

April 1, 2010

# *DeVault Industries LLC*

## *Custom Engineered Shooting Solutions*

Dean and I made it back from California where we conducted three clinics with 28 shooters. It's a miracle "We both stayed healthy and no one landed in the Emergency room for kidney stones or the flu. I will always remember the sign said welcome to warm and sunny California, I think the weatherman forgot to tell someone about the warm part. The first class was at the North Hollywood Gun Club and the high temperature for the day was 41 degrees with pouring rain. At some point during the day someone decided to dump the water off of the tent just as I was walking by and splash, about 4 gallons of cold clean water went down my back inside my coat. I spent the next 6 hours with wet socks and underwear, fun stuff. The next stop was sunny San Diego where they set 40 record low temperatures. You guessed it we were there for that very festive occasion. First day was a high of 39 degrees with rain. By this time in the trip I was ready to head back to Canton, Ohio as my lovely wife was calling to tell me they were having 65 degree days. Go figure. Finally it was on to Redlands and the high desert, the last hope for good weather. We were not disappointed, high 60's and low 70's for our last two days. Dean and I would like to thank everyone that came out to spend time with us and we especially want to thank all the people at the clubs that made our stay a great success. We even had one lady shooter that told me we were the cutest teachers that she has had so far, I very quickly gave her a business card for my eye doctor as she cannot see as clearly as she should. All joking aside we made many new lifelong friends and I appreciate the support and the way we were greeted by everyone. The shooters made my first trip to California a very memorable experience and I can't wait to go back again. Thank you for a great time,

Dennis and Dean

### ***"DeVault Winners Box"***

Bill McGuire ~ **Blaser F3 Luxus**, featuring DeVault Industries Custom Stock and Delrin add-on rib~ **East Coast Championship Hunters Point ~ Main Event Champion 187 x 200 Prelim. Champion 95 x 100 Clay Cartridge FITAS Master Class R/U 89 x 100**

Remember that the winner's box is for everyone but you have to let us know. If you are shooting any of the products from DeVault Industries or have taken a Double D Shooting Clinic let us know your scores and we will post your results to share with all of our readers. At this time our little letter is being viewed by over 4,000 people. So don't be shy let us know.

## *The World According to Me ~ "Dennis DeVault"*

Another month has flown by and it won't be too long until Spring in Northeast Ohio will begin. With the warm weather we can once again begin our stock fitting and manufacturing process. This month I will dive into a little more about stock fitting and hopefully provide a little more understanding on what makes it all work. The first thing I want to discuss is a few words that I am learning to despise very much. The F word (Floating the target), the B word (my Buddy says) and last but not least the A word (the Anchor point). First let me say the word **Float** should only be used when you are referring to being in a swimming pool or toilet. The **Buddy** term should only be used to refer fondly to how much you enjoy shooting with your buddy. The wrong use is telling me that your buddy told you to tell me how your stock should be built. And the last and the most famous is the **Anchor**. The Anchor word should only be used when referring to the device you use to hold your boat in position when fishing. The ultimate though is when all three words are used in one sentence. "My Buddy said not to make the POI of my barrel is to high because I might have to float the targets that I shoot at and also I need an anchor point to hook my face into the stock when I mount the gun".

First things first; **float**. At our last clinic Dean and I watched a group take the line for their first 25 targets. We always use the first round to evaluate and take notes on each student before we begin making comments or corrections. One shooter knocked the bottom out of 22 of the 25 targets that he shot at for the first round. I checked his rib and noted that it was all the way up making the gun shoot at its lowest POI. I asked him why he had the gun set so flat and he answered; "All my buddies told me I was shooting over the targets I was missing." I asked him how he determined this and he told me that when the gun was patterned it was high on paper so he was attempting to float the targets to stay under them when shooting. If you are floating the targets you are no longer pointing the shotgun you are aiming. A shotgun to be shot properly needs to be pointed and not aimed. I asked him if I could lower the rib a bit and let him shoot another round. So I lowered the rib and raised the POI about 7 inches. I also asked if he would just look at the target and not attempt the aiming part. He assured me that he would try on the next round and the breaks got much better but he was not yet comfortable with the new setting so I did not push the issue. The next day it was time to practice Doubles and this same person did not have a Doubles gun so he borrowed Dean's Perazzi to participate. When he picked up the gun he asked me where it shot and I lied and said about the same as his current gun. He took the line and just started smoking targets and having a great time. During the morning he shot high pairs and low pairs. As the wind came in the pairs were not all steady and some were dropping but he had no problem breaking high and low targets alike. After we finished I asked the shooter how was the experience and he replied great. I then told him that the gun he shot for Doubles was about 16 inches high; I knew this because I built the gun for Dean. He was stunned and took his single barrel lowered the rib all the way down and never look back the rest of the day. He learned two things that weekend; his buddies really didn't know if he was shooting over the targets and that floating the targets definitely did not work like he thought. When he just went out and shot, with no preconceived notions and just looked at the target and pulled the trigger when he got to the target; the shot became natural instead of mechanical. Not everyone can shoot a gun that high but I knew from watching him that the gun would shoot where he was looking and that is the key.

Last month I had a customer come in and request a fitting for a custom stock to be built. As we chatted about the process the first morning he informed me that his **Buddies** (multiple friends) said to tell me to be sure I gave him an anchor point to hook his face into when he mounted the gun. I asked him if his friends were mad at him and if they wanted to see him shoot with a lot of pain? He said, "No" but he needed me to explain to him what we were going to do. Many shooters talk about an anchor point for their face. After fitting stocks for 15 years I have observed that those folks are arm shooters. They shoot from their shoulders and arms not from the waist and legs. There are some shooters that shoot that method very well but they are among a very

select few. As shooters we have been shooting ill fitting stocks for years and the factories keep building them that way. There is no reason for manufacturers to change. Most shotguns today were deprived from hunting guns. Gun stocks were built from hunting roots. All the guns today with a few exceptions were designed as hunting guns that were converted to target guns later. Many companies started producing guns with higher ribs to help get your head up but the guns still shot flat. They feared the unknown and stepping outside the box.

Now to the **anchor**. Wrapping your thumb over the top of the grip (**high riding the grip**) will promote the practice of arm shooting. Also high riding the grip will hinder the ability to mount the gun into the shoulder pocket properly with little to no effort. **High riding the grip** is when the hand is on top of the grip moving the fingers up almost to the receiver. This position puts the trigger finger at an angle down across the side of the receiver and you are now lifting instead of pulling the trigger. This also puts the wrist in a very unnatural and strained position. The wrist is made to bend left to right not up and down. When shaking someone's hand the wrist is straight and not bent at a downward angle.

With your hand on top of the grip the heel of the gun can only be raised as high as your elbow and shoulder will allow. If you drop your hand to the side of the grip the gun will rotate upward unobstructed and the mount will be consistent and fluid every time. Dropping the hand to the side of the grip takes the thumb out of play and also allows the trigger finger to be in-line with the trigger so it trigger can be pulled instead of lifted. Dropping the hand down will cause the grip length to be moved in and it also takes the middle finger away from the back of the trigger guard. Now the trigger guard will not beat your middle finger and cause undue pain. With the hand in the proper position the gun can only be held by three fingers on the grip and those fingers pull the gun straight back into the shoulder pocket. By taking the thumb out of play you will not have to ability to turn the gun left or right with your hands and arms. This position is very strange to someone that has never done this before but with two days of shooting you will adapt quickly and the fatigue in the hand will become non-existent. If you do everything you can to take away the tendency to arm shoot. Thus the need for an anchor point is no longer necessary.

How many times do you see shooters that mount the gun and turn their head into the stock and hook the front part of the mouth onto the stock? Look at their face after an afternoon of shooting and see the pain one must go through to supposedly enjoy their sport. Yes it will take time to learn to do something differently than you are used to doing. Sometimes a shooter cannot help themselves and just can't learn a new method. But for many the thought of being able to shoot pain free and learn a new method is worth the time. We have all seen shooters with holes in their cheeks, or bleeding after a 300 target day. I don't call that kind a pain fun and enjoyable.

As an overall observation the clay target shooting sports equipment is very far behind the times. In all the other sports the equipment manufacturers have done a great job in producing equipment that exceeds the ability of the person using the equipment. Shooting is deeply ingrained in old traditions and grossly outdated thoughts and equipment. It is a proven fact that it takes 21 days to drop one habit and develop a new one. In this day and age of instant gratification it is difficult to have to adopt a new way of approaching an old game. As human nature goes it is our inability to accept change and explore new frontiers that keeps us in the dark ages. That's OK, but I will continue to change my customer's one stock at a time and continue to pursue new ideas and pursue a higher knowledge base for my customers no matter how long it takes.

All and all I have been afforded the opportunity to meet many great people and develop lifelong friends in this sport. God Bless everyone that we have managed to touch and I hope to be around for many years to come.

Until next month,

Rodeo Man Out

## *From the Mind of ~ Dean DeBow*

### **“Does Practice make Perfect?”**

Well it is officially Spring even though it still seems like Winter in some areas. Dennis & I just returned from a trip to California, and we witnessed a 40 year record cold front. Old El Nino paid us all a brief visit while we were in North Hollywood and San Diego. Even with the cold snap, it is still a beautiful State. If you have never been there to shoot or visit, do yourself a favor, take the time to experience it.

It seems like yesterday; when I was ask by Dennis to start writing this monthly letter. I truly hope you take a bit of something useful out of each one of them, I know with each one, I find something that was buried in my subconscious. There are so many ways to look at something, yet not everyone gets the same meaning from the same sentence, so if it seems I am repeating myself from a past letter, it is only because it has a different meaning this time around.

### Now for this month's topic; **“Does practice make perfect?”**

The answer is yes; but only if you practice perfect! And, it depends on how you approach it. If you do not have a practice routine, by all means start one. If you have one and have not accomplished your goals, or are not getting where you want to be in your game, start from the feet and redesign it. This game is not something you can approach from a generic standpoint. Meaning what works for one, will not work for everyone.

We are as individual in shooting as we are the shoes we wear. From wearing prescription glasses, low back problems, knee and or rotator cuff problems, family issues and all of the rest. Only you know what feels comfortable to you, and you need to figure out how to work around these difficulties without it hindering your performance as best as you can. If you do not have a gun club next door, it does not mean you cannot practice your routine. All it means is that you cannot practice your shooting to see if your routine is working. I would rather shoot 4 good rounds of practice a week than to just shoot 20 rounds of practice. I have always practiced many parts of my routine without a gun in hand once I knew it was correct. This game is played with your mind and your eyes, they control everything else. Action and reaction, the target is the stimulus and you react to it. This can be done without a gun or targets. I had a one on one lesson with a gentleman two days after we returned from California. Here is a prime example of what I am speaking of and why we miss some easy targets and have no idea why.

He is a new shooter, about a year or so into shooting and doing fairly well. But he has 3 guns and he was switching from one to the other with no practice routine. In fact the gun he was about to give up on is the one he is now shooting. He has very good hand eye coordination but he had only been told where he had shot when he missed instead of why he had missed. This is a very common coaching error almost everywhere. What we do in our DD Shooting classes is find out why you are missing, no matter how frequent or seldom it occurs.

It makes no difference where you shot if you miss. I told him to stop calling for the target, just mount his gun, then I will throw a target and you shoot it. He broke all 5 with such ease he ask me to do it again on the next post. He then broke the next 2 just as smooth, and smoked them as hard as it could be done. He was still not sure of where I was headed with this. Then I turned on the voice release and ask him to proceed as usual. He missed 2 of the next 3 and chipped one of those; it was like a different person had stepped into his place. He turned to me with a red face and asked, “What happened, what was the difference?” When we took the call out of the equation he reacted to the target (stimulus) and broke it with such ease, yet when we put the call back in the process he started moving the gun before the target appeared, and sometimes in a the direction of the previous target flight and angle. That comes from your subconscious memory. If you do not think you do this try shooting hand pulled targets. If you have never shot targets pulled by hand, or even if you have, it will surprise you how the mind will tell your eyes to move with the sound of your call instead of the movement of the target. The gun will always follow your eye that is what is supposed to happen. This is something we all must become aware of, and each time we are preparing for our turn to shoot a target, tell your eyes to look for the target.

We are all human; we are not machines and so everyone does this to a degree. The key is to lock your eyes

and not move before you see the target leave the house. If you cannot stop moving your eyes before you see the target then stay in the gun and learn to control the trigger. Go shoot some Sporting Clays, and getting out of the normal routine, it is good practice. Most of us shoot because it is our turn to do so and we want to be in rhythm with the squad. That is fine, as long as you are not simply shooting because it is your turn, but because you are ready to take the shot.

I shot beside one of the best lady shooters of all times for many years. She is truly as close to a machine as I have ever seen. If it did not feel right she would remount or if there was a broken target she started all over again as if it never happened. Shoot your game at your speed, not the squads timing. That alone can be the kiss of death for a good score.

So, evaluate your practice routine and see if something different may help you achieve the next goal on your list. "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting a different result." Please do not do the same thing over and over and expect different results.

Until next month,

Keep your head down and be safe.

There is a Champion in each and every one of you.

Dean DeBow

**Our first group of students in California. This was taken at the Hollywood Gun Club This was the second day after all the rain had cleared out. A great bunch and we had a good time.**





**This was our third group at the Redlands Gun Club in Redlands California. Looks like a happy bunch. They were happy because it was not freezing cold for our last stop**



**This is a group of our friends at a Sporting Clays shoot in sunny Florida. “Gee” it must have been warm there notice the short sleeve shirts and no winter gear. I was jealous after seeing this. The gentleman on the far right and the Lady in the front are displaying some of our products that we recently built. Sorry I just had to throw in that plug.**



We have clinic dates already scheduled for 2010. Go to the web site below and see if there are openings at a clinic near you. If anyone wants to schedule a clinic at their favorite club let Dean or Dennis know so we can set you in the schedule. Watch the web site for the dates and locations as we post the schedule [www.ddshooting.com](http://www.ddshooting.com) Contact Dean @ 270-886-2095 or Dennis @ 330-456-6070. We look forward to seeing everyone this year.

We are now accepting Profile sheets and Deposits for the Clinic in Indiana at the Fulton County Gun Club and also in Ohio at the North Lawrence Fish & Game Club.

Fulton County is June 5th & 6th and North Lawrence is June 12th & 13th. You can sign up by going to the above web site, click on the shooter profile page, fill out and submit the shooter profile and at the bottom of the same page you can click into the on-line store and pay your deposit. Your deposit secures your spot for the clinic. If you are not comfortable with the paying of your deposit on-line call the shop and we will take your information for the deposit and put in the information manually. Thank you and we look forward to seeing everyone at the clinic.



**Group number 2 from Lemon Grove near San Diego This was also taken after the rain cleared out on the second day. A little smaller group but everyone seemed to have a great time**

## *DeVault Industries LLC*

3500 12th. Street NW

Canton, Ohio 44708

Voice 330-456-6070

Fax 330-456-5742

e-mail: [dennisdevault@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dennisdevault@sbcglobal.net)

on the web: <http://www.devaultind.com>

