *Cambridge Dictionary* describes the word “unsustainable” as “something that cannot continue at the same rate” or “causing damage to the environment by using more of something than can be replaced naturally”. It is crucial to understand this concept because all successful conservation is underpinned by *sustainability*.

A second concept that is very important, and not something that was taught back when I qualified, is *holistic management*. This is “dealing with or treating the whole of something and not just a part”. In successful modern conservation, this is essential, and we approach *holistic sustainability* from three aspects.

With regard to poaching, they are as follows:

- **Ecologically**, poaching is unsustainable because the off-take/harvest is not managed by number, age class or sex, and it is also not based on sound science. Therefore, it usually exceeds what is sustainable.
- **Economically**, it is unsustainable because none of the revenue generated from poaching goes back into the management of the wildlife system, and law-abiding society does not receive the benefits from it.
- Thirdly, it is **socially unsustainable** because it is illegal, and the means of killing is usually inhumane and disrespectful to wildlife.

PLANET PRINCIPLES

Here, I must add another concept, one that is critical to rational decision-making and what I refer to as *planet principles*. These are principles that are unavoidable on planet Earth. They are mostly related to environmental sustainability, but some are related to concepts of how human society functions. Let's look at

three planet principles that are relevant to this discussion:

- The first is *economics*. This deals with the material welfare of mankind. In a world with 7,8 billion humans that are presently the dominant creature, economics is unavoidable.
- The second principle is the *resource chain*, in other words, what is dependent on what for its survival. This determines what our conservation priorities for a sustainable planet should be. In order of priority, they are soil and groundwater conservation, followed by conservation of plant communities, and then animal communities. Animal communities can be further broken down into prey and predators. The upper level never exists without the lower level. Please note here that I refer to “communities” and not “individuals”. We are part of the resource chain!
- The third planet principle, and a fact that is not well known, is that the rangelands of the world are kept productive and sustainable by *hoofed animals*. For

those who are wondering, the “rangelands” consist of all the grassland, savanna, semi-desert and tundra habitats on Earth. So, it's just about everything, excluding the equatorial and montane rainforests.

If hoofed animals are absent or don't impact appropriately, these areas degrade and become deserts. In short, hoofed animals achieve this by their hoof action, which breaks up and aerates capped and hard soils, the right amount of grazing and rest, and the deposition of dung and urine. I was not taught this principle at university as it was not well known back then. Only after I met Allan Savory, the doyen of holistic management, did my understanding of these systems become clearer.

This third planet principle is a key component of what is referred to as *regenerative management* and is the foundation of how we should be approaching all environmental management. Please go and watch the documentary *Kiss the Ground*; it will give you a good idea of what I'm talking

Sustainable utilisation and management of natural resources are key to preserving wildlife and ecosystems.



about and will hopefully be a real eye-opener.

If 7,8 billion humans are a fact, and hoofed animals are essential for the planet's sustainability, then the relationship between the two is critical. So, what about the story that the cattle produce methane, which is causing global warming, and leading to climate change? Well, simply explained, hoofed animals are the drivers of healthy soil and plant root systems, and this is where most of the carbon sequestration on the planet

occurs. If one is rational and thinks back to a time many thousands of years ago when the world was healthy and sustainable, there were many more hoofed animals roaming the planet than there are today. So, it is not logical that this should now suddenly be a major factor in driving global warming and climate change. And science supports this.

According to a study by White Oak Pastures, a regenerative agricultural company in the USA, the fact is that it's not the cow; it's the how! The prob-

lem doesn't lie in the livestock numbers but in the way livestock are kept. They should be on the rangelands fulfilling important functions. The conversion to regenerative farming will also take care of numerous welfare issues.

DEVALUATION OF WILDLIFE

Now that we have a grasp on some of the important planet principles, let's get back to rationalising wildlife management. During the last decade, a new threat to wildlife has emerged, namely the devaluation of wildlife. This is the greatest threat to our wildlife!

Devaluation means that wildlife is no longer the land use of choice. This is because of the way we are rationalising its use, and the activities associated with it are not enhancing its economic potential. As a result, the generated income no longer covers operating

costs, including its protection, and, ultimately, there is less revenue to provide value to people in salaries and profit from business. The end result is what is quoted in many scientific papers as *habitat loss*.

Habitat cannot be lost, at least not without the conscious decision by man, so this should actually be referred to as *land-use change*. In Africa, this change is usually to agriculture or mining. The change from wildlife to citrus just outside the APNR's Enkhulu gate is a case in point.

This is a very important concept, because in the context of 7,8 billion humans, the distribution and density of the various species on the planet almost directly correlate to the value of that species to humans.

Devaluation of wildlife has been happening through two means:

Intensive use and management of wildlife

The first is the intensive use and management of wildlife, commonly known as intensive or selective breeding, canned hunting and other associated activities that de-wild and fragment our wildlife areas. None of these practices are natural. The word "fragment" refers to the fencing of camps and the reduction in the size of continuous wildlife areas.

The inherent value of wildlife, and what drives tourists (both photographic and hunting tourists) to visit wildlife areas repeatedly, is in the wildness of the land and the wildness of the animals. Any activity that detracts from that devalues it. A good example of this is the fascination wildlife lovers have with the great wildlife areas of the world versus that of zoos. Most people visit a zoo once in their lifetime but will continue to visit »



TOP: In the majority of African wildlife areas, photographic/game-viewing tourism generates welcome income. **RIGHT:** Tourists on a game drive.



Capturing a bush experience on camera. Africa is a popular wildlife destination for local and overseas tourists. (Photo: Nic de Bruine)

» wildlife areas repeatedly over their entire life. The principle is simple: Humans become bored with things that are controlled and predictable and remain fascinated by those that are not.

Animal rights extremist movement

The second means of devaluing wildlife has been the *animal rights extremist movement*. This is very different from environmentalism and animal welfare. It basically implies that humans have no right to use animals or their products and that animals should have an equal footing on the planet. It can also be described as the anti-sustainable-use movement. This threat is not widely acknowledged or understood, and it is doing great harm to conservation. Many misguided wildlife lovers believe they are saving wildlife by supporting this and are not aware of the unintended consequences of it. It defies planet principles and, therefore, is not rationally feasible for the survival of the planet.

It emerged and has established in the new age of communication where, through social media, people are now able to assert themselves and influence various discussions and debates, even those where they are not qualified to do so. Previously, conservation decisions were made by those trained and experienced in the field, but today, that is not the case. The failing of modern conservation has been to not embrace the age of communication, to tell its story, and to reach out and educate society. This has to change.

So, how is the animal rights extremist movement impacting very negatively on conservation? Simple: It is reducing the ability of wildlife managers to give value to wildlife and wild land, and here is how this



Gentle giant of the bushveld. (Photo: Johan van Wyk)

is happening.

In the majority of African wildlife areas, which include all national parks, game reserves, conservancies and game ranches, the primary way to viably generate income is tourism. This is done through photographic/game-viewing tourism and hunting tourism.

Photo/game-viewing tourism

From an economic and ecological perspective, not all habitat where wildlife occurs in Africa is productive enough to sustain the photographic/game-viewing tourism model. A good example of this is the *productivity gradient* (based mostly on soils and rainfall), which decreases from south to north in the wildlife areas adjacent to the KNP.

What this means is, as you travel north, the areas become drier and the land becomes less productive, and, consequently, animal densities decline. A photographic/game-viewing operation depends on great game viewing to keep tourists satisfied. This is directly linked to the occupancies and economic success of the operation. There also needs to be sufficient groundwater (from boreholes) to meet the needs of the

tourists and the staff staying there. This is approximately 400 litres per person per day.

If these two factors are not present, it is not economically and ecologically viable, and another wildlife-based land-use model needs to be established. If there is not another acceptable wildlife-based land-use model, then wildlife is replaced, and we get land-use change.

Added to this, the majority of photographic and game-viewing tourists do not go to remote areas. Ask yourselves the question: If you won a photographic/game-viewing safari to Africa, where would you go? I've posed this question to many people who aspire to go on a safari to Africa, and the answers are overwhelming. More than 95% of them chose one of three wildlife areas – either the Serengeti system, the Okavango system or the Kruger National Park system. Now have a look on the map as to what these three areas represent. It's actually a very small portion of the protected areas in Africa!

These people's choices are influenced by:

- marketing by the TV wildlife channels because of the abundant wildlife;

- ease of access related to infrastructure, such as international airports and tarred roads; and
- regional stability (safety).

If the photo/game-viewing tourism model is not viable, then how are most wildlife areas in Africa going to generate revenue sustainably and provide benefits to the local people? This is the role of responsibly practised trophy hunting!

Trophy hunting

Urban-dwelling, privileged people often have a very negative view of trophy hunting. When asked to explain what exactly trophy hunting is, not many people are able to do so, and those that have any "facts" are usually short of the real facts.

Now here is a fact: When one has a viewpoint based on a picture in one's mind and yet one cannot articulate the facts to verbally support this viewpoint, then the reality is that your viewpoint is a product of propaganda. In this case, the anti-hunting propaganda is being perpetuated by the animal rights extremist NGOs and journalists.

Here are a few of the real facts related to trophy hunting:

- The word "trophy", when used in the context of hunting, is misunderstood. The common disconnected urban interpretation of the word "trophy" is a prize for having won a contest.
- The "trophies" in the hunting context are actually "mementos" of the hunting experience. The mementos include horns, skins, skulls, photos, videos, meat, and memories of the experience from the hunt. Like all resource use, the important thing is whether these mementos are acquired in a responsible and sustainable

THE REAL THREAT TO WILDLIFE - THE FACTS FROM A GAME RANGER

The rangelands of the world are kept productive and sustainable by hoofed animals such as these buffalo. (Photo: Nic de Bruine)



manner. Why do we not care about the impacts of the other mementos that tourists acquire when visiting different parts of the world? I visited Scotland a few years ago, and the memento I brought home was a bottle of whisky. The impact of whisky production has meant that vast tracts of Great Britain have been cleared of wildlife and indigenous vegetation, and this has been replaced by something of greater value, barley farming, to produce whisky!

- Whether it's hunting for meat or a trophy, an animal is harvested.
- Trophy hunters utilise the whole carcass, the same as meat hunters.
- The value of a Cape buffalo hunted as *meat* is about R10 000 (approximately US\$ 650), compared to R350 000 (around US\$ 25 000) when hunted as a *trophy*. As a wildlife manager, which income would you rather receive for the utilisation of one buffalo?
- Is trophy hunting any less or more ethical than golf or the host of other activities mankind happily engages in? Think of the impacts associated with a golf course (water use, herbicides, pesticides, clearing of indigenous bush and the animals living there).

- Are you familiar with the word "complicit"? It is extremely relevant. When we eat meat, we are complicit in the living conditions and the killing of those animals that produced the meat. Conversely, when we eat vegetables, we are complicit in the killing of animals, deforestation, desertification tending ploughing of soil, and the insect holocaust when crops are sprayed. These are the realities of modern intensive agriculture and the production of most of our food. The fact is, "by proxy" we are all farmers, and we are all hunters. It is not possible to live free from impact!
- 100 years ago, when the world was a lot healthier, the hunter was the hero in the village; today, he's the villain. This is because mankind has lost touch with what it takes to survive on planet Earth and the realities of our daily existence. Hunting is a natural process.
- What man values has a direct reflection on the land use you see around you. In South Africa, we have previously given great value to wildlife, so much so that we have approximately 19 million hectares of land under the land use of wildlife, and the huge KNP is merely 2 million hectares of this. Approximately 50% of these

19 million hectares generates income from hunting tourism. Giving value to wildlife means that one sees wildlife everywhere when driving through our beautiful country. When driving around most developed countries where they have devalued wildlife, it has been replaced. The United Kingdom is a case in point.

- Banning trophy hunting does not result in another use of the wildlife. Rather, it devalues wildlife and results in land-use change!

So, as rational and responsible wildlife lovers, what should be the real issues that we discuss when the topic turns to hunting? They are just the same as those we used to assess why poaching is unsustainable, namely:

- **Ecologically:** Are the hunting quotas in terms of number, age class and genetics sustainable? What was the water use, the waste and the carbon footprint generated by the activity, and is the area being managed regeneratively and kept *wild*? Simply put, was the resource use and the land management sustainable?
- **Economically:** What was the monetary value brought in by the hunt? Is this what the consumed resources are worth? Was the revenue generated used in the stewardship of the wildlife

system? And did society (especially those communities living with the wildlife) receive benefit from it?

- **Socially:** Was the hunting conducted in an ethical (respectful and humane) and lawful manner?

What is ironic is that those passionate about wildlife are so focused these days on hunting and the negative issues associated with a few isolated botched hunts that they overlook the impacts of other resource use going on in wildlife areas. One never sees the articles about the photographic/game-viewing industry, such as "Outrage over lodge water use and pumping boreholes dry" or "Outrage over off-road driving". The reality of the photographic/game-viewing industry is that most lodges use well over one million litres of water per month, and the off-road driving results in the death of plants and causes erosion if not managed properly. Are water and plants not just as precious as the lives of animals?

The real issue should be whether or not wildlife thrives! So, let's stop trying to ban hunting and the imports of trophies from hunting, and start working towards understanding what the responsible principles of resource use are, then apply them to *all* wildlife areas, and give wildlife back its value – otherwise, it will soon be gone! 🌐

Bosveldgewere en -kalibers

KOM ONS SKEI DIE KAF VAN DIE KORING AS DIT
BY GEWERE EN KALIBERS VIR DIE BOS KOM.

Ek het al meermale gestaan en luister hoe jagters met mekaar oor sekere kalibers argumenteer. Dis een van daardie nimmereindigende debatte met geen einde in sig nie, en in baie gevalle is diegene wat argumenteer nie net onkundig nie, maar ook ietwat naïef as dit kom by die plek waar eksterne ballistiek en doodmaakvermoë mekaar ontmoet. Insge-lyks die kwessie van 'n "bosgeweer". Ek het al dikwels in 'n geweerwinkel na 'n bepaalde geweer staan en kyk, net om iemand te hoor sê dat dit 'n ideale bosgeweer sal maak.

Hierdie Zoeloelandse njala is met 'n .318 Westley Richards, gelaai met 'n 250 grein Woodleigh-koeël, gejag. Dis 'n uitstekende kombinasie vir die bos.



BO: Dis in omstandighede soos hierdie waar 'n teleskoop met 'n verligte kruisdraad tot sy reg kom. Die blouwildebees se vel is donker en hy staan in diep skaduwee. 'n Verligte kruisdraad sal help om die koeël op die regte plek te plaas.

REGS: Hierdie swartwitpens bied 'n skietkans, maar dit sal 'n kaliber verg wat goed penetreer om teen hierdie hoek die koeël by die bok se enjinkamer uit te kry.



Derhalwe het ek besluit dis dalk tyd om met 'n bietjie meer aandag te kyk na wat 'n bosgeweer en -kaliber is, of liever, dalk nie is nie.

DIE GROOT VERSKIL

Ek dink die eerste groot verskil tussen 'n "vlaktekakaliber" en 'n "bosveldkaliber" lê in die aanwending van die betrokke kaliber. Op die oop vlaktes van die Vrystaat, Karoo en Kalahari is skietafstande tot so ver as 300 meter niks snaaks nie; ander faktore soos wind speel ook hier 'n rol. Om hierdie rede verkies ek gesoute

vlaktejag-kalibers soos die .25-06 Remington, .270 Winchester en 7x64 Brenneke, asook die verskeie 7mm's en .300 Magnums, gelaai met aërodinamiese koeëls teen flinke trompsnelhede. 'n Springbokram op 250 meter op die oop vlaktes met die

windjie wat begin stoot, verg 'n bietjie dinkwerk. Dis helaas nie altyd so maklik onder sulke omstandighede om net die geweer op te tel en die sneller te druk nie.

As ons egter dieselfde vlaktegeweër, by wyse van spreke, bos toe vat, verander die

prentjie ewe skielik. Kom ons gebruik die .300 Winchester Magnum as voorbeeld: 'n Goeie vlaktelading vir hierdie warm Amerikaanse nommer is 'n 180 grein-koeël teen ongeveer 3 000 vps. Hierdie kombinasie werk goed vir gemsbokke in die Kalahari, swart- »



Teleskope met 'n verligte kruisdraad, soos hierdie Leupold VX-5HD, maak dit makliker om moeilike skote in die bos suksesvol te skiet.

» wildebeeste op die oop vlaktes, en selfs vir elande met goeie skootplasing. Daar is uiteraard min kans dat takke of blare tussen die koeël en die bok sal beland. Daarbene-

wens het die koeël op langer afstande al redelik spoed verloor, wat vleisskade beperk, en die jagter het terselfdertyd die voordeel van 'n platter trajek gehad. Op die vlaktes is

die .300 dus in sy element, maar in Musina se digte mopaniebosse lyk die prentjie ietwat anders!

In die bos is skietafstande selde verder as sowat 150 me-

ter en meer dikwels veel korter. Die .300 se koeëls tref dus 'n bok teen 'n heelwat hoër spoed. Die noodwendige gevolg is drasties meer vleisskade, tesame met 'n afname in koeëlprestasie. Ek is oortuig dat dit die gebruik van die verskillende .300's op kort afstande op wild is wat baie jagters van hulle afskrik. Dit is egter geensins die kaliber se skuld nie, eerder net die aanwending daarvan.

Al is 'n .300 en die ander warmpatat-kalibers nie noodwendig die beste keuse vir die bos nie, is daar tog baie jagters wat hulle suksesvol in die bos aanwend. Sommige is versigtig om hul skote só te plaas dat die vleisskade min is; ander weer gebruik swaarder koeëls wat stadiger trek. Goeie skootplasing was nog altyd 'n voorvereiste vir sukses in die jagveld, ongeag waar die jag plaasvind. My ontdekking is egter dat 'n mens



Hierdie is die 250 grein Woodleigh-koeël vanuit 'n .318 Westley Richards waarna in die teks verwys word, wat amper dwarsdeur 'n groot vlakvarkbeer gepenetreer het.



Die tradisionele Mauserkalibers het met rede uitstekende reputasies in Afrika opgebou. Hier is, van links na regs, die 7x57, 8x57 JS, 9x57 en 9,3x62. Heel regs is 'n .375 H&H vir skaal.



Daar is 'n hele paar kalibers wat uitstekend werk in die bos met die regte ammunisie en as die skut sy deel doen. Hier, van links na regs, is die .308 Winchester, .30-06, .318 Westley Richards, 9,3x62 en .375 H&H.

soms vinnig van 'n kans gebruik moet maak. Dit gaan dus op 'n stadium onafwendbaar gebeur dat 'n rooibok op 'n kort afstand 'n bladskoot uit die .300 gaan kry, met die verwagte gevolge.

MEER GESKIKTE KANDIDATE

Ek het reeds genoem dat skietafstande in die bosveld selde verder as 150 meter is, en meer dikwels heelwat korter. Dit is derhalwe onnodig om 'n kaliber met oormatige trompsnel-

heid in die bos te gebruik.

'n Vriend van my het onlangs die opmerking gemaak dat die Mauser-sportgewere wat tot en met die Tweede Wêreldoorlog in Mauser se eie kalibers vervaardig is, almal

min of meer dieselfde ballistiese resep gevolg het: Almal het koeëls wat redelik swaar was vir die betrokke kalibers teen ongeveer 2 300 vps of stadiger geskiet. Dit sluit in die 7x57 (175 grein-koeël), 8x57 (220 grein-koeël), 9x57 (245 grein-koeël) en die 9,3x62 (285 grein-koeël). Bykans al hierdie kalibers het uitstekende reputasies in Afrika opgebou en is vandag nog in algemene gebruik. Daar is 'n rede hiervoor.

As ons na die Mauser-“resep” (by gebrek aan 'n beter beskrywing) kyk, is dit duidelik dat die standaardkoeëls waarmee destyds se fabrieksammunisie gelaai is, oor uitstekende seksionele digtheid beskik. Aangesien daar destyds nie so iets soos 'n premium-koeël, waaraan ons vandag gewoon is, bestaan het nie, was al die Mauser-kalibers met konvensionele sagteneus-, loodkernkoeëls gelaai. Die goeie seksionele digtheid en matige trompsnelheid het mekaar aangevul om goeie koeëlprestasie en uitstekende penetrasie te verseker. Dié kombinasie is tot vandag toe 'n wenner en dit is dus veilig om aan te neem dat koeëls met goeie seksionele digtheid, tesame met matige trompsnelheid, twee van die belangrike bestanddele van die ideale boskaliber is.

Behalwe goeie seksionele digtheid en matige trompsnelheid, is daar myns insiens ook 'n derde bestanddeel wat in ag geneem behoort te word: goeie koeëlkonstruksie. Ek weet ek het in die vorige paragraaf geskryf dat konvensionele loodkernkoeëls in baie gevalle goed werk as die trompsnelheid matig gehou word, maar dis ook 'n feit dat ons as jagters vandag toegang het tot wonderlike premium-jagkoeëls; iets wat nie in die verlede die geval was nie. »

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» Premiumkoeëls bied bepaalde voordele as dit by jag kom. Eerstens is hulle só ontwerp dat hulle goed omklink met 'n groot frontale area, wat op sy beurt 'n groter wondkanaal veroorsaak. Tweedens behou dié soort koeëls hul gewig en penetreer gewoonlik uitstekend, selfs al tref hulle groot bene ná impak. Derdens breek premiumkoeëls, danksy hul konstruksie, nie op en verander in skrapnel nie, wat dus minder vleisskade veroorsaak. Ek weet premiumkoeëls is duurder as “gewone” koeëls,

maar die koeël is een van die goedkoper elemente as die somme aan die einde van die jag gemaak word. Volgens my is hulle elke sent werd.

Ek het 'n paar jaar gelede 'n goeie illustrasie gekry van hoe effektief die kombinasie van goeie koeëlkonstruksie, seksionele digtheid en matige trompsnelheid in die bos kan wees. Een van my geliefkoosde jagkalibers is die byna vergete .318 Westley Richards. Die .318 skiet 'n 250 grein-koeël (.330"-deursnit) met 'n uitstekende seksionele digt-

heid van .328 teen 'n besadigde 2 300 vps, maar dis een van die dodelikste kalibers waarmee ek al ooit gejag het. Gelaai met 'n 250 grein Woodleigh-sagteneuskoeël, is dit nogal 'n stryd om 'n omgeklinkte koeël te herwin – hulle vlieg doeltreffend dwarsdeur die meeste diere, met bitter min vleisskade.

Ek het een oggend in die digte bosse naby Hluhluwe 'n vlakvarkbeer wat in lang gras gestaan het, met die .318 geskiet. Ek het my egter effens misgis met die hoek waarteen

die vark gestaan het, en die koeël het hom op die regterboud, skuins van agter, getref. Hy het nietemin in sy spore neergeslaan en tot my verbasing kon ons nie 'n uitgangswond iewers sien nie. Die raaisel is kort daarna opgelos toe ons die dier afgeslag het. Daardie Woodleigh-koeël het letterlik dwarsdeur die beer gepenetreer en ons het die perfek omgeklinkte koeël agter sy kop gekry! Dit het nie net op uitstekende koeëlprestasie gedui nie, maar ook op die .318 se vermoëns as kaliber. Soos 'n Australiese vriend van my op 'n keer oor dié kaliber opgemerk het: *“The old .318 punches above its weight.”* Inderdaad, maar dieselfde kan van 'n paar ander kalibers ook gesê word.

KALIBERS WAT DIE WERK SAL DOEN

Voor almal dalk dink dat ek die .318 as die boskaliber van keuse aanbeveel, wees asseblief gerus dat daar vandag 'n wye spektrum uiters geskikte kalibers is wat almal die werk sal doen en waarvoor ammunisie vryelik beskikbaar is.

Aan die onderkant van die spektrum werk die matiger 6,5-kalibers soos die .260 Remington, 6,5 Creedmoor en 6,5x55 Sweedse Mauser baie goed met swaarder koeëls (140-160 grein). Terugskop is matig en aangesien die 6,5's deesdae nogal die *“flavour of the month”* is, is ammunisie en komponente vryelik beskikbaar. As ons opbeweeg na die 7mm, is die 7-08 Remington 'n goeie keuse. So ook die immergroen 7x57 Mauser. Ek het baie bokke geskiet met dié kombinasie van 'n 175 grein-koeël teen 2 400 vps in die 7x57 en dit werk uitstekend. Die .270 Winchester, gelaai met swaar 160 grein-koeëls, werk ook uitstekend in die bos.

As ons na die groter kali-



Hierdie koedoe is in digte bosse met 'n .30-06, gelaai met 180 grein-koeëls gejag.

bers kyk, is beide die .308 Winchester en .30-06 goeie keuses. Die .308 sukkel soms met die baie swaar (220 grein) .308"-koeëls, maar die .30-06 hanteer hulle goed. Die verskillende .300 Magnums kan ook met 220 grein-koeëls gelaai word, maar die spoed bly steeds aan die hoë kant en, soos genoem, kom hulle eintlik op die oop vlaktes tot hul reg.

As ons selfs groter gaan, is daar verskeie van die 8mm's wat goeie kandidate is en so ook minder bekende nommers (ten minste in Suid-Afrika) soos die .338-06 en .35 Whelen. Die 9,3x62 Mauser is loshande een van die beste boskalibers van alle tye en selfs grootwild soos buffels en olifante het al voor die onder-skatte 9,3 die knie gebuig. Die .375 H&H met 300 grein-koeëls is ook 'n goeie keuse en alhoewel die .375 te veel geweer vir sommige is, het hierdie kaliber nie verniet 'n wonderlike reputasie in die jagveld nie.

Baie jagters jag met swaar-kaliber-gewere soos die .404 Jeffery, .416 Rigby en .470 NE in die bos. Mits die skut die terugskop kan hanteer, het ek geen probleem daarmee nie. Die groot kalibers skiet as 'n reël groot, swaar koeëls teen matige trompsnelhede en veroorsaak gewoonlik min vleiskade, gepaardgaande met wonderlike penetrasie. Volgens my is daar nie eintlik iets soos te veel geweer nie; dis eerder die skut se vermoëns en kennis van sy geweer wat die deurslag gee.

Daar heers 'n wanopvatting by sekere jagters dat van die groter kalibers dwarsdeur takke en bosse kan skiet en steeds by die prooi sal uitkom. Dit is nie so nie. Elke kaliber, klein of groot, kan deur 'n obstruksie tussen die jagter en die bok van koers af gedeflekteer word. Vermoed dus tot elke prys

obstruksies en onthou dat daar nie werklik iets soos, om die Amerikaanse term te gebruik, 'n "brush buster" is nie.

DIE BOSGEWEER

Vir die vlaktejagter, wat dikwels van die bakkie af of dalk vanuit 'n voorsitposisie skiet, is faktore soos sy geweer se gewig en looplengte van belang ten einde die perfekte skoot te kan skiet. Gewere met langer lope is in staat tot hoër trompsnelhede en is dus 'n aanwinst op die vlaktes. In die bos is dieselfde dinge ook belangrik, maar om ander redes.

Die meeste bosjagters, die uwe inkluis, is by voorkeur stapjagters en om koes-koes met 'n swaar geweer met 'n groot teleskoop en lang loop in digte bosse te loop en jag, is beslis nie my idee van pret nie. Ek is dus 'n voorstander van gewere met lope nie langer as 24" nie wanneer bos toe gegaan word. Inteendeel, lope kan selfs korter wees sonder enige verlies aan effektiwiteit op die afstande waarop geskiet word. Kortere gewere is gewoonlik ligter en lekker handig en hang ook laer oor die skouer – iets wat goed te pas kom as 'n mens heeldag

moet loop en buk om onder takke en bosse deur te beweeg. Wat gewig betref, verkies ek gewere aan die ligter kant om dieselfde redes: Hulle is gemaklik om te dra en hanteer gewoonlik baie lekker.

GESKIKTE TELESKOPE

Aangesien die skietafstande in die bos gewoonlik nie baie ver is nie, is dit nie nodig om meer glas op jou gekose geweer te monteer as wat nodig is nie. My pa het vir baie jare net vaste 4x-vergroting-teleskope op omtrent al sy gewere gemonteer en hy het mooi met hulle in die bos reggekom. Ek moet bysê dat baie jagters tot 'n dekade of twee gelede maar min vertrou in teleskope met verstelbare vergrotings gehad het en dat vastevergroting-teleskope daarom meer populêr was. Vandag lyk dinge egter ietwat anders.

Ek jag al lank met teleskope van 3-9x- of 3-10x-vergroting op die meeste van my jaggewere. Op sy laagste verstelling is die teleskoop baie handig in die bos en kan skote selfs op baie kort afstande gemaklik geskiet word. Stel die vergroting op na 9x en ewe skielik is die skoot na die

koedoebul wat onder in die leegte in die pad staan, 'n werklikheid. My advies in dié verband is om eerder 'n ietwat laer vergroting maar beter kwaliteit te kies. Teleskope is deesdae duur items, maar 'n goeie een sal baie jare se betroubare diens lewer en bykans 'n leeftyd hou as dit goed opgepas word.

Iets waaroor ek lank skepties was, maar deesdae nogal nuwe waardering voor gekry het, is 'n teleskoop met 'n verligte kruisdraad. Dit kom handig te pas wanneer 'n donkerkleurige dier soos 'n blou-wildebees in diep skadu staan. Die verligte kruisdraad staan lekker uit teen die dier se vel en is vinnig om te gebruik.

Ek is seker dat daar in die toekoms nog baie ink sal vloei oor die onderwerpe van boskalibers en -gewere. Dis 'n interessante onderwerp waaroor daar baie uiteenlopende opinies is wat deur verskillende ondervindings aangevuur word. Op die ou end behoort 'n mens jou waarskynlik nie net tot een geweer te beperk om 'n bepaalde taak te verrig nie. Elke jagter kort per slot van rekening minstens een geweer vir die bos en een vir die vlaktes! 🎯



Moenie die mite glo dat sekere kalibers dwarsdeur takke, gras en ander obstruksies kan skiet en steeds by die teiken uitkom nie! Hierdie koedoekoei bied bykans geen skietkans vir 'n skoot in die hart/long-area nie.



The legendary Puma White Hunter knife – revered by hunters and collectors alike.

Puma – a household name

A FAMOUS NAME IN KNIFE-MAKING STILL GOING STRONG IN AFRICA



All Puma blades are individually tested for hardness before shipping, as the sticker on the blade of this Puma IP knife confirms.

There can be very few names in knife-making with the same ring to it as that of Puma. Puma knives have been known for many years as

top-quality products that will last a lifetime. Some of their products, such as the well-known White Hunter knife, have become collector's items much cherished by many a knife collector. With a history of knife-making dating back to 1769, Puma remains one of the preeminent knife manufacturers in Europe today.

Inyathi Sporting Supplies, importer of Puma knives into South Africa, presently imports two lines of Puma knives into the country. The first is the Puma IP (International Production) line of knives, manufactured since 2003. These are produced by Puma Solingen in conjunction with selected international manufacturers,

with Puma still supervising design, production, and quality control. Puma IP knives not only make use of traditional staghorn handles; hardy olivewood, native to southern Europe, is also used on some of the knives in the line-up. The Puma IP knife range fills a void in the hunting knife market, where quality and affordability meet, and offers excellent value for money.

In addition to the IP series, Puma's traditional finest-quality hunting knives are also available in South Africa. As in the past, these knives are aimed at the upper end of the market. Manufactured by Puma in Germany from the finest steel (an analysis of the

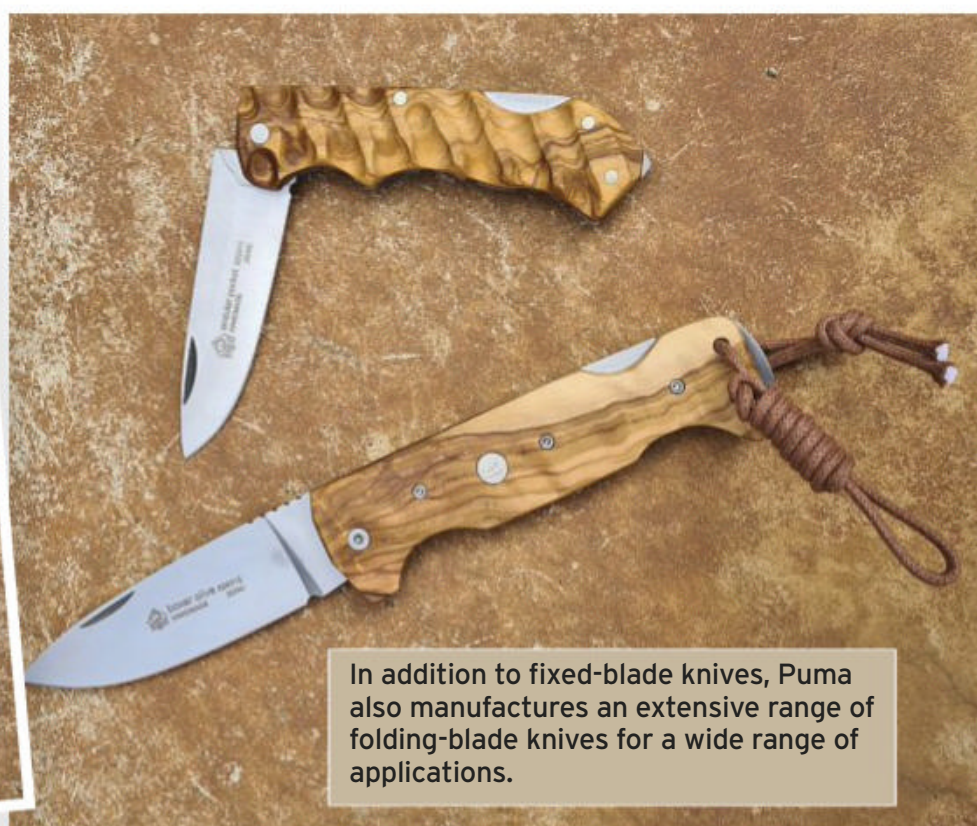
steel used in these knives is available on the Puma website at: www.pumaknives.de) and other raw materials, they are priced accordingly. What the customer gets in return, however, is a knife of uncompromising quality that will last a lifetime.

Before shipping, Puma knives are treated for Rockwell hardness and are marked accordingly on the blade – Puma calls it the “Rockwell dot”. They also carry a factory warranty for a period of five years from the date of purchase.

If your local dealer does not stock Puma knives, ask them to call Inyathi Sporting Supplies on 012-808-9911. ☎



A Puma IP fixed-blade hunting knife with an olivewood handle. Note the neat leather pouch.



In addition to fixed-blade knives, Puma also manufactures an extensive range of folding-blade knives for a wide range of applications.

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Hornady

DGX® BONDED

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The bonding process locks the jacket and lead core together, improving the retained weight of the expanded bullet.



Available at all participating dealers. Contact Inyathi to locate your nearest dealer.



Daardie tyd van die jaar

DIE VERLANGE NA DIE JAGVELD IS IETS WAT NET DIE HART VAN 'N WARE JAGTER KAN VERSTAAN.

Dis weer daardie tyd van die jaar... Dit begin sommer aan die einde van Maart wanneer die dae begin koeler word en jy smiddae van die werk af kom en oplet dat die eerste bome se blare besig is om te verkleur. Daardie tyd van die jaar duur gewoonlik die hele April totdat die jagseisoen in die meeste van die provinsies uiteindelik oopmaak. Dis 'n tyd waarin die groot verlang na jou gunstelingjagplek jou sommer skielik oorval. Dit kan helder oordag op kantoor gebeur wanneer jy in jou etensuur vinnig deur 'n jagtydskrif blaai en by die jaggeleenthede vir die jaar vashaak, of lank ná middernag wanneer jy nie kan slaap nie en wakker lê oor daardie 60"-koedoebul wat jou nog altyd bly ontwyk, of tydens Sondagmiddag se braai

ná kerk as jy daardie laaste sakkie Alldays-hout aan die brand steek en windaf oorval word deur daardie unieke, onmiskenbare reuk van 'n harde-kool-bosveldvuur.

DIE GEWEERKLUIS

Dis dan wanneer jy na die geweerkluis in die studeerkamer stap en senuweeagtig met die sleutels aan die bos vroetel om die regte een raak te vat. As die kluisdeur egter geluidloos oopswaai en jy die bekende reuk van Youngs "303"-geweerolie kry, weet jy daar is 'n kans dat die kole dalk al koud gaan wees voor jy na die braaivleisvuur terugkeer. En as jy dan eers jou hartsgeweer tussen al die ander gewere uit die kluis haal en die littekens op sy houtkolf weer ou jagverhale in jou binneste laat herleef en aangename herinne-



Om die kampvuur te geniet ná 'n dag in die jagveld is so onlosmaaklik deel van die jagondervinding soos die jag self.

FOTO ONDER: Die rooi duine van die Kalahari het 'n bekoring van hulle eie.



ringe aan die jagveld uit die skatkamers van jou hart op-diep, besef jy dat vroulied van-dag sal moet braai, anders word daar nie geëet nie.

Vir Lucas Potgieter het daardie tyd van die jaar tydens 'n stadspartytjie aangebreek waar sakemense onthaal is. Bo al die blinkleerskoene en bakkebaarde was daar ook bankbalanse en balansstate. Dis toe dat die hunkering na die wye en wilde wêreld – na die Bosveld – hom oorval het en van hom, die stadsmens, 'n alleenmens gemaak het: “Dan kom die groot verlang na my sitplek in die holte van die wildevy, na my swartgebrande keteltjie wat ek op die kole staangemaak het, na my ou swaar kaliber wat eenkant teen die droë stomp leun, en na die hiëna wat van die rivier se kant af eers brullend en dan kekkelend sy gekkigheid oor die leegtes uitbasuin.”¹

BOEKE EN PLEKNAME

Daardie tyd van die jaar loop 'n mens se gedagtes somer vanself “terug op die verpaaie”² nes P.J. Schoeman s'n. Jy trap “spore wat nie toewaaie nie”³ langs die Swart Umfolozirivier in KwaZulu-Natal en sien voor jou geestesoor die buffelhorings wat in die son blink. Of jy haal 'n Doc Immelman-boek van die boekrak langs die kaggel af en ry saam met sy karakters in die Land-Rover na die vee-pos. Daar haal jy die Mauser of Mannlicher agter die sitplek uit, stop 'n paar patrone in jou broeksak en stap saam met die Nama-beeswagter op die spore van die koedoes wat gisteraand met die omuramba afgekom het.

Daardie tyd van die jaar verlustig jy jou in die bekoring wat sekere plekname in Suidelike Afrika inhou. Omaruru en Otjiwarongo, Alldays en Askham klink mos net baie



Die glimlag sê alles! Baie weke se afwagting lei tot sukses wat net 'n jagter sal verstaan.

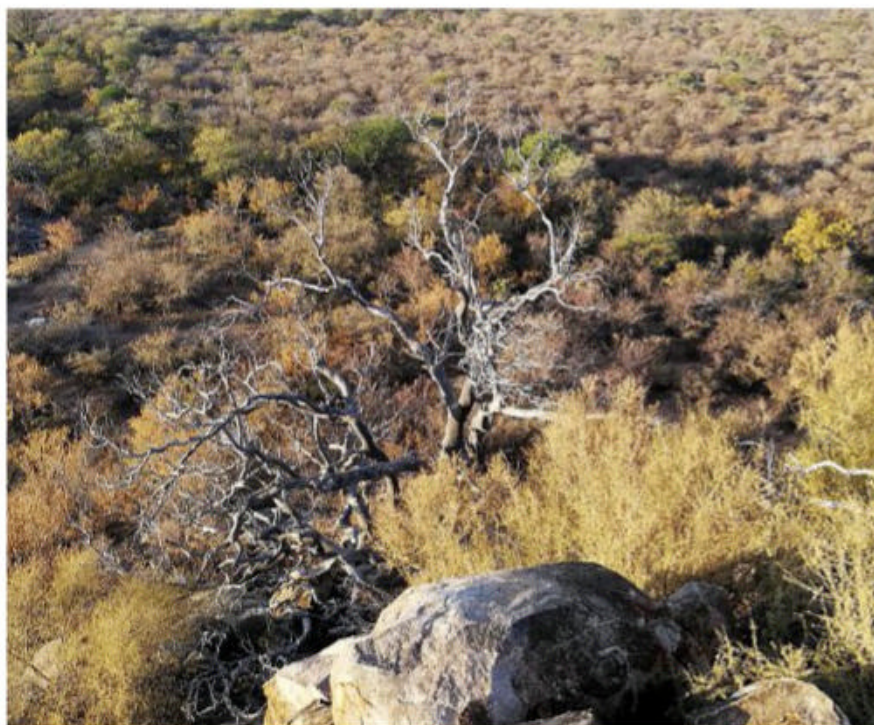
beter as Brandfort en Bloemfontein, en die Kaokoveld en die Zambezidelte laat jou hunker na jagsafari's uit 'n vervloë era. Selfs die vasteland se naam, Afrika, het 'n sekere klank wat jou drome oor grootwild laat droom en gesigte laat sien van 'n Rowland Ward-trofee teen die stoepmuur of stringe biltong onder die afdak. Dis 'n bekoring wat net die vasteland van Afrika inhou; Europa of Amerika kan nie daarmee vergelyk word nie.

ROEPSTEM VAN DIE NATUUR

Daardie tyd van die jaar is moeilik. Jy wens letterlik die tyd verby sodat jy die roep van die natuur kan beantwoord en saam met jou jagmaat in die rooi sand van die Kalahari in die skadu van die groot ou kameeldoring kan sit en wag vir die ribbetjie wat eenkant op die kole sis. Of in die nag onder die oop sterreheemel langs die kampvuur in die droë rivierbedding word daar gesels oor die dag se jag wat verby is. Die ver skoot op die

pragtige springbokram wat jy toe nie gewaag het nie, die naby skoot op die gemsbok aan die voet van die duin wat jy ook nie gevat het nie omdat jy die mooi van daardie oomblik vir altyd in jou geheue wou vaslê. Maar jy is innig dankbaar omdat een van die patrone uit die nuwe pakkie die koedoebul in sy spore laat omval het.

Dis 'n moeilike tyd omdat dit so sleepvoet verbygaan, maar dit is ook 'n lekker tyd waarin jy die komende winter se jag of jagte kan beplan. Wil jy weer jou tent in die skadu van die ou haak-en-steek aan die voet van die granietskoppie gaan staanmaak, of is jy op soek na 'n nuwe vuurmaakplek waar jou kampvuur se kole nooit sal uitbrand nie? Gaan jy terug na daardie sandwêreld waar jy verlede jaar die groot koedoebul raakgeloop het wat nou nog by jou spook, of is dit tyd vir jou vel-skoene om nuwe spore in 'n onbekende wêreld te trap en vroegoggend vars nuus in kronkelende voetpaaie te lees? Waar hoor jy die roepstem van die natuur die duidelikste? Is dit in digbegroeide boswêreld waar jy gebukkend en koeskoes moet loop om die uit- »



'n Granietskoppie in die bosveld is nie net 'n uitkykpunt nie maar ook 'n baken in die boswêreld.



Sukses in die jagveld bring soete herinneringe wat vir jare daarna nog in die geheue bly.

» geslape elande onder skoot te kry, of verkies jy die ooptes, rooi duine en kameeldorings van die Kalahari? Dalk is dit die savanna-grasvelde van Afrika waar jy jou hart verloor het, of miskien is dit die ribbokke van die koue Suid-Vrystaat wat jou hart warmer laat klop.

Waar dit ook al is, daardie tyd van die jaar gee jy gewoonlik jou gedagtes vrye teuels oor watter spesie jy in watter deel van die Afrika-kontinent wil jag. Dit is gewoonlik net jou begroting wat veroorsaak dat jy daardie gedagtes somer vinnig kortknip. In 'n poging om jou karige begroting te laat klop, stap jy dan met driftige hale na jou herlaikamer waar jy vir die volgende uur of wat seker maak dat jy genoeg ammunisie het vir die jagseisoen wat voorlê en ook genoeg patrone om seker te maak dat jou geweer op skoot is. Dis 'n groot lekerke om daardie tyd van die

jaar na jou plaaslike skietbaan te ry en seker te maak watter lading kruit en grein koeël die beste by jou spesifieke kaliber pas vir die spesie wat jy wil jag en die afstande waaroor jy heel moontlik sal moet skiet. Die heel lekkerste is natuurlik wanneer jy somer vroeg in die jagseisoen vir jou 'n biltongjag in die Vrystaat boek om self te sien oor watter doodmaakvermoë jou herlaaide patrone beskik. Het die koeël diep genoeg gepentreer, het dit genoeg gewig behou, en is jy beïndruk met die minimum vleisskade aan die blesbokkarkas? Dis altyd 'n gerusstelling om te weet presies waartoe jou geweer en ammunisie in staat is wanneer jy op grootwild se spore in digte boskasies stap.

SKIETBAAN TOE

Wanneer jy op die skietbaan is gedurende daardie tyd van die jaar, maak jy ook somer seker dat jou geweer in 'n

goeie werkende toestand is. Jy gebruik ook die tyd om vanaf die skyfskiet-, knakskiet-, dooierus- en uit-die-vuis-posisies op jou teiken aan te lê en seker te maak dat jy gereeld die doodmaakarea tref. In die jagveld is daar nie altyd 'n mik in 'n boom of 'n droë stomp of miershoop beskikbaar wanneer die wyehoringbuffelbul uiteindelik plankdwars draai nie. Dis ook die ideale tyd om jou vuurwapenlisensies na te gaan en seker te maak dat jy oor die nodige jaglisensie, permitte en toestemmingsbriewe beskik.

Daardie tyd van die jaar gee gewoonlik 'n gedoente af om jou jagbaadjie uit jou vrou se hande te red. Die baadjie wat saam met jou op die buffel se bloedspoor in die hoë tamboekiegras gestap het en wat die snerpende koue op die Oos-Kaapse berge van jou lyf af moes weghou. Sy dreig elke jaar om ou Wagter se hok daarmee uit te voer of om

dit aan 'n welsynsorganisasie te skenk, veral wanneer sy op jou afkom waar jy dit uit jou kas haal en verlangend daarna sit en kyk. Jy het ook al geleer om dit nie te durf wag om jou arms so nou en dan gedurende daardie tyd van die jaar op 'n naweek deur sy moue te steek nie, want dan loop jy gevaar om die baadjie of jou vrou finaal te verloor.

FIKSHEID

Die moeilikste deel van daardie tyd van die jaar, behalwe die tyd wat so sleepvoet verbygaan, is om fiks te word vir die jag wat voorlê. Dis nou nie dat jy oefen om 'n marathon te hardloop nie, maar jy moet 'n punt daarvan maak om met die honde te gaan stap, te draf, of fiets te ry. Enigiets wat sal maak dat jy jou gejaagde asem onder beheer kan kry vir 'n doodskoot, of dat jou moeë voete en bene jou lyf, met die rooibok op jou skouers, tot by die kamp sal dra. Jy weet mos of jy in sandwêreld of bergwêreld gaan jag. Maak seker dat jy daarop voorbereid is.

Alles in ag genome, is daardie tyd van die jaar een van die heel lekkerste ondervindings van jou hele jagervaring. Verlang gerus maar 'n bietjie na jou ideale jagwêreld, droom oor daardie blinkhoring-koedoebul met die diep draaie, hunker na die bos, die oop sterreheemel of die kameeraadskap van 'n hardekoolvuur en luister na die taal wat jou hart verstaan...

Voetnote:

1. Potgieter, L., *Staanplekkies langs my geweerpad*, Sigma Press, Pretoria, 1979.
2. Schoeman, P.J., *Terug op die ver paaie*, Voortrekpers, Pretoria, 1962.
3. Schoeman, P.J., *Spore wat nie toewaai nie*, Perskor, Johannesburg, 1979. 🌐

Quality at an affordable price

— SNAPSHOT —

The firm OF Mossberg & Sons from the USA is perhaps better known as a maker of shotguns rather than rifles. Even so, rifles feature prominently in their current production line-up.

Although not necessarily aimed at the higher spectrum of the market, Mossberg bolt-action rifles offer good quality and excellent value for money at affordable prices.

The Mossberg Patriot bolt-action rifle featured here is chambered for the .30-06 and is fitted with a Leupold VX-3i 4,5-14x40 scope. Mossberg and Leupold products are imported into South Africa by Formalito in Pretoria.

KOLSKOOT
BY JOHAN VAN WYK

Avoiding the pitfalls of vintage shotguns

SOMETIMES AN OLD SHOTGUN CAN BE EITHER A PITFALL OR A TREASURE...



TOP: Owning and using a vintage gun in good condition, such as this Damascus-barrelled 12-bore Stephen Grant hammer gun dating from the 1870s, is an absolute joy.

BOTTOM: Proof marks are an important aspect of vintage guns. Although they often appear to be just a jumble of random markings, they are an important indicator of any gun's history and an excellent indicator of the type of ammunition the gun in question was made for. These belong to an ultra-rare Henry Atkin hammer ejector 12-bore, made and originally proofed by the London Proof House in 1884 and subsequently (during the 1950s) reproofed for use with Nitro ammunition.

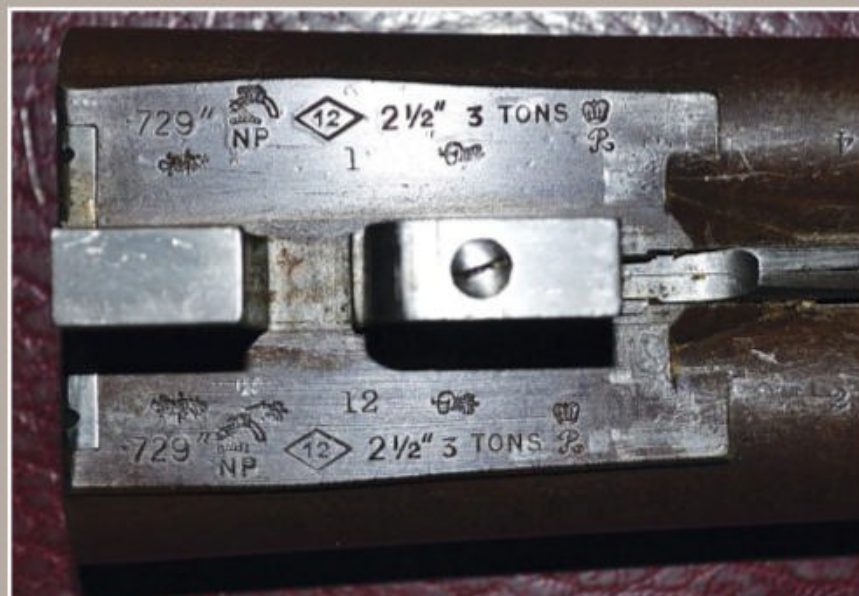
Most reasonable-sized gun shops in South Africa usually have a vintage shotgun or two lurking on the shelves. Almost invariably, these guns are side-by-sides, often considerably older than the shop owners themselves. Therefore, it goes without saying that condition – not only general condition but also the question of whether a particular gun is safe to shoot or not – is of paramount importance to the would-be buyer of such a vintage shotgun.

Having done a fair bit of trading in vintage shotguns over the years and having a few very knowledgeable friends, I have developed a few pointers for evaluating a

gun before taking out the chequebook. These pointers have often come in handy when evaluating a vintage gun. It is usually not too difficult to stave off potential disaster or a bad investment, provided you know what to look for, that is.

BARRELS FIRST AND FOREMOST

The first and foremost consideration should be the barrels – study them very closely! There should be no serious dents or pits. Excessive looseness or play between the barrels and the action is often a definite no-no as well. The problem with corrosion, especially pitting, is that it is often impossible to determine the depth of the damage. The



laws of physics being what they are, a pit mark is, therefore, the ideal place for a disastrous breach of the integrity of the barrels to occur. Seriously pitted barrels should thus be avoided.

The same goes for badly dented barrels. With the help of a dent-raiser, a good gunsmith can repair minor dents relatively easy. However, really deep dongs pose a more serious challenge. Again, the big question is whether the integrity of the barrels has been compromised and whether the gun is still safe to shoot. A deep dent can cause a wad to get stuck in the barrel, with absolutely disastrous consequences if another shell is chambered and fired in that same barrel again. For this reason, my advice is to look not only *through* the barrels of your potential acquisition but to look closely *at* them.

OFF THE FACE

If a gun has been shot off the face, it may well be possible to have it rejoined. In Britain, the most common modus operandi today is to have a new hinge-pin made or, in the case of a gun with a non-removable hinge-pin, to have the lumps built up again, thus bringing the gun back into action. A gun rejoined in this manner will be good again for many years of shooting. Still,

such a repair is expensive and definitely not run-of-the-mill gunsmithing. Many not-so-competent gunsmiths revert to other practices to tighten up old guns, such as peening the lumps and even squeezing the action in a vice. Avoid such “repairs” like the plague! Not only do they cause damage to the gun, they also don’t last much longer than a box or two of ammunition.

BARRELS, AGAIN

The ribs should be firmly attached to the barrels. Fortunately, the test for loose ribs is simple: Remove the fore-end of the gun and detach the barrels. Hold the barrels by the lumps and lightly tap each barrel with a hard object such as a wooden mallet or even a fingernail. If they chime like a bell, the ribs are still firmly attached, and you have one less worry.

Another aspect that, rather surprisingly, often goes unmentioned in the world of vintage guns is barrel wall thickness. Many vintage guns, specifically English game guns, were made with relatively thin barrels to begin with, to save weight. Some makers, especially Boss, specialised in building ultra-lightweight guns and filed their barrels even thinner to save even more weight.

The corrosive ammunition primers of an earlier era caus-



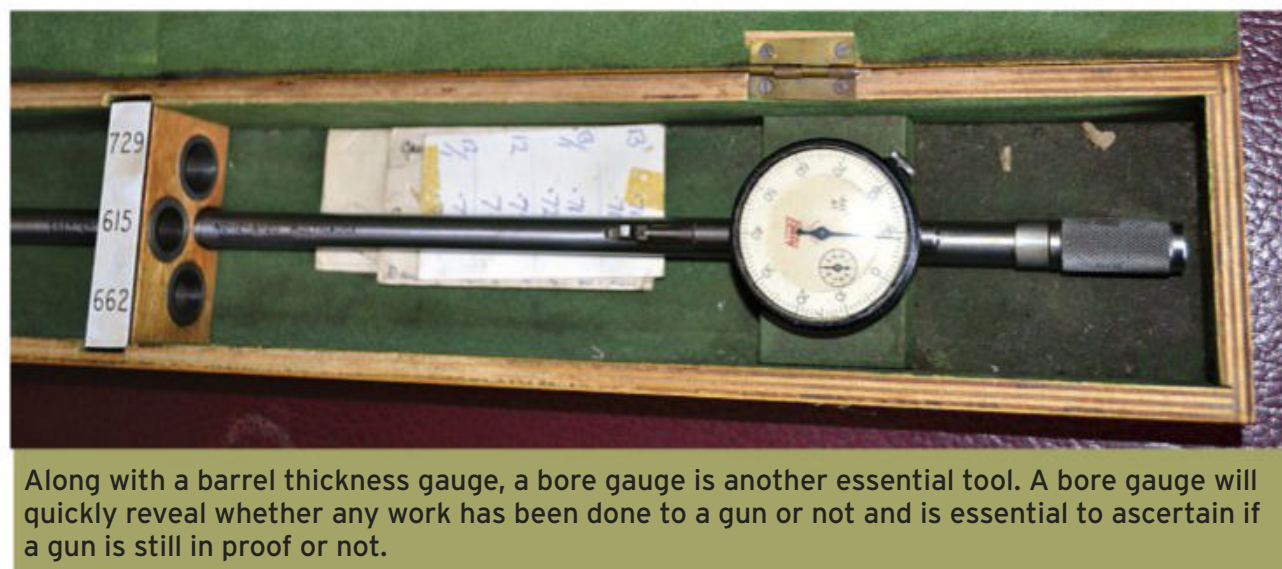
Gun dealer Andrew Tonkin measuring the barrels of a vintage Damascus-barrelled 12-bore gun. A barrel thickness gauge such as this is an essential piece of kit for the dealer who wants to make a living selling old guns and is the prime hedge against disaster in the form of dangerously thin barrels.

ed a great many pitted and rusted shotgun barrels over the years. Many of these damaged barrels were honed out to get rid of the damage.

If done correctly, this practice is a perfectly acceptable repair method. However, as it involves the removal of steel virtually throughout the length of the barrel, the inevitable

result is thinner barrel walls. In the UK, such an alteration also sometimes requires reproof from either of the proof houses in that country.

What is “thin” and what is “thick” in this regard? Although there is no legally established minimum requirement in the UK, it is generally regarded as prudent if a gun has barrel walls the thickness of at least twenty thousandths of an inch at a point a few inches in front of the forcing cones, exactly where the pressure is highest. Barrels thinner than this are not necessarily dangerous if they are in good condition otherwise and used with ammunition loaded to a pressure level that the gun was made for. Nonetheless, they are difficult to repair if dented. When all is said and done, a few thou’ of extra »



Along with a barrel thickness gauge, a bore gauge is another essential tool. A bore gauge will quickly reveal whether any work has been done to a gun or not and is essential to ascertain if a gun is still in proof or not.



Shotgun cartridges come in a wide variety of lengths and are almost without fail loaded to corresponding pressure levels. Here, from left to right, we have a 2½" cartridge, followed by a 2¾" cartridge, a Magnum 3" cartridge, and a mammoth 3½" cartridge loaded with a hefty charge of copper-plated, buffered No 5 shot. It is essential to match the chambers of a gun to the cartridges it was designed to use.

» steel in the right place goes a long way. However, it is remarkable how few dealers in this country possess a barrel-thickness gauge, not to mention bore and chamber gauges.

DAMASCUS VS STEEL

Another subject that regularly causes shivers through the shotgun community is that of Damascus barrels. Damascus was created by rolling, twisting and hammering layers of heated, low-carbon steel and iron around a mandrel. As the mandrel was removed, a perfect barrel was the end result. Damascus barrels were widely used from the late 1700s to the early 1900s when they were superseded by fluid steel. However, along the way, thousands of Damascus-barrelled guns were made in Britain, Germany, France and Belgium, many of which are still with us. Some maintain that a Damascus-barrelled gun is merely an accident waiting to happen, whilst others (present company included) believe that they are just fine if used properly.

In 1891, the Birmingham Proof House carried out exhaustive tests on several barrels of different construction, including Damascus and fluid-

steel barrels of varying qualities. Their experimentation clearly showed that there was virtually nothing to choose between good fluid-steel and Damascus barrels, and that both were fine for use at the pressure levels generated by shotguns. In recent times, Sherman Bell in the US basically replicated these tests with modern proof ammunition and came to the same conclusions.

Having owned several Damascus-barrelled shotguns, I'm of the opinion that vintage Damascus barrels in good, undamaged condition are as safe to use as vintage fluid-steel barrels in similar condition. I go to great pains to use ammunition in my vintage guns that is of the correct length and delivers the same chamber pressures than the guns were proofed for.

I have never had a problem even remotely related to Damascus barrel steel, nor do I foresee any. Good Damascus is good and bad Damascus is bad, just as good fluid steel is good and bad fluid steel is bad. If in doubt, have the barrels inspected by someone with the right equipment and knowledge.

It is remarkable how resil-



The short, sharp forcing cones of the chambers of many vintage guns tend to deliver better patterns with ammunition loaded with fibre wads (left). Plastic wads (right) are a relatively modern invention dating from the 1960s.

ient well-made shotgun barrels can be. A few years ago, an extremely rare and valuable side-by-side 20-bore from a well-known Scottish maker surfaced in South Africa. Although the gun was in pretty poor condition, with surface rust, a cracked stock and shortened Damascus barrels, it was still worth resurrecting because of its rarity. In due course, the gun found its way to one of the London auctions. Along the way, it was rejoined and the barrels were honed out to remove what pitting there was. Although the gun now had barrels of a mere .0009" (yes, no misprint – nine-thousandths of an inch!) thick, it sailed through modern London Nitro Proof and sold for good money after two telephone bidders chased the price through the roof. So much for Damascus steel barrels and their alleged inherent weakness.

ACTIONS

Action-wise, in the unlikely event of the owner of a modern over/under shotgun experiencing technical difficulties, it is usually a relatively simple matter to order replacement parts through the local agents and have a competent gunsmith fit them. However, with a century-old gun made in a factory that last produced guns shortly after the end of

World War II, a request for a replacement mainspring might take longer to be fulfilled! For me, this is one of the bigger potential pitfalls of old guns. Although serious breakages are very rare indeed on well-made guns, they do happen occasionally. When they do, it sometimes takes the proverbial man on a horse to put things right again.

In my experience, people who are really well qualified to carry out specialist repairs such as replacement mainsprings and the like are very rare in South Africa. Therefore, steer clear of a gun with loose ribs, a malfunctioning lock or ejector mechanism, or any other similar defect. Although not necessarily terminal, such defects can be costly and difficult to repair in this country. A good example of this is the hammer/firing pin found on vintage Westley Richards guns. In this design, the firing pin and hammer are machined from one block of steel, and the firing pin is merely an extension that strikes the primer as it falls through the firing-pin hole in the breech face of the action as the trigger is pulled. I have never heard of one of these breaking, but I don't want to be within earshot of the gunsmith tasked to repair one either! Thus, make sure that

the gun you intend to buy is in good mechanical shape before closing the deal.

OTHER POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

There are other alterations that may or may not influence the value and/or shootability of a vintage gun. Guns with lengthened chambers (usually reamed from 2½" to 2¾") are frequently encountered. When done in the UK, such an alteration requires reproof and is dependent on sufficient barrel wall thickness to be safe. With the availability of 2½" shotgun ammunition in SA, it is not a conversion I personally care for or would recommend. Aside from being potentially unsafe (if done by some backyard mechanic who masquerades as a gunsmith), it also destroys the collector's value in the case of a good-quality gun if not done in conjunction with reproof.

Chopped barrels are also a fatal "alteration" in almost every instance. Apart from removing what choke boring a gun may have had, it usually also affects balance and therefore handling.

Woodwork can be somewhat less problematic to sort out. I have seen some seriously cracked stocks repaired so expertly that it was impossible to see any sign of the earlier damage afterwards. Shortening or lengthening a stock is all in a day's work for a competent stocker, as is fitting a replacement recoil pad, if the gun had one, to begin with. If a gun requires complete restocking, though, things could get complicated in a hurry. Properly restocking a double gun is not a job for the novice stocker but requires the skill and know-how of an expert. Inletting on boxlock-actioned guns is slightly easier to do, but sidelocks and some over/under designs

are inherently tricky to inlet. Hence, stockers demand a premium for work of this kind. I would therefore advise anyone against buying a gun that needs restocking unless the inherent value of the gun itself deserves such a drastic make-over or money is no object at all. Adding wood where it's needed, taking wood away where there is a surplus, and even bending a stock are all perfectly acceptable and much more affordable alternatives. When done well, it can transform a sow's ear into something resembling a silk purse that will do just fine on the clay pigeon range, as well as in the field.

sports long chambers but was originally made for use with 2½" chambers, is now out of proof and must be inspected thoroughly for any other misdemeanours it may have been subjected to.

Various publications offer good summaries of the proof marks used currently and in the past throughout the UK and Europe, the most thorough summary being *The Standard Directory of Proof Marks* by Gerhard Wirnsberger. In my humble opinion, it is essential reading for anyone contemplating the study of a subject that could sometimes be frustrating in the extreme.

If you, the prospective buy-

ammunition before investing in caseloads of shotgun ammunition that may not necessarily be the best choice for your gun.

Having done a bit of experimentation in this regard, I have found that, as a general rule, older guns tend to pattern much tighter with ammunition loaded with plastic wads – even to the extent that one of my guns, an English 12-bore boxlock of 1913 vintage with fluid-steel barrels, delivered consistent, almost full-choke patterns with just about every type of ammunition I used in it, even though it was choked Modified and Improved Cylinder. This phenomenon is not a problem at all, just something to bear in mind.

Although vintage side-by-sides, particularly in 12-bore, can often be had at very reasonable prices, keep in mind what you want to use it for before closing the deal.

If the gun is mainly meant for bushpig or some or other similar critter, the use of high-pressure buckshot-loaded cartridges or even slugs is a given. As old guns (especially those with 2½" chambers) and modern, high-pressure cartridges do not, as a rule, make good bedfellows, a vintage gun may not be the correct choice in this instance. Something like a modern pump-action or semi-auto gun would probably be the better choice for this particular application.

On the other hand, if you intend to use the gun in the field in pursuit of such noble game birds as francolin or guinea-fowl, a well-fitting old side-by-side in good condition may very well be exactly what you need.

Just be aware, though – shotgunning is addictive, and once the bug has bitten, one is seldom satisfied with just one gun! 🎯

Many guns of an earlier generation were made with short, sharp forcing cones designed for use with ammunition loaded with fibre wads.

PROOF MARKS

Basic knowledge of the proof marks stamped on guns produced during earlier and modern times throughout the UK and Europe is sometimes handy. It is essential to know what length of cartridge a gun was originally chambered for and the pressure level for which it was proofed. This is the type of information that can be gleaned from the proof marks (usually stamped on the flats of the barrels of a side-by-side, right below the chambers). It is always worth spending a bit of time studying them thoroughly.

Guns sometimes lead adventurous lives, and it is not uncommon for a gun originally made for use with black powder to be reproofed for use with Nitro propellant, or have its bores lapped out, both of which require reproof. Similarly, a gun that now

er, have stumbled upon an old side-by-side in good, shootable condition, and it tugged at your heartstrings the moment you laid eyes on it, with the only cure being to buy it, only one thing remains – to find the correct ammunition for it. Many guns of an earlier generation were made with short, sharp forcing cones designed for use with ammunition loaded with fibre wads. Although some manufacturers still load modern ammunition with fibre wads, they are not necessarily freely available. Therefore, we are often forced to use ammunition loaded with plastic wads instead. I don't have much of a problem with this, but plastic wads do have a rather marked influence on the pattern that a gun will shoot.

So, do yourself a favour and visit your local shooting range. Shoot a few patterns with your gun and a variety of suitable

Teleskoop of oop visier?

'N BELANGRIKE KEUSE VIR DIE JAGTER



Braam by die seekoeibul wat hy met my .375 geskiet het.

Sommige mense skiet maklik raak, maar ek moet baie oefen om dit reg te kry. Nie dat oefen vir my 'n straf is nie – ek hou van skiet!

Ek het my eerste bril in standaard 8 gekry (ons het destyds nog in standers skoolgegaan; grade is gebruik om die deklinasie van 'n hoek aan te dui). Van kleintyd af was dit dus vir my moeilik om op die visier, korrel en teiken te fokus. Geen wonder dat my gewere van meet af met teleskope toegegerus was nie.

'n Groot debat woed altyd oor die kwessie of 'n jagter 'n geweer met of sonder 'n teleskoop moet gebruik as hy gevaarlike wild aandurf. Grootwildjagters uit die era toe teleskope nog nie verstelbare ver-

grotings gehad het nie, het geen goeie woord vir teleskope oor nie. In een artikel skryf 'n grootwildjagter dat hy net die gekwete dier se hare kon sien toe dit op hom afstorm. Hy kon egter glad nie vasstel op watter deel van die lyf sy geweer gerig was nie. Dit het amper sy lewe gekos en hy het net daar besluit om nooit weer gevaarlike wild met 'n teleskoop op sy geweer te jag nie. In 'n ander artikel vertel nog 'n jagter dat hy dieselfde oorgekom het nadat hy vergeet het om die teleskoop na die kleinste vergroting terug te draai. Hy het die vorige dag die geweer gebruik om 'n bok oor 'n ver afstand te skiet. Om hierdie rede het hy ook sy teleskoop afgehaal.

Vir my het 'n teleskoop eg-

ter net voordele. Byna alle skuts vaar beter met 'n teleskoop as met oop visiere. Wanneer 'n dier in die skadu staan, kan hy baie beter met 'n teleskoop geïdentifiseer word. Die mikpunt op sy lyf kan ook duidelik waargeneem word.

As die jagter vergeet om die vergroting af te draai, sal hy waarskynlik ook vergeet om die visier se klappie van 300 na 100 meter af te slaan. As die jagter oefen om met albei oë oop te mik en die vergroting is afgedraai, sal hy hom nie met 'n verkeerde mikpunt op die dier misgis nie. Dit verg dus ook oefening om met 'n teleskoop te jag as jy aan oop visiere gewoond was.

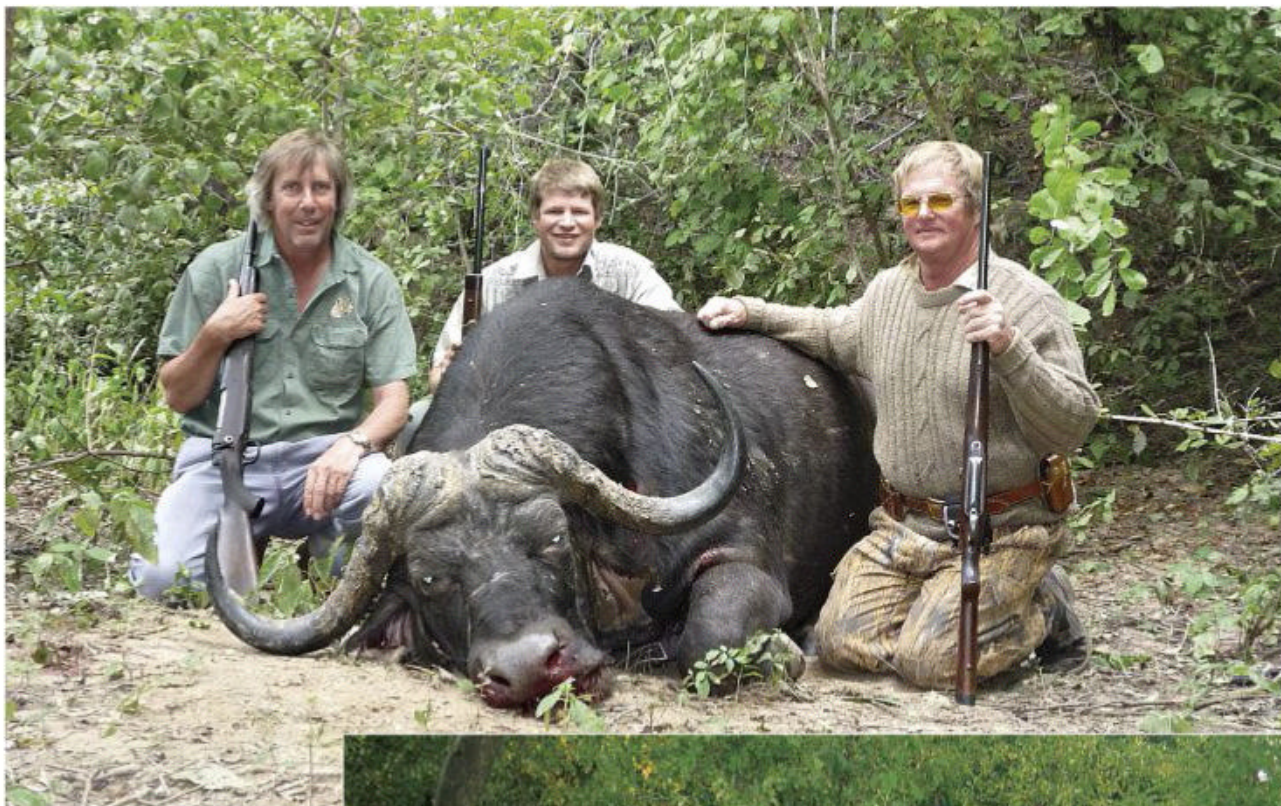
IN DIE VELD

Die Land Cruiser het met 'n

eentonige gedreun stadig in die sagte sand van die Sapi-rivier noordwaarts na die Zambezirivier geploeg. 'n Dringende klop op my skouer van Sam, ons spoorsnyer, het my uit my mymering agter op die bankie geruk. Die *dagha boy* (ou buffelbul) het rustig bo-op die wal gewei. Morkel en Braam het stil voor uit die kajuit geklim en versigtig teen die wal opgekluipt. Met die afklim het my geweerloop met 'n harde "ping" teen die antenne gekap. Die Engelse beskrywing "*If looks could kill*" is 'n onderbeklemtoning van die oë wat my aangegluur het!

Wonder bo wonder het die buffel skynbaar niks gehoor nie. Braam se skoot het eerste geklap en Morkel s'n 'n breukdeel van 'n sekonde daarna. Morkel en Braam het albei weer geskiet en die buffel was nou effens omgekrapt. Ek en Braam het mekaar teen die wal ontmoet – hy was op pad ondertoe en ek op pad boontoe. "*I'm out of ammo*," het hy gefluister. As hy opgewonde raak, is hy lief om die Rooitaal te praat. Sy .505 Gibbs se patrone was op en sy patroonbelt het met die haastige klim uit die bakkie agtergebly.

Bo-op die wal het Morkel en die bul mekaar bekyk. Hy het nog net een patroon in sy .458 Lott oorgehad. Sy magasyn hou net drie, en hy wou die laaste bête indien die buffel storm. Met my skoot uit die .375 het die buffel geval. Braam en Morkel het baie goeie hart/long-skote gevuur. Ek dink die buffel was in elk geval op pad grond toe – my skoot was net 'n bietjie ekstra versekering. Ons kon nie my



BO: Braam, Morkel en Dawie by die buffelbul waarop Dawie die laaste skoot geskiet het. Die koeël is later uit die skedel herwin.

REGS: Ben en Dawie by die seekoei wat Dawie finaal met die .375 geskiet het. 'n Teleskoop op die geweer het die skoot moontlik gemaak.



skoot op die buffel vind nie, maar toe die buffelkop aan die einde van die jagtog opge-laaï word, het Braam iets binne-in die skoongekookte skedel hoor ratel – dit was 'n .375-volmantelkoeël.

Die vorige dag het ons 'n seekoeibul in Nyatchamarapan gewaar. Dit was Ben Jansen se beurt om te skiet en Morkel moes hom rugsteun. Ons het versigtig nader beweeg en tot teen die pan gekruip. Toe die bul sy kop hoog genoeg uit die water lig, het Ben se skoot geklap en Morkel s'n byna on-

middelklik daarna. Ben se skoot was beslis raak. Ons kon aan die borrels sien dat die bul op pad na die oorkantste wal was.

Die bul het weer te voorskyn gekom en nog twee skote is afgevuur. Die borrels het egter getoon dat die dier steeds volstoom van ons af wegbeweeg het. Intussen het ek dooierus gevat deur uit 'n sittende posisie oor my knie aan te lê en die borrels gevolg. Toe die seekoei se kop weer bo die water verskyn, het die kruishaar mooi teen sy agterkop tot stilstand gekom en ek

het die sneller gedruk. Die bul was onmiddellik dood. Wanneer my vriend Roelie Jordaan 'n goeie skoot geskiet het, sê hy altyd 'n blinde hoender kan ook soms 'n mieliepit raak pik. Hierdie keer het die .375 inderdaad raak gepik.

Op 'n ander jagtog in die Zambezivallei het Braam ook my .375 gebruik om 'n seekoei in die Zambezirivier te skiet. Die ou staatmaker het 'n paar goeie, karaktervolle skrape opgedoen terwyl Braam die dier deur 'n digte boskasie op die rivierwal bekruipt het.

By 'n ander geleentheid het Morkel en Braam 'n buffeltrop wat onder skadubome gerus het, bekruipt. Een bul het onder 'n baie digte boom gestaan en Morkel kon nie sy mikpunt duidelik met die oop visier sien nie. Die teleskoop op die .375 het egter weereens die taak vergemaklik en die ou strydros was ná 'n moeilike herwinning op die jagbakkie.

VERSKILLENDE OPSIES

Volgens my sal 'n swaarkaliber-geweer, toegerus met 'n teleskoop waaraan jy gewoond is, beter resultate vir die geleentheidsjagter lewer as 'n geweer met 'n oop visier. Verreweg die meeste jagters gebruik teleskope op hul gewere. Monteer dus maar ook 'n verstelbare of laevergroting-teleskoop op jou grootkaliber.

Vir 'n professionele jagter wat byna daagliks sy dubbelloop met oop visiere gebruik, is dit 'n ander storie. Wanneer hy sy kliënt se lewe moet beskerm, is dit gewoonlik op kort afstand en kan hy instinktief raak skiet.

'n Ander opsie is natuurlik 'n vinnig verwyderbare teleskoop. Daardie weg het ek ook al probeer volg. Die probleem is egter, wat maak 'n mens met die teleskoop as jy dit in die bos afhaal? Dit kort dan ook 'n bêreplek. Jy het reeds 'n verkyker om jou nek, 'n patroonbelt om jou middel, 'n mes iewers aan die belt, 'n sakkie vir jou kamera, nog 'n sakkie vir jou GPS en nou boonop 'n lywige bergplek vir die teleskoop. Al hierdie goed aan jou lyf maak dit moeilik om stil te bekruipt. Afgesien daarvan, haak iets alewig vas as jy deur digte bos beweeg. Om alles te kroon, lyk jy ook nou eerder na 'n Kersboom as 'n jagter! 🌲

A stunning Kalahari sunrise.

Hunting gemsbuck in the red dunes of the Namibian Kalahari

A SPECIAL HUNT IN THE RED DUNES OF THE KALAHARI



Peering over the top of a dune at a distant herd of gemsbuck.



The successful conclusion to a horseback hunt for gemsbuck, substandard bullet performance notwithstanding.

There is just something about the red dunes of the Kalahari. I don't quite know what it is, but it is intoxicating! Maybe it's the vast emptiness, the silence of the grass swaying in the warm morning breeze, the unapologetic rawness of the local people, the cleanness of pure nature, the sociable weavers nesting for a modest living, or the red sand crack-

ing under your boots with the crossing of each dune. Or maybe it's just the splendid and undeniable beauty.

Just recently, I hunted in the southeastern parts of Namibia known as the Kalahari in search of gemsbuck and springbuck in their native habitat. Martin Jansen van Rensburg, owner of Van Rensburg Hunting, arranged this very special hunt for me. The

hunting concession covers more than 50 000 ha – a true Kalahari experience. Casper, an old friend of mine, joined me to film the hunt.

I've hunted the Kalahari on several different occasions before, but this time proved to be unique in many ways. We would be in the veld early, with the sun just creeping over the red dunes. Then we would walk into the wind

slowly, crossing the dunes. With each dune crossing, we would carefully peek over the grass on the dune crest, glassing the "street" ahead. Ideally, we wanted to walk into the wind with the sun behind our backs, but it seldom played out that way.

Despite all the Covid-19 travel restrictions and regulations, we managed to be in the Kalahari at the start of the



TOP: My gemsbuck cow had horns measuring just short of 42". **MIDDLE:** This beautiful Kalahari springbuck was one of the smaller prizes of the hunt. **BOTTOM:** Taking aim at some gemsbuck while lying on the crest of a dune.



hunting season. Although we arrived late at night, we were greeted with a warm, hearty meal – hospitality so typical of the Namibian farmers. Finally, we managed to put a face to the voice of Martin, his wife Tiesie, and their son FJ. We were pleasantly surprised by their humour, hospitality, and honest kindness. This really felt like our home away from home as we unpacked close to midnight in the camp nestled next to a red dune. The promise of new memories lingered in the air and spurred excitement for what was to come in the next few days!

THE FIRST MORNING

On the first morning, we sighted in the .270 and .243 (both mounted with Schmidt und Bender 8x56 optics) at 200 metres before setting off to one of the hunting areas some 45 minutes away to familiarise ourselves with the terrain. Petrus and Seun, two of the local Nama people, were our trackers. We spotted herds of gemsbuck over just about every second dune, and the excitement grew as we planned our hunt for the next two weeks.

The first official hunting day started early: We were up at 05:00 to get ready and left before first light. It was a crisp, chilly morning, and the air was filled with the chirping of

sociable weavers. We drove for 45 minutes, and as we went through a large salt pan, the horizon turned red as the sun slowly rose. We stopped on a dune deep into the hunting concession. By now, the sun was peeking over the red dunes, revealing a spectacular view. Springbuck were grazing a way off to our left, and in front of us a small herd of gemsbuck trotted over the next dune in the direction of the rising sun. We just stood there for a few moments, absorbing the soft, whispering northern breeze and the red sand crunching under our boots. I was awestruck by the breathtaking view – truly a moment in time.

We took out the rifle and packed something to eat and a bottle of water. The hunt was on, and we were in pursuit of gemsbuck. We started walking into the northern wind, with the sun slightly to our right. With each dune crossing, we glassed the dune streets, as well as the escarpment of the dunes ahead.

Petrus and Seun set a pace not often seen on a walk-and-stalk hunt. I tried to slow them down on several occasions, but as soon as the excitement grew again, they were back at a pace that can only be described as power walking.

Soon, we spotted the first gemsbuck about 600 metres »



TOP LEFT: Stopping for a lunch of gemsbuck liver at noon is a special treat after a hard morning's hunt.

TOP RIGHT: Our camp in the middle of the Kalahari.

BOTTOM LEFT: One of the Cape cobras we encountered during the hunt.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Seun with his red hat that gave the game away at least once.

» away, feeding on the lee side of a dune. Two other dunes separated us from the animal, and as the wind was in our favour, we decided to stalk closer to get a better view. As we closed in on it, we saw a herd of seven gemsbuck much closer. They were quite relaxed, feeding along. The chase was on, with only one dune between them and us.

It was a perfect set-up, and we slowly moved up the dune, searching for a vantage point from which to shoot. Seun would range for me while Casper followed behind me, filming everything as it unfolded. Slowly, I loaded the .270 and crawled into position. However, there was no good shooting position because of all the grass on the dune. So we carefully moved to another spot on the dune, with the gemsbuck still unaware of us. As I settled into a good position, they suddenly got spook-

ed, trotted a short distance, and stopped again. They had probably spotted Seun with his red hat, standing behind us in the tall grass to range them.

The herd was now 254 metres away, staring at us and clearly aware of our presence. Instinctively, I knew I only had a few seconds and slowly squeezed the trigger. The shot hit home, penetrating the vitals, and the big cow only went a short distance before expiring. A strange feeling of contentment and relief came over me as I approached her. I have experienced this feeling more times than I can remember, but I believe it reminds the hunter of the importance of a successful hunt and the respect towards the animal. The cow's horns measured 39½"; a beautiful animal hunted on foot in her native habitat.

We gutted her there and took the large intestine, liver, kidneys, and heart to prepare

it for brunch – we were hungry! Martin cooked it over open coals next to one of the waterholes, and I made a curry stew with some of the gemsbuck meat and the testicles of a springbuck we had shot earlier. We then enjoyed a well-deserved rest before resuming hunting in the afternoon.

OFF ON THE HUNT AGAIN

The afternoon was warm, with very little wind. We caught sight of a small herd of gemsbuck and pursued them, with Petrus and Seun setting the pace again. We could hardly keep up – it certainly wasn't the kind of bushveld walk-and-stalk I grew up with and was accustomed to! The genes in this particular herd were clearly exceptional as most of the animals had horns that appeared to be 40" or longer. We stalked them on a dune slope while they were walking slowly in a street parallel to us.

As I peeked over the dune, they were approximately 200 metres away. Unfortunately, they spotted us at the last moment and started running. Whistling just spurred them on, but luckily, they stopped again.

Seun quickly ranged them at 248 metres, and I settled the crosshair on what seemed to be the largest one. She only ran about 50 metres before going down, causing the rest of the herd to stop. Petrus urged me to take another gemsbuck, but we still had a few days of hunting left. I was tired, and it was warm, so I decided to let them go. My gemsbuck was magnificent, with horns just shy of 42". Hunting her on foot in this environment was a special experience indeed!

After a long but rewarding hunting day, Tiesie prepared a delicious stew of lamb tripe and gemsbuck for us. We feasted until we couldn't eat any more. Late that evening, we

HUNTING GEMSBUCK IN THE RED DUNES OF THE NAMIBIAN KALAHARI



FJ and I with one of the gemsbuck mentioned in the article.



Another magnificent Kalahari gemsbuck – a true prize of the hunt in this special area.

arrived at our camp, fully content. We sat around the campfire, captivated by the flames and listening to the soothing night sounds while reliving the memories of the day's hunt. These are the moments that successfully conclude a hunt and add to its meaning.

We continued hunting this way, walking and stalking in the dunes for the better part of ten days. Every other day, we would rest after a long, hard day's hunt. We had some really exciting and special times in the dunes, harvesting another five gemsbuck and five springbuck. One afternoon, we lost Petrus and Joshua while they were following a gemsbuck

herd. We only found them at sunset when they managed to make a fire on a large dune.

The vast openness of the Kalahari instils a sense of peace in one. Add to this the healthy ecosystem of this area. We encountered Cape cobras, puff adders, leopard tortoises, and African skunks and saw more bat-eared foxes than I'd seen anywhere else in Southern Africa. Tiesie's meals were exceptional every time, while Martin's sense of humour made this one of the most fulfilling hunts I had experienced in a long time.

A FINALE ON HORSEBACK

As our trip drew to an end, we

decided to take one of Martin's horses, as well as a few of the local Nama people's horses and set out to hunt one last gemsbuck. That afternoon, we first had to ride Martin's horse quite some distance to the hunting area where the other horses were. The hunt would start from there the following morning.

None of these horses were trained for hunting; they weren't even used to a rifle-bearing rider on their back. I had to ride only a short distance with Martin's horse to get him used to the rifle. However, while galloping between two dunes, the rifle's leather sling broke and the rifle landed on the horse's back. Startled, he started running and bucking, trying to throw me off. He then chose a camelthorn tree to throw me against. I managed to grab the rifle behind me with my left hand to prevent it from falling to the ground. However, this just spurred him on; I suppose he thought it was a whip. Luckily, I got him under control after a while. He was not keen on me riding him after that, not even without the rifle.

Early the following morning, we saddled the horses. I mounted Martin's horse with-

out the rifle to check the length of the stirrups, with Martin holding the reins. The moment I was on his back, he suddenly jumped straight up into the air, falling backwards onto his back and on top of me. My head barely missed a concrete slab! Seun immediately offered me one of his horses that were even more unfamiliar with this kind of outing! Without further ado, however, Petrus, Seun, Casper and I headed off into the dunes.

We rode into the sun as the wind was now blowing towards the west. Late morning, we spotted five gemsbuck feeding on the southern slope of a dune, about 800 metres away. We slowly rode along the slope of the adjacent dune towards them. When we were parallel to them, we stalked them on foot over the dune. As we crawled the last few metres, they saw us, turned, and faced us about 230 metres off. I aimed at the centre of a young bull's chest, and the bullet struck him on the money. To my surprise, I could see the bullet exiting on his left side. He ran another 150 metres or so and stopped, allowing me a second shot, after which he dropped in his tracks. It turned out that the projectile entered his chest, turned under his left shoulder and exited just behind the shoulder.

And so, an adrenaline-packed 11 days came to an end. Tiesie processed our meat into biltong, sausage, *droëwors*, mince, and stewing meat. The boerewors and *droëwors* are some of the best I've tasted as they use Persian sheep fat that gives it a very distinctive taste. Worth returning for!

It turned out to be a very special hunt – we arrived as clients and left as friends. Fond memories were made, which we will cherish for a long time to come. 🌐



Hier wys ek vir Bernard hoe om haelgeweer te skiet nadat hy die baan en veld al goed bemeester het.

Hoe om kinders te leer skiet

OM ONS JONG JAGTERTJIES EN SKUTS TOUWYS TE MAAK MET SKIET IS BEIDE 'N VOORREG EN 'N GROOT VERANTWOORDELIKHEID.

Die Suid-Afrikaanse jag- en skietkultuur kom al honderde jare saam met ons en is grootliks op ons voorgeslagte se lewenswyse as boere en jagters geskoei. Die behoud van hierdie kultuur is onder geweldige druk van antijag- en diereregte-groepe, tesame met die byna onstuitbare aanslag van moderne tegnologie op ons kinders. Selfone, rekenaarspeletjies en dies meer is baie aantreklike afleidings vir kinders en beroof hulle van tyd in die buitelug en veld. 'n Goeie manier om dié aanslag teen te staan, is om ons kinders te leer skiet en natuurlik ook te leer jag!

Om 'n kind op die regte skiet- en jagpad te stuur is egter nie altyd so eenvoudig nie; dit verg voorbereiding, dinkwerk en beplanning. Boonop is daar ander aspekte wat oorweeg moet word, soos die feit dat elke kind uniek is. Dis veral belangrik om 'n kind se uniekheid ten opsigte van die

volgende aspekte te verstaan: Elke kind leer teen sy eie pas en verskil wat emosionele volwassenheid en liggaamsbou betref. Verder is daar kinders wat geen of weinige blootstelling aan jag en gewere kry nie. Dis belangrik om al hierdie faktore in ag te neem voordat 'n skietpaadjie met 'n kind geloop word.

LOOP DIE PAD EEN-EEN

Ek glo vas dat hierdie paadjie met 'n kind een-een geloop moet word, veral met seuns. Om kinders in groepe te leer skiet werk nie altyd nie. Soos kinders maar is, is daar altyd 'n mate van spelery betrokke hoe groter die groepie raak. Dit kan veroorsaak dat al die inligting nie insink soos dit moet nie, veral die veiligheidsaspekte. Die kans dat 'n kind beter sal konsentreer en dus leer as hy op sy eie geleer word, is goed.

Ek het gevind dat dit beter is om een kind op 'n slag baan toe te neem sodat daar géén groepsdruk is nie. Seuns in



My oudste dogter, Danielle, agter haar Ruger .223 Remington ter voorbereiding van 'n blesbokjag in 2019. Om kinders verskillende veldskietposisies en tegnieke te leer voordat daar op bokke geskiet word, is uiters belangrik. Sy is ook linkshandig, maar verkies om regs te skiet. Ek het sedertdien vir haar 'n Tikka T3 "lefty" in .270 Winchester aangeskaf.

groepe bring gewoonlik die jong mannetjies se ego's na vore – elkeen wil verder, beter en meer skiet as sy boetie of maatjie. Dit is nie soseer verkeerd nie, maar dit kan tog 'n invloed hê as een knaap nie so goed soos sy maatjie vaar nie, of dalk sukkel. Haal die kompetisie-element uit die opleiding totdat die kind die

skietkuns bemeester het. Volgens my is dit baie makliker om meisies te leer skiet as seuns. Seuns het gewoonlik 'n beter meganiese aanleg en verstaan meestal vinniger as meisies hoe 'n geweer werk. Hulle het oor die algemeen ook meer krag en benodig minder hulp met dinge soos die toemaak van 'n gewerslot.



BO: My jongste dogter, Anine, word geleer om van 'n driepootskietstok af te skiet met my .22 Hornet.

LINKS: Om na papier te skiet kan vir kinders vinnig vervelig raak. 'n Stelletjie miniatuurteikens is ideaal om die sessie opwindend te hou en is 'n baie goeie belegging, selfs vir pa!

Daarteenoor het meisies gewoonlik nie die windmaker-ego's van seuns nie, luister as 'n reël beter en doen presies wat jy sê, wat hulle dikwels beter as seuns laat skiet! Let op na die talle beskrywende woorde wat ek gebruik en onthou dat kinders van mekaar verskil.

MOENIE ONGEDULDIG RAAK NIE

Om jou eie kind te leer het sy eie slaggate. Iets wat ek al dikwels gesien het, is 'n pa wat vinnig ongeduldig raak met sy eie seun, soms tot so 'n mate dat die knapie se trane vloei. Dit moet ten alle koste vermy word. As jy as pa nie die geduld het om jou kind te leer sonder om vies te word nie, vra iemand anders wat kundig is om dit te doen. Ander mense of vriende se kinders sal gewoonlik minder teëpraat met 'n pa se vriend wat hulle ken as met hul eie pa. Gevolglik luister hulle beter of doen eenvoudig wat die oom hulle aansê om te doen. Ek het dit al telkemale beleef met die kinders wat ek leer skiet en jag

het. Ek het dieselfde met my eie dogters gedoen. Die meeste van hul skietopleiding is deur vriende gedoen wat al jare lank jag.

My aanslag is om heel eertens veiligheid vas te lê. Ek wil amper sê dit is waar ons móét begin. Veiligheid kom altyd eerste! Ek vra gewoonlik enige jong seun of meisie om vir my soveel veiligheidsreëls op te noem as wat hulle kan. Vorige ondervinding met gewere en skiet sal dan 'n aanduiding gee van hoeveel hulle reeds weet. As hulle nie een reël kan opnoem nie, begin ons voor met 'n lys van sowat 10 tot 15 reëls. Ons almal ken hierdie reëls en sal seker verskil oor wat die belangrikste is, maar almal is belangrik:

1. Sorg dat die geweer altyd in 'n veilige rigting wys.
2. Hanteer 'n geweer altyd asof dit gelaai is.
3. Hou jou vinger van die sneller af totdat jy reg is om te skiet.
4. Maak seker 'n geweer is nie gelaai nie elke keer as jy dit vir iemand gee of by

iemand neem, of as jy die geweer bêre of uithaal vir gebruik.

5. Maak seker wat die teiken is waarna jy skiet en wat aan die ander kant van die teiken is.
6. Maak seker jy het die regte ammunisie vir die geweer waarmee jy skiet.
7. Dra goeie oor- en oogbeskerming.
8. Drank, dwelms en gewere hoort nie saam nie.
9. Hou alle wapens buite bereik van kinders en leer hulle om nie met wapens te speel nie.
10. Maak seker die geweer se loop is skoon, met ander woorde dat daar geen obstrukties binne-in is nie.
11. Moet nooit na harde oppervlakke of water skiet nie.
12. As jy op 'n skietbaan is, staan agter die skietbank of punt en bly ten alle tye daar totdat die baan veilig verklaar word.

Daar kan baie by hierdie reëls gevoeg word, soos om 'n kind te leer dat 'n .22 LR net

so gevaarlik soos 'n .30-06 is. Hou egter die lys kort genoeg sodat die kind dit kan onthou. As ek weet ek moet 'n kind leer skiet, word hierdie reëls voor die tyd oorgedra sodat hy tyd het om dit te leer. Ek gee gewoonlik 'n beloning, soos 'n ekstra pakkie .22 LR-patrone om uit te skiet as hy al die reëls kan opnoem. Die teenoorgestelde geld ook: As hy nie 'n poging aangewend het om die reëls te leer nie, skiet hy nie of ons gaan eers wêr deur al die reëls voordat ons skiet, met 'n aanmaning dat hy dit volgende keer moet kan opnoem. (Maak voor die tyd seker die kind verstaan hoe belangrik dit is.)

HOU DIT PRAKTIES EN VERSTAANBAAR

Dit is ook baie belangrik om hierdie reëls met praktiese lesse op te volg voordat daar begin skiet word: Wys die kind wat beteken "hou altyd die loop in 'n veilige rigting" of "maak seker die loop is nie versper nie". Haal die slot uit en laat hy self deur die loop kyk. Verduidelik ook wat kan gebeur as 'n mens na water skiet. As hierdie veiligheidsbeginsels vasgelê is, kan die skietwerk begin.

Gewoonlik is dit met 'n luggeweer en hiermee stem ek volkome saam. Maak egter seker die geweer pas die kind en is nie te groot nie. 'n Kind wat sukkel om 'n geweer vas te hou, sal nooit goed skiet nie en voel hy misluk. Dit is natuurlik vir niemand lekker nie, kinders inkluis. Met luggewere is daar min geraas en terugskop, dis goedkoop en kan vir groot pret sorg. Papierskiet is lekker, maar kinders raak vinnig verveeld daarmee. Begin egter daarmee, want 'n papierteiken sal jou wys hoe goed die kind skiet en waar hy fouteer met aanlê, die sneller druk, rigting, kop optel en deurvoer, asemhaling, en dies meer. »



Jong Tiaan Troskie, vriend Christiaan se seun, met my 6,5 Creedmoor op Schalk se plaas. Hy is linkshandig en ons moes die skiettafel swaai, die regte sakke neersit en selfs vir hom 'n stoel met 'n skietsak bou sodat hy mooi kon sit en aanlê. Ondanks sy jong ouderdom het hy die valplate met 'n regterhandse geweer geklits tot en met 700 meter sonder om 'n skoot te mis. Hy lyk dalk nog te jonk vir 'n 6,5, maar die geweer het weinig terugskop met die knaldemper op.

» As die kind goed genoeg op papier skiet, kan daar na die lekker gedeeltes beweeg word, soos 'n teiken wat reaksie toon – leë koeldrankblikkies (wat hy self later moet optel) of 'n stel silhoeëtteikens wat omval as dit getref word (met inagneming van terugslagkoeëls en veiligheid). Selfs plastiekbotteltjies vol water kan prettig wees.

Die idee is om dit vir die kind lekker te maak. Moet nooit 'n kind na glasbottels laat skiet nie. Maak seker hy neem dooierus oor 'n skietraam of sakke – dit moet maklik wees om mee te begin.

'N BELONING OP SY TYD

Hou sessies korter en meer gereeld in stede van langer en beloon goeie gedrag, veiligheid en knap skietwerk. Ek is dalk effe streng, maar skort enige sessie summier op (op 'n mooi manier) as enige veiligheidsreël verbreek word en laat die kind dan eers weer

later toe om te skiet. Dit is natuurlik makliker as 'n mens die hele naweek op die plaas is, maar nie so prakties as jy baantyd bespreek het nie. Die idee is om die kind te leer dat dit 'n ernstige saak is om veiligheidsreëls te oortree.

Die tyd wat aan elke kind bestee moet word, wissel na gelang van die faktore wat vroeër genoem is en sal bepaal wanneer hy reg is om na iets groter oor te skakel. Ek gebruik gewoonlik hier 'n .22 LR – die terugskop is weereens min en die ammunisie goedkoop. Kinders voel gewoonlik ook hulle skiet nou met 'n “regte” geweer. Dieselfde geld vir die .22-sessie – begin op papier, want die gemiddelde luggeweer wat pa besit se sneller verskil maar baie van 'n .22 s'n en die ekstra snellerdruk wat 'n goedkoop breeknek-luggeweer nodig het, is nou afwesig.

Leer die kind die verskil tussen die twee gewere. Goeie

oog- en oorbeskerming raak nou verpligtend. Let veral op na terugslagkoeëls as daar op harde teikens soos miniatuur-silhoeëtteikens geskiet word. Hou die afstande so kort as wat veiligheid toelaat om mee te begin en verleng dit na gelang van die kind se vooruitgang. Beloon goeie skietwerk met positiewe terugvoer soos “Jong, maar jy skiet darem baie goed. Ons is trots op jou!” As die kind moeg raak, begin sukkel, gefrustreerd raak en dit nie meer geniet nie, moet jy die situasie baie vinnig opsom en die regte besluit neem. Staak eerder die sessie en gaan later weer aan eerder as om dit onaangenaam te maak.

PASOP VIR DIE GROTER KALIBERS AAN DIE BEGIN

Afhangend van die kind se vooruitgang, ouderdom, liggaamsbou en konsentrasievlak, kan bogenoemde in een dag gedoen word. Daar kan selfs na 'n groter kaliber soos 'n .223 Remington of .243 Winchester beweeg word. Moenie 'n klein kind 'n kaliber laat skiet wat hom gaan laat skrik of hom seermaak nie! Ek het al talle kere op Facebook video's gesien van hoe 'n pa sy klein seuntjie met sy .375 H&H, wat hy amper nie eers kan vashou nie, laat skiet. Wat in so 'n pa se kop aangaan, weet nógter alleen! Jy doen die kind net 'n onreg aan en loop 'n groot risiko om hom dalk vir altyd van skiet af te skrik.

'n Kind se reaksie op die skoot sal vir jou aandui of hy gemaklik is; skakel slegs na groter kalibers oor as hy gereed is daarvoor. Verduidelik ook dat die terugskop en geraas tussen kalibers verskil: “Hoe groter die kaliber, hoe groter die geraas en terugskop,” is gewoonlik voldoende verduideliking. Die gebruik van knaldempers help baie

met beide. In sekere gevalle laat dit die kind selfs toe om byvoorbeeld direk van 'n .22 na 'n .308 Winchester met 'n knaldemper en 150 grein-koeëls oor te skakel sonder om enige pyn- en skokgrense te oorskry.

Lewensgrootte teikens van bokke werk goed en leer die kind die bok se anatomie en korrekte skootplasing. Met die senterslaggewere kan die afstande natuurlik effens gerek word na 100 of selfs 200 meter – die kind se vermoë en vaardigheid is die bepalende faktor. As hierdie basiese tegnieke bemeester word, kan daar na skietstokke, bome, miershope en ander meer gevorderde tegnieke beweeg word.

Linkshandige kinders het ekstra aandag nodig, want dit is meestal vir hulle moeilik om met 'n regterhandse geweer te skiet.

Wanneer is 'n kind oud genoeg om te begin skiet? (Let wel, nie oud genoeg om te begin jág nie – dit is 'n storie vir 'n ander dag.) Dis 'n moeilike vraag, maar ek dink daar is riglyne soos die volgende wat gevolg kan word: Kan die kind die geweer behoorlik vashou? Kan hy luister en verstaan en ('n aanvaarbare mate van) gehoorsaamheid toepas? Weet die kind dat onvanpaste gedrag nagevolg sal hê? Toon hy reeds belangstelling en wil hy enigsins skiet, of het sy pa druk op hom uitgeoefen om te begin jag of skiet?

Weereens verskil antwoorde hierop van kind tot kind. Dit is ons verantwoordelikheid om die regte besluit vir die spesifieke kind te neem. Wag eerder nog 'n jaar as om 'n kind skietryp te probeer druk.

Laastens is dit van kritieke belang dat jy as volwassene waaksaam bly en die kind heeltyd tydens die opleidingsessies dophou, want 'n kind bly maar 'n kind... 

Spaanse vuur- messe deur Manufacturas Muela



'n Muela-mes wat op die taktiese of oorlewingsmark gefokus is.

DIÉ SPAANSE VERVAARDIGER BIED KWALITEITSNYGOED TEEN BEKOSTIGBARE PRYSE.



Hierdie Muela is die soort mes wat diep in Suid-Afrikaanse jagters se harte gekruip het - 'n betroubare, bekostigbare jagmes wat baie jare se goeie diens sal gee. Let op die netjiese leerskede.

Met agente in verskeie lande dwarsoor die wêreld, onder meer Suid-Afrika, Nieu-Seeland, Australië, die VSA, Tanzanië, Kanada, Argentinië, Duitsland, Brittanje en nog vele meer, is Muela 'n internasionaal bekende handelsmerk wat naam gemaak het en nog lank met ons sal wees.

In Suid-Afrika is Muela-messe bekend vir hul goeie kwaliteit teen bekostigbare pryse. Hul produkte pryk aan die belde en in die sakke van talle van ons jagters tydens elke jagseisoen. Hierdie messe het getroue jagmaats geword waarop 'n mens kan staatmaak - dít op sigself is die beste advertensie wat enige mesvervaardiger kán kry.

Muela-messe word deur Formalito in Pretoria ingevoer. Kontak hulle telefonies by 012-808-9911. ☎

Die Manufacturas Muela-verhaal begin in die 1950's toe Eladio Muela, 'n mesmaker, sy eerste bestelling vir 'n 38-stukknipmes ontvang het. Sedertdien het Muela uitgebrei en vandag geniet dié vervaardiger 'n uitstekende reputasie vir die kwaliteitmesse wat hulle vervaardig.

Muela maak tans 'n baie wye reeks messe, waaronder kombuismesse, knipmesse, messe vir die jagveld en buitlewe, sowel as messe met da-

masstaal-lemme. Hulle bied ook beperkte hoeveelhede meer gespesialiseerde messe vir versamelaars en entoesiaste.

Net soos ander vervaardigers, maak Muela grootskaals gebruik van rekenaartegnologie gedurende die vervaardigingsproses ten einde kwaliteit te verseker. Verskeie hefmateriale word vir verskillende modelle in die Muela-stal gebruik. Een hiervan is takbokhoring, asook hout wat in die Mueala-fabriek verwerk word. Muela-messe word hierna met die hand aanmekaargesit, ge-

poleer, afgewerk, geslyp en verpak voordat hulle wêreldwyd verskeep word.



Benewens messe vir die jagter, maak Muela ook messe soos dié in beperkte getalle vir versamelaars.

Buying your first shotgun – what you need to consider

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS TO KEEP IN MIND BEFORE MAKING THE INVESTMENT

The Beretta 686 Silver Pigeon is another excellent choice for the first-time shotgun buyer.

Just in case there is some misunderstanding with the title, this is not about the first shotgun you were privileged to own or shoot with, but rather about a selection process for the first-time buyer and aspirant shotgun shooter.

Shotgun shooting seems to be on the rise, at least judging by the number of shooting clubs active in my area and the turnout at clay target events. It's also clear that bird shooting is alive and well, and any number of organised activities are on offer through associations and institutions, as well as in

Vintage side-by-sides such as this 12-bore William Powell sidelock ejector can be a good buy, but an expert evaluation is needed before closing the deal.



TOP: These two modern over/under guns from Italy represent some of the finest-quality shotguns on the market today. They are both in 12-bore and were made by Famars (top) and Perugini & Visini.

BELOW: The world of clay target shooting is dominated by the over/under gun at present.



the media. Many shooting clubs now also offer three-gun shoots that include shotguns. However, as these shoots are normally undertaken with pump, semi-auto or combat shotguns and, therefore, fall outside the gamut of this article, we'll confine ourselves to the double-barrelled models.

Let's for a moment consider the person interested in purchasing their first shotgun. This is someone of any age from teenager through student, someone in any stage of a working career to retired people who, for whatever reason, have been exposed to wingshooting or any of the clay target disciplines and are keen to acquire a shotgun.

Secondly, one must consider the parameters that would come into play in such a situation, mindful of the plethora of guns available on the market.

APPLICATION IS A PRIME CONSIDERATION

These parameters must include application, purchase price, budget, amount of shooting, calibre, and ammunition

cost. Furthermore, one must not discount some influence of friends, peers and advisors towards some particular manufacturer, or that a final decision may be based on availability »



Brian's advice is to consider a 12-bore over/under as a first shotgun. These two are by Browning but there are other suitable makes as well.

» at a given moment.

So, this first gun would be either for a clay target application or wingshooting, or perhaps a bit of both. In the clay target discipline, there are also several disciplines. However, for this rationale, they can conveniently be divided into the skeet, compak and sporting group, and the trap, universal and Olympic trench group of disciplines. The former requires a gun a little more akin to a “field” gun, while the latter tends much more to specialist guns. The age-old question always arises – over/under or side-by-side? The first is a bit of a misnomer by nomenclature, where the word “superposed” better describes the gun’s barrel orientation, with one on top of the other, and the latter with the barrels side by side in configuration. The over/under dominates the modern shotgun world and far outnumbers side-by-sides on the shelves.

The side-by-side, on the other hand, is generally lighter and hence less predisposed to heavier loads and long sessions on the clay range, and more suited to long days afield, being easier to carry all day long.

Now, and probably more importantly, how does the budget match the purchase price? In our house, there usually is a massive disparity, and such purchases will have to compete with several other priorities (such as school fees), which “dearly beloved” (my better half) seems to consider more important than shotguns. As far as calibre goes, there has always been a devout group of minor-bore aficionados. On the other end of the scale, I’ve never encountered a 10-bore in South Africa.

Can a case be made for a minor bore as a first shotgun? Most certainly, if you are a

youngster or a woman, and I know of a few men with physical limitations or injuries where a 20-bore would better suit their requirements. There also seems to be a growing popularity of the 20-bore in South Africa, and I found seven 20-bore options at a well-known local dealership. Generally, though, the 12-bore is where things will end due to availability and ammunition cost.

VARIOUS GUNS TO CONSIDER

Let us, on a continuum, try to define the first-time shotgun owner. Starting way out in the left field, we have the minor bores – the .410, 28-, 20- and 16-bores. For all practical purposes, the .410 is out of bounds here, while the 28s and 16s have a mystique and a bit of a snob value to them. With the side-by-sides, we start with the investment guns from famous makers – Boss, Purdey, Holland & Holland and Woodward, the Damascus brigade, and on to the more recent and affordable side-by-sides like the Brno.

Moving along, we get to the first of the over/unders, with a fair plethora of the cheaper clones like ATA, CZ Mallard, Fabarm and Marocchi, and on to the Berettas, Mirokus and Brownings that dominate the world of shotgunning. Next, we come to Winchester, Fausti, Caesar Guerini, Rizzini, Blaser, followed by the Perazzis, Renato Gamba, Belgian-made Browning B25, Famars (Abbiatico & Salvinelli), Perugini & Visini, and, finally, the eye-wateringly expensive British over/unders. It is heartening to see that a fair number of these modern over/unders are offered in the local market in 20-bore persuasion as well. It must also be added that at any point along the spectrum, the affordably priced option of a

second-hand gun is also available. I may have left out someone's favourite fowling piece, but you get the idea.

WINGSHOOTER OR CLAY SHOOTER?

On statistical probability, the first-time buyer is most likely to be an aspirant wingshooter with a clay target problem or an aspirant clay target shooter with a wingshooting problem.

Obviously, the sliding scale envisaged above also has cost implications, with both ends of the scale quite capable of generating prices with five zeros in the second-hand category and potentially six zeros

rapidly approaching for me to commit to what I think one should purchase, with the inevitable side-effect of creating a long queue of dissatisfied readers with different views on favourite shotguns. Remember that I also subscribe to the dictum that if it works for you and you are happy, that's fine by me!

For my money, Beretta's 686 Silver Pigeon and Browning's 525 will take some beating at a smidgen over R40 000. These, of course, have single triggers, selective safety and multichokes, making them very flexible indeed. Having experience with both of these

pins on either side of the barrel, making the action lower in height.

On the slightly lower end, I would take a long and hard look at the Franchi Sporter, Winchester Select and Weatherby Orion, having now dropped the financial layout to R25 000 or so. In the side-by-side world, I really struggled to find reasonably priced new guns, so I'm afraid I can't make a fixed recommendation here – this will take some serious shopping and a lot of good advice.

I took the liberty of browsing the website of a popular trading platform for second-hand guns and found 13 pages of options ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. There was a fair scattering of Berettas and Brownings at reasonable prices, and in the side-by-side category again substantially fewer, with a few Brno 47s and 49s at really good prices, along with a scattering from the British trade, with the majority having to be classified as projects at best. A little earlier in this article, I mentioned buyer beware: If considering a second-hand purchase, one must be patient and would be well advised to consult an expert for evaluation before purchase. This type of expert evaluation is easily the subject of a separate narrative. In South Africa, one has to first spend some time on defining an "expert" – it isn't necessarily someone you met at a braai. Of course, the older the gun, the greater the scrutiny required.

To sum up: Get yourself an over/under 12-bore from Beretta or Browning or something close, depending on your budget. Buy the best gun that you can afford and, most importantly, enjoy the wonderful world of shotguns! 

There also seems to be a growing popularity of the 20-bore in South Africa, and I found seven 20-bore options at a well-known local dealership.

for new guns. In the middle, any of the more affordable options can go for under R20 000 on a good day, with the middle of the ranges in the low R40 000. One can expect to buy second-hand guns in reasonable condition at about two-thirds of the price of a new one, but buyer beware – more about that later!

So, to sum up, we have a person interested in starting out with shotgunning, and by and large, expecting to fork out somewhere between R15 000 to R45 000 for a generalist shotgun that will be at home in the field and on the range. We can further expect this to be of 12-bore persuasion (ammunition availability and cost), and choice will gravitate to over/under more than to side-by-side. Within these parameters, the choices are certainly starting to narrow down, and the time is

models, there is not much that can go wrong, considering that they dominate the world shotgun market. Both have minor weaknesses and many strengths, but it will take excessive use, if not abuse, before these manifest. If you can stretch the budget, then you may also elevate the stakes to the Browning 725s.

So, what is the difference between the Beretta and the Browning? It comes down to the height of the action or frame, which, in turn, affects how deep the barrels lie within the frame. This affects recoil and handling. The taller the action, the greater the stress on the action, which is obviated by the number of "bites" or contact points between barrels and action. The Browning locking bolt is below the barrels, making for a taller action, while the Beretta has two conical locking

Swarovski Z5 2.4-12x50 BT riflescope

A QUALITY SCOPE THAT REALLY DELIVERS

Released early in 2019, the Swarovski Z5 2.4-12x50 BT (ballistic turret) riflescope is an SFP (second focal plane) reticle telescope that punches far above its weight. Firstly, it features a high (12x) magnification for a 25 mm tube scope. It also offers a very generous 90-click elevation adjustment and a 50-click windage adjustment, equating to a 22.5 MOA and 12.5 MOA adjustment range, respectively, at 100 yards.

Each tactile click moves the reticle by $\frac{1}{4}''$ at 100 yards (7 mm at 100 metres). At only 480 grams, it is considerably lighter than most other scopes offering similar features. The same four-coil spring system used in Swarovski's 30 mm tube Z6i and Z8i ranges is used in the 2.4-12x50 BT – a system that has proved its ruggedness over the years. At the lowest magnification, it offers a field of view of 15.3 metres at 100 metres – again, the best of any 1" tube scope the market has. Lastly, Swarovski claims that the 92%-rated light transmission of the 2.4-12x50 BT is also the best of any 1" scope they currently offer. It doesn't have parallax adjustment, which

is factory-set at 109 yards (100 metres). Eye relief is a generous 95 mm. Two reticules are available, namely the Plex and 4W, but more on this later.

The textured magnification ring is marked for the 2.4, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12x magnification settings and turns with constant and just enough stiffness to avoid accidental movement. A raised knob between the 4x and 6x magnification settings helps with adjustment. The diopter adjustment ring is in the usual place, shrouding the ocular lens. As the name suggests, the scope features a 50 mm objective lens. The BT system works as follows: A coupling ring encloses the turret's adjustment mechanism and serves as the base for three additional marking rings, with a green, orange and red dot respectively. These are all held in place by a cap that can be unscrewed with a coin. Unscrew the cap and remove it, as well as the three rings.

Zero your rifle at your preferred distance, say 100 metres. Now it is time to set the scope's zero stop, should you so prefer. The adjustment mechanism has two dials – turn the bottom dial clockwise until it stops, taking care not to move the top dial in the process. Next, reinsert the coupling on the adjustment system and align the triangle on the coupling with the dot at the base of the turret – this is now the zero stop for your preferred zero distance. The scope turret can now only turn anti-clockwise for upward adjustment.

Choose your three additional distances, and in turn, zero the rifle at these. For each extra zero achieved, reinsert a ring, one at a time, so that it also aligns with the white dot at the base. I choose to do this as follows: green for the first additional range, orange for the next one, and red for the last/furthest. This made sense to me as it is easy to remember –

green light for close, orange for a bit further (caution) and red for furthest (stop, like a traffic light). Tip: Note how many clicks each extra distance requires for future use, or in case you accidentally lose track, or a ring falls off while zeroing at the increased distances. Once done, turn the rings clockwise as a unit until the zero stop engages, reinsert the cap, and tighten.

The windage turret can be reindexed. It has an outer dial that only engages the inner dial, which makes the actual adjustment when the outer dial is pushed onto it. By pulling out the outside dial, it disengages the inner dial. The outer dial can then be turned so that a small triangle aligns with a white marker on the turret base and is then reinserted. It is a handy feature to quickly return to the windage zero.

I mounted the Swarovski on my Remington ADL 700 in 6.5 Creedmoor – my rifle used for tests that constantly produces sub-15 mm groups at 100 metres with Swift Scirocco II 130-grain bullets leaving the muzzle at 2 750 fps. I zeroed the rifle at 100 metres and used a Strellok Pro to determine the theoretical number of clicks needed for my chosen additional zero points of 200, 250 and 300 metres – a practi-



The Z5 2.4-12x50 BT riflescope.



The Z5 2.4-12x50 BT - a quality riflescope.

cal choice for a hunting rifle to be used in various conditions.

After the 100-metre zero, it took just four shots to confirm the 200-, 250- and 300-metre settings. I had to add one extra click to the 250-metre adjustment (in addition to what Strellok suggested), thus the extra shot to confirm the point of impact. Easy.

The scope was a pleasure to use, and I hit the small 100 mm gongs on the range with every shot at every distance, dialling from 100, then to 200, 250 and 300, and back again several times. I also did the same exercise on paper targets with a 1" bull, going further and closer, and managed to repeatedly hit the bull at every distance. Just to confirm the tracking capabilities, I did a "box test" by dialling 28 clicks right, firing a three-shot group, then 28 clicks up for another three-shot group, and then left

and down again by the same number to get back to the original group. After having dialled a total of 112 clicks adjustment, the last three shots landed almost exactly on top of the first group, and all the groups formed an almost perfect square.

The scope's optical quality is what one would expect from the brand, and light gathering is excellent. The scope lenses have SWARODUR and SWAROTOP coatings. It is not intended as a long-range scope but can be stretched into one, depending on your rifle's specific ballistics. This is how I would do it: Firstly, achieve, say, a 200-metre zero but do not align the triangle with the dot; align it the number of clicks to the left required for a 300-metre zero. Effectively, your zero stop is now 200 metres but unmarked, and your triangle

now becomes the 300-metre marker. You now have the three dots to set extra distances of, say, 400, 500 and 600 metres – perfect for the gong range. In addition, you can calculate the click needed for an additional distance, for example, 700 metres, and put this on a cheat sheet – i.e., make a note: "For 700 metres, turn to red dot plus 'X' number of clicks more." This way, you can easily set up the scope for six distances, not just four.

I would use the scope on a bushveld hunting rifle and, depending on the calibre and its associated ballistics, it is conceivable that it can be made to work exactly as intended on a huge range of calibres. I can see myself using it on one of my .375 H&Hs with 50-, 100-, 200- and 250-metre markers. The 50 mm objective lens does call for



The results of a "box test" – the first and last shots landed almost on top of one another.

slightly higher rings, but in my books, the benefits mentioned in the first paragraph far outweigh this small drawback, especially the weight, or rather, the lack of it.

All considered, it is a superb scope for hunting. It is a quality product that I can recommend. In fact, I am saving up for one with a 4W reticle. No Swarovski product has ever let me down. The 4W reticle makes more sense to me – the top vertical post is narrower, affording a better field of view, and the windage could come in handy for longer shots on windy days.

At a suggested retail price of R26 500, the Z5 2.4-12x50 is not inexpensive, but like I always maintain, "quality never is". It comes with a rubber-bounded ocular and objective lens cap, cleaning cloth and Swarovski's ten-year warranty. Contact Whylo Distributors on 031-584-8088 if your local gun shop does not stock it.

Many thanks to Normark for supplying the bullets used during testing. 🇿🇦



The different markers as described, set up for 100, 200, 250 and 300 metres for testing purposes.

The British black powder express rifle – timeless quality

A LOOK BACK AT SOME OF YESTERYEAR'S RIFLES

It is believed that the Chinese invented gunpowder (known as black powder today) during the Tang Dynasty (9th century CE). Gunpowder was the first explosive/propellant, although incendiary materials like “Greek fire” go back to at least 400 BCE. It would appear as if the substance made its way to the Western world fairly quickly, mostly helped along by the Mongol conquests of the 13th century.

The potential for destruction that the substance promised was soon apparent. Paintings and drawings have been

found that depict the use of primitive artillery used in Italy as early as 1320, and “hand cannons” during the latter half of the 14th century. However, it is probable that the substance was used for warlike purposes long before that. Effective artillery was a reality by the 15th century, and firearms dominated the battlefields of Europe by the 17th century. The end of the Eastern Roman Empire was helped along in 1453 by the first “supergun” when Constantinople was sacked by the Ottoman emperor Mehmet II, aided by a massive cannon that reduced the

walls of the great city to rubble prior to the final conquest.

The first ignition method was by the shooter or assistant manually plunging a glowing fuse into a flash-hole of a hand-held weapon.

This was followed by mechanical locks such as the matchlock (1400s), wheel lock (1500s), flintlock (1600s) and cap or percussion lock from about 1820 or thereabouts. Interestingly, the flintlock had the longest lifespan of any ignition system up to the present, having been in constant use for about 200 years, from 1615 to about 1815.

This James Woodward & Sons sidelock double rifle in .450/400 (3¼") BPE was made as an uncompromising, best-quality rifle.

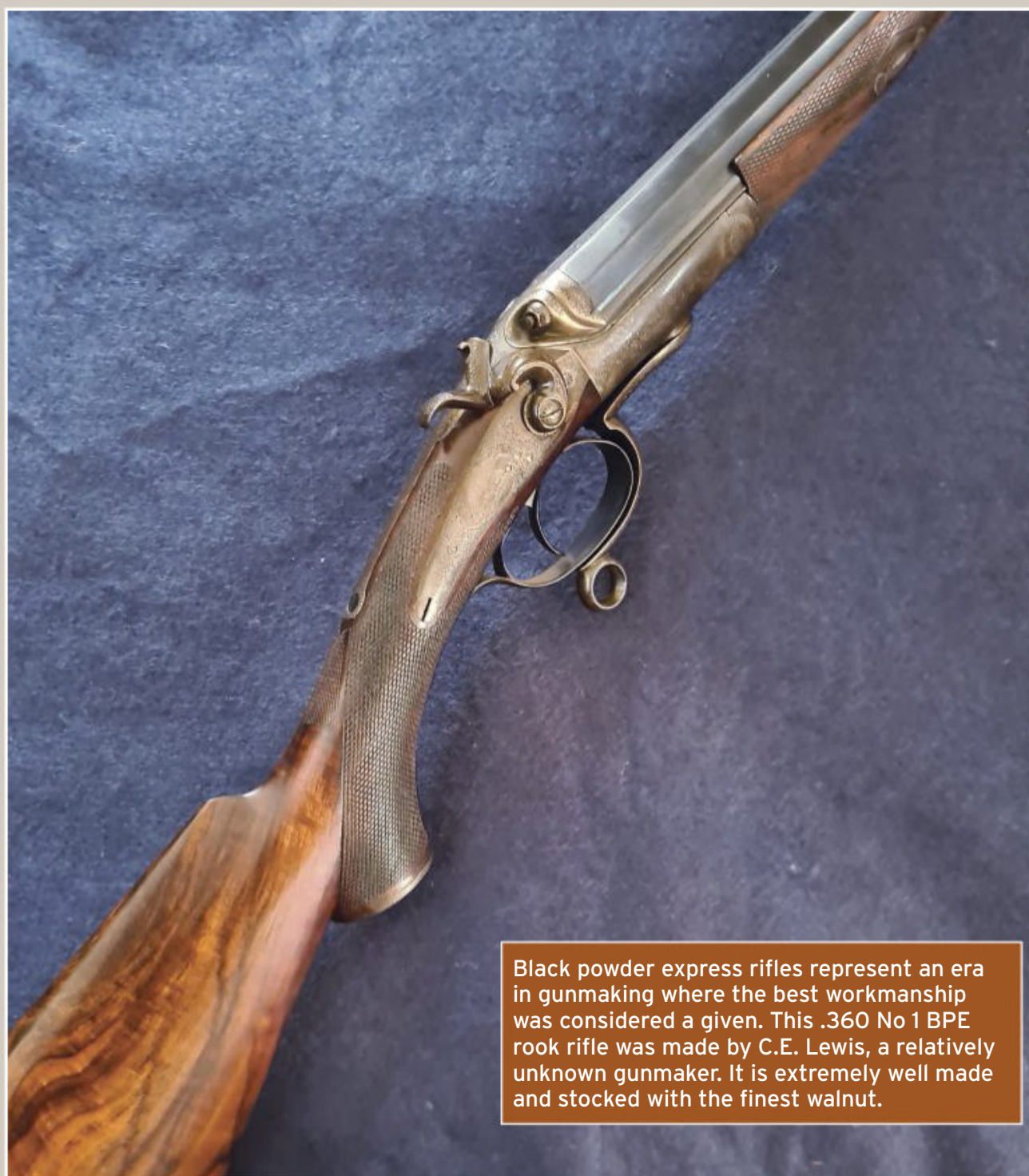


THE BREECH-LOADER EMERGES

From about 1860, the breech-loading firearm began its evolution – a process that continues to this day. Early breech-loading firearms, both military and sporting, were mainly break-open designs inspired by the French Lefauchaux action. They were followed by single-shot falling- and swing-ing-block designs and then by the various bolt-action designs. From about 1865 to 1895, the sporting arm of choice for the well-heeled was the double-barrelled black powder firearm. During this time, Great Britain was the world leader in firearm design and innovation. Their perfection of what today is called the British black powder express rifle was one of the great, if not *the* greatest, periods of firearm refinement and excellence that ever existed.

These are strong words, I know, given the excellence of the work by continental masters like Boutet of France during the 19th century, as well as work carried out at the courts of other crowned heads of Europe, the British shotgun industry up to WW II, the modern USA custom bolt-action industry, the Italian shotgun renaissance and engraving during recent times, and others. I award this accolade because it just so happened that an age of profound firearm innovation occurred at a time when build quality was at a peak never bettered before or after.

Good as the pre-WW II quality proved to be in the British firearm trade, the amount of innovation and technical progress was simply not in the same league as the evolution of the express rifle. The same can be said of any other period and centres of excellence as mentioned above.



Black powder express rifles represent an era in gunmaking where the best workmanship was considered a given. This .360 No 1 BPE rook rifle was made by C.E. Lewis, a relatively unknown gunmaker. It is extremely well made and stocked with the finest walnut.

“EXPRESS”

The term “express” was first used by James Purdey of London, and it referred to a high-speed train used in Britain during the 1850s. This term was used to describe a rifle that utilised an abnormally heavy powder charge relative to its bullet weight. The aim of this arrangement was to increase the muzzle velocity, and in doing so, improve the trajectory to make the hitting of distant targets easier. Although this was started during the percussion era, it was to become famous during the breech-loading era.

By all accounts, Britain was

the only country where the “express” was touted, and makers from the continent and America continued with the “normal” ratio of bullet to powder. Roughly speaking, the expresses used about 35-45% of the bullet weight as powder charge, while the norm from Europe and America was about 15-25%. Using today’s wisdom, one can imagine that ballistically, the express idea was not very wise, as the loss of sectional density, ballistic coefficient and penetration caused by the concept was probably the reason that American hunters preferred the heavy-bulleted Sharps,

Borchardt and other rifles for nearly wiping out the prairie buffalo.

The low sectional density of the express-type cartridges, combined with the moderate velocities that were obtained, couldn’t have been confidence-inspiring in Africa, where critters sometimes bite, stomp and scratch. A case in point is one of the most popular expresses, the .450 3¼” BPE (Black Powder Express). With a 270-grain bullet and 120 grains of FFG, the muzzle velocity was in the order of 1 900 fps. However, the SD was a mere .183, while the norm today for anything remote-»



A selection of black powder express cartridges, from left to right: .450 BPE, .500 No 2 BPE, .500 BPE, another .500 No 2 BPE, .577 BPE and, lastly, a .30-06 cartridge for comparison.

» ly approaching dangerous game status is about .30. Compare that with the typical .34 sectional density of the Amer-

ican buffalo cartridges of the day, similar to the modern .458 Winchester and others.

So, although the ballistic

excellence may be questioned, it is the excellence of the innovation, craftsmanship, decoration and function that cannot



Another Woodward double rifle, this time a .577/500 BPE with external hammers and a Jones underlever.

be questioned. While the decorations turned out by the continental gunsmiths of the 17th and 18th century royal courts were breathtaking, and the bolt-action rifle's effectiveness and understated beauty of the American trade today are superb, I'm of the view that the period during which the express rifle was perfected in Great Britain was unequalled.

Manufacturers of the day competed with each other to perfect function and form and reached a zenith by the time it paradoxically became obsolete when cordite was introduced in the late 1890s.

Black powder being the only propellant available during the express period, a rifle thus chambered would of course not be referred to then as black powder express, but merely as express. (Finding a rifle marked "BPE" will be akin to finding an antique coin dated 100 BC!) After the introduction of nitro propellant, the term "nitro express" was adopted by most, and the expresses of the black powder era were mostly forgotten. However, many weapons so chambered stayed in use, and catalogues by the big ammunition companies in Britain advertised ammunition for them right up to the 1930s.

FURTHER REFINEMENTS

While the technical excellence of the weapons was perfected in the workshops, engravers toiled at the art of quiet, tasteful and beautiful embellishment, and marksmen made sure that the weapons were fit for purpose through perfect regulation and sighting. The Jones underlever of 1851 gradually made way for the Purdey sliding-bolt of 1863, and the Scott top spindle of 1865.

Refinements in rifling included Enfield, Metford and

Henry types, combined with gain twist and even tapered bores! After that, every famous maker became known for subtle idiosyncrasies and improvements over time. Purdey had their “island” locks, Holland & Holland had micro-rifling, Stephen Grant favoured the side-lever opener, Woodward had the under-lever cocking “The Automatic” action, and Rigby the rising vertical-bolt. In Birmingham, Westley Richards perfected the C-type doll’s head bite, Greener the treble-wedge fast-locking, and W&C Scott (later Webley & Scott) the screw-grip. In Edinburgh, Alex Henry propagated his patented rifling and crafted some of the finest BPE rifles ever built. The vastness of the improvements and patents is astounding, and this subject is comprehensively covered in a three-volume reference book by David Baker and Ian Crudgington.

LIMITED CHAMBERINGS

Surprisingly, the number of chamberings for these express rifles was not numerous and generally consisted of only the .360-, .400-, .450-, .500- and .577-bores. Makers like Westley Richards put forth their own series of express cartridges, as did Gibbs of Bristol. It is noteworthy that Gibbs, in addition to the express loadings, also offered an old-fashioned 570-grain bullet/90 grains of powder load – for Africa, maybe? Using this cartridge, I once (unintentionally) shot through two blue wildebeest bulls. This might explain FC Selous’ affection for the Gibbs .461 cartridge and why rifles in this chambering turn up from time to time in South Africa. What is true is that these calibres were available in a multitude of case lengths – definitely a



A 570-grain paper-patched, cast lead bullet for a Gibbs .461 No 2 cartridge (right) next to a modern 500-grain .458 full metal jacket bullet.

headache for the two cartridge factories at the time.

However, it is also true that the odd case lengths were just that, odd, and were quickly destined to become collector’s items. Consider the .500 Express as an example: It was available in at least six case lengths. Very soon, however, only the 3” and 3¼” versions survived.

If you are lucky enough to stumble upon and own such a rifle, it is immensely satisfying to load for and shoot with, and indeed to hunt with such a beauty as well. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to load it to perform properly with the black powders available today, as nothing on the market approaches the ability of the Curtis’s & Harvey powder of Victorian times. Sometimes you might be lucky, but more often, you will not. The shortcut is to use the so-called nitro-for-black loading but be warned: Do not attempt to jump into this blindly. Considerably less smokeless is needed to obtain the performance

of the day, and you must absolutely know what you are doing. Although these rifles by good makers were the best available in their day, even the best materials of the time will not be considered strong by today’s standards.

The amazing thing is that, if done correctly, peak pressures will be lower than those generated by the black powder of the period! (Sherman Bell and Tom Amburst proved this after conducting a series of tests for the *Double Gun Journal*). The reference book on this subject is definitely *Shooting the British Double Rifle* by Graeme Wright. Come to think of it, the book is worth having, even if you do not own a double rifle.

MODERN COMPONENTS

Cases for these rifles are no longer a problem, as the nitro equivalent of most of them exists. If not, a call to Bruce Bertram in Australia will soon sort you out.

Bullets for the express family come in many guises and

can keep you occupied for a long time indeed. In general, Henry-type rifling prefers paper-patched lead bullets, while Enfield-type rifling mostly shoots well-lubricated lead bullets. Metford rifling is the most adaptable of all, and will generally shoot well with greased lead, paper-patched lead or copper-plated lead bullets. Most of these styles will also work well with copper-jacketed bullets, but one cannot help but think that wear to the bore will be quicker with these, especially with Damascus barrels. Having said that, I have used copper-jacketed bullets for many years without any noticeable wear problems. Writers such as Graeme Wright, Sherman Bell and Ross Seyfried also have no problem with this practice. Making paper-patched and lubricated cast lead bullets is an art in itself. Some good books on the subject are available if you trawl the Internet.

The last word goes to hammer versus hammerless. The golden period under discussion was also the period that saw the zenith of the hammer gun, and the almost complete conversion to hammerless designs before the express became obsolete. Although some absolute gems exist in hammerless persuasion, the romantic streak within me will always find a reason to consider the hammer versions to be more elegant and desirable! As the saying goes, “To each his own”.

As is the case with many fine things throughout history, we will never witness the like of these great rifles again. This surely makes it our duty to nurture and care for them so that future generations can admire and use them like we do and those before us had the opportunity to do. ☸

Wanneer is 'n kind oud genoeg?



GEDULD IS DIE SAADJIE WAT DIE LIEFDE VIR JAG BY JOU KIND KAN LAAT ONTKIEM.

Natuurlik sal 'n entoesiastiese jagter sy passie vir jag met sy kinders wil deel. Die groot vraag is egter: Wanneer is die tyd ryp?

Stadig nou! Dit is belangrik om eerstens te besef dat jou kind nie noodwendig 'n ontlukkende jagter is, wil wees, of hoef te wees nie. Net soos sommige sportief is en ander nie, is party gebore jagters terwyl ander ongemaklik is daarmee. Gee jou kind dus die blootstelling, maar moenie 'n geweer in sy hande forseer net omdat dit jou eie belangstelling is nie.

GEREEDHEID

Ouers verwag gewoonlik 'n kitsbeslissing as hulle vra wanneer 'n kind gereed is om te

jag. Die antwoord is egter veel ingewikkelder as bloot 'n spesifieke ouderdom.

Ja, die kind moet sekerlik oud genoeg wees om 'n geweer self met die nodige veiligheid en behendigheid te kan hanteer en akkuraat te vuur, maar sy emosionele volwassenheid is net so belangrik.

Met die realistiese elektroniese speletjies waaraan kinders blootgestel word, raak die sprong van speelskiet na werklik skiet gevaarlik smal. Waar die rekenaar egter agterna afgeskakel kan word, is dit nie die geval met die werklikheid nie. Die kind moet oud genoeg wees om die erns en implikasies van jag te besef, want hy gaan gekonfronteer word met egte bloed en die

wete dat hy onherroeplik 'n lewe geneem het.

Is hy emosioneel opgewasse hiervoor? Hoe gaan hy dit ervaar en wat kan die effek daarvan op sy psige wees? Wees versigtig dat jy as ouer nie jou gebreide siening as maatstaf gebruik wanneer jy jou kind beoordeel nie. Vra jouself eerder hoe die kind dit sou ervaar as hy byvoorbeeld die toneel van 'n noodlottige motorongeluk moes aanskou.

Volgens 'n Amerikaanse studie ervaar kinders die grootste toename in hul emosionele besorgdheid en liefde vir diere wanneer hulle tussen 7 en 10 jaar oud is, terwyl feitlike en kognitiewe begrip van diere eers tussen 11 en 14 jaar toeneem. Etiese en ekologiese

begrip ontwikkel later, tussen 14 en 17 jaar.

Die spesifieke studie beveel 12 tot 14 jaar aan as die beste ouderdom om 'n kind omtrent die buitelewe te leer. Dit is die stadium wanneer kinders die basiese begrip van 'n ekosisteem begin verstaan en 'n sin vir moraliteit ontwikkel.

Ouers is oor die algemeen te haastig wanneer dit kom by die groot besluit of die tyd ryp is vir kleinboet of kleinsus om iets te skiet. 'n Mens kan die gretigheid verstaan, maar in baie gevalle veroorsaak dit dat oorywerige pa's jagtertjies vroeg breek, eerder as kweek. Daar is egter skynbaar 'n korrelasie tussen die ouderdom waarop iemand aan jag bekend gestel word en die duur van sy belangstelling. Bogenoemde studie voer aan dat ouer toetreders, veral dié bo 20, waarskynlik gouer weer sal ophou jag as iemand wat as kind aan jag bekend gestel is. Die betrokkenheid van die vaderfiguur en die mate waartoe jag 'n familiekultuur is, is ook belangrike faktore wat die aard van 'n jong jagter se belangstelling beïnvloed.

VOORBEREIDING

Om 'n jong jagtertjie aan jag bekend te wil stel deur hom bloot iets te laat skiet, is om van die verkeerde kant af te begin.

Dit is veel belangriker om hom van 'n jong ouderdom af stelselmatig in die weë en die wêreld van die jagter in te lyf.



Dis belangrik om kinders te leer skiet met die regte toerusting. 'n Windbuks is gewoonlik een van die eerste wapenverwante leermeesters wat ingespan word.

'n Deeglike vakleerlingskap, voor hy sielkundig opgesaal word met die verantwoordelikheid van doodmaak, help hom om die standpunte en waardes van jagters te verken. Langs hierdie weg groei hy as't ware in jag in – iets wat uiteindelik vir hom 'n lang en vervullende reis kan raak.

As 'n eerste stap behoort hy gereelde blootstelling aan die veld te kry sonder dat 'n geweer noodwendig by is. Kamp, uitkenning van spesies en geslagte, spore en veldkennis is almal fasette waarvan die jagter iets behoort te weet en wat vir 'n kind stimulerend en verrykend kan wees.

Die volgende fase kan dié van helper wees wanneer die grootmense jag. Pligte soos hekke oopmaak, die jagvoertuig skoonmaak, vuurmaak en dergelike takies sal hom leer dat jag nie net 'n skietspelletjie is nie, maar 'n proses met verantwoordelikhede. Terselfdertyd kry hy geleentheid om te sien hoe volwasse jagters optree – iets wat vir hom leiding kan gee, mits die rolmodelle reg is.

Teen hierdie tyd behoort junior al goed bekend te wees met skietkuns en wapenhantering, maar nie noodwendig met 'n volwaardige jaggeweer nie.

Die ou, tradisionele leer-skool van eers kettie dra, dan windbuks en daarna .22, was 'n goeie een. Baie van vandag se gesoute jagters het hul vaardighede en toewyding te danke aan hierdie geduldige proses. Geduld is nie meer so volop nie, maar die nederige windbuks bly steeds 'n bekostigbare manier om jong skuts deeglik vertrouwd te maak met wapenveiligheid en aspekte van skietkuns soos skietposisie, greep, trajek en wind.

Die junior jagopleiding wat jagtersverenigings aanbied, is natuurlik ook uitstekende voorbereiding vir 'n jong jag-

ter. Hierdie mense ken hul vak en verstaan die vermoëns van kinders. Hul ouerlike ego is nie op die spel nie en die opleiding is in lyn met breë riglyne, terwyl die ouer se uitkyk tot sy eie ervaringsveld en omstandighede beperk kan wees. Die meeste verenigings bied ook kursusse aan waar ouer juniors self 'n bok kan skiet en bewerk.

DIE KIND SE EERSTE JAG

Wanneer kry die kind kans om op 'n lewende dier te skiet?

Die ou maatstaf van hoe jonger die jagter, hoe kleiner die prooi, het steeds meriete. Kleiner diere is nie noodwendig makliker nie en 'n lewe is 'n lewe, maar deur hiermee weg te spring, laat dit minstens ruimte vir groter aspirasies later en die persepsie van 'n leerskool met vlakke. Die genoemde studie vir die *US Fish & Wildlife Service* beveel ook aan dat kinders jonger as 16 hulle by kleinwild bepaal.

Dit is egter belangrik om dit van meet af by die jong jagter in te prent dat enige lewende dier of voël nooit bloot as 'n teiken beskou mag word nie en slegs gejag kan word as daar regverdiging voor is en die reëls en wette nagekom word. Hy behoort trouens 'n goeie besef van jagetiek te hê voor hy hoegenaamd toegelaat word om self op iets te skiet.

Die dag wanneer junior sy eerste bok skiet, behoort vir hom 'n mylpaal te wees. Respekteer dit en voeg waarde aan die ondervinding toe deur 'n volwaardige, toegewyde jag daarvan te maak, nie sommer net 'n kortpad-skietskans so tussen die grootmense se jag deur nie.

Moet dit egter ook nie só aanpak dat hy druk ervaar nie. Elke pa wil graag sy kind na sy hand leer maar moet ook sy eie beperkinge en die invloed van sy eie ego kan



Jag gaan oor meer as net doodmaak. Dis noodsaaklik om 'n algemene waardering vir die natuur, asook die nodige mate van respek wat daarmee saamgaan, oor te dra.

herken. Dit kan selfs raadsaam wees om die kind liever saam met 'n ander betroubare persoon veld toe te stuur. Dit gebeur maklik dat 'n pa se behoefte om sy kind te sien presteer hom ongeduldig maak en dat hy daardeur onbillike druk op die kind plaas. 'n Kind wil nie graag sy ouer teleurstel nie en die ervaring kan 'n onaangename een raak wat sy belangstelling in jag demp, eerder as aanwakker.

Hoe die kind se eerste jag ook al gebeur, die sukses daarvan moenie gemeet word aan

wat dood is nie, maar eerder aan die waarde van die ondervinding vir die kind.

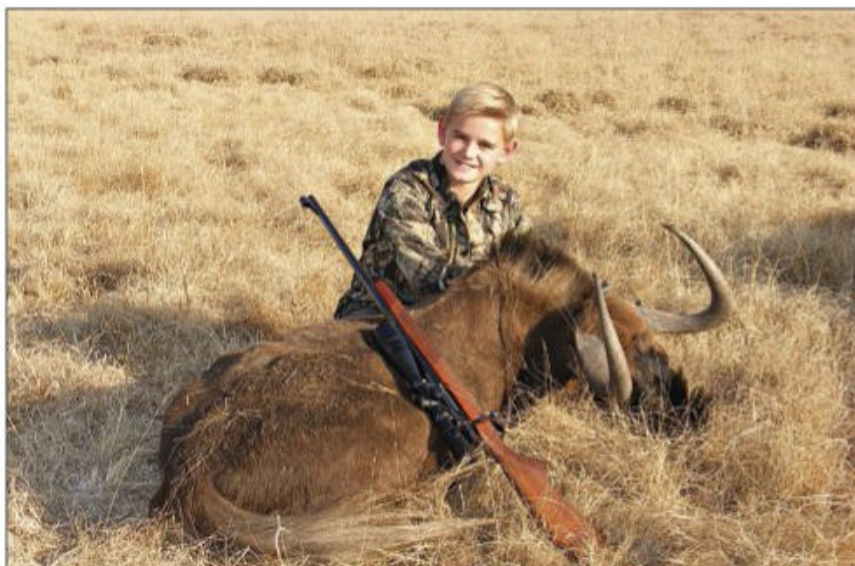
Was daar vir hom lewenslesse in die ervaring? Het hy avontuur en uitdaging geproe, moes hy deursetting en geduld aan die dag lê, of teleurstelling oorkom? Wat het hy geleer van die natuur en die rol van lewe en dood daarin? Was dit vir hom betekenisvol?

SLAGGATE

Die grootste slag gat waarin die ouer seker kán trap, is om “sukses” bloot aan die dood- »



Baie van ons se eerste “grootwild” is tipies 'n duif, en die lesse wat hieruit geleer kan word, moenie onderskat word nie.



Sukses in die jagveld is vir baie kinders die suksesvolle uitkoms ná deeglike voorbereiding, sowel as die besef van verantwoordelikheid wat met die neem van 'n lewe gepaard gaan. Volgens Herman is dit nie 'n goeie ding om jou kind te vinnig en te veel in die jagveld te laat doen nie.

» maak van 'n dier te koppel, sonder om die kind met die nodige verwysingsraamwerk toe te rus. Dikwels is die pa se eie ego hiervoor verantwoordelik. Hy wil graag met sy kind spog en is self nie vol-groeid genoeg as jagter om sy fout te besef nie.

Jy bewys nie 'n kleintjie 'n guns as jy hom 'n geweer help laai en vashou en dan 'n op-hef van hom maak omdat "hy" 'n bok geskiet het nie. Hy weet goed hy sou dit nie son-der hulp kon doen nie, en as gevolg daarvan kan hy ontoe-reikend voel of selfs die ge-volgtrekking maak dat dit OK is om te kul.

Nog minder is dit in die kind se belang as hy op 'n jong ouderdom al verskeie "presta-sies" op sy kerfstok het sonder dat hy die jag daarvan verstaan het of waardering daarvoor het. Die pa wat byvoorbeeld spog dat sy pikkie van sewe al 'n eland geskiet het, doen sy kind waarskynlik 'n onreg aan.

Deur die kind ryp te druk, ontnem hy hom van ideale en mylpale. So 'n kind het nie geleentheid om natuurlik as jagter te groei nie. As hy klein-tyd al alles gedoen het, bly daar vir hom min oor om na

te strewe en sy belangstelling in jag kan dan bloot 'n kortston-dige fase wees. Sy toekoms as jagter is vir hom bederf omdat hy nie die dieper fasette en aan-trekkingskrag van jag stelsel-matig ontdek het nie, maar dit bloot ervaar het as kitsgrati-fikasie, met pa se geld gekoop.

DIE GROTER PRENTJIE

As geheel kan die inlywing van 'n kind in die jagwêreld 'n konstruktiewe proses wees met 'n veel wyer invloed as net die skep van 'n jagter.

Daar is min terreine waar die geleentheid om 'n band tussen ouer en kind te smee, so gunstig is as tydens 'n jag. In die jagveld is daar tyd vir mekaar, daar is die eerlike agtergrond van die natuur, die kampvuur met sy magiese in-vloed en die harde werklik-heid dat jag nie 'n speletjie is nie, maar 'n aktiwiteit wat verantwoordelikheid verg.

Hier kan jy wedersydse ver-troue vestig, wat later in die lewe nodig kan raak. Hier kan jy ook die septer van man-wees onder gunstige omstan-dighede aangee en jou kind op uitdagings voorberei.

As jy die dieper waardes van jag by 'n kind wat belang-

stelling toon, kan vestig, plant jy 'n saadjie wat hom waar-skynlik lewenslank sal bybly. Laat hom egter bloot 'n bok skiet sonder dat hy daarvoor gereed is, en die natuur kan vir hom verlore wees, en hy vir die natuur.

'N PAAR WENKE

- Moenie 'n kind dwing om te skiet of jag nie. Laat jou eerder deur sy belangstel-ling lei.
- Die daad van doodmaak moet binne die algehele jagkonteks gesien word.
- Wees versigtig om nie 'n kind te laat skiet met 'n kaliber wat bokant sy ver-moëns is nie. Die vrees wat hy hieruit kan oor-hou, kan veel meer skade doen as wat die ondervin-ding werd is.
- Beperk die kind tot spe-sies wat betroubaar ge-dood kan word met die kaliber waarmee hy ge-maklik skiet.
- Laat 'n kind verkieslik met 'n teleskoop van lae ver-groting skiet. 'n Hoë ver-groting gaan net enige bewe beklemtoon en on-sekerheid veroorsaak.
- Moet nie verwag dat 'n

kind akkuraat moet kan skiet met 'n geweer wat hom nie reg pas nie.

- Leer hom verantwoorde-likheid, etiek en respek, maar behou ook die ele-ment van pret. 'n Kind se aandagspan is kort; moe-nie dat skiet of jag vir hom soos 'n eksamen raak nie.
- Wees eerlik oor sy resul-tate, maar wees taktvol met kritiek. Dit moet vir hom 'n opbouwende erva-ring wees.
- Moenie sukses as 'n stan-daard voorhou nie. Leer hom ook hoe om teleur-stelling en mislukking te hanteer.
- Besef dat kinders verskil. Een met min selfvertroue moet miskien aangemoed-ig word, terwyl 'n ander een dalk weer 'n bietjie teruggehou moet word.
- Kweek te alle tye agting vir wapens, diere en mede-mense. Smoor tekens van "bloeddorstigheid" in die kiem.
- Moenie jag as 'n mededin-gende aktiwiteit uitbeeld nie. Dit kan sommige kin-ders ontmoedig.
- Besef altyd dat jy as ouer die voorbeeld stel. ☸



Sukses en die satis-faksie wat daarmee saamgaan, is vir baie kinders 'n wonderlike aansporing wat later groot vrugte in die jagveld afwerp.

Something different from Italy

The Lupo bolt-action rifle from Italian manufacturer Benelli is this company's first foray into the world of hunting rifles after dominating the tactical and semi-automatic hunting shotgun markets for many years.

Optimised for fine accuracy, the Lupo features modern styling and a special cryo-treated barrel, along with Benelli's own recoil reduction system in the stock. The synthetic stock, as well as the trigger, is adjustable to fit the shooter's needs, and the action is fitted with a detachable, double-stack box magazine.

This example is chambered in .300 Winchester Magnum and is fitted with a Leupold VX-5HD scope. Benelli and Leupold products are imported into South Africa by Formalito in Pretoria.

Why wingshooting?

It's all about the dogs...

SOLID REASONS FOR TAKING UP THE NOBLE ART OF WINGSHOOTING

I don't really know what prompted me into wingshooting. We were not a hunting or shooting family. My dad did own a pretty ordinary Spanish 16-bore side-by-side that he bought after the Sharpeville incident, which took my fancy. So, I presume the old Nationalist government can be blamed for laying the foundation of my early wingshooting interest. That sweet little 16 is still going strong, by the way.

Perhaps the affordability of wingshooting was another important factor. As a young

extension officer for the citrus industry, my annual salary of R5 800 (minus income tax) wasn't enough to buy impala or kudu, although I did have access to farms. However, game birds were abundant and free and willingly offered to young, drooling extension officers – unlike today when, pound for pound, a greywing must be the most expensive meat you could buy.

I never looked at the pros and cons and positively decided this was the type of hunting I would like to do. I sort of stumbled into it from the af-

fordability side. My stumble then evolved into a love for dogs, guns and birds, which became the most wonderful sport imaginable. I cannot compare it to biltong or trophy hunting, or any other form of hunting, for I simply know nothing about it. I can only attempt to describe a day “under the birds” that will hopefully do justice to this beautiful sport.

THE SHOOT

We would gather at Simon's place early in the morning. It is midwinter, cold enough for

warm jackets, mittens and mohair socks. The dogs feel nothing. Brimming with excitement, they mill around the hunters, greet old pals and beg to get going. Polka, Holly, Brambles and Skollie are four springer spaniel dynamos of energy and enthusiasm, while Brescia is a mild-mannered German Drahthaar. It is very wet from all the dew. We cup our hands around mugs of steaming coffee and wonder if we have everything for the long walk down the hill. There would be no bailout or “rescue” service before we



A fine gun and a noble game bird – the perfect combination in the field.



An eager dog is one of the wingshooter's greatest assets and, as Kobus says, the reason he took up wingshooting to begin with.

sight. I didn't even get a shot. But Skollie persists, so there must be more. "Don't drop your vigilance!" When the struggler takes off, I am more than ready and nail it a good distance off where it drops in thick scrub.

Skollie is onto it in a flash and delicately hauls the beautiful bird out of the bush. It is a fine-looking, plump hen without a feather out of place – gloriously immaculate and a jewel to behold.

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

Yep, I think, it's all about the dogs. But what is it about the dogs? What makes gundogs so valuable, so wonderful? As working dogs, they are no better than guide dogs, sniffing dogs or tracking dogs. Perhaps, I reason, it is because in gundogs we have companions who are more enthusiastic about our hobby than ourselves.

Shortly after we got married, I bought my first spaniel, a little brown cocker. I was lucky as my wife was also smitten by it. I recently read in a *Field* magazine they call it "puppy love": "There's no better way for a man to perk up his dating profile than by posing with a puppy. It gives a whole new meaning to picking up birds." Well, I already had my chick, but still, it sort of cemented the relationship. I wanted a bird dog, and with my limited knowledge, the cocker sounded about right.

The cocker's father was a decoy in an antique shop, comfortably loafing on a worn-out lounge, the chair's protruding coir matting an excellent match for the cocker's golden-brown hair. It pulled in unsuspecting females like flies to a rotting pig. The shop owners were very happy with their decoy's results, and he was allowed liberties no other staff member could even contemplate. »

would bottom out amongst the cows near the dairy.

It is francolin season. Down in the valley, we will have a go at the Capes and the guinea-fowl, but for the time being, it is redwing francolin we are after. The walk will be challenging, but we will take it slowly, enjoying the magnificent views – the deep green valley against the blue of the mountains. In between will be patches of pink heath and white everlastings. It has rained well the previous week, so there will be enough water for the dogs everywhere.

And then the three of us set off. The first stretch is a walk through the forest to get to the grassy slopes. The dogs rush off in wild abandon to clear their piping and get rid of any cropped-up, surplus energy. I carry my gun open over my shoulder, well used, shiny with the patina of many years' hard work. Simon's Masu, a turn-of-the-century Damascus hammer gun, is snug in the crook of his arm. Neville is in love with his latest little Spanish number, a 28-bore made

for Orvis. He changes his guns like his underpants!

On the edge of the grass, the dogs are called to order. We split up – one guy follows on the ridge, one to the right, and one to the left.

Polka and Skollie work in tandem out in front of me. Holly and Bramble stick with Simon. Neville's Drahthaar ranges further than the spaniels; the pointer has a distinct advantage when hunting partridges. I love watching the dogs; one draws so much energy and enthusiasm from them. Polka and Skollie are brace mates with many shoots behind them. They quarter the grass in front, regularly crossing over to check out every little thing that might hold the slightest possibility of a bird. They know their job so well. It's magic. It's poetry in motion.

WHY WINGSHOOTING?

I've often contemplated the issue of my fascination for wingshooting. Why wingshooting? In the past, I developed complicated theories to

discover the multifaceted nature of the sport, the epitome of which can only be reached when all aspects are mastered and brought together in one holistic attempt at a perfect ten. The special skills required for shooting on the wing, the enduring and artistic beauty of a double-barrelled shotgun, the carving of decoys, fieldcraft and bird identification. But it always came back to the dogs. Today, they are everything. Yes, I think, without the dogs, the hunt is nothing. It's dead. That's it. Quite simply, wingshooting to me is all about the dogs.

In front, the dogs are getting birdy. Their body language shows it all. They pick up speed, electricity ripples through their bodies, and you can sense they are onto something. And when they smash into a covey, I am ready with the old SKB. But they break in the wrong direction. In a split second, they are up and off down the valley. In a beautiful gliding curve, the feathered missiles disappear out of

» Back then, I knew nothing about shooting, let alone selecting the right gundog for the right purpose from working lines and how to train it properly. Fortunately, that spaniel sired excellent pups, with some ancient hunting genes still lingering about. When my nine-month-old cocker flushed a pair of Swainson's from a clump of reeds, catching us still concentrating on emptying our early-morning bladders, I knew I had a keeper.

After the cocker, a lifelong love affair with English springer spaniels followed because the books said they were so much better than the cockers. Better temperaments anyway. Apparently, there was no good working cocker material in South Africa. Whether this is still the case, I don't know, but cockers seem to be making a comeback in the UK. By the time I collected my first puppy from the kennels, I had gained some practical experience and had read everything I could lay my hands on.

On the way back home, I saw my wife crying quietly with the puppy on her lap, "He's so good, so brave!" I knew this one was going to make the grade as well.

We had marvellous times together. With theoretical knowledge, rapidly cemented by practical experience, our results started improving. I attended working spaniel trials to see what these dogs were really capable of and how it should be done. I very quickly decided I was happy with the way we were doing things, for mostly, we were having fun. The stresses and strains of competitive dog work and shooting were not for me. The springers have an easy way of working; they almost train themselves. They are incredible



Game birds are gloriously immaculate creatures – not a feather out of place.

retrievers, loving housemates and totally loyal to their hunting companions. Dubbed "the maids of all work" in the field sports world, no man could ask for a better companion – a one-man dog, if ever there was one.

Starting off with greywing, I set myself the target of collecting most of the game birds available in the country. A mate and I travelled all the way to Rhodes in the high Drakensberg to be guided by the legendary Dirk Steynberg, and for the first time encountered pointers. Njoster actually was a Dropper, a pointer/setter cross, popular in those days in the Eastern Cape. I marvelled at this tireless and far-ranging dog. Realising the importance of different dogs for different purposes, I now set out not only collecting as many of the different game birds available, but also gaining the experience of shooting over as many different gundogs as possible.

Redwing francolin over pure-bred pointers in the Steenkampsberge near Dullstroom, Cape francolin over Hungarian vizslas in the valleys below Babylonstoring,

and Brittanies near Napier. I started shooting with friends who owned GSPs, which I still think are probably the best dogs for South African conditions, even though at times they have quirky temperaments. Drahthaar or German wire-haired pointers were a revelation, and I immediately fell in love with them. Labradors and golden retrievers just made me love my spaniels even more. I watched an Italian Spinone strutting his stuff and followed behind red and Llewellyn setters, soon realising I knew too little about these dogs. I must make that visit to Tarkastad to attend a Border Field Trial to watch and learn about these graceful dogs, the Eastern Cape being the stronghold of these beautiful canines. Big Sky country, my contact said; I will love the experience. I have yet to come across Weimaraners and flat-coated retrievers at working trials and wonder why these excellent dogs have not yet really featured in South Africa.

I then came to the important conclusion that to every man, his dog was the best. You would never be able to

convince them that their Jack Russell terrier was not an ideal gundog, or that their sausage dog that retrieves the tennis ball so tirelessly is not going to make it in the field. And you'd better not criticise them in any way, lest you want to lose all your friends. They simply will not understand, for they do not know the difference, the man behind the dog being just as important as the dog itself!

Down below, the dogs have flushed a flock of guinea-fowl into the thick riverine bush. Some have veered off into a side valley, running hell for leather up the hill. No use chasing them. We decide on the group in the brambles and bracken next to the river. The spaniels will come into their own now. They can flush a leopard from a gin trap!

With panting dogs and a couple of birds, we gather for lunch and rest before the evening's planned offensive at the dam for ducks and geese. We have called for a friend to bring his labrador.

Yes, I think, and most definitely so – wingshooting is all about the dogs! 🍷

A great notion from the Victorian era

SNAPSHOT

The British gunmakers Westley Richards & Co Ltd, with premises situated in Birmingham, are famous for inventing and patenting the boxlock action for double rifles and shotguns in 1878. The Anson & Deeley boxlock action, named after a director and the shop foreman at the time of the action's introduction, has been produced in its thousands in many countries the world over and remains in production up to the present day.

In 1897, Westley Richards introduced what they called the "hand-detachable lock action" in an attempt to remove the friction-bearing pins through the boxlock action's body, which kept the lockwork and tumblers in place. With this design, the bottom plate of the action could be removed, allowing the shooter to remove the locks from the action for cleaning or maintenance. In the United States, the design subsequently became known as the "droplock". The droplock is still in production with Westley Richards and can be had either as a shotgun or as a double-barrelled rifle in various calibres up to .700 NE.

The example shown here is a droplock game gun in 12-bore with fine, 30" Damascus barrels. It is an early example and dates from 1898 but is still in action in the game fields of Africa every year. It is a prime example of fine British gunmaking at its best.



Almal se leermeeester

DIE .22 LR WAS BYKANS ALMAL SE EERSTE LEERMEESTER EN IS OOK BYKANS ALMAL SE LIEFLING.

Dis waarskynlik redelik akkuraat om te raai dat die .22 LR verantwoordelik was vir die bekendstelling van derduisende mense aan die opwindende wêreld van “groot” gewere. Volgens die gebruiklike prosedure het die meeste van ons ons skietende met ’n windbuks geslyp. Sodra ons hom be-meester het, is ons daarna versigtig aan die .22 LR bekendgestel.

Ek onthou die dag soos gister toe ek die eerste keer met ’n “regte” geweer kennis gemaak het. Dit was ’n gehawende .22-geweertjie. Vergelyke met die slag van die windbuks waaraan ek toe reeds gewoond was, het die parmantige klap van die .22 toe ek die sneller druk, my sommer dadelik laat voel dat ek ook nou in die wêreld van grootmense gewere was.

Ek kon dadelik sien dat die .22 waarmee ek nou geskiet het, ’n perd van ’n ander kleur was. Die grootmense het nou baie moeite gedoen om die belangrikheid van wapenveiligheid te beklemtoon. Waar die leë koeldrankblikkie van tevore net ’n gaatjie ingehad het en stadig omgeval het as ek dit met die windbuks geklits het, was daar duidelik meer reaksie by die teiken as die .22 gepraat het! Ek het ook agtergekom dat daar feitlik geen terugskop was nie, al het die .22 lekker geklap as ek die sneller gedruk het.

BAIE VOORDELE

Dis juis die .22 LR se talle positiwe eienskappe soos negeerbare terugskop, tesame met die gevoel van ’n “regte” geweer en bekostigbaarheid, wat dié kaliber so gewild vir opleiding van veral die jong-

span maak. Die meeste senter-slagkalibers skop net eenvoudig te veel om ’n kind op die skietbaan mee touwys te maak. Bowendien raak die koste van ammunisie ook gou ’n wesentlike faktor om in ag te neem.

Aan die ander kant is die .22 LR ’n baie meer kostedoel-treffende opsie om die aanvanklike skietwerk mee te doen. Dis ’n kaliber wat by uitstek geskik is om selfvertroue op te bou en skietvernuf te slyp, en ek weet van baie min kinders wat nie in ’n japtrap amper verslaaf geraak het aan .22-skiet nie. Deesdae verkoop talle handelaars ook baie oulike teikens wat dinge nog meer interessant maak en die belangstelling prikkel. Klein valplaatjies en selfs teikens wat ontplof of ’n ander reaksie veroorsaak as hulle raak geskiet word, word al hoe gewilder en is toenemend in aanvraag.

Hou egter in gedagte dat .22-koeëltjies geneig is om van harde voorwerpe af terug te

spat. Dra dus liever voldoende oor- en oogbeskerming wanneer jy met die .22 skiet.

OORSPRONG

Sover ek kan vasstel, is die oorsprong van die .22 LR soos ons dit vandag ken, ietwat troebel. Sekere bronne dui die oorsprong aan as die jaar 1887 deur J Stevens Arms & Tool Company. Ander bronne beweer die .22 LR is deur die Union Metallic Cartridge Company in 1884 bekendgestel. Die aanvanklike lading was 5 grein fynge maalde swartkruit agter ’n 40-grein loodkoeëltjie, maar daar is vinnig ander warmer ladings vir die .22 bekendgestel.

Dis amper ’n uitgemaakte saak dat die aanvanklike denkrigting agter die .22 LR juis as ’n skyfskiet-patroon was. Wie die aanvanklike ontwerpers ook al was, hulle het uitstekend hierin geslaag.

VERSILLLENDE SOORTE AMMUNISIE

Vandag is daar ’n wye verskei-



BO: Geweertjies in .22 LR soos hierdie Mauser van voor die Tweede Wêreldoorlog was menige grootwildjagter se eerste “regte” geweer en het die fondasie gelê vir goeie skietvernuf asook goeie wapenhantering en -maniere.

LINKS: Slegs kleinwild soos hase en veerwild soos hierdie fisant is geskikte prooi vir die .22 LR.

.22 LR-ammunisie is bekostigbaar en beskikbaar in 'n groot verskeidenheid. Die linkerkantste patroon is gelaai met 'n soliede 40 grein-loodkoeël en die regterkantste een met klein haelkorreltjies.



denheid .22 LR-ammunisie in die handel verkrygbaar. Die gewildste lading staan as *standard velocity* bekend. Dit blyk dat dié lading se trompsnelheid gewoonlik in die omgewing van 1 070-1 125 vps is, maar dit kan tussen vervaardigers verskil.

High velocity-.22 LR-ammunisie se trompsnelheid is ietwat vinniger (1 200-1 350 vps), terwyl *hyper velocity*-ammunisie se trompsnelheid selfs nóg vinniger is – sommige vervaardigers s'n roem op 1 600 vps! Daar is ook vervaardigers wat patrone gelaai met haelkorreltjies vir die .22 LR produseer. Ek het nog altyd gewonder hoe doeltreffend dié kombinasie is op enigiets groter as 'n parmantige muis!

Aan die onderkant van die skaal is daar ook subsoniese ammunisie vir die .22 LR beskikbaar. Met subsoniese ammunisie en 'n knaldemper is die .22 LR feitlik geruisloos en dis juis hierdie eienskap wat dié ammunisie ietwat berug gemaak het. Na bewering was die kombinasie van 'n Beretta .22 LR-pistool met 'n knaldemper en subsoniese ammunisie een van die geliefkoosde wapens van die spioenasiediens van 'n sekere Midde-Oosterse land vir doeleindes wat gelukkig nie op hierdie artikel betrekking het nie!

GEBRUIKE VIR DIE .22

Benewens om kinders mee te leer skiet, het die .22 LR ook

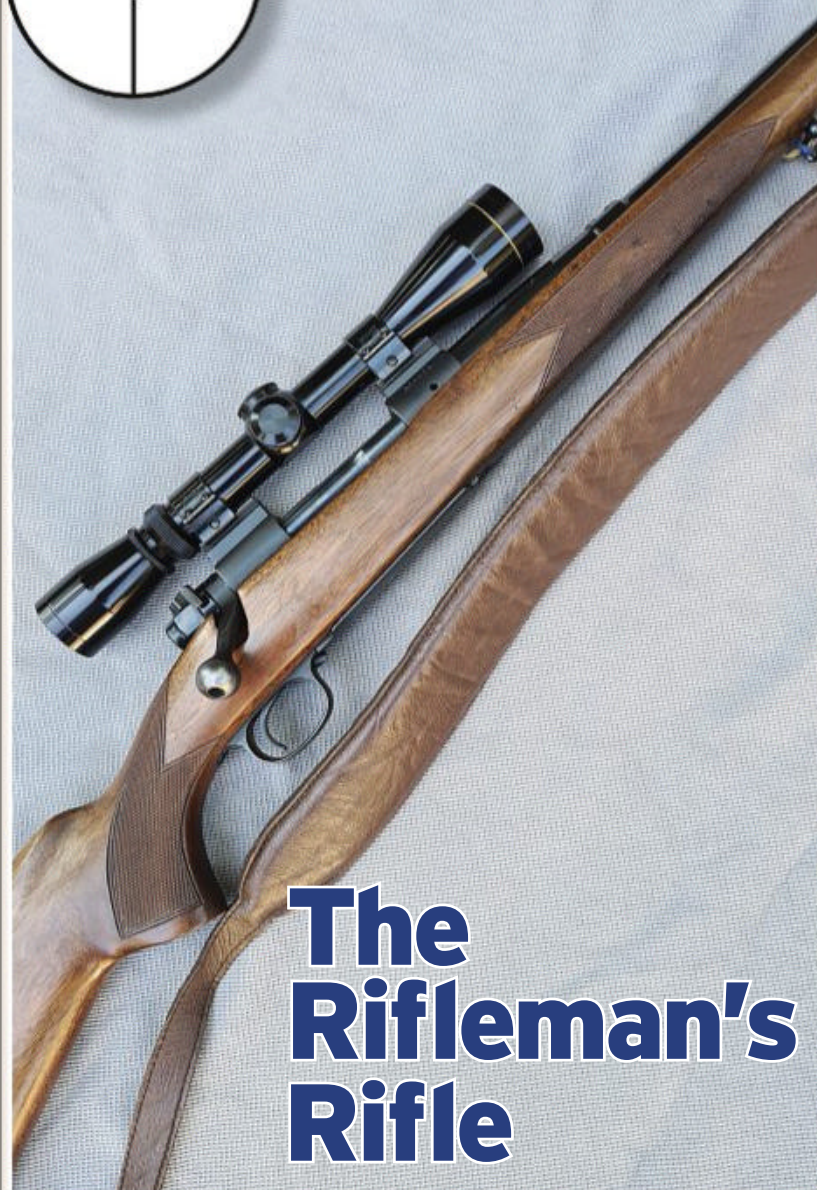
ander gebruike. Talle mense vind dit baie ontspannend om met 'n .22 en 'n paar pakkies ammunisie skietbaan toe te gaan. Dis ook 'n bekostigbare en effektiewe manier om die oog gedurende die somermaande in te hou.

Daar is 'n klomp stories in omloop oor hoe groot bokke en selfs olifante met die .22 platgetrek is. Ek weet dit is ook deur die jare vir vele slagbeeste aangewend. Volgens my is die .22 egter nie 'n jagwapen vir enigiets groter as kleinwild soos hase en veerwild soos tarentale en fisante nie, selfs al word die vinniger ammunisie wat vandag beskikbaar is, gebruik.

Daar is tans baie verskillende skietkompetisies wat spesifiek op die .22 LR gemik is. Dit het op sy beurt weer die ontwikkeling van 'n groot verskeidenheid .22-gewere en -handwapens aangespoor. Die dae toe die tipiese .22 LR 'n gehawende ou geweeftjie was wat van geslag tot geslag oorgedra is, is dus helaas verby. As dit by .22's kom, is die keuses vandag so te sê onbeperk.

Die .22 LR is met goeie rede waarskynlik die gewildste kaliber ter wêreld. As leermeester, ontspanningsmiddel en selfs oorlewingshulpmiddel is dit onverbeterlik. Ek twyfel nie vir 'n oomblik dat almal se leermeester en liefing sal aanhou gedy so lank as wat daar geskiet en gejag word nie. Lank lewe die leermeester! 🎯

SNAPSHOT



The Rifleman's Rifle

The first edition of Winchester's legendary Model 70 rifle, manufactured from 1936 to 1963 at the company's famous manufacturing plant in New Haven, Connecticut, rightly gained fame as a superb hunting rifle.

The pre-'64 Model 70, as they became known after the action was radically altered in 1964 to reduce manufacturing costs, was chambered in a wide range of cartridges over the years, ranging from the .22 Hornet to the powerful .458 Winchester Magnum.

Although the Model 70 is still available today, manufacturing has shifted to a new plant in Portugal where rifles are assembled from parts manufactured in the United States.

This pristine example was made in 1951 and is chambered in .270 Winchester. This rifle/cartridge combination was made famous by the late Jack O'Connor, who hunted big game the world over with his Winchester .270.

Precision by Nordiske



OPTICS WORTH A SECOND LOOK

The name Nordiske may not immediately ring a bell with most hunters but this brand of optics is certainly worth looking at if you hunt on the open plains or spend lots of time shooting at gongs at extended range.

SA JAGTER/HUNTER was recently supplied with a Nordiske Series 8 HD 4-32x56 scope for testing purposes. Starting with the technical side of things, the scope has a 34 mm main tube, illuminated reticle, a full 100 MOA of adjustment ($\frac{1}{4}$ MOA per click), fully coated lenses, and target turrets with zero-stop. As can be imagined, the 34 mm main tube, coupled with the 56 mm objective lens, as well as the mechanics required for the illuminated reticle and extensive adjustments on offer make for a pretty hefty scope. But as

I will explain, the intended use for the scope is not necessarily walk-and-stalk hunting, so this isn't a big hurdle.

ON THE RANGE

With the help of Nordiske 34 mm rings, I mounted the scope on my standard "scope tester" – a heavy-barrelled Winchester Model 70 in .243 Winchester. My application for the rifle is as a *voorsit* rifle on the open plains as well as the odd gong shoot, so the Nordiske was right at home on the .243. Recommended torque settings for scope mounting screws can be found in the owner's manual, by the way.

After mounting the scope on my rifle at home, I went through the usual routine of bore-sighting it to save time on the shooting range. What impressed me from the start



Windage-adjustable Nordiske rings were used to mount the scope on the rifle. They performed very well.



The Nordiske's turrets are stout affairs and adjustments were easy to make and positive.



The battery housing for the illuminated reticle on the left side of the scope, located next to the parallax adjustment and illuminated reticle adjustment wheels.



The Nordiske's windage and elevation adjustments are made in $\frac{1}{4}$ MOA per click.

The Nordiske Series 8 HD 4-32x56 scope mounted on the test platform, a heavy-barrel Model 70 Winchester in .243.



was the audible and positive clicks every time I adjusted one of the turrets. The illuminated reticle makes use of a standard CR 2032 battery. The battery recess is located on the left side of the scope next to the parallax adjustment knob. According to the instruction manual, the battery will provide 29 hours of reticle illumination at full power and up to 140 hours of illumination at lower illumination settings.

As I had access to a 500-metre range for testing purposes, complete with a number of gongs already set up, I sighted the Nordiske in to put the bullets right on the money at 100 metres. Hereafter, I fired a number of shots at the gongs at 200, 300, 400 and 500 metres. Indifferent shooting notwithstanding, I was impressed with the Nordiske's optics, adjustments were easy, and the scope responded accurately to inputs. Parallax adjustment is adjustable from 15 yards to 800 yards and beyond, 800 yards and beyond.

FIRST FOCAL PLANE RETICLE

The reticle used in the Nor-

diske is fitted in the first focal plane of the scope. What this implies is that the magnification appears to get smaller as the magnification is decreased and bigger when the magnification is cranked up again. This is a feature that many people dislike, instead preferring a scope with a reticle in the second focal plane with a reticle that appears to be a constant size, no matter the magnification. I will admit that my middle-aged eyes found the reticle to be hard going when the magnification was turned down to below 8x magnification or so, but whenever the power was increased past this mark, I had no problems in making shots on gongs and a paper blesbuck target set up during a subsequent range session.

As it turned out, I tested the Nordiske scope on bright sunshine days, and as previously mentioned, I could not fault the optical quality. Since receiving the Nordiske, I have switched between it and another scope by a well-known manufacturer on my .243, and the complaints from my side regarding optical quality and



Lens covers are supplied as a standard item - a nice touch.



The turret cap for vertical adjustments has to be removed to engage the ZeroLock function.

use with the Nordiske are exactly zero.

The reticle fitted to the Nordiske consists of two horizontal posts and one vertical post on the bottom with a series of very fine lines and a small aiming dot in the centre, complete with holdover marks. With the magnification above 10x, it was pleasant to use, and the illuminated reticle (which has six different illumination settings) helped things along nicely. To make use of the ZeroLock turret function, three small Allen-head screws in the elevation turret must be loosened and the turret cap removed for adjustment. It was easy to do, thanks to the clear and concise instructions in the owner's manual. With the ZeroLock clutch system engaged, vertical adjustment is limited to 24 MOA and hori-

zontal adjustment to 40 MOA.

CONCLUSION

As you have probably been able to ascertain by now, the Nordiske is a specialised piece of equipment. It is a fine scope for use on the open plains where walking long distances is not required, and it worked very well for me on the gong range. It is also supplied with flip-up lens covers and a lens shade as standard and carries a lifetime warranty - a nice touch.

The Nordiske Series 8 HD 4-32x56 is available from numerous outlets countrywide and retails for approximately R24 000. For more information, visit them on the web at www.nordiskeprecision.com or contact Safari Outdoor at www.so.co.za.

K+LSKOOT
BY JOHAN VAN WYK

Winchester's Safari Express - a worthy dangerous- game rifle

AN AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE HEAVY HITTER

Besides the Mauser M98, the Winchester Model 70 is in all probability the best known and most respected of bolt actions. For almost a century, and despite many changes, the Model 70 has remained in production and continues to sell well despite fierce competition from rivals.

THE START OF THE MODEL 70

The Model 70 went into production on 20 January 1936 at Winchester's plant in New Haven, Connecticut. It was released on 1 January 1937, by which time the factory had produced more than 2 000 rifles.

Model 70 receivers were machined from chrome-moly steel and finished by hand, including the Winchester logo roll-marked on

MAIN PHOTO: Winchester's Safari Express is a well-designed and well-made rifle that ticks a lot of boxes.

INSERT: Winchester's three-position safety catch is one of the best in the business and works well with either open sights or a telescope.



the left wall of the action. This was followed by spot-hardening of the extraction cam behind the bridge, as well as heat-treating, tumbling, and bluing before the actions were sent for assembly.

A few things set the Model 70 apart from the beginning. It was fitted with a well-designed and comfortable stock and soon earned a reputation for good accuracy – the barrels featured hand-cut rifling. In addition, the Model 70's bolt handle was designed to clear low-mounted scopes and had a simple, reliable and adjustable trigger.

Calibre-wise, the Model 70 was available in a host of chamberings from the .22 Hornet up to and including the mighty .458 Winchester Magnum, introduced in 1956. From an African perspective, however, the two most important chamberings were the .300 and .375 Holland & Holland Magnums. By chambering rifles for these two cartridges, Winchester proved that the Model 70 action could be lengthened to accommodate .375-length cartridges. In addition, by chambering rifles for the .375 H&H, Winchester placed a solid, reliable and affordable big-game rifle within reach of the man on the street. In hindsight, it was a stroke of genius, and to this day, Model 70s in .375 H&H are something of an African stalwart.

MODEL 70 ACTION

The heart of any rifle is its action, and the Model 70 certainly has many redeeming features. The most noticeable characteristic of the action is the broad, non-rotating claw extractor, borrowed straight from Mauser. The claw ensures positive extraction and control-feeding and has come to be regarded as a must-have for any rifle intended for dan-



The Model 70's broad, Mauser-style claw extractor ensures control-feeding and positive extraction and is a very desirable feature on a rifle intended for dangerous game.

gerous game or even just rough work afield.

We have already touched on the bolt handle that will clear a low-mounted scope, and in combination with this, the safety catch will not interfere with a mounted scope either.

Another feature of the Model 70 is less obvious: It makes use of a cone-breeching system. What this implies is that the breech-end of the barrel is funnel-shaped. It is a system that certainly aids in the smooth feeding of cartridges into the chamber. Still, critics claim that it is not as strong as the system used, for instance, on the Remington 700 or Mauser M98. However, with ammunition loaded to normal service pressure, there won't be any problems with cone-breeching, and it certainly wouldn't have remained

a feature of the Model 70 for all these years if it was a weak spot.

TROUBLED WATERS

Sadly, by the early 1960s, the Model 70 was in trouble. Manufacturing costs rose steadily through the years, and by 1960, it was decided to alter the Model 70 action to make it easier and cheaper to manufacture. The result was a much-altered Model 70 action that was introduced in 1964 with serial number 700 000. To say that the new action caused a major earthquake in the rifle world would be an understatement!

The "improved" Model 70 did away with the tried-and-trusted claw extractor. The magazine box and trigger guard assembly were now made from aluminium and the stock had cheap, nasty

white-line spacers, poor inletting and even worse chequering. Winchester had certainly done a proper hatchet job on the Model 70 and, what is worse, the public did not take kindly to the changes, causing sales to suffer even further.

Despite this, Winchester stuck to their guns with the Model 70. In 1968, a new anti-bind rail smoothed bolt travel, and a few years later, changes were made to the stock design. By 1984, Winchester had a shorter Model 70 action in the works for cartridges like the .243 Winchester. In due course, stainless steel actions also became available.

Olin, long-time owners of Winchester, sold the company to a group of investors calling themselves the US Repeating Arms Company (USRAC) in 1981. In 1984, USRAC filed for bankruptcy. Then, in 1987, a group of five investors acquired Winchester. One of these investors was Fabrique Nationale from Belgium, who were taken over by the giant French armaments conglomerate, GIAT, in 1991.

Notwithstanding corporate moves and shakes, Winchester made a somewhat hesitant return to the claw extractor on some models in 1987. Public response was immediate and positive and during the next five years, Winchester quietly shelved what had become known as the post-1964 Model 70 action.

Because of various factors, however, the Model 70 still couldn't come close to covering its manufacturing costs. So, by 2006, Winchester's owners decided to close down the historic Winchester plant in New Haven. Annual losses were in the millions, and yet again, everyone thought that the Model 70 was doomed, this time for good. Luckily, this was not the case.»

» A NEW FACTORY

FN moved the manufacture of the Model 70 to a new, state-of-the-art factory in Columbia, South Carolina, and started manufacturing a somewhat changed Model 70 rifle there in 2007. The changes to the action include a new anti-bind system, as well as a new trigger system called the MOA three-lever trigger. This last change has always been somewhat puzzling to me as the original trigger system was easy to adjust and reliable to a fault. However, the new system works well, so Winchester presumably had their reasons for making the change.

In 2013, the final assembly of the Model 70 moved yet again, this time to a plant in Portugal. This is how things stand at the time of writing. The new Portuguese-assembled rifles are clearly stamped "Made in USA. BACO, Inc., Morgan, Utah – Assembled in Portugal by Browning Viana".

ENTER THE SAFARI EXPRESS

Earlier, we touched on the fact that Winchester chambered Model 70s for heavy calibres almost from the start. Happily, this trend continues, and Winchester's flagship heavy hitter at this stage is called the Safari Express. As can be imagined, it is aimed very much at safari hunting and the African market.

The Safari Express is available in three Magnum big-bore chamberings: the .375 H&H, .416 Remington and .458 Winchester. Magazine capacity is 3+1 across the board. Good, sturdy, adjustable, express-type open sights with a nice, big brass bead up front and a wide V-blade at the back are a standard fit, as are two strengthening cross-bolts through the stock, a smidgen of epoxy compound internally around the recoil



The barrel-band-mounted front sling swivel.



The sturdy and adjustable backsight of the Safari Express is a very welcome feature indeed.

lug, as well as a barrel-band-mounted front sling swivel. The metalwork is finished in a non-reflective finish that almost feels like satin to the touch. It looks good and is practical on a hunting rifle.

The stock appears to be from American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and is crafted in a very practical style for a big-bore. The butt, which is fitted with a solid black Pachmayr

recoil pad, is broad enough to soak up the recoil, and the comb with cheekpiece is in the classic, straight style. It has enough drop to allow comfortable use of the open sights but accommodates a low-mounted telescope equally well.

Two-panel chequering on the grip and a wraparound pattern on the fore-end, which has enough meat on it to allow a nice, firm grip under

recoil, are standard. The individual diamonds of the chequering were a touch too sharp for my taste. I found they would dig into my hands under recoil, so I would prefer the chequering, although it is well executed, to be less sharp.

Out of the box, the trigger of the test rifle in .416 Remington Magnum was a tad heavy for my liking, but this can be easily remedied with the help of a gunsmith. The stock fitted me nicely, but a colleague who happens to be quite a bit taller than me remarked that the 13³/₄" length of pull was slightly too short for him. Barrel length is standard at 24", and overall empty weight is 9 lbs, although a Safari Express in .375 H&H felt slightly heavier because of the identical barrel profile.

As is to be expected from a dangerous-game rifle, the Safari Express functioned without hiccups. It smoothly cycled Hornady factory ammunition and ejected empties with authority. The .416 Remington is no lightweight cartridge, but the weight of the rifle, combined with the sensible stock design, made the rifle comfortable to shoot.

All in all, I have to give good marks to Winchester's current big-bore bone cruncher. The Safari Express is an attractive, well-made rifle that will give many years of trouble-free service. If I happened to be in the market for a factory rifle chambered in a big-bore cartridge, I would definitely give the big Winchester some serious consideration.

The Safari Express retails for approximately R45 000 (at the time of writing). Winchester rifles are imported into South Africa by Inyathi Sporting Supplies. If your local dealer does not stock them, ask them to give Inyathi a call on 012-808-9911. 

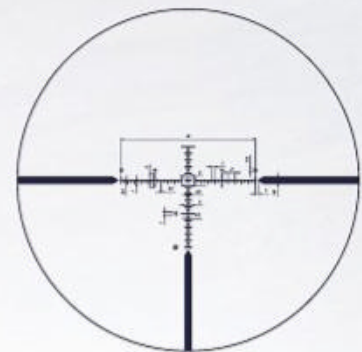
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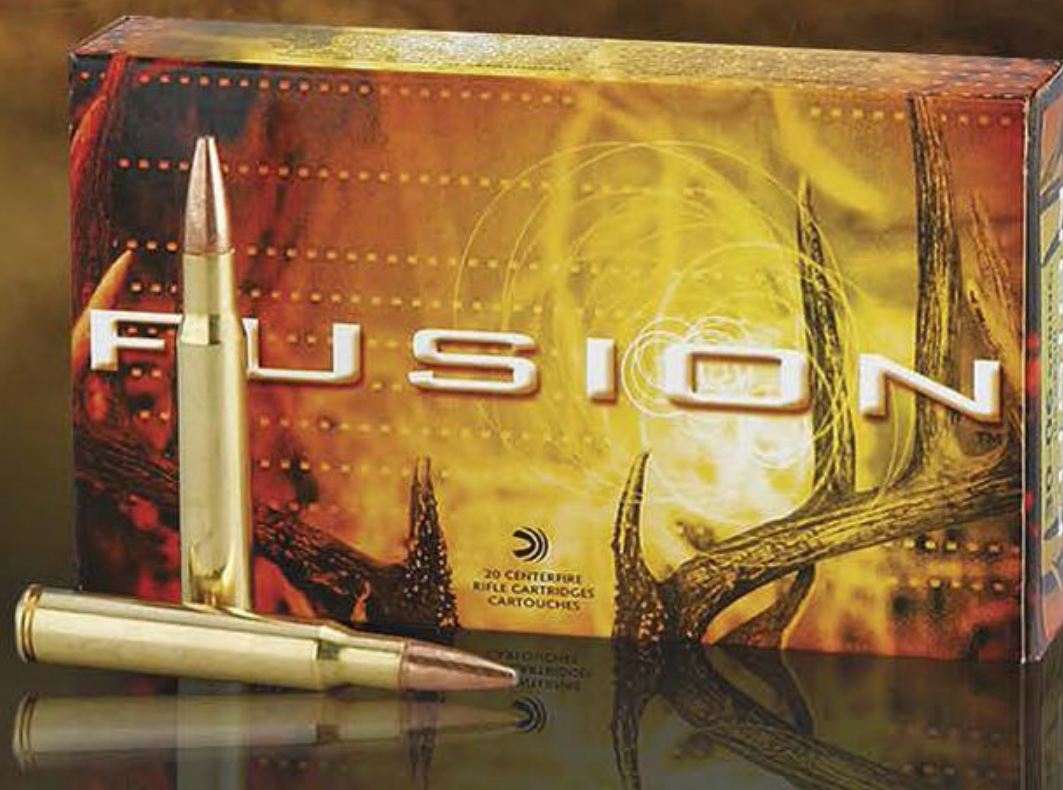
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