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# GUN NOTES

*By Elmer Keith, Executive Editor*

### *SIGHTING IN HUNTING RIFLES*

Before attempting any big-game hunt, the rifle should be correctly sighted and zeroed so that when the chance does come, you can place your shot with precision. Many things must be considered in sighting in the hunting rifle. For instance, the elevation at which you hunt must be considered. First, let's look at the effect of elevation on your rifle's zero. Years ago, three of us, including my friend Judge Martin, zeroed our rifles here at the 2,400 feet elevation, then took them to Alaska and all of our rifles shot six inches low up there at sea level at 200 yards. I missed the first shot at a black bear with my .35 Whelen. I went under him before holding higher on that blackie and then downed him. Then I checked the super-accurate G&H Springfield and found it was six inches low at 200 yards. Earlier, I had found the effect of elevation here in Idaho. My .280 Dubiel Magnum was sighted perfectly for 300 yards at 4,200 feet. However, it shot a good four inches high up at 10,000 feet. I found that rifles sighted here shot to the center all right in Africa, when fired at about the same elevation. Elevation should always be considered and if possible, a pre-hunt shot or two fired at or in the country you are going to hunt could possibly save your game for you!

The game hunted also has much to do with the range in which you sight your rifle. Mule deer, sheep and goat are often apt to be at long ranges and high-velocity rifles should be sighted to take advantage of their flat trajectory. Rifles of the .30-06 class should be zeroed at 200 yards while

*continued on page 13*


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## GUNNOTES

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the higher velocity magnums can be zeroed at 250 to 300 yards for expert riflemen who will remember to hold around 4½ inches low at 200 yards. For the tyro it is better to sight them for 200 yards to not over 250, as a lot of misses are over the animal if sighted for too long a point blank.

For timber game and elk, moose and big bear, which are much more often timber game than otherwise, I like a rifle set for 150 yards so you can place the bullet where you want it as shooting is most often from 30 yards out to around 150 yards. I carried my .400 Whelen with a 350-grain WTC Co. bullet sighted for 150 yards. I killed 12 elk and forget how many mule deer with it and I have never lost an animal hit with it. Velocity was only around 2,300 feet per second with the heavy bullet.

Most big rifles chambered for the .338 Magnum, the .340 Weatherby, .375 H&H and my .338-74 Keith can be safely sighted for 250 yards and run little chance of overshooting. I carry my .338-74 Keith rifles set for 300 yards and expect a 4½-inch raise at 200 and the same for the .340 Weatherby, which is our old .334 O.K.H. with a larger diameter bullet. The longest ranged of them all are the .338-378 K.T. with a 250-grain bullet at just over 3,000 fps velocity and the 275-grain Speer at 2,600 fps. I have found that long, heavy bullets in proportion to caliber do not shed velocity as fast as the light, ultra-high-velocity slugs, and for this reason are much flatter in trajectory at long range than most people would suspect. I can get by nicely for all big-game hunting with velocities from 2,000 to 2,300 fps for the heavy stuff—elk, moose, big bear and the Big Five or Big Six of Africa. For long-range hunting, I have done all right with velocities of just 2,600 fps to 2,700 fps with long, heavy bullets, for ranges out to 500 and on a rare occasion or two at 600 yards.

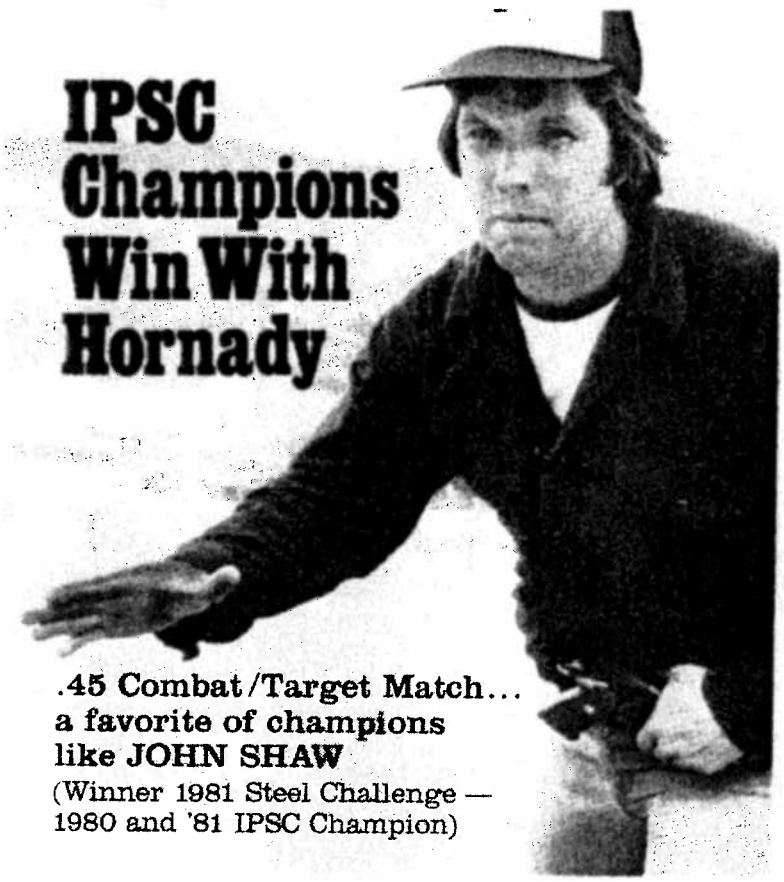
Range estimation is something every hunter should practice constantly when hunting. Estimate the distance to a rock, tree or some other object, then pace it off. Do this at every opportunity and you will be a far better game shot. If you know your rifle and its drop at various ranges, it's very easy to hold up, or over, distance game and make killing hits.

Remember at low altitudes the distance always looks greater than it actually is and at high elevations the range appears much closer than it actually is and for this reason you may be more apt to overshoot at low elevations and undershoot at higher elevations. All these conditions must be carefully considered if you are to become a good big-game shot.

### *PENETRATION OF SOLIDS*

Right after World War II, Kynoch turned out some solids or full-patched bullets for most of the big double rifle calibers

*continued on page 14*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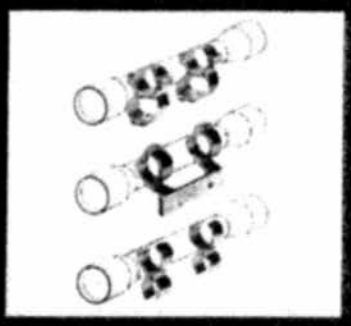

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## GUNNOTES

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that had very brittle steel jackets. These tended to blow up and rupture on the land cuts and gave very poor penetration. A .600 double Nitro Express failed to penetrate to the brain of a wounded elephant with six side shots well placed. The bull had been stopped with a spine shot just over the tail, but those steel-jacket solids would not penetrate even from the heaviest modern double rifle. After a lot of kicks, Kynoch then turned out some very fine solids with steel jackets and in many different calibers. The .416 has long been noted for its tremendous penetration. A rhino took me on in Africa at just 18 paces and I could not get a shot at his shoulder to break it and aimed at his chest for a heart shot when he turned and faced me, but just as I started the trigger squeeze, he ducked his head and charged. Heavy tree boles covered both shoulders, so I hit him in the end of the nose right under the front horn at ten paces. The 520-grain cupro nickel solid from my .476 Westley Richards shattered all the upper jaw teeth on the right side and he went down on his chin with front feet folded back, but continued to kick toward me. I was well caught in wait-a-bit thorn, so waited for him to regain his feet for my second shot. When he came up on all fours I shot for his right shoulder but just as I fired he fell on his nose again with his hind quarters still erect from the effects of the first slug. My second slug went in over the shoulder in the ribs and penetrated through to the right hind quarter. The bull continued to kick himself toward me at a few feet-range as I was reloading the big double, so I yelled at John Lawrence, my white hunter, to take him on. John did so instantly, giving him a slug from his .416 just back of the bone in the right shoulder that we found later. It had penetrated clear through to the left flank, which we measured as a full 60 inches of penetration from this 410-grain, steel-jacketed solid. That rhino bull took it but jumped to his feet and swapped ends and departed from the heavy thorn. Had not John hit him when he did, he would have been on me in another second, and before I could possibly have reloaded. The bull then barged out in the open and John hit him again through the top of the withers, and I found an opening and tore myself out of the wait-a-bit thorn and gave him one square in the shoulder that broke both shoulder and spine, but the 520-grain bullet shattered in the spine to tiny fragments. It killed the bull, however, and I then poured the other barrel down into the brain between the ears at close range when he fell on his side with the top of his head toward me. John's .416 showed much better penetration than my .476 Westley with cupro-nickel, jacketed solids.

The best penetration on elephant I have heard of has been from the .416, the .458 and the .460 Weatherby, the latter doing best of all with real heavy-steel, jacketed solids from bolt-action rifles. The best penetration from double rifles I have had accurate reports on comes from George Neary. He shot a bull elephant in the seat of the pants with his old Rigby .577-100-750 with steel jacket solids and the bullet came out of the huge bull's chest and badly nicked one of his tusks. Russ Douglas also reported shooting a big bull that turned on them after his lady client had given him a slug in the stomach at a few yards range. Russ shot him in the chest and the slug went clear through the elephant and exited after breaking the left hip. Lyle Corcoran shot a big bull running broadside through the

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## GUNNOTES

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rain with my H&H .577 with the same load and the slug went through the big Congo bull's head and then through a small tree on the other side. Another bull he shot through the shoulders with my rifle went clear through and exited. So for the man who can handle them, there is little doubt but that the .577-100-750 with steel-jacket solids is the best medicine of all where extreme penetration is needed on elephant, rhino or buff.

### *KEITH .44 MAGNUM BULLET*

Gregg Harrison, Rt. 3, Box 81H, Pleasant Hill Church Rd., Blountville, TN 37617, sent me a batch of 270-grain Keith bullets he had cast from his mould. These fine bullets are very accurate and a charge of 21 grains of 2400 seems to be the right medicine for them with normal primers. They should give maximum penetration on big game and in this respect beat my old original 250-grain due to the extra 20 grains of weight. The base band is a trifle wider, the nose a trifle longer, and the grease groove is square and deep but narrower than my original design. However, there was no sign of leading and unlike a 280-grain bullet I designed for Belding & Mull back in 1925, these 270-grainers are as accurate at long range as any I have ever tried.

My Belding & Mull 280-grain slug had a nose patterned after the old .41 Long Colt—very blunt and I now believe it had too much weight forward, for finest long-range accuracy. It also had a narrower front band. The .44 Mag has now killed everything from polar bear, moose, elk and elephant to Cape buffalo, and I believe this Harrison variation on my original design may well prove the best of all for deep penetration on big game. A recent letter from Harrison says the moulds were made by Northwest Industrial Co. in El Paso, TX. Ken Lomont also found these bullets very accurate from his machine rest. Ken chronographed the loads with 21 grains of 2400 from an eight-inch barrel at 1,425 feet per second. Eighteen shots at 60 yards went into a three-inch group from his machine rest. Remington No. 2½ standard primers were used. White's lab test showed my 250-grain bullet with 22 grains of 2,400 and a normal primer produced around 1,400 feet with 34,000 PSI from a 6½-inch barrel. For the silhouette shooters using .44 Magnum guns, this Keith 270-grain bullet should prove the ultimate for knocking over the iron silhouette targets. It will also prove ideal for stopping cars—either by busting up the motor block, or penetration of the tires or the gas tank—over any tight bullet/high velocity combination possible from the .44 Magnum.

*Elmer Keith's illness still precludes his answering any correspondence.*


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# GUN NOTES

*By Elmer Keith, Executive Editor*

### *BIG-GAME BULLETS*

First, let's talk about full jacket or solid bullets. As a boy in Montana, I used a 1903 Springfield with full-patch, 150-grain bullets for my coyote shooting and had very good success with the little spitzer full-patch bullet. They usually tumbled on impact and killed quite well. Sometimes however, on broadside rib shots, they sim-

ply drilled through and then I had to shoot again. Later, after service on the Montana National Guard .30 caliber team at Camp Perry, I tried the full-patch nine-degree boattail on coyotes and it did not kill half as well as the short, tumbling 150-grainer. I lost 15 coyotes one winter. They were shot with the 173-grain boattails that simply drilled through with no tumbling.

Back in 1917 I wounded a six-point elk at daylight on the West Gallatin by putting a 220-grain soft nose in his flank while he was quartering away. It was the only shot I could get between the trees. I trailed that bull all day into and then out of the park. I gave the bull my scent on a long circle and ran him out. I got another running shot in the deep snow and planted another 220-grain bullet in the elk's flank. Both bullets, I later learned, went into the paunch and stayed right there. The bull left

his seven-point partner and turned down the mountain and I slipped him another 220-grain right under his tail. That stopped him. Being a green 18-year-old kid, I put

in a 150-grain service spitzer and worked my way down for a close shot. When I fired, he whirled, his hair all on end, threw his head up and charged and I shot him in

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## GUNNOTES

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ıe bulge of the neck which dropped him ɔr good. Later when I skinned out the head I found a badly deformed 150-grain bullet lodged in the jawbone, showing how that bullet changed direction.

While the 150-grain service .30 caliber bullet is the most erratic after striking game, the flat point bullets are most apt to hold a true course with the round nose second. I once shot a big bull bison at 60 yards standing broadside to me. I held for a high lung shot as I did not want to damage the skull. That bull jumped eight feet into the air from the impact of the 520-grain cupro nickel-covered solid from my .476 Westley Richards double rifle, and he came down in full charge! My next barrel, I tried for a shoulder shot as he quartered toward me. The 520-grain solid went inside the shoulder, struck a rib, turned square across the chest and broke another rib and wound up under the skin. That put him down, but he was not dead. It later proved to be a mass of broken-up jacket and core with no resemblance to its former shape. The bull was still not dead and after five minutes Iver Henriksen ran in against my wishes and sat down on the bull's hindquarters, saying he would never get up. As Iver kinked his tail, the bull exploded off the ground 'rowing Iver to one side. As he whirled to ·t Iver, I shot him in the side of the neck, .lling him instantly. That 520-grain round nose solid went through the neck vertebrae and into the side hill. Iver dug it out the next spring and it was only "rifling marked" and still in perfect shape! That shows you never can be certain just what any bullet, even a solid, will do on impact. An African Cape buffalo I also shot broadside through the heart with the same rifle and 520-grain solid simply jumped into high gear and ran in the direction he was originally headed. Swinging the big rifle sights ahead of his nose, I shot the other barrel which caught him high in the shoulder and broke the shoulder and the spine. His front legs folded up and he skidded on his chin with his hindquarters high in the air for 30 feet before he hit a rock pile and folded up without a kick. Those two solids worked perfectly. While the two 520-grain solids worked perfectly on the Cape buffalo, my first shot at the bison with the same ammunition, held for a lung shot, went through the skin and never entered either lung. Where it went, we never determined nor did we find it in the meat. I can only conclude it turned on a rib and went back into the huge paunch and lodged there as there was absolutely no trace of an exit. How two ribs can so badly deform a 520-ain, .476 solid and the same type bullet after the neck vertebrae of that bison and go into the snow and ground a foot, and still be in perfect shape is beyond my ken. I prefer solids for elephant, buffalo, rhino and hippo, but you should strive for either

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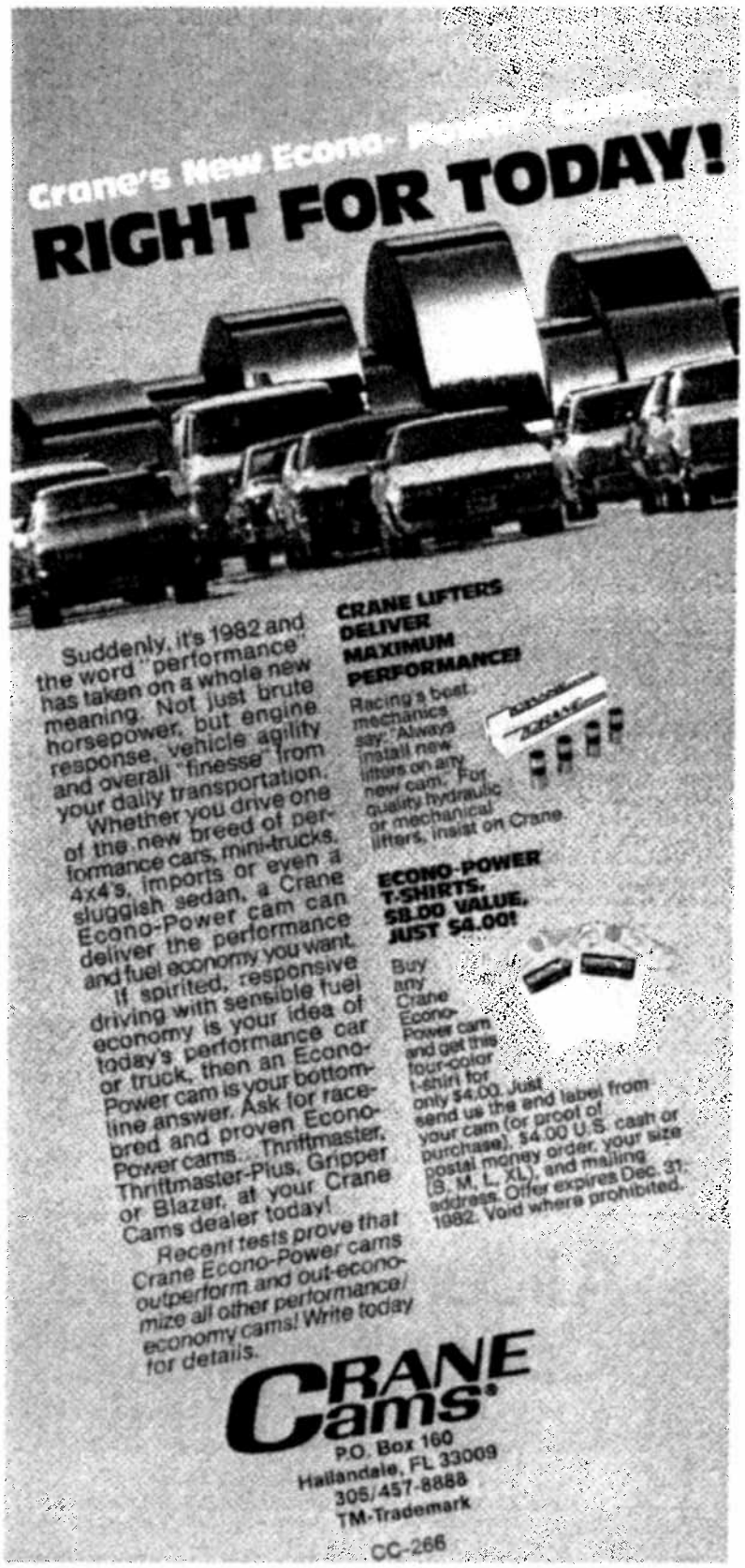
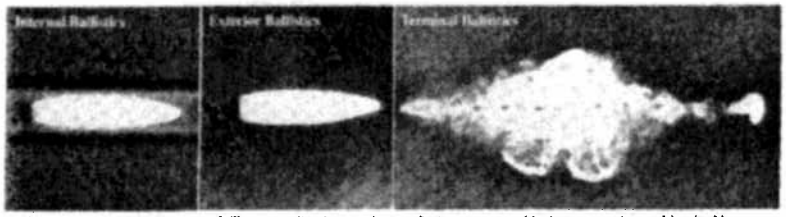


# On Target

## Start to Finish

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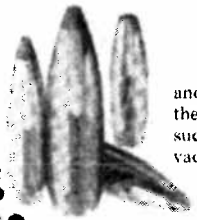

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## GUNNOTES

*continued from page 13*

a brain or spine shot and break bones w/ solids, otherwise they may have little immediate effect. My 1957 African White Hunter, John Lawrence, once told me if he could shoot like I did on that safari that he would use nothing but solids. However, I prefer soft nose for all lesser game.

Over the years I have tried or seen used about every possible type of expanding bullets at both low and high velocities. The umbrella point of Winchester, the Bronze Point of Remington, the U.S. Cartridge trick point were most all at high velocity and they proved to have very poor penetration in the main. They would also ruin a lot of meat and you never could predict exactly how they would perform. If they got into the lungs and heart area, they killed quicker than a long heavy soft nose but they also failed miserably through lack of penetration on raking shots and often on shoulder shots as well. Seven elk were shot in the shoulder one fall in the Selway. I once put five Remington Bronze Points of 150-grain into a bull elk's ribs at 300 yards from a Government Springfield sporter. The five all went through the rib cage and into the right lung where each blew out a small crater the size of a hen's egg. Then my partner put two .25-35 117-grain into his paunch, out of five he fired, and the bull turned around and faced us. I had the one clip of 1923 National Match boatt, of 173-grains weight, so I shoved them in the magazine and centered my aim on his neck. He dropped dead at that shot and we later found that the bullet had drilled him full-length and it finally came out at the top of his tail.

That and many more experiences with short, lightweight, high-velocity bullets soured me on them for my own game shooting.

One party I had in the Lochsa, in the late thirties, were all armed with .30-06 and 180-grain U.S. Cartridge Company's trick point spitzer bullets. They should have had seven elk but wound up with three kills that hit the neck or spine and the other four got away wounded in spite of our best efforts to trail them up.

I sent a hunting party to Charlie Snook at Elk Summit in the sixties. Each had a .270 rifle and 150-grain bulleted ammo. Two of them shot three elk each and the other two each shot two elk they wounded and lost them all. Charlie was as mad as a wet hen when they wanted to book again for the next year. He told them he would only book them if they came to me and took my recommendations for an elk rifle. They did so and I told them to get Model 70 Winchester rifles in .375 H&H and 300-grain bullets. Then sight the rifles 150 yards for that heavy-timbered elk country. They booked again and after the hunt they each came in with a fifth of scotch for me and claimed they got four elk

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## GUNNOTES

*continued from page 14*

vith one shot each!

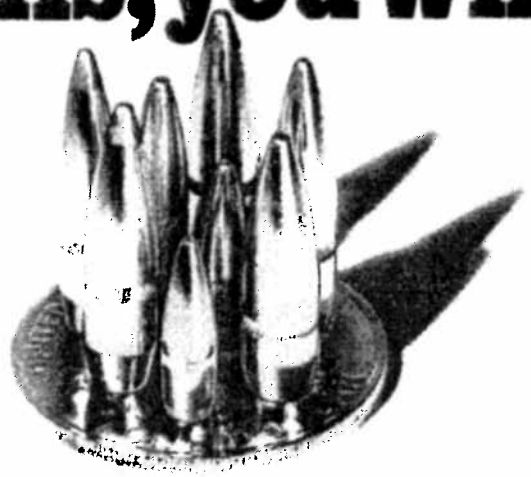
Leslie Simson, who hunted Africa for 23 years and filled many museum groups of African game, used a .577 double for lion and all the big stuff, and for plains game he recommended a rifle of .35 caliber throwing a 275-grain bullet at 2,500 feet per second (fps) and if any change is required, then add bullet weight rather than velocity. After a lifetime of hunting from the Arctic to Africa, I concur with his findings 100 percent.

I stopped booking anyone for elk unless they used a rifle throwing at least a 250-grain bullet and not less than .33 caliber in the rifle, as I was getting pretty tired of trailing wounded elk. Summing up our present big-game bullets, the 250-.338 and 300-grain Nosler Partition jacket always gave good results even though the point-half would blow off at close range and I have had no experience with the later one-piece jacketed Nosler. The Sierra Bottails in both 250 grains .338 and 300-grain .375 were by all odds the most accurate game bullets I have ever fired but at the time did not expand much on broadside shots at antelope. They also blew up on bones of heavier game and also often shed their jackets on heavy game. The 275 old heavy jacket Speer was, for many years, my standby in he various .338 caliber rifles after we quit ie .333 O.K.H. The .338 Magnum is our old short-belted .333 O.K.H. with a .008-inch larger bullet just as the .340 Weatherby is our old .334 O.K.H. with the same larger bullet.

For years I used the 275-grain Western Tool & Copper Works bullets in the .35 Whelen. They would not expand enough on black bear but were wonderful on grizzly, brownies and elk. The .400 Whelen with 63 grains of 17 1/2 powder and the 350-grain W.T.C. Co. bullet was always a killer on everything.

Bill Stegers softpoints with the cores soldered to the jacket always worked well from all reports, though I never used them myself. Summing them all up, I have more faith in a plain soft nose with enough lead exposed for certain expansion and a heavy enough jacket to hold together. The Hot Core Speer has done well in this respect as has the Remington Core Lokt. This Remington has always proved a reliable bullet in their heaviest weights, but their 150-grain 7 mm Mag will blow up like about all other high-velocity bullets and I don't recommend that caliber for anything heavier than deer. After a lifetime of hunting, I prefer a long, heavy soft nose bullet with a heavy enough jacket so it will expand, but never blow up. I prefer it to go right through an animal's lungs broadside, and leave a blood trail, whereas the high-velocity stuff that blows up leaves no blood trail and seldom penetrates sufficiently except on broadside rib shots, which are so seldom obtained.


# Tails, you win!



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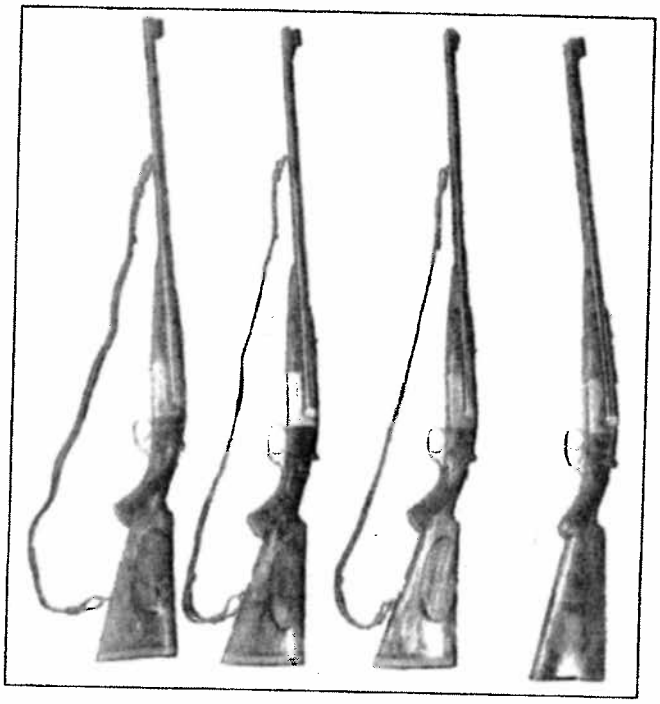


*Although double rifles are actually seldom scoped, they can have a scope mounted. None of these four doubles has a scope largely because they were used for short-range shooting. The left-most rifle is the .476 Westley Richards that Keith took on his first African safari.*

They have taken every species of big game on this and all other continents over the years. I have seen about all American species killed with them. The huge Wainwright buffalo herd, numbering in the thousands, was slaughtered during World War II for the meat and hides (with exception of a few animals). They were all killed by one man with the old .303 British, using solids and shooting for the brain or neck spine.

One of the famous old African elephant hunters who racked up an awful lot of ivory used a pair of Model 95 Winchesters in .30-40-220 Krag with solid nickel-covered bullets. He depended almost entirely on brain shots and stopped many charging bulls by feeding them these long 220-grain solids on a line between the eyes. The .30-40 is still widely used in this country, as is the .303 British in Canada, and with very good reason. The .303 served the British Army well through both World War I and World War II, and was widely used in most of the old British colonies all over the world.

Over the years I have seen better and more uniform game-killing results from these two old loads, when used at reasonable to close range, than I have from the .30-06 with lighter bullets and even the various .300 magnums with light bullets. There is a reason for this. The .303 in 215-grain and the .30-40 in 220-grain softpoint carried a good exposure of lead, and velocity was (and still is) comparatively low, 2,000 to 2,200 fps. The bullets expand reliably on contact, yet they do not fragment and break up on contact with the game, as does about all high-velocity stuff. With either load and proper bullet placement, you can be sure of a good deep wound channel and a bullet that will hold together.

High velocity to flatten the trajectory is necessary for all long-range shooting, but this is neither necessary nor desirable for close-range timber and brush hunting, something our present crop of arms writers seems to have forgotten. The old cartridges like the .45-70 simply will not die out, as too many real hunters know their worth. Most timber hunting of deer and black bear presents shots at 20 to 150 yards, and for these ranges on this game the old loads are still among the best.

I killed my first bull elk with a Krag carbine with 220-grain solids. I had filed a ring around the tip and removed the jacket, a dangerous procedure, but it worked. Then, when the .30-06 let me down on several elk, I went back to the old, heavy Sharps single-shot rifle, until Jim Howe gave me a .400 Whelen in 1925 for Christmas.

In all fairness to the .30-06 and its older brother, the .30-03 with longer neck, when they were used with 220-grain softpoints with plenty of lead exposed, they always delivered similarly good results for the size of the cartridge. But when used with the many trick points in lightweight spitzers, many failures resulted. I used a Model 95 Winchester, caliber .30-03, with a 220-grain bullet for several years as a saddle gun, until I acquired some .35 W.C.F. and .405 Model 95 rifles, and I had very good results on deer and black bear.

## .400-360 BRITISH AMMO

There is a lot of good double rifles kicking around this country, including rifles by the best British makers in .400-360 caliber. Kynoch has dropped production of the cartridge, and ammunition is scarce and hard to come by. Ray Marriage of Montana Custom Handloads, Bozeman, Montana, makes this ammunition from 9.3x74R Norma brass and uses the 286-grain 9.3x74R Norma bullet, with modern primers and powders, to produce good, reliable loads for these rifles.

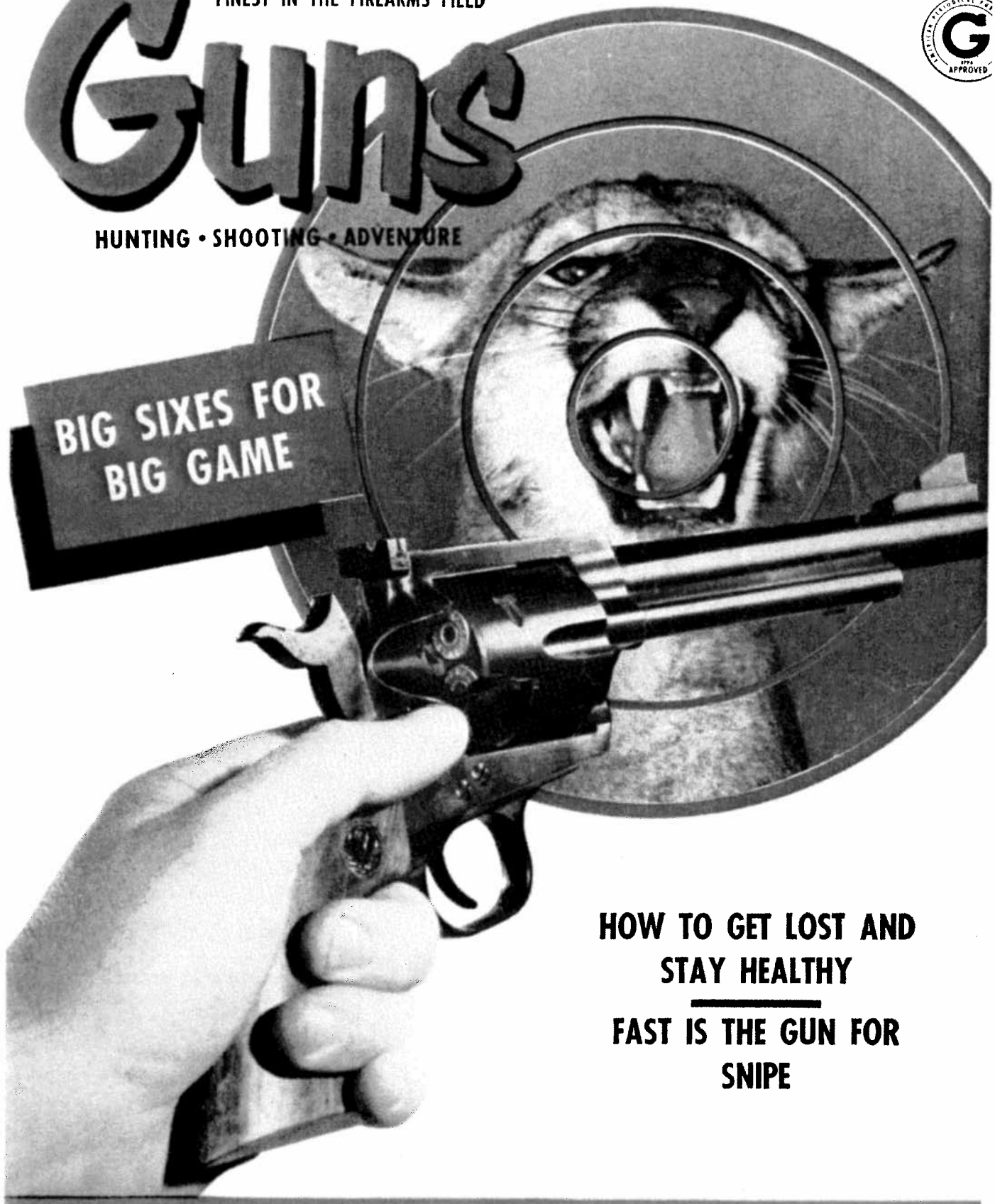
My Purdey took a 300-grain bullet with 40 grains of cordite, and my best Westley uses a 314-grain bullet with 41 grains of cordite, both in the standard Kynoch 2¾-inch case. Most of these rifles can be fit-

OCTOBER 1958 50

FINEST IN THE FIREARMS FIELD

# Guns

HUNTING • SHOOTING • ADVENTURE



## BIG SIXES FOR BIG GAME

HOW TO GET LOST AND STAY HEALTHY

FAST IS THE GUN FOR SNIPE

AMERICA'S NO. 1 GAME TARGET

Keith with big African buffalo downed with a .476 caliber Westley Richards double-barreled rifle. Both barrels were needed to make this kill.

# CHAPTER 20

# BISON AND BUFFALO

As a game animal the bison, known in this country almost entirely as the buffalo, is gone. Canada still has a wild herd of the original wood bison, now mixed somewhat with plains buffalo, that were moved north from the Fort Wainwright herd. This herd still lives around Slave River and Slave Lake. It is the only wild herd left on this continent. The Yellowstone Park herd is still maintained, as well as various small herds all over the West. One is on the bison range between Kalispell and Missoula, Montana. Another small herd, now mixed somewhat with cattle, is called the House Rock herd of Arizona. Many other small private herds are maintained over the western part of this country, so that the animal is now in no danger of extinction.

The great Wainwright herd, numbering upward of 27,000, was killed off at the orders of the Canadian government by Purchell. He carefully slaughtered them, a few at a time, as he and his helpers could properly handle both meat and skins. It was just a huge job of butchering, requiring several years for completion, and they were mostly corralled before killing. This was done to make room for the training of troops, so I have been told, but it is a pity the herd could not have been moved and retained alive. No doubt it was composed largely of descendants of the old Flathead herd that was sold to the Canadian government when I was still a small boy. The Crow Indians have a small herd on their reservation in Montana.

Formerly the bison ranged in untold numbers from the Great Slave Lake to the Rocky Mountains, at the northern extremity of its range, southward to latitude 25 degrees in Old Mexico along the westward side. To the east it extended from Great Slave Lake southeast to the Great Lakes, and from there south to Georgia. Only small numbers occurred east of the Alleghenies. In the northern Rockies the section of the Liard River was about its northern extremity. In Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Oregon, it occurred far west of the Continental Divide. The main range, however, was the drainage of the Mississippi River Valley and its tributaries. Over this section, comprising most of the plains of the continent, the buffalo once ranged in countless millions and even as late as the early seventies herds still remained, numbering well into the millions. West of the Rockies it once extended as far as the Blue Mountains and the eastern extremities of the Sierra Nevada.

I have found old bleached skulls over much of Montana as a boy, and just over the north rim of a 10,000-foot mesa, between the Pahsimeroi Valley and the Willow Creek-Lost River drainage in Idaho, and as far north as the low hills north of Fort St. John, I have seen the ancient buffalo trails still worn deep into the soft hillsides. Along the Missouri River many old trails still show where the great herds came down to water and cross the river. At one time there were no doubt between 50 and 100 million bison on this continent. Today, only a few scattering small bands exist, and the one wild herd in Canada.

North of the Peace River, at Fort St. John, old Indians claimed that very hard winters, with

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# GUNS & AMMO

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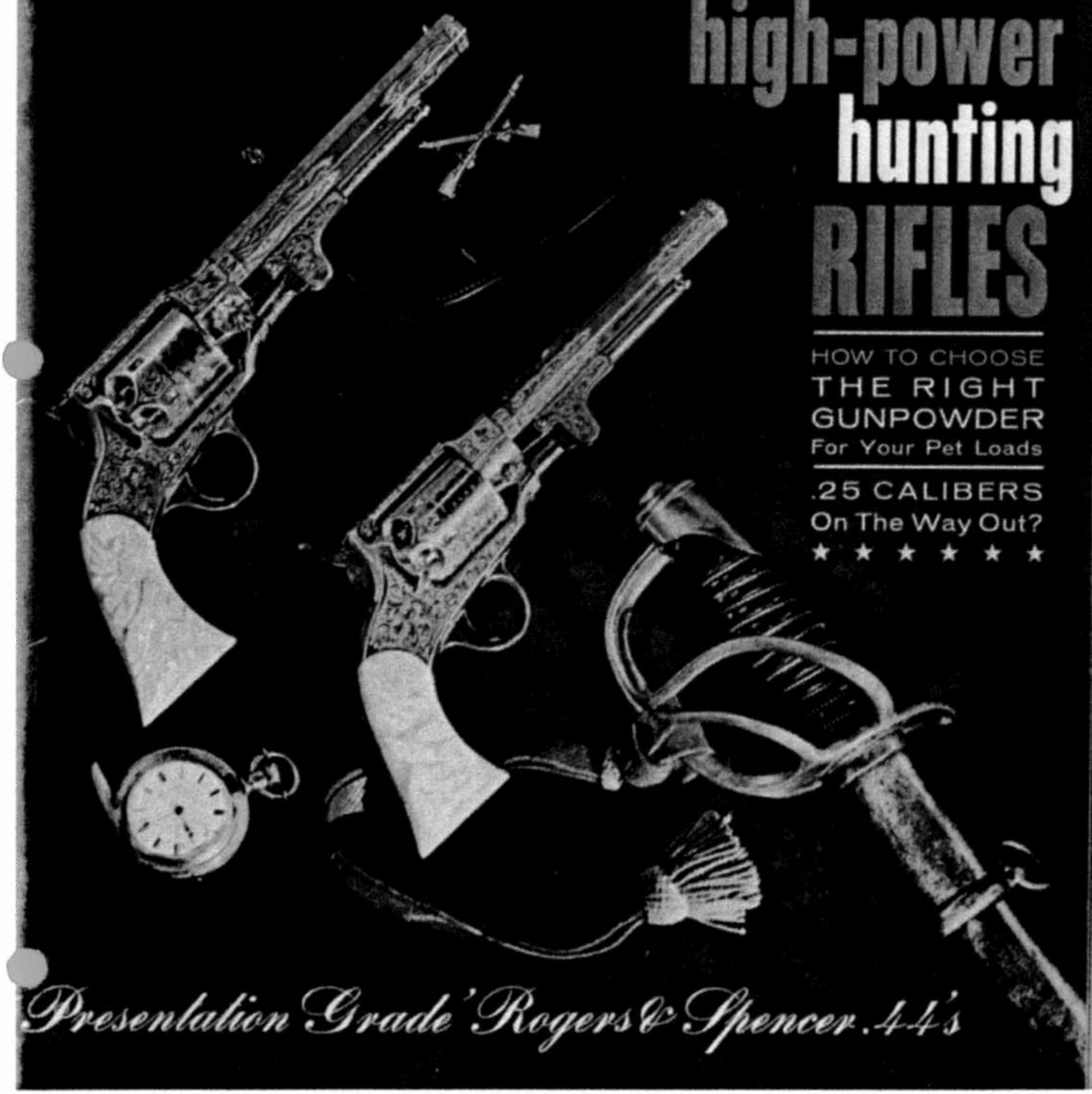
A ROUNDUP ON

## high-power hunting RIFLES

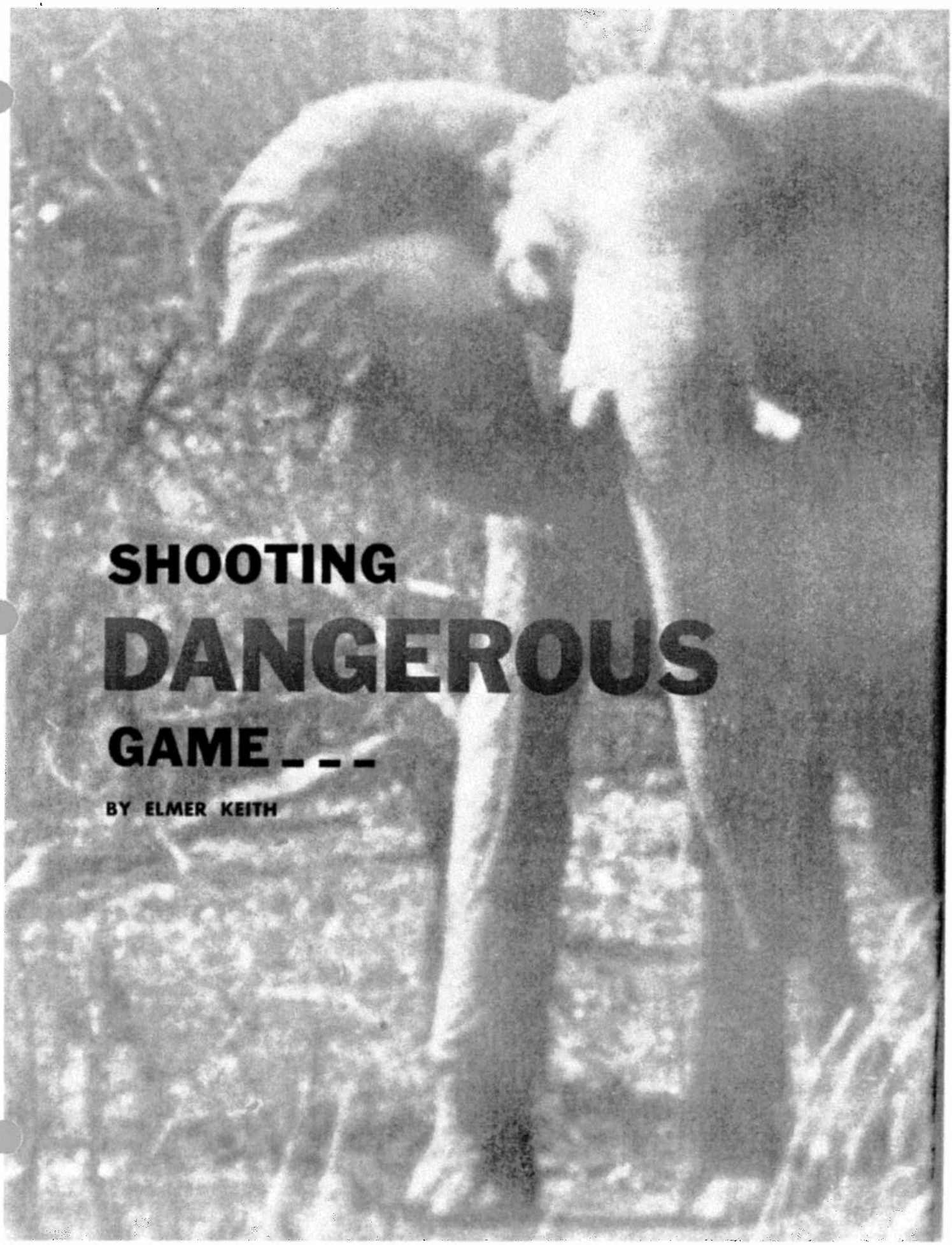
HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GUNPOWDER For Your Pet Loads

.25 CALIBERS On The Way Out?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



*Presentation Grade' Rogers & Spencer .44's*



# SHOOTING DANGEROUS GAME - - -

BY ELMER KEITH

Successfully hunting dangerous big game calls for different rifles and techniques than are required with non-dangerous big game. While sheep, deer, goat and African plains antelope are often shot at extreme ranges by necessity, long shots should never be taken at dangerous game. With dangerous game, you should stalk close enough to be absolutely certain of placing your first bullet in exactly the right place. Also your rifle has its maximum killing power near the muzzle.

As a general rule, the African elephant hunters adage, "Git as close as ye can, laddie, and then git ten yards closer," holds true. However, it is possible to get so close to a dangerous beast that you do not have time to get in more than one shot. This can be just as dangerous as shooting at too great a range.

In thick cover, you can easily get too close to a dangerous game animal. Then it may be impossible to put in a killing shot owing to the way the beast is turned. It is folly to shoot until you are absolutely certain of placing that vital first shot. If you are out of wind from the stalk, or excited, wait until your breathing calms down and you can shoot accurately.

Dangerous big game is a hazard only when it comes within striking distance of the hunter. If unmolested and not wounded, most big game will try to get away. There is the exception, however, in previously

**WHEN YOU'RE AFTER GAME THAT CAN 'HIT BACK' YOU'VE GOT TO STACK THE ODDS IN YOUR FAVOR!**

*Here is a remarkable photo of a young bull elephant emerging from his "bath." Note comparatively small tusks. Nevertheless this youngster can do plenty damage.*

wounded beasts, who will charge on sight. These tend to make dangerous game hunting really interesting.

In America, the only truly dangerous game is the grizzly, Alaskan brownie and Polar bear. Bison, moose, elk and even deer will fight when cornered or badly wounded, and an occasional black bear may attack unprovoked. In Africa, they have the big five, elephant, buffalo, rhino, lion and leopard. When wounded, the sable, oryx, roan and bushbuck can all be nasty customers in thick stuff. In India, they have the giant gaur, the tiger and leopard, as well as elephant and buffalo.

The conditions under which game is taken has a great bearing on the degree of danger in hunting it. Our own big bears, the big five of Africa and the dangerous game of India can all be taken with comparative safety, under ideal conditions, if that first shot is placed right. All are deadly when wounded, or when hunted under the wrong conditions. Practically all spe-

*Left: Author with a good-sized cape buffalo dropped with .476 Westley Richards double. Below: Keith indicates the two hits it took to down his buff. Upper shot shattered the shoulder and spine; lower is through heart.*

*This fine male lion was taken by Ed Helm, of California, with a head shot at 35 yards with a .375 H&H and 300-grain Silvertip bullet.*

cies will make for the heaviest cover when wounded and usually circle downwind before stopping or lying down, either to rest or to waylay you. They can pick up the scent of anyone following their blood trail and also be in the best position for a successful charge. You can expect this procedure from a wounded beast and you should be constantly on the lookout for it.

By far the best method is to shoot only when you can be certain of placing that first shot where it will either kill or disable the beast. If he is not turned just right, you can often bring him around by breaking a twig, tossing a pebble, or stick to attract his attention. It is better to spend an hour in close proximity to big game until you can get a killing shot, than to gamble on a chance shot. If you wait for a certain shot, you have the upper hand. If you take a chance and make a bad shot, the wounded beast will make for cover. Then he has the upper hand and you have the dangerous job of digging him out.

You should study the anatomy and skeletal structure of the game you plan to hunt, even if you have to go to a zoo or museum to do so. Learn the position of the heart and the shoulder bones, and spine throughout the length of the animal, also the exact location of the brain.

A brain shot is instantly fatal. A spine hit, if not immediately fatal, will disable and anchor the beast. The heart shot is fine on unwounded beasts, if they are headed away from you. They usually jump into a hard run in the direction they are headed until they bleed out. A heart shot is almost worthless for stopping a wounded animal at close range. He will usually swivel around and come for you. The beast is already aware that you have wounded him, and a heart shot in such cases only gives him your location.

Let us take up the best shots on big bear and the big cats. If the beast is broadside, the best shot is about the middle of the shoulder, in line with the spine or just under it. Try to drive that shoulder right into the chest cavity. You have a large vital area for a target. A low shot will still hit shoulder and heart. A higher one will break the shoulder and continue into the spine, usually killing almost instantly.

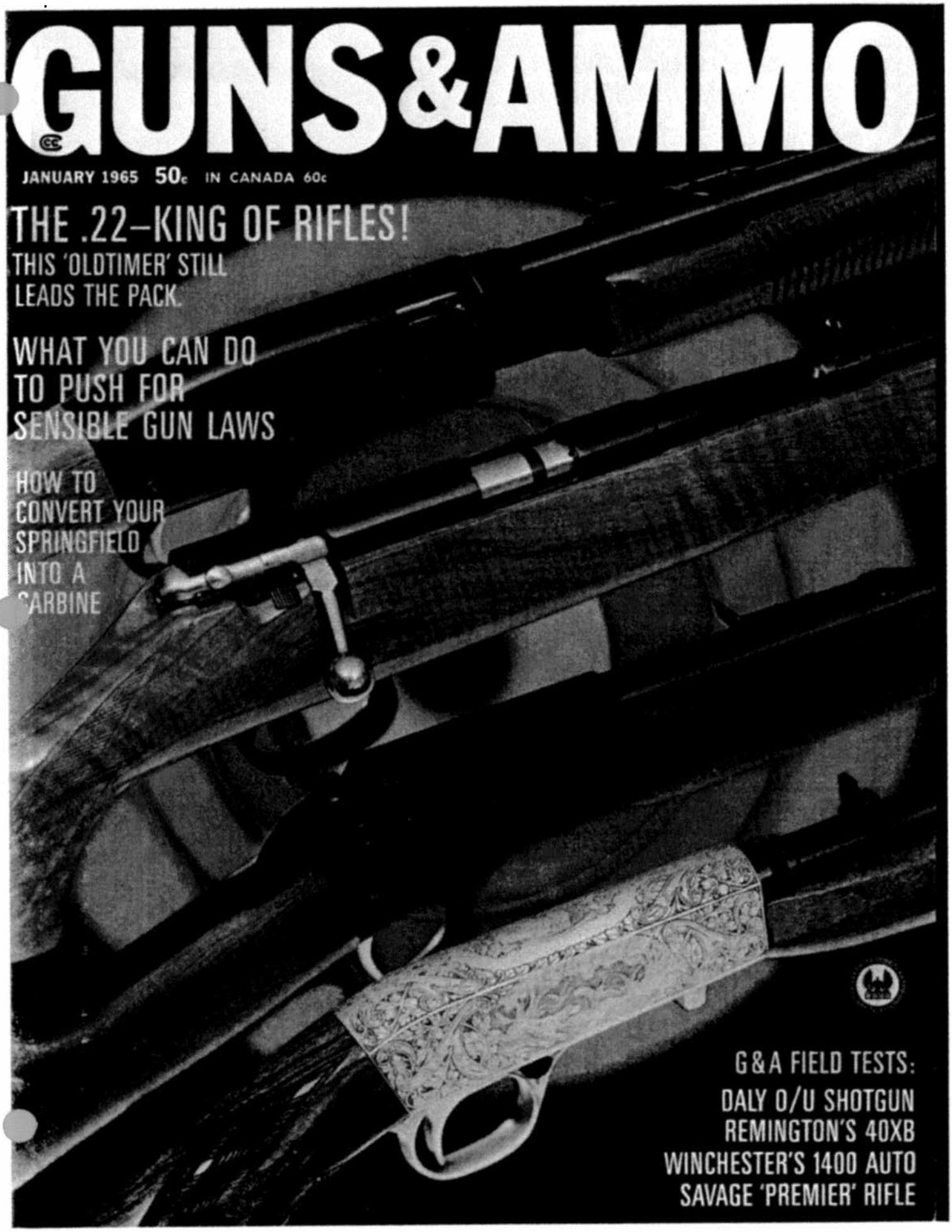
If the beast is turned squarely away from you, and you can get no other shot, aim for the spine from the root of the tail upward to the base of the skull. A hit in this area is a stopper but can be administered with certainty only at fairly close range, say 50 yards or less. If the beast faces you at a fair range, say near 100 yards, a shot in the top of the chest, at the base of the neck is best. Here it will either break the spine or if it falls a bit low, destroy the arteries over the heart. If the spine at the base of the neck is missed, it may not stop the beast, but you have every chance of making a certain killing hit on the frontal chest shots if you correctly place your bullet.

Should the beast come for you, aim just under the nose. Never try to shoot a charging lion between the eyes. There is absolutely nothing but hair over his eyes. Aim under the white spot on his chin. The same holds true with bear. A shot driven directly down the nasal passage will nearly always reach the brain. The skull is usually wanted for measurements, however it is far better to have a smashed skull on the beast than on your own shoulders.

*Three Dturo warriors look over author's bull rhino dropped with two 520-grain "solids" from .476. A rhino can take a lot of stopping!*

# GUNS & AMMO

JANUARY 1965 50c IN CANADA 60c



## THE .22–KING OF RIFLES!

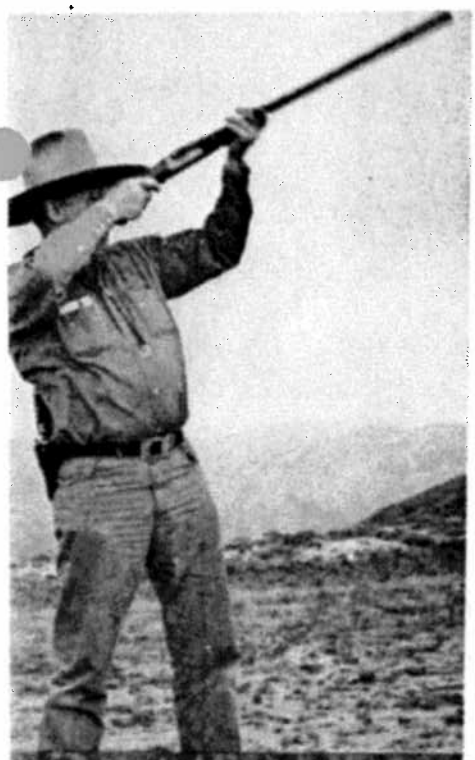
THIS 'OLDTIMER' STILL LEADS THE PACK.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PUSH FOR SENSIBLE GUN LAWS

## HOW TO CONVERT YOUR SPRINGFIELD INTO A CARBINE

## G&A FIELD TESTS:

DALY O/U SHOTGUN
REMINGTON'S 40XB
WINCHESTER'S 1400 AUTO
SAVAGE 'PREMIER' RIFLE



Above Right: Keith is shown firing another "stopping gun." Although its recoil can be teeth shattering, it has been proved recoil is ignored in the excitement of firing at big game.

Above Center: The author poses with a big African Cape buffalo which almost spelled disaster to himself and his white hunter. Keith stopped it just in time with a .476 double rifle.

Above Left: The huge Alaskan brown bear can be a mean customer when it's encountered at close range. For such hunting, most professional guides advise at least a .375 H&H Magnum.

**When you come to close quarters with big game that can 'hit back,' that's when you need...**

# RIFLES WITH STOPPING POWER!!!

Except in Alaska, there is little need for a big stopping rifle on this Continent. However, the great Alaskan brownie and the grizzly in dense alders and brush is potentially just as dangerous as any game on Earth. Leslie Simson, who hunted Africa for some 26 years, told my old partner, Arthur Kinnan, he considered a big brownie in the alders just as dangerous as any game on the Dark Continent. Modern jet transportation places practically all of the great game fields of the world within a few days travel of any sportsman, if he has a long check book.

While I consider the big polar bear the greatest trophy and the most dangerous animal to hunt on this Continent, the danger is not from the bear, but the conditions under which he must be hunted on the Arctic ice pack. Taken by steamer in the Eastern Arctic, polar bear are easy, but fly out over the Western Arctic ice pack or travel by dog team and it becomes a different matter.

The great polar bear can be taken easily with any .338, .350, .375 or .378 Weatherby Magnum, with 275- to 300-grain bullets. Ranges may be close or long but you take the polar bear out on the open ice packs, which is far different from crawling through 10-foot alders for brown bear.

Hunting the big brown in the alders along the coast should always be done by two men. In brown bear country, the above rifles listed for polars are ideal. It is well for the hunter to carry such a rifle, while the guide packs a heavy stopping rifle. In the last three trips to Alaska I noticed far more guides using .450 Alaskans, made up by Harold Johnson and Harold Fuller, or .458 Winchester Magnums. The .375 Magnum was also a prime favorite with most of the guides. The .404 or .416 are also excellent stopping

**by Elmer Keith**

## STOPPING POWER!

rifles for a guide to pack in the alders, for really big brownies. A double of the 450/.400 class is also ideal for the big bear. Anything throwing a 400- to 500-grain slug at around 2000 to 2200 fps, is ideal for instantly stopping a big wounded brownie. Placed right, lighter calibers and bullets will do the trick, but I have yet to see the man who can always place his light bullet just right on a fast moving brownie or grizzly in dense brush or alders.

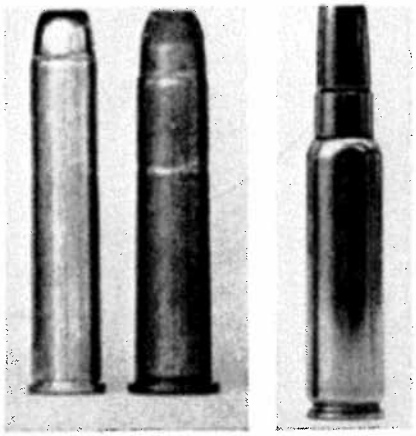
Most big bear will run at the sight of you, or when they get your scent. But meet one at very close range on a bear trail in the alders and it may be just as startled as you are, and jump you before it has time to think the situation over.

About one in fifty of the big bear will charge to a finish, unprovoked, and in some sections the percentage is much higher. For such close-range work on big brown bear or grizzly, I much prefer a big double rifle, something throwing from 400 to 500-grains of bullet metal at moderate velocity. Second choice is a big lever action Winchester, preferably the .450 Alaskan or at least a .405 Model '95. My third choice is a big bolt action, .338 to .375 or .404.

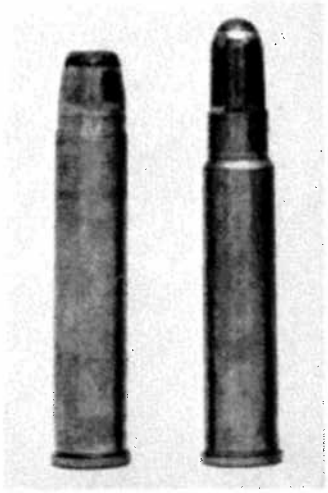
When we turn to African and Asian big game, even more powerful rifles are just good "life insurance." While every animal on earth can be and has been killed with little 7 x 57mm 175-grain solids to the brain, as W. D. M. Bell, the great hunter, did, it must be remembered that those days are long past. Bell hunted virgin country and unsophisticated elephant; the same as did my friend Gerrit, Forbe, around the turn of the century. Conditions are different today. Asia has the giant gaur and the water buffalo as well as the largest of the cats, the tiger. Whether the latter is larger than the African lion I do not know, never having hunted Asia. I do know some lion run from 500 to 600 pounds. Asia also has the leopard, and the Indian elephant.

In Africa we have the so called "big five," elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard. The big water horse, the hippo, is huge but is not classed dangerous game, although he can be and often is deadly to anyone in a small boat or on one of his trails, when he heads for the water.

Having taken most American game, except musk-ox and walrus, and also the big five of Africa, I believe the buffalo is probably the toughest of all game to stop or turn. American bison are tough and I had one stand on its feet ten minutes after the first 566-grain Sharps slug had gone through the middle of its heart, and five more minutes after the second slug had also gone through its heart. One of them actually went through sideways and they measure 1½ inches long.



**Three "stoppers" are from left; the new .444 Marlin pushes a 240-grain bullet at 2400 fps; the venerable .45/70 still carries a punch with a 405-grain bullet leaving the muzzle at 1320 fps; the .40/.348, a wildcat designed for the Win. 71 lever action, fires a 400-grain Barnes bullet at a potent 2100 fps for real punch on game.**



**The new Marlin .444 was hardly on the market before it spawned several wildcats. At right is the .35/.444—a real blaster firing a 200-grain bullet at 2400 fps. This is a big game "natural."**

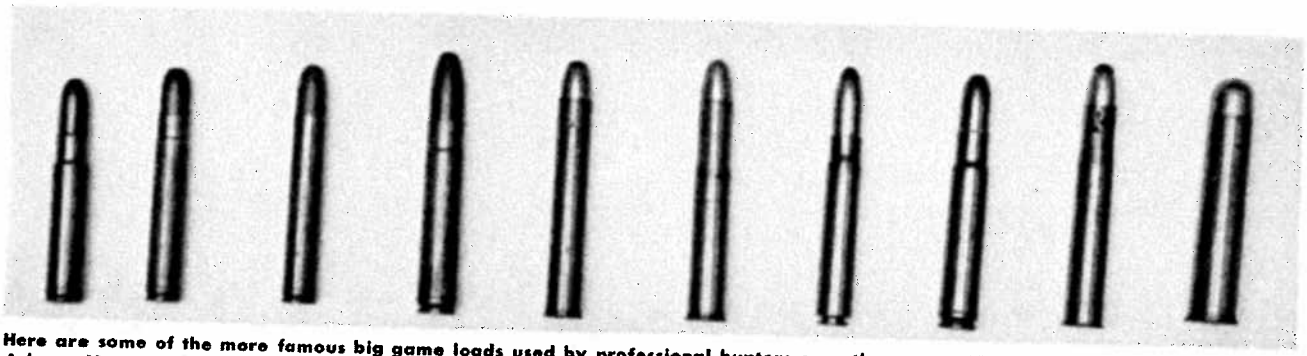
**Big game stopping loads of yesteryear were fantastic loads such as the 8-bore load shown here compared with modern .458 Win. Magnum. It fired a 1250-grain slug at 1400 fps — ouch!**

**Th author's son, Ted, is shown firing an Atkinson & Marquart .475 Magnum loaded with a 600-grain Barnes bullet, 105 grains of 4320 at a muzzle velocity of 2500 fps. This one can kill at both ends from the looks of the recoil. It's strictly for Africa.**

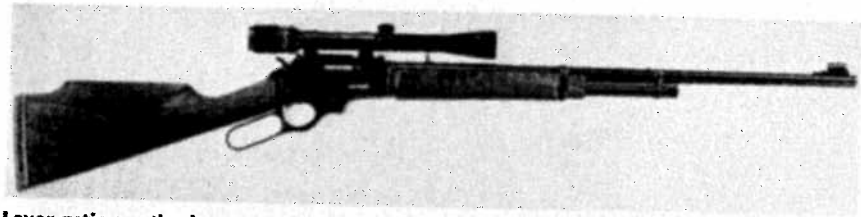
**The famed Model 71 Winchester lever action rifle, now discontinued, is still a favorite short range big game "stopper" when chambered for such potent wildcats as the .40/.348.**

The leopard is no different in Africa from those in Asia and is easily killed with any modern rifle from the 7mm upwards. Wounded, however, and in the bush, it is one of the most dangerous and vindictive of all animals, and the most certain to maul someone if carelessly followed up. Lion and tiger, while the largest of the cats, are only a third the size of a really big Alaskan bear. Any rifle of the .375 Magnum to .400 bore class is ideal for them, if picked shots are taken and the first one planted right.

While some American writers recommend .30 caliber rifles for all dangerous game, I noticed that the British white hunters, who get more actual experience on dangerous game in one



**Here are some of the more famous big game loads used by professional hunters over the years: .424 OKH, 400-gr. .404 bullet; .450 Ashurst Magnum, 500-gr.; .475 OKH, a .375 case necked up to take the .470 bullet; .500 Buhmiller, a .416 Rigby or .460 Weatherby case necked up to .50 caliber and taking a 570-gr. slug; British .475 Nitro, a 520-gr. bullet at 2150 fps; Holland's famed 500/.465 which pushes a 480-gr. bullet at 2125 fps; German Schuler 11.2 X 72; Weatherby's potent .460 magnum which gives a 500-gr. bullet an astounding 2700 fps MV; the famed Kynoch .450 Nitro, an African "standard" for many years; the .600 Nitro firing a 900-gr. bullet at almost 2,000 fps — the biggest of them all. These calibers are for the largest of game at shorter ranges.**



**Lever action enthusiasts now have a big game, close-range, "knock-'em-down-and-outer" in the new .444 Magnum recently introduced by Marlin. The Model 336 is a 4-shot 3/5 magazine that checks in at handy 7½ pounds, drilled and tapped for a scope sight.**

**Before the advent of smokeless powder, and in the heyday of African big game hunting, nimrods used such rifles as this huge 8-bore double weighting 17 pounds. It fired 1250-gr. bullets and the 12 drams of black powder pushed a shooter back a step or two!**

year than we Americans do in a lifetime, all advocated the heaviest rifle that the hunter could carry and shoot accurately.

An elephant has wonderful ears, regular radar screens, and its sense of smell is second to no other animal. In dense cover, or if wounded, it can be exceedingly dangerous and can trail you up with that snorkel just as well as a hound dog. It is remarkable how well they tend to blend into the tree trunks and bush, and are hard to see for eyes unaccustomed to hunting big game. Most big bulls today have been hunted enough to be very wise and they will water every two or three days, then hike back some ten to twenty miles into the most inpenetrable bush they can find.

For Africa and Asia you have two choices in a big stopping rifle. Some prefer the big bolt action magazine [illegible], and some old timers preferred the [illegible]5 Winchester to anything else. My white hunter, John Lawrence, of White Hunters Limited, preferred the big magnum Mauser and had a pair of them by Rigby in .416 caliber. He sent one to the U.S. and had it rebarreled to .460 Weatherby. He wrote me that he liked it much better than the .416 caliber, but he had trouble with solids breaking up until he cut down the powder load somewhat. John Buhmiller, who has killed his share of elephant and buffalo, preferred the big bolt action, and brought in the first rifle and cartridge that Roy Weatherby later called his .460. It was the .416 case expanded to .45 caliber. I later suggested he do the same thing in .50 caliber, which he did, using the 570-grain .500 Nitro Express bullet. He claimed this and the .505 Gibbs were even better than the various .450s and .416s. On one of John Buhmiller's recent trips, however, charging buffalo and rhino made a believer of him, and he adopted a .475-2 double for buffalo in dense cover in preference to his beloved bolt actions.

The most experienced elephant hunter in White Hunters, Ltd., is Bob Foster. He has long used a pair of .470 doubles with a good reliable gun bearer to load and carry the second rifle. Bob has killed about as many big tuskers as anyone, something over 600 really big ones, I understand. He told me of once dropping five big bulls that came for him at one time. He was armed with a little double for the .400 Jeffery cartridge. He dropped two of the first with frontal brain shots, reloaded and killed two more with side head shots as they went past. He reloaded again and got the last one with a heart shot, as I remember. Bob is a very cool and expert rifleman and knows his elephant anatomy as well as any man.

John Taylor, who wrote me he had killed some 1475 elephants, prefers the big doubles over any other type of weapon for elephant or any dangerous game. John Burger, author of *Horned Death*, preferred the .404 bolt action, but he was a buffalo hunter rather than an elephant hunter. He preferred the extra rounds in the magazine gun to the double. Wally Jones, an American with White Hunters, Ltd., and John Buhmiller, have probably had more experience on elephant than any other living Americans. Jones uses and prefers a .577 double H&H. One very experienced elephant hunter used a pair of Model 95 Winchesters in .30-40 caliber with 220-grain solids. He preferred to depend on brain shots, and the fast repeating action. He, like Bell, was a small-bore man, but did most of his hunting 30 to 40 years ago, when the elephants were not as sophisticated as they are today. Another hunter, Edgar DeBono, uses a pair of .500 Nitro Express doubles for all his work as a white hunter. My own vote goes to the big double for a stopping rifle but my limited experience is no more than a drop in the bucket, compared with these men.

Dangerous game is not dangerous until it comes to close quarters. The

continued on page 64

# Elmer Keith
# Gun Collection
# April 1972
## Double Barrel Rifles



| Rifle | Make | Calibre | Serial # | Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| R 58 | Charles Boswell - Ejector | 500 NE | 17109 | 4,500 |
| | Cased with Assessories with EK on stock | | | |
| R 59 | Holland & Holland Royal Grade | 375 Mag Rim | | |
| | Scope Sighted - Hand Detachable side locks | | 30423 | 5,000 |
| | Fully Engraved - Cased w/ all assessories | | | |
| R 60 | Westley Richards Cape Gun | 303 British | T2247 | 4,000 |
| | ejectors, Hand detachable | 16 Gauge | | |
| | locks, ½ pistol circassian stock | | | |
| R. 61 | Jeffery - Box Lock | | | |
| | fully engraved | 450-400 | 20176 | 10,000 |
| | 24" Bbl. | 4" | | |
| | Jim Corbets Tigre Rifle used to kill man eating | | | |
| | tigres, some who have killed 100-300 natives | | | |
| | Oak & Leather case w/ assessories | | | |
| | Worn bright but good condition | | | |
| | 2 triggers / w ejectors. | | | |
| R 62 | Westley Richards | 470 NE | 17222 | 5,000 |
| | Best Quality, Hand detachable locks | | | |
| | ejectors, single trigger | | | |
| | fully engraved | | | |
| | carcissian stock | | | |
| | Used by EK to kill big 5 in 1957 | | | |
| | Cased w/ all assessories | | | |
| R 63 | Westley Richards #2 Grade | 500 N.E. | 09367 | 4,000 |
| | ejectors, cased w/ all assessories | | | |
| | plain gun - new condition | | | |
| R 64 | Westley Richards - Best Quality | 470 NE | 9331 | 5,000 |
| | plain finished, ejectors, Hand | | | |
| | detachable locks, cased with all | | | |
| | assessories | | | |
| | made for Stewart Edward White | | | |
| | used in Africa - Big 5 | | | |
| R 65 | Josh - Springer - Best Quality | 9374R | 10506 | 5000 |
| | full side lock, ejectors | | | |
| | Hand detachable locks | | | |
| | set triggers, Scope sighted w/ Zeiss Zielvier | | | |
| | 4X scope P.A. mounts | | | |
| | fully engraved | | | |
| R 66 | Westley Richards - ejector, Best Quality | | 17336 | 5000 |
| | Hand detachable locks | 577 NE | | |
| | fully engraved + extra set of locks | | | |

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