

Precision SHOOTING

Dealing exclusively with extreme rifle accuracy

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Editorial

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Long gone is my Napoleonic style smooth bore beauty that once exploded frequently under the skies of southern California. Ah, the never ending fun that it provided! For years now the absence of this black powder-powered companion left a void in my life. That lack has since been remedied, I am happy to say.

While back I found myself visiting the workshop of gunsmith Joe Dakota, located a bit west of Spokane, Washington. While there I idly inquired about an unusually shaped piece of steel. "Oh, that?" he said. It's a heavy steel axle shaft from a locomotive out of the Spokane railroad yards." "Hmmm," I mused. "Wouldn't that be a dandy thing if the right gunsmith worked it over?"

Joe knows me well. He wryly inquired how large would I like the bore? We settled on inch and a half. The fuse hole should be 5/32. Trim the steel to, say, about 18 inches in length. Joe suggested that I give him a call in about three weeks.

It had been no easy matter to drill into steel of that quality. But in three weeks there it lay in his shop, ready to go. The good Mr. Dakota offered the opinion that a test might be in order before I took it home. A phone call was made.

Off we went to a farm owned by a friend of his who resembled one of those wiry fellows in an A. B. Frost painting of long ago. I thought that I was really into enjoyment of the workings of a small cannon. The bib-overalled farmer fellow, as we stood out behind his large wooden barn was into a rip roaring time. We had been kawahbooming one ounce lead balls into a nearby hillside and we would still be there if he had his way.

Living in parts of Idaho one

spends an inordinate amount of time thinking about the coming winter. Like beginning a few days after the end of the last one. If it wasn't gathering cord wood, getting in gardens, dealing with large downed trees, making sure that the water well was in order, maybe building a new storage shed, shooting an occasional round on the backyard range and the rest...if it wasn't all that then it was something else.

Lesser matters would now be put in their proper perspective. It was time for people to know that this wasn't another in the woods backwater set up. For miles around neighbors would soon be aware that a class act was now in their midst. And what better day than the Fourth of July?

My wife and a friend of hers were on the front lawn, drinking

ice tea. They watched as I rolled a wheelbarrow by. It had some kind of metal thing leaning out over its front. As yet there was no carriage for the cannon. In the wheelbarrow an arrangement had been made with sturdy birch blocks. There would be no proverbial loose cannons today. Rigid it was.

A large privacy berm about ten feet high borders the front of our place. Behind it is a grassy, tree-lined lane that runs about one hundred yards north and south. On this side of the berm a fellow (me, to be exact) was a man in the midst of serious preparation of something or other. A fellow who was totally unaware that things were about to go South in a hurry. The best laid plans and all that...

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ABOUT THE COVER

CHRIS RUGER RIFLE

This rifle is the product of the artistry and skill of Chris Ruger of Ruger Custom Guns of Kingston, New York. The right bolt, right port stainless action is a Stolle Grizzly II in a highly polished finish.

The barrel is a 5 1/2 contour stainless Hart, chambered in .243 Ackley Improved, 40 degree shoulder. The distinctive interrupted barrel fluting is a service provided by Hart and adds a stylishly modern look to the rifle. It has a Holland recoil lug and the trigger is a Jewell with a bottom safety. The magazine box and trigger guard are Remington 700, the barrel free floated and the action is pillar bedded.

The hand-oiled stock is an original pattern of Chris' and is executed on a beautiful piece of exhibition grade Bastogne walnut. There is no separate grip cap but the wood at the base of the grip is flared into one and a Pachmayr Decelerator butt pad is installed. The stock has inlaid oval sling bases with screws installed in time.

The 45-X Leupold Competition scope is mounted with Kelbly rings.

Roland Paolucci

