

AMERICAN SHOOTING JOURNAL

MEET MISTER SHOTGUN

Dave Miller:
World Records Holder,
CZ-USA Manager,
Champion of
Youth Shooting

BULLET BATTLE

Are Cup-and-core
Projectiles Outdated?

BULL MARKET

British Columbia's
Elk-rich Tutchodi Valley

GUN REVIEW

The Glock 47

+ Ballistic Advantage's
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AMERICAN SHOOTING JOURNAL

Volume 12 // Issue 12 // September 2023

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ON THE COVER

Dave Miller got his start in the shotgun shooting sports at a young age and, having gone on to do big, big things in the field, stands at the gates of becoming a legend. (DAVE MILLER)



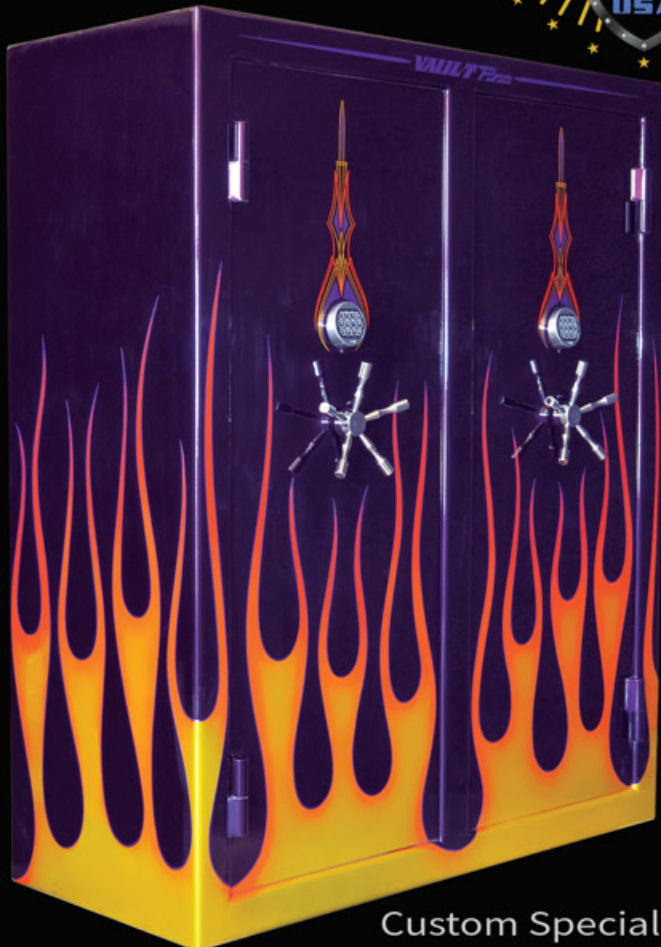
Website: AmericanShootingJournal.com
 Facebook: [Facebook.com/AmericanShootingJournal](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanShootingJournal)
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MEDIA INDEX PUBLISHING GROUP
 941 Powell Ave SW, Suite 120, Renton, WA 98057
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CONTENTS

COVER STORY



SCATTERGUN ALLEY: THE SHOTGUN WORLD'S NEXT LEGEND

Meet Dave Miller, the owner of two Guinness World Records and a product manager for CZ-USA who is deeply involved in getting kids into the shooting sports – and even manages to get in some upland bird hunting! Larry Case shares Miller's story.

22

(DAVE MILLER)

FEATURES

34 ROAD HUNTER: ELK OF TUCHODI

A wapiti-rich valley in British Columbia's Rocky Mountains served up a bull hunt for the ages for Scott Haugen, who had over 50 bulls respond to cow calls. Our traveling sportsman recounts a most excellent – and productive – elk hunting adventure.

43 BULLET BULLETIN: ARE CUP-AND-CORE BULLETS OUTDATED?

Designs come and go, even in the world of rifle and handgun bullets. Phil Massaro looks at how well the "19th century formula" of putting a copper jacket over a lead core has stood the test of time and stacks up next to modern and lead-free projectiles.

56 D.I.Y. PROJECT – HOW TO CAMO PAINT YOUR RIFLE

When Nick Perna wasn't able to get a Henry Arms AR-7 in the camo finish he wanted, he decided to make his own pattern. Grab some Krylon, painter's tape and a mix of mediums as Perna shows you how to do it yourself!

63 SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING: WHY I LIKE SPIKE'S

Find out why Paul Pawela and his wife Linda trust Spike's Tactical AR-platform firearms to protect themselves.

72 GUN REVIEW: THE GLOCK 47

You may not be excited by yet another Glock – what Nick Perna dubs the Toyota Camry of handguns – "but you will be satisfied" by the 47. And he should know, following his police department's switch to the new model.

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ALSO INSIDE

87 LAW ENFORCEMENT SPOTLIGHT: TO SERVE AND PROTECT INCLUDES CRITTERS TOO
Animals can't dial 911, but when they need help, officers are quick to answer their barks and moos too. Sergeant Nick Perna shares the stories of doggos he's saved and the three cows that a Wisconsin cop rescued from a medium-rare fate.

91 BLACK POWDER: A FOWLER DOES FINE AT TRADE GUN FROLIC
Toting his 20-gauge Fowler built from a Tennessee Valley Muzzleloading kit, Mike Nesbitt walks us through a unique Washington state competition that challenges he and other smoothbore flintlock shooters to hit bull's-eye, gong and clay targets.

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT

83 BALLISTIC ADVANTAGE
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DEPARTMENTS

- 13** Gun Show Calendar
- 17** Competition Calendar
- 19** Precision Rifle Series Schedule, Recent Results
- 81** Holster Gallery



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C&E GUN SHOWS cegunshows.com	September 9-10 September 23-24 Sept. 30-Oct. 1 October 7-8 October 14-15	Hickory, N.C. Columbus, Ohio Sharonville, Ohio Fayetteville, N.C. Concord, N.C.	Hickory Metro Convention Center Westland Mall Sharonville Convention Center Crown Expo Center Cabarrus Arena & Events Center
CONSTELLATIONS, INC. kcshow.com mcshow.com	September 17 October 8 October 22 November 12 November 19 December 10 December 17	Woodstock, Ill. St. Charles, Ill. Woodstock, Ill. St. Charles, Ill. Woodstock, Ill. St. Charles, Ill. Woodstock, Ill.	McHenry County Fairgrounds Kane County Fairgrounds McHenry County Fairgrounds Kane County Fairgrounds McHenry County Fairgrounds Kane County Fairgrounds McHenry County Fairgrounds
CROSSROADS OF THE WEST GUN SHOWS crossroadsgunshows.com	September 9-10 September 16-17 September 16-17 September 23-24 September 23-24 Sept. 30-Oct. 1	Phoenix, Ariz. Tucson, Ariz. Vernal, Utah Mesa, Ariz. Sandy, Utah Ontario, Calif.	Arizona State Fairgrounds Pima County Fairgrounds Uintah Conference Center Centennial Hall Mountain America Expo Ontario Convention Center
FLORIDA GUN SHOWS floridagunshows.com	September 9-10 Sept. 30-Oct. 1 October 7-8 October 21-22 October 28-29	Palmetto, Fla. Fort Myers, Fla. Orlando, Fla. Tampa, Fla. Palmetto, Fla.	Bradenton Convention Center Lee County Civic Center Central Florida Fair Grounds Florida State Fairgrounds Bradenton Convention Center
GGG PROMOTIONS gunshowtrader.com	September 16-17 September 22-24 Sept. 30-Oct. 1	Henderson, Texas Nacogdoches, Texas Hot Springs, Ark.	Rusk County Expo Center Nacogdoches County Expo Center Garland County Fairgrounds
RK SHOWS rkshows.com	September 9-10 September 16-17 September 23-24 September 23-24 Sept. 30-Oct. 1 Sept. 30-Oct. 1 October 6-8	Lexington, Ky. Atlanta, Ga. Owensboro, Ky. Gray, Tenn. Paducah, Ky. Columbus, Ga. Neosho, Mo.	Kentucky Horse Park Atlanta Expo Center Owensboro Sportscenter Appalachian Fairgrounds Trader's Mall Columbus (Ironworks) Convention Center Newton County Fairgrounds

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REAL TEXAS GUN SHOWS therealtexasgunshow.com	September 16-17 Sept. 30-Oct. 1 October 14-15	Orange, Texas Port Arthur, Texas Taylor, Texas	Orange County Expo Robert A. Bower Civic Center Williamson County Expo Center
TANNER GUN SHOWS tannergunshow.com	Sept. 29-Oct. 1 October 13-15 October 27-29	Denver, Colo. Colorado Springs, Colo. Aurora, Colo.	Crowne Plaza Norris Penrose Event Center Arapahoe County Fairgrounds
WES KNODEL GUN SHOWS wesknodelgunshows.com	September 9-10 September 16-17 October 14-15 October 28-29	Centralia, Wash. Redmond, Ore. Centralia, Wash. Redmond, Ore.	Southwest Washington Fairgrounds Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center Southwest Washington Fairgrounds Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center
ZURKO PROMOTIONS chicagocivilwarshow.com	September 23	Wheaton, Ill.	DuPage County Fairgrounds

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SEPTEMBER 16

NTCSC-USA Shooting Rocky
Mountain Regional PTO
Colorado Springs, Colo.

SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 3

Rifle & Pistol Olympic Trials
Part 1
Fort Moore, Ga.



uspsa.org

SEPTEMBER 6-10

Vortex Optics Open/PCC
Nationals
Talladega, Ala.

SEPTEMBER 21-23

Arkansas Section
Championship
Perryville, Ark.

SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 1

Virginia State USPSA
Championship
Fredericksburg, Va.

SEPTEMBER 9-10

Oregon Open Sectional
Championship
Keno, Ore.

SEPTEMBER 22-23

Alabama Section
Championship
Woodville, Ala.

SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 1

CZ-USA Missouri Fall Classic
Newburg, Mo.

SEPTEMBER 15-17

Iowa Section Championship
Elkhart, Iowa

SEPTEMBER 22-23

Team Pinoy USA Charity
Invitational Shoot
Sloughhouse, Calif.

OCTOBER 4-8

Sig Sauer Handgun Nationals
Marengo, Ohio



gssfonline.com

SEPTEMBER 9-10

Benton Gun Club GSSF
Challenge
Bauxite, Ark.

SEPTEMBER 23-24

Badger State Regional
Classic
Muskego, Wis.

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1

Twin Tiers Regional Classic
Pine City, N.Y.

SEPTEMBER 15-17

Glock Annual Shoot & Gunny
Challenge
Talladega, Ala.

SEPTEMBER 23-24

Atomic City GSSF
Los Alamos, N.M.

OCTOBER 7-8

Manatee Gun Club Glock
Challenge
Myakka City, Fla.



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SEPTEMBER 9-10

California State
Championships
Oakdale, Calif.

SEPTEMBER 22-24

8th Annual Renay Watt
Shootout
Valley View, Texas

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1

Northeast Regional
Championship
Centre Hall, Pa.

SEPTEMBER 12-16

CMSA Ariat Eastern US
Championship
Shelbyville, Tenn.

SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 1

New Mexico State Shoot
Albuquerque, N.M.

OCTOBER 6-8

15th Annual Lone Star
Classic
Vernon, Texas



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SEPTEMBER 8-9

Arkansas State IDPA
Championship
Hot Springs, Ark.

SEPTEMBER 22-23

Utah IDPA State
Championship
Salt Lake City, Utah

OCTOBER 6-7

Indiana State Championship
Atlanta, Ind.

SEPTEMBER 15-16

Gateway IDPA Classic
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September 23	CA Sharpshooter Showdown	San Luis Obispo, Calif.
September 30	Bushnell Tactical Gap Grind Pro Am	Finger, Tenn.
October 7	KRG Wind Breaker	Mica, Wash.
October 14	MPA Fall Shootout	Swainsboro, Ga.
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JOHN KYLE TRUITT Open Div.
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RYAN ADAMS Open Div.
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A SHOTGUN LEGEND IN THE FINISHING

Meet Dave Miller, the owner of two Guinness World Records and a product manager for CZ-USA who is deeply involved in getting kids into shooting sports and even manages to get in some bird hunting.

STORY BY LARRY CASE • PHOTOS BY DAVE MILLER

Shotgun shooters have their celebrities and heroes just like anyone else. Most of us remember the incredible shooting of exhibition shooter Tom Knapp, who entertained crowds for years with his fancy shotgun exhibitions. Older shooters will remember Rudy Etchen (Mr. 870), who set multiple records, many of them with a pump shotgun. And in recent years, another shotgunner you may have heard of is well on his way to becoming a legend – Dave Miller.

This isn't the first time I have written about Miller in this column. I have taken you along on trips with him to hunt turkeys in Missouri, pheasants in Kansas and ducks on the Texas coast, as well as shared accounts of his world record events with a shotgun. I have tried to relate to you the activities and mindset of a guy who basically eats, sleeps and

thinks about shotguns 24/7. If Miller is not actually on the range shooting a shotgun at the time, he is no doubt thinking about some way to do it differently or better. The energy and drive of this guy is incredible, and, frankly, it kind of makes me tired just trying to keep up with him sometimes.

Besides demonstrating his shotgun prowess as an exhibition shooter for gun company CZ-USA (cz-usa.com) and competing at a very high level in sporting clay competitions all over the country, Miller has done something else. He has brought a degree of innovation to the shotgun world that is possibly unequaled. In late 2009, Miller came on as the shotgun product manager for CZ-USA, and over the next few years his foresight and creativity as a shotgunner brought the company to the forefront as a source for competition and hunting shotguns. The All-American Combo competition



Miller during the 2015 Guinness World Record attempt to break the most clays in an hour; the CZ 712s with 12-shell magazine extenders that he used (below left); and a view of the grounds and audience that saw the record broken (below right).



gun, the Magnum Reaper turkey gun, the Swamp Magnum waterfowl shotgun, the 712 G3 and the All-Terrain model shotguns are just some of the innovations that have appeared in CZ-USA's lineup thanks to Miller's ingenuity.

IN ADDITION TO his shooting and inventiveness with new guns, Miller has raised awareness about shotgun shooting to bring new shooters into the fold another way. He created and participated in two Guinness World Record events that may have brought more attention to shotgun sports and helped young shooters than any other undertaking ever attempted.

On May 16, 2015, Miller set the Guinness World Record for most clay targets shot in one hour – 3,653. I was there. I saw it, and let me tell you, boys and girls, it was a sight to behold. I have been trying to think of



A forearm tattoo memorializes the feat of busting 3,653 clay targets in one hour.

something to compare it to, so that I could describe what was going on. I really can't, but imagine a state fair, or NASCAR event with shotguns, and everyone is waiting to see the attempt at some great feat, like Evel Knievel

jumping the Grand Canyon or the like. This endeavor took months of planning and practice and a lot of help from friends and family.

Another thing that Miller did was this: He almost immediately took this



Miller's world record is on display at the National Shooting Complex Museum in San Antonio, Texas, and there are also displays at the NRA Museum in Fairfax, Virginia, and the Buffalo Bill Museum of the West in Cody, Wyoming.



If you have two entries in the world record book, it's only natural that one of your springer spaniels is named Guinness.

idea to John Linquist, who was at the time working with Pheasants Forever, as Miller wanted the record attempt to be connected to this conservation-based group to help them raise money for their shooting programs for young people. This endeavor yielded more than \$84,000 to the organization for its efforts to help get kids outdoors and teach them to shoot.

I knew Miller would not rest long on this accomplishment and in 2019 he set about to break another world record, settling on a different concept: the most clays broken by a five-person team in 12 hours. The standing record of 4,602 was set by a five-man team in Kent, England, in 2015. With careful planning and much training by his squad of hotshot young shooters, Miller figured he could easily surpass this record, and boy, did he!

The really cool thing that Miller

did here is that he recruited young shooters from all over the country to be his teammates on this historic record attempt. Two boys and two girls were chosen to accompany him on the firing line on October 12, 2019, at the Powder Creek Shooting Park in Lenexa, Kansas. The shooters chosen for this had to score well at qualifying events, as well as write an essay explaining why they should be on the record attempt team.

I was also at this event, and again, it was something to behold. I watched Miller and these young shooters shoot for 12 hours, with what seemed to me very few breaks. In the end, they broke 14,167 targets to easily bust the old Guinness World Record mark. The team of shooters shot an amazing 82 percent of the targets thrown in the 12 hours. Most of us would be very satisfied with that percentage on a few rounds of trap or skeet at our local gun range!

I recently spoke with Miller to find out more about his involvement with shotguns and the shooting sports.

Larry Case How did you get your start in shooting and hunting?

Dave Miller Well, a long, long time ago in a land far, far away, my father would buy me a brick of .22 LR nearly each week in the summers to keep me busy when I was 13 to 15 years old. Occasionally we would shoot trap, but just enough to keep me wanting more. Sporting clays didn't really exist yet, especially in the Midwest.

In 1987, we moved to Grain Valley, Missouri. I grew up in a rural area, (and) I shot just about everything there was with a .22 LR. Heck, back in the day, it was nothing for my father to shoot a clay target out of the air with his Savage .22. My dad joined a trap league at the Lake Lotawana Sportsmen's Club, and he shot trap every Thursday night. I was 13 and was hired to set targets down in the trap houses. Back then we didn't have clay machines with carousels; each target had to be hand-placed on the machine. As payment, I could shoot a single round of 25 targets at the end of the night, but only if there was time.

LC Once you became interested in shotgun sports, did you have a favorite game?

DM Sporting clays, hands down. In 1989, my father and his friend Donny Albertson participated in the very first National Sporting Clays Championship,



Miller and author Larry Case take a break after a successful spring turkey hunt in Missouri.



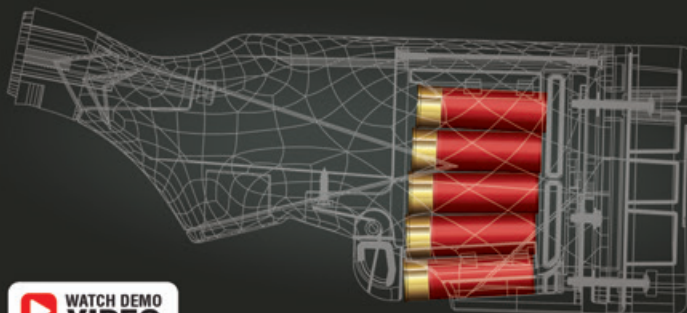
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Where in his youth Miller hand-loaded shooting clays into carousels for other shooters, a veritable battery of the machines helped him set his 2015 world record.

which was held at the Horse and Hunt Club in Prior Lake, Minnesota. From there, my father's and my passion to shoot clay targets from a trap house quickly changed to sporting clays. Slowly, sporting clays courses began popping up here and there around the Midwest. Three very early clubs we frequently shot at were Pin Oak Hill near Chillicothe, Missouri, and Cedar

Hill near Baldwin City, Kansas; there was also Ravenwood Hunting Lodge in Topeka, Kansas.

I continued shooting nearly every weekend; all the money I would earn working part-time after school at the golf course would fuel my appetite for clays. I believe minimum wage was about \$3.50 per hour and a flat of 12-gauge shells cost about \$30.

LC What is the biggest mistake you see shooters make when trying to hit clay targets?

DM Unfortunately, most target shooters fail at using their eyesight and body position properly. Many beginners set their eyes and body position, which includes the shotgun, in the same location, which seems comfortable at the start but there couldn't be a worse thing to do. As a result, the target seems fast to the eyes and feels extremely fast to the hands and body as the shooter winds up into the shot. In other words, they must force the physical movement of the eyes, body and hands (gun) to make the shot.

The goal is to choose the location to shoot the target – this is known as the “break area” – and set your body position up to where mounting the gun there is easy, then the eyes turn back toward the focal pickup point and then finally, the hands (gun) start somewhere in between. All of this happens with the gun down off the shoulder. Then the gun is mounted



Miller lines up the red dot sight on a CZ Reaper Magnum shotgun with a target.



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Hip action. Miller performed the record event all from the hip. He is seen here holding one of the CZ 712s he used.

into the lead side of the target line and the shot is taken.

LC How did you become involved with CZ-USA?

DM I was contacted by Alice Poluchova (former president of CZ-USA) for shooting lessons, then later she gave me a contract to shoot for CZ-USA. Keep in mind, I had been shooting for years and loved my shooting community and really enjoyed the idea of competing. However, I didn't get to do it very much, as competition targets cost more and you had to travel. But now I was getting reimbursed for entry fees and travel – this was a huge deal!

After two years of shooting and representing CZ-USA at clay shooting events, Alice came to me and offered me a job as the shotgun product manager. From there, I left my 12-year career in the fitness industry to follow my passion, (and) I started full time in December 2009. By 2010, I continued

to shoot for CZ-USA and had tremendous success in tournaments but also in business with CZ-USA. Working with Alice Poluchova, Sherri Goodwin and Jason Morton, it seemed this new brand of firearms had no limit in the US market.

LC Your world record events have been very popular. What do you think they accomplished for the shotgun shooting world?

DM They have certainly elevated the brand awareness of CZ and its products. I also feel these events have helped inspire young athletes and they have certainly helped to generate money and support for organizations like AIM (the official youth program of the Amateur Trapshooting Association), SCTP (Scholastic Clay Target Program) and Pheasants Forever. At the 2015 World Record event, we had just launched the CZ 712 G2 and the CZ 912, both gas-operated 12-gauge semiautomatic

shotguns. The idea was to partner with Pheasants Forever by donating and selling them some product that their chapters could use to raise money for their youth shooting program, No Child Left Indoors.

LC You have overseen many innovations in CZ-USA shotguns. Do you have a favorite?

DM The All-Terrain series guns are my favorite.

(Author's note: It should be noted that one of the features in the All-Terrain break-action shotguns is Miller's brilliant concept of hiding rare earth magnets in the extractors and ejectors. This allows the gun to go upside down with the action open and the shells will not fall out – very handy in upland and duck blind situations and while handling gun dogs.)

MILLER'S WORK TO increase youth participation in the shotgun sports means he's now on speed dial as others look to pick his brain.

"The phone rings often now from coaches looking to increase their knowledge and elevate their athletes in the disciplines of skeet, trap and especially sporting clays," says Miller. "This year I have conducted nine specialized coach training seminars all over the country and have one more to go before upland bird season is here."

He's looking forward to hunting, as are his two four-legged companions.

"Guinness and Sailor, my two English springer spaniels, are now 7½ years old; they are in their prime and ready to find birds," Miller says.

"I still live near where I grew up," he adds. "The town has changed immensely, from 1,200 people to 17,000. Back in 2001, I purchased 42 acres in northern Ray County, Missouri, and I have recently built a new barn/man cave, which will be home to the Miller Shooting Sports Clay Target Training Facility. The building is 7,500 square feet and will have accommodations for people to eat, sleep, relax, shoot and most importantly learn about clay shooting, and I still work and shoot for CZ-USA."

Miller turned 50 in August and if anything, he is going faster instead

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of slowing down. He is in demand as a shooting coach, he is teaching coach training seminars with his company, Miller Shooting Sports (miller shooting sports.com), and when upland bird seasons start, he will be on the road with his springer spaniels. I have hunted with him and believe me, you don't want to be the pheasant

that flushes in front of Mr. Miller.

What is next for Dave Miller and what records will he break next? Stay tuned! ★

Editor's note: Larry Case has been a devoted outdoorsman since he was a child. He will admit to an addiction to turkey

hunting (spring and fall), but refuses any treatment. He enjoys the company of gobblers and cur dogs that are loud and people who speak the truth softly. Case served 36 years as a game warden in West Virginia and retired with the rank of district captain. You can check out his podcast and other stories at gunsandcornbred.com.



Now 50, Miller is looking forward to this fall's upland bird season with his two gun dogs. "I have hunted with him and believe me, you don't want to be the pheasant that flushes in front of Mr. Miller," writes Case.



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In one day of elk hunting in British Columbia, author Scott Haugen had over 50 bulls respond to cow calls – with more than 20 of those coming within 40 yards.

ELK OF TUCHODI

A wapiti-rich valley in British Columbia's Rocky Mountains serves up a bull hunt for the ages.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SCOTT HAUGEN



As the bush plane banked hard on its final approach into base camp, my eyes strained to see any elk

on the surrounding hillsides. Off both wingtips it was easy to spot mountain goats as they fed above the treeline, their white coats a sharp contrast to the gray slate and green grass in which they stood. Giant moose were simple to spot in the valleys, their large, paddle-like antlers glistening in the midday sun. But no elk.



After touching down on the dirt runway and taxiing into camp, I was greeted by Larry and Lori Warren, owners of Tuchodi River Outfitters (tuchodiriveroutfitters.com) in British Columbia. "Did you see any critters?" Larry quizzed with a firm handshake. "Goat and moose, but no elk," I shared. "Don't worry, they're here," he smiled.

THOUGH IT WAS the allure of mountain goats and moose that initially drew me to this land, it was also late September and the elk rut was in full swing. The Tuchodi River drainage is acclaimed for hosting what could be Canada's largest roaming herd of Rocky Mountain elk.

Following a quick lunch, it didn't take long to unpack and get my bow dialed in. Soon we were headed into the timber for a quick afternoon hunt. "There are a lot of bulls hanging around camp this year," Larry shared, tipping his cowboy hat to the hills.



Horseback hunts are what Tuchodi River Outfitters is known for. When elk hunting in Canada, aliens are required to hire a guide.

"We'll just walk from here."

Fifty yards from the cabin, I saw my first sign of elk. Fresh tracks and droppings covered the edge of the aspen forest. Larry shot me a wink.

In less than 15 minutes we'd made it to the first gentle knoll without even breaking a sweat. "Try calling," Larry encouraged. Putting light pressure on the open-reed call, I let out a seductive cow sound that carried up the valley. A bull bugled, followed by two others farther up the draw.

"It's early in the day; they're not real fired-up yet," Larry whispered as he headed up the trail.

Where I come from, three bulls answering the first call is as fired-up as they get. But Larry didn't give them a second thought.

A short time later, I let out another

series of cow calls, these directed into a different drainage. Two bulls answered back. A couple estrus cow calls got five more bulls to respond. "They're starting to wake up a little now," Larry muttered as he pushed on.

Over the course of the next three hours we'd hear more than 20 bulls bugle. Eight of these bulls would approach to within 40 yards of where I called, but lacing an arrow through the thick brush was next to impossible.

During that three-hour flurry, there was no more than two minutes where a bugling bull could not be heard. As the timber grew dark, it was obvious the bulls were quickly dropping in elevation, toward their nightly feeding grounds.

"We won't push 'em," Larry said. I was in no hurry for the hunt to end on the first evening, not with so many



There are few thrills greater than calling in a bugling bull elk to within bow range.

bulls in the area. Little did I know that the action experienced on that first afternoon was but a small sampling of what was to come.

BY 5 A.M. the next morning, camp was abuzz. Wranglers prepared the horses. Cooks whipped up breakfast and bagged lunches. Hunters readied themselves for a day afield.

Soon we were riding into the hills, the quiet strides of the horses barely breaking the morning silence on the moist forest floor. Before we could make it to the top of the first knoll, a bull bugled, then another.

"We need to get ahead of them before they reach thick timber," Larry urged. We rode past several elk, calling from horseback as we went. Our calls

calmed the bulls, for they continued bugling at our every sound.

Dismounting, Larry tied off the horses while I set up to call a bull that sounded close. No sooner had the cow sounds passed my lips when the bull fired back. A second bull announced its interest with a raspy bugle. As the two bulls approached, so did a third, from downwind. The minute the big six-by-six winded us from below, the jig was up and all three bulls scampered.

Hopping back in the saddles, we headed farther up the ridge. This time when a bull responded to our calls, it was even closer. Sliding off the horses, Larry grabbed the reins while I scrambled into position.

Within seconds, two bulls came crashing in to the calls. Both were nice

five-points, but neither were what we were looking for.

By now it was late morning and the bugles of distant bulls rang high in the hills. The wind also picked up and began to swirl – a bad combination for an archery hunter.

"Let's head into the trees, eat lunch and take a nap," Larry whispered. "There's no use calling in these windy conditions or pushing the elk any more. We'll wait and see what it does this afternoon."

Mesmerized by falling, golden aspen leaves and elegant clouds whisking by, the sounds of bugling bulls rang clear in my mind. Settling into a cozy bed of thick green moss, sleep came quickly.

By 3 p.m. the wind was subsiding.



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Slayer Calls' bull and cow elk calls have impressed Haugen, who has hunted widely in the Western Hemisphere for wapiti.

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"Let's move to the east side of the ridge; there's gotta be some elk up and feeding in the shaded draws," Larry suggested.

No sooner had a locator bugle left my tube than a hot bull answered. It quickly began moving our direction but winded us before I could release an arrow. It was a dandy six-pointer I would have loved hanging a tag on.

Pushing on, we reached the edge of an old burn that reeked of rutting bulls. Letting out a single cow call, five bulls simultaneously responded. "They seem to be fired up this afternoon," muttered Larry, plucking a long straw of yellow grass from his teeth.

Making it to a designated landmark, we felt we were in good position to drop into the treeline, work into the wind and start calling. Just then, a bull barked and took off. Every bull on the hillside shut down.

DARKNESS WAS CLOSING in as we hiked back to the horses. With only enough time to try one more setup, we dropped into a wooded canyon. An excited cow call got four immediate replies, followed by a string of more bugles in the distance. In all, 12 bulls could be heard from that one spot. I'd never heard anything like it, before or since.

With time running out we moved into position, targeting the closest bull. Larry stayed 30 yards back, intermittently calling between my sounds. I moved into the throat of a small ravine that offered multiple, though very tight, shooting lanes.

At the first calf sound that left my call, a bull rumbled back no more than 60 yards away. Crashing brush left no doubt as to what was unfolding. Arrow nocked, I waited. Again the bull bugled, followed by another bull to its left. Both bulls were closing in.

As the pair trotted closer, their heavy chest cavities labored for air. Glunks and bugles ensued, then the first bull materialized in front of me. It slipped by so quickly I didn't have a shot through the dense brush.

Then the second bull emerged from



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Outfitter Larry Warren and Haugen with the author's heavy-racked bull that came in bugling.

the trees. Its heavy rack was easy to see in the tangled underbrush. I let out a quick cow call to stop the bull. It worked and as it bugled, so did a third bull that was now barreling down the draw. The first bull that ran past also bugled, while thrashing a tree 20 yards behind me.

I could see the second bull's rack moving in the trees, then it stopped. I let out a subtle cow chirp and the bull bugled, tipped its rack back and began weaving forward through the tangle of trees.

Fearing one of the three bulls would soon wind us, I swung on the bull and came to full draw. Tracking the massive body through the mess of branches, I held my 30-yard pin tight behind its shoulder. Worried I'd not be able to get a shot through the maze of vines, I moved the sights ahead of the bull, found a tiny opening in the brush and waited for it to walk into it.

As the bull entered the gap, I let out a sharp call. The second it stopped, my arrow was on the way. The bull took off. The blood trail was easy to follow.

While field dressing the bull, bugles echoed through distant valleys; no words were needed to pass the time. As we rode the horses out of the hills under the cover of darkness, the closer we drew to camp, the louder the chorus of bugles became.

After tending the horses and taking care of the meat, a hearty dinner followed in the main cabin. Other hunters had gotten elk, too, and vivid stories were relived by all. It was one of the best elk hunting days of my life, for never had I heard or seen so many bulls in a single day.

With the excitement of the hunt fresh in my mind, adrenaline kept me awake. It didn't help that the valley was ringing with bugling bulls that surrounded the cabin. I wouldn't have preferred it any other way. ★

Editor's note: To order Scott Haugen's bestselling instructional DVD, Field Dressing, Skinning & Caping Big Game, including elk, visit scotthaugen.com. Follow Scott on Instagram and Facebook.

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The old cup-and-core design has certainly evolved since the 19th century.

THE CUP-AND-CORE BULLET: IS IT OUTDATED?

An expert looks at whether this '19th century formula still has merit' next to modern and lead-free projectiles.

STORY BY PHIL MASSARO • PHOTOS BY MASSARO MEDIA GROUP

If you wander down the ammunition aisle of your favorite gun shop, you'll see all sorts of different projectiles available, both for handguns and rifles. Modern advancements like bonded core and copper monometal – and even some hybrids of these styles



– are extremely popular, yet many of us still reach for the traditional jacketed bullet. This design has been with us for quite a while and has accounted for innumerable game animals, as well as saved lives in both defensive and law enforcement situations.

But with the evolution of the projectile, some question whether or not the jacketed lead bullet – commonly referred to as the “cup-and-

core” bullet – is antiquated. Let's take a look at the pros and cons in a number of handgun and rifle cartridges to see whether or not the 19th century formula still has merit.

I took my first big game animal – a whitetail doe that stood still just a bit too long – with a Winchester Model 94 in .30-30 Winchester, using a 170-grain Remington Core-Lokt bullet. I was young, just 16, inexperienced and



The .30-30 Winchester offers a moderate velocity, and is very well served by traditional cup-and-core bullets.

didn't place the shot very well, but the animal went down quickly. I spent half a dozen seasons with that rifle and had a couple of bonafide bullet failures with different (and inexpensive) brands, leading to a lack of faith. To be honest, the gun didn't fit well and it wasn't very accurate (sadly typical of the era), but when a decent cup-and-core bullet

was put in the vitals, things went just fine. Moderate velocity, even at up-close-and-personal distances, posed no challenge for a properly constructed cup-and-core bullet.

Moving up to a Ruger 77 in .308 Winchester in my early 20s, my dad and I handloaded some Hornady InterLock spitzers first, moving to the

Nosler Ballistic shortly thereafter, as Dad found better accuracy with the latter bullet. Both worked just fine in the terminal phase for the whitetails we'd pursue each fall.

I'd go on to feed that Ruger Sierra GameKings and ProHunters, as well as projectiles from Speer, Berger, Remington and more. Same can be



Hornady's InterLock spitzer bullet makes a great choice for many of the classic cartridges, like the .275 Rigby – better known as the 7x57mm Mauser.

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said for my .300 Winchester Magnum; between the two cartridges, I'd take deer, black bear, caribou and coyotes.

So what makes a cup-and-core bullet tick, and what are some of the issues found with the design?

COLONEL EDUARD RUBIN first put a copper jacket – or cup – over a lead bullet core in the early 1880s in order to take full advantage of the unprecedented velocities generated by smokeless powder. Copper was chosen because it was harder than lead, so it helped reduce lead fouling in the barrel, yet it was soft enough to allow the lands of the steel barrel to cut into the jacket

and impart the proper spin needed to stabilize the bullet in flight. Once this bullet impacts an animal, the jacket acts to slow expansion – in comparison to a bullet constructed of lead alone – and the hunters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were pleased, but the design was not without issues.

It wasn't exactly uncommon to see the jacket and core separate upon impact, especially in the higher-velocity magnum cartridges of the early 20th century, and even more so when dealing with a boattail bullet of cup-and-core construction. John Nosler's now-famous encounter with a Canadian bull moose

that neglected to read the script – Mr. N was carrying a .300 Holland & Holland Magnum loaded with cup-and-core bullets – led to his efforts to build a better mousetrap, resulting in the Nosler Partition.

While his excellent design was groundbreaking, others simply tried to modify the cup-and-core designs by adding a cannelure, or crimping groove, to “lock” the jacket and core together. Remington's famous Core-Lokt is named for this concept, as is the Hornady InterLock bullet, and to a certain degree the design works. But if you push these bullets fast enough, they will separate. Is this a deal-



Author Phil Massaro used a 165-grain Hornady InterLock from a .30-06 Springfield (in a beautiful Rigby rifle) to cleanly take this Scottish red stag at 200 yards. The bullet performed perfectly.



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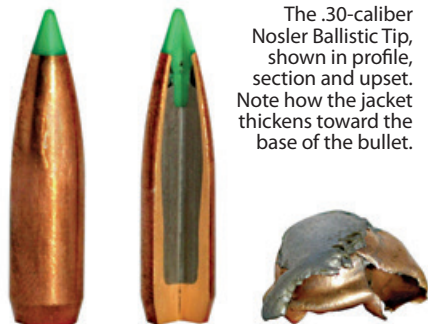
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breaker? Not always. I've recovered many bullets that, um, "failed" from animals that were as dead as fair play.

Some folks would increase the thickness of the copper jacket in order to further strengthen the bullet. Hawk Bullets, a boutique bulletmaker from New Jersey, offers several different jacket thicknesses to choose from. Sierra's GameKing hollowpoint hunting bullets have a notoriously thick jacket and are able to withstand the impact of magnum-class



The .30-caliber Nosler Ballistic Tip, shown in profile, section and upset. Note how the jacket thickens toward the base of the bullet.



The Hornady InterLock roundnose bullets – shown here in 6.5mm caliber, 160 grains – are becoming harder to find, but they make great woods bullets.



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Hawk Bullets offers the option of choosing jacket thickness to best mate the projectile to the job at hand.

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cartridges. On the flip side of that coin, reducing the jacket thickness will increase the frangibility of a bullet, and the vast majority of varmint/predator bullets have very thin jackets. Sierra's BlitzKing, Hornady's V-Max, Nosler's Varmageddon and Ballistic Tip Varmint, and Speer's TNT are all great examples of thin-jacketed varmint bullets.

Jacket thickness – or the lack thereof – is also an important component of a good match-grade target bullet. Looking to two of the most popular match bullet brands – Sierra and Berger – you'll see a thin yet highly concentric jacket. There is no need for a thick jacket because these bullets aren't designed for use on game. The smaller calibers are often used on varmints and predators, specifically for their rapid expansion from the thin jackets.

Traditionally, heavier bullet weights are a great means of preventing premature breakup and overexpansion in a cup-and-core design. I still love the heavy roundnose projectiles that made the great reputations for many of the classic cartridges. The 160-grain 6.5mm, 175-grain 7mm, 220-grain .30, and the 250-grain .330-inch-caliber for the .318 Westley Richards, among others, all carry their weight forward and have an impressive sectional density value. It's no small wonder that all of these projectiles are so closely associated with deep, straight-line penetration. Hornady's InterLock was available in the first three listed, and I've swaged .338-inch-diameter bullets down to .330 inch with good results for the .318 Westley Richards.



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Federal's famous HST handgun bullet might be a high-tech design, but at the end of the day it remains a cup-and-core bullet. (FEDERAL PREMIUM)

As a general rule, I prefer cup-and-core hunting bullets to be on the heavier side of the spectrum when it comes to big game animals. I remember a buddy who, having recently acquired a .300 Winchester Magnum, was complaining that a considerable amount of meat was lost when using the faster cartridge. I asked what ammo he was using, and it turned out that he'd bought 150-grain softpoints. Light for caliber and cruising over 3,200 feet per second, it's not hard to imagine why his deer looked like he'd tossed a hand grenade at them. I had him switch to 180-grain bullets, and there was a considerable change for the better. At .30-30 Winchester or even .308 Winchester velocities, it wouldn't have been nearly as bad, but not in a magnum.

TO ANSWER THE initial question – is the cup-and-core design outdated? – I will respond with an emphatic *no*. Modern



Representing a wonderful blend of terminal performance, accuracy and affordability, Federal Premium's Punch is a good cup-and-core design.

iterations of the classic formula, like the Nosler Ballistic Tip and Hornady ELD-X for the hunters, not to mention all the fantastic match bullets that are setting both accuracy and distance records, show that the cup-and-core is very much alive. Many handguns are loaded with some variety of a cup-and-core design, from the simple

jacketed hollowpoint, like the Hornady XTP and Federal Punch, to the more technologically advanced designs like Federal's long-celebrated Hydra-Shok and HST. All of these present a good balance of expansion and penetration, and provide a level of terminal performance that can save your life.

Does all of this mean that there



Sierra's GameKing hollowpoint is designed to fly like their MatchKing, but features a very thick jacket to handle even magnum-level velocities.



The Tipped MatchKing is Sierra's latest upgrade on the famous bullet design; the polymer tip offers a more consistent ballistic coefficient value across the board.



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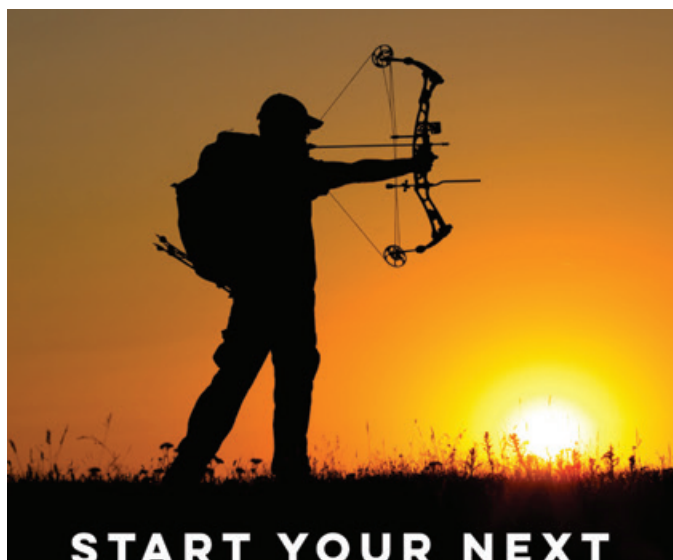
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Browning loads the 175-grain Sierra Tipped GameKing bullet in their .68 Western load; despite the velocity, this high-sectional-density bullet will stay together, even on game like elk and moose.



Hornady's simple yet effective XTP handgun bullet makes a good choice for both hunting and self-defense.



A pair of recovered jackets from very dead whitetail deer; these bullets started life as 130-grain Nosler Ballistic Tips. Jacket/core separation can be a problem with cup-and-core bullets, but as hunter Dale Quick reports, both deer went down within a few steps.

is no point in the bonded-core and lead-free copper designs? Absolutely not. I feel that while a cup-and-core bullet of suitable weight works well on game animals, a premium bonded-core or monometal will give similar performance at a lighter weight. For example, a 180-grain cup-and-core softpoint will certainly work well on deer, bear and moose in any of the .300 magnum cartridges, but you could drop down to 165 grains if you choose a Nosler AccuBond, Federal Terminal Ascent, Swift A-Frame or Barnes TSX. And there are game animals that pretty much demand a premium softpoint – Cape buffalo come quickly to mind – to ensure proper penetration through the vital organs, while giving the desired expansion. On the other hand, some hunting situations dictate a more rapid expansion; as I write these words I am preparing for a leopard hunt in Africa, and will be using a 286-grain Hornady InterLock from a 9.3x62mm Mauser to handle Mr. Spots.

The biggest threat to the cup-and-core design is the banning of lead ammunition; as this “green” movement takes root (I’m not a fan, personally), the lead core/copper jacket formula gets shelved. Let’s hope it doesn’t put a great bullet design to rest. ★

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HOW TO CAMO PAINT YOUR RIFLE

A few cans of Krylon, some painter's tape and a mix of mediums are all that stand between you and a custom finish on your firearm, and here's how to do it.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY NICK PERNA

I went to the gun store knowing exactly what I wanted. I had done my research and decided I wanted a Henry Arms AR-7 .22-caliber Survival Rifle. Specifically, I wanted it in Viper Western Camo. If for some reason that was not available, I would settle for the True Timber Kanati Camo model. My mind was made up; I would settle for nothing less.

"All we got 'em in is black," the clerk at the gun store told me. "We're all sold out on those camo models."

What to do? I wanted one of the camo models! But it could take *months* before they got another one in stock. I needed that gun *today* because, well, I am impatient and did not want to wait. There were

empty beer cans at home that needed perforating.

So I bought the black one. And what do you do when you don't get what you want? You improvise, adapt and overcome! You DIY!

As a former law enforcement sniper, I am familiar with the process of painting firearms. Like making a

ghillie suit, camo painting a sniper rifle is a rite of passage for long-range gunners. I decided to apply my own camo to the rifle.

PREP WORK

To prepare the rifle for painting, there are a few steps involved.

First, ensure the weapon is empty/safe. Next, completely wipe down the weapon to get any excess lubricants off the surfaces. Finally, apply painter's tape to the areas that do not need to be painted. I applied tape to the end of the barrel, the ejection port, the magazine well and the trigger area.

The general rule of thumb with tape is the more, the better. After the rifle is completely painted and the tape is removed, you can use a Q-tip or paintbrush to do touch-ups. Getting an excessive amount of paint in the chamber, or other functioning parts of the firearm, can affect its



When author Nick Perna wasn't able to get a Henry Arms AR-7 in the camo finish he wanted, he decided to make his own pattern.



Blue painter's tape works well for keeping paint out of unwanted areas like the end of the barrel, the ejection port, the magazine well and the trigger area.

ability to operate effectively.

PAINT

A strong Krylon-type paint is a good choice. It needs to stand up to the rigors of field work and extreme heat when firing, and be resistant to lubricants and cleaning liquids. Regular spray paint probably is not going to cut it. I generally stick with brown, olive drab (green), tan and black.

There are different schools of

thought when it comes to which colors to apply first. You can start with a dark color and then add lighter colors, but I chose to do the opposite, starting with lighter shades and then going to progressively darker ones. I chose to do this because where I live in Northern California, there tends to be lighter-colored foliage most of the year. If you're reading this in Florida, it will probably be the opposite.

For this project I went for a light-

colored base (tan), followed by olive drab, then brown.

Make sure the spray can is completely shaken up and functioning properly. Test it first. Spray paint nozzles can be cleaned by soaking them in gasoline or paint remover. Weapons should be painted on a drop cloth and the can should be held about 4 inches from the rifle.

APPLYING SCHEMES

There are several options for applying schemes to your rifle. For instance:

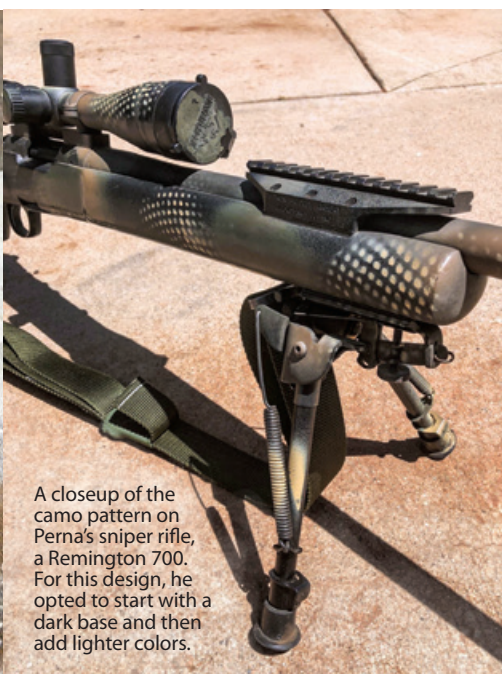
- Use items like sponges to dab colors on. Sponges can be cut into random shapes, dabbed in paint, then applied in spots;
- Use cutouts or stencils of typical camouflage shapes. It's best to tape them into the desired position and then apply paint;
- Or use mesh materials like sports jerseys to add dot patterns. I utilized this tool for this project to apply the brown portions. Different size mesh can be used to make spots of varying sizes. The mesh can be held in position by hand, but just make sure to wear a glove.

TOUCH-UPS

Once dry and painted satisfactorily, it's time to remove the tape and do touch-ups. It's best to use the primary color (in this case, tan) for touch-ups. The



Krylon paint in colors like brown, olive drab (green), tan and black is best, says the author.



A closeup of the camo pattern on Perna's sniper rifle, a Remington 700. For this design, he opted to start with a dark base and then add lighter colors.



For the Henry AR-7 project, Perna started with a tan base to match the foliage in his area.

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Perna then used some of the local flora, in this case a maple leaf, to add a realistic touch.

magazine that had been in the weapon during the painting process can now be removed and the unexposed parts painted over. It's important to have a camouflage magazine since an unpainted one will stand out. It's probably a good idea to have a bunch of painted magazines.

Once done, make sure all exposed surfaces have been painted. It's important to remember that the purpose of the paint job is not to make the gun look cool. Rather, the focus is to make it less visible. So, if there are mistakes in the pattern that do not detract from its overall camouflaging purpose, then it does not need to be fixed.

There is not a need to apply a sealant over the paint. In fact,



The author also used a retired lacrosse jersey with brown paint to apply the mesh pattern.



The finished product!

it might make more sense to not seal the paint in, in case the camo needs to be removed at some future point. (Say, you'll be operating in a different environment.)

Even the strongest paint is not impervious to wear and tear. The weapon needs to be inspected periodically and touch-up paint applied. Receivers and areas that are handled a lot (stocks, grips, fore grips) see the most wear. Some cleaning products, like solvents, can also affect the paint. When making repairs, it's not about making it pretty; the only concern is maintaining the functionality of the camouflage.

ALL DONE!

Once complete, step back and take a moment to admire your artistic handiwork. Take a few pics and send them to your buddies to make them jealous. Then take your weapon to the range to ensure it is functioning properly and that the paint stays intact. Now it's time to go ventilate some cans! ★



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WHY I LIKE SPIKE'S

Self-defense expert and his wife trust company's AR-platform firearms to protect themselves.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PAUL PAWELA

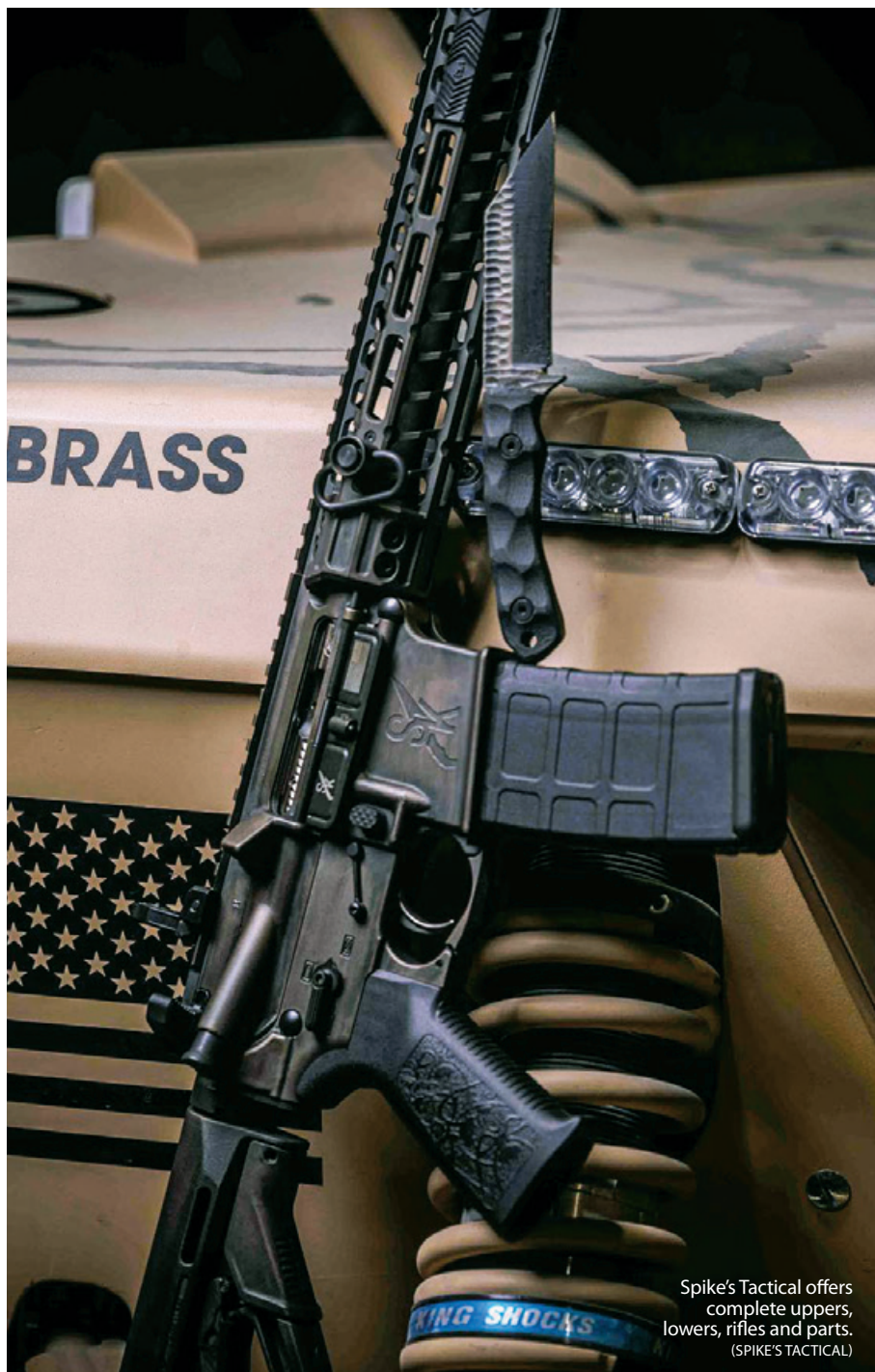


As I have stated previously in the pages of *American Shooting Journal*, when it comes to self-defense and self-preservation, there is little difference between 1800s pioneers and people of today.

During the 1800s, families traveled the West in buckboard wagons knowing full well the perils they would face, and knowing their travels would take them through dangerous and hostile lands. These people accepted those risks as they traveled with the most modern firearms they could afford. The legendary Colt .45 Single Action Army (SAA) revolver was the popular handgun of the day, and while this gun was used primarily for close distance, it was very accurate at ranges of 25 to 50 yards. The next gun of choice was the double-barreled shotgun, common in calibers that ranged from 10- to 20-gauge for hunting. For men, double-aught buck fit the bill.



The prized tool of choice for defensive purposes was the repeating rifle, such as the Henry rifle. It was popular because it could be fired multiple times before reloading was necessary. The majority of repeating rifles held seven to 15 cartridges, and they were both fast to fire and deadly accurate at varying distances. Notable Western icon Matt Warner was quoted as saying, "In close-in fighting, the six-shooter is the best weapon, but in long-range fighting, the rifle can't be beat."



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Author Paul Pawela's wife Linda with a Spike's AR pistol. The brace has since been removed to comply with the ATF brace rule.

In the 21st century, revolvers have been replaced with semiautomatics like Glocks, Sigs and Smith & Wessons. Double-barreled shotguns have been replaced by high-speed semiautomatics like Benellis, Berettas and Mossbergs. And the king semiauto rifle platform is undoubtedly the AR-15.

The AR-15-style rifle has been a favorite of Americans for several years. It is a lightweight semiautomatic rifle based on the Colt AR-15 design. Different manufacturers have seized on its popularity, to the point that hundreds of companies are now dedicated to making their own AR-style rifle.

Before buying an AR-15, I recommend that several factors be included in your thought process. First and foremost, what is the reason you want an AR-15 in the first place?

MY THOUGHTS ABOUT owning one always go in this order: self-defense,

hunting and sport shooting events. My views differ from most about self-defense with the AR platform. In my household, in an emergency the AR-15 first goes into my wife's hands to serve in a backup role. The AR platform

is light enough for her to hold with comfort and ease in several positions, including sitting, kneeling and prone. If there are multiple assailants, if need be, my wife can lay down rapid-fire rounds with pinpoint accuracy under duress. With a Tac Light flashlight (a must-have accessory), she can disorient the intruder(s) and identify the threat, freeing me to do what needs to be done.

This has always been part of our family plan since we have been together, and a lot went into the thought process of what manufacturer we would go with to get the specific weapon we needed. Both of us chose Spike's Tactical rifles for many different reasons.

Full disclosure: I must confess I have personally known the owner of Spike's for many years. Many things can be said of the man, but these are my thoughts. Mike Register, aka Spike, is another example of an American success story. Years ago, when not working at his regular day job, he assembled guns in his garage all day and night and sold the guns he built on the weekends at gun shows. Spike's reputation grew relatively fast, thanks to the attention to detail on his guns, as well as his dedication to his customer base.

Spike is a man's man. His yes means



Pawela, Mike "Spike" Register and nationally known tactical trainer EJ Owens.



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The author's personal Spike's-built AR.

yes, and his no means no. As long as I have known him, he has been an honest man in every sense of the word. That reason alone should encourage anyone to do business with him. As Spike's business outgrew his garage, he set up shop in a warehouse in Apopka, Florida. I grew up next door to Apopka in Forest City, so naturally I felt a close bond with Spike and the people who worked for him. Whenever I have taken family or friends to Spike's facility unannounced, everyone has welcomed us with open arms.

THE MILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION is, how good are Spike's guns? The simple

answer is they are pretty darn good. I have put thousands of rounds through them, and they are pretty darn accurate. The wife and I can hit targets out to 300 yards all day long, and while I'd never advocate for civilians shooting anyone at that distance, it's comforting to know we can.

Don't just take my word for it. Spike's customers also include Ranger Hall of Famer/Special Forces legend Gary O'Neal, international firearms trainer and SOCOM consultant Dr. EJ Owens, and Benghazi hero Kris "Tanto" Paronto and his entire Battleline Tactical staff. Both Tanto and Spike's guns made the cover of

the August 2022 issue of *American Shooting Journal*.

Some classes at Assault Counter Tactics – my self-defense training company – even use Spike's Tactical rifles. National firearms trainers Tim and Andy Tolbert often use an assortment of Spike's rifles, whether the class is force-on-force or live fire.

Several years ago, my longtime girlfriend (now wife) Linda and I visited Spike's Tactical to get "our" dream gun built. Upon arrival, Spike himself whisked my gal away and took her straight to his best gun builder. From start to finish, Linda had the final say in every piece and part that went into that gun. She calls it her baby, since she says she gave it life.

I would love to tell you that what is hers is mine, and what's mine is hers, but that would be a lie. Our Spike's gun was specifically built for her at the behest of Spike himself, and she had input in everything that made it her gun. That was a warm gesture Spike showed my wife, and I will be forever grateful.

SO, SPIKE'S GUNS are good. But would I bet my life with them? Yes, I would, and I have. On one occasion, Linda and I were heading north to see the kids and grandkids for a long overdue vacation. We stopped near Interstate



Ranger Hall of Famer Gary O'Neal teaching a young fan the fundamentals of marksmanship on a Spike's rifle.



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A display of different makes and models of Spike's ARs.

95 in Ridgeland, South Carolina, for the night. Unbeknownst to us, it was not the best area. I was awakened in the middle of the night to a drug deal that had gone bad, and two men were doing nefarious things to one of the drug dealers' cars. Both men were armed with ice picks. I picked up the Spike's rifle, which I always bring on the road, while my wife called 911. The bad guys saw the rifle and ran.

Undercover officers came to the scene and asked if I knew the hotel was in a crime-infested drug area. My response was no, I did not get that review on Yelp. The second piece of advice the undercover gave me was that when I was engaging bad guys, I probably should not be doing it in Punisher underwear; point taken.

The truth was that I had faith and confidence in the Spike's Tactical weapon that I had in my hands to protect not only me, but my wife as well. Did I know the capabilities of

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A glimpse inside the company's central Florida manufacturing facility.



Complete uppers (this image) and rifles (below) ready to ship.



that gun? Indeed, it had been shot thousands of times with every round one could think of without a flaw or hiccup. Nothing would prevent my wife and me from seeing our kids and grandchildren, and on that day, our Spike's Tactical rifle ensured that it happened safely.

I AM, BY trade, a professional firearms trainer and have been for over 40 years. I've also been a self-defense writer for nearly 35 years. I am supposed to be unbiased on specific subject matters. Like it or not, my reputation in the industry is to tell the truth. Am I biased toward Spike's Tactical? Let's see, I have known the man for nearly 20 years and consider him a friend. His reputation in the business is rock-solid. He has a great staff who will go the distance in customer service. His guns come with a lifetime guarantee. His quality control is excellent, and all the component parts for his weapons are also excellent. The barrels he uses for his rifles are darn near impenetrable. Not only are these rifles pretty darn good, but they are affordable and I will put them up against many other popular guns that are more expensive.

What matters most to me is that my wife can not only shoot her Spike's Tactical rifle with extreme precision, but she is also confident she can back me in a life-threatening situation. I am extremely confident that she has my six in a bad situation, and everything is in control when she has her Spike's rifle. Am I biased about Spike's Tactical rifles? You are damn right, I am. Do I trust his products with my life and my family's lives? The simple answer is yes, and I don't believe anyone can give a stronger endorsement! ★

Editor's note: For more info on Spike's Tactical, visit spikestactical.com. Author Paul Pawela is a nationally recognized firearms and self-defense expert. For his realistic self-defense training, see assaultcountertactics.com.

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Officers at Northern California's Redwood City Police Department are issued SureFire X300 lights for their new Glock 47s, which replaced their Gen 4 Glock 22s.



GUN REVIEW: THE GLOCK 47

You may not be excited by yet another Glock – the Toyota Camry of handguns – ‘but you will be satisfied.’

STORY AND PHOTOS BY NICK PERNA

In the world of firearms writers, there’s nothing more exciting than testing and evaluating a new firearm, unless it’s a Glock. Glock (us.glock.com) has been designing and manufacturing high-quality handguns for over 30 years,

and the reality is that the company has basically been updating, adding to and otherwise perfecting the same basic handgun that rolled off the assembly line in 1982. So there’s the boring part – nothing new and fancy, just improved. Glocks are also boringly reliable,

accurate and consistent. So there’s that. If it were a car, a Glock would be something akin to a Toyota Camry or Honda Accord.

The latest in the Glock family is the Glock 47. For those unfamiliar with the numbering system for Glocks,



The Glock 47 comes with three 17-round magazines, two more rounds than traditional Glocks carry.

the number 47 indicates that it is the 47th handgun design the company has marketed. This causes a lot of confusion, since you would think it would be done by caliber – for instance, the Glock 22 would shoot .22-caliber ammo (it takes .40 caliber). But for those familiar with the culture at Glock, this is indicative of the no-nonsense approach taken by the company’s founder, Gaston Glock. Gaston started out as an engineer manufacturing curtain rods and military knives, and then got into the gun business when he decided to see if he could make a handgun, based on a polymer frame, that was better than what was on the market at the time.

Whether you love ‘em or hate ‘em, it’s hard to argue with success. The Glock is the most widely used handgun in law enforcement and is one of the most popular pistols for private purchase as well. With imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, most modern field-stripped handguns resemble or are an almost direct copy of the Glock’s operating mechanisms.

SO WHAT DOES the Glock 47 MOS (Modular Optical System) do better than previous models? Quite a few things, actually. As the name MOS

implies, it’s equipped out of the box to take an optic. The slide is milled to accept most optics on the market today. The 47 was initially designed to meet the needs of the United States Customs and Border Protection agency, with the MOS compatibility option being one of the requirements. The gun is chambered in 9mm and, in appearance, most closely resembles the Glock 17. It is unknown if there are plans to come out with other calibers.

The 47 comes standard with three

17-round magazines. The magic round count for full-frame Glocks has traditionally been 15. On the surface, the addition of two more rounds is a minor thing, but in a gun fight it can be the difference in whether or not you come home at night. As with all Glock mags, the last few rounds can be a challenge to load. The gun comes with a mag loader to assist with this issue.

Gen 5 mags drop freely from the magazine well. In older models, the magazine was designed not to allow the mag to fall completely from the mag well after the magazine release button was pushed. I’ve heard that the Austrian military – the original purchasers of the Glock – wanted it that way so soldiers wouldn’t lose their magazines. This meant Glock gun-runners in the early 2000s had to strip mags out of the mag well with their nonfiring hand or do the “Glock shake,” a technique where you would violently flip your wrist after you hit the mag release to make the empty mag fly out. Glock has fixed this.

Modularity has become the industry standard in firearms. Sig Sauer has taken this to new levels with their interchangeable fire control systems like the one found in the Sig 332, which allows the user to easily swap out different size frames and different

All Gen 5s now come with forward slide serrations to facilitate easier press checking.





A new Glock isn't the most exciting firearm, writes author Nick Perna, but it is always reliable, accurate and consistent.

The Glock's "much-maligned" finger grooves are a hot topic amongst critics, states Perna, but they've been done away with on the 47.



length slides. The Glock system is built around the frame of the handgun so there aren't many options there, save different size backstraps that can be swapped out (the Glock 47 comes with two). However, with the Glock 47, the user can swap out slides from other Gen 5 Glock 17, 19 and 45 handguns. This gives the user some choice in terms of length of slide for increased concealability (the Glock 19 slide) or better accuracy from a longer slide (the Glock 17 slide). The internal components of the Gen 5 Glock 17, 19 and 45 are interchangeable with the Glock 47.

All Gen 5s now come with forward slide serrations to facilitate easier press checking. Glock finally came around and added an ambidextrous slide release (referred to as a "slide stop" in Glock talk). They also got rid of the much-maligned finger grooves on the front of the frame. Personally, I didn't care much either way about the finger grooves, but they were a hot topic

of discussion amongst the keyboard commandos with virtual degrees in what is considered "tacticacool." Anyway, they got rid of them.

The 47s still come with the cheap plastic sights Glock includes on all of their handguns. The only thing good about them is they are easy to remove so you can replace them with an after-market sight set. I guess the issued sights help keep the price point lower, but it's offset by having to buy your own.

MY POLICE DEPARTMENT recently made the switch from the Gen 4 .40-caliber Glock 22 to the 9mm Glock 47. We saw an immediate improvement in accuracy, especially from some of the "shooting-challenged" officers that every department has. This had a lot to do with switching calibers. The .40-caliber Smith & Wesson round was the wonder boy of handgun calibers in the late '90s, hailed for its stopping power when compared to the 9mm.

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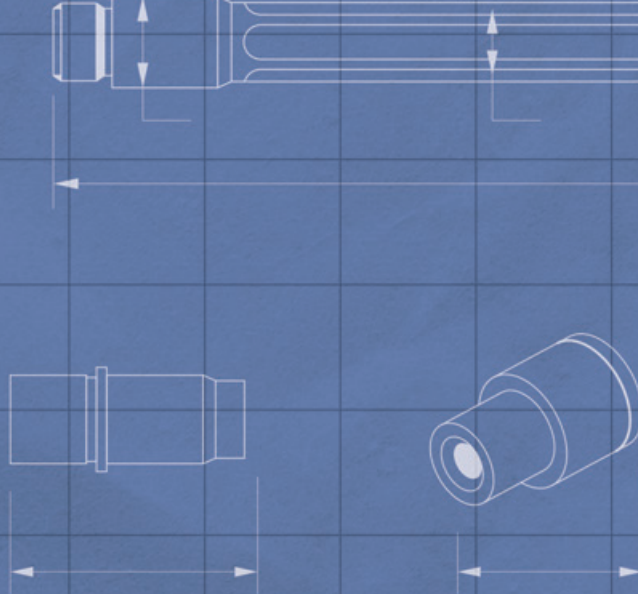


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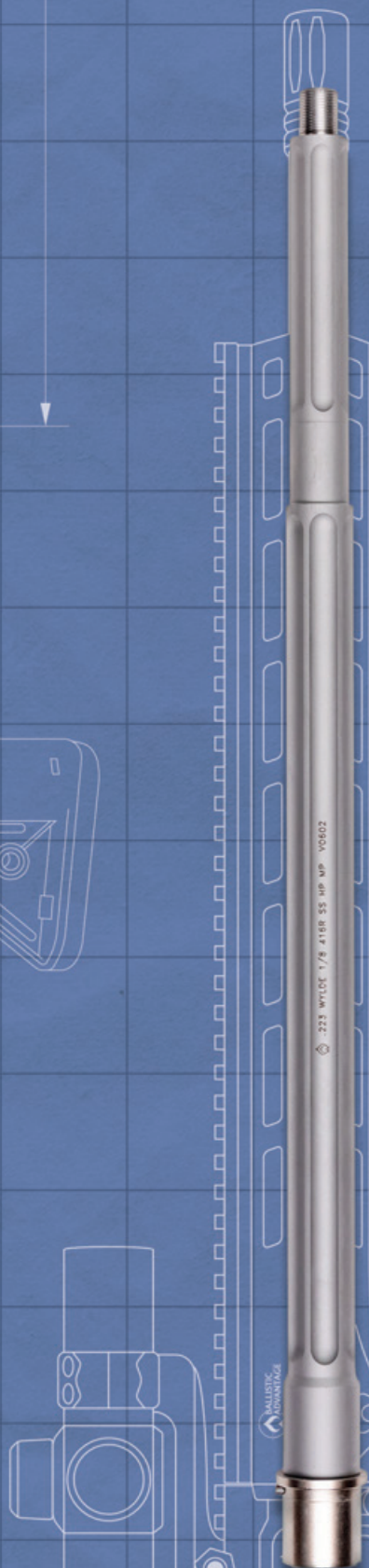
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Perna and fellow officers at the Redwood City PD are pleased with the Glock 47.

Truth be told, both calibers are equally effective at eliminating threats and, as more modern tacticians have pointed out, it's shot placement that is the most important element of stopping threats. The downside to the .40 is its sharper recoil. As a lawman who has carried a .45-caliber handgun most of his career, I can honestly say that a .40-caliber recoil is sharper. This makes it more difficult to train new shooters with and increases the likelihood of issues like recoil anticipation.

This is not an issue with the 9mm Glock 47. I noticed two things when testing it on the range that I hadn't observed in previous Glock models, which also make it more user-friendly. One, the slide requires less effort to

rack. It is also easier to pull it back to press check it. This may be attributed to the shorter dust cover on the Glock 47. Two, the trigger pull felt smoother than what I had come to expect from Glocks. The usual Glock trigger pull, to me, feels like a two-stage trigger with a long pull in between both stages. The Glock 47 trigger seemed to have eliminated some of the pull time and stiffness from the trigger pull.

About half of the officers have opted to mount optics on their guns. We haven't had any issues with them and, for those who prefer optics, it just makes a good gun better. Our department also issues SureFire X300 lights. The bean counters in the department counted it as a big win that

our new Glock 47s (minus the optics) fit in our old Safariland Glock 22 holsters! The X300s were also recycled from the old .40-cal warhorses. The cops and the accountants were both happy, which is rare.

I have been trying out my newly issued 47 at work in plainclothes or undercover assignments, as well as off duty. For holsters, I have purchased ones that are the correct size for a Glock 17. Most holster manufacturers I looked at didn't list the Glock 47 as a holster size, since it is so new. So look for Glock 17 holsters if you want one for your 47.

All in all, I can't promise you will be excited about getting a new Glock 47, but you will be satisfied. ★

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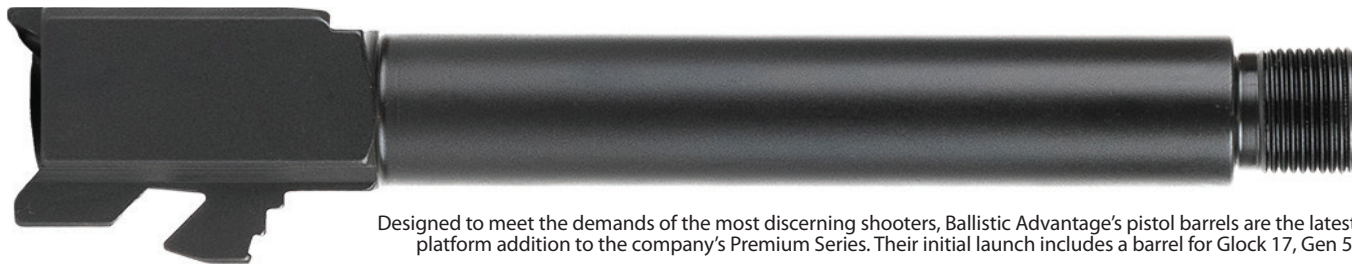
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Designed to meet the demands of the most discerning shooters, Ballistic Advantage's pistol barrels are the latest platform addition to the company's Premium Series. Their initial launch includes a barrel for Glock 17, Gen 5.

NEW DROP-IN BARRELS FOR GLOCKS

Ballistic Advantage's Premium Series for select models (with more coming soon) will 'undoubtedly exceed your expectations' at the range.

PHOTOS BY BALLISTIC ADVANTAGE

Ballistic Advantage, an Apopka, Florida-based manufacturer of premium high-end rifle barrels and other firearm components, recently announced the launch of a new line of drop-in Premium Series pistol barrels.

Designed to meet the demands of discerning shooters, Ballistic Advantage's new line of pistol barrels incorporates cutting-edge advancements and meticulous craftsmanship. Leveraging state-of-the-art materials and manufacturing processes, the company has created a collection of pistol barrels that redefine industry standards and elevate shooting experiences to new heights.

While many line extensions are in the works, initial flagship models include improved performing barrels for generations 3, 4 and 5 Glock 17 and Glock 19. Crafted from hardened 416R stainless steel, these barrels deliver exceptional durability, reduced recoil and enhanced muzzle control, enabling shooters to achieve



Ballistic Advantage plans to release barrels for the Glock 19, Gen 3-5, as well as Glock 34, 26 and Glock 17, Gen 3-4. These barrels will come in a variety of threaded and nonthreaded, coating and fluting options.

improved accuracy for optimal shooting performance.

"I am an avid Glock fan, and I firmly believe that they already

manufacture exceptional products.

However, our team has diligently concentrated on all the crucial aspects and made significant improvements

in the right areas,” stated Adam Wainio, president of Ballistic Advantage. “As a result, when you equip your Glock with a BA barrel, it genuinely becomes an upgrade, and the final outcome will undoubtedly exceed your expectations.”

He continued, “I take immense pride in the relentless efforts of this team, and I wholeheartedly recommend you consider using a BA barrel in your pistol to unlock its full potential. Here’s to the first of many more remarkable offerings.”

The key features and associated benefits of the Premium Series pistol barrels include:

Advanced rifling technology: The Premium Series pistol barrels utilize innovative rifling technology, optimizing bullet stabilization and minimizing barrel fouling. This results in improved accuracy, reduced bullet deviation and easier cleaning and maintenance.

Match-grade performance, duty-grade reliability: Each barrel undergoes meticulous fitting to ensure perfect alignment and lock-up with the firearm’s slide, resulting in a precise fit that enhances accuracy, eliminates barrel play and enhances overall shooting performance.

Improved function: The Premium Series line incorporates the latest advanced engineering enhancements for autocomp feedback and milling operations technologies that improve the overall function while decreasing the stress to the barrel. These improvements enhance the reliability, cycling and extraction, ensuring consistent and smooth operation.

Threaded barrel option: Ballistic Advantage offers a threaded barrel option for select models, allowing users to easily attach muzzle devices such as suppressors or compensators.

Nonthreaded barrel option: An exclusive option for Premium Series’

nonthreaded barrels is an optimal 11-degree competition-style target crown. This design feature enhances accuracy in two ways. First, the 11-degree target crown design allows the propellant gases a resistance-free path as the projectile exits the bore of the barrel. Additionally, the design feature protects the bore from damage caused by misuse.

In line with its commitment to customer satisfaction, Ballistic Advantage offers comprehensive customer support services. These services include product information, technical assistance and a dedicated support team to address any queries or concerns. Ballistic Advantage offers performance warranty for function over the lifetime of the barrel. ★

Editor’s note: For more information about Ballistic Advantage’s new line of pistol barrels, including pricing and availability, visit ballisticadvantage.com.

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A screenshot from the bodycam video of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, police officer Andrew Crabb, who rescued three cows from a burning barn in late June.

TO SERVE AND PROTECT INCLUDES CRITTERS TOO

STORY BY NICK PERNA • PHOTO AND SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF STURGEON BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

To protect and serve, for all of God's creatures. In the two-plus years I've been penning the Law Enforcement Spotlight column for *American Shooting Journal*, I've written about the heroics of many officers protecting their fellow humans from harm. It's not just about helping people, though. There are also times when cops do what they can to protect the four-legged residents of the jurisdictions they patrol.



A few years back, when I was a

nighttime patrol supervisor, my team responded to a report of a "dog hotel" that was on fire. When I got there, I saw that the place was, in fact, on fire. Upon entering the business, I saw all manner of dogs in their "hotel rooms," glorified kennels where their owners could view them through a webcam. The fire was spreading in the direction of the dogs. The officers on my team looked to me for a solution. I wasn't going to let the animals burn to death, nor was I going to let their owners watch it live, courtesy of the internet, so I made the only choice that made sense.

"Let 'em out!" I ordered, and we did. All of them. Poodles, beagles,

Animals can't dial 911, but when they need help, officers are quick to answer their barks, moos too.



Officer Andrew Crabb.

Labradoodles, even a great Dane. We let 50-plus dogs loose.

Luckily, we managed to corral most of them into a room attached to the building that was safe from the blaze while the fire department was able to extinguish the fire. The hotel manager arrived, less than happy about the prospect of trying to get the dogs back to their rooms. Not my problem. All dogs go to heaven, but just not on my watch.

Another time, my wife, a former cop raised in rural upstate New York and well versed in dealing with animals, tackled and secured a pig that had wandered onto a major freeway near the San Francisco International Airport. How the pig, affectionately booked with the SPCA as “Wilbur,” managed to traverse the area is anyone’s guess, but we have a blurry old Polaroid picture to



prove the capture.

I’ve given more than one dog a ride home after it wandered away from its residence. I even pulled one out of a house that was on fire. I did it, in part, to save the dog. The primary reason at the time was to appease its owner, who was about to go running inside herself.

WHICH BRINGS ME to June 25, 2023, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and the actions of Officer Andrew Crabb. Spotting a barn on fire, he observed three cows that were way too close to the flames. As Crabb ran across a field to them, he could hear their “moos” of distress.

He risked his own safety to enter the barn, get to a gate and let the three bovines loose to join the rest of their herd outside. (The trio was locked up due to the fact that they all

had priors for escaping the ranch.) Local volunteer firefighters then responded, extinguishing the flames.

I’m sure there was no end to the jokes being tossed around at Sturgeon Bay PD regarding Officer Crabb’s “udderly” selfless act, saving the cows from a medium-rare fate.

All jokes aside, it was an extraordinary act of kindness and bravery worthy of mention. They are all God’s creatures, after all. ★

Editor’s note: Author Nick Perna is a sergeant with the Redwood City Police Department in Northern California. He previously served as a paratrooper in the US Army and is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also has a master’s degree from the University of San Francisco. He is a frequent contributor to multiple print and online forums on topics related to law enforcement, firearms, tactics and veterans issues.

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BLACK POWDER



Author Mike Nesbitt earned second place at this year's Trade Gun Frolic with his Fowler, a 20-gauge smoothbore built from a Tennessee Valley Muzzleloading kit and which features this L&R Durs Egg lock.

A FOWLER DOES FINE AT TRADE GUN FROLIC

Washington state competition challenges smoothbore flintlock shooters with bull's-eyes, gongs, clays.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MIKE NESBITT

For an intense morning of good shooting fun, the Trade Gun Frolic, an annual shoot sponsored by the Washington State Muzzleloading Association, is really hard to beat. This is a match that includes paper target shooting, a good round of shooting gongs,



plus some real fun while shooting at flying clays. The top three shooters are awarded with medals from the WSMA and the Paul Bunyan Plainsmen, who hold the match at their range outside Tacoma and award additional prizes to all shooters.

The WSMA medals are rather unique. They are octagon in shape, somewhat matching the octagon barrels that most nonmilitary

muzzleloading rifles have. Then inside that octagon, as if in the crown of the muzzle, are the words "Washington State Muzzleloading Association." Toward the inside of that crown is the outline of rifling grooves and lands, for a six-groove barrel. The rifling details are somewhat overshadowed by a flintlock's hammer, or "cock," with a flint in its jaws. In the photo here, that flintlock hammer is silver because that



Only smoothbore flintlocks sans rear sight and set trigger are allowed at the event, and Nesbitt's Fowler fit right in. It sports a 36-inch barrel, but the gun can be ordered with a 42-inch.

was my award for second place. The first-place winner received a medal with a gold-colored hammer, and the third-place hammer is bronze-colored.

I ALMOST DIDN'T go to this year's doin's.

Let me put the whole blame for my being there on my partners, "Rapid Robert" DeLisle and Jerry Mayo. They talked me into going. So I gathered my gear, making sure I had some extra flints as well as plenty of priming

powder. Added to that was an elk-skin bag carrying .595-inch-diameter round balls for my 20-gauge and a shot flask that was full of No. 7½ birdshot. With those items, plus wads and some lubricated Bridgers Best patches for the



Bob DeLisle fires his Northwest gun at a flying clay.



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The author's paper target showing nine rather good hits.

round ball shooting, I was ready to go.

The Trade Gun Frolic is the single "trade guns only" event held annually in the state of Washington. To qualify as a trade gun, the piece must be a smoothbore flintlock with no rear sight and it cannot have a set trigger. Those are simple requirements but even so, we often get asked if a percussion shotgun could be allowed. But making this a "flintlocks only" event is part of the real fun. That goes double on a rainy day, when percussions might have a true advantage.

Even so, because our match administrators don't want to turn anyone away, we did have a percussion shooter this year. That was a rather young man, an advanced Scout, who wanted to shoot with us but as yet did not have the required equipment. So the requirements were relaxed in his favor and he did shoot with us, using a percussion single-shot smoothbore. Here's hopin' the experience was good



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The three top shooters were (from left to right) Allen Tresch, who scored 241-X, Nesbitt, with 166-X, and Mike Moran, at 154-X. A total of 305 points were possible, including five bonus points awarded for wearing period attire.

for him and we'd like to see him come back for more muzzleloading.

The course of fire for the match was broken down into three areas with two groups of shooters taking the field. The first group, which included Mike Moran (my partner on a flintlock duck hunt six years ago), would begin on the paper range, shooting 10 shots each at a paper bull's-eye target for a possible score of 100 points. Then that same group would go to the steel target range for shooting at gongs. There were five gongs, and each one was shot at twice, for 10 total shots and another 100 possible points.

While they were busy shooting at those stationary targets, the second group of shooters, which included me and my partners plus Mike Holeman, would start on the trap range for flying clays. My partners said that was my fault. While on the way to the match, I had said, "I hope we don't start with the fliers." They said that jinxed us. Anyway, we did start on the flying targets, of

which there were 10 for another possible 100 points. The total possible score for this match was 300 points. In a bit we'll see how some of our shooters did.

FIRST, LET'S DISCUSS the muzzleloader I used. My 20-gauge Fowler was made from a kit by Tennessee Valley Muzzleloading and if you're looking for a smoothbore, this is a gun I will quickly recommend. TVM will sell the gun as a kit or completed firearm – your choice.

My Fowler was to be just a bit different from the standard model. The standard lock used on the Fowler is the large Siler flintlock, but I wanted an L&R lock on my gun. Matt Avance, the owner of TVM, recommended the L&R Durs Egg lock. That is what I got and I have no complaints at all! And because I wanted my Fowler to be on the handy side, I ordered it with the 36-inch-long barrel. (The other option is for a 42-inch barrel.) Other features in my kit included brass furniture

(the other option was steel), as well as added fittings for a sling – a swivel at the front and a large button at the back. That sling swivel would be fitted with its screw through the middle barrel lug and positioned so the swivel would "fall" down on the middle ramrod pipe, so it could not block the ramrod from going through the ramrod pipes.

There was one more stipulation for my kit; I asked for very plain straight-grained wood with no figure. That was just what I received and let me compliment TVM for it. My reason for requesting very plain wood was because I artificially striped the stock, somewhat like noted 1800s Pennsylvania gunmaker Henry Leman striped his stocks. That might be just a bit out of place on a typical Fowler, but my gun is mine and is not typical.

AT THIS TRADE Gun Frolic, my TVM Fowler worked very well. I can only wish that I had performed as well.

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Out of my 10 shots on the flying clays course, I got only two good hits. That's par for me. Bob tied with me and Mike Holeman got one more for three hits plus bragging rights.

Let me add that the trap for these flying clays was a full 16 yards ahead of us, just like for regular shotguns. We are used to shooting at closer targets and most of our trade guns and Fowlers do not have choked barrels, just cylinder bores. That made me wonder how many of those targets were able to fly through open or hollow patterns. Of course, we'll never know.

Then our group went to the other range to shoot with patched round balls at paper targets and then gongs. For those shots, I simply changed my load from birdshot to a patched .595-inch round ball, with still over 60 grains of GOEX 3Fg powder. Of course, the patch was a lubed .015-inch Bridgers Best, which keeps the loading rather easy.

My paper target looked better than

it really was. That was because of one missed shot, but the other nine shots all scored rather well, giving me a paper score of 76-X. The high target score was shot by Mike Moran, an 89-X, and I really should have taken a picture of his target. There were actually four shooters who scored over 80 on their paper targets, which put my target in fifth place.

Following the paper targets, we went to the gongs. There were five different gongs, each with a particular shape. The first gong was the largest one, a buffalo. To set the pace for my shooting, on my first shot at the buffalo, I missed it clean! That made me talk to myself just a little bit, and apparently I listened.

My next shot at the buffalo, at 35 yards, was a good hit. Then on my next eight shots, I made good hits with six of them, giving me seven hits, or 70 points. Only Allen Tresch scored higher on the gongs with one more hit.

Allen's good shooting earned him

first place in the aggregate at the Trade Gun Frolic. Out of the possible 305 points (counting five bonus points for primitive attire), Allen scored an admirable 241-X. After my little talk with myself, my shooting earned me a total of 166-X, which was good for second place. And very close behind me was my old partner, Mike Moran, with 154-X.

THE FROLIC SHOULD be attended by more shooters simply because it is so much fun. And aiming a trade gun with no rear sight takes a little practice. Even so, some rather good shooting can be done, especially at the fairly short ranges we were shooting at. And, as usual, after shooting the Trade Gun Frolic, I felt that if I had to pick just one muzzleloader, it would be a smoothbore, like a trade gun or my Fowler, because of the variety of loads it handles so well. We'll see how the scores run next year. ★



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