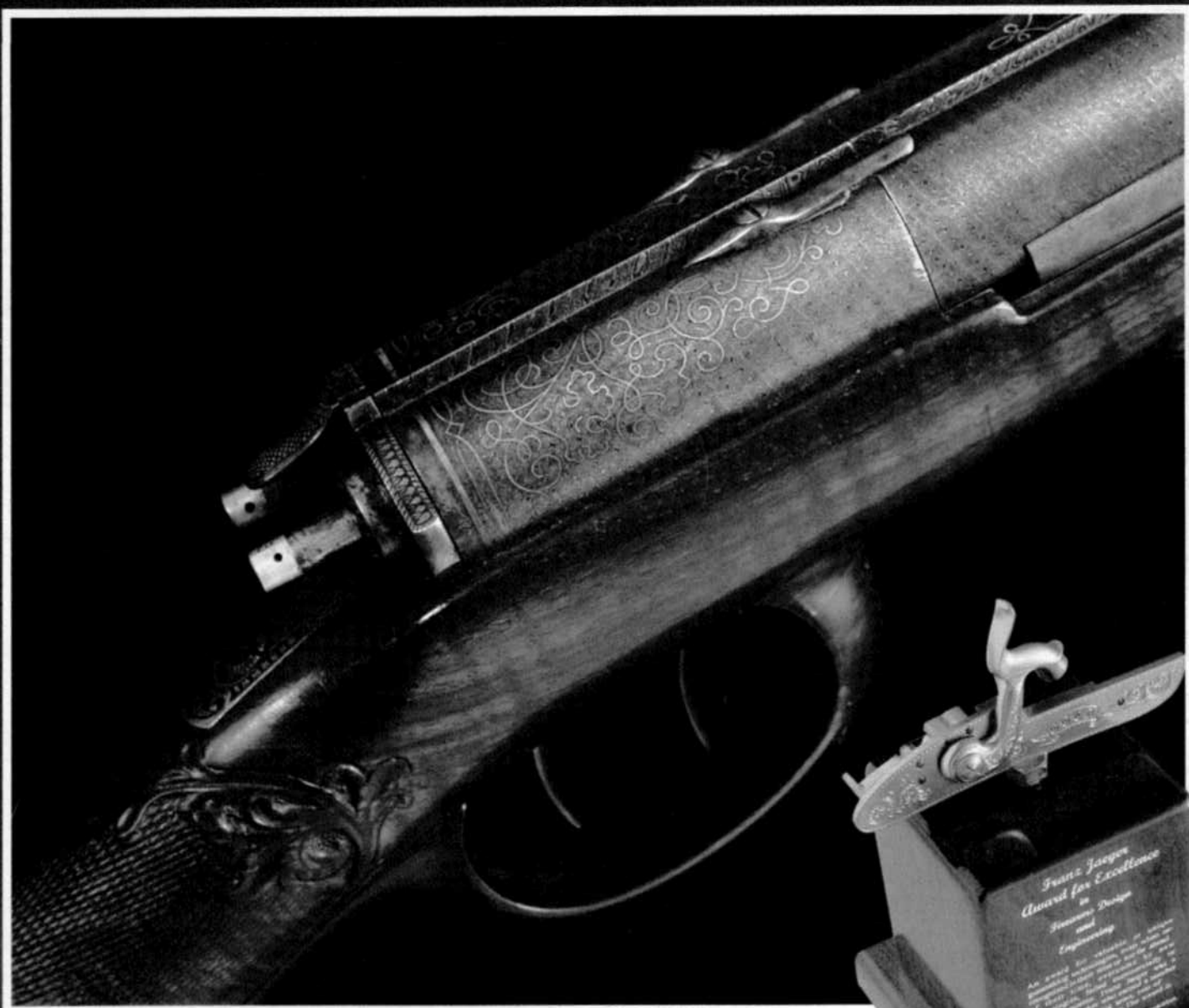




The Journal of the German Gun Collectors Association

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*The winner of the 2006 Franz Jäger Award:  
Franz von Dreyse 20 ga. side-by-side shotgun. Turn to page 21 for more information.*

## The “Best Gun” at the German Gun Exhibit/Vintagers 2006

The judges at the German Gun Exhibit reached a unanimous decision in naming this gun the “Best of Show”. If you look at all the photos, you will most likely agree.

The condition, the styling of the action and the hammers, the engraving, the two Damascus barrel sets and the completeness of the accessories that come with the gun all added up to a most unusual piece.



The first action design for pin-fire ammunition by Casimir Lefauchaux dates back to 1833 and further improvements were made in the following decades. With the advent of center fire ammunition, pin-fire ammunition faded away, but the Lefauchaux action found even greater use with this much better ammunition with brass cases for rifle cartridges and cases for shot shells with a brass base. This can be attributed to the discovery that brass, when not too thick, expanded under the gas pressure of the burning powder, sealing off the breech of the barrels reliably, but returning to its



original dimension so that the empty case could easily be removed from the chamber.

This gun was most likely made in the second half of the 19th century, but an exact date is not known. We were not able to find any information about Sackreuter in Frankfurt on the Main or M. Mach in Prag. Neither can we be sure what each of them did on the gun. It seems like Sackreuter was the maker and Mach either the lock maker or the engraver.

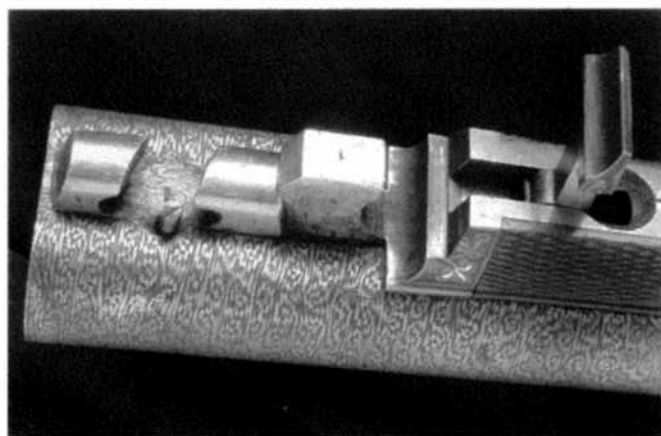
Not too often do we see Damascus barrels where the softer iron has been etched out to a certain depth, making the pattern of the harder steel wire stand proud.

We also admire the beautiful condition of the bores in both barrels, but especially in the cape gun barrel with one .58 caliber bore. The bore is as smooth as on barrels made from high grade steel and we found no signs of a steel liner. The three 16 Ga. shotgun barrels are also in exceptionally perfect condition.

A special feature that I have never seen is the arrangement for removing the barrels from a Lefauchaux action. Most

of these guns have a forend held to the barrels by a wedge. Removal of this wedge is not always easy and the exchange of barrels much more time consuming.

On this gun, each barrel set has its own forend end held in place by a screw that stays in place when the barrels are removed. To remove the barrel, the lever under the forend is turned to the side. Pushing down on the end that fits into a cupped recess can open a precisely fitted latch. This snaps open when pushed and opens up a gap through which the hinge pin can be disengaged by opening the barrel all the way to a stop. As a former



gunsmith I can appreciate the work required to not only make this work, but also the flawlessly fitting parts.

If some of us might think that the reloading of ammunition was only made possible in recent times, here is proof that we are wrong. Fitted into the hard



case are all the tools needed for reloading the pin fire ammunition.

We know that pin-fire cartridge cases were made and sold by a few ammunition makers of that period. With this set of tools the owner of the gun could re-size the cases, add powder with the powder measure, insert a wad that he had cut with his wad cutter, add the shot with the shot measure, cover it with the cardboard wad he had cut and create a roll crimp. A case extractor completes this tool set.

The brass cartridge cases we found in the case are most likely of much later vintage.

Our sincere thanks to Charles Woolley for not only sharing this fine gun with us, but also three others we will try to show in future Journals. He also has agreed to come to the Baltimore Gun Show in March and display some of his guns on one of our tables there.



**J. Sackreuter – M. Mach**  
**Cased pin-fire gun with two sets of barrels**

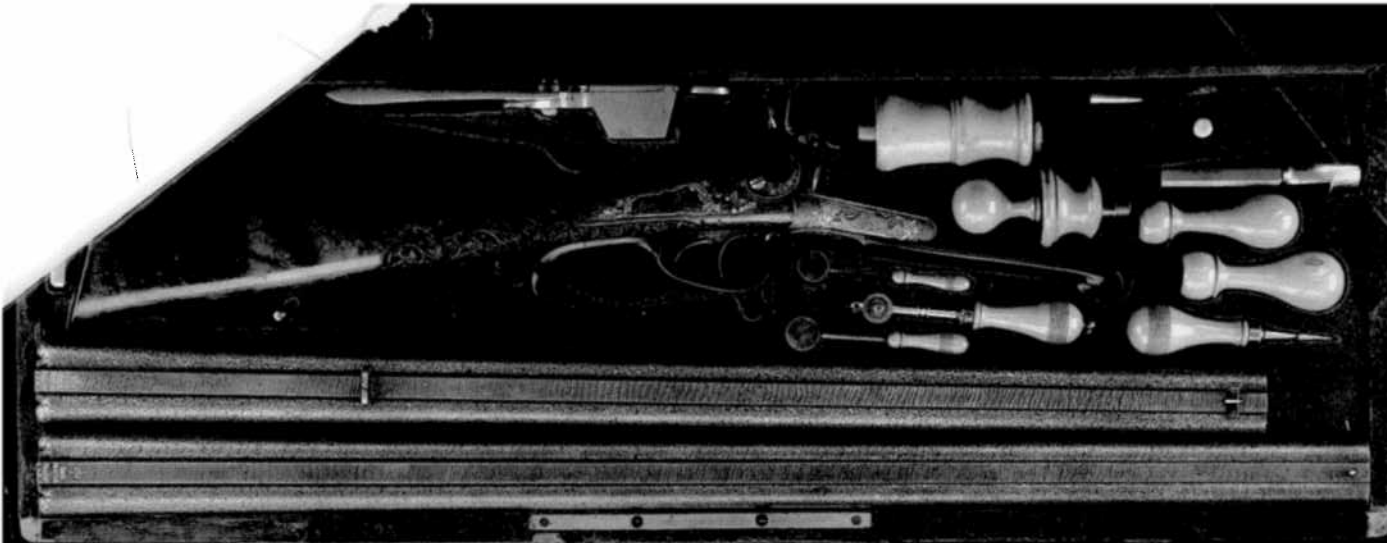
Owner: Charles Woolley, Vermont





1335. **EXCEPTIONALLY FINE CASED PINFIRE CAPE GUN AND SHOTGUN COMBO BY M. MACH OF PRAGUE. SN 2074.** Cal. 16 Ga. (2-1/2" Chambers) and 16 Ga./ 24 Ga. Rifle. This exceptional cased set was the recipient of the "Best Gun" award at the German Gun Exhibit at the Vintage Cup in 2006 and is accompanied by its trophy for same. It also won the Gold Medal, Concours d'Elegance in 2005. The 29" shotgun barrels, and 27" Cape Gun barrels, have deeply etched Bernard Damascus steel barrels with high flat ribs, that are inlaid in gold "Sack - Reuter" and "Frankfurt A - M" (retailer) at rear of ribs. Breech ends of bbls have gold inlaid scroll in engraved checkered background. Cape gun bbls have single standing V-notch rear sight, and German silver bladed front sight, dovetailed through rib. Bottoms of bbls have sling loops soldered on. Small foreends are fixed to bbls with a screw and have an interesting arrangement for interchange of bbls. There is a spring loaded catch pivoting through forend iron. Upon depressing the forward end, the catch snaps open to allow assembly of bbls to action. This ingenious system is possibly unique. Lefacheux type action has horn covered front lever with nicely filed fences and beads. Back action peninsula locks have tall serpentine pinfire hammers. Steel trigger guard has inset horn grip at rear portion. Front portion of bow has nicely filed volute. Front trigger is set. All metal is beautifully engraved with inlaid accents of gold and silver. There are vignettes of game and dogs relief carved in finely stippled backgrounds. Right side of action depicts a large cat attacking a boar. Right lockplate has a pair of foxes preparing for a grouse dinner. Left action depicts a trio of chamois on mountaintop. Left lockplate shows a roebuck and doe in open woodlands. Top tang of action shows a sitting greyhound. Bow of trigger guard has a pair of pheasants. Background engraving is beautifully cut and nicely styled relief acanthus, highlighted with gold and silver tendrils, with a combination of checkered and stippled background. Right sidelock has "M. Mach" inlaid in gold, and left "In Prag". Honey-colored nicely marbled and slightly figured European walnut buttstock measures 14" over steel trap buttplate with 2" tang. Engraving continues the acanthus motif with gold inlay and relief grouse on tang. Cover of trap depicts a fine full length portrait of Jaeger wearing a cape, with his rifle at ready. SN is near heel. Stock features a nicely sculpted right hand cheekpiece, and sling loop on toe. In place of checkering there is relief carved acanthus scroll with stippled background. Everything about this fine combination gun exudes quality. Shotgun bbls: Bore diameter: left -.674, right -.675. Bore restrictions: left -.000, right -.000. Wall thickness: left -.046, right -.043. Drop at heel: 2-5/16", drop at comb: 1-9/16". Weight: 7 lbs. 2.9 oz, LOP 14". Cape bbls: Bore diameter: left -.674, .602 rifle groove diameter. Bore restrictions: left -.000, Wall thickness: left -.043. Drop at heel: Approx 2-3/8", drop at comb: Approx 1-11/16". Weight: 7 lbs. 12.5 oz, LOP 14". Checkered pattern leather covered wood case has large raised embossed panel on lid and brass oval central medallion, as well as large brass tack corners. Interior is lined in dark green cloth, and is closely French fitted for an array of original accessories. Accessories include two beautifully filed and polished wad cutters, one for shotgun, one for the rifle; matching rifle bullet mold has cavities for round and pointed conical projectiles; most of the other loading accessories are turned out of boxwood, and are stamped "16", and include shell holder with wad rammer, roll crimping tool, and powder and





shot dippers. Rifle loading equipment is stamped "24" and includes shell holder, rammer, and crimper. There are also a pinfire broken case extractor, turn screw, and Greenheart cleaning rod, all with matching boxwood handles. The original patterned leather cloth-backed sling, and five modern brass pinfire cases are also included. Also accompanied by a German pewter stein awarded as the gold medal winner at the Concours d'Elegance of Fine Guns in 2006. PROVENANCE: Copy of "Waffenschmied" Fall 2006 with gun on rear cover. Correspondence regarding history of this maker. CONDITION: Excellent. Bbbs retain virtually all of their original finish, slightly silvered at muzzles. Strikingly bold pattern is evident throughout, with no areas of discoloration. Metal appears to have originally been finished in a dark French gray, and most of that finish is still present. Wood retains nearly all of its original French polish with numerous marks and nicks. There are a few minor marks in the horn of the opening lever. Carved horn grip is excellent. All horn retains most of its high polish. Action is tight. Bbbs are on face. Locks are crisp. Rifle bore is excellent. Shotgun bores show full length scratches, possibly as maker intended, and are bright, but with some pitting. Case leather is considerably deteriorated with large areas missing, but has been stabilized. Interior cloth is excellent, with a few areas where it has been worn through from contact with gun and bbbs. Accessories are excellent. Steel retains all of its bright polish. Boxwood retains its original lacquer. Unique ensemble by a maker, little known outside of central Europe, but highly regarded in Bohemia. Stein is new. 4-39722 MGM103 (10,000-15,000)

