The Small Bore
SHOT GUN

BY

Parker Brothers

Pioneer Makers in America

Advent of the Small Bore Gun

In view of the many inquiries that are constantly being received by us relative to the merits of small bore shot guns—particularly the 20 gauge—we feel that some information on this interesting subject may appeal to sportsmen who would like to heighten the charm of game shooting, and at the same time place no material handicap as to actual results achieved, when using light guns of small calibre.

Experience has demonstrated that featherweight guns of whatever gauge are not, when put to actual test, as serviceable as they may appear when being handled indoors without loads in them, for then nothing but the handiness with which they are mounted to the shoulder appears. While such guns can undeniably be swung with great celerity and ease, yet when they are fired, the recoil is very unpleasant if they are loaded to the capacity of their gauge, and nothing will so surely mar the pleasure of shooting, and be at the same time as conducive to missing as to shoot with a kicking gun.

A small bore gun, if of sufficient weight and properly bored to withstand full charges with perfect safety, is a tremendously hard shooter, giving greater velocity to the shot than can be obtained with any feather-weight of wider bore, which, owing to its lightness can never be loaded up to the capacity of its gauge. Hence, a 12 gauge weighing 6 pounds is merely a 12 gauge in name but not by any means a representative of the 12 gauge class, whereas a 20 gauge weighing 6 pounds is a very serviceable gun and quite capable of withstanding a moderately heavy charge. A 12 gauge of 6½ pounds weight is still of dwarf type as compared to the full size, but a 20 gauge at that weight is a very powerful shooter and unless needed for exceptionally hard shooting that is the full weight limit for guns of that calibre.

To sum up the entire situation in a few words, it is just as well to admit that the main advantage of using a 20 gauge gun lies in its diminished weight, and also the lightness and reduced bulk of its ammunition, hence, both are more easily carried and the gun itself is more easily handled, especially in all kinds of covert shooting where snap shots are the rule.

To recommend the use of small bores solely

on their diminutive features, regardless of what can actually be accomplished with them afield, is too absurd, because if the 20 gauge cannot give a good account of itself when in action, under service conditions, it is folly to use one and naturally no manufacturer would recommend any kind of gun that has not proved itself to be fully up to the standard.

The chronograph, as will be shown, has established the fact that a 20 gauge propels its load of shot with as great, or even greater speed, than does a 12 gauge, when both are loaded with normal game charges, so, in that respect neither has the advantage excepting that a 20 gauge weighing 6½ pounds will shoot a full load of ammunition, whereas it takes quite 7¾ pounds in a 12 gauge to reach the limit for that calibre. Naturally the larger gun shoots a greater quantity of shot, but after all, why crush a butterfly on a wheel; the smaller load in the 20 gauge is enough, and that should suffice, especially when the pleasure of feeling one has done something skillful is taken into consideration, and that sensation should counter-balance whatever short-comings may be inherent to the trim little guns.

It is just as well to dispel the erroneous idea that a 20 gauge gun is invariably a very close shooter, and that none but the

very best shots need ever expect to do good work with it, as the pattern made by a gun of any gauge depends entirely upon the way it is bored and loaded. So since a 20 gauge can be regulated to throw its charge of No. 8, No. 9, or No. 10, shot to cover a 30 inch circle at 25 yards so that even so small a bird as a quail has very little chance of escape, that of itself proves it must be a good gun for all kinds of covert shooting where snap shots predominate. On the other hand by properly choking the barrels, they can be made to pattern as high as 65% of the pellets in the same size circle at 40 yards, even when using the full charge of 2½ drams of bulk nitro powder and ⅞ of an ounce of say No. 7 shot. So, purely in the matter of the gun itself nothing further can reasonably be desired,—although of course none but first class guns can be expected to give such results.

It thus can clearly be seen that the gauge of the gun does not operate against the shooter, as it will depend entirely upon him as to whether he bags or misses his quarry.

For all shooting where the gun has to be carried long distances over rough ground and hard going, a 20 gauge with 28 or 30 inch barrels weighing 5¾ to 6⅛ pounds will be found about right, and the charge should be 2¼ drams bulk nitro powder and ¾ of an

ounce of small shot. If the weight of the gun is from 6¼ to 6½ pounds, then 2½ drams of powder and ⅞ of an ounce of shot; and it will pay in the end to adopt a gun of this weight as the extra ¼ of a dram of powder in a 20 gauge means a great deal in the way of velocity, i. e., striking force, and that is what is needed, especially when shooting small shot. For all kinds of wild fowl shooting, guns with longer barrels are preferred by many men of experience because here the shooting will be at longer range and the increased length of the barrels unquestionably affords better alignment. So here 32 inch barrels bored full choke are much used, and these should be chambered to use shells from 2¾ to 3 inches in length, allowing full charges of 2½ drams of bulk nitro powder and ⅞ of an ounce of shot with wadding enough to hold back all the gases. By cushioning the charge of shot, steadier shooting at long range is obtained. For duck shooting over decoys, 20 gauges of this kind will be found perfect, and by having their weight say 6¾ to 7 pounds, thereby minimizing the recoil, the pleasure of shooting is enhanced to such an extent that any slight shortcoming inherent to the gun will be entirely ignored. One seldom hears of a good 20 gauge being shelved to make way for any

Velocity tests made over a 100 foot range, with Parker Guns of gauges from 12 to 28, all having 30 inch barrels, and full choke bored.

12	gauge	2¾	drams DuPont,	1 oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 903 feet
12	gauge	3	drams DuPont,	1⅛ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 921 feet
12	gauge	3½	drams DuPont,	1¼ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 963 feet
16	gauge	2¾	drams DuPont,	⅞ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 948 feet
*16	gauge	3	drams DuPont,	1 oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 969 feet
20	gauge	2¼	drams DuPont,	¾ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 902 feet
20	gauge	2½	drams DuPont,	⅞ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 941 feet
*20	gauge	2¾	drams DuPont,	⅞ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 974 feet
28	gauge	2	drams DuPont,	⅝ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 973 feet
28	gauge	2¼	drams DuPont,	¾ oz.	No. 7 chilled shot, velocity 978 feet

*Not recommended by us and not loaded by loading companies.

other gun. Sportsmen who suffer from gun headache will never know the comfort derived from adopting these heavy small bores until they have actually tried them, and as in this class of shooting the gun is never carried much, its increased weight is all in the right direction.

In order to give some idea of what the 20 gauge Parker Gun will do, when tested by the chronograph, the following figures will be of interest.

It will be seen that the average 12 gauge game load of 3 drams and 1⅛ ounce No. 7 shot gives velocity of 921 foot seconds, while the 2¾ dram load in the 16 gauge gives 948 foot seconds, and the 20 gauge with its 2½ drams gives 941 foot seconds, both outstripping the standard 12 gauge game load for speed. Furthermore the 12 gauge with the maximum charge of 3½ drams, reached a velocity of 963 foot seconds as against 974 foot seconds attained with the 20 gauge when loaded with 2¾ drams of powder and ⅞ of an ounce of shot. THIS LATTER LOAD IS NOT TO BE RECOMMENDED AND IS NOT LOADED BY LOADING COMPANIES, as none but a very heavy 20 gauge can be successfully used. The full limit of bulk nitro powder should not exceed 2½ drams, which if properly wadded, will be found to answer every purpose, and as that charge can be fired comfortably from a gun weighing 6½ pounds, nothing more need be desired.

Following table exhibits approximately what Parker guns of different gauges may be expected to do at 25 yards, the idea being to show that small bores, if so ordered, will give a much larger spread of shot than is generally known; in fact a cylinder bore 20 gauge, at this distance, will give about the same size killing circle as the same boring will in a 12 gauge.

Make of Gun	Gauge	Drams of Powder	Quantity of No. 9 Shot in Ounces	Killing Circles in Inches of Cylinder Barrels at 25 Yards	Average in Inches of Cylinder Barrels	Killing Circles in Inches of Modified Choke Barrels	Average in Inches of Modified Barrels	Killing Circles in Inches of Full Choke Barrels at 25 Yards	Average in Inches of Choke Barrels
Parker	12	3	1⅛	29, 30	30	22, 22, 22, 23	22	16, 16, 17, 18	17
Parker	16	2¾	1	28, 28, 28	28	. . . .	. . .	18, 19, 17	18
Parker	20	2¼	⅞	28, 30, 28	29	. . . .	. . .	20, 19, 21	20
Parker	28	2	¾	24, 26, 26	25	. . . .	. . .	20, 19, 18	19

It is quite apparent therefore that the gauge of the gun does not operate against the shooter by handicapping him in his shooting, because by having his 20 gauge built and bored according to his special requirements, he can be supplied with a most useful and highly serviceable weapon, whether he use it at quail when shooting from 15 to 25 yards, or at snipe up to 45 yards, although of course no gun, whatever its calibre, can be expected to do its best work at minimum and maximum ranges; so to be prepared for any emergency, either two pairs of barrels have to be used, or else an all around gun with one barrel improved cylinder and the other full choke, will be found to answer almost any purpose.

The 28 gauge Parker shot gun has many staunch advocates, and while the possibilities with this gun are not generally realized, yet the time will come when many more of them will be shot. The foregoing table clearly shows what may be expected from guns of this calibre when full charges of powder are used, but as the breech pressure is very much greater in these narrow chambers, the only safe plan is to have these guns of full weight and especially to be sure that the breech is extra thick to avoid bulging or bursting under the great strain to which it is subjected. By having guns of this gauge chambered for

2⅞ inch cases a respectable charge of powder can be used without putting too much pressure on it and still have room for a full complement of wads and ⅝ or ¾ of an ounce of shot. It is just as well to remember that 70% of ⅝ of an ounce of shot and 70% of 1¼ ounces is a vastly different proposition, so when targeting all small bores one should bear this in mind and be guided by what can be accomplished with the little guns afield rather than what is revealed from shooting at a paper target.

It should be apparent to the most casual observer that the smaller the charge of shot, the greater is the skill of the gun borer to so concentrate it that even at long range, and when using full charges of powder killing patterns will be obtained. Therefore it is imperative that the choke should be shaped in such fashion that it will hold the pellets together at extreme ranges even when going at "express" speed, and it is in just such tests that the Parker gun will invariably show its superiority. The above is borne out by the innumerable victories of our 12 gauge guns, at the trap, whether it be shooting at flying targets or at pigeons, in open competition against all other makes of guns, both in the hands of amateurs and professionals.

As game guns, small bore Parkers have

taken the lead in America ever since their introduction and have been regarded as standards of perfection and serviceability, earning for themselves and their makers the thanks and unstinted praise of thousands of sportsmen, whose burden afield has been perceptibly lightened by having adopted these handy little guns.

To attempt chronicling what Parker guns have done in the hands of amateurs and professionals at the trap, during the last half century, would fill a volume and still leave some grand achievements unsaid; so no attempt will be made in that direction. Suffice it to say that the Grand American Handicap, which is the largest tournament in the world, has been won more times by contestants shooting Parkers, than by others using any three makes of guns combined, and the only perfect score of 100 straight in this classic event stands to the credit of the "Old Reliable" Parker gun.

Under the auspices of the Interstate Association, the bona fide Championship of America has been won six times out of eight and twice with scores of 198 x 200 targets at 18 yds., which are the highest ever made in this event. In the year 1912, the highest official averages at single and double targets were made with Parker guns, and when the famous American team, composed of the finest

trap shots on earth, went abroad to meet all comers, eight of the twelve shot Parker guns, proving conclusively that when left to their own choice, our best men pinned their faith to the "Old Reliable," knowing from past experience that it is the peer of any gun made, a genuine American shot gun, original in its construction, faultless in its balance, unexcelled in shooting qualities, positive in its action, strong and durable in its working parts, artistic in its design, and dollar for dollar, the best gun made.

For further particulars regarding Parker guns, address,

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