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September/October 2019

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MARLIN 1895 DARK SERIES

COUNTER TECH:
THE SCIENCE OF SCOPES

INSIGHTS:
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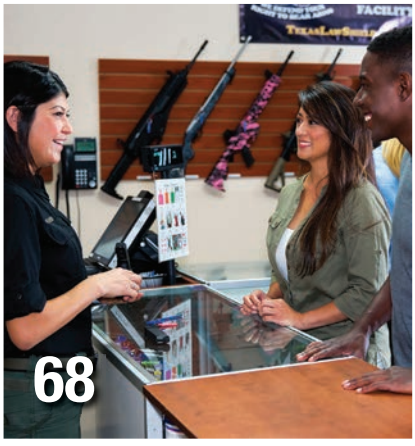
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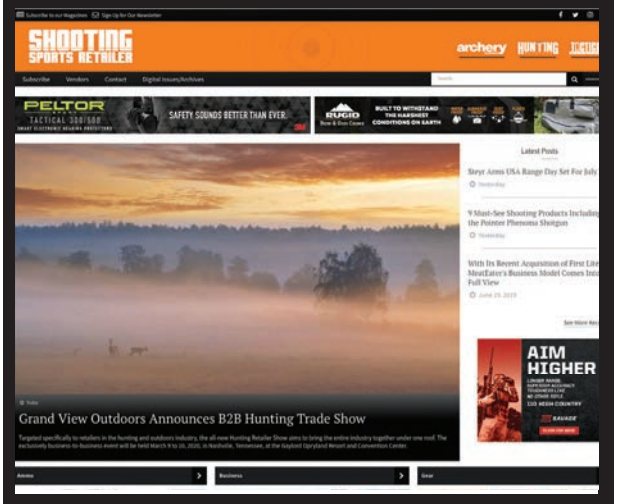
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In May of this year, Lyman Products added Mark 7 Reloading to their family of brands which already included Pachmayr, TacStar, A-Zoom, Trius and Butch's.

Mark 7 and its world class engineering team have brought change and innovation to the market since their introduction of the popular AutoDrive systems in 2015. Since then they have continued to bring new and dynamic advancement to the reloading category with their Evolution, Evolution Pro and Revolution Reloading Systems.

Lyman president and CEO Rick Ranzinger says, "Lyman Products provides strong manufacturing capabilities and brand recognition that will enable Mark 7 to grow to new heights. While Mark 7 will continue to operate out of its Florida plant, Lyman's Connecticut facility will take over manufacturing of many of the components of the reloading systems to provide a more e˜ cient production process."

° is level of reloading o¸ ers incredible opportunities for what Lyman and Mark 7 have dubbed the "pro-sumer". For example, if you are a range that collects spent brass, this would provide the means to quickly and e˜ ciently process the brass and even reload it for resale. What makes this technology so unique are the sensors that monitor every step of the reloading process. ° e Revolution Pro can turn out 3,500 rounds per hour. At that speed, it is impossible for a person to keep track of every step of the process to ensure that all of the crucial components are correct. Digital sensors dramatically increase the utility of the systems by alerting the user to certain conditions. Primer pocket obstructions, incorrect powder levels, bullet orientation and more are constantly monitored. ° e machine will stop immediately if an error is detected and will display the error on the tablet screen so that the appropriate steps can be taken to correct the problem and continue reloading.

In addition to displaying at trade shows, Lyman plans to host live webinars to demonstrate this technology to our audiences. We are excited to embark on this new chapter as we continue the Lyman mission to provide innovative products designed by shooters, for shooters, since 1878.

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Those colorful coatings on lenses serve a specific purpose. They minimize the reflection of light so more light can pass through the lens system.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Explaining the science of scopes in simple terms will help you sell your customers the right optics.

By Tom McHale

Our industry seems to make a habit of manufacturing confusion. For example, why do .38 Special and .357 Magnums have different names but use bullets of the same diameter? Why would we refer to a .357-inch bullet as a .38? Similarly, the topic of rifle scopes causes much confusion and angst. Concepts like focal plane, parallax and exit pupil can make the eyes glaze over and cause bunions, or so I hear.

Thankfully, while the optics industry uses lots of complex and confusing terms, the concepts are simple to understand once you visualize them. Let's explore some concepts and features that will help you sell the right optics to your customers.

PARALLAX

One of the least understood concepts in scope science is parallax. The word itself derives from "alteration" or "displacement." It refers to the apparent difference in the location or position of an object based on the position from which it's viewed. That's a mouthful, so let's break it down in terms of rifle scopes using an extreme analogy.

Suppose you're shooting at a target 100 yards down range. Instead of placing your scope reticle on the rifle receiver, let's say the crosshairs are on a super-long extended rail from your rifle 50 yards down range. You can still hit the target with great precision, as long as your eye is lined up precisely with the breech of the rifle, the crosshair way out front and the target. However, if your eye moves left or right relative to the breech, when you look at the crosshair, it will appear to float to the left or right of the target down range.

> If you focus the reticle only with the eyepiece and the target image with the parallax adjustment, both will be crystal clear.

When using a scope, the magic inside superimposes the reticle and target image so both are in the same focal plane. To butcher optical science, you might think of the crosshair resting right on the target. If the reticle and target image are not coincident, then the opportunity for parallax shift exists.

A parallax adjustment on a scope allows the shooter to "focus" the reticle and target image so they are in the same plane. As a result, small movements of the eye relative to the scope won't cause an apparent

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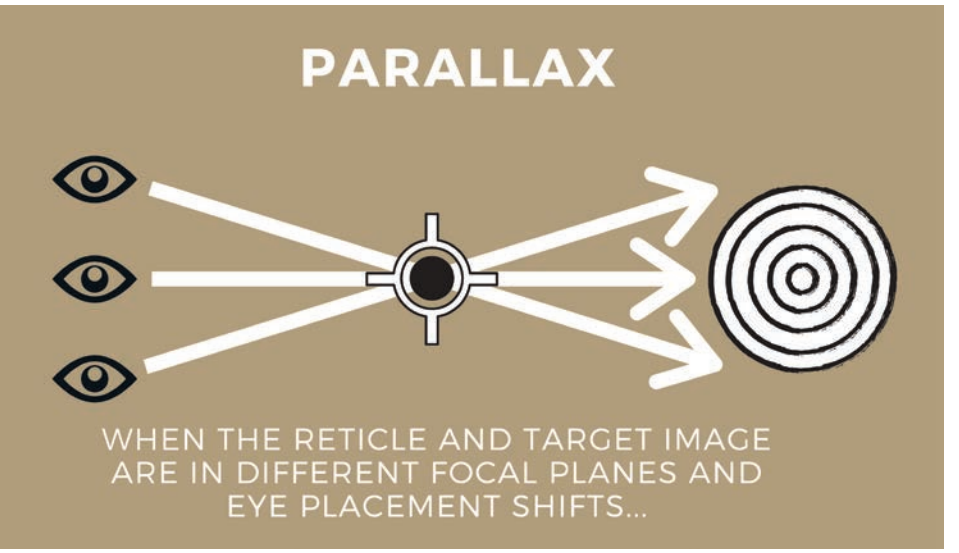
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movement of the reticle and target image because they are virtually locked together. Not all scopes have parallax adjustment, however. In those cases, the manufacturer generally sets a fixed parallax focus adjustment, usually at 100 yards. For "close enough" work, this approach is fine, although it does require the shooter to maintain consistent eye placement relative to the scope.

FOCAL PLANE

The simplest way to explain the concept of focal plane is to envision the placement of the reticle. Inside the scope tube, multiple lenses process the incoming light and repackage it in the desired manner for our viewing pleasure. One such lens function is magnification. If you think about the placement of the reticle relative to the magnification lenses, then you've got the concept of focal plane. Simply put, if the reticle is in front of the magnification lens system, then it will also be magnified before the image reaches your eye. If it's placed behind the magnification lens, then the reticle will not be enlarged along with whatever you're viewing.

First focal plane scopes have the reticle forward of the magnification lens, so the reticle will grow and shrink as you adjust magnification.

Second focal plane scopes are built with the reticle behind the magnification lenses so the reticle will always appear to be a constant size, no matter what the magnification selection.

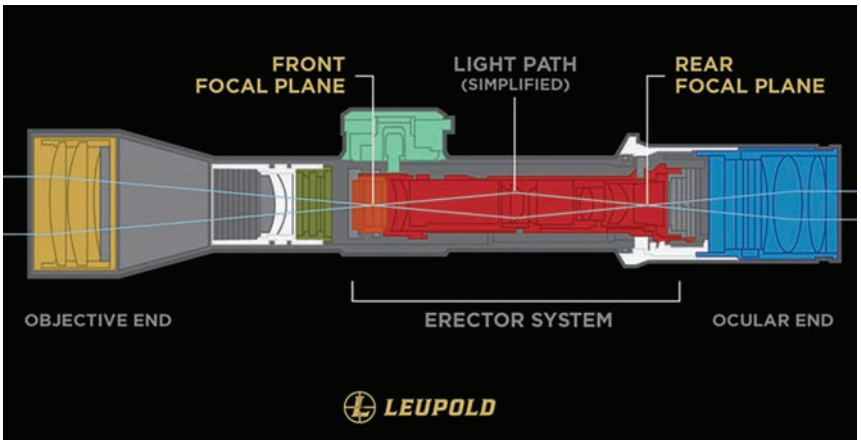
Here's why it's important to understand the impacts of focal plane. Any reticle that's more complex than a simple dot or crosshairs can be used to leverage the rules of proportion. Marks on the reticle can be used to "hold over" when aiming at a distant target or when shooting in a crosswind. These same marks can also be used to estimate range by comparing the size of a known object down range to its apparent "size" as measured by reticle marks.



This Steiner T5Xi has a parallax adjustment wheel on the left side turret. Other scopes use a ring around the objective lens up front.

Simply put, if the reticle is in front of the magnification lens system, then it will also be magnified before the image reaches your eye.

As long as the reticle remains in constant proportion to objects viewed through the scope, these functions work consistently. If a deer appears to be one MOA or milliradian "tall" as measured by reticle marks, then that relationship will hold true as long as the deer and reticle are magnified together. If the reticle marks remain constant, but magnification settings make the deer appear larger or smaller, then that relationship breaks. At higher magnification, the deer might appear to be a half MOA or milliradian "tall" while at lower power levels



it might appear to be a full MOA or mil. The deer hasn't changed size in the physical universe.

If you think of the impact of inconsistent reticle/image relationship in terms of holdover, the problem becomes clear. If you are holding one MOA high at one power setting, that reflects a lot more real vertical drop at a low magnification than it does at a higher level.

So, here's the bottom line. With a first focal plane scope, functions like holdover and ranging work at any power level because the relationship between reticle and target remains in sync. With second focal plane scopes, you'll need to perform these functions at one power level. Most manufacturers design their reticles to be used at the maximum power setting.

EXIT PUPIL

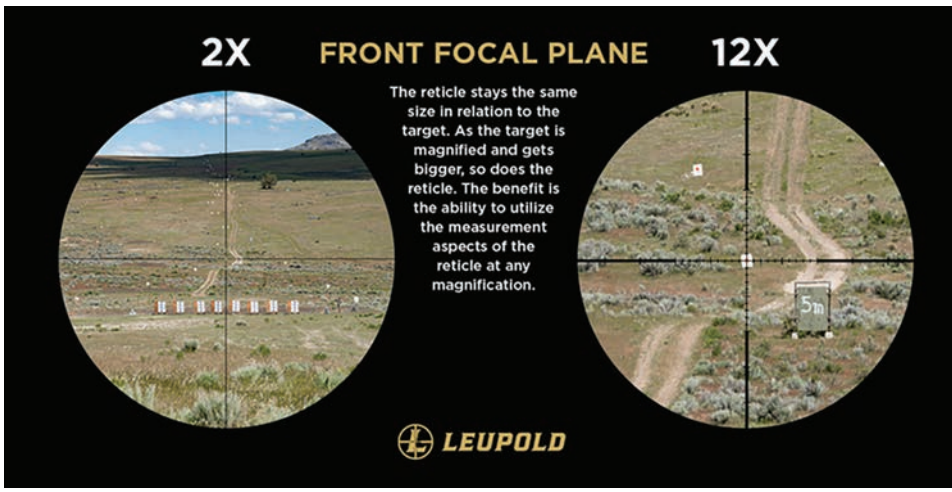
One scope packaging specification that causes confusion is exit pupil. Think of this as the diameter of the light beam exiting the ocular (rear) lens and going into the eye. While not technically accurate, envision a cylinder of light.

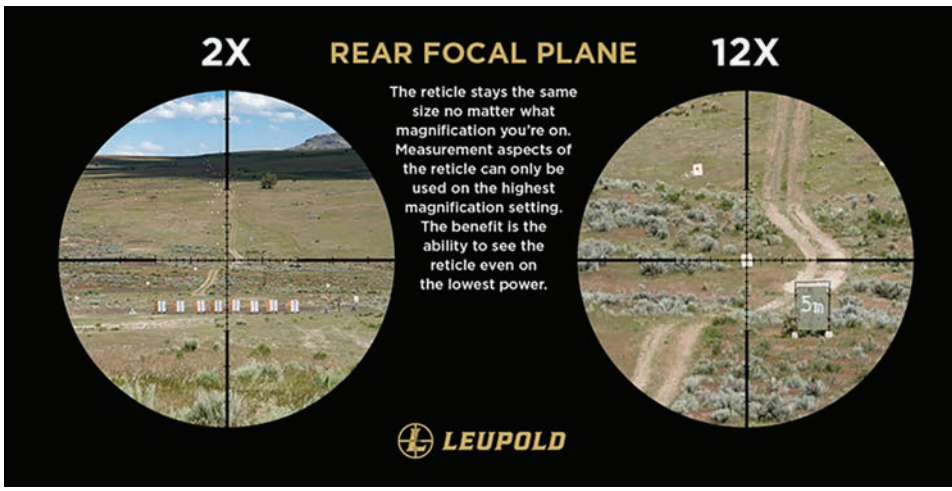
The human eye pupil is the entry point for light. While the pupil is adjustable, it generally ranges in diameter from about 2mm to 7mm based on the amount of environmental light. Your pupil shrinks in bright light and expands in low light. In a perfect world, a scope would deliver a beam of light that exactly matches the size of the pupil. If the pupil and exit pupil are identical, every bit of available light is being delivered to the eye and nothing is wasted. By definition, and all else being equal, the result will be the best possible image that the eye can accept. If the exit pupil is smaller than the eye pupil, the eye and brain aren't getting as much optical data as they can handle, and the image will appear dark and less clear.

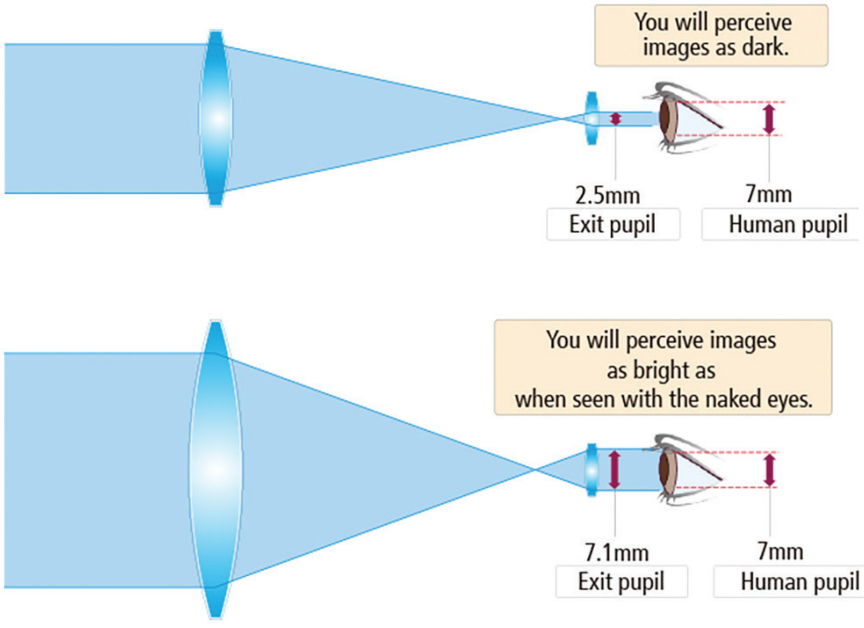
In a perfect world, your scope would sense the diameter of your pupils based on current light conditions and adjust its output to match. In theory, that would provide the perfect image in any condition. In reality, things aren't quite that automatic. However, it is possible to determine and adjust the exit pupil of a scope by adjusting its magnification settings. We'll get into that next.

OBJECTIVE LENS

The objective, or front, lens is the primary light gathering component in a scope. There's a perception that bigger is better, but that's not always true. The objective lens is only one factor that determines the diameter of the exit pupil. The other factor is







magnification level. Using the two, one can calculate the exit pupil by dividing the objective lens size in millimeters by the magnification power level. For example, a scope with a 40mm objective lens set at 4x magnification would have an exit pupil size of 10mm. If you adjust the power of the same scope up to 10x, then the exit pupil would shrink to 4mm. At higher magnification, a smaller "cylinder" of light is passed to your eye.

This can be useful in the field. In low light conditions, where the eye pupil is fully expanded to 6 or 7 millimeters, it may be beneficial to adjust the scope magnification to a level that will generate an exit pupil of similar size.



The focus ring on the eyepiece is only used for bringing the reticle itself into focus. The target focus should always be adjusted using the parallax.

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If you focus the reticle only with the eyepiece and the target image with the parallax adjustment, both will be crystal clear.

EYEPIECE FOCUS

Most scopes have a means of focusing the eyepiece itself. There will either be a ring for this purpose, or the whole eyepiece will rotate and move the lens closer or farther from the scope body. The purpose is to focus the reticle itself. That's it.

Things get confusing because this eyepiece mechanism can also be used to focus the target image too. Don't do that. That's what the parallax adjustment is for. If you focus the reticle only with the eyepiece and the target image with the parallax adjustment, both will be crystal clear.

> If the exit pupil is smaller than the eye pupil, the eye and brain aren't getting as much optical data as they can handle, and the image will appear dark and less clear.

Fortunately, if you're the only one using your scope, the eyepiece should be a one-time or very infrequent adjustment process. To set it, just point your scope at a white or plain background like the sky. Take a quick look to see if the reticle is in sharp focus. If it's not, adjust the eyepiece. It's important to do this exercise in short bursts or your eye and brain will try to compensate and focus the reticle on their own. The goal is to prevent your eye from having to work to focus the reticle. Once you get it focused, lock it down. From that point on, your reticle should always be in focus. To make the target crystal clear, use the parallax adjustment knob or wheel.

LENS COATINGS

Almost every modern scope comes with layers of lens coatings. This isn't just marketing hype, the coatings have a purpose and make a big difference in optical clarity. While there are different types of coatings for different purposes, the most common goal is to reduce light reflection. When light strikes a clear glass lens, a certain percentage bounces off instead of passing through the lens. Anti-reflective lens coatings minimize the amount of light that's reflected so more passes through, ultimately to your eye. The result is a brighter and clearer image.

While the terminology on the box can seem confusing, a basic understanding of some key optics principles can help you guide your customers through informed decision processes to pick the right optic for their needs. SSR

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EMBRACING THE DARK SIDE

Marlin's new Dark Series rifles combine classic action with modern tactical features.

By Brian McCombie

˜ ere's not a thing wrong with old-school lever actions, with wood stocks and blued steel and a look that reminds us of America's Old West history.

But there's also nothing wrong with a new take on an old favorite, especially if the new take might draw in a di° erent set of customers. ˜ at's the approach Marlin Firearms has taken with the new Dark Series lever-action ri¸ es. Introduced in April 2019 at the NRA Annual Meetings & Exhibitions, the Dark Series guns are based on standard Marlin models but incorporate a more tactical look and feel than the traditional blued-and-wood levers.

No doubt the Dark Series will be met with disdain by lever-action purists. But the purists really aren't the market for these ri¸ es, and the early indications are that a very solid market exists for the Dark Series.

I recently received a new 1895 Dark chambered in 45-70 Govt. Like the other ri¸ es in the series, the 1895 Dark arrives complete with a rail atop the receiver and much of the barrel, a threaded barrel and Parkerized metal with a wood stock and fore end in a black-painted ÿ nish. Dark Series ri¸ es also feature a black paracord wrap-



Marlin's new 1895 Dark Series rifles feature an XS Lever Rail with ghost ring peep sight and a traditional front post. The test gun, chambered in 45-70 Govt, produced 2-inch and smaller groups at 50 yards.

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Like the other rifles in the series, the 1895 Dark arrives complete with a rail atop the receiver and much of the barrel.

ping on the lever loop and a black paracord sling.

On Target

Initially, I tried out the 1895 Dark using the standard iron sights. ˜ e 1895 Dark features an XS Lever Rail with ghost ring peep sight and a traditional front post. I was able to shoot 2-inch and smaller groups with the ri° e at 50 yards, including a 1.30-inch 4-shot group with Barnes VOR-TX 45-70 ÿring a 300-grain TSX FN bullet.

But the XS Lever Rail on the 1895 Dark essentially makes this an "optics-ready" ri° e, and I ÿgured a scope would be a better way to judge accuracy at distances beyond 50 yards. So I mounted a Swarovski Z6i 1-6x24mm onto the 1895 Dark.

Mounting the Swarovski was easy enough. However, while the drop at the stock's comb and heel are pretty much perfect for using the rear peep



After adding a scope, the 1895 Dark delivered a sub-MOA three-shot group with Federal Power-Shok ammo that measured just .585-inch.

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The hardwood stock and forend are painted with a textured black finish that provides a nice grip.

sight, these dimensions are too low for a scope. Even with an optic with a relatively low proÿle and mounting it with lower rings, I found it very hard to get a good cheek weld.

My solution? I strapped on the Urban Warfare IVS Cheek Pad made by Blackhawk. Once the cheek pad was on the stock, I had enough cheek weld for quality shooting.

I took on targets at 100 yards and was pleasantly surprised at how well the 1895 Dark grouped. I used the aforementioned Barnes ammunition, plus Federal Power-Shok with a 300-grain jacketed soft-point bullet, and Hornady LEVERevolution 45-70 launching a 250-grain Mono° ex bullet.

I had no problem pegging 2-inch groups at 100 yards, ÿring ÿve shots. My best groups included a 1.30-inch four-shot cluster with the Barnes.

I also shot a sub-MOA 3-shot group with the Federal Power-Shok that measured just .585-inches. ¿ rough my scope, I saw the three shots touching, got way too cocky and tried a fourth shot. I should've at least waited for the barrel and my excitement at the very tight group to cool a bit.

¿ at last shot went a little high and left, and expanded the group total to 1.36-inches. ¿ at's still very, very good for a 45-70 lever-action hunting ri° e with a 16.25-inch barrel.

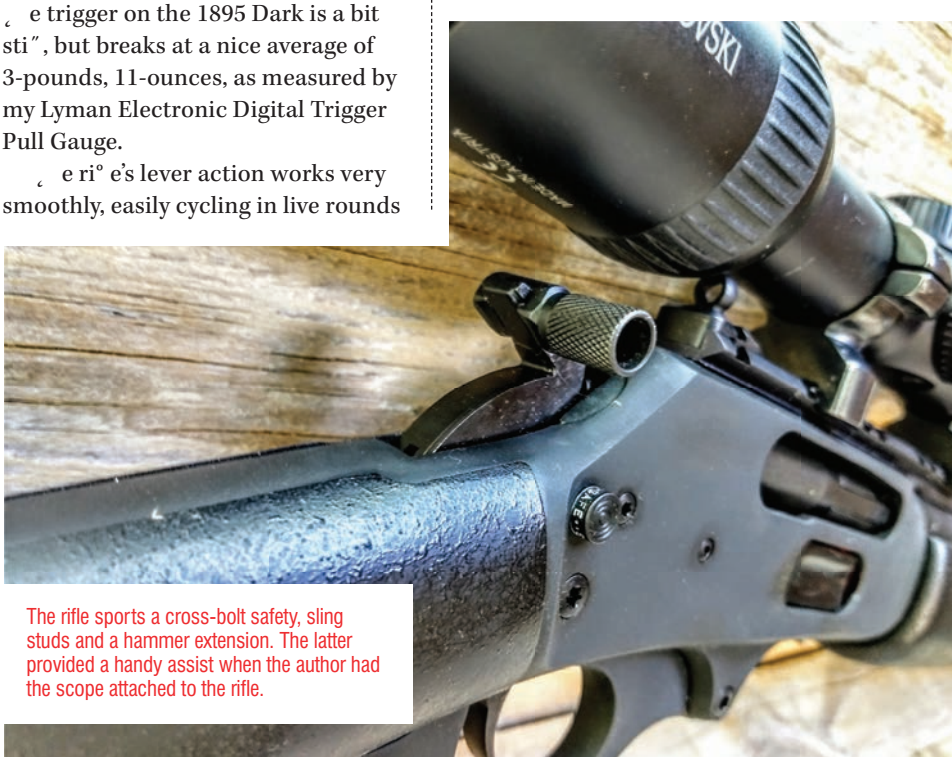
Strong Features

¿ e trigger on the 1895 Dark is a bit sti", but breaks at a nice average of 3-pounds, 11-ounces, as measured by my Lyman Electronic Digital Trigger Pull Gauge.

¿ e ri° e's lever action works very smoothly, easily cycling in live rounds and ejecting spent brass. ¿ e larger lever loop provides good leverage and the paracord wrapping around the loop provides a smooth surface for the back of the ÿngers when cycling the action. I had no problems loading the large 45 to 70 rounds through the side-loading gate and up and into the tubular magazine under the barrel.

I had no problem pegging 2-inch groups at 100 yards, firing five shots. My best groups included a 1.30-inch four-shot cluster with the Barnes.

¿ e hardwood stock and forend are painted with a textured black ÿnish, and that surface ÿnish provides a nice grip. I didn't even miss the traditional checkering.



The rifle sports a cross-bolt safety, sling studs and a hammer extension. The latter provided a handy assist when the author had the scope attached to the rifle.

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IN FOCUS

Dark Series rifles include a black paracord wrapping on the lever loop and a black paracord sling. They also arrive from the factory already threaded for a suppressor or muzzle brake.







SPECS

Manufacturer: Marlin
Model: Model 1895 Dark Series
Caliber: 45-70 Govt.
Action: Lever
Barrel: 16.25-inch carbon steel
Barrel Twist: 1:20, six groove Ballard style
Receiver: Forged carbon steel, machined and polished
Capacity: 5-shot, full-length tubular magazine
Safety: Cross-Bolt Style
Finish: Black, Parkerized
Overall Length: 34.5 inches
Approximate Weight: 7.65 pounds
Stock: Hardwood, painted black with black webbing surface
Muzzle: Threaded at 11/16x24
Includes: Paracord Sling, XS Lever Rail with Ghost Ring, Big Loop Lever also paracord wrapped, sling studs and hammer extension.
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˜ e XS Lever Rail runs from the rear of the receiver to approximately halfway up the length of the barrel. ˜ at extra rail length will be very handy for the hunter who might like to attach a night vision or thermal scope or attachment and do some hunting after dark for hogs and the like (where legal, of course).

˜ e Dark Series ri° es arrive from the factory already threaded for a suppressor or muzzle brake, and thread protector is included. On the 1895 Dark, the threading is at 11/16-24. ˜ e ri° e also sports a cross-bolt safety, sling studs and a hammer extension. ˜ e latter provided a handy assist when I had the scope attached to the ri° e.

Consumer Interest

Marlin ÿ rst released the 336 Dark chambered in 30-30 Win. a couple months prior to the 1895 Dark in 45-70 Govt. Based on the reception the 336 Dark received, Eric Lundgren,





Marlin's senior product manager for ri˜es, believes that FFL retailers will ÿnd good demand for the 1895 Dark and the other ri˜es in the series.

As Lundgren explained, reactions were very positive when initial reviews of the 336 Dark were posted online.

"One of the reviews was posted to a larger ÿrearms website and it did very well there," Lundgren noted. "¿ at website then put it up on its Facebook page, and in just a week, it was shared over 1,000 times on Facebook and to other social media platforms."

While there were some dissenting opinions about a lever with a tactical look, most comments were very positive.

"One of the things the readers of the original reviews really liked was that the Dark Series ri˜es come factory-threaded for a suppressor," he added. "In the past, it could be di˝cult to get a lever action threaded. Almost none came that way from the factory, and the tubular magazine presented di˝culties for many gunsmiths."

So, a good sales strategy is to stress not only the 1895 Dark tactical accessories but their very functional uses. Start with the threaded barrel, then move to the XS Lever Rail and how it works for optics and other accessories. Point out that the paracord sling is included with the ri˜e, as well as the paracord wrapped loop, sling studs and hammer extension.

> The target market for the Dark Series rifles is really those people who've never considered a lever action before. – Eric Lundgren



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DARK



Selling It

"˜ e target market for the Dark Series ri° es is really those people who've never considered a lever action before," Lundgren noted. "˜ e 1895 Dark and the other Dark ri° es are essentially hybrids that combine a traditional platform with modern features. So, I think you'd do well to not go the standard lever-action route and pair up these ri° es with displays featuring rustic woods and cowboy accessories."

One display option, then, is to make sure you have at least one ri° e out of the gun rack and shown in pro-ÿle so customers can see the rail and paracord. If you have a suppressor on hand, attach that, too, so customers understand this is suppressor-ready. (Your signage will need to explain, "Suppressor not included.")

You might also want to attach a ri° e scope to the 1895 Dark — again explaining the optic is not included — as a way to show o″ the ri° e's capabilities and to potentially generate an optics sale.

˜ e people who generally purchase tactical ri° es often start their "window shopping" with AR-platform ri° es, so you may even want to display the 1895 Dark and the other Dark Series models with your store's ARs.

Marlin sales sta″ are ready and eager to help retailers, too, with in-store visits and suggestions for selling the Dark Series to a particular establishment's customer base. Marlin also has a full slate of Dark Series advertising in the queue, both for print and online platforms, designed to drive consumers to retail.

And Marlin isn't done with the tactical approach.

In addition to the 336 and 1894 Dark, Marlin has other ri° es in the series forthcoming. ˜ ese include an 1895 Dark chambered in .444 Marlin, an 1894 Dark in .357 Mag/.38Spl, another 1894 Dark in .44 Rem Mag/.44 Spl., and a .410 lever-action shotgun under the 1895 Series. SSR

DRIVEN BY INNOVATION

Ruger has evolved from a company staked on legacy designs to one pushing the industry forward.

By Max Archer

Ruger has a legacy of o˜ering heavy-duty utility guns that many consider to be a bit overbuilt. Historical designs were among the brand's most prominent traits, but today that perception is drastically di˜erent.

Going back just 15 years, the most exciting products coming out of Ruger were the updated Ruger Mark III and the Red Label Shotgun. °e Ruger products of today would seem almost alien to the Ruger lineup back then. Even the hardcore Ruger fans did not see Ruger as a ÿrearms innovation company, but instead a company that produced a set of standard, highly durable and a˜ordable ÿre-



Ruger's blend of legacy products and innovative new designs has put it back on top as a leader in firearms engineering.



Ruger is clearly using its expansive design and manufacturing capabilities to their fullest, as represented in the detail of these parts from a range of firearms.

arms. In early 2000, Ruger was far from the company it has become today. It has been transformed.

Bill Ruger's vision for his ÿrearm company focused on foundational pieces of the business, including historically inspired ÿrearms designs and manufacturing capabilities like the Ruger Investment Casting business. ° ese foundational pieces and continued investment have allowed the company to innovate quickly over the years. ° ere were also some interesting strategic decisions along the way, including manufacturing titanium golf club heads in a joint venture with Callaway in 1995, and passing on the original manufacturing contract to make the ArmaLite AR-15. Allegedly Bill did not want to start making military ÿrearms even though Ruger was ArmaLite's ÿrst choice. ° is was an interesting choice in the 1960s considering the Ruger AR-556 accounted for approximately 29 percent of sales in 2016 and remains one of Ruger's top selling ÿrearms.

Ruger never lacked leadership, but it did need a strategy update in 2000 to remain competitive with the growing conglomerates in the sporting industry. Where Ruger was o¸ ering remixed versions of oldie-but-goodie products, its competition was jumping into the sales explosionl happening in the tactical market. Ruger was a hunting and sportsmen's brand until 2006 with individual competitors like Glock, S&W, Remington, Sig Sauer and the large conglomerates with dozens of brands all aggressively chipping away at Ruger's market share as the leader in ÿrearms manufacturing.

New Direction

In 2006, Ruger began its transformation to a company based on innovative new designs rather than legacy products. With the appointment of Mike Fifer as CEO and an almost completely new board of directors, the company was poised for signiÿcant change.

Just over a year later the cutting-edge Ruger SR9 pistol was released. It was widely regarded as one of the most innovative products from the company in decades. ° en the tiny polymer-framed LCP was unveiled in 2008, again showing the industry that Ruger was no longer playing by the same old design rules. Most importantly, the company lifted the original design restrictions on defensive and tactical style ÿrearms and was able to start using all those manufacturing capabilities to design ÿrearms without limits, as evidenced in the 2009 release of the groundbreaking composite polymer-metal hybrid LCR revolver.

More product ideas began to ″ow fast that same year with the introduction of the Gunsite ri″e, SR-556, SR22 and SR1911. Ruger also continued the tried and true product remix formula of legacy models including modiÿcation of

In early 2000, Ruger was far from the company it has become today. It has been transformed.

The expansion of new facilities, tooling and manufacturing capabilities dramatically improved the overall quality and precision of Ruger products across all models.

the 10/22 format for the Charger Pistol and unique rimfire and centerfire Take-Down models. But they also expanded with the SRx, LCx, American and Mark IV line of pistols and the American, Gunsite, SR-556/762 and Precision Rifle models. Instead of only rewarmed product offerings, they gave customers completely new products to be excited about each and every year and in some cases, each quarter.

In the company's 2015 annual report, then-CEO Mike Fifer reflected the new strategy and direction, "New product introductions are an important driver of demand, regardless of the political environment. In 2016, we launched three new major product platforms including the Ruger Precision Rifle, the Ruger American Pistol and the Silent-SR sound suppressor. In addition, we introduced more than 20 product line extensions and over 100 Distributor Exclusive models. New products generated sales of $115.4 million or approximately 21 percent of sales for 2015 and sales of $50.3 million or approximately 29 percent of sales in the first quarter of 2016."

New product development was a key part of the ongoing success, along with a new Voice of the Customer program that solicited input from potential purchasers to ensure the company created products consumers wanted. Ruger combined that with the knowledge and experience of its employees in the new product development process. The Ruger Investment Casting division began producing more machined parts, precision die casting, forgings and more use of metal injection molding, which can deliver completely finished precision parts in one manufacturing step.

Modernization

"The expansion into the new Mayodan, North Carolina, facility started with the purchase of a 220,000-square-foot former textile plant for $1.7 million, update costs of $5.5 million and more than $30 million in equipment. "The expansion of new facilities, tooling and manufacturing capabilities dramatically improved the overall quality and precision of Ruger products across all models. "The American Rifle and Pistol line and the Precision Rifle all set higher standers for quality and precision.

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Innovative engineering and cost-effective materials helped Ruger lay the groundwork for its transformation since 2006 to a company based on new designs.

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The SilentSR suppressor was a big step for Ruger's innovation and cultural strategy change.

˜ ese new ÿrearms were a re″ection of what Ruger had become. Using cutting edge technology, new ri″e models were much more a¸ ordable, featured innovative engineering all while being feature rich and shockingly accurate. ˜ e Precision Ri″e became regarded as one of the most accurate and well equipped out-of-the-box competition ri″es available anywhere. ˜ e comany became a design leader again in just a few short years.

Ruger has continued to invest in plant modernization, and expansion required new and varied approaches with ongoing investment in equipment, training and processes. With new facilities came updated processes including the application of the Toyota Production System, which strives to eliminate non-value-added activities in every process of the business.

Based on information in the 2015 annual report, Ruger's 2006 yearly sell-through was approximately 480,000 units. Nine years later under Fifer's leadership, yearly sales exceeded half a billion dollars with a yearly sell-through of approximately 370 percent more per year —1,793,800 units in 2015. Ruger still easily outpaces No. 2 Smith & Wesson and No. 3 Remington by a fair margin and produces over three times the volume of No. 4 Sig Sauer.

Over that same time, Ruger has beat the S&P 500 average growth by well over 100 percent. With the changes in product mix to include more defensive and tactical focused ÿrearms, it has reaped the rewards of the surge in ÿrearms sales over the last decade. ˜ e company then took those proÿts and aggressively invested in new equipment, facilities and key personnel to continue to drive a high level of product innovation and quality.

Mike Fifer retired in 2017, but the innovation has continued under new CEO Chris Killoy. In 2019 Ruger again o¸ ered a peek into its marketing strategy as well as some maturing capabilities delivering complex design and manufacturing models.

Ruger AR-556 Pistol

˜ e AR-556 has been noted as a competition-killing AR-format ri″e. It delivered on the Ruger durability and quality promise with an MSRP of $799 and an actual street price of under $500. ˜ is year Ruger o¸ ered that same format in an SB Tactical brace-equipped pistol format that will likely retail for under $600. Undoubtedly it will become one

The company became a design leader again in just a few short years.

of the hottest selling AR-format pistols available and a model hard for the competition to compete with. This format is quickly becoming the go-to for home defense and backpacked outdoor firearms. Despite all the political controversy over this "black gun" format, Ruger is going to market strong, even o¸ ering new custom patriotic Cerakote models.

Ruger Super GP100

˜ is 8-round full-moon-clip competition pistol combines some of the design elements from the LCR with the legacy Super Redhawk design. Other technical design elements are the match crowned and sleeved barrel, PVD coating to enhance loading and Ruger Custom Shop tuning. Ruger clearly designed the Super GP100 to compete with the continuously backordered S&W R8 competition revolver. ˜ e Super GP100 is deÿnitely in the high end of the range with an MSRP $1,549, but if Ruger can offer improved availability over the competition, it will be an extremely competitive offering.

Wrangler

Of all the new models for 2019, the Wrangler represents one of the most impressive demonstrations of what Ruger can now deliver in the low price range, with an MSRP of $249 and a street price of around $180. ˜ e gun basically replicates a Single Six with Vaquero-style sights for about $400 less — very impressive. Ruger created the Wrangler in response to customer requests for a less expensive option to the low-quality inexpensive import revolvers ″ooding the market.

A cold-hammer-forged barrel and cylinder assure accuracy and durability. Some internals and grips were recycled Single Six parts. All this cut development costs, but Ruger went a lot further with a less expensive un″uted cylinder, utilizing die-cast aluminum alloys for the ejector housing cylinder frame and loading gate. ˜ e grip frame and trigger guard are die-cast zinc alloy to add weight and feel with 50 percent less cost than steel. ˜ e checkered hammer and smooth-faced bow trigger are both precision injection-molded stainless steel components. ˜ e look of each of these metals is completely di¸ erent, so Ruger elected to Cerakote the gun to deliver an appealing look. It is an extremely well made and very accurate gun.

A lot of innovation went into producing a gun of this quality at a price point under $200. It makes me wonder what innovations Ruger is planning next if they can execute at this quality for this price. SSR



The SR-556 Pistol is a clear departure from the strategy Ruger had for years.



HIT YOUR TARGET

Five reasons your firearms business will benefit from social media advertising.

BUSINESS INSIDER

By Ben Curnett

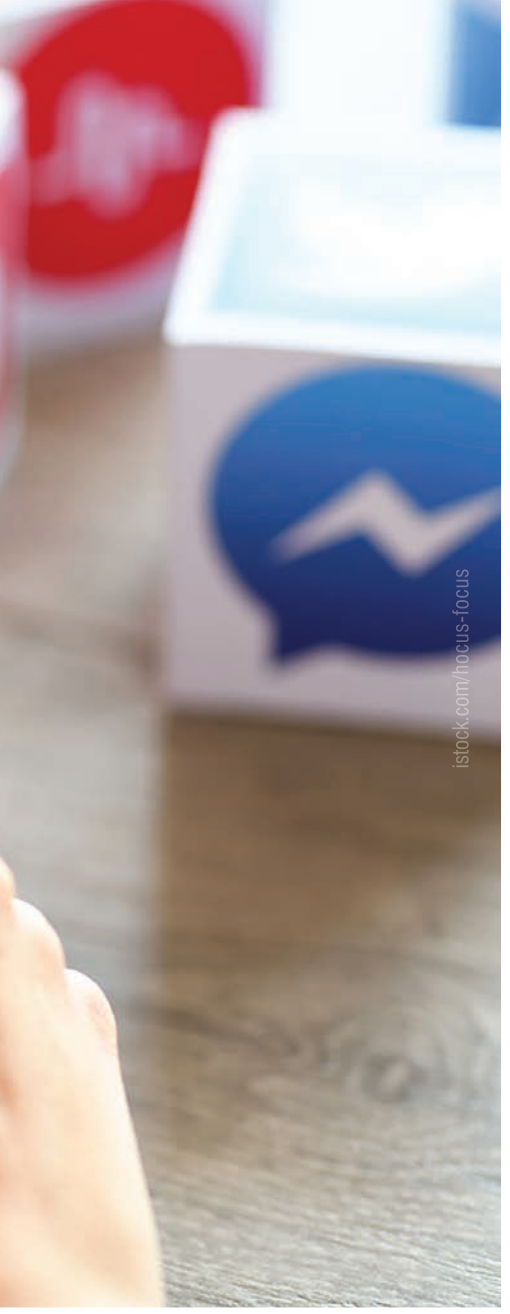
Here's a fact to chew on: Free social media marketing is dead.

Done. Finished. Kaput.

In fact, it's estimated that a Facebook page's posts will reach just 6.4 percent of its total fans anymore.

This goes double for shooting sports businesses. With all the confusion around content — what's acceptable and what's not — it's likely your posts are reaching far fewer people than you think.

So, is it worth even being on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter anymore? The answer is absolutely "Yes." Social media is still the main way most people use the internet, and it will be for a



long time to come.

Take a look at how people are spending their time online:

- 43 percent of people post about businesses they visit.
- 79 percent of people like or follow a brand on social media to get more information about it.
- Customers interact with businesses 4.3 times before making a purchase.

People are communicating, and they're still using social media to do it. With that in mind, let's take a look at just ÿve out of 100 or more reasons to start using paid-for social ads instead of just throwing posts out there randomly.

Ads don't work because you explain everything. Ads work because you hint at something more, and good ads always leave the viewer wanting something more to see.

1. Social Ads Are Dirt Cheap

° ere is no way — not radio, not magazines, not billboards — to reach more people for less money than through the use of social media ads. Costs are often a fraction of a cent per impression on all three of the big platforms: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. And because these are social ads we're talking about, there are always other actions people can take, like leaving a comment, clicking a link or watching another video. You have amazing shooting sports content (more on that below), and social media is the perfect place to get it out to the masses.

2. Your Audience Is There

Get rid of the mindset that because you don't personally use social media it's not worth it. Your customers do use it, and that means the power of social audience targeting is great. You can target using your email lists, people who like certain shooting sports products, people who have visited certain pages on your website or you can use a combination of all three.

3. You Get to Tell Facebook What to Do

Maybe the best thing about using social media ads instead of just posting is that you can choose what kind of action you want from the post. Are you advertising a ladies-only training special? ° en it's a good thing to know your targeted audience of 26- to 45-year-old women likes to see a video before they click over to a website, and with that knowledge you can up a little bit of your budget for video views and a little bit for website tra¸ c and make sure you're showing your ads to every part of your intended audience.

4. Social Ads Move People From Inaction to Action

People don't buy things on social media. But as we've seen with some of the statistics above, they almost always use social media on the way to making their purchase decisions. Using social ads, you can be in front of your audience when you announce a big upcoming event, while they're deciding if they should come and when they're on premises ready to buy.

5. Shooting Sports Content Is Actually Perfect for Social Ads

Ads don't work because you explain everything. Ads work because you hint at something more, and good ads always leave the viewer wanting something more to see.

° is plays perfectly into the strict rules the social media platforms have set around shooting sports content. Sure, it's no longer possible to put a shopping feed for ÿrearms into Instagram, but a quick video talking about home protection gets the point across just ÿne. Also, look at all the green checks on Facebook's ad policies list — that's all acceptable content allowed around ÿrearms and ammunition. You just need to be creative and put it to use.

° is list doesn't come close to covering all the reasons you should be using social media ads as part of your digital marketing plan as an FFL retailer or ÿrearms range owner, so before you write o˝ social media ads for your shooting sports business, dig a little further. It's likely that the platforms, your customers and your content line up better than you imagined. SSR

Ben Curnett has been a marketer in the outdoor industry for 15 years as a copywriter and digital marketing strategist.



Browning's X-Bolt Max Long Range rifle topped with Leupold's new VX-5 HD 4-20x52 scope is an affordable and highly effective combo for hunters who need long-range performance.

AN AFFORDABLE LONG-RANGE OPTION

Browning and Leupold combine for a combo your customers will want to take afield.

By Jace Bauserman

˜ e roots of Browning's X-Bolt ri° e line run deep in gun lore. Favored by throngs of hunters across the globe, the X-Bolt line is renowned for producing custom-class accuracy. When the minds at Browning decided to add a new member to this coveted line, I couldn't wait to get my hands on it and send some lead downrange.

˜ e X-Bolt Max Long Range ri° e was designed to ÿ ll a gap in Browning's current lineup of long-range assassins. ˜ e goal was to build a ri° e that would produce the type of accuracy one would expect to ÿ nd in popular Browning builds like its X-Bolt Hell's Canyon Speed Long Range McMillan and X-Bolt Pro Long Range, but hit a more economical price point. ˜ e price-point goal was met. One can expect to get into an X-Bolt Max Long Range for a tick under $1,300. As for the accuracy piece of the puzzle ... lets dive in.

First Impressions

˜ e ri° e was a stunner, and a quick overview showed no nicks, dings or out-of-box damage. ˜ e Composite Max stock grabbed my attention from the get-go. ˜ e stock sports a fully adjustable comb, and adjustment is a snap. A wheel located about center-stock turns easily and allows for about 1 inch of vertical movement. Other stock hat-tippers included the



vertical pistol grip, which is really a must when it comes to precision long-range accuracy. ˜ e grip felt comfortable and allowed for excellent trigger-ÿnger placement. I also took notice of the wide forearm and appreciated the fact that the stock boasted three swivel studs for sling and bipod use.

˜ e gun, for a long-range shooter, felt great in the hand. ˜ e 26-inch barrel length seemed maneuverable and at 8.3 pounds, the ri¸ e wasn't overly heavy. ˜ e X-Bolt, of course, was smooth and featured the short 60-degree bolt throw this series of ri-¸ es is renowned for. Also present was the bolt-lock safety and bolt-unlock button, which allows one to completely empty the ri¸ e while it's on safe. In-and-out operation of the center-feed polymer magazine both with and without ammo was smooth. Browning ÿt the X-Bolt Max Long Range with its coveted three-lever Feather Trigger system and the barrel is free-¸ oated.

˜ e gun was topped with Leupold's new-for-2019 VX-5 HD 4-20x52 scope. Leupold's goal with the VX-5 was to provide an economical o″ering that would fall between the VX-6 line and the VX-3i, and still provide the type of clarity, durability and function one has come to expect in a VX scope. ˜ e tube is a 32mm, which was created to get the necessary travel and elevation adjustment needed. Fitted with Leupold's two-turn ZeroLock 2 dials, shooters can expect two full revolutions of distance setting, and the scope comes with one CDS (Custom Dial System) cap, which will be built to your ri¸ e's speciÿcations. Additional CDS dials can be added for $80 per dial. ˜ e VX-5 provides a wide magni-

The VX-5 HD scope features Leupold's two-turn ZeroLock 2 dials and a CDS (Custom Dial System) cap, which is built to the rifle's specifications.



A quick in-the-field bore sight and three rounds downrange was all it took to get the combo dialed in at 100 yards.

ÿcation range, superior eye relief and rapid focus.

Zeroing In

After a quick in-the-ÿeld bore sight, I got in the prone position, propped the X-Bolt Max Long Range up on a feed sack and squeezed the trigger. Since we were hunting with the riº es the next day, I didn't opt to tinker with the Feather Trigger system. I found the out-of-the-box pull to be crisp and not overly heavy. Recoil, thanks to the muzzle brake, was nil on this .300 WSM model, and I was able to stay in the scope and see my bullet's placement. Chalk this up to the design of the buttstock. Parallel surfaces line up with the bore and work in concert with the muzzle brake to prevent the gun from tipping up at the shot.

After ÿrin g three Browning BXS 180-grain bullets downrange, the riº e/scope combo was zeroed at 100 yards. ¿ is is when the beauty of Leupold's VX-5 HD really took over. I replaced the standard dial via three set screws with Leupold's CDS. ¿ e particular dial had already been calibrated for the .300 WSM 180-grain BXS bullets I was shooting. ¿ e great thing about the CDS dial is its twist-and-turn locking system. Simply depress a button and turn the dial. Once the dial is set, the button locks and the dial will not move. After replacing this dial, I simply turned it to the laser-engraved 2 setting (representing 200 yards) and hit center bull's-eye. Unlike some scopes, the numbers and dashes on the CDS represent yardage and not MOA.

After firing three Browning BXS 180-grain bullets downrange, the rifle/scope combo was zeroed at 100 yards. This is when the beauty of Leupold's VX-5 HD really took over.

¿ e gun was holding like a rock, the optics were crystal clear, and my rounds were hitting exactly where I was holding. My conÿdence was building quickly. I applaud the vertical pistol grip. It's meaty and feels great in the hand. ¿ e wide forearm melted into the feed sack and created a stable platform. Not once when shooting the X-Bolt Max Long Range did I feel shifty or o″ t arget.

For the next hour, I just enjoyed the accuracy of this riº e/scope combo. It was obvious both Browning and Leupold hit a grand slam. Both wanted to give long-range shooters an economical option without sacriÿc-



ing quality. Mission accomplished. It was noticeable as I stretched out the distance from the target that the free-˜oating barrel, which is bedded in the front and rear of the action, was doing its job. All X-Bolt production barrels are air-gauged and promise exceptional head-space control. All X-Bolt barrels are hand-chambered to ensure precision head space.

With light fading and the next day's bear hunt looming, I opted to send one more bullet downrange in the lowlight conditions. I wanted to get a good feel for how the VX-5 HD operated in lowlight and get a good test of its Twilight Max HD Management System. ° is system is meant to make the most of usable light and was designed to maximize the light your eye needs when light is fading.

Quickly, I moved the 4-inch-diameter steel gong to 300 yards, jogged back, got prone and settled my crosshairs. Not only was light fading, but the sky was overcast and a light rain had started to fall. Reaching up, I di-

The Composite Max stock sports a fully adjustable comb, and all X-Bolt production barrels are air-gauged and promise exceptional head-space control.

aled my VX-5 HD to the 3 setting and squeezed. The gong rang. It doesn't get much simpler. Set the dial, squeeze the trigger and the round will find its mark.

I didn't test the rifle/scope combo off a ench because I wanted to simulate in-the-field shooting and provide an accurate, true field test.

Into the Field

The next evening, myself, along with Twisted Timber Outfitters owner Brian Lewis and Browning's Director of Marketing and Communications Rafe Nielsen were overlooking a distant bait across a massive canyon. My Leupold optics told me the shot to the bait barrel was exactly 275 yards. I dialed-in my CDS dial, propped my gun up on my Badlands pack and scoped the surroundings.

All parties involved were impressed with how well the rifle shouldered and connected on a moving target.

A large sow and two cubs were first on the scene. It was a riot to watch the cubs play while mama stuffed her face. Plus, it gave me the chance to practice settling my crosshairs on black hide. I was impressed with how well the crosshairs stood out. Black bears, because of their thick hides, solid color and general body shape are tough to pick out an "exact" spot on. Often, black crosshairs melt into the dark hide making the process all the more difficult. I didn't find this to be the case with the TMOA Reticle. The crosshairs were easily distinguishable against the black hide.

The trio stayed on the bait for just over an hour, and multiple times during that hour I got prone, settled my crosshairs and practiced my breathing routine. Of course, I had no intentions of shooting the sow, but I wanted to use the opportunity to prepare should a shot opportunity arise over the course of the evening.

The mama and two cubs had only been off he bait for about 15 minutes when Rafe spotted movement in the bottom of the canyon.

"Got a good-sized bear," he whis-



The author glassing the opposite side of a massive canyon, waiting for a black bear to show up.



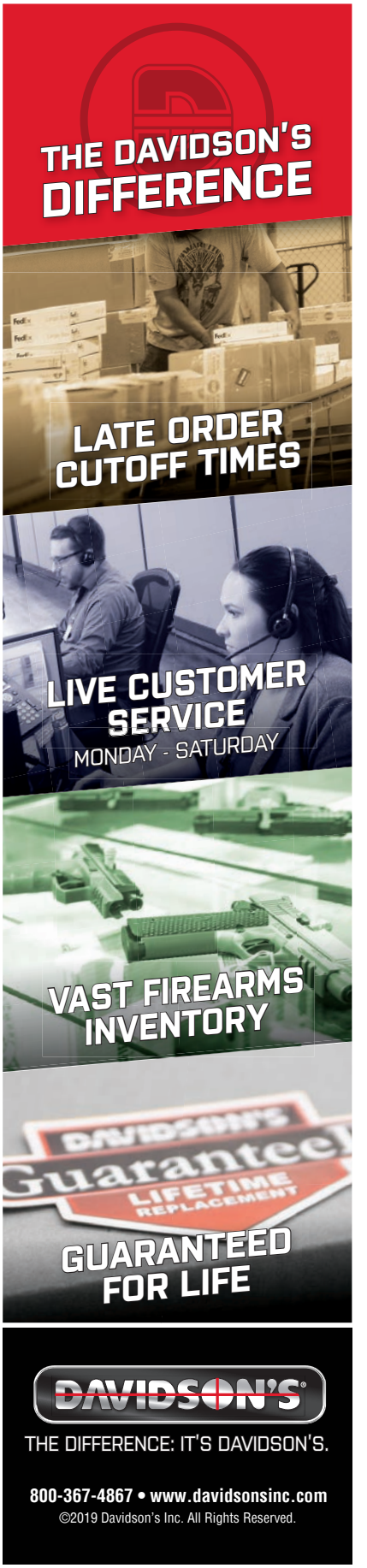
Everyone in the hunting party was impressed with how well the rifle shouldered and connected on a moving target. For a long-range rifle, the X-Bolt handles wonderfully when shot offhand.



pered. “It’s about to pop out of the brush and onto the open hillside.”

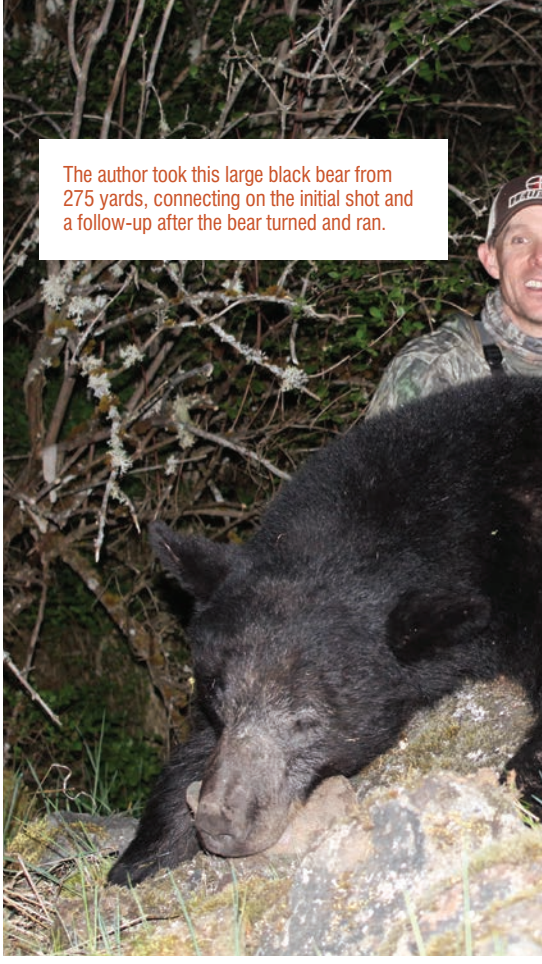
A good-sized bear it was, and my heart instantly leapt into my throat. Patiently, we waited as the bear made its way some 500 feet up the steep hillside to the bait barrel. I was in no hurry. Once the bear hit the bait, it settled right in and started feeding. I was prone and my X-Bolt was propped up on my pack. Picking a spot, I settled my crosshairs on the bruin and started to squeeze.

˜ e hit was obvious. I saw it through the scope and both Brian and Rafe conÿrmed it as well. ˜ e bear spun o¸ the barrel, tipped right and then stumbled left. Gaining its legs, it started to run at a good clip downhill. Instinct took over. Jumping to my feet, I quickly chambered a round, threw down on the bear and ÿred again. ˜ is hit was right between the shoulder blades and sent the big bear tumbling. Some 400-plus feet later, it reached the bottom of the canyon. ˜ ere was no movement. ˜ e job was done. I was elated.





Over the course of the hunt, three other bears were harvested with the Browning/Leupold combo from 330, 225 and 440 yards. All were one-shot kills.



The author took this large black bear from 275 yards, connecting on the initial shot and a follow-up after the bear turned and ran.

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The rifle is comfortable and balanced, yet extremely maneuverable. The scope is clear and durable, and the CDS dial makes it a breeze to use.

Upon reaching the bear, it was clear the ÿrst shot was right through the heart. As we skinned and packed meat late into the night, the talk turned to the second shot. All parties involved were impressed with how well the ri° e shouldered and connected on a moving target. For a long-range ri° e, the X-Bolt handles wonderfully when shot o¸ hand.

Final Thoughts

″ is ri° e/scope combo gets an A+ rating from me. How could it not? ″ e ri° e is comfortable and balanced, yet extremely maneuverable. ″ e scope is clear, durable and the CDS dial makes it a breeze to use. Over the course of the hunt, three other bears were harvested with this same combo. ″ e shot distances were 330 yards, 225 yards and 440 yards. All were one-shot kills.

I'll be adding Browning's X-Bolt Max Long Range ri° e topped with Leupold's VX-5 HD 4-20x52 to my arsenal. It provides exceptional accuracy in an e¸ ective, a¸ ordable long-range combo that will get your customers' attention. SSR



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Is it the centerfire or air version? Sig Sauer makes air pistols and rifles that exactly match their more powerful counterparts. They're great for at-home training.

CLEARING THE AIR

Modern airguns don't need powder to pack a punch — or to pump up your profits.

By Tom McHale

Modern airguns aren't your Grandpappy's Daisy Red Ryder. Sure, that timeless classic is still manufactured, and everybody should own one, but there's a whole new era of power, performance and impressive technology in the airgun world. In fact, modern airguns rank right up there with popular centerfires in terms of velocity and muzzle energy.

Airguns and traditional fi earms do share some attributes. When push comes to shove, it's all about air pushing a projectile down the barrel. The only real differences are in how hot that air is and the source. Is there enough in common, both in terms of product and customer interest to warrant your investment of time, money and energy in selling airguns? Maybe. Let's explore.

Modern Airguns

Before we get into what defines "modern airguns" let's defi e the playing field. You probably see plenty of airguns lining the shelves of local big box general purpose and sporting



New-to-air companies like Sig Sauer have entered the market with both premium air products and perfect replicas of their centerfire arms.

goods stores. There's nothing wrong with these pump, piston, CO2 and spring-powered handguns and rifles. They function reliably, shoot readily available .177 and .22 caliber BBs and pellets, can take down small game and recreational targets and offer surprisingly good accuracy at appropriate ranges. They're also affordable, usually in the sub $150 price range. And that's why we're not going to talk about them here. Let's all agree up front that competing with the big box chains by trying to discount commodity airguns is not the most effective margin-optimization strategy.

What we're talking about in the context of this article are the real air guns. Note the space between "air" and "guns." New-to-air companies like Sig Sauer have entered the market with both premium air products and perfect replicas of their centerfire arms. Established high-end companies like FX, AirForce, Daystate and Brocock offer stunning and meticulously engineered masterpieces that range in price from $300 to $5,000. Even companies that fill the shelves of the big box stores like Gamo and Crosman offer higher-end products that are a match for rimfire and centerfire rifles.



This Sig Sauer P320 air pistol runs on CO2 cartridges and fires .177 pellets.

Power

Modern airguns range in caliber from the pervasive .177 all the way up to .50 caliber. In the lower end, you might roughly equate the .25 airgun models to a rimfire .22 Long Rifle firearm. Pellet weight, velocity and foot-pounds of energy are close enough for government work. For example, I've been testing two .25s recently: the AirForce Airguns Condor SS and the FX Wildcat Mk II. Both match and even exceed .22LR performance.

The FX Wildcat Mk II .25 caliber is fed by a rotary magazine, so it's limited to firi g standard airgun pellets in the 27-grain range, give or take a few depending on the make and model. As just one power example, the H&N Sport Barracuda Hunter 27.47-grain pellet leaves the muzzle at 823.5 fps and delivers 41.37 ft-lbs of kinetic energy. That's squarely in .22LR territory.

The AirForce Condor SS is a single-shot breech loader, and that opens up a world of possibilities for not only traditional pellets but .25-caliber lead slugs. I've fi ed ammo ranging from



Guns in the pre-charged pneumatic category have onboard air cylinders that store many shots worth of air in reserve, so there's no pumping or cocking between shots.



The Gamo Urban .22 is a great starter PCP rifle that's backyard friendly but still packs a punch.

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This Sig Sauer We the People BB pistol is identical (on the outside) to the .45 caliber version.





PCP airguns can be filled with a hand pump like this one, but you get more bang for your buck when you pair a hand pump with a smaller caliber air rifle. The Gamo TC-45 can fire jumbo .45 caliber pellets or solid lead slugs. I tested projectiles weighing as much as 411 grains.

Airgun suppressors aren't part of the National Firearms Act, so not only do you avoid filling out forms and paying Uncle Spendy $200 to buy one, you can sell them over the counter.

25-grain pellets to 105-grain solid slugs. In the midrange, the Hunters Supply 48-grain bullet leaves this ri˜e at 889 fps and generates 84.2 foot-pounds of muzzle energy.

°ose are a couple of impressive examples, but modern airgun technology doesn't stop there. Consider a big bore like the Gamo TC-45. As the name implies, it ÿres a true .45-caliber slug. Projectiles I've tested range from 138 grains to a whopping 405 grains. °at puts us into 300 to 400 foot-pounds territory with ease. If you want to make a good comparison for the hunting market, you might equate a big-bore airgun to a modern muzzleloader. °e ballistics and terminal performance on medium to large game is very similar.

Technology

Unlike centerÿres, where each cartridge generates its own supply of compressed gas, airguns have two basic operational choices. °ey can generate air for each shot or they can keep an onboard reservoir and release air as needed. °e air-per-shot model is often found on big box store ri˜es, but that technology is also used on premium ri˜es. °e new ASP20 Break-Action Ri˜e from Sig Sauer feels more like a ÿne European centerÿre with its heavy wood stock and all-steel construction. It's made in the same factory as all the centerÿre Sigs so you'll get outstanding quality of important components like the barrel.

Premium airguns that store an onboard air reservoir are generally in the pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) category. Airguns like our ÿrst two





examples (the FX Wildcat Mk II and AirForce Condor SS) have onboard air cylinders that store many shots worth of air in reserve. ˜ at means no pumping or air-compression cocking for every shot, so they operate much more like bolt-action centerÿres. ˜ at also means that the airgun has to meter the right amount of air, at the correct pressure, for each and every shot. Constant air pressure delivered to the pellet means constant velocity, and that leads to repeatable accuracy. ˜ at's an engineering challenge as the reservoir volume and pressure drops with each shot ÿred. Some designs like the Umarex Gauntlet solve this air regulation challenge mechanically while others like the Daystate Red Wolf use onboard computers to monitor available air and meter the correct charge for each shot.

˜ e bottom line: If you appreciate ÿne engineering and technology, airguns might be right up your alley.

Price Point

From a retail perspective, a good air riˌe may o″er some margin and proÿt beneÿts. As long as you're not competing with the local Wally World on volume mass-market models, you're looking at price points for a riˌe starting at $300 and going up as you add quality and features. Moving up the feature scale, a backyard plinker and solid small game hunter, the Gamo Urban .22 PCP carries an MSRP of $499. If you want to go big bore, you will lean on the four-ÿgure price point. ˜ at Gamo TC-45 mentioned earlier lists for $999.

As with the centerÿre riˌe market, you'll pay for quality and precision. Sticking with our example riˌes, that FX Wildcat Mk II pushes $1,500 while the electronic Daystate Red Wolf will set one back a cool $2,400 give or take. Here's the good news. Passionate airgunners are happy to pay premium prices for premium gear.







The FX Wildcat Mk II is a great performer that won't break the bank.The FX Wildcat Mk II .25 caliber is fed by a rotary magazine, so it's limited to firing standard airgun pellets in the 27-grain range.

Reasons to Believe

˜ e new crop of airgun products offer more ° exibility for the end user than centerÿre guns. Here are a few beneÿts.

No Range Required

Yes, airguns still ÿre projectiles, so all safety rules apply. However, the dramatically reduced noise, lower velocities and lighter projectiles allow them to be used safely in many more environments than centerÿres. ˜ e smaller versions in .177 and .22-caliber are backyard and even garage friendly with the right backstops. Moving up to .25s and larger, you'll want more space, but even these don't penetrate as much or travel as far as a centerÿre ri° e projectile. ˜ ese attributes also translate to less ricochet. You can safely shoot airguns in more places than centerÿres, so, in theory, they may appeal to those living in more urban areas.

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Less Noise

Airguns are quieter than centerfires. A lot quieter. In fact, I've not yet encountered an airgun that requires hearing protection for safe operation. Don't get me wrong, they're not silent in the Hollywood movie sense. After all, there's still a pressure blast of air coming out of the muzzle, and just as with a balloon popping, you'll hear that. What you won't hear is an ear-shattering 160 decibels of noise. Refer back to the first benefit — you can shoot them in more places without ticking off he neighbors (as much.)

Hassle-Free Suppression

Here's a fun one. Airgun suppressors aren't part of the National Firearms Act, so not only do you avoid filling out forms and paying Uncle Spendy $200 to buy one, you can sell them over the counter. Practically speaking, most premium airguns come with either integrally suppressed barrels or







The AirForce Airguns Condor SS .25 caliber's buttstock doubles as its air reservoir.

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a suppressor in place, but aftermarket versions are available and perfectly legal.

No Paperwork

As a retailer, I can't imagine you'll complain about not having to complete forms and background checks and store all that paper forever. Regardless of caliber, airguns are over-the-counter products. We can't keep up with all the state and local laws, so check your locale, but in general, there are few if any restrictions on airguns.

Built-in Accessory Sales

Last, but certainly not least, airguns



The Wildcat Mk II is a great performer that won't break the bank.

Another option for PCP rifle air supply is to use a larger carbon fiber tank like this one from Omega Air Cylinders. You fill it occasionally at a dive shop or paintball center.





Benjamin offers a portable 4,500 psi air compressor that will fill most any air rifle on the market.

are accessory friendly. In the centerfire world, all you need to buy is a fi earm and ammunition. Sometimes, an optic or scope may be required, but most everything else is optional. Assuming you're selling a PCP rifle, you'll also need to sell your new airgun owner a way to charge the onboard air reservoir with 3,000 or 4,500 psi of compressed air.

There are three ways to do this. First, you can provide an air compressor. No, the home store versions won't do. An airgun compressor generally outputs 4,500 psi of very dry air. Prices are coming down, but even a portable model like the Benjamin Traveler lists for about $650. If you don't want to compress your own air, you can opt for a high-capacity carbon fiber air cylinder. These units, like those used by firefighters, hold many recharges for a rifle and are themselves filled at dive shops and paintball centers. Last but not least, one can go with a hand-operated air pump. Again, your standard bicycle pump won't do. These $150 to $200 units deliver dried air in the 4,500 psi range.

Marketing and Merchandizing

The most important tip for the airgun market is to get serious. By that I mean consider products that appeal to someone who wants more than the $129.99 big box store special. There's nothing wrong with those products, and they certainly are fun. It just doesn't make sense to compete in that market.

Consider some starter PCP air rifle "kits." Rifles like the Umarex Gauntlet and Gamo Urban 22 are aff rdable and simple. They're also surprisingly great performers considering the $300 to $400 price points. The best part is that you can sell these with simple hand pumps for the air supply. The smaller calibers and reasonable air reservoir sizes make them "feasible" to keep filled with a manually operated pump. Larger-caliber rifles simply suck too much air. You can use them with a hand pump, but you'll burn plenty of calories pumping them up every handful of shots.

Consider stocking products complementary to centerfire guns. Over the past two years, the market for "identical" airguns for training has exploded. Sig Sauer produces air pistols and carbines that mimic centerfire classics like their 1911, P229, P226, M17 / P320, MCX and MPX. We're not talking about toys here. These are steel guns that will fit in your customers' holsters, share the same accessories like lights and lasers and provide safe at-home training options. The best part is that they're simple to operate and keep running. Unlike the dedicated PCP air rifles, these run on disposable CO2 cartridges and shoot readily available BBs and pellets.

If you want to promote the value of airgunning, consider setting up a test range. All you need is 10 yards and it can even be indoors if you have a safe space. If not, perhaps a back parking lot test area might be feasible? Just be sure to follow any local regulations if applicable.

The Bottom Line

While aficionados have always appreciated the elegance of airgunning, centerfi e folks have looked down their nose at those "puny BB guns." No more. Advanced manufacturing techniques, some creative design work and technological breakthroughs have created a whole new market with a big revenue upside. While controversy abounds about fire and brimstone firearms, hardly anyone bats an eye over "BB gun" ownership and use. Give the new guns a look. They might represent a new business opportunity. SSR

A COBRA WITH A BIGGER BITE

Colt adds to its den of snakes with the King Cobra in .357 Magnum.

By Doug Larson



Revolvers have been around for a long, long time. And no matter how popular semi-automatic handguns have gotten, some people still choose a revolver for self defense. Some even choose a single action instead of double. And there are many shooters who miss the time when Colt produced some of the best double-action revolvers ever made.

Colt is making special e˜orts with more advertising and retailer support to promote its brand and resume its position as a leader in the U.S. ÿrearms market. It is very likely that retailers are going to see an increase in customers looking for Colts, including the latest King Cobra.

Colt is well aware that there is a large demand for the old Colt double actions. In the last half of the 20th century, Colt was a leader in revolvers and made a series of guns that became known as the snakes. ‘ey had names like Python, Diamondback and Cobra. ‘e ÿrst lightweight aluminum-frame revolver was the Cobra. It was based on the famous D-frame Colt, the Detective Special. Back in 2017, after a long absence from the double-action revolver business, Colt introduced the modern Cobra. It's very similar to the original, but with a few improvements that have now been passed along to the new King Cobra.

Modern Upgrades

‘e 2017 Cobra is chambered in .38 Special and is rated for +P pressures. ‘e idea was to make a revolver that could be used for self defense and be easier to control under recoil than a .357 Magnum so it could also be shot on the range for pleasure. Although the .38 Special cartridge is a lot more e˜ective than it used to be due to huge improvements in bullet design and propellants, some people still want the additional power o˜ered by the .357 Magnum. So Colt now o˜ers the King Cobra, which is almost identical to the 2017 Cobra, but is chambered in the more powerful round.

Both the modern Cobra and the King Cobra are stainless steel guns, with the 2017 Cobra having a matte

ÿnish and the King Cobra having a slightly more polished, brushed ÿnish. At ÿrst glance, both guns look the same except for the King's longer 3-inch barrel. Both guns beneÿt from a subtle but e° ective change involving the positioning of the grip a little further aft compared to the original Cobra. It makes the gun easier to control under recoil and allows the trigger guard to be larger so that it can more easily accommodate a gloved trigger ÿnger.

Both also have the innovative LL2 or Linear Leaf Spring version 2, which is a dual leaf mainspring that contributes greatly to a very smooth, consistent trigger pull with little stacking. It's really remarkable for a factory trigger. When the Cobra was introduced to a number of gun writers at Gunsite in November 2016, there were many positive comments about the factory trigger and how it contributed to ease of shooting. ¿ at beneÿt continues with the King Cobra. Trigger pull on the test gun averaged about 8.5 pounds for double action and about 2.7 pounds for single action.

Good Proportions

¿ e King Cobra di° ers only slightly from the Cobra introduced in 2017. Both have the same basic frame except that the top strap on the King Cobra is a bit thicker to add the strength needed for the more powerful .357 Magnum cartridge. And the front of the frame is a little narrower front to back to make room for the longer cartridge. ¿ e King's barrel, besides being an inch longer, has a greater outside diameter, which increases strength and weight. Additionally, the King Cobra has a recessed crown. It is not a sleeved barrel.

Colt is making special efforts with more advertising and retailer support to promote its brand and resume its position as a leader in the U.S. firearms market.

¿ ere is something appealing about a 3-inch-barreled revolver. It not only adds weight to reduce felt recoil compared to a 2-inch barrel, but it also increases the sight radius to make aiming a little easier. It also just looks more proportional while remaining short enough to carry discreetly.

Like the 2017 Cobra, the King Cobra's front sight can be easily replaced. Just loosen a screw at the muzzle, lift the sight blade out and replace it. No machining is required, so if the owner wants a tritium-powered night sight, installing one is simple. But the factory front sight is so good many shooters will see no need to change it.

¿ e factory front sight is a black



To open the cylinder, the latch on the left side of the King Cobra is pulled to the rear while the cylinder is pushed from right to left. Also note the direction of the bolt cuts in the cylinder indicating that the cylinder rotates clockwise.

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Manufacturer: Colt
Model: King Cobra
Caliber: .357 Magnum
Action: Double action
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3 inches
Overall Length: 8.125 inches
Weight: 28 ounces
Grips: Rubber recoil absorbing
Sights: Fixed rear groove, front blade with brass bead
Finish: Stainless
MSRP: $899
For more information: *www.colt.com*

blade with a brass bead. Brass beads have been around a long time and seem to glitter even if the light is so low that a black front blade disappears. The bead draws the eye, which is important because focusing on the front sight helps greatly in hitting the target. Beads can be thought of as the original night sights.

The rear sight on the King is a groove that extends the length of the top strap. Adjusting the sights easily is not possible, but the test and evaluation King Cobra shot to point of aim, indicating attention to detail in assembly. If a revolver with fixed sights shoots left or right, it can be difficult



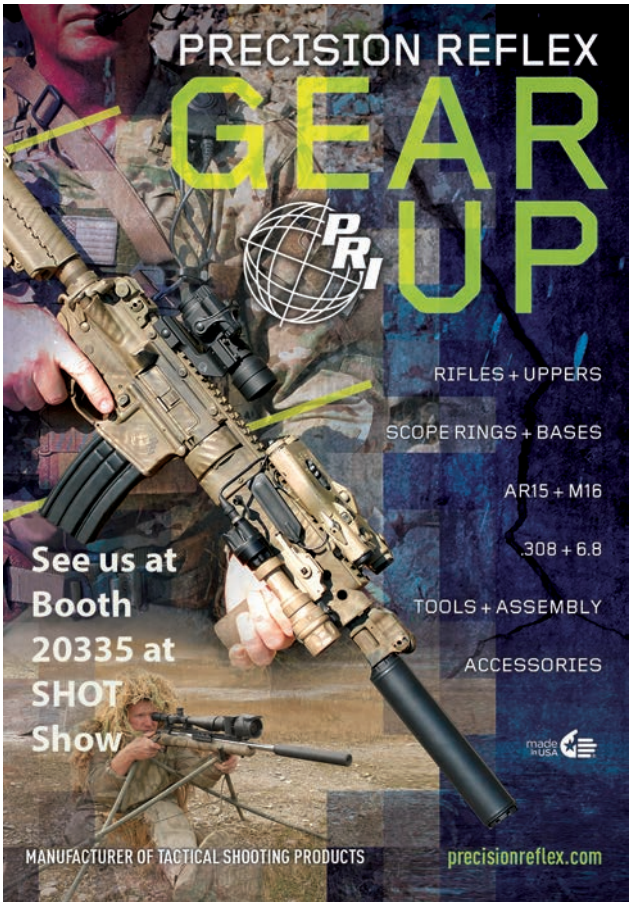
Although it may look like it, the King Cobra does not have a shrouded barrel. Instead, the crown is recessed.





There is little chance of the rear sight being damaged because it is a groove that runs the length of the frame. Because it is stainless steel, though, it can be a little hard to refine the sight picture for precision shots.

This is what Colt calls the Linear Leaf version 2 (LL2) mainspring. It has two leafs and contributes greatly to reducing stacking during the trigger stroke, which is a common problem with factory double-action revolvers.



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if not impossible to correct because the only way to do it is to slightly rotate the barrel — something best left to an experienced gunsmith. If the gun shoots high or low, a shorter or taller front sight — if available — can be installed, or a di¸ erent load that is faster or slower can be tried.

It's not intuitive, but if the bullet leaves the muzzle at a greater speed, the round will hit lower, not higher. ˜ e opposite holds if the round is slower. That's because the gun is under recoil while the bullet is still in the barrel, so a faster bullet will exit the muzzle while it is lower in the recoil event.

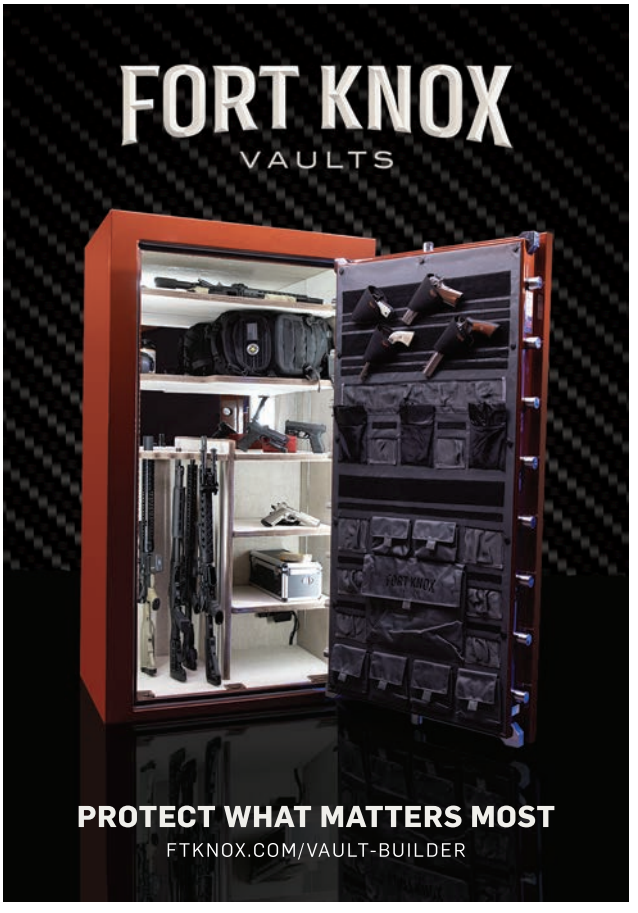
Trigger pull on the test gun averaged about 8.5 pounds for double action and about 2.7 pounds for single action.

Snake Charmer

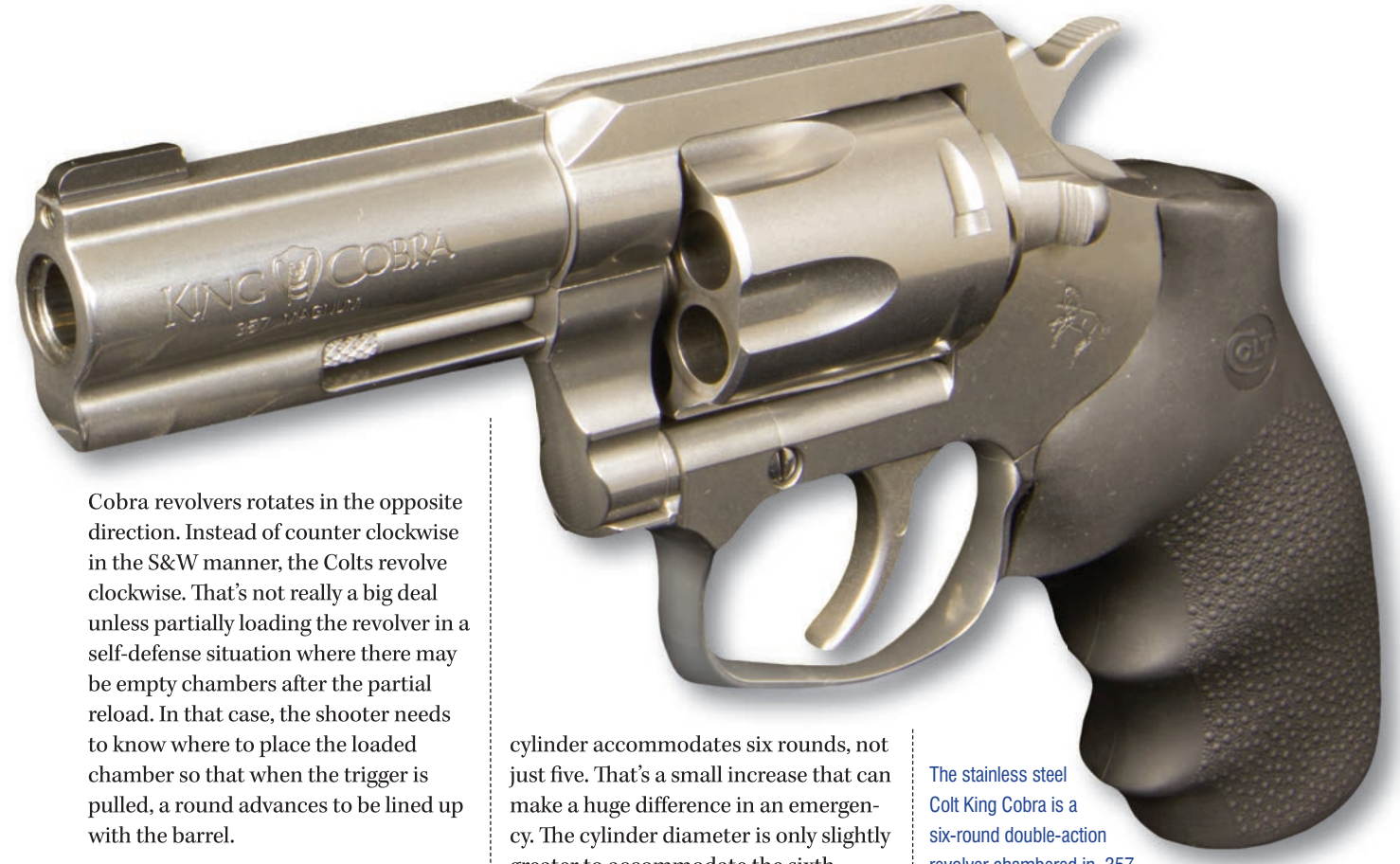
Shooting the King Cobra, especially with .38 Special or .38 Special +P ammunition, was very pleasant and recoil was very tame. Stoking it with .357 Magnum loads changed things a bit, but recoil was still quite manageable and not at all punishing. For range practice and fun though, many will stick to the lower recoiling .38 Special rounds and save the more powerful .357 Magnum loads for self defense. ˜ e rubber grip, which is probably made by Hogue judging from its appearance, also helps manage recoil.

Like the Cobra introduced in 2017, the King Cobra has a fully shrouded ejector rod. Not only does the extra weight of the shroud reduce muzzle ° ip, it protects the ejector rod from being bent. ˜ e original Cobra had an exposed ejector rod, and anyone who owned a Cobra with a bent ejector rod knows that they were next to impossible to straighten. ˜ e solution was to buy a new rod. ˜ e shroud also reduces the possibility of snagging the ejector rod on clothing or anything else that could tear the gun from the shooter's hand or prohibit holstering or drawing the gun. So the shroud is a welcome addition.

For those who are familiar with double-action revolvers, primarily those made by Smith & Wesson, it is important to note that the cylinder on the Colt King Cobra and the







The stainless steel Colt King Cobra is a six-round double-action revolver chambered in .357 Magnum. With a 3-inch barrel, it is easy to carry discreetly.

Cobra revolvers rotates in the opposite direction. Instead of counter clockwise in the S&W manner, the Colts revolve clockwise. That's not really a big deal unless partially loading the revolver in a self-defense situation where there may be empty chambers after the partial reload. In that case, the shooter needs to know where to place the loaded chamber so that when the trigger is pulled, a round advances to be lined up with the barrel.

Shooting the King Cobra, especially with .38 Special or .38 Special +P ammunition, was very pleasant and recoil was very tame.

Another important attribute of the King Cobra compared to a similar sized Smith & Wesson revolver is that its cylinder accommodates six rounds, not just five. That's a small increase that can make a huge difference in an emergency. The cylinder diameter is only slightly greater to accommodate the sixth round and is pretty much a non-issue when considering ease of concealment.

More Gun

And there is some good news for those retailers and consumers living in the highly regulated state of California. Both the Cobra and King Cobra recently received approval for sale in that state.

The King Cobra has an MSRP of $899, a couple of hundred dollars more than the Cobra introduced in 2017. But it's more gun, besides being a Colt double-action revolver.

If your store is not currently a Colt dealer, it might pay to check out the Colt offerings and talk to a Colt representative. For more information contact Colt, (800) 962-2658, or visit *www.colt.com*. SSR

The brass bead front sight does a good job reflecting available light, even when it is nearly dark. It draws the eye, making it easier to maintain a good aim for accurate shots.



AMMUNITION TESTING

Colt King Cobra

Ammunition	Velocity	Average Group	Best Group
Double Tap .38 Spl. +P 125 grain	1,076 fps	1.24"	1.08"
Hornady JHP/XTP .357 Mag 125 grain	1,436 fps	1.07"	0.84"
Remington JSP .357 Mag 125 grain	1,426 fps	0.95"	0.57"

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second 15 feet from the muzzle by chronograph and accuracy in inches for three five-shot groups at 10 yards.

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FOLDS of HONOR

QUALITY THAT SELLS ITSELF

Galco delivers holsters that are handsome enough for Hollywood and tough enough to handle the real world.

By Doug Larson

Fifty years ago, Richard Gallagher opened a small shop to make horsehide holsters in Chicago. Back then, Chicago was a di˜erent place and the company was called °e Famous Jackass Leather Company. About a decade later, Gallagher moved his operation to Phoenix, Arizona, and a little later, changed the name to Galco International.

For decades now, his holsters have been seen on the screen, but more impressive is the fact that Galco holsters are used in real life by law enforcement and the military where they perform a much more important task than serving as props for actors.

Galco products' aesthetics make them attractive to Hollywood, but they also get the job done in the real world under some very di¸cult conditions. °is is the result of carefully designed features, quality construction, tough materials and the products are thoroughly tested before going into production — and the holsters aren't just strapped on so someone can take a few quick draws to see if they work.

If your customer needs a sling, loop ammunition carrier, belly band, portfolio holster or a shotgun shell pouch, Galco has it.

Strong Culture

Galco is in close proximity to Gunsite Academy, the world-class gun ÿghting school that teaches not only people who have never touched a gun before, but also real-life warriors and covert operators who thrust themselves into life-and-death situations where sometimes skill with a gun is the only way to save a life. Many Galco employees are Gunsite graduates, one is even a former training director from Gunsite, so they know what's required of a lifesaving piece of equipment. °ese employees — and others who are engaged in real-life dangerous work — test the products before they are put into production.

When a ˙aw is found, it is discussed with designers who go back to the drawing board and make the improvements necessary to ÿx the problem. Only then is the product released. °at's a lot more testing than most holster makers perform.

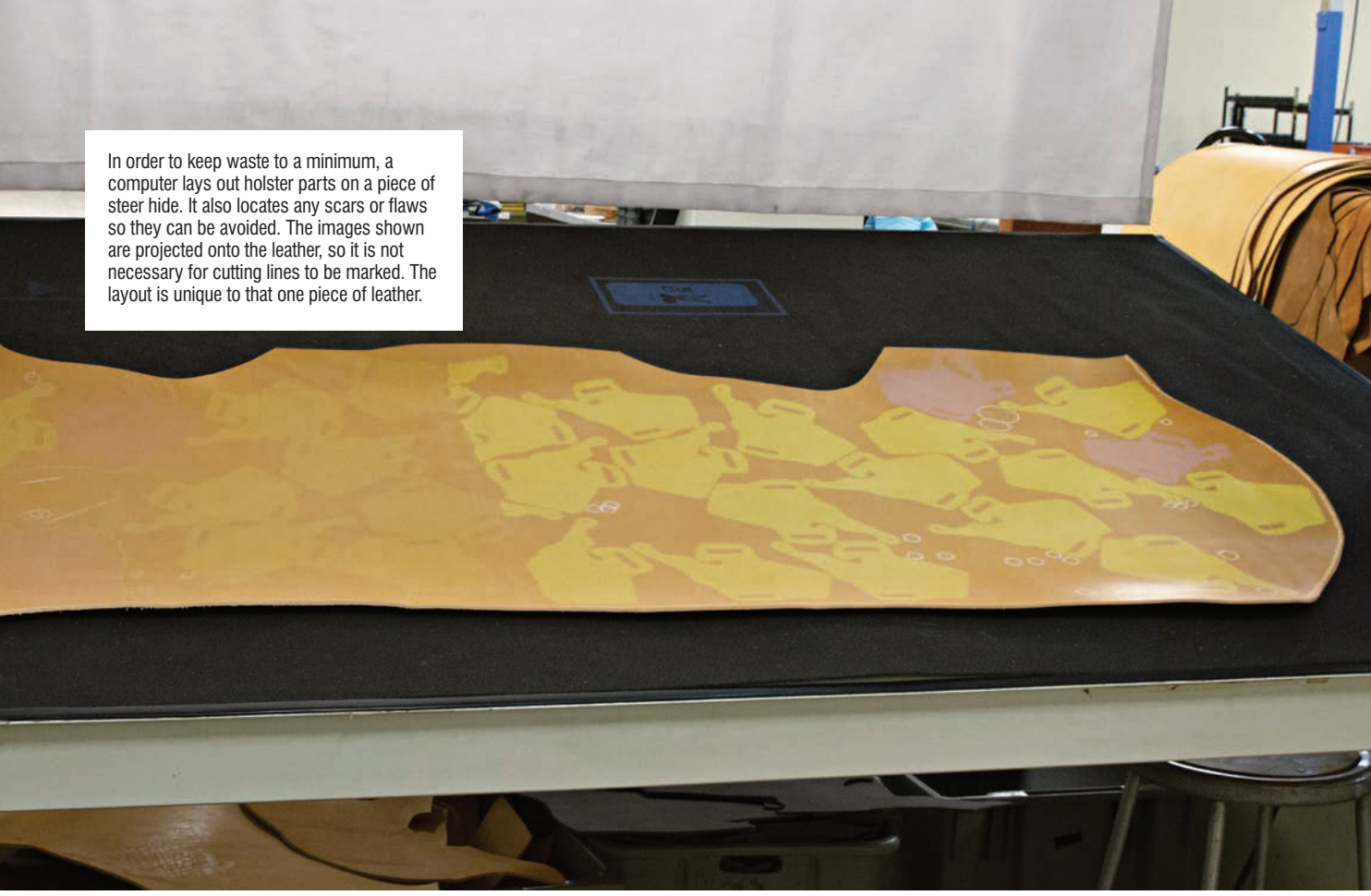
While talking to employees as I toured the headquarters and manufacturing facility in Phoenix, it became obvious that something special was going on. °e pride of craftsmanship came through. Many employees have been with Galco for a very long time, and they were outgoing and friendly while continuing to do their jobs. I've toured many manufacturing facilities as a writer, but nowhere were employees so eager to talk about what they were doing. °e average length of service for a Galco employee is about 10 years with many having more than 20 years on the job. In fact, one person has personally hand-molded, or boned, over 1 million leather holsters for a perfect fit.

Galco makes a variety of holsters, belts, purses, slings, pouches and bags. If your customer needs a sling, loop ammunition carrier, belly band, port-





The Phoenix holster has been around for many years and still features the thumb-break retention system. Its classic design and beautifully oiled and lacquered steer hide material is still in demand.



In order to keep waste to a minimum, a computer lays out holster parts on a piece of steer hide. It also locates any scars or flaws so they can be avoided. The images shown are projected onto the leather, so it is not necessary for cutting lines to be marked. The layout is unique to that one piece of leather.

folio holster or a shotgun shell pouch, Galco has it. ˜ e materials used include Kydex, injection-molded plastics, and of course, top quality steer hide. And for those who like nylon holsters, Galco is bringing those back, too. ˜ ey won't be the ° oppy, cheap nylon holsters often seen, but will be strong enough to hold a gun in place so that when it is needed in a hurry, the shooter won't have to search for the grip because the holster has sagged or moved from its normal place. ˜ e nylon holster line will be a bit more expensive than others on the market, but will still be a value option for those not wanting or who can't afford leather.

Quality Workmanship

Galco uses only the highest quality leather, unlike some companies that save money by using inferior grades that won't last as long. Steer hides are vegetable-tanned to be tough and durable. ˜ is is the same quality leather used in saddles. When a softer leather is needed for certain applications, they turn to chromium-tanned hides, which are typically used in auto upholstery and garments.

Galco carefully selects steer backs and does not buy bellies, which are of lower quality, softer and usually have more scars. And most hides are produced in the U.S., which has become somewhat uncommon because there are only three vegetable tanning operations left in the U.S. But Galco also o¸ ers a limited selection of exotic hides like shark, alligator and stingray for those customers who want something a bit unusual.

˜ ere is of course more to the leather products Galco is known for than just the hides with which they are made. Stitching can be a weak point if

Galco uses only the highest quality leather, unlike some companies that save money by using inferior grades that won't last as long.



After holster parts are laid out by the computer, the leather is transferred to the cutting machine that follows the computer layout and automatically makes the cuts.

not done right. Galco harness stitches leather products and uses synthetic thread that won't rot like cotton can. ˜ e harness stitching simulates a locked hand stitch. In fact, Galco uses some stitching machines that are around 100 years old to maintain the traditional hand-sewn appearance of its products. Some of these machines are capable of sewing through multiple layers of tough saddle leather up to 1 1/8-inch thick. ˜ ese machines arguably produce better products than modern needle-fed machines, but they're so old that Galco maintains a machine shop and foundry to make replacement parts to keep them running.

Galco uses both analine and pigmented dyes and also hand rubs oil into the leather before a lacquer ÿnish is applied. ˜i s treatment not only gives the leather a beautiful, deep tan sheen, but helps to preserve the leather by ÿlling pores with oil so that substances like sweat cannot get in and cause rot.

Big Selection

Currently, Galco boasts of over 1,000 retailers and about 2,400 SKUs. ˜ at's a lot. Some SKUs are more popular than others, so Galco likes to see its distributors stock the top 500 SKUs and works with retailers to help them carry the top selling 100 or more SKUs.



It may be a surprise to many, but Galco holsters are sewn one at a time by skilled employees using heavy-duty harness stitching machines.



Galco holsters have a typical mark-up of about 30 percent, but with volume discounts, retailers can increase margins to 40 percent. Many customers — especially with the increase of concealed carry permits — want a holster to carry their gun, and it's a win for the retailer whenever a holster is sold, particularly when margins are slim to non-existent on a gun just sold to a new owner. But a major problem for retailers is carrying enough stock to satisfy every customer's request. So Galco makes special e¸ orts to make delivery of holsters on special dealer orders within one to three days.

With 2,400 SKUs, sometimes even Galco doesn't have a particular model for a particular gun in stock. If that hap-



Galco was a pioneer in the use of Kydex for holsters. This machine heat forms Kydex sheets to holster molds using a vacuum process.



Some holsters have rivets, and a machine like this is used to install them. Here an employee mates Kydex and leather with rivets.



Galco uses high quality fabric for some of its products. Here a worker sews together pieces of fleece-lined canvas for a long gun case.







The Miami Classic shoulder holster system designed for a real life cop by Richard Gallagher in the 1970s would eventually be fitted to fictional detective Sonny Crockett played by Don Johnson. The Miami Classic was regularly seen in the television series *Miami Vice*.

pens, the retailer may have to wait two to six weeks, but Galco works hard to meet demand and has the horsepower to satisfy most requests quickly.

Helping Sales

Through its staff f employee representatives, who are in regular contact with retailers, Galco provides in-store training. The company also offers cooperative advertising funds and stands ready to help retailers with in-store events. The company makes available in-store point-of-purchase displays, and since Galco sells direct to retailers through distributors and offers products to consumers through its website, it helps protect retailer profit margins by enforcing a Minimum Advertised Price policy.

When visiting a store, the sales representative can help the dealer by taking a Galco inventory, providing order history reports, sharing holster sales trends and marketing plans and informing the dealer about new products in development and any promotions that are planned. All these things help retailers manage Galco stock and plan future orders.

Galco regularly advertises in many publications, so consumers recognize the name. That helps with sales, as does the fact Hollywood often shows Galco products on television and in the movies. If you are old enough, you might remember the television series Miami Vice where one of the characters, Sonny Crockett played by Don Johnson, wore a Galco shoulder holster called the Miami Classic. That kind of publicity is almost impossible to buy and helps to sell products.

Galco maintains a strong website with a dealers-only section that is password protected and makes finding products by feature, holster model or gun make and model quick and easy. Products can be ordered through the website and images are available for dealers to use in advertising. Additionally, dealer specific reports are available and can be printed if desired.

Several wholesale buying levels are offered with buy-ins as low as $250 and projected annual sales as little as $750.

Galco regularly displays at major industry trade and consumer shows including the NRA Annual Meeting, SHOT Show and NASGW. And Galco is a member of Sports INC, Nations Best Sports and Worldwide Buying Group. SSR



Businesses with high levels of employee engagement perform significantly better than other businesses, thanks in large part to the fact that engaged employees provide more productivity, sales and creativity.

ENGAGE YOUR PROFIT POTENTIAL

By Michaelean Pike

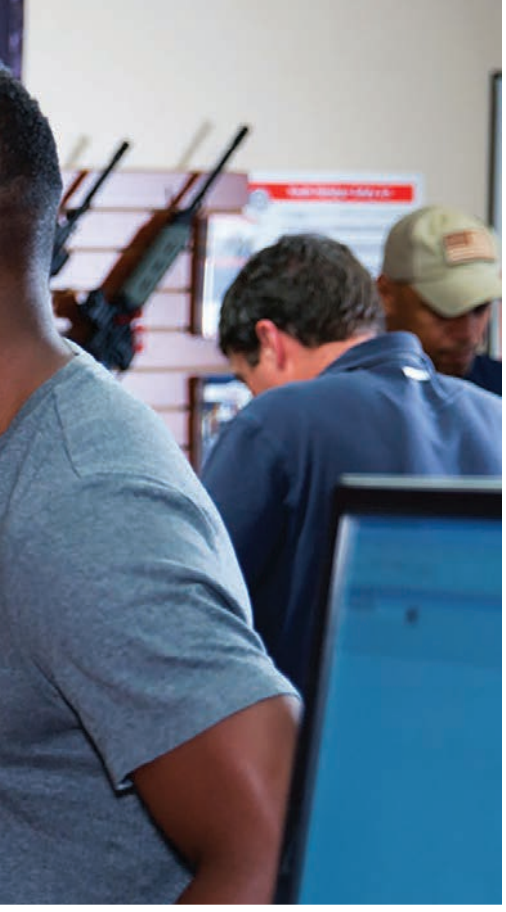
The happiness of the people on your payroll has a big impact on your bottom line.

You pay your employees to help your business succeed, but if you're not keeping them motivated they may be costing you.

Years ago I read an article about how, as Millennials were entering the workforce, a number of businesses were faced with finding ways to reward employees for their achievements. That generation, after all, had grown up with participation trophies and grade inflation, and as employees, they expected recognition at a level previous generations simply hadn't needed.

As a Gen Xer with parents who frequently stressed that if work was fun you wouldn't get paid to do it, this seemed unnecessary to me. And when the recession shifted the balance of power in the employee-employer relationship back in the employer's favor, it seemed like the need for constant recognition might become a thing of the past.

But "employee engagement" is now a hot topic, with businesses investing big money in ensuring their employees are happier and more motivated. And with good reason. Gallup has been tracking employee engagement for years, and while the percentage of employees who

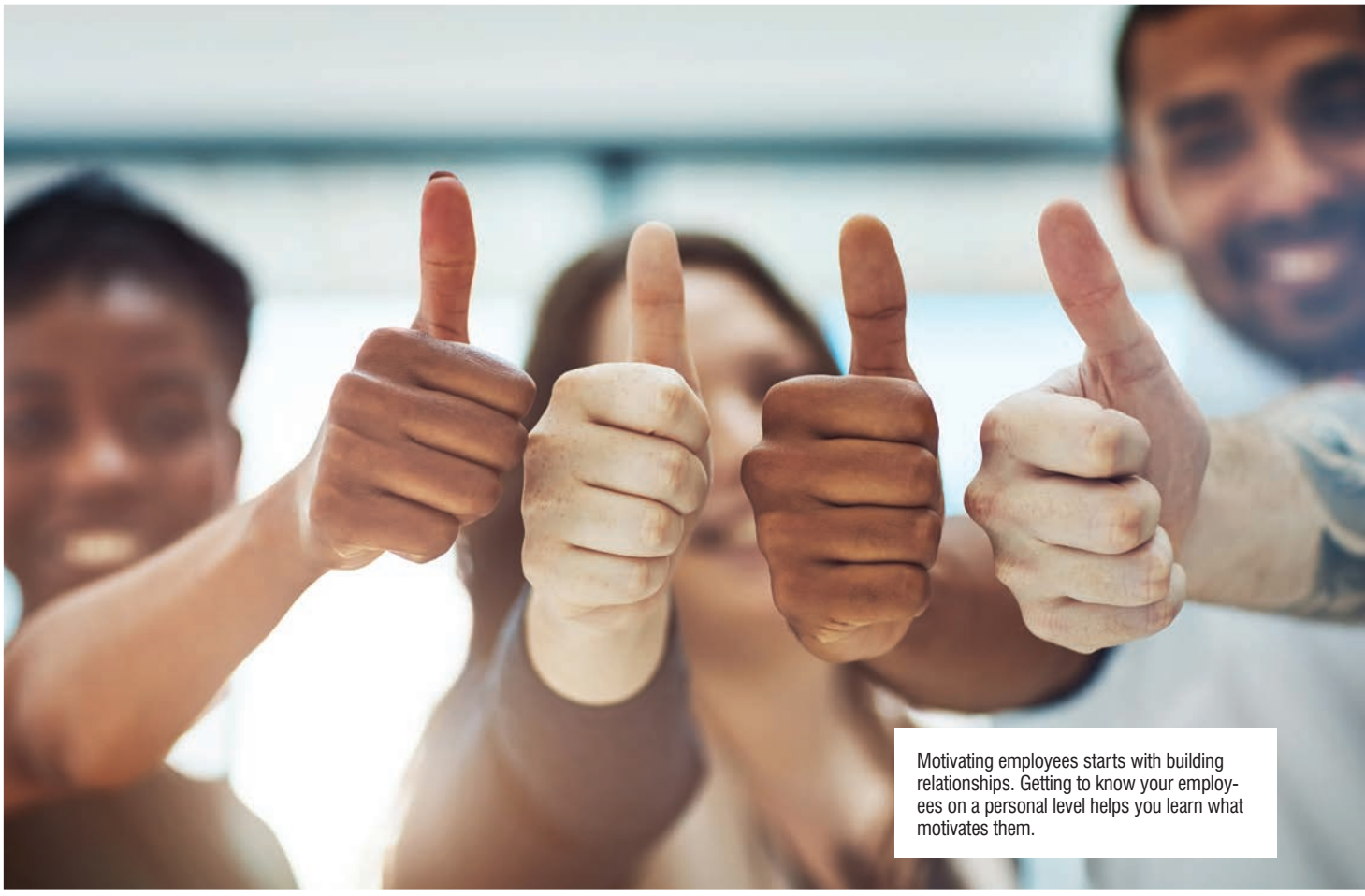


People work harder for good leaders. More importantly, a poor leader can actually turn good employees into bad ones. — Joshua Miller

are engaged has been increasing, it's still surprisingly low — about 33 percent.

What does it mean for an employee to be "engaged"? Like all buzzwords, this word seems to be tossed around an awful lot without a lot of speciﬁcs attached to it. But, in general, an engaged employee is enthusiastic about his or her work and is actively contributing to the workplace. It's from your engaged employees that you're likely to get new ideas and improved processes; your unengaged employees are just doing what you ask them to do and collecting a paycheck.

The costs of unengaged employees are staggering. An earlier Gallup report estimated that a lack of engagement costs U.S. businesses between $450 and $550 billion in lost productivity each year. Unengaged employees are more likely to call in sick, get into workplace accidents and make mistakes at work. They're also more likely to quit their jobs, resulting in costly turnover. Engaged employees, meanwhile, perform 20 percent better than disengaged employees, according to an article on Entrepreneur.com. That same article indicated that companies with a high level of employee engagement perform 202 percent better than other companies, thanks in large part to the fact that engaged employees have higher productivity, higher sales and higher creativity. It's no wonder that companies are



Motivating employees starts with building relationships. Getting to know your employees on a personal level helps you learn what motivates them.

Asking employees to do things that play to their weaknesses is just asking for failure. — Joshua Miller

desperate to find the secret to improving their employee engagement.

Not About Salary

To me, the answer to employee engagement seemed simple: Just pay people more and they'll care about their jobs.

Of course, there is a link between salary and engagement, and if you're not paying your employees a fair market value, you can expect less-motivated employees and higher turnover. But engagement isn't just about salary.

"It's more complicated than that," explains Joshua Miller. A West Point graduate and former U.S. Army Captain, Miller has held management positions with a number of large businesses and is especially experienced in improving company culture. "Sure, paying too little is a great way to demotivate any employee. But just giving everyone a raise isn't going to magically turn a company around."

Showing Leadership

The importance of good leadership to the bottom line was driven home to me years ago when I was a teenager working at McDonald's. One of my managers, Vince, was exceptional at motivating employees. We worked harder and enjoyed our shifts more when Vince was working than when some of the other managers were there. Several years later, some friends and I stopped at a different McDonald's. The dining room was clean, the employees were friendly and efficient and our orders were ready quickly — a big difference from some of the other McDonald's stores nearby. I wasn't surprised to see that the store manager for this particular location was Vince.

I realize that your gun shop is a far cry from McDonald's, but this perfectly illustrates how important a good leader is. That McDonald's, like the surrounding stores, was corporate-owned, which meant that Vince was working with pay scales comparable to the other stores. He was hiring employees from the same general area. His employees were doing the same job as employees at other stores and they were serving the same general clientele. And yet his employees looked happier, worked faster and performed better — all because they had a better leader.

Miller agrees with this assessment. "People work harder for good leaders," he says. "More importantly, a poor leader can actually turn good employees into bad ones."

Unfortunately, many businesses tend



An engaged employee is enthusiastic about his or her work and is actively contributing to the workplace. It's from your engaged employees that you're likely to get new ideas and improved processes.

to promote people to management because they've demonstrated proficiency at their jobs rather than looking specifically for employees who have strong leadership skills. This often results in middle managers who lack important leadership skills, increasing the risk of having unengaged employees.

Building Relationships

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to better motivate your employees — and these steps won't cost you an arm and a leg.

"Motivating employees starts with building relationships," Miller explains. "If I have an employee that I feel is underperforming or not accomplishing everything I think he can accomplish, the first thing I do is sit down and talk to him. Not about his job. I ask him about his family and the things he likes to do after work."

Getting to know your employees on a personal level also helps you learn what motivates your employees. If you have an employee with young children, you may find he or she values having the flexibility (within reason) to attend school or sports functions. Other employees may not care as much about having a flexible work schedule but might care a great deal about having their hard work acknowledged. Other employees may be motivated from having an employer that matches donations to charities the employee supports or that supports fundraisers for causes about which the employees are passionate.

It takes time to build this type of relationship, and some managers don't appreciate the value of talking to their employees. But different employees are motivated by different things. A one-size-fits-all approach won't be as effective as getting to know them individually.

Playing to Strengths

"Once I've spoken with an employee a number of times and feel like we've developed a solid relationship, I'll go to him with a project," Miller says. "This project generally falls under the list of tasks I want the employee to be doing that he isn't yet doing. But most importantly, it will be a project that plays to his strengths."



For a small business, employee turnover can be especially costly — and exhausting — as there are fewer people to pick up the slack when an employee leaves.

Many managers feel it's important to have well-rounded employees, meaning employees who are capable of doing many different tasks. Miller doesn't believe each individual employee needs to be able to do a variety of tasks. Instead, he stresses the importance of a well-rounded team, with employees who excel in their own areas.

"Asking employees to do things that play to their weaknesses is just asking for failure," Miller says. "Your employee is going to resent having to do something he's not good at. It's going to take him longer to do it than someone who's good at that particular task, and in the meantime, he's not working on what he is good at. Ultimately, the employee will become less engaged, you're not utilizing your resources wisely and you're setting yourself up for failure as a leader."

As Miller is building relationships with his employees, he's learning about their strengths and weaknesses.

"If I have an older employee who has little to no computer experience, asking him to develop Excel spreadsheets or take over my social media presence would not end well," Miller says. "And yet many companies will ask this of their employees simply because someone feels that employee has the time or is in a certain department.

"When I approach an employee about a project or task I need to have handled, I explain that I need that particular employee because of his or her skills or qualifications. And because of the relationship that we've built, the employee wants to help out. It ends up being a win-win situation — I get the employee to do a task I've wanted him to do, and he gets to do a task that plays to his strengths and showcases what he can do. But it all stems from building that relationship in the first place."

Maintaining Balance

It's easy to assume that employee engagement isn't as much of a problem in our industry. After all, most of us love the shooting sports, and our jobs often allow us to pursue our passion to an enviable degree. Managers in small businesses also have an easier time building relationships with their employees simply because they work more closely together, so much of what makes employees happier comes naturally to small businesses.

But that doesn't mean you can stop thinking about employee engagement. For a small business, employee turnover can be especially costly — and exhausting — as there are fewer people to pick up the slack when an employee leaves. And your employees may be disappointed to find that some of the busiest times for shooting sports retailers correspond to the times when they'd most like to be in the field.

You can't change when your busy season hits, but it's important to be aware of your employees' work-life balance. If you have a good employee putting in long hours or racking up vacation days because he or she never takes any, you may want to stress the importance of taking time away from the business. Sure, it's on your employee to use his or her vacation time, but you don't want a good employee to burn out or feel resentful that his or her long hours are going unnoticed. SSR

NEW PRODUCTS

EC

EDITOR'S CHOICE

By Mike Schoblaska

1 SAVAGE 110 PRAIRIE HUNTER

The Savage 110 Prairie Hunter, a precision bolt-action platform rifle chambered in the popular .224 Valkyrie cartridge, is tailor-made for long-distance shooters and hunters targeting medium-size game such as pronghorns, varmints and predators. With a wide selection of bullet weights and designs available, the 110 Prairie Hunter unleashes the full power and accuracy of the .224 Valkyrie, and its AccuFit system makes it easy to customize comb height and length-of-pull for any hunter. The Prairie Hunter's user-adjustable AccuTrigger, 22-inch button-rifled barrel and target crown ensure consistent accuracy at extreme ranges. Other features include a threaded muzzle, synthetic stock with a beavertail forend, three QD studs and a detachable box magazine. MSRP: $759; (800) 370-0708

WWW.SAVAGEARMS.COM





2 SHAW BARRELS 350 LEGEND CONVERSION KIT

Owners of existing AR-platform rifles can now convert to Winchester's hot new 350 Legend using Shaw Barrels' surprisingly affordable conversion kit. The 350 Legend, which now justly owns the title of "The world's fastest straight-walled hunting cartridge," is designed to convert any AR-platform rifle into what Winchester claims is a 250-yard deer cartridge. The 350 Legend will be a hit with hunters in those states that allow deer hunting only with straight-walled centerfire cartridges or shotgun slugs. The 350 Legend Conversion Kit includes a 16-inch 416R stainless steel H-bar barrel, upper with forward assist and dust cover, A2 flash hider, .750-inch gas block, carbine-length gas system and 10-round magazine. MSRP: $475; (412) 221-3636

WWW.SHAWCUSTOMBARRELS.COM

3 AMERICAN TACTICAL S60 POLYMER MAGAZINE

American Tactical, U.S. manufacturer and world-wide importer of firearms, ammunition and tactical equipment, has partnered with German arms manufacturer Schmeisser GmbH to exclusively import and distribute the Schemisser S60 60-round Polymer Stick AR-15 magazine. Chambered in 5.56/.223 for the AR-15/M4 platform, the S60 is the world's first patented 60-round polymer stick magazine and is the perfect accessory for shooting enthusiasts. Made from glass reinforced polymer, this patent pending magazine features a unique follower system that doubles the capacity of a normal AR magazine without being bulky or cumbersome. Designed to shoot both .223 Rem. and 5.56x45mm NATO, the Schmeisser S60 provides an instant capacity upgrade over the standard AR magazines at an affordable price. MSRP: $69.95; (800) 290-0065

WWW.AMERICANTACTICAL.US



4 BENJAMIN FORTITUDE AIR RIFLE

The Fortitude is Benjamin Airguns' latest generation of pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) air rifles for hunters and shooters, in .177 and .22 calibers. The Fortitude is packed with the most highly desired features and technologies that demanding airgun enthusiasts will appreciate. It is a multi-shot repeater with a regulator that uses interchangeable 10-shot rotary magazines for bolt-action operation. The Fortitude features a lightweight all-weather ergonomic stock. The regulator built into the 3,000 psi reservoir controls the output air pressure for shot-to-shot consistency, making the Fortitude a great option for backyard plinking, target shooting, pest control or small game hunting. MSRP: $299.99; (800) 724-7486

WWW.CROSMAN.COM



5 BREAKTHROUGH CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES A-I-O

Breakthrough Clean Technologies recently announced the addition of its new biosynthetic All-in-One (CLP) to its product lineup — expertly crafted using the finest base oils, additives and most effective solvents that modern chemistry has to offer. Providing both superior cleaning and lubrication, the All-in-One (CLP) removes carbon fouling, oil and grime while penetrating deep to provide protection from rust and corrosion. It also minimizes friction and wear from metal-to-metal contact. The All-in-One (CLP) is a great addition to any shooter's range bag for a quick cleaning to keep firearms operating smoothly. Breakthrough lubricants withstand extreme temperatures (won't gum up) and minimize the frequency of needed applications while protecting firearms. MSRP: $16.95 (6-oz trigger spray bottle). Other sizes available; (888) 455-5499

WWW.BREAKTHROUGHCLEAN.COM



6 ETS .40 CALIBER GLOCK MAGAZINES

Elite Tactical Systems recently announced the release of its new line of .40-caliber Glock clear polymer magazines. Included are the GLK-22-140 (19 rounds) and GLK-22-170 (24 rounds) competition legal models. Competitive shooters can now reduce the number of magazine changes and identify ammo type quickly when competing. The clear polymer magazines feature extreme impact resistance so they won't crack when dropped, and the feed lips and body won't spread when fully loaded and stored long term. They are very resistant to harsh chemicals and heat, and won't become brittle over time, even when exposed to harsh environments or extreme cold. MSRP: $16.99-$21.99; (855) 887-5452

WWW.ETSGROUP.US



7 LWRCI SMG-45 CARBINE

LWRCI announces the release of its first pistol-caliber carbine — the SMG-45, an AR-platform rifle with an innovative delayed-blowback/short-recoil operating system that delivers a unique shooting experience. Constructed of advanced aluminum and steel alloys and protected with hardcoat anodizing, ferritic nitrocarburization and nickel-boron surface treatments, the SMG-45 is built to last. Features include a fully ambidextrous lower receiver with AR-style controls for the safety and bolt catch/release, a paddle magazine release, the LWRCI Ultra Combat Grip and an LWRCI Enhanced Fire Control Group and more. The launch configuration for the SMG-45 is a pistol equipped with the SB Tactical SBTi folding subgun brace. It ships with two 25-round magazines. MSRP: $2,995; (410) 901-1348

WWW.LWRCI.COM



8 FOXPRO XWAVE E-CALLER

The FoxPro XWAVE electronic game caller features two positional Xtreme High Definition horn speakers with an added tweeter for improved frequency response, extreme volume capabilities and realistic sound clarity. It is also Bluetooth compatible, so the user can connect wirelessly via their portable device and play animal sounds from their own library. The XWAVE comes with 100 high-quality FoxPro-sounds and the ability to store and access up to 1,000 sounds, and can be operated manually or with the TX-1000 remote control. It features a full-color graphic LCD screen, a barometer indicator, moon phase indicator, temperature indicator, battery level indicator, timer or time clock and much more. MSRP: $699.95; (717) 248-2507

WWW.GOFOXPRO.COM



9 SABRE RED PEPPER SPRAY

Sabre Tactical Red Pepper Spray canisters deliver up to 13 one-second bursts (30 short bursts) of the most potent and popular pepper spray available for protection against multiple targets. The canisters feature a first-of-its-kind metal duty belt clip for easy access — clip to clothing, belt or backpack — and can be switched to either side of the canister for left- or right-handed users. In-house laboratory tests guarantee maximum stopping power, eliminating the 30 percent failure rate of some other pepper spray brands. The unit is refillable with quick and easy replacement canisters, ensuring fresh, potent protection when needed. MSRP: $19.99; (800) 325-9568

WWW.SABRERED.COM

NEW PRODUCTS



10 PACHMAYR EVERY DAY CARRY KNIVES

Pachmayr recently announced the launch of its new line of Every Day Carry (EDC) knives for sportsmen, shooters, professionals and law enforcement officials. The line consists of six different knives for various uses and carry style — the Dominator, Grunt, Snare, Grappler, Griffin and Blacktail — all built to the Pachmayr standard of quality and functionality. At the top of the line is the Dominator, measuring 8.5 inches in overall length with a modified sheepfoot fixed blade, G10 handle, Kydex sheath and belt clip. For those looking for an EDC knife with a tactical edge, the Blacktail features a 6.75-inch drop point black-coated blade with a black aluminum handle and stainless-steel liner. MSRP: $23.98 to $99.98; (800) 225-9626

WWW.LYMANPRODUCTS.COM

11 MOSSBERG PATRIOT 350 LEGEND

Looking for the latest high-performance, straight-walled cartridge offering for multi-game, multi-season hunting? Look no further than Mossberg and its classically styled Patriot Synthetic and Patriot Synthetic Super Bantam bolt-action rifles chambered in 350 Legend. Both models are available with a factory mounted variable 3-9x40mm riflescope. Built with hunters in mind, the 350 Legend is the fastest straight-walled hunting cartridge available — offering more energy, less recoil and better penetration than many of its competitors. The 350 Legend's on-game performance and the feature-rich Mossberg Patriot bolt-action rifle is a great combination for deer, hogs, black bears and other large game. MSRP: $396/Synthetic and Synthetic Super Bantam/$435 (scoped combo); (203) 230-5300

WWW.MOSSBERG.COM

12 HATSANUSA AT44 QES AIRGUN

The newest addition to the HatsanUSA family of airguns, the AT44 QES, proves that high-octane energy does not have to come at a high price or decibel level. Featuring its state-of-the-art Integrated Sound Moderator with QuietEnergy technology, the AT44 QES produces up to 1,350 fps and 49 fpe. It comes with TruGlo-equipped open sights and features a pre-charged pneumatic side lever action with a magazine capacity of up to 10 pellets. Hatsan's Quattro two-stage, fully adjustable match trigger offers consistent performance, and the airgun features both an automatic cocking system and manual safety. The AT44 QES is offered in three calibers (.177, .22 and .25) and two barrel length variations (19.4- and 23-inch barrel). MSRP: $449.99 to $499.99; (877) 278-4448

WWW.HATSANAIRGUNSUSA.COM



13 RCBS MATCHMASTER COMPETITION DIE SETS

RCBS recently announced the launch of the new MatchMaster Competition Die Series — available in full length, neck sizing and seating configurations. The full length sizing dies use RCBS's precision-machined neck bushings to put the perfect amount of neck tension on each round. The titanium-nitride coated expander offers silky-smooth case extraction and reduced brass buildup. The neck sizing die set also puts the perfect amount of neck tension on each round while not changing the body dimensions of fired cases. The set also includes a MatchMaster competition seating die, with its unique bullet seating window and micrometer-adjustable, free-floating, self-centering, bullet-seating stem. Reloaders can fine-tune any load with repeatable precision. MSRP $185.79; (800) 533-5000

WWW.RCBS.COM



14 KENT CARTRIDGE FASTEEL 2.0

Kent Cartridge has upgraded its Fasteel line of steel shot waterfowl loads with the introduction of Fasteel 2.0 Precision Plated Steel non-toxic shotshells. The foundation of Fasteel 2.0 begins with a high-performance base-wad to optimize functionality in today's most popular semi-auto firearms, allowing for fast follow-up shots and ensuring consistent reliability. The new loads use zinc-plated shot and nickel-plated heads to provide added corrosion protection. Improvements in powder allow for increased speeds on select loads while maintaining pattern uniformity and managed recoil. Custom blended, low-flash powders provide consistent, clean-burning performance and maintain SAAMI standards for pressure and velocity. MSRP: $14.99 to $23.99; (888) 311-5368.

WWW.KENTCARTRIDGE.COM



15 METAL ART OF WISCONSIN FREEDOM CABINET

Metal Art of Wisconsin is proud to announce the latest addition to its 2nd Amendment collection, the Freedom Cabinet. American made in Wisconsin from locally sourced timber and 16-gauge cold-rolled steel, these pieces are the perfect way to show respect for the principles of America's Founding Fathers while adding a beautiful centerpiece to any home. Each Freedom Cabinet comes complete with a tough, foam insert that can easily be configured to safely and discretely store anything behind Old Glory. This decorative strongbox is available in 2-, 3- and 4-foot sizes. MSRP: Varies by size. 2-foot Freedom Cabinet Slider $234.95/$334.95 with RFID lock and key cards (920) 717-0635

WWW.METALARTOFWISCONSIN.COM

DIRT?

LOL, SO WHAT.





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RELOADING & MAINTENANCE ROUNDUP



1 LYMAN | Brass Smith All-American 8 Turret Press

The Brass Smith All-American 8 Turret Press from Lyman Products is an extra-large 8-station turret machined out of heavy-duty cast iron. It will hold two complete four-die sets or up to four two-die sets. The large press opening accommodates even the largest cases. For added safety, the primer feed comes with a heavy steel shield that surrounds the primer tubes. The turret press is equipped with a ball handle that can be positioned for either right- or left-handed use. It is designed for use with any standard 7/8x14 thread dies and accepts standard shell holders. The Brass Smith All-American 8 Turret Press has a durable powder coat finish and weighs 23 pounds.



4 RCBS | VLD 3-Way Cutter

The unique three-blade head of the VLD 3-Way Cutter from RCBS trims cases like a standard cutting tool while also chamfering the case with inside blades and deburring with an outside blade. The 3-Way Cutter easily attaches to both Case Trimmers and Trim Pros. The 3-Way Cutter features carbide cutting surfaces with multi-caliber adjustability to fit cases from .22 up to .50 caliber.



2 BARNES | Tipped Triple-Shock X Bullets

The Tipped Triple-Shock X bullets from Barnes feature the same 100 percent copper body as the original TSX bullets, but with an added polymer tip that boosts ballistic coefficient and improves long-range ballistics. The tip and a re-engineered nose cavity provide even faster expansion. The Tipped TSX bullets feature virtually 100 percent weight retention and four sharp cutting petals that double bullet diameter for more internal damage.



3 ALLIANT POWDER | Reloder 16

Reloder 16 rifle powder from Alliant Powder boasts world-class stability across temperature extremes with TZ technology that resists the natural tendency to generate more pressure at higher temperatures and less pressure at lower temperatures. It contains a proprietary de-coppering additive and no DNT or DBP. Reloder 16 is made in Sweden for Alliant Powder and is available in 1- and 8-pound canisters.



5 DILLON PRECISION PRODUCTS | Electric Variable Speed Casefeeder

Dillon Precision Products developed the Electric Variable Speed Casefeeder for their XL650 that automatically orients brass mouth-side up, fills the case feed tube, shuts off when the tube is full and automatically starts as the tube gets low. The casefeeder can be infinitely regulated to spin from 0 to 8 RPM. The bowl has an adjustable window cuff and case deflector for a large range of cartridge capability. The unit features a universal power supply for both domestic and foreign voltages and is sold with or without a feed plate.



6 REDDING RELOADING EQUIPMENT | Premium Die Sets

With the addition of .224 Valkyrie, 6mm Creedmoor and .22 Nosler, Redding Reloading Equipment has expanded their offering of Premium Die Sets. These die sets include a carbide expander button and a micrometer-adjusting seat stem. The carbide expander button reduces stress on the case neck and is also free floating. The micrometer-adjusting seat stem allows for precise bullet seating depth to 1/0.001-inch.



7 HODGDON POWDER COMPANY | CFE 223

CFE 223 from Hodgdon Powder Company is a spherical propellant designed to provide top velocities in fast cartridges. CFE 223 contains Copper Fouling Eraser, which deters copper fouling and contributes to longer periods of peak accuracy with less barrel cleaning time. The spherical powder lends itself to consistently accurate metering. CFE 223 is available in 1- and 8-pound containers.

8 FRANKFORD ARSENAL | M-Press Coaxial Reloading Press



The Frankford Arsenal M-Press Coaxial Reloading press features an easily adjustable universal shell holder system, spent primer tray that's easy to empty and the ability for the press to cam over or not. The shell holder system allows the user to switch from small to magnum pistol or rifle-size cases with the turn of a dial. The floating die system allows for optimal bullet to case alignment, helping to minimize runout for the most accurate ammunition possible. The M-Press also features two parallel guide rods for stability and an integrated LED work light.



9 PROLIX | Lubricant



PrOlix is a greatly improved CLP, citrus-based cleaner with lubricant suspended in the formula. It goes on wet, cleans, bonds and turns dry to the touch. The biodegradable product was lab-developed and tested by law enforcement, military and civilian shooters. PrOlix is also used in commercial/industrial applications, and won't wipe off, burn off or build up. It has been listed on the USDA's Bio-Preferred Products website since 2012. PrOlix will have a new look soon with a more easy-to-handle PrO 16-ounce spray container.

10 KESTREL | 5700 Ballistics Weather Meter with Hornady 4DOF



Kestrel Ballistics has partnered with Hornady to launch the Kestrel 5700 Ballistics Weather Meter with Hornady 4DOF, a reliable onsite environmental measurement tool with precise Hornady 4DOF trajectory solutions. The Hornady 4DOF ballistic engine provides trajectory solutions based on projectile drag coefficient along with the exact physical modeling of the projectile and its mass and aerodynamic properties. This unit can run for hundreds of hours on a single AA lithium battery and features large buttons and a bright, clear backlit display for easy operation in the field. The Kestrel 5700 Ballistics Weather Meter with Hornady 4DOF is IP-67 waterproof rated and MIL-STD-810 drop-tested.

11 STARLINE | 5.56x45mm Rifle Brass



Starline Brass has added the 5.56x45mm cases to their growing lineup of quality rifle brass. The 5.556x45mm brass is identical to Starline's .223 Remington brass, except for a slight change in the metallurgy making it harder at the base of the case. Starline Brass utilizes multiple hand and machine inspections to ensure cosmetic and dimensional characteristics meet their high standards. Starline cases are contained between each step of the manufacturing process to maintain consistency and quality.

12 BARRELBUDDY | Gun Cleaning System



BarrelBuddy is a multi-stage polymer that scrubs, collects particulate, absorbs residue and buffs bores clean in a single step. True 360-degree compression provides 100 percent contact with the barrel, pushing into and cleaning rifling. It can be used dry or with a solvent to clean barrels as small as .22 and as big as 10-guage shotguns. The BarrelBuddy can also be used to oil the barrel after cleaning is complete.

13 SHOOTING CHRONY | M-1 Master Chrony

The M-1 Master Chrony from Shooting Chrony provides numbered shot velocities that remain on display until the next shot. The M-1 Master Chrony is available with readouts in meters/second or feet/second and includes a remote control with close-up readout and 18-foot cord. The unit is powered by a single 9-volt battery that lasts for up to 48 hours of continuous use. The M-1 Master Chrony can also be upgraded to any higher tier Shooting Chrony chronograph with additional accessories.

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EDITORIAL

Editor / Luke Laggis
Group Managing Editor / Hilary Dyer
Copy Editor / Alex Headley
Product Editor / Mike Schoblaska
Digital Editor / Alan Clemons

ADVERTISING

President/Publisher GVO / Derrick Nawrocki
derrick.nawrocki@grandviewoutdoors.com

Regional Sales Manager / Don Harris
don.harris@grandviewoutdoors.com

Regional Sales Manager / Mike Kizzire
mike.kizzire@grandviewoutdoors.com

Regional Sales Manager / Patrick Boyle
patrick.boyle@grandviewoutdoors.com

National Sales Representatives
Byers Media / Ken Byers & Toby Shaw
info@byersmediaonline.com

CREATIVE

Art Director / Justin Lancaster

ADMINISTRATION

Circulation / Nicole LaBeau
nicole.labeau@colepublishing.com

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EMAIL nicole.labeau@colepublishing.com. Please include both old and new addresses.

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RELOADING ROAD SHOW

Playing host can put you in touch with a steady stream of repeat business.

By Steve Comus

Retailers are beneﬁtting from the Reloading Road Show put on by Hodgdon Powder and other leading companies in the shooting sports industry. And the fun is just beginning as more Road Show appearances are being arranged.

°is whole concept was unveiled at this year's SHOT Show. It's intended to reintroduce shooters to reloading while introducing a whole new generation to the productive and enjoyable practice.

°ere is a sense of accomplishment for shooters using the ammunition they loaded themselves. °eir level of interest in shooting grows, which means they buy more as they shoot more. Ultimately, it's not just about selling reloading equipment, but about creating repeat tra¸c.

Savvy retailers can beneﬁt from this e˝ort, designed to use the manufacturer/retailer network to bring newcomers to the loading bench and beyond.

Long History

°e Reloading Road Show brings representatives from various companies into retail stores to show customers how their products and services can help them get into reloading.

According to Chris Hodgdon, public relations manager at Hodgdon Powder, this new program is a variation of what his grandfather did following World War II when the companies set up circus tents in communities around the country and showed consumers how to load. During the war, there were literally millions of men and women in the military who, by deﬁnition, were already shooters, but who had little to no experience loading their own ammo.

In the post-war era, Hodgdon recognized a potentially huge market and personally approached it with his products and others.

Back to Basics

Bruce Hodgdon established the Hodgdon Powder Company in 1947. In those early days of reloading, Bruce partnered with companies like Hornady, Lyman, MEC, Nosler, RCBS, Redding, Sierra Bullets, Speer and others to teach consumers how to reload. °ey traveled around the country hosting reloading seminars. In 2019, Hodgdon is reviving this concept.

"Hodgdon will continue to collaborate with a lot of our original manufacturing partners like Hornady, Lyman, MEC, Nosler, RCBS, Redding, Sierra Bullets and Speer but will also partner with Dillon Precision, Frankford Arsenal and Lee," Chris Hodgdon explained.

°e company will also partner with local Hodgdon dealers and bring in NRA-certiﬁed reloading experts to train consumers. °ey can also tailor courses to metallic handgun or ri˙e, or even shotshell reloading if needed.

"Grandad started this concept over 50 years ago, personally traveling around the country to show consumers how to reload," says Chris Hodgdon. "I think he would be proud to see his family and his company keeping this tradition alive."

A number of factors have triggered a renewed interest in handloading, not the least of which is the heightened interest in long-range precision shooting. Reloading allows a shooter to ﬁne-tune loads for a speciﬁc ri˙e, enhancing performance. Shooters are demanding top performance from all of their equipment, ammunition included. Another reason is cost. Reloading ammo can create a signiﬁcant savings, especially if the ammo is for obsolete or hard-to-find cartridges. There are classic rifles chambered for such cartridges and reloading is about the only practical way to keep them shooting.

Reloading can save on universally available cartridges too. We're talking about 9mmP, .40 S&W, .45 ACP and 5.56mm NATO.

Clear Benefits

°ere are all kinds of reasons why carrying and promoting reloading supplies and equipment makes sense — even beyond the proﬁt.

Shooters who reload tend to shoot more, which means they need to resupply regularly. Reloading is all about the details and reloaders like to talk.

Yes, online retailers handle huge volumes of reloading equipment and supplies. But that doesn't mean there isn't a local angle. Online retailers can't be a local, trusted human source and presence.

°at's what these Reloading Road Show seminars are all about — bringing company representatives face to face with individual consumers.

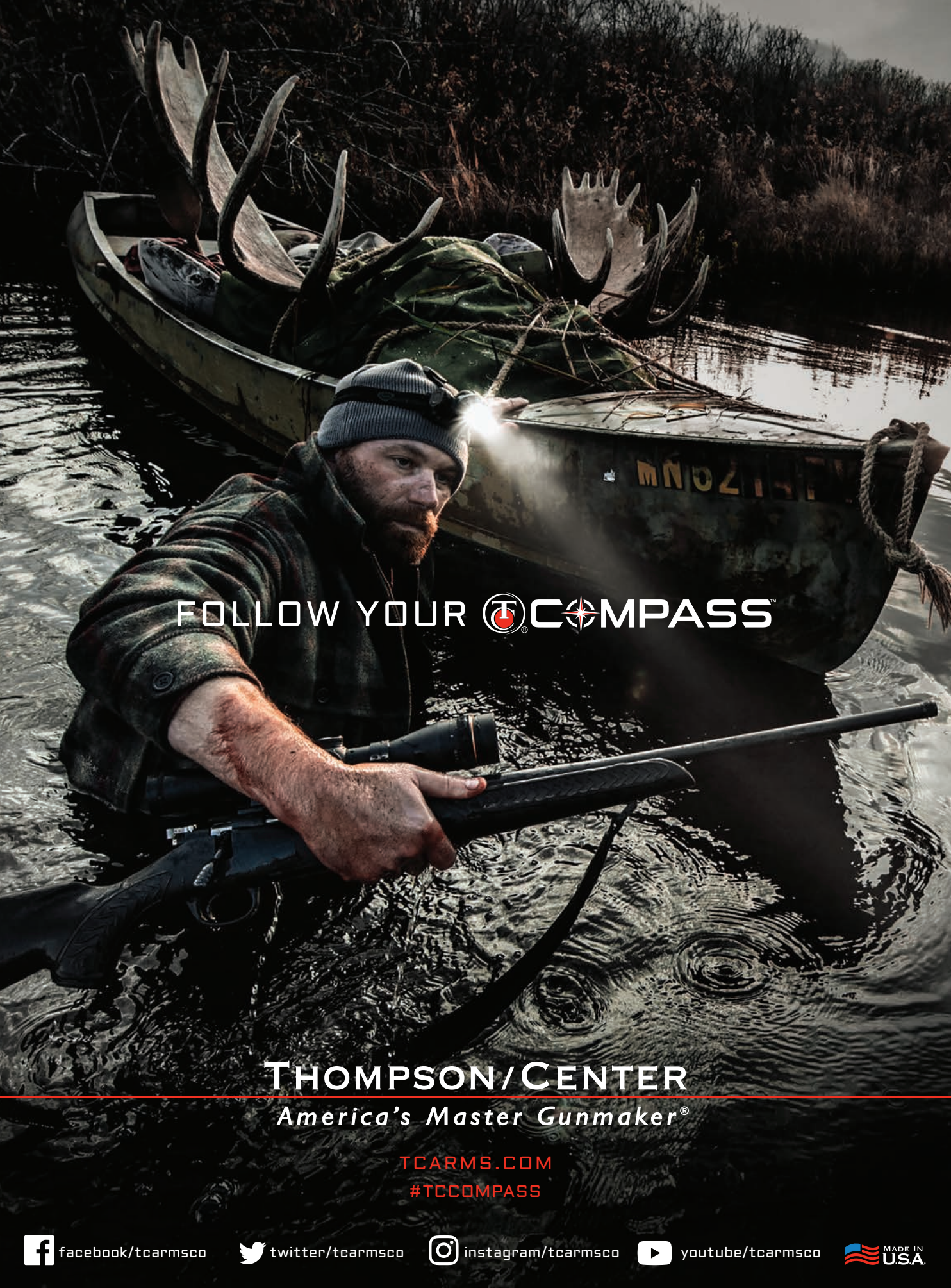
°ese seminars are great for introducing shooters to reloading or ﬁring up existing reloaders. °ey also set the stage to keep those same customers coming back once they've caught the reloading bug.

All shooters attending reloading seminars can be added to the store's customer database if they're not already in it. A seminar could help you connect to and grow the local scene. Networking is still alive and well in the world.

Increased focus on reloading may not be the hot ticket for all retailers, but it's something to consider for retailers not already involved in that product stream.

In a market where there are periods of boom and bust, it's important to recognize the constants. °e Reloading Road Show is a sales and educational bandwagon. Hop on. It could be both fun and proﬁtable.

For information about the Reloading Road Show, or to arrange for a seminar in your store, contact Kent Sakamoto at Hodgdon Powder Co. Call 913-745-0822 or email *ksakamoto@hodgdon.com*. SSR


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A soldier with Alpha Company, 4-17 Infantry Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, testing the new TANGO6T with a M110A1 Compact Semi-Auto Sniper System at Fort Bliss Texas. Photo by US Army SSG Kimberly Jenkins and SGT Brian Micheliche, 1st Stryker Brigade, 1st Armored Division, Public Affairs





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