



April 2009 Newsletter

“Spring has sprung, grass has riz and this is where the story is.” Birds are chirping and singing, the sun has been shining and I am ready for a new season. Over the winter I developed a ton of bad habits and it is time to start the exercises and get in shape for the summer. There is a lot going on this year.

There is the youth raffle in Kentucky on the 4th of July. We still have

tickets available so give us a call and reserve your ticket before they are all gone.

Dean and I have started a new company called Double D Shooting Clinics. We have scheduled our first 4 clinics. Buffalo Gun Club in Minnesota - (is sold out), Crown Point, Indiana, Edinburgh Gun Club, Ohio and Evergreen Gun Club in Seattle Washington. If you would like to

have a clinic at your club give Dean or Dennis a call.

Dean 270-348-2223

Dennis 330-456-6070

You can also visit us on the web at

www.ddshooting.com or

www.devaultind.com

The new site is up and running and we hope that you like the new look for the clinic presentation. Dean & I look forward to seeing everyone as we move around the country.

Shooting Clinics for the 2009 target Year

May 2nd & 3rd Edinburgh Gun Club, Edinburgh, Ohio (space available)

May 16th & 17th Buffalo Gun Club, Minnesota (class is full)

June 4th & 5th Great Salt Lake Gun Club, Utah (space available)

June 6th & 7th Evergreen Gun Club, Seattle, Washington (space available)

Remember your spot is not confirmed until we receive your \$ 200.00 deposit

“The World According to Me,” by Dennis DeVault

Good things our happening at DeVault Industries for the new season. With help from friends we have done our first Video. It can be seen by going to www.devaultind.com; then click on the custom stock button, then scroll down and click on the view video link. We are in the process of developing a video for FAQ. This video will show how our Infinity is made and why we feel it is the best shotgun manufactured today. There will also be videos on how to remove the trigger and where to lubricate the moving parts. Trying to learn all this new high tech stuff is keeping me up at night. They say you can teach old dogs new tricks if the old dog really wants to learn.

I am trying to get to more shoots this year. If you are out an about and spot our new rig, please stop by and say hello. We love to talk to everyone and tell lies and tall shooting stories when we can. It is always nice to put names with faces of all the folks that call during the year. If you have a question, and want an answer, by all means stop and just ask. Dean and I love the tough questions and would be very happy to share a little knowledge if we can.

How do I pick a piece of wood?

There has been a request to cover this topic and this seems to be a good month. I look at hundreds of pieces of wood each year and there are times that the lines all run together. There are several things to consider when looking for a blank. Grain structure, moisture content, overall width of the blank and blank thickness.

Grain structure; look for good figure in the butt area and straight grain for the grip if possible. The strongest piece of wood that you can use on a gun is straight grain. The more curl and burl that the stock blank has the weaker the grain becomes. The burl grain is caused by weight on the tree. The bigger the tree is the more the grain compression. This induces stress in the blank that may cause the wood to twist or move during the machining process. That makes it difficult to keep the

blank stable and harder to work with. I get calls asking why we can't do a stock quicker. Wood is a living breathing thing, and while beautiful, but it is not always kind.

Moisture content is another concern. We like to see wood that has been dried to a moisture of no less than 8% and no more than 12%. When you go below 8% the wood is too dry. When you cut the wood, the grain opens up and it can take on moisture quickly and become unstable. If the moisture content is too high then the wood will form steam when you bore the hole for the stock bolt. If wood with high moisture is machined and then allowed to set, it will shrink and begin to twist and turn, causing problems. We recently carved a stock for a customer who brought his own piece of wood with him when he came for his fitting appointment. He assured me that the wood was dry. We started to work on his blank by first drilling the bolt hole in the stock blank. One of my guys told me I better take a look at the blank. As he was drilling the thru bolt hole I watched the steam roll out and that indicated interior moisture. We finished the hole and inserted a steel rod to keep the blank straight. Next we put the stock on the machine to carve it according to the pattern. I told the guys to cut the inside pockets and the exterior leaving 3/8" excess material everywhere. Then we hung the stock in a drying oven at 130 degrees with air moving over the blank for two weeks. We put the blank back into the machine to finish the profile and we needed every bit of that 3/8" to make the stock and not turn it into scrap.

Blank width, Most wood blanks have been cut in the old style suited for the Model 12 or an old side by side. The blanks are wide at the back and taper sharply toward the front of the blank. **See Fig. 1.** When possible look for blanks that are like **Fig. 2.** Fig. 2 is large enough to accommodate the new high rib models that are being built today. As the ribs become higher the face is lifted up. Unless you desire a huge gap between the bottom of the comb and the top of the stock, you need more blank

width.

Blank thickness; If you have a stock made that is going to have offset and a lot of toe out select a blank that is at least 2-1/2" thick. This size blank will accommodate almost any toe out and offset requirements. I use the term "offset" because at DeVault Industries we do not use "cast" but prefer to use offset. Offset moves the comb away from the shooters face in a straight line parallel to the bore center line. Cast bends the stock away from the shooters face. With cast the shooter only has one place that the face can be and have perfect alignment for the eye to be centered with the bore. Offset makes the comb parallel to the bore center line and this allows the face to be anywhere on the comb and have the eye centered. Cast also moves the butt pad away from the pocket of the shoulder and places the butt out on the ball of the shoulder joint. Take it from someone that used to shoot that way. The recoil pounds on the shoulder joint and now I suffer with pain even though I no longer shoot with the gun out on my arm. Offset requires a thicker blank and this is why many stock makers do not like making a stock with offset.

Grain and the Look; You only go around once. Beauty, as they say, is in the eyes of the beholder. I have always said there is no excuse to walk around with an ugly gun stock. Pick out what suites your taste and pocket book. You do not need to spend a fortune on wood, if the finish guy knows what he is doing, and brings out the natural grain in the wood. It is not out of dumb luck that the "Infinity" beautiful to look at and to shoot. "Just like with shooting, Knowing something and Doing It, are two different things. Knowing what to look for in a blank isn't the same as being able to make a stock. It takes craftsmanship to turn knowledge, experience and science into a stock that is beautiful in the eyes of the owner and a pleasure to shoot. That is part of what makes DeVault Ind. shotguns the best."

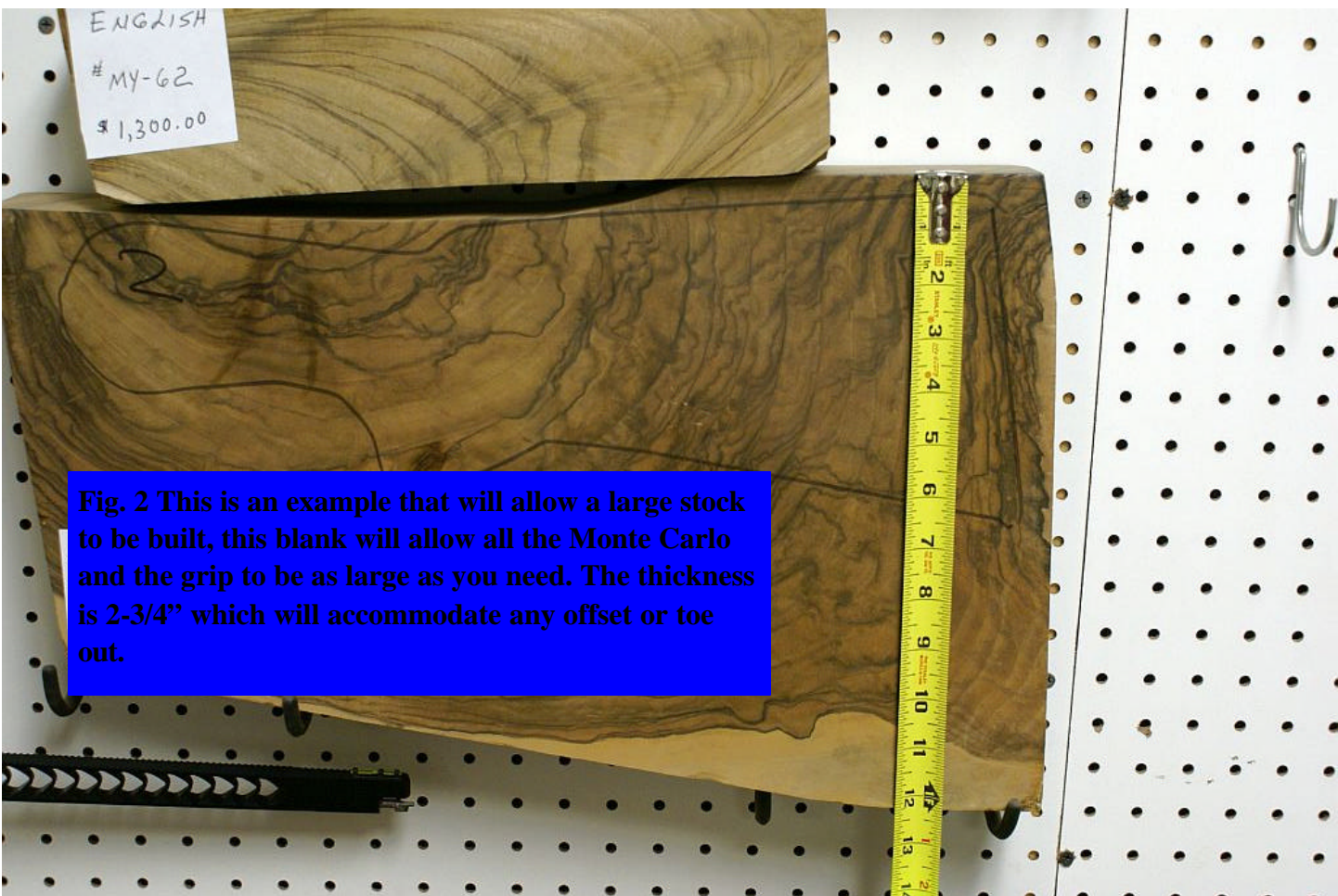
Rodeo Man Out

Fig 1 Good thickness, good width across the back of the stock but too much taper, if you have a larger grip an extended cap we will have to be installed.



ENGLISH
MY-62
\$1,300.00

Fig. 2 This is an example that will allow a large stock to be built, this blank will allow all the Monte Carlo and the grip to be as large as you need. The thickness is 2-3/4" which will accommodate any offset or toe out.



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www.windycityshooting.com



Inside the mind of Dean DeBow

I would like to talk this month about the mental side of the game. This is one of the most important parts of competitive sports. Once you have your stock fitted to you and the gun shooting where you look; the rest is technique and handling the mental pressure. Your body's natural enemy is stress. Talk about self sabotage!! Your body will tell your brain many lies to alleviate a stressful situation. The natural subconscious thing to do is miss a target so your body does not have to deal with the stress. An example is, if you are running a good score and you mount your gun wrong and shoot before you are ready. Instead of doing what you know is the right thing to do, which is remount; you tell yourself, "It is just Singles you can break it , go ahead and shoot." Then you hear that all too familiar sound, "LOST!" Clear your mind of anything other than the job at hand, which is breaking the target. A negative thought, is not necessarily a bad thought, it is just a thought other than breaking the target. One time, while shooting with a friend, we both missed one target and ended up with a 199. He turned to me, as we walked back to the locker room, and ask why I missed. I replied, "I shot before I was ready." He asked, "Do you know why I missed?" "I have no idea; I know you shot behind it but not why". He replied, "I was trying to decide what to wear to the shoot off!!" As you stand there waiting for your turn to shoot, your mind can wander. There are millions of thing to think about, and you can think about them, until that 3 to 8 second window when it is your turn. Then do what it takes to get ready and make the shot. Some say they need a rhythm to shoot

a good score. That is an example of stress dictating your ability! If you are with 2 Shooters in a handicap shoot off, there is no rhythm, especially if you are different yardages. Each of you will, in fact, have to shoot alone. Do you forfeit or shoot and just loose? Reading a golf magazine, on my way out west to a shoot one time, I found an interesting article. It was titled "Staying in the Now" and written by a golf coach who worked with some of the top Golfers in the world. Although coaching a totally different game, I realized we had much in common from the mental aspect of competitive sports. Staying in the now means keeping focused until the job is finished. Then, until it is your turn again, you may do whatever you wish. I use to think you had to stay focused from the time you got out of bed until the tournament was completed. A friend told me I was going to fly into 5000 pieces some day if I did not learn how to shoot with ease. I ask if he meant relax? "No, shoot with ease", he said.

What I read by the golf pro instructor was saying the same thing. Shooting with ease is not as easy for some as for others. It helps me to set realistic goals, for each discipline of the game, that are within my ability. Singles, if I break 97, it is acceptable. Handicap, if I break 90-95 (depending on the weather), is acceptable. Doubles, 96 or above, is realistic.

If you get to the last post and are at your goal or better, be grateful, and take some of the pressure off of yourself. Look at the last 5 or 10 as a gift, but do not relax. Shoot them

with ease! As I stated, in a previous news letter, I have had to change my style due to my physical condition. So I am discovering new things and re-discovering some old ones. Going through this process, I think it has made me a better coach. If you go out to do your best in practice, it will show up in your competition. Pump up your practice routine to win. Do not just go out and shoot a lot of targets every week with your friends. What you practice will become your routine! Fifty targets, worked at hard, are better than 500 targets just going through the motions. Start with your feet and work your way up at each post, all the way to a point on the house, from each post. When it can be done without thought, you will feel it. Find some mental trigger point, that lets you know you are ready to make the shot, don't just take it and hope for the best. It may be counting in your head to 3 or tapping your finger on the forearm. Whatever works for you? Find something that sends your mind to the place it needs to be for that few seconds it takes to break the target.

Until next month.

Remember, there is a Champion in each and every one of you.

Dean DeBow



Spring is finally here!!! “Are you ready to take the leap for a new gun, used gun or maybe treat yourself to a custom Stock?”

Contact:

DeVault Industries LLC
330-456-6070 or on the web
www.devaultind.com