



LSA QUARTERLY



The Louisiana Shooting Association

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600 YARD WIND READING CLASS



On Saturday August 20, 2011, Lanny Russell held a Wind Reading Class on the 600-yard range at Palo Alto Rifle and Pistol Club in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Lanny is a High Master in both F-Open and Prone classes and also one of the Match Directors for the monthly, Regional and State Mid-Range Prone matches. He has previously held classes on Introduction to 600 yard competitive shooting as well as reloading, but this class was the most comprehensive to-date. The skies were sunny and it warmed up quickly, but that did not deter the students or their enthusiasm.

Rifle settings were checked with a few practice rounds and then everyone got down to business.



Lanny talked about the basics of good marksmanship and provided a simple formula for achieving that goal:

Accurate Rifle + Good Shot Execution + Wind Reading = Success

Of course, as most of the students were to find out shortly this was easier said than done as they later realized it takes time and practice to consistently get all three right.

Using an open air classroom format, Lanny discussed:

- *HARDWARE AND BALLISTICS*- Appropriate rifles, caliber, ballistic coefficients/trajectories, and optics.
- *WIND*- Observing and selecting wind indicators, estimating velocity and direction, analyzing wind cycles and condition changes, selecting the dominant condition. Strategy to use for major direction changes and reverses.
- *MIRAGE*- What is it and does it help or hurt?
- *SHOOTING METHODS*- Discussion of strategies for a single shot at distance versus repetitious firing under match conditions.
- *NO WIND ZERO*- What is it and why is it important?
- *LEARNING TO READ WIND*- What is the trick?

Lanny then set up and shot several rounds to demonstrate the concept of wind reading and how to use the previously discussed methods. After a few rounds, the students read the wind and Lanny shot on their calls.





Afterward, the students were broken up into 3 groups with 1 shooter and 1 spotter to plot shots staying on the line and the third group working in the pits pulling targets. For this first string shooters made their own calls and the spotter plotted where the shots landed on the target. After all 3 groups of students had shot a 20 round string, everyone regrouped on the line to analyze and discuss. Lanny had each shooter look over where his rounds had been plotted and gave each shooter advice on adjustments to be made.



Students were again divided into three groups. This time, however, they were teamed up by caliber. The spotter now was asked to call wind conditions for the shooter or they could make a decision as a team. This allowed the spotter a chance to concentrate on the wind conditions without having to fire the rifle. Once again all shots were plotted and then analyzed as a group and discussed.



Students attending the class ranged from new shooters, to hunters and also the seasoned competitor. All came away with a better understanding of reading the wind and Lanny's even-tempered presentation of the information put everyone at ease and no one had that "new guy" feeling.

There will be more Wind, Intro and Reloading Clinics in the future, and we'll be sure to post them for folks to put on their calendar.



By Rick Stewart

Photos taken by Lee Alessi

The Home Defense Shotgun Challenge

Shotguns are a part of American culture. I own a few and enjoy shooting them quite a bit in various applications. Shotguns are some of the most versatile guns out there, able to be used to hunt a tremendous variety of game and are employed in several different sports. They are probably the dominant firearm in the American psyche when it comes to home defense – but is it the best choice?

To start at the beginning, the legend and lore started during the settlement of the famed Wild West. The term “riding shotgun” comes from the person who rode next to a coach driver armed with a shotgun to defend against bandits. Doc Holliday used a shotgun to great effect at the famed shoot out at the OK Corral. This continued into the muddy trenches of World War One, the steamy jungles of Vietnam and now dusty caves of the Middle East. The 12 gauge has earned a well deserved reputation as a close quarters weapon that delivers results. One of the most qualified firearms instructors I’ve had the privilege to train with, Louis Awerbuck, prefers the 12 gauge and put it to good use in combat.

There is no question that the shotgun’s popularity is a direct result of its effective use throughout history. What I ask the reader to do is step back and re-evaluate the shotgun’s use as a home defense weapon.

The 12 gauge shotgun is a very effective weapon in some cases, but it may not be the ideal home defense weapon. Furthermore I feel the shotgun may actually be a niche weapon and one of the least desirable selections for home defense.

I wish I had a nickel for every time I’ve heard these myths concerning the home defense shotgun:

- The sound of racking the action will make bad guys run for safety
- You don’t have to aim
- OO Buck is the ultimate home defense load
- A pump shotgun is the most reliable thing out there

I won’t argue that the sound of a pump shotgun is unmistakable and intimidating, but I’m going to circle back to that at the end of this article.

Your shotgun is a rifle. What, you say? No, clearly a shotgun is a shotgun; a rifle is a rifle. Except when you start looking at the pattern or spread shotguns produce. Within the distances found inside a typical house, the spread or pattern of a shotgun is more like a rifle from an accuracy standpoint. Shotguns shoot either a bunch of little lead balls or one big slug, but let us focus on the little lead balls for now. As they leave the barrel, they spread out and form a pattern over distance.

The problem is that the distance in most houses doesn’t allow for that pattern to grow beyond 6” or so. Realistically, what is the longest shot inside your house? Unless you have an odd lay out or huge house, it is rare to have more than a 30 foot shot and a 15 foot shot is more realistic.

Here is the first part of my challenge - Measure your long and average shots, go to the range, and put a target at those distances. Pick your favorite load of buckshot and measure the patterns. With my two favorites, a 18.5” Remington 11-87 and 20” Mossberg 590A1 I always seem to average groups around 5”, give or take an inch.

Inside most houses with this size pattern you must aim. Now consider we might have to step outside the house. That pattern will now expand rapidly as it speeds toward whatever is behind the target. If one stray pellet misses your target you have a .32 caliber round with enough energy to kill someone 100 yards away. When you are dealing with a 10 foot pattern you can't control where the ones that miss will go, but you are surely accountable for them.

Now that we have established that you have to aim regardless, and that at distance OO Buck in a neighborhood might be a problem – what about slugs? Slugs have great terminal performance but they penetrate and then penetrate some more. More to the point, they don't necessarily have better terminal performance than quality rifle ammunition.

Regarding the steadfast reliability of the trusty pump... During training and practice I've seen pump shotguns have more problems than semi-automatics. The reason is simple – under pressure, people short-stroke the action. Not me, you say? My observation has been that shooters dedicated enough to go train with some of the best in the country, like Clint Smith and Louis Awerbuck, occasionally short stroke the pump. When you do, depending on how you do it, the gun can end up with some crazy malfunctions. People make mistakes when they try to go fast. Short stroking under the pressure of a timed drill while your peers watch is embarrassing. When facing an armed attacker it can create lethal consequences. I own both platforms, but I prefer the automatic. It is worth noting that automatics also dominate competition for similar reasons.

Shotguns have a few other warts as well. As compared to modern rifles, they are low capacity, slow to load and reload, and require more training to use competently. Recoil can be an issue, particularly for people of smaller stature.

When deciding what to use for defending your castle, step back and start from scratch. Why not consider something that has less recoil, more capacity, and plenty of terminal capability? The AR-15 is a proven performer with modern ammunition, and if you don't like the 5.56 round, it is available in everything else under the sun these days. The AK-47 (or AK-74) is an inexpensive but effective choice. Those are the two easy ones, but the market has a plethora of other options. Rifles can certainly have excessive penetration, but ammunition selection and evaluating your own situation should always be a part of your decision making process.

Here is the second part of the challenge – go spend some time really learning to use a shotgun. Take a class with it and see what you think after a few hundred rounds and a couple days of shooting and operating it while moving, using cover and problem solving. Now do the same thing with a rifle. This will take some time and cost money. I suspect if you ever find yourself picking up a gun to defend your family you will be thankful for the experience.

I'll be shocked if you don't come away with the opinion that the shotgun is a unique weapon that has a niche use, but that the rifle is a more practical defensive choice most the time. As I mentioned initially, I own many shotguns and they have their place to be sure, but speaking for myself as an individual defending my home, a rifle is my first choice. That doesn't mean that the shotgun isn't effective – but I encourage people to consider their own situation when looking for the best tools for the job.

Finally – I wouldn't count on the sound of chambering a shell to scare off an intruder. It gives them a lot of information. They now know approximately how far away you are and that you are armed, and it may push them to make the first move. That said, grab an AR or AK and chamber a round. Those weapons certainly don't sound inviting.

Paul Angrisano

September 29, 2011

Louisiana Shooting Association, Inc.
Statement of Cash Flows
 January through August 2011

	<u>Jan - Aug 11</u>
OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Net Income	-211.76
Net cash provided by Operating Activities	-211.76
INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
AR15 Rim Fire Uppers	-850.00
Net cash provided by Investing Activities	-850.00
FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Jr Program:Advertising	168.00
Jr Program:Donations Received	-117.00
Jr Program:Equipment	1,469.20
Jr Program:Grant Given	420.00
Jr Program:Grant Received	-244.00
Jr Program:Lodging	-531.04
Jr Program:M1 Raffle Ticket Expense	175.57
Jr Program:M1 Raffle Ticket Sales	-352.00
Jr Program:Raffle Rifle Expense	200.00
Jr Program:Retained Earnings	770.06
Jr Program:Shooting Supplies	533.00
Special Projects:Match Fees	430.00
Special Projects:Rifle Usage Fee	20.00
Net cash provided by Financing Activities	2,941.79
Net cash Increase for period	1,880.03
Cash at beginning of period	54,507.64
Cash at end of period	<u><u>56,387.67</u></u>

Unaudited

September 29, 2011
Cash Basis

Louisiana Shooting Association, Inc.
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2011

	<u>Aug 31, 11</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking	5,316.61
LSA Tower Gold Super Savings	51,071.06
Total Checking/Savings	<u>56,387.67</u>
Total Current Assets	56,387.67
Fixed Assets	
AR-15 Service Rifles	8,600.00
AR15 Rim Fire Uppers	3,737.60
Gun Safe	848.28
Total Fixed Assets	<u>13,185.88</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>69,573.55</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Jr Program	
Donations Received	50.00
Lodging	-531.04
M1 Raffle Ticket Expense	-468.17
M1 Raffle Ticket Sales	3,441.00
Retained Earnings	<u>7,270.20</u>
Total Jr Program	9,761.99
Opening Balance Equity	54,959.74
Retained Earnings	4,597.38
Special Projects	
Amicus Brief	-185.00
Match Fees	430.00
Rifle Usage Fee	<u>221.20</u>
Total Special Projects	466.20
Net Income	<u>-211.76</u>
Total Equity	<u>69,573.55</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>69,573.55</u>

Unaudited

A Tribute To My Dad

My dad grew up during the depression in Liberty, Mississippi and knew what it was like to go without. Having lost his dad at an early age and with limited available resources, he and his brothers did not have the luxury of practicing their marksmanship often. Each round fired needed to account for something. So, my dad and his brothers learned the “one shot, one kill” philosophy early in life. This “make every shot count” attitude would be passed down to me and it started with learning to hunt before you hunted.

Some of the earliest memories I have of my childhood were my dad waking me up at 5:00 in the morning to go deer hunting. So what’s the big deal about that, you may ask? To a six-year-old it is quite a big deal. I didn’t even have a gun yet, but here I was going out with my dad in darkness, carefully walking along a trail with flashlights to a spot that we hoped would produce a deer. Having to sit for hours without having toys to play with, waiting and watching for an elusive prey seemed an eternity to a six-year-old, but it taught me patience. Sitting there, just waiting, just watching, getting drowsy, snapping awake, looking around and then waiting some more. Day in and day out, the entire 1961-1962 deer season.

My dad must have decided I had it in me to be a hunter, because for my 7th birthday he bought for me a Harrington & Richardson single shot 20-gauge shotgun. Shoot, Little Ralphie in “A Christmas Story” could keep his Red Ryder BB gun. I had a “real” gun! This would be my hunting weapon for the next six years.

For my entire life I had been around guns of all types. But I had never had what others might call a “fascination” with them. I attribute this to my dad and his allowing me to become familiar with firearms at an early age. Whenever I asked, he would pull his rifles, shotguns and pistols out of the closet and let me hold them. But, first he made sure they were empty (bolt/action/cylinder open), showed me how to do it myself and always made sure I never pointed any of them toward anyone. He believed, rightly so, that if I didn’t have any curiosity about guns, I was less likely to sneak one or more out his closet while no one was home.

From the 1960’s to the mid-1970’s, I hunted around Lorman, Mississippi. My great aunt had 1000 acres straddling Jefferson and Claiborne counties where she lived. Only a few family members hunted, so it was seldom that we had more than 3 or 4 people to make a hunt. Up until 1975, when I stopped hunting, the most we were ever able to get together to make a hunt were 8 people. It was also before 3- or 4-wheelers, so you walked everywhere you went. The terrain was hilly, so to cover 1-2 miles in a day going to and from stands and up and down hills was not out of the ordinary. You would leave to go to your stand around 5:30 AM and usually got there and settled in by 6:15 to 6:30.

We also didn’t know anything about planting food plots in those days. You scouted the areas and looked for trails or other signs of deer activity. And you stood or sat on the ground. No 8-foot high enclosed wooden stands with swivel chairs, heaters and high power rifles. It was all shotguns and up close. The longest shots would be around 40 yards.

The only camouflage clothing we had were the World War II USMC Pacific theatre variety. That was it. Or you wore jeans and a regular coat. My hunting footwear was a pair of green uninsulated rubber boots. In winter you would wear a couple of pairs of socks and put plastic bread bags over the socks to try to keep your feet warm. In 12-15 degree temperature, it didn’t work. Our yearly routine was to get up Christmas morning, see what we got, load up and go to my Grandmother’s for Christmas dinner and then head to Lorman to be ready to hunt the next morning. Christmas gifts, unless hunting related, were not seen again until after the New Year. From 1965 to 1975....every year.

There were also some rules we had to follow. Break any of them and you found yourself sitting at the trailer, with no television, twiddling your thumbs until everyone came back. First rule- only the person in the lead had a loaded gun, but did not have a round in the chamber. So, it was only natural that single-shot shotguns never lead the way. Second rule- when you reached your stand you did not leave it for any reason until the hunting group came back through in reverse order to get you. Third rule- you did not load your weapon until the group had moved out of sight.

Why cover all this? Because this is how I hunted my first 6 years and NEVER KILLED A DEER! Yep, that's right! I shot AT a few deer, but never killed one. My dad never made me feel foolish, though. He would ask me questions about how far away the deer was when I shot at it, what kind of cover was around and was the deer walking or running. He once took some big pieces of cardboard and put one at 20 yards and one at 40 yards. He then had me shoot each with the #3 Buckshot I was using. At 20 yards, it had a reasonably good pattern, but at 40 yards, it was literally hit and miss. So, I knew that any shot beyond 20-25 yards was going to be problematic for my shotgun.

In 1968, my dad had a heart attack and it was thought that he would never hunt again. But, he refused to give in and bought a Thompson Center Contender and a .22 LR with scope and was right back in it. This meant I got to use his Browning Light 12. For a 13 year old moving up from a single shot 20-gauge to a semi-auto 12-gauge was like going from a VW Beetle to a Ferrari to a 13-year-old. I now had a weapon with the reach to get out to that 40-yard and beyond area and still have killing power. Taking what I had learned with the single shot and knowing the limitations of the gun, and myself I never again missed a deer from that period on.



In 1970, my dad had regained his health, so he took back his Browning. I was disappointed, until he showed me the new Mossberg 12-gauge 3-inch magnum bolt action shotgun with a 36-inch barrel and 2 round magazine he had bought me. My favorite load would be a slug followed by 2-00 buckshot.

I was now at the age where girls were becoming a big part of my life, but I still wanted to spend time with my dad when he went hunting in case he had another heart attack and I'd be there to help. The solution- bring the girlfriend up to the hunting camp with my family. Problem solved.

But fate has a way of catching up with us and in April 1975, my father passed away from a massive heart attack that took him without suffering. That hunting season I tried to go back to the woods, but couldn't. I realized at that point that being with my dad had been as big a part of the hunting experience as the hunting itself. He had taught me everything I knew about hunting, fishing and the outdoors in general. It would be 25 years before I would again deer hunt, but even today, I still miss my dad and all the advice he could probably still give me.

I competitively shoot rifles now and it's my dad's teaching me patience and perseverance that has allowed me to stick with my new sport without letting the disappointments, setbacks and

frustrations overtake me. I just use the advice he instilled in me so many years ago - *know your personal limitations and the limitations of your equipment.*

Thanks, Dad for everything you taught me. I still miss you!

By the way- I still have the Browning and Mossberg shotguns.

By: Rick Stewart

2011 CAMP PERRY REPORT

Fifteen Louisiana shooters attended CMP week at Camp Perry for the 109th National Rifle Matches. CMP week consists of the National Trophy Matches and the CMP Games Events. Those in attendance were Mark Altazin, Ron Chatelain, Tony Geeck, Jay Hunt, Rudy Kalman, Buck Kliebert, David Laballe, John Laws, Nick Owen, Brad Petras, Bruce Pickering, Gary Schwabe, Mike Strikmiller, Dwayne Vidrine and Dan Zelenka. Each shooter participated in several events, the highlights of which are below. Complete results are available at www.odcmp.com "National Trophy Matches Results".

http://clubs.odcmp.com/cgi-bin/report_matchResult.cgi?matchID=6544

The two juniors, Rudy Kalman and Brad Petras, started their trip to Camp Perry by attending the USMC Junior Highpower Clinic. The clinic helped the participants improve their skills as well as make friends with other juniors across the country. The clinic also included an Excellence-in-Competition match that provided 4-point introductory legs for the top 10% of the non-distinguished shooters who did not already have any leg points. Rudy Kalman earned his first 4 points with a score of 467-10X which was the 7th highest score of 102 non-distinguished juniors.



2011 Louisiana Service Rifle Team members during 300 yard rapid fire stage at Camp Perry

One of the adults, Nick Owen, attended the Small Arms Firing School which is a clinic taught by the US Army Marksmanship Unit. The clinic also included an Excellence-in-Competition match that provided 4-point introductory legs for the top 10% of the non-distinguished shooters who did not already have any leg points. Nick earned his first 4 points with a score of 389-10X out of 400 possible points. He finished 4th of 538 competitors.

The President's Rifle Match is the first and arguably the most difficult of the National Trophy Matches. It is a 30 shot match without sighters consisting of 10 shots slow fire at 200 yards from the standing position, 10 shots rapid fire at 300 yards from the prone position, and 10 shots slow fire from the prone position at 600 yards. It leaves little room for error. The top 100 finishers are the "President's 100" and receive medals and shoulder tabs for their accomplishment. Military shooters are authorized to wear these on their uniforms. Conditions were interesting with a storm blowing in on one relay that caused a cease fire for a two hour period. Dan Zelenka was on that relay but luckily managed to get his last shot off about thirty seconds before the cease fire. Because of the weather, the cut for the "President's 100" was a below average 284-4X. Only one Louisiana shooter finished in the "President's 100" - Dan Zelenka with a 288-9X for 34th out of 1251. This was Dan's 3rd "President's 100" finish in as many years. Other Louisiana shooters who scored well were Rudy Kalman at 187th with a 280-3X, and Buck Kliebert at 323rd with a 275-3X.

The National Trophy Individual Match is a 50 shot match without sighters that is similar to local Excellence-in-Competition matches. It consists of 10 shots slow fire at 200 yards from the standing position, 10 shots rapid fire at 200 yards from the sitting position, 10 shots rapid fire at 300 yards from the prone position, and 20 shots slow fire from the prone position at 600 yards. Medals are awarded to those competitors finishing above the score of the top 10% of the "non-distinguished" shooters. A "non-distinguished" shooter is one who has not yet earned the coveted title of "Distinguished Rifleman" by accumulating 30 award points in Excellence-in-Competition matches. The Louisiana contingent performed well this year with one gold and two bronze medals. The gold medal was earned by Dan Zelenka with a 481-14X. Ron Chatelain and Buck Kliebert each earned a bronze medal with scores of 475-11X and 475-10X respectively.

The Hearst Doubles Match is a two-man team match firing the same 30 shot format as the President's Match. Most of the Louisiana team slept in due to early morning rain. However, those who chose to brave the weather were treated to a beautiful day for shooting. The best finishing Louisiana team was John Laws and Nick Owen at 39th out of 251 with a 567-10X.

Since many of the group decided to skip the activities at the range, junior Brad Petras and his father George decided to book a fishing trip for the afternoon. The Port Clinton area is famous for its walleye fishing and they were not disappointed. Most of the guys decided that a fishing excursion should be part of next year's Camp Perry trip.

This year Louisiana fielded a service rifle team for the National Trophy Team Match. This match is a six-man team match firing the same 50 shot format as the National Trophy Individual Match. This year's team members were Team Captain David Laballe, Coach Jay Hunt, and firing members Mark Altazin, Rudy Kalman, Buck Kliebert, John Laws, Bruce Pickering and Dan Zelenka. In addition, Nick Owen and Dwayne Vidrine lent valuable assistance performing scoring duties. The team finished in 19th place out of 52 teams with a score of 2806-59X, bettering last year's finish by 6 places and nearly 50 points. John Laws led the team in scoring with a personal best of 485-12X. Much of the team's improvement is due to the large amount of support received by its non-firing members who performed vital tasks which in the past had been covered by the firing members.

Tony Geeck again participated in the National Trophy Infantry Team Match, shooting on Team Got 7.62?. Team members came from several states and all fired M14 style rifles. The National Trophy Infantry Team Match differs greatly in format from any other National Trophy Match. The six



Brad Petras with his first walleye.

members of the team are issued 384 rounds of ammunition which is spread among them according to the team's firing plan. Targets for the match are military silhouettes and the distances fired are 600, 500, 300 and 200 yards. The match begins at 600 yards with the shooters in the prone position and the coaches kneeling behind them with 10X binoculars. Eight targets are exposed for 50 seconds while the shooters try to get as many hits as possible with the coaches calling out corrections to those shooters not on target. The match continues at the nearer yard lines in similar fashion except that the targets are reduced in size for 300 and 200 and the shooters must fire from the sitting (300) and standing (200) positions. Hits made at 600 yards are worth 4 points with the value decreasing by 1 point each time the team moves forward. The match ends when all shooters have exhausted their ammunition. Once again the wood gun shooters' scores were low, but their fun factor was high.

The CMP Games Events consist of the M1 Carbine, 1903 Springfield, Vintage Military Rifle and John C. Garand matches. The M1 Carbine Match is fired at 100 yards and consists of 10 sighting shots, 10 slow fire shots from the prone position, 10 rapid fire shots from the prone position, 10 rapid fire shots from the sitting or kneeling position and 10 slow fire shots from the standing position. The remaining three matches are shot at 200 yards and consist of 5 sighting shots, 10 slow fire shots from the prone position, 10 rapid fire shots from the prone position and 10 slow fire shots from the standing position. Louisiana shooters earned the following medals in the Games Events:

- John Laws – Gold in Springfield and Bronze in M1 Garand
- Nick Owen - Silver in Vintage Military Rifle
- Gary Schwabe - Bronze in Springfield and Silver in Vintage Military Rifle and M1 Garand
- Mike Strikmiller - Silver in Vintage Military Rifle and Bronze in M1 Carbine, Springfield and M1 Garand
- Dwayne Vidrine - Silver in Vintage Military Rifle



2011 Louisiana Service Rifle Team -- Front Row - Mark Altazin, Dan Zelenka, Bruce Pickering, John Laws, Rudy Kalman, Buck Kliebert (Trigger Pullers) Back row - Nick Owen (Scorer), Jay Hunt (Coach), David Laballe (Captain)

Congratulations to the Louisiana shooters who participated in the 109th National Trophy Rifle Matches.

Dan Zelenka

Long Range Handgun Hunting with the 6.5 JDJ

By
Jay D. Hunt, Ph.D.

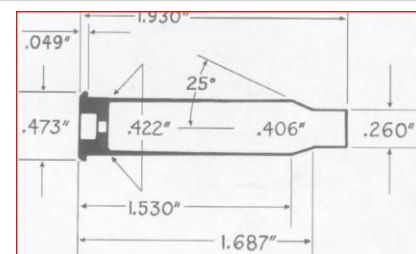
The loads mentioned in this article are safe in my particular handgun, but should not be used without first reducing the load in your handgun, and working up to maximum loads. Check your loading data against a reliable source before attempting to work up a load.

My introduction to handgun hunting in the mid-1980s was, well, let's just say, substantially less than mediocre. I was a graduate student living in Memphis making around \$10,000 a year with a new wife, and a brand new baby daughter. There was not a lot of extra money (diapers and formula were expensive), and sometimes those end-of-the-month meals were really creative.

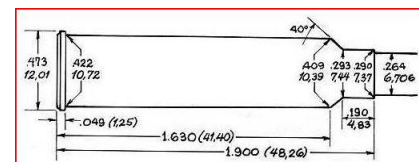
I knew what I wanted, but what I wanted and what I could afford were two entirely different things. I finally found a great deal on a Thompson/Center (T/C) Contender with two barrels: a 7mm T/CU and a .223 Remington, both in 14-inch configurations. Based on bullet weight selections, the then current game laws in Tennessee, and my love affair with all things 7mm, I decided that the 7mm T/CU would be (just) adequate for taking deer sized game.

In the 1980s, Memphis had a fantastic public shooting range located near the city garbage dump, and I was there every available weekend working up loads. As I could not afford a chronograph in those days, I relied on group sizes and published velocities. I was concerned about terminal performance, so I selected the (then) new Sierra 130 Gr. single shot pistol bullet. These bullets, which are no longer available, were purported to expand at velocities lower than would be expected from a rifle length barrel. My pet load was 26.0 Gr. of H4895, which sent a 130 Gr. bullet out of the barrel at a leisurely 2000 FPS. At 100 yards, this would yield 909 ft-lbs of energy at 1775 FPS, which should be marginally adequate to dispatch a whitetail deer. I will say, however, that the load produced one ragged hole on many a three-shot group at 100 yards.

In 1988, my hunting buddy borrowed my Contender and managed to put that theory to the test on nice tall 6-point in Middle Tennessee. He was set up beside a small pond, which had been the watering hole for several nice deer throughout the season. The single shot hit the buck behind the shoulder, and he immediately leapt into the air and landed in the pond. After we fished him out, a necropsy revealed that the deer had actually drowned, and the performance of the bullet was poor. It appeared that the bullet had fragmented immediately upon impact, and jacket fragments were found at the entrance wound. My buddy looked at me and summed it up, "Well that's not good." I made a decision on that day that I would not shoot another deer with the 7mm T/CU.



.225 Winchester



6.5 JDJ

a

(However, groundhogs were never safe when the 7 mm T/CU was in my possession).

Over the intervening years, a career and family seriously impacted my handgun hunting, and when I did have a chance to hunt, I used my trusty Ruger Redhawk in .44 Remington Magnum. However, my interest in single shot pistol hunting never faded. Last year, Dan Zelenka, President of the LSA, suggested that I borrow his 6.5 JDJ barrel for the T/C Contender. The 6.5 JDJ started life as a wildcat creation by famed pistol hunter, J.D. Jones. Jones took the venerable .225 Winchester, expanded the neck to .264", and steepened the neck from 25° to 40°. After a lot of research, I realized that I had finally found the perfect single shot pistol caliber for hunting deer and pigs, so I had SSK Industries send me my own barrel.

Reinventing the wheel has never been my favorite pastime, so with a bit of research I found that most hunters recommend the 120 Gr. Nosler Ballistic Tip (BT) for this cartridge. But, before I could begin reloading, I had to form the wildcat cases. I purchased 100 brand new .225 Winchester cases, and sized them using my custom Hornady dies. Although the dies are able to get virgin .225 Winchester cases close to final dimensions, like many wildcat cartridges, one has to fire-form them to get them to the final dimensions. Jones recommends using heavier bullets over a reduced load for this process. I used 31.0 Gr. of Varget under a 140 Gr. Speer JSP bullet. A quick trip to the range resulted in 100 newly fire-formed 6.5 JDJ cases.

Dan and Jones both recommend putting the 120 Gr. Nosler BT over 38.0 to 38.5 Gr. of IMR4350. This has been Dan's go-to load for hunting for many years, and has cost many a game animal its life. Dan has used it for hunting in North America and Africa. Accuracy from Dan's barrel with this load was great, but from my barrel, was poor. As Dan succinctly reported, it shot "minute of washtub" from my barrel. Although a slight exaggeration, 100-yard groups from my barrel averaged 1.9", whereas this same load turned in averages of less than 1" from Dan's barrel. Of note, Dan's barrel has a 1-9" twist barrel, whereas my barrel has a 1-8" twist. My plans were to use this pistol in September to hunt pronghorn antelope in Wyoming, where 300 yard shots are not atypical. Clearly, 2 minutes-of-angle (MOA) would not be accurate enough for this purpose.

From my previous experience, the BT is deadly. This proved to be true when I took a small buck during the 2010 Louisiana hunting season at 71 yards with a single shot to the neck (the only clear target available). The BT created tremendous shock and damage to the neck and he fell without taking a step. The BT fragmented and shed a lot of its jacket through the wound channel, exiting on the far side. Likewise, I have found that the 120 Gr. BT from my pistol expands violently on prairie dogs, doing tremendous damage to these small critters. But, although the bullet is deadly, my pistol just didn't seem to like them.

Given my concerns over the accuracy of the BT out of my barrel, and my infatuation with the new Barnes Tipped Triple Shock (TTSX) bullet, I decided to work up a load using the 120 Gr. TTSX bullet over Hodgdon Varget. J.D. Jones warns against the use of Barnes X-bullets in the Contender because of the long bearing surface on these solid copper bullets and the excessive pressures that can be generated. The original Barnes X-bullets were much longer than their cousins of the same



From left to right, the .225 Winchester case serves as the parent for the 6.5 JDJ shown to its right. A 6.5 JDJ loaded to an OAL of 2.900" with a 120 Gr. Nosler Ballistic Tip. A .243 Winchester round is included for comparison.

weight, given to the solid cooper design and the subsequent lack of a lead core. Bullets of similar design, such as the Sirocco, were reported to have caused high pressures and excessive fouling resulting in unacceptable accuracy. I, likewise, found this to be true in my experiments with the original Sirocco bullet design.

Barnes took this into consideration when they created the new TSX and TTSX bullets, and placed multiple circumferential grooves in the bullet to reduce bearing surface. At first glance, one may confuse these grooves as cannelures (often misspelled as "cannalures"), but they are not. However, blowing up a pistol, much less MY pistol has never been a desire of mine, so I heeded J.D. Jones' warnings and approached load development carefully. Mr. Jones recommends that bullets be seated at least .050 inches from the lands and that powder charges be reduced accordingly.

Using a full-length resized case without a primer or powder, I inserted a 120 Gr. TTSX into the case and inserted this into the bore of my Contender. I repeatedly closed the chamber until the bullet was seated in the case deep enough to allow the Contender to securely latch. After I removed the case from the bore, I measured the case length and determined that the throat of my Contender with this particular bullet seated against the lands was 2.9505 inches. Subtracting the minimum bullet jump of .05 inches from this, resulted in a maximum cartridge overall length (O.A.L.) of 2.9005. Just to be safe, I adjusted my dies to seat the bullets to an easy to remember O.A.L. of 2.9000. Keep in mind that your handgun will have a different throat length and you cannot skip this step of determining the maximum safe O.A.L for your particular handgun.

By the way, if you own a Hornady or Stony Point Overall Length (O.A.L.) gauge, you can make your own reference cases for measuring the throat of your firearm. Purchase a 5/16-36 tap (a taper tap is best if you can find one, but a punch tap will work). Take a fired case, and resize it using your full-length sizing die for the appropriate caliber. Next, center the case in a drill press, and drill out the primer pocket all the way through using a $\frac{9}{32}$ drill. You can figure out the correct drill to use using a very easy-to-use formula. Once the case is drilled and tapped, it will fit your O.A.L. gauge.

J.D. Jones recommends reducing powder charges by at least 10%, so again, just to be safe, I reduced charges by 15%. The maximum load of Varget recommended by SSK for the 120 Gr. Nosler BT is 34.0 Gr. Using this as my upper limit, I began loading 85% of 34.0 Gr., or 29.0 Gr. To make a very long story a little bit shorter, I discovered that 33.8 Gr. of Varget behind a Barnes 120 Gr. TTSX bullet is safe in my pistol. Bolstered by this finding, I worked up a load with Reloader 15, which has a similar burn rate as Varget. I found that 33.5 Gr. of Reloader 15 behind this same bullet was both safe and extremely accurate.

TAP DRILLS FOR SPECIAL THREAD SIZES

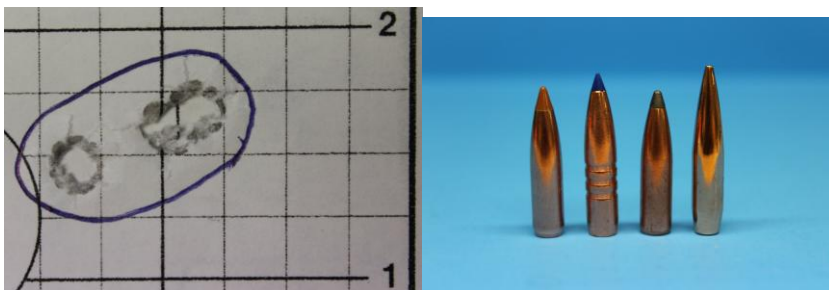
To determine tap drill size for special threads, use the following formula:

$$\text{TAP DRILL SIZE} = \text{DIA} - (.974 / \text{PITCH})$$

EXAMPLE: 3/8-32

$$.375 - (.974 / 32) = .345$$

USE DRILL SIZE CLOSEST TO .345



The four bullets used for load design are (from L to R), 120 Gr. Nosler Ballistic Tip, 120 Gr. Barnes TTSX, 125 Gr. Nosler Partition, and 130 Gr. Berger Hunting VLD.

However, Dan was not impressed with the potential terminal performance of the Barnes TTSX bullets as compared to the known terminal performance of the Nosler BT. His logic was flawless: he has killed all sorts of game with the BT, and knows that it works. So, it was back to the drawing board. Luckily, one of my favorite

pastimes is to develop loads for a new firearm. Based on published data, and 36 years of reloading experience, I began to develop loads using ten different powders and four different bullets.

Bullet	Powder	Charge Weight (Gr.)	Average Group Size (in)	Muzzle Velocity (FPS)	Remaining Velocity at 100 yds (FPS)	Energy at 100 yds (ft-lbs)
120 Gr. Nosler BT	IMR4350	38.5	1.92	2347±17	2166	1250
	AA2520	33.5	0.63	2463±14	2276	1380
	AA2230	33.0	1.61	2456±11	2276	1380
	AA2495	34.0	1.44	2400*	2216	1309
	Varget	34.0	1.51	2460*	2273	1377
	RL15	35.0	1.92	2400*	2216	1309
	N550	37.0	1.61	2431±9	2245	1343
	N160	38.0	2.24	2300±9	2120	1198
120 Gr. Barnes TTSX	RL15	33.5	0.91	2300*	2115	1192
	Varget	33.8	1.29	2376±21	2187	1275
125 Gr. Nosler Part	IMR4320	33.0	1.88	2410*	2222	1370
	N550	36.5	2.11	2375±12	2188	1329
130 Gr. Berger VLD	H4831	39.0	1.70	2200*	2055	1219
	IMR4350	33.5	1.31	2300*	2151	1336
	IMR4320	32.0	2.86	2340*	2191	1386
	N550	36.0	1.46	2340±22	2191	1386
*Velocity estimated based on published data						
Bullet	Powder	Charge Weight (Gr.)	Average Group Size (in) [MOA]			
			100 Yards	200 Yards	300 Yards	
120 Gr. Nosler BT	AA2520	33.5	0.63 [0.60]	2.26 [1.08]	3.01 [0.96]	
			<i>Remaining Velocity (FPS):</i>	2276	2097	1927
			<i>Remaining Energy (ft-lbs):</i>	1380	1172	989

After several hours at the range with my Oehler 35P chronograph, the results were in. I have decided that my 6.5 JDJ barrel is female: beautiful but moody. Of the 16 loads tested to date, only two shoot below 1 MOA. Luckily, the best of those groups is with the 120 Gr. Nosler BT! The use of 33.5 Gr. of Accurate 2520 results in groups that often are in the 0.50" range.

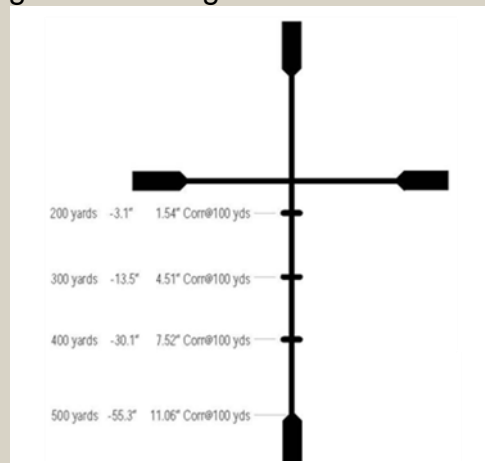
I finally had the accurate load I needed to stalk pronghorn antelope in the high plains of Wyoming. Under the brutally hot sun of August in Southern Louisiana, I headed out to the 600-yard

range at the Palo Alto Rifle & Pistol Club near Donaldsonville, LA. After a day at the range, I made an important, but expensive discovery: the Bushnell Elite 3200 2-6X scope on my 6.5 JDJ was fantastic for hunting situations from 0-200 yards, but was inadequate for those 300 yard shots. I hear you asking, "Why?" The answer is simple: with the scope sighted in at either 100 or 200 yards (or anyplace in between), shots out at 300 yards fell well below the target. Through careful experimentation, I found that the correct aiming point was somewhere between the crosshairs and the point at which the reticle went from thin to thick. My problem was that when I had plenty of time to estimate the correct aiming point, I could get reasonably good groups for hunting purposes; however, in the heat of the moment with that trophy pronghorn just itching to spring off towards the horizon, I was very worried that I would not be able to get the shot right.



Ballistic Plex

Again, I went to Dan for advice. Dan suggested I look into getting a Burris 2-7X handgun scope with a Ballistic Plex™ reticle. Given that my Wyoming hunt was a mere three weeks away, and I had to be confident in my 300-yard shots, I broke out the AmEx and ordered the scope. There are several ways to use the Ballistic Plex™, and the Burris website gives a great description of each of the methods one may use to get the most out of the scope. Based on calculations for my bullet and velocity, I chose to sight in my scope at 146 yards. The plexes on the scope have been designed by Burris to be as useful as possible for as many different cartridges as possible. Using ballistic software, I calculated the anticipated trajectory for my load of 33.5 Gr. of AA2520 under a 120 Gr. Nosler BT at 2463 FPS. Theoretically, with the crosshairs zeroed at 146 yards, the crosshairs would place shots 1.0 inches high at 100 yards, the first plex should be dead on at 200 yards, the second plex should be 1.6 inches low at 300 yards, and the third plex should place shots 6.1 inches low at 400 yards.



Yards	Ballistic Plex Reticle Drop	Calculated Bullet Trajectory	Drop Variance (inches)
100	Crosshairs	1.0	1.0
146	Crosshairs	0.0	
200	-3.1	-3.1	0.0
300	-13.5	-15.1	-1.6
400	-30.1	-36.2	-6.1

I chose to use the second plex below the crosshairs to sight in the scope at 300 yards. This is more difficult than it sounds, and required a great deal of practice before I became really proficient at shooting reasonable groups of about 1 MOA. Sighting in involved the use of a Caldwell Tackdriver™ shooting bag from a concrete bench at standard targets. Once the zero had been confirmed, the pistol was again fired at 200 yards, and then at 100 yards to confirm that the calculated ballistics matched the actual ballistics. Although not perfect, they matched close enough for hunting situations.

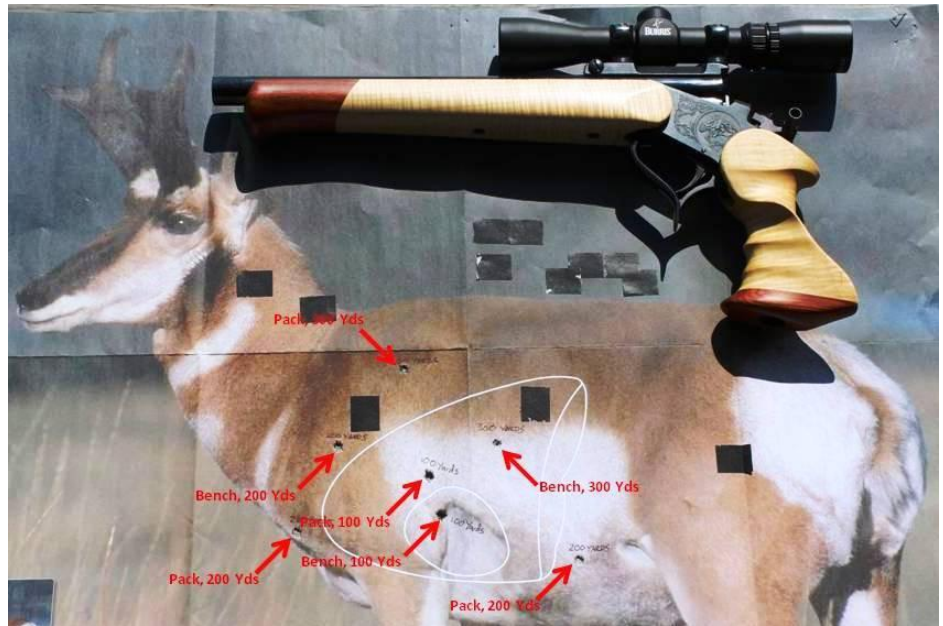


Finally, shots were taken from the bench, and from the ground using my day pack as a shooting rest on a ½-scale antelope target (shots taken from 300 yards appeared to be an antelope standing at 600 yards). In addition to boosting my confidence in my ability to take that 300 yard shot at an antelope, I learned something very important: it is really difficult to shoot a pistol from the ground using a backpack as a rest. I also learned that shooting from a purpose-built tripod was impossible at those distances.

So, how did the cartridge perform on my trip to Wyoming? The bottom line is that I'd love to tell you, but I

can't. As the sun rose on the morning of my hunt, I found myself sitting on a butte about 150 feet above the plains. I could easily see many miles in every direction. I had a very nice buck on the butte with me that was easily within pistol range at about 150 yards; however, there were also two does below me on the plain. When I tried to move into position to get a shot on the buck, the does saw me and the buck ran down onto the plains to be with them. The shot I did take was really outside of my comfort zone, and was taken from a precarious laying position with the pistol on my pack below the rest of my body. The shot went clean over the buck, who didn't stick around for an encore shot. I ended up taking several long shots that day with my pistol, all of which were clean misses. So, in the afternoon, I broke out the rifle and took a nice buck at 354 yards with a 6.5 X 55 custom Mauser that I built.

After the hunt that night at dinner my outfitter, J.T. Nunn and I were talking about next year's hunt. We decided that the best approach for getting a shot on a buck would be to use an archery blind set up over a watering hole. So although I was not successful in 2011 with the 6.5 JDJ, I feel confident that this time next year I'll be telling you all about the pronghorn taken with my pistol.



To give more of a hunting feel to the sighting in process, a ½-scale antelope target was used. The author aimed center mass on the target using the white patch on the mid-body as his aiming point. The vital area could not be seen from 200 or 300 yards. Holes resulting from experimentation with the Elite 3200 scope previously mounted on the pistol are covered with black squares.



Resources mentioned in this article

Accurate Powders	http://www.accuratepowder.com/
Alliant Powders	http://www.alliantpowder.com/
Barnes Bullets	http://www.barnesbullets.com/
Bar-Nunn Hunting	http://www.bar-nunn.com/
Berger Bullets	http://bergerbullets.com/
Burris Pistol Scopes	http://www.burrisoptics.com/burrisusa.html
Bushnell Pistol Scopes	http://www.bushnell.com/hunting/
Caldwell Shooting Supplies	http://www.battenfeldtechnologies.com/caldwell/
Hodgdon and IMR Powders	http://www.hodgdon.com/
Nosler Bullets	http://www.nosler.com/
Oehler Ballistic Chronographs	http://www.oehler-research.com/index.html
Palo Alto Rifle & Pistol Club	http://paloaltogunclub.com/
SSK Industries	http://sskindustries.com/
Vihtavuori Powders	http://www.lapua.com/en/products/reloading/vihtavuori-powders

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c/o Jay D. Hunt
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Convenience Fee (3% only if paying by credit card) _____
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