

LADY SHOOTER

Life Styles



SAY HELLO TO

Julia

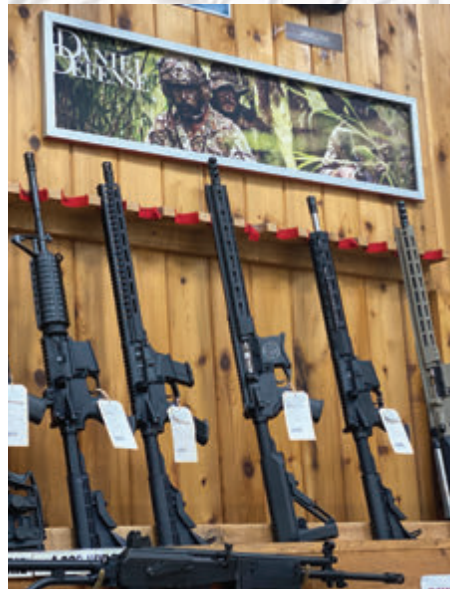


Hello, I would like to introduce you to my new friend Julia. She will make a great addition to our group. Julia loves getting together with her friends and spending the day breaking clay targets, but don't let her good looks fool you, when it comes to breaking clays she is all business. As a friend I value that she is strong, reliable and well poised. Her famous father, Julius Caesar, taught her at an early age the benefits of competition and that you can still have fun when you are not busy running around conquering the modern world. I hope you like Julia as much as I do, she is going to be one of my trusted shooting partners for many years.


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AIM TO INSPIRE

"I didn't get there by wishing for it or hoping for it, but by working for it."

-Estee Lauder

In our lives we often run into people that make an impact on us in one way or another. People that we look up to because of their achievements professionally, athletically, and even just someone that makes you think, wow, you're a really good mom. The admiration and respect that we give people who we view as being successful or worthy of esteem can sometimes lead to negative emotions. I find that these negative emotions arise from comparison. I have been guilty of this trap of comparison before and I want to talk about it a little. Comparing someone's life and their achievements to your own is a dangerous road to travel. At the end of the day, we are and will always remain just people. We are all people sharing this place called Earth and trying to make our way through this thing called life. Every one of us has our own life to live and no two are alike. It is imperative to us at LadyShooter Lifestyles that we continue to share stories that inspire others to work harder, dream bigger, and grow tougher. Living the lady shooter lifestyle is something that all of us that work, write, create, and contribute to this magazine are passionate about. I hope that as you read this issue you feel our love in creating this magazine and are inspired to encourage and reach out to the ladies we have featured. We aim to build a true community of inspiration, education, and sisterhood.

As we move forward in 2021, our first year of Lady Shooter Lifestyles, we are learning every single day how much hard work pays off. This is now our third full length issue and we could not

be more excited about it. Things are moving fast and we are doing our best to keep up. Last year around this time we were making the decision to postpone the initial debut due to the pandemic. Now fast forward to this year and we are full steam ahead with the magazine, events, blogs, and there seems to be no end in sight!

Here at Lady Shooter Lifestyles, we strive to recognize hard work and dedication by not only featuring amazing ladies that have a passion for life and shooting sports, but also by recognizing hard work within our own organization. We are excited to announce that Andrea Bogard, has accepted the position of Co-Editor. You have seen Andrea's dedication and contribution to the magazine from the very beginning with her feature "Balance is a Masterpiece" and many more. Her writing and photography have been essential to the success of this publication and her extensive background an asset. We are thrilled to have Andrea involved on a higher level so we can work together to bring you the best content and stories. Andrea will be starting a new blog that is currently under development. Building onto her "Balance is a Masterpiece" feature, she will be sharing her daily life with you. As a mother of two, living in rural Michigan, Andrea has a most unique lifestyle which allows her to live the ultimate #ladyschoolerlifestyle. I know we are all eager to know more about it, please be on the lookout for announcements on the launch of her blog.

That being said we are excited for you to enjoy our creation. In our Leading Ladies feature this edition we are bringing you candid interviews with four incredible ladies that will be representing the USA at the Tokyo Olympics. Our "21 Things you Don't Know About Me" features one of my favorite young shooters and future Olympian, Sidney Coffin. If you want a good laugh, make sure you follow her journey. We are also introducing the beautiful and

expansive world of Archery to you. Andrea brings us another excellent installment of the 2nd Amendment Discussions along with Part Two of her AR build journey in "Till I Can Make it on My Own." We get to visit South Florida and experience her first successful turkey hunt at Quail Creek Plantation. Look for more stories on her visit including a gator hunt in our next issue! As always, we have a great firearm profile, this time the lady's Victoria from Krieghoff. We also have been receiving your feedback about how much you love the wild game recipes that we have decided to bring you even more. This time you get a meal from Holly Hearn at Game Girl Gourmet and a dessert from Bri VanScotter at Wilderness to Table. We are also celebrating the launch of the Winchester Ladies Cup which is bringing big money to ladies shooting. You will also find my Blooming Babes article detailing our first ladies' event where my mom came and shot a shotgun for the first time! The last article I want to mention is near and dear to my heart because it is about Macy Ledet, our Fashion Editor. Her story "Macy Strong" will change your life if you open your heart to the beauty, fragility, and resilience of life.

It is a pleasure and an honor to bring you this issue of LadyShooter Lifestyles and we all look forward to hearing and seeing your feedback. Whether on social media or via email, all of our staff is available if you ever have questions, comments, feedback, ideas, or even a submission for publication. ■

Natalia Gonzalez

“...Til I can make it on my own.”

— The Beatles

JOIN **ANDREA BOGARD** ON THIS MULTI-ISSUE JOURNEY AS SHE TAKES AN AR-15 BUILD FROM IDEA TO #PEWPEW!

Part II: Let's Go Shopping!

Welcome back! In our last installment we discussed what “AR” stands for, looked at purpose and function of this firearm style, decided on a caliber and said “yes” to a project totally out of my mechanically-challenged wheelhouse.

So, what's the next step? Parts, parts and more parts!!! What goes into this platform and how do we find the pieces we need? Come along as we go through the parts we'll need and then chat about how to find that “just right” combination of goodies.

The first thing we start with is a “**Lower.**” This is the foundation of

break it down.

The lower houses the trigger assembly, sits above the pistol grip and has a port/well for the magazine. It's one half of the receiver, or the guts of the gun. There are lots of options for this. You can buy a completed lower that will just snap together via a few pins to whichever upper you select. Or, you can purchase what's called a “Stripped” Lower along with a “Parts Kit.” The second option is more labor intensive and can be kind of like a ballistics Rubix Cube.

Let's talk **Uppers.** The upper is the second half of the receiver. It manages/houses the barrel and bolt. You can

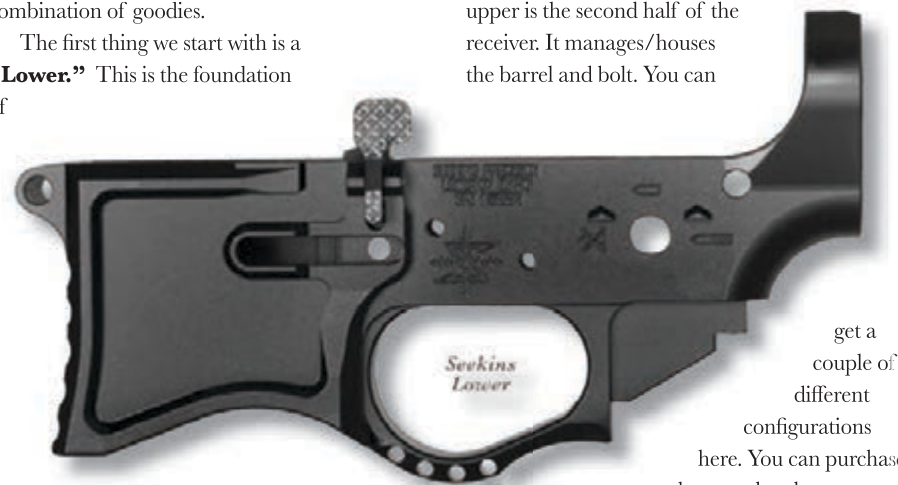
Next, we have the **Gas Block.** This is a component that can have tremendous impact on felt recoil, ammunition latitude, cycle time and overall reliability of your AR-15. A gas block is a metal fitting that goes over the barrel and gas port that regulates how much hot gas escapes the barrel. They are available in fixed or adjustable options.

A good fixed gas block will improve reliability, consistency and function. A well-made adjustable gas block will give you the ability to tune your AR like a musical instrument to achieve maximum performance.

While we're on the subject, let's talk barrels. You can get all different lengths, materials, finishes and end options. Length will vary based on caliber and purpose. Materials range from full steel to carbon wrapped options. For ends, you can get brakes, suppressors, barrel nuts or other configurations.

Our last large component is the stock. These can be highly adjustable, quickly collapsible or custom fit. Stock options are purpose built based on focus and intended use. Do you plan to do a lot of bench rest shooting? Then look at a higher comb, non-collapsible option to create greater stability. Will you be building up a deer rifle for the kids? Then something highly adjustable to accommodate a child's diminutive proportions is in order. As with most of the components above, once you define the purpose, the perfect product will present.

There are lots of smaller parts we'll discuss, as well, but these are the big ones we're going to tackle first. There's a lot of information to absorb, isn't there? I have to admit, at first it looked somewhat daunting. Literally hundreds of



get a couple of different configurations here. You can purchase the completed upper which has the bolt and barrel in one neat package. This method involves a pretty basic click and snap and presto! You have an AR receiver and barrel. Another option is to purchase the upper structure, bolt and barrel as separate components so you can have ultimate control over the system. This means sourcing each one separately and fitting together.

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options, so what do I choose? And why?

Let's look at this from another perspective. You've got a house or room to remodel. While mired in the thousands of paint samples, hundreds of flooring options and virtually unlimited design elements, the end product can seem overwhelming. So, what do you do? You pick that “one thing” that is really important to you and all other design elements flow as a result.

Building a gun is no different. So, what's that “one thing?” For me, it was the barrel. For you it might be stock design, color or trigger assembly. It's that one thing you just refuse to compromise on and design the rest of your build around.

Let's look at some brands and see what's out there!

My “one thing” is the barrel. I wanted a Proof Research brand carbon wrapped barrel in .204 Ruger. I have a Proof barrel on my Griffin & Howe Highlander in 6.5 Creedmoor and have been beyond impressed with the performance, consistency, reliability and accuracy. For example, when I shoot my current Proof barrel over a chronograph, I see single digit speed variations. This is incredible from a consistency standpoint!

Now I have my “one thing” on order. It's time to look at the other components. Let's recap, shall we?

Lower: I want to get a stripped lower with a parts kit. I want to know what pins go where and how to put everything together. I want to learn where all the little parts and pieces go and how they work. As an abysmal failure at Rubix cubes

and jigsaw puzzles, I have confidence this will be far more interesting.

Upper: If you'll recall, we can get a completed upper with a bolt assembly/upper housing and barrel or source them separately. I want to source them separately.

Here are my reasons:

I am getting the barrel directly from Proof Research.

I am selecting a bolt/carrier that has been recommended by Proof as functioning beautifully with their barrels from a specifications standpoint.

I am evaluating a side charge option for the upper/bolt carrier. This means that instead of having the T-handle at the rear of the receiver, there is a bolt handle attached to the right side (in this case since it's a right-handed rifle) of the bolt/carrier. My top choice for this component group is the JP Enterprises Side Charge kit.

Let's talk about that. I am not looking for a tactical rifle. I am looking for something I can hunt with successfully and shoot with precision. It's much easier to remain “in the gun” and effectively utilize my optics with a side charge. It will function much like a semiauto shotgun, ergonomically speaking.

Now that we have the barrel on order, let's look at the other components we need. At the moment, availability of parts is

reminiscent of the national ammo shortage. I am looking at a few different companies for the stripped lower: Seekins Precision, Alex Pro Firearms and San Tan Tactical.

All of these offer the stripped lower and corresponding parts kits. The biggest determining factors will be availability, trigger guard contour (I want a larger trigger guard because I want to safely wear gloves if needed) and where on the lower the safety mechanism is situated. Some locations are more ergonomically friendly than others. As noted before, this is the part of your gun that is serialized and registered as a firearm.

For uppers, I am looking for color and contour. I'd like to find a midnight bronze or sand/earth color to offset the black carbon barrel and matte black lower. As with lowers, availability will most likely determine which brand I end up within a certain set of parameters.

Let's talk gas blocks. I am going to go with an adjustable gas block so I have maximum control over performance and load capability. I am looking at the following brand options for adjustable gas blocks: SLR and Superlative Arms.

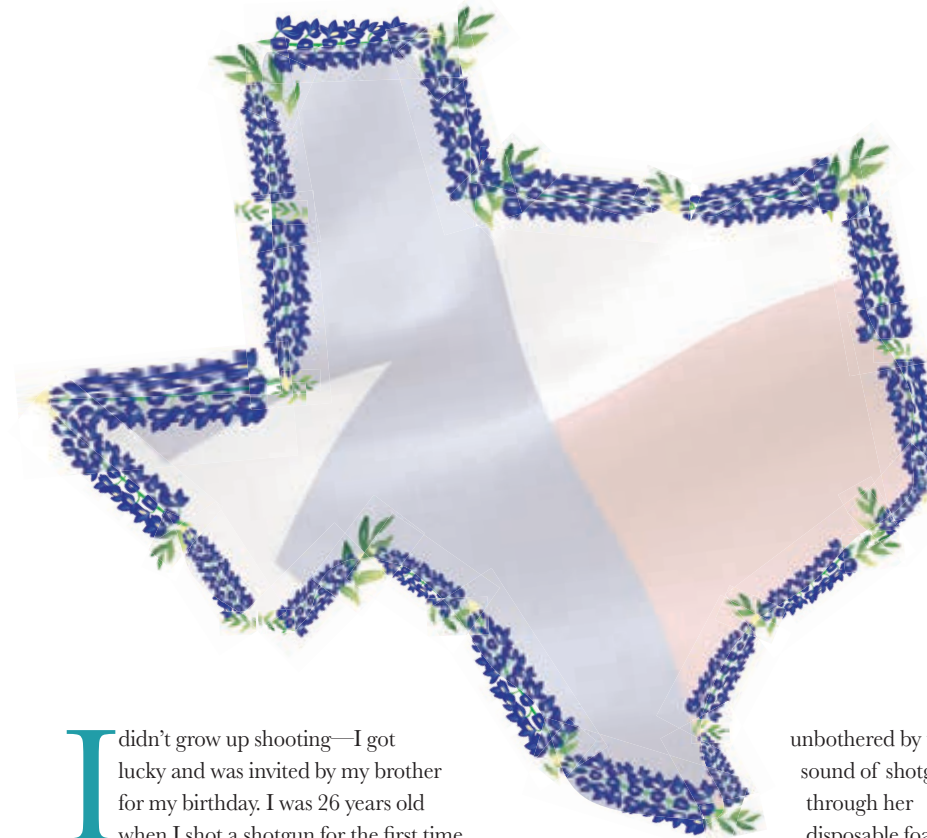
The last component we're going to focus on today is the trigger. If the trigger is sloppy, of poor quality or not comfortable, it doesn't matter how nice the rest of the gun is. I am going to go with a Trigger Tech 2-stage trigger. I have one in my Griffin & Howe Highlander and love how clean, crisp, adjustable and user-friendly it is.

We have the basics decided, so now it's time to start ordering. I'm so excited for those packages to start arriving! There are several things to still figure out, but we have what we need to get started.

By now, you've heard the term “purpose-built” quite a bit. This is a purpose-built gun built for a higher purpose. I want to “Make it

on my own,” and I am! And, so can you! Check back in our next installment for how these things start to go together! ■





Blooming Babes

AN EVENT FOR NEW SHOOTERS BY NATALIA GONZALEZ

I didn't grow up shooting—I got lucky and was invited by my brother for my birthday. I was 26 years old when I shot a shotgun for the first time. Fast forward to April 24, 2021, the day my mom shot a shotgun for the first time. She was 59 years and 31 days old. She shot a 28 gauge Browning that we borrowed from James Edgmon, the owner of R&R Trap Sales and Service in San Antonio, Texas. My mom has accompanied me to the range many times before. She's watched me shoot, sat in the golf cart, and enjoyed the beautiful weather and great outdoors, completely

unbothered by the sound of shotguns through her disposable foam earplugs. But on that day, Mom decided she was ready to try shooting for herself...and on that day, Mom became a Blooming Babe. We had twelve Blooming Babes blossom on this day and I cannot begin to express the joy I feel that my mom was one of them. Blooming Babes was an event that we decided to create in order to introduce the wonderful

sport of shooting clays to ladies in the San Antonio area. My mom drove all the way from Houston just to support our event. She thought, "Why not finally give this little sport that my daughter loves so much a try?" I suppose that I keep talking about my mom because, well, she's my mom! And I never thought I would get her to try a shotgun. You should have seen her face the first time I told her I had fallen in love with shooting clays with a shotgun - you would have thought I had told her that I loved scrubbing the floors with a toothbrush instead. Getting someone to try a really fun shooting sport isn't always as easy as you would think. Some people have a hard time stepping out of their comfort zone to try something new, let alone something involving big guns that go bang! Of course, there are also



Natalia teaching her mom, Lucy, to shoot a shotgun for the first time



The Blooming Babes



Karen Greesen shooting a 20 gauge Beretta Semi-auto

lots of ladies that will enthusiastically RSVP “Yes, please!” to any invitation involving guns that go bang!

Take for instance, Karen Greesen; she’s the “Yes, please!” type. I first met Karen when she showed up to my NSCA Level I Instructor Course as a student. Wearing her bedazzled *A Girl and A Gun* purple pistol name tag and an oversized shooting vest, she enthusiastically listened to everything I told her to do as she shot an old 20 gauge semi-auto. As an experienced pistol shooter, she was trying to aim, as most of us do when we first try shooting at a moving target. For some of us, the nasty little habit still shows up even after years of shooting clay targets: the uncontrollable urge to measure the gap between the barrel and the bird with our eyes can take over and ruin our shot at a broken target. I was pleasantly surprised when Karen showed up to Blooming Babes with that same old 20 gauge semi-auto, her shooting vest, her nametag, and her enthusiastic energy and willingness to learn, as intact as the first day I met her.

With Beretta and Syren on hand as sponsors, the ladies had many demo guns to choose from. 12 gauge and 20 gauge semi-autos from their A400 line and a 694 over/under from Beretta were heavily played with that day. Syren sent over three beautiful over under ladies specific shotguns, which were carefully shot and enjoyed as well. I had originally thought that the ladies would gravitate towards the semi-autos, however, the Syren guns never got back to the rack until



Demo guns from Beretta and Syren

the event was over. The ladies were shocked at how little the recoil was from the demo guns and the ladies who did bring their own guns quickly decided shooting the demos was going to be easier on their shoulders and infinitely more fun. The ladies learned to shoot an incoming target, then an outgoing target, then a report pair of the two, and finally a true pair.

Every single lady broke a true pair that day, something almost every single one said she wouldn’t be able to do when she came up to me to take her turn. Every time one of the ladies broke a target, the entire group cheered her on. I have to say that out of the few hundred targets we shot, very few of them did not break before they hit the ground. I could feel the energy of each lady as she approached me. Confidence, calmness, eagerness, shyness, fear, and even sadness were present amongst us that day. The sadness was from all of us when it was time to end the event and return the guns to Beretta and



The ladies practicing with unloaded guns, learning to move with the target

shotgun for the first time ever! Some of you may have seen her in the *What’s In My Shooting Bag?* feature in our last issue of the magazine. As an avid rifle competitor, Jana struggled a bit with the whole “not aiming” concept. She understood that she was doing it and could feel herself doing it. Her natural instinct to aim fought hard with her desire to let go and move with the target. It took her a bit of practice with an unloaded gun and watching the birds as other ladies shot to learn the dance of shooting clays.

Syren at the end of the day.

My dad also joined my mom at the event, but I barely spoke with him because he sat in the back under the tent, just watching and listening. He said that the best thing he heard was a woman say, “Have you ever seen this many smiles on ladies without jewelry being involved?” I almost cried when he told me that. One, because it was funny and true, and two, because I felt that deep in my heart. Why you might ask? Well, I was getting engaged a few years ago and my fiancé wanted to get me a big diamond ring. I’m actually not much of a jewelry person, so I asked him if he would buy me a big fancy shotgun instead, and that I would prefer a simple gold band. He didn’t go for that idea and that might be the reason it didn’t work out. I’m half kidding about the last part, but the story is true. I am the kind of gal that would rather have a quality shotgun than a carat. They cost about the same, so why not?

Jana Severyns joined us to try shooting a



Jana Severyns shooting a Beretta A400 12 gauge



Lisa Gallaway shooting a Syren Elos N2 Sporting

“Have you ever seen this many smiles on ladies without jewelry being involved?”



Julie Clark shooting the Beretta 694 demo gun

Julie Clark, who can be seen wearing a competitor number from the tournament, also joined us. Julie owns the Austin Gun Club in Lampasas, Texas. We were honored that she came to participate and I really enjoyed working with her. Despite owning a gun club, her clay shooting experience is still new. There is a long and winding road that led Julie to the world of owning a gun club, which I am sure we will publish in a future issue. She started to tell me her story and I wanted to hear more, but we both wanted to get down to the stadium field after the event because there was food and drinks, and the North vs South vs West event about to start. I found it extremely humbling that she would not only come and participate, but also express a willingness to learn and grow in a sport that she is



Joanna "Jojo" Fuess shooting the Syren Elos N2 Elevate like a pro



clearly passionate about. Austin Gun Club will be hosting a Super Sporting Championship in October and I have already started looking for hotels. Super Sporting happens to be my favorite Sporting Clays event. I realize that some of you reading have no idea what I am talking about, and I promise that we are working on resources for the website to explain more about each type of shooting sport and the different events out there.

Another shooter wearing a competitor number is Joanna Fuess, but she goes by JoJo. She borrowed a vest from her good friend Justin Napier, who was also shooting in the tournament, hence the competitor number was not hers – although she could have easily been competing because I don't think she missed at all. With a good shooter like Justin as a friend, she could certainly have a future in competition.

Brandy Friend showed up wearing one of my favorite tanks from *A Girl and A Gun*, "SHELL YEAH". I instantly liked her because I have the same shirt, and I LOVE that she wore it to our event. Brandy brought a gun but I don't think she ever even took it out of the case. Brandy has since reached out to let me know that she is hiring a shooting coach in San Antonio, and is looking to start competing in the near future.

Pam Patton was one of the ladies who gave off some shy energy. She seemed a little unsure of herself when we started, but let me tell you what...by the end of the event, Pam couldn't get enough! I am certain that I will see her out shooting frequently—I saw the fire in her eyes by the time we were done.

Lisa Gallaway was one of the first ladies to show up and she was a bright energy from the start. Outgoing and friendly don't even begin to



Brandy Friend getting very comfortable with the Syren Elos N2 Elevate



Lisa learning quickly



Pam Patton shooting a Syren Elos N2 Sporting and loving it



cover her spark. Lisa is a member of *A Girl and A Gun* in the Katy, Texas chapter, and she had come to visit family in San Antonio; a very efficient two birds-one shell kind of weekend for her.

I think Candice Villanueva was the second lady to show up. I remember because she drives a really cool jacked up 4Runner, my dream vehicle. I drive a 2004 4Runner with 250k miles on it, and while it is a rare V8 and 4x4, I still found myself trying not to drool when she pulled up. Candice also brought her own gun and it went back to the car the moment she laid eyes on the demo guns. Her enthusiastic energy made her so fun to teach that I found myself wishing she lived in Houston so we could shoot together more often.

Rhonda enjoying the Beretta A400 20 gauge



Candice falling in love with the Beretta A400



Rhonda Langehenning was the quietest and most eager to shoot. She was determined to shoot well and while she seemed to doubt herself just a little, she would turn into a confident shooter mid-shot and crush the targets one by one. It was interesting to watch her shoot. I believe she took the least number of turns because she just kept breaking everything on the first shot.

The last lady to show up was Katheren Rawls. She brought her own 20 gauge over/under and shot it the whole time. She is an experienced

archer and was very excited when I mentioned that archery content was coming in this issue of the magazine. I don't know exactly what time she arrived because it was well into the start of the event, but she caught up quickly. She shot the singles and then the report pair. She was unsure of herself with the true pair and ended up needing some dry fire practice before she got over rushing from the first target to break the second.

Our youngest participant was Piper Haynes, sporting one of her mother's elegant designs and

Katheren getting more comfortable with her own gun



Piper upgraded from her 28 gauge to the Beretta A400 20 gauge

a big smile. Mckenna Quinn is designed and owned by her mother, Amber Haynes. Piper has shot before—she has done a lot of hunting with her mother and grandfather. However, you would have thought this was her first time out. Not because she didn't shoot well or handle the gun well, but because she was so excited to shoot! Being an experienced hunter can help you shoot clays well, but it is still a different game, and Piper was used to shooting a 28 gauge. She did not want to let go of the Beretta A400 20 gauge that she shot—she had to share it with Karen and Rhonda though.

Karen actually took a private shooting lesson with me the next day before I had to shoot my main event, and was really missing the soft recoil and smoother shot of the Beretta A400 20 gauge during our lesson. She wanted to shoot more, but the shotgun she brought just wore her out after a few minutes each time we got to a new station. She was so sweet; she encouraged me to practice while she rested. I did, and I was not shooting well. I noticed I was flinching and so did she. She had me run some dry fire drills and then watched me as I shot. She actually ended up coaching me on trigger control because she is an expert pistol shooter. I got a text from her the following day with a photo of her new Beretta A400 20 gauge. She said she just couldn't resist.

I am telling you about each participant individually because while this was a group event, each lady was an individual. Each one had a different level of experience, each one chose a

different gun to call her own for those two hours, and each one struggled with different obstacles before she was able to consistently break the targets. However, all of them ended up in the same spot: breaking true pairs with the confidence of an experienced shooter. When I started working with each lady, I had no idea what to expect, I just knew that it was my job to encourage her. I don't know that I had a preconceived notion that all the ladies would successfully break each target as a single, report, and then true pair. However, I will admit that I was a little surprised when I realized that every single one of them got it! All were encouraged by watching the others and almost as a team, they crossed the proverbial finish line of the event.



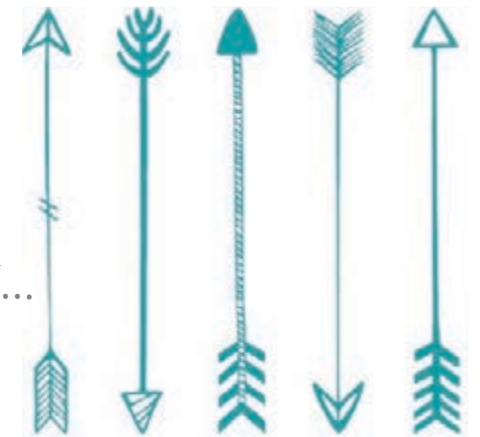
Our sponsors did an amazing job of providing us with everything we needed—from the ammo donated by Fiocchi, the targets and range space donated by Briley Manufacturing, the demo guns and hats provided by Beretta and Syren, and the goodie bag items including gunchies from Primer & Co. Mckenna Quinn also donated a polo shooting shirt and a beanie hat as a door prize. Syren and Beretta also donated some very generous raffle prizes such as a shell pouch, range bag, umbrella and a wine coffee table book. There were some very happy winners! Without these amazing sponsors, our events would not be possible. Thank you to everyone that participated by sharing the event with their network, and those that came out to participate. ■





Archery 101

ANDREA BOGARD SAYS FOLLOW YOUR ARROW...



As a lady shooter, shooting is part of your lifestyle. Up until now, you may have confined your focus to things that go “bang.” There is also a big, beautiful expanse of things that go “thwack.” Welcome to the wonderful world of archery!

So, you followed your arrow here. What is archery? Whether your brain heads straight to Cupid or thoughts of combing the American West in search of arrowheads, you are on the right track. The first bows and arrows were invented in the Middle Ages in Europe. Archery was actually referred to as “toxophilus,” meaning “the love of the bow” in Greek.

What’s a bow? A bow, in its simplest form, is a stick or shaft with flexion in the limbs that store mechanical energy. This energy is provided by the shooter pulling or drawing a string that attaches to both limbs. Once the string is drawn back and the energy is residing in the limbs, the string is released propelling a projectile forward at an increased speed due to the energy storage process.

While bows have come a long way, technologically speaking, the principles have remained essentially the same. Today we’re doing to look at a few different categories of bows, what they are, what they’re used for and how to get started.

LONG BOW

The long bow was the weapon of choice for English armies beginning in the 14th century. This changed dramatically following the advent of gun powder. It’s long, drawn by hand and shoots a long feathered arrow.

This brings up an interesting point, why feathers? Have you ever noticed that arrows have

feathers on the end opposite the point? Have you ever played Lawn Jarts? If yes, then you have a fundamental grasp of why there are feathers on arrows. Balance, twist, stability and tracking. Today, we can use feathers or synthetic pieces that look like feathers. Both feathers and their synthetic counterparts are called “fletches.” If you are fletching your arrows, that means you are adding feathers or other material to the ends.

RECURVE BOW

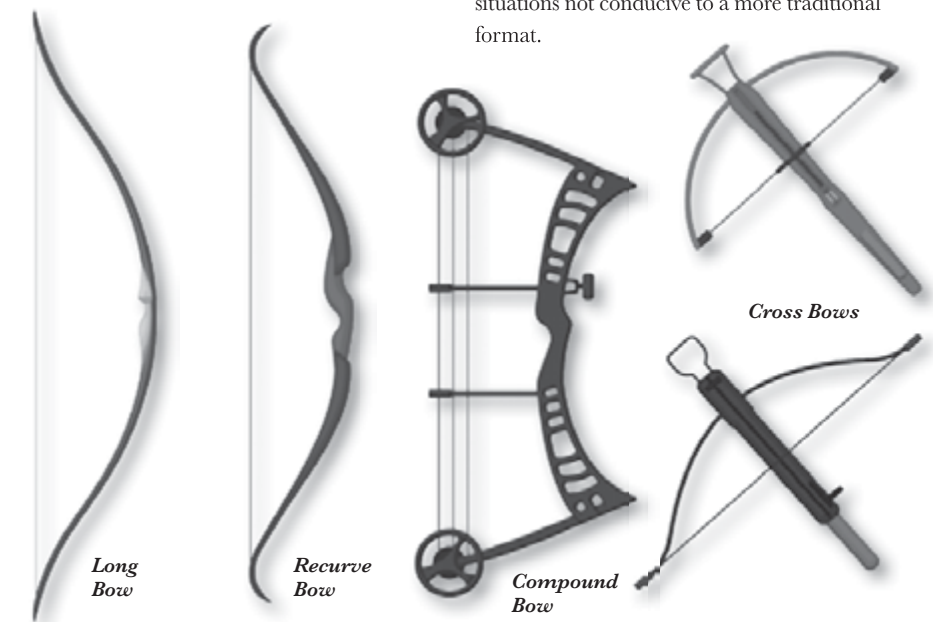
The recurve is a step up from the long bow, energetically speaking. The recurve has limbs that curve away from archer when the string is removed. It stores more energy and thus equates to more speed. The recurve was a good option when a long bow was cumbersome in length/size based on terrain or intended purpose.

COMPOUND BOW

We have now arrived at the modern archery construct. Instead of a simple string tied to limbs, the compound bow uses a system of cables and pulleys to create and store exponentially greater amounts of energy when compared to the more primitive methods.

CROSS BOW

This is a bow constructed perpendicular to a traditional bow and affixed to a stock. These have gained immense popularity in recent years with people wanting the bow hunting experience, but are physically or skillfully unable to ethically hunt with any of the aforementioned methods. Additionally, they have gained momentum as a good alternative to a compound bow in hunting situations not conducive to a more traditional format.



Cross Bows

So, we've got the basic types covered. A moment ago we touched on arrows. An arrow has a few basic components you should be familiar with.

Shaft – this is the long skinny part. It can be made of aluminum, carbon or a combination of the two.

Nock – this is the small, colored plastic piece on the end opposite the tip. It has a notch in it that clips on to the string to keep it attached.

Field tip – this is a dull, blunter shaped tip screwed into the end of the shaft opposite the nock and is used for practice. You don't hunt with these.

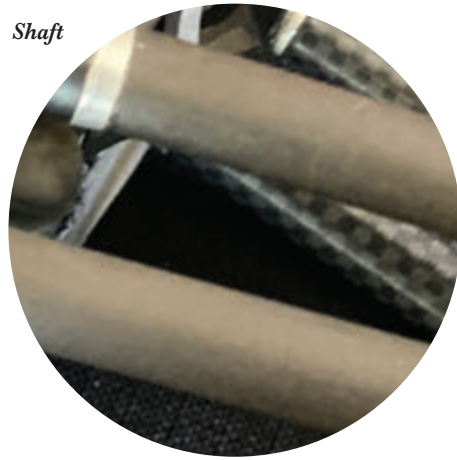
Broadhead – the broadhead is a sharp, multi-blade head that screws into the end in place of the field tip. These can be fixed blade (the blades don't move) or mechanical (the blades deploy upon impact with their intended target).

Now you know a little about the different types of bows and the basic process of archery. There is a lot more depth to be explored on the technical side, but for now, we're going to look at some different ways you can engage in the amazing hobby that is archery.

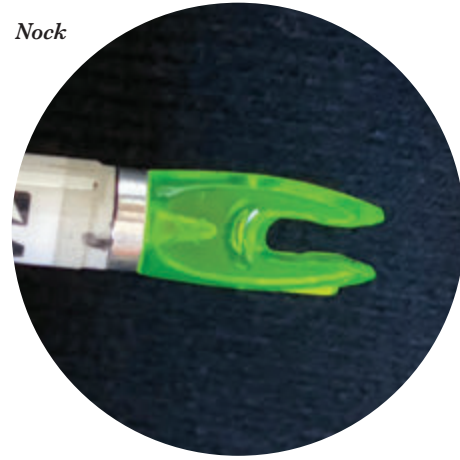
You can start anywhere along the continuum listed above. Is it a long bow in the backyard shooting at a hay bale? Or, is it a journey to the local archery shop to get a compound and joint a shooting league? Archery, like other sports, has pro shops, instructors, leagues and goodies galore.

Do you want to hunt? Shoot in a 3-D league (think sporting clays, but with a bow!)? Learn

Shaft



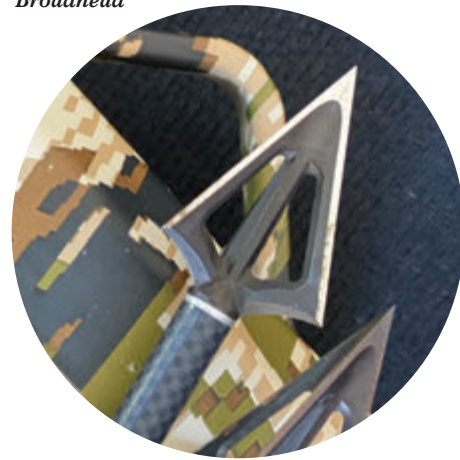
Nock



Field Tip

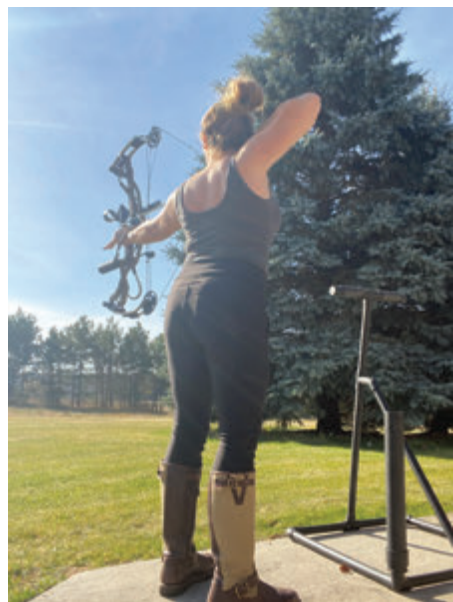


Broadhead



horse-back mounted archery (yes, that's a thing!)? Shoot paper targets? Bow fish? There are tons of options when it comes to the bow. So, for the "love of the bow," follow your arrow and try something new!

Check back as we look at bows, accessories, gear, archery clubs and what to look for in a pro shop! ■



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Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes

A COMPLETE UPPER BODY STRETCH
BY MICHELLE MILES

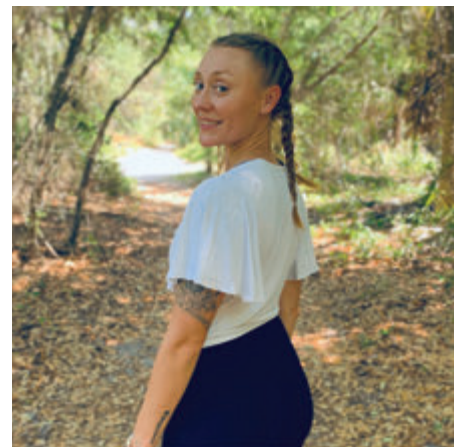
Welcome back to Yoga for Shooters. If you don't already know, my name is Michelle Miles. I am the health and wellness editor for Lady Shooter Lifestyles, and I run a Health & Wellness business called Lifestyle of Alignment. I believe that aligning not only your body, but also your mind and spirit are the key to living a happy and healthy life. I'm an experienced yoga instructor and specialize in injury prevention through supporting a healthy spine. As a sporting clays competitor and shotgun coach, I chose these stretches specifically designed for fellow outdoorsmen and women who regularly have muscle tension in the upper back, neck, and shoulders. Though muscle tension is common in these areas, the benefits of releasing that tension might not be so common. That's what I'm here for, to tell you WHY you will want to keep reading. Muscle tension in the upper body restricts blood flow to your eyes, resulting in vision problems and headaches. Ever wonder why some days targets seem blurry? You may be drinking enough water, getting plenty of rest, but let's be real, you aren't stretching enough, or at all. Let's start now together now! You can even do these stretches while out at the gun club. I have described seated and standing options for immediate relief so, there are no excuses to do something beneficial your body.

Remember, the stretches are described starting with the right-side body, but always repeat on the left side body as well. What you do to one side, must be done to the other side in order to maintain body balance.

I. Front Shoulder & Pectoral Stretch
Opening the chest and shoulder muscles will release tons of tension! You may even feel a release in the neck muscles here, which can help with vision and overall focus. Shot recoil creates tension in these areas, so you may find the targets become clearer as you stretch and release the chest, neck, and shoulders. Creating mobility and strength allows the spine to stay in place. Tight muscles can pull and tug on the spine causing all sorts of issues for different body systems. Our entire health starts with a healthy spine so be sure to strengthen and stretch, focusing on extra tight or overworked areas.



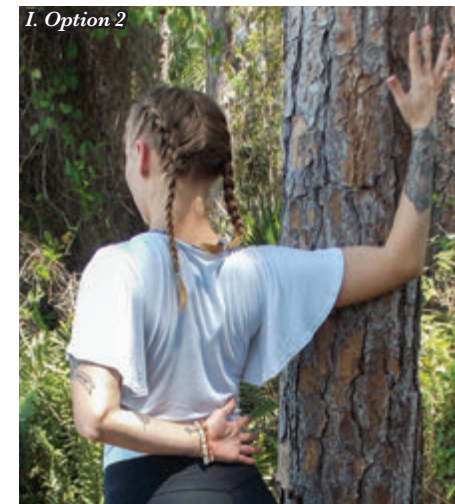
I. Option 1



LIFESTYLE OF ALIGNMENT

Option 1- Laying Down: Lay on belly. Extend right arm out, in line with shoulder and palm to the floor. Look away from the extended arm by placing your right temple on the ground. Bend the left knee and gently roll over to your right side, sending the left hip up to sky and placing your left hand in front of chest. Place the left foot on the ground behind your right-side body. Think about flattening the right hand completely and gently pushing into the pinky side of the hand keeping the shoulder down away from the ears. Hold for 10 cycles of breath. The inhale and exhale are one cycle.

For a deeper stretch, do this exact same stretch with a bend right elbow creating a 90-degree shape instead of straight arm. As you roll over that right shoulder, lift the left



I. Option 2

hip to the sky and bring the left arm: to the low back, reach it high to the sky, or just keep left hand on the earth helping to stabilize the stretch.

Option 2-Standing: Find a door way, pole, or tree as a prop. Stand next to your prop and bring the right arm to the prop placing the arm at 90 degrees. Stack wrist above elbow, and elbow in line with shoulder. Gently lean forward with the body. Hold this chest and shoulder stretch for about 1 minute each side. Adjust as needed and breathe deeply imagining the tight muscles softening.

For a deeper stretch, begin to turn away from the prop and bent arm. Do this also with a straight arm.

II. Triceps Stretch

This stretch improves mobility and circulation. You can use a towel to deepen the stretch.

Reach right arm above you and bend elbow, palm reaching down the back. Grab the right elbow with the left hand bringing it close to the head stacking the right elbow above right shoulder. Lean back into right arm. Sit or stand up tall, keeping head lifted, and chest open.

Grab the towel with the right arm, as you bring it



II.



II with towel



III Option 1

overhead bend at the elbow. Reach the left arm behind the back and grab the remaining towel. Give it a tug by pulling the left hand down to stretch the right triceps and shoulder. This modification can be helpful to improve the stretch by slowly closing the gap between the hands.

Variation (Ultimate Goal)

Bind the hands together behind you. If the right elbow is to the sky, keep it towards the head and in line with the shoulder. Focus on sitting up tall leaning back gently to assist in proper form.

III. Eagle Arms

This stretch focuses on centering clearing vision by oxygenating the body. This is a full upper body stretch. Eagle Arms enhances finger, wrist, and arm mobility while stretching and strengthening biceps, triceps, and shoulders. This pose is a shooters best friend! It can take time to build this shape so start with these variations.

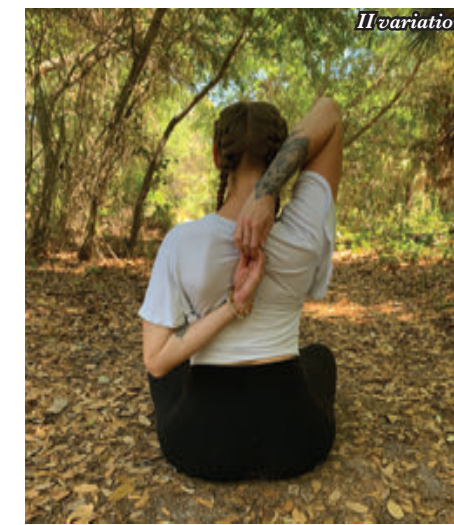
Option 1 - Sitting: Cross the elbows, right over left, giving yourself a hug. Stack the spine and lean back slightly, keeping back straight. Lift elbows in line with sternum. Draw shoulders down your back and together towards the midline of the body. Stay there if that's enough. Play with tucking chin towards the chest on exhales and looking up to the sky on inhales. Move slowly with the breath.

Option 2- (Standing or Sitting): Give yourself a hug right arm crossed over left. Keep elbows together and lift hands up bringing top of forearms towards one another. Grab the right thumb with left fingers OR bring the palms together (left fingertips into the right palm.) Keeping the bind, lift palms and elbows up. Press hands away from your face. Draw the shoulder blades together and down your back. Leaning back slightly broadening your chest. It will feel like an opposition here as you activate different parts of the arms and shoulders. Be sure to draw the naval toward the spine keeping the core engaged protecting the back.

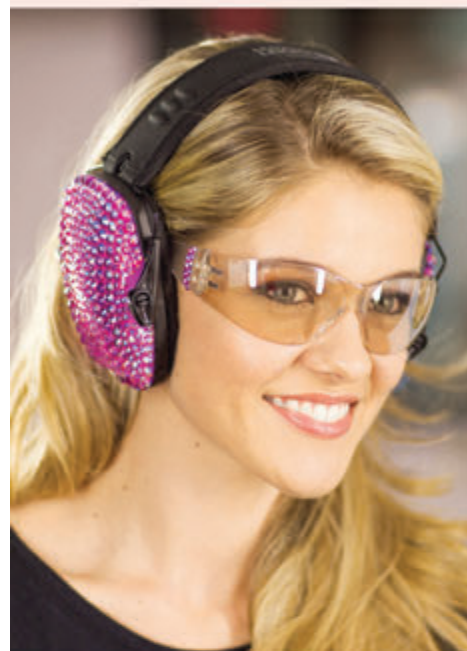


III Option 2

Hold each side for 10 breathes, and remember each side will feel different so do what you can without judging yourself. Be curious with how long you can relax in to each pose finding ease and deep breathes.



II variation



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IV Option 1

IV. Extended Puppy Pose:

This pose stretches and opens the middle back and shoulders calming the mind and cultivating awareness of breath. For a more restful position feel free to use a bolster or rolled up blanket between the hamstrings and calves. Or better yet do this standing while on the shooting course if needed

Option 1 - On the Ground: Come to a tabletop position on hands and knees to start. Keep the knees directly under the hips and tuck the bottoms of the toes to the floor for more stability. With core engaged, walk to the hands out in front of you and start to lower the chest toward to floor. The ankles, knees, to hips will make a 90-degree shape. Forehead lowers to the floor or a block, as the armpits open,

curving the middle back, it may be helpful to come on the finger tips keeping the elbows off the floor and activating the arms for support.

Modification – From a table top position sit the hips back slightly on a rolled-up blanket or bolster. Walk the hands out flat on the floor creating 45-degree angle from hips to knees to ankles. The blanket which is under the back of the thighs and on top of the calves will give you support and take pressure off the shoulders and upper cervical spine while you sit back on it gently.

Option 2 - Standing: Grab a tree, place hands to a wall, or any other surface you choose. Walk feet back, keep hips above ankles and lower chest towards the ground. Allow the armpits to open and keep neck neutral. ■



IV Option 2

To Honor and Elevate



THE MISSION OF THE WINCHESTER LADIES CUP BY ANDREA BOGARD

The last several years have brought women into the shooting sports in droves. Competitive sporting clays is no different. What is somewhat different is the large disparity between the cash payouts for men's events versus women's events.

Winchester President, Brett Flaughter, noticed this gap and wanted to learn more. He reached out to Winchester-sponsored sporting clay shooter Desirae Edmunds, and she confirmed his observations – the women's events received significantly less in cash winnings when compared to the corresponding men's events.

In the world of competitive professional sports, this is extremely common. However, just because something is the status quo, doesn't mean it should remain as such. Flaughter wanted to find a way to "elevate the importance of women participating in the shooting sports."

His solution—the Winchester Ladies Cup—a remarkable initiative rooted in creating a tidal change within the sporting clays world that directly impacts lady competitors.

About the Ladies Cup:

Winchester is proud to present the Winchester Ladies Cup, a new season-long competition for female shooters on the National Sporting Clays Association Championship Tour, powered by Winchester. The Winchester Ladies Cup strives to bring equality to women shooters by increasing payouts at regional events and by offering an award at the end of the season to the top three female shooters.

The Winchester Ladies Cup is more than a monetary equalizer according to President Brett Flaughter. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the women who continue to work hard in promoting target shooting as well as recruiting new participants to the sporting clays competitions like

the NSCA Championship Tour, Powered by Winchester.

When asked about the long-term goal behind the Winchester Ladies Cup, Flaughter's response was simple: to perpetuate and grow the sport.

On behalf of the thousands of lady shooters across the U.S., thank you Winchester and Brett Flaughter for developing this initiative and acknowledging the critical role of the competitive lady shooter in the growth of the shooting sports. Follow the Winchester Ladies Cup this season at the seven regional events! ■

At all seven regional events, Winchester will add \$5,000 to the total purse, including an additional:

- \$2,500 for All-Around Champion
- \$1,500 for Runner-Up
- \$1,000 for Third Place

At the end of the season, the top three female shooters will receive a combined \$10,000 payout including:

- \$5,000 for the Winchester Ladies Cup Champion
- \$3,000 for Runner-Up
- \$2,000 for Third Place



2021 NSCA CHAMPIONSHIP TOUR, POWERED BY WINCHESTER WINCHESTER LADIES CUP LOCATIONS, DATES AND PAYOUTS		
EVENT DATE	EVENT & LOCATION	PAYOUT
APRIL 7-11	WESTERN REGIONAL	KAREN SHEDD \$2500
	PINNACLE AT BEN AVERY (AZ)	DESIRAE EDMUNDS \$1500
		HAYLYN HANKS \$1000
APRIL 28 - MAY 2	SOUTHEAST REGIONAL	MADISON SHARPE \$2500
	THE MEADOWS GUN CLUB (GA)	ANNABELLE AYRES \$1500
		KAREN SHEDD \$1000
MAY 19-23	NORTHEAST REGIONAL	\$5000
	M&M SPORTING CLAYS (NJ)	
JUNE 7-13	U.S. OPEN	\$5000
	CLAYTHORNE LODGE (KS)	
AUGUST 11-15	NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL	\$5000
	GAME UNLIMITED (WI)	
SEPTEMBER 22-25	SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL	\$5000
	COVEY RISE LODGE (LA)	
OCTOBER 22-31	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP	\$5000
	NATIONAL SHOOTING COMPLEX (TX)	+ END OF SEASON \$10000



SIDNEY COFFIN



21 Things You *didn't* know ABOUT Me

1. My two favorite animals are a cow and a sloth. I love the majestic movement of each animal.

2. My favorite color is turquoise, because it is bright and pretty.

3. I shoot every discipline, including sub-gauge skeet, sporting clays, and FITASC.

4. My gun's name is Donald (named after the one and only Donald Trump) and the stock is made from Spalted Pecan so it is blonde.

5. My favorite discipline to shoot is International Trap (Bunker Trap). I love the fast and unpredictable targets.

6. Before I started shooting I played Basketball, Softball, Volleyball and soccer.

7. I HAVE MY OWN COOKING SHOW ON FACEBOOK. BUT I AM A TERRIBLE COOK.

8. I have a 29 year old sister. She's pretty cool.

9. I love to hunt and fish. I mean I have to eat.



10. I want to be a Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgeon when I grow up. I had to use spell check to spell this.

11. I love Buc-ee's. Who doesn't love that Texas department store?!

12. I like waking up early, I feel like I get more accomplished.

13. My favorite people are Brandy Elrod and Derrick Mein. Brandy is my spirit animal and I aspire to be a target God like Derrick.

14. I am convinced Alaska is an island and is by Hawaii.



15. My dream college is Hillsdale College in Michigan.



16. I earned my first USA shooting vest in 2020.

17. I am very good at water sports. It comes with the territory living on a lake.

18. I love mullets. Especially the curly 1980s mullets.

19. I love talking to people and making new friends.

20. My dream Exotic to hunt is an Elk. Even though I have been informed that Elk are not Exotics.



21. My nickname in USA Shooting is *Snort*, because I snort when I laugh. ■

Sidney Coffin is a fun loving teenage girl that just so happens to be a phenom with a shotgun. No matter where you are on a shotgun range do not worry you will hear her because of her signature snorting laugh that is highly contagious. Sidney loves her friends & family and has definitely never met a stranger. Sidney started shooting four years ago and in that short time has a resume that can compete with any professional adult athlete. She is a member of the Sub-Junior team for USA Shooting and will represent TEAM USA in Peru in September of 2021.

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“How Many Sleeps, Mama?”

ANDREA BOGARD TALKS ABOUT TRIP PREPPING

As a mama who hunts, shoots and travels to keep cheerios on the table and meat in the freezer, I get this question a lot:

“How many sleeps ‘til you leave, Mama?”

“How many sleeps will you be gone?”

“What are you hunting?”

All good questions, and all have both specific answers and necessary prep. This time I am heading to Florida for an Osceola turkey and alligator hunt. I’ll be writing multiple stories along the way about the destinations/lodges, the firearms used and the hunt itself. Like many things, the prep and planning are as important as the actual event.

WHAT AM I HUNTING WITH?

The prep for this trip is multi-faceted. First, I will be hunting turkeys so that means I will be taking a shotgun or a bow (it’s not legal in most states to hunt turkeys with a rifle). I elected to bring a shotgun because I will be bow hunting turkeys here in Michigan later in the spring.

I decided to bring my Benelli M2 in 20 gauge with the timbered Gore pattern. I located the loads I wanted – Remington Nitro yellow three inch hull with 1 ¼ oz of copper plated 5s - and patterned the tightest choke I had. I was looking for a strong pattern in the neck/head area of my target at 30, 40 and 45 yards. I wasn’t happy with the performance of that choke, so I bought a different one to try to improve my pattern density – the Carlson’s Longbeard XR in 20 ga.

The new choke provided the performance I was looking for at the yardages I tested. Satisfied, I put the Benelli in my Pelican case and moved to the next discipline.

For my alligator hunt, I would be doing a spot and stalk style pursuit using a rifle. I decided to

take my Griffin & Howe Highlander in 6.5 Creedmoor. For an optic, I was using a Swarovski 3.5-18x50. The detachable carbon-fiber bi-pod would provide a variety of shooting position options, depending on encounter type and shot presentation.

Having never hunted alligators, I was full of questions. What kind of shot distance will we be looking for? What’s the target area? Vitals? Head shot? My outfitter was more than happy to answer my questions and provided a ton of information to incorporate into my preparation. The most helpful piece for my current round of questions? “Make sure you can hit a quarter sized kill spot at 50 yards.”

Perfect. I love having concrete markers when preparing for a hunt. I started at the 100-yard range off my back patio. I checked my zero and evaluated target selection. I was shooting at a one-inch diameter dot which would be a little larger than a quarter. After a few shots, I decided to up the odds a bit. I got some pennies and taped them to my target. A couple shots later, I had two freshly shot pieces of brass, two pennies with .264 inch diameter holes in them and a strong dose of confidence I could ethically harvest an alligator.

Over the next several weeks, I would dry fire and live fire multiple times from a variety of shooting positions at varying distances. During a nationwide ammo shortage, dryfire practice is an invaluable practice and preparation tool.

GEAR

So, we know what we’re hunting and what we’re hunting it with. What’s next? Gear. I have a hunting clothes buying problem. My husband reminds me of this frequently. I remind him that as problems go, it could be worse.

When prepping for a trip I look at weather, topography, hunting style, duration, peril encounter possibilities and pray for a flawed scale at the Delta check-in so I’m not whacked with an over-weight baggage charge.



Eleanor - My GH Highlander rifle



Dryfire is invaluable





- I'll be hunting in warm weather (75-85 degrees and sunny)
- Relatively flat ground
- Spot/stalk as well as some blind sits
- Six days on the ground
- Snakes

For gear, we're going with light weight, quick dry, breathable, sun-protective, merino-wool focused pieces as well as a rain-coat and snake boots. There are some great brands out there that meet these parameters in women's hunting gear. Sitka gear and Prois both offer some great options!

Let's go a layer deeper: I always travel with a variety of sports bras for two reasons. Number one, you never know when you're going to have to take off at a dead run down a concourse to make a plane. Number two, a recoil induced imprint on your shoulder from bra adjustment hardware is never comfortable. Also, watch your fabrics in your undergarments while hunting. Quick dry (not 100% cotton), breathable fabrics are key. I like being able to handwash pieces in the field if I miscalculate my packing needs.

PACKING

Packing is both an artform and an engineering class with a little prayer and pixie dust mixed in. I sent my 13-year-old son to Alaska last year on a fishing trip and I'll never forget the look on his face when I packed his veritable mountain of stuff into his suitcase with room to spare. I'm

treasuring that look of admiration as we head into the teenage years...

To pack for a hunting trip, priorities must be established. I know I am taking two long guns, ammo for both, binos, a range finder and a bi-pod in addition to clothing, camera equipment, a laptop and hunting-friendly toiletries.

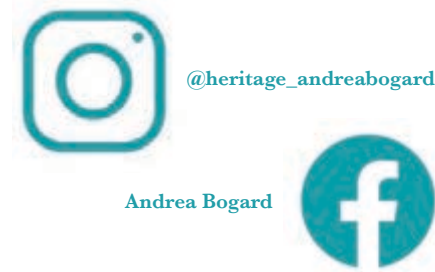
I have multiple options for cases, but elected to go with a long, thinner Pelican case that will accommodate both long guns and the required ammo. Check state/airline/TSA regulations for specifics on packing these items.

I've got my clothes laid out, my guns safely packed and my camera gear prepped for travel. Toiletries when you hunt are kind of a different beast. You want to be efficient, practical and preferably as scent free as possible. Select items that will protect your skin and hair and not smell like you just bought out a Bath and Body Works store.

Now we put it all together. I'm a list person, so here we go:

- Guns
- Ammo
- Binos
- Rangefinder
- Bi-pod
- Camera gear/batteries
- Chargers/Adapters (adapters are really important if you are traveling internationally, so find out what the format is at your destination).
- Laptop
- Harddrives
- Tags/Licenses
- Clothes
- Boots
- Toiletries
- Cash

So tonight when I hear the question, "How many sleeps, Mama?" my answer is "Two, Baby." I will snuggle him up in my lap, smell the days dirt in his blond buzz cut and kiss his squishy cheeks. I will know that while I am prepping for a hunting trip, I am teaching him what it means to chase a dream. I am showing him what it means to work for something. At the end of the day, I'm not showing him how to prepare for a trip. I'm showing him how to make a dream a reality. ■



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FOOD Dessert Recipes

BY CHEF BRI VAN SCOTTER
OF WILDERNESS TO TABLE

Bear Fat Espresso Brownies with Tahini Buttercream

Yield: 16 brownies

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 50 minutes

- 1 cup bear fat, melted
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/4 cup espresso powder
- 4 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

Frosting

- 1 stick softened unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup tahini
- 3/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Maldon sea salt

Directions:

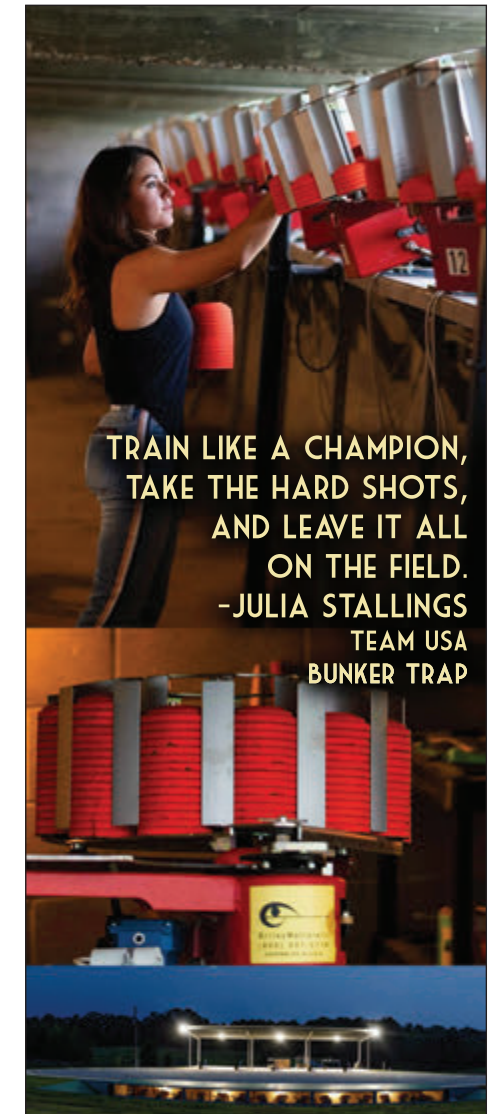
Preheat an oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, add the bear fat, white sugar, brown sugar and espresso powder. Whisk until everything is well combined, about 1 minute. Then add the eggs and whisk them in until well combined. Use a spatula to gently mix in the flour and the cocoa powder. Mix until just incorporated making sure not to over mix. Spray a 9 x13 baking dish with non-stick cooking spray and line it with parchment paper. Place the batter into the baking dish and spread out evenly. Bake for 35-40 minutes.

Frosting:

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment add the butter and the tahini, mix for 1 minute. Then add the powdered sugar and vanilla extract and whisk on high for 3 minutes.

Assemble

Once the brownies are completely cooled, place the buttercream on top of the brownies and spread it evenly on top. Sprinkle the top with a bit of maldon sea salt, cut then serve. ■



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TAKE THE HARD SHOTS,
AND LEAVE IT ALL
ON THE FIELD.
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FOOD | Pork Recipes

BY CHEF HOLLY HEARN OF
GAME GIRL GOURMET

Stuffed Wild Pork Tenderloin with Parmesan Polenta

I started Game Girl Gourmet to provide creative and unique wild game food to hunting lodges, sportfishing charters as well as private wild game dinners for small events. I am also incredibly passionate about sharing my love of wild game food and educating others about safe and sustainable hunting practices, and last but not least—butchering! I have been butchering for about nine years and have come to realize that most people are unaware of how to utilize wild game the same way they would store bought meat. This realization led me to begin working on a visual Podcast with Made in Texas Radio, showcasing wild game cooking and butchering.

For this recipe, I chose to use the backstraps from a wild pig that was taken on my parents' property in Fannett, Texas. Wild pigs are an ever-increasing threat here in the Lone Star State. With no natural predators and incredibly fast breeding rates, wild pig populations have skyrocketed in recent years. These high population numbers and a year-round hunting season make them an incredibly sustainable protein source, not to mention they are delicious. Throughout the course of my life and hunting career I have heard from multiple people that wild pig meat is not good to eat, tastes gamey, is tough, etc. This could not be further from the truth! I have found that almost of all these complaints can be addressed with proper butchering techniques and using the right cooking methods for the right cuts! The best way to ensure meat quality is to confirm that an animal is "caped" meaning skinned, quartered, and then immediately put on ice after dispatching. Following this I begin the process of "wet aging" which is placing a brick under one end of the cooler, opening the drain, and



changing the ice every day for between 4-7 days. The key is the guarantee that the meat never sits in water and stays ice cold. After "wet aging" I begin breaking down the hams and front shoulders into more recognizable cuts that resemble what you would see in the grocery store. This is the general process that I utilize when butchering all wild game with exception of birds. Another important thing to remember when cooking wild pork, and most other types of wild game, is not to overcook it! Wild meat is incredibly lean and tends to dry out thus is easily over cooked. Each type of meat and cut requires different cooking techniques but typically cooking it medium-rare to medium is considered safe. I personally prefer rare to medium-rare.

Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

- 1 wild pork back strap
- Fresh spinach
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- Sundried Tomatoes, julienned
- Your favorite cheese (Mozzarella, feta, gouda) I use whatever I have available
- Balsamic vinegar
- Coarse Salt, pepper

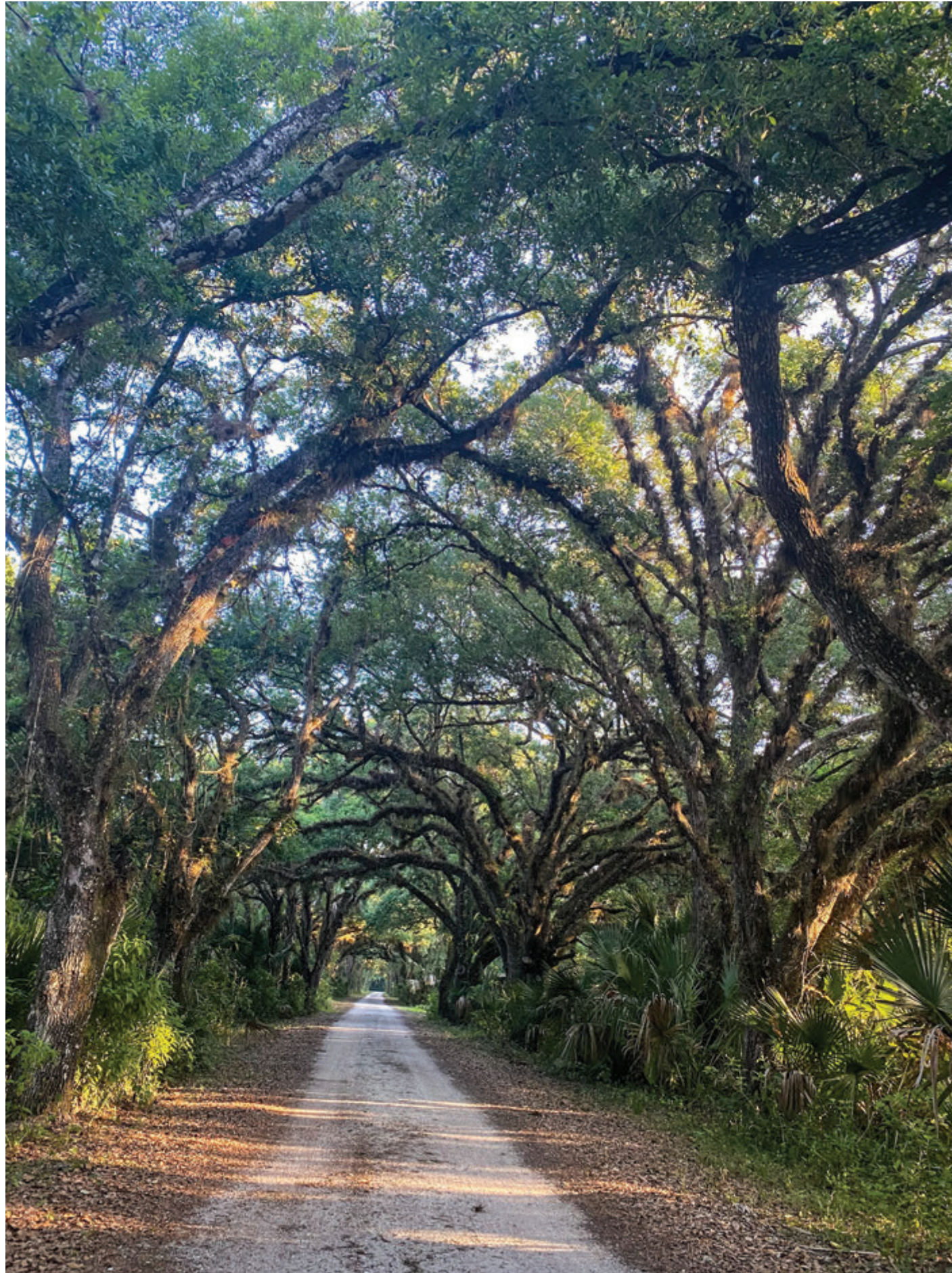
Set oven to 400°F . Cut back strap in half, butterfly up to 1/2 inch, open backstrap and tenderize to 1/4 inch thickness. Season both sides of flattened back strap with coarse salt and

pepper. Place spinach in square, garlic, sundried tomatoes, and cheese on one side of the flattened back strap leaving about 1/4 - 1/2 inch of space all the way around. Tightly roll backstrap and secure with toothpicks. Top rolled backstrap with sundried tomato oil and balsamic. Heat olive oil or grapeseed oil over medium heat and sear for two minutes on one side in a cast iron pan. Flip tenderloin and place the skillet in the pre heated oven for 10-15 minutes depending on thickness of the backstrap. Remove from oven and rest 5-10 minutes. Slice, drizzle with balsamic glaze and serve.

Parmesan Polenta

- 4 cups stock
- 1 cup corn meal
- 2/3 cup high quality parmesan
- 1/2 cup milk or heavy cream
- 3 Tbsp Butter
- Salt to taste

Bring stock to a boil and over medium high heat. Whisk in cornmeal turn heat to medium. Stir periodically for 30-45 minutes until polenta is tender. Warm milk (it doesn't have to be boiling but you don't want to add cold liquid to the polenta it stops the cooking). Add milk, butter and parmesan to the polenta stirring with a rubber spatula and season with salt to taste. ■



A Collector of Experiences

A POST-ADVENTURE REFLECTION
BY ANDREA BOGARD



Sitting beneath a Palmetto in South Florida, a shotgun across my lap, I listened to the world wake up for the day. I sifted through the sounds listening for the coveted “gobble,” an indicator I might be in the right place.

The chorus of hundreds of birds and distant cattle went to battle with the hum of insects and the sound of my own heartbeat. I watched the field before me brighten as the sun rose to the East.

In the quiet of my mind, I reflected on a conversation from the night before. I was sitting in a rocker in front of a fire pot with a glass of wine in hand soaking in the magic of Quail Creek Plantation. Across from me was my guide and host for the week, Fred Fanizzi. We were talking about big game hunting and the “trophy hunting” moniker, specifically.

In contrast to the smooth as honey Florida drawl, his next words struck me profoundly. “I am not a trophy hunter; I am a collector of experiences.”

I sat back in my rocking chair and absorbed the words, the fire and the message. I felt like I finally had the phraseology to describe a big part of what draws me to a life of pursuit. I’m not chasing an animal or a trophy, I’m chasing an experience. Let me tell you about the experience that is Quail Creek Plantation.

Earlier That Day

I gratefully pulled my rented Jeep up to a beautiful gated arch. The iconic quail in the center of the iron gate indicated I was in fact at

the right place. Having been up since three am to catch an early flight, I was quite excited to have arrived at my home for the next few days.

I parked and took in the lodge. Everything about it was both welcoming and elegant. The stone circle drive, the soaring rooflines and the impeccable landscaping all communicated a luxury experience you could both embrace and soak in.

The interior of the lodge was a warm palette of wood, beautiful taxidermy, hides and rich leathers. It was the kind of place you could feel at home in muddy camo or a cocktail dress and either would be absolutely fine.

On the subject of camo, I had a hunt to get

ready for. I was to hunt Osceola turkeys bright and early the following morning. Here are a few things to keep in mind as this adventure unfolds:

I have hunted turkeys with both a bow and shotgun. I have never actually gotten a turkey. I think turkeys are jerks. For critters with a pea-sized brain, they can be rather infuriating

So, 4:45 the next morning, I got up showered, dressed, grabbed my shotgun and camera bag and off we went. Fred drove us through the soft Florida darkness to our spot. We were going to walk about a half a mile to our spot and make a Palmetto leaf blind once we got there.





Something important to note here - a great hunting guide is kind of like a good massage therapist. You are placing your well-being in that person's hands and that takes a lot of trust. Also, a good massage therapist knows when you just want to be quiet and internalize an experience versus carry on a conversation. That morning, I wanted to sit quietly and soak in everything with wide open senses. And, thanks to my great guide, that was exactly the experience I received.

Once we got settled in our blind, the layers of dawn rolled away to reveal a lush, green field laced with Spanish moss and beautiful live oaks. The parade of colors as the sky transitioned from night to day was like a living watercolor in front of me.

In true turkey form, we heard a few gobbles early on and then nothing. Long about 9:30 am Fred told me we were going to go on a walkabout around the field and see what we could find. With my Benelli slung over my shoulder, we headed out around the perimeter of the field.

With stealth in mind, we paused to glass and listen every 50-yards or so. Standing in the shade of a live oak, we glassed a cozy meadow in front of us. Ah hah! A hen's glossy head popped up above the softly waving grass. Hunkering down under the tree, we waited to see if she was alone or if there were any Toms with her.

We didn't have long to wait. With a rapid sequence of gobbles, a hasty reposition to face the right way, a deep breath and a prayer, I clicked the safety off on my Benelli M2 while I watched

two irritated gobblers round a Palmetto leaf.

With the eloquent advice of my guide playing in my head, I aimed where the "feather meets the



leather" on the larger one and squeezed. Poof! Feathers. Everywhere! My first turkey was officially on the ground!!!

As I walked up to him, I followed the trail of feathers to the big, glossy critter in the grass. I had my first turkey! After taking pictures, we walked back to the truck. Fred pulled out a couple chairs, put them under a tree, hung up my bird and handed me a Corona, complete with lime.

We sat beneath the live oaks, drank a beer and relived the hunt. As we slipped into comfortable silence, I reflected back on his philosophy. I am both a collector and pursuer of experiences, moments and memories. Thanks to Fred Fanizzi and Quail Creek Plantation, I have a truly magnificent experience to add to the collection. Thank you. It was truly an honor. ■

#deadbyfred

Check back for a full feature on Quail Creek Plantation and all this magnificent destination has to offer!



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WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GROW THE SHOOTING SPORTS.

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The Beauty of Balance

THE KRIEGHOFF K-80 VICTORIA, BY [ANDREA BOGARD](#)

“Balance is not something you find; it’s something you create.” --Jana Kingsford

I remember playing on a see-saw as a child. It was typically a frustrating activity because I was usually much shorter and lighter than my opponent across the battered wooden plank. I learned early about fulcrums, balance points and weight distribution, even though I couldn’t yet affix the terms correctly.

Some shotguns I’ve picked up remind me of the imbalance found in a poorly paired see-saw shenanigan. The K-80 Victoria was the absolute antithesis of that. In 25 years of shooting, I’ve never picked up a shotgun that felt so perfectly right in the hands. But why? What makes the K-80 Victoria feel so right? Let’s walk through her and find out.

When I first got her out of the hard Victoria gun case, I found a crisp, elegant white and gold package marked “For Ladies Only.” The iconic Krieghoff logo was etched in gold at the bottom.

I flipped open the fastener and found a stack of heavy linen cards with details and imagery showcasing the K-80 and K-20 Victoria models. The mantra on the back of many of the pieces read *“Like a Goddess. Feminine. Elegant. Beautiful. The K-80 Victoria.”*

I picked her up out of her velvet lined case and put her together. She settled comfortably into my small hands. The first thing that jumped out to me was the grip radius. It had been tightened to accommodate smaller hands/fingers.

My right index finger was able to reach the adjustable trigger with ease.

The delicate palm swell nestled into my hand like they were made for one another. In my kitchen I executed a few practice gun mounts. The beads stacked perfectly and my eye was aligned with the rib properly. So far so good.

It was time to take her to the range. In true Northern Michigan form, it was 25 degrees with gusts up to 20 mph. This means two things. First, the birds will be extremely unpredictable. Second, a down coat and fuzzy bibs will be the shooting attire of choice.

When I profile a shotgun, I like to shoot as many different types of ammunition out of it that I can get my hands on. This helps me learn about how it shoots/functions under varying circumstances. I started out with a 1 oz load of 7.5s travelling at 1150 feet per second and cleared the first station. Off to a good start...

The next station brought a medium speed 35-yard crosser. As I called “pull,” the wind kicked up providing an unexpected tail wind. What was a medium speed bird now called for a significant acceleration across the icy field.

At that moment, I was not confident I could get the 32-inch Parours barrels where I needed in time. Before the thought had completely formed, I watched the target explode in the air, mingling with the driving snowflakes. The

32-inch barrels had moved exactly where I wanted them to go with seemingly no effort.

Over the next 12 stations, I would shoot ammunition across a broad spectrum of shot size, dram equivalent and speed. Even with 1 1/8 oz handicap loads travelling 1235 fps, the K-80 recoiled comfortably and swung smoothly. Additionally, recovery time between shots was immediate – this is important for quick cadence doubles.

On the subject of swing, let’s talk weight. The K-80 Victoria weighs in at a marvelously manageable 7 pounds 15 ounces. Many comparable women’s shotguns are within this weight range, but I have yet to handle one that moves as effortlessly or feels as light as this one.

To me, weight is less important than feel. Frequently, a women’s version of a shotgun is modified heavily in the stock (cast, pitch, drop, length, toe dimensions, etc), with the fore-end construct being left the same as the original male version. In some shotguns, this feels akin to grasping a 2x4 instead of a shotgun.

Not the K-80 Victoria. The fore-end has been slenderized just enough to accommodate a smaller hand, without sacrificing the solidarity and stability found in the traditional K-80. That said, the balance of the overall gun has not been compromised in any way. For each intentional modification, the gun appears to have been



considered as a whole to make sure each change is complimentary, instead of a distraction.

“...Offers captivating lightness, handling and precision...”

Frequently, marketing materials highlight the positive, downplay the shortcomings and attempt to reframe any negatives in a positive light. That’s why it’s called marketing. After combing through all the information I could find, I can say that the K-80 Victoria backs up all that it purports to be.

It delivers on everything it promises and shows no hint of deficiency. Let’s look at some specs in the table below.

The combination of components that make up the K-80 Victoria demonstrate that balance was intentionally created, not found. There is not a single facet of this shotgun that has not been perfectly curated and flawlessly executed – from aesthetics to functionality.

When creating the K-80 Victoria, the goal was not to create a blinged-out version of a man’s gun. In fact, everything about the Victoria is elegant and understated. The mission was to create a fine shotgun that uniquely fit the needs, wants and expectations of the discerning lady shooter.

SPECS	
MODEL	K-80 VICTORIA
BARREL	32" TESTED, 28" AND 30" AVAILABLE
GAUGE	12G TESTED, 20G AND 28G AVAILABLE
WEIGHT	7 LBS 15 OZ
LOP	14" (TO TRIGGER SET AS ARRIVED)
STOCK	LADIES VICTORIA WITH ADJ. COMB
FINISH	OIL, WITH VICTORIA CHECKERING
RIB	7-6MM TAPER FLAT
ENGRAVING	STANDARD
CHOKES	MOD/IMOD, AVAILABLE WITH CHOKED BARRELS

The K-80 Victoria exemplifies perfect balance and also raises the bar for what a ladies shotgun should be. Are you ready to experience the balanced beauty and perfection that define the K-80 Victoria? ■





Leading Ladies

Olympic Version



THE LADIES READY TO RAISE THE FLAG IN TOKYO BY NATALIA GONZALEZ

Ever since I was a little girl watching the Olympics on TV, I knew I wanted to make it to the Olympics one day, as I'm sure lots of little girls feel. The athletes I watched were just the most glamorous and graceful ladies I had ever seen, and I wanted to be just like them. I didn't know what sport would get me there, but I tried a few just to be sure. Watching figure skating, gymnastics, and swimming was my favorite, and luckily, I was already a swimmer so I thought that must be it. Obviously, this didn't happen because I quit swimming after freshmen year of high school to focus on getting out of high school, and I just hated having to wash my hair every single day. Back then, the most popular athletes from the most popular sports would grace the covers of magazines and Wheaties boxes, and for a short season, they were rock stars. Dressed up in their Team USA jumpsuits, Olympic medals graced their necks proudly beckoning America's youth to dare to dream Olympic Dreams.

I didn't know shooting of any kind was an Olympic sport until I started shooting guns myself. I dated an Olympic skeet shooter, and

through him I met many other Olympic shotgun shooters. When the Rio 2016 Olympics came around, I found myself in a unique position I never thought I would be in. I actually knew a number of Olympic shooters from all over the world giving me yet a greater reason to cheer on the athletes. I found out what dates and times their matches would be televised, and I set my DVR to record them. Needless to say, they were not prime time like gymnastics and swimming. It was the most exciting Olympic games I have ever watched because I was cheering on people I actually knew and not just famous athletes! It was during this time that I realized how incredibly unfair it must feel for Olympic shooters who train just as hard, work just as hard, and compete just as hard as any other Olympian, yet are never in the spotlight. Take Kim Rhode for example, an Olympic shooter that has won six medals in two different disciplines: Women's Double Trap and Skeet, all consecutively. Basically, she has never come home from an Olympic game without a medal. Despite being a remarkably decorated athlete, she is only a household name amongst other shooters and has never been on a box of Wheaties.

The 2020 Summer Olympics were scheduled to take place in Tokyo, Japan, during the month of July. However, a growing pandemic quickly put a stop to those plans along with many others in late March of 2020. In an unprecedented move, the Olympic committee along with other sports governing bodies decided to wait out the pandemic and pray that 2021 would bring better circumstances with it and allow for the games to happen. When the announcement was made to postpone the world's foremost sporting competition, many athletes were still awaiting Olympic trials, but their gnawing anticipation to win their ticket to the Olympics was put on hold. Athletes that had already secured their spots on Team USA were forced to wait for their moment, their competition, and the event they had been preparing for. For those whose Olympic trials had not yet happened, limbo was the name of the new game they were playing. Some had been preparing since they could remember, yet some discovered their love of the sport and their own talent much later in life. Both equally prepared, both equally disappointed.

Leading Ladies is honored to bring you an inside look into some of the competitors of the Tokyo Olympics 2021—the first time the Olympics are being held during an odd year. We wanted to highlight some of the incredibly



Kim Rhode

talented women that represent our great country on Team USA in shooting sports and archery. I had the exclusive opportunity to talk with these ladies while they prepare for their Olympic games as well as other World Cup events. I am excited to share with you some insight into the exceptional position that these athletes have been put in due to the circumstances of our new reality. Since 1896 when the modern Olympics began, the games have been cancelled or postponed only five other times, all having to do with war. Beyond the postponement of their chance at a medal, the fact that they will have to venture into a foreign country to compete on the world stage basically alone makes their Olympic experience unique to that of any others before. Spectators have been banned from the games, including family. Even team doctors are struggling to get credentials for the games.

I wanted to ask these Leading Ladies about their Olympic journey from the first time they tried their Olympic sport until now, as well as their philosophy on mental game, their health and wellness plans. I was also curious about their thoughts on Olympic ring tattoos, their post-Olympic plans and last but not least, how they deal with naysayers and ladies they don't get along with but have to shoot with. This last one is a very personal question, and I debated on whether or not to ask it. It was important to me that you, the readers, got the chance to categorically understand what the life of a competitive shooter can be like. It can be glamorous, fun, exciting, and thrilling even, but it can also have some downfalls because of the competitive nature and the many personalities one has to deal with, as is true in any sport.



ALEXIS LAGAN
WOMEN'S AIR PISTOL & SPORT PISTOL

Our first leading lady is 28-year-old Alexis Lagan. She is a fourth generation graduate of the only high school in Boulder City, Nevada. Just outside of Las Vegas, Boulder City is the historic town where Hoover Dam is located. Alexis grew up with her sights set on BYU (Brigham Young University) like her mother. Those plans changed when a recruiter from the Utah Physics department found her and offered her a better deal. Alexis was heavily involved in robotics and science, so attending University of Utah's prestigious science department was in her best interest. It became even more apparent her fate was to attend Utah over BYU when she later learned BYU didn't have a shooting team. Her father, Barry Lagan, taught her firearms safety

2013 National Junior Olympics Air Pistol Final



and how to shoot at a young age. It was an activity her family bonded over. "I wanted to try everything that Mom and Dad did, and this was something we all enjoyed together". It was a wonderful time, and the memories still bring a warm smile to her face as she recalls her first day on the range with a magical sense of nostalgia. "It wasn't about a particular goal. It was just about hanging out and having fun."

Alexis found her Olympic sport during her first year at college as a way to get out and meet new people. "Most of my friends went to BYU, so I figured I needed a way to make new friends." During Welcome Week at the University of Utah, she met the pistol team who were recruiting. She decided to give it a shot. The tryouts for the team

were a small competition to understand the level each potential athlete was currently at. She immediately let her competitive nature kick in, and she wanted to win. The results proved that she had a long way to go before she could be competitive with the Olympians, but it was a starting point. Looking back, she chuckled, recalling her scores because of how far she has come. "That's the point of this sport, to continue to set the bar higher for yourself."

Her first big competition was the NRA Collegiate Nationals. Having qualified in every available discipline as a freshman, her coach asked her to step down from one of the events on behalf of a senior, so he could compete in his last year at college. The day the team was meant to depart, a teammate had a family emergency, leaving Alexis to compete in the sport she had dropped before as the only female in the event of 50m Free Pistol. However, the roller coaster of this competition was not done. Due to complications during a surgery, Alexis's grandmother passed away unexpectedly during the first day of competition. Having been very close to her grandmother, she was deeply saddened, but continued to follow her passion and competed. "That was the beginning of it all, I was able to still shoot and maintain myself despite all of these crazy things happening. It is something that I reflect upon often when I have obstacles come up during competition. I was able to do that back then, and that was my first competition ever. I think I can handle nearly anything else."

Around 2015, Alexis decided she wanted to go to the 2016 Olympics. With her coaches, Matt

DeLong and Elwood Powell, she assembled a plan to help her succeed at the Olympic trials. Obstacles being no stranger to Alexis, her plans hit a small snag when the National Pistol Coach at the time was a little rough on her. "He told me that I was never going to be an Olympian, and I was never going to be successful in this sport, and so he wasn't going to invest a lot of time and energy in me." Being told this just one month before the Olympic trials were set to happen, Alexis did not take his opinion to heart. She competed hard, and narrowly missed making the Olympic team by just a few points landing in the alternate spot. Sadly, due to lack of slots made available to USA Shooting, alternates for shooting sports don't actually get to attend the Olympic games.

Again, Alexis did not let an obstacle get in her way. She instead joined the USA Shooting Media Team and worked as an intern behind the scenes. Through this opportunity, she learned the ins and outs of working with the media as an Olympian. She learned inside strategy on self-promotion, and how to prepare oneself to tackle interviews once you make the team. Learning to speak to the media and general public allowed her to have the proper background to prepare for this Olympics rather than being thrust into the spotlight during Rio. Now Alexis has won her ticket to Tokyo to compete for Team USA in Women's Air Pistol and Sport Pistol. Alexis has a sweet and soft-spoken manner about her that carries a whole weight of emotion behind them. It is obvious that she cares, not only about her passion for shooting but about people and helping make the world of shooting a better place. You can watch some



interviews she has done with other organizations on YouTube, and you will see a poised and gentle lady with well thought out answers and a knack for public speaking. Here are her candid answers to my probing questions.

■ **When did you realize that you were going to Tokyo, and how did you feel when you found out they were being postponed?**

For a lot of people, the realization came after the Olympic trials when they were told you are going to Tokyo. For me, it happened in 2018 at the Championship of Americas when I won the Women's Sport Pistol quota. That moment I shot my last shot, I knew it was a good shot. I turned around and waited for them to announce that I had won. I just lost it. I jumped around, my teammates were shouting, I knew at that moment that I was going to work as hard I needed to in order to make sure that I secured that spot. That was going to be my ticket that I wrote my name on, and I was going to the Olympics. When the time came at Olympic trials, and I won the spot, it felt anticipated. I already knew. Of course I won, I have been looking forward to this for forever. I know that my coach, Jason Turner, and I put in the work, we put in the hours. I trained, and I was doing everything right. When it came time for me to go to the Olympic trials, I ended up winning by more than 20 points! Typically, in this sport you might win an Olympic Gold medal with .5 points difference between you and the silver medal winner. That was kind of jaw dropping and more exciting for me than winning the trials. This competition was me 100%

securing my spot that no one can argue that I am meant to go to the Olympics. As soon as we found out that the Olympics were going to be postponed, my coach called me and said "Put your guns away, don't touch anything, you're taking a break. We haven't had a break since 2016, so you're going to take a break for a solid couple of months, and then we're going to get back to work."

■ **What are your thoughts on getting an Olympic Rings tattoo?**

It is something that I have thought about. I go back and forth on whether I do want to get it or not. Some people say that you get it once you win a medal at the Olympics. Others say if you just go to the Olympics, you get it. It's something that I am not entirely concerned about until after the Olympics. I have joked around that I want to get it on the inside of my trigger finger, just little Olympic rings because it's my trigger finger - that's what got me to the Olympics. But we'll see. It might be somewhere less noticeable than my hand. I don't even like to write things on my hand because I like my hands to be really clean.

■ **Tell me about your training.**

Right now, I train Monday through Friday (and even some Saturdays) from 8:30 to 12pm. After training, I'm doing three days of cardio and two days of strength training throughout the week. The workouts have all been designed by Katie McClosky, Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach at the Olympic Training Center. I work

through one routine for four weeks—three weeks are building, one week is offloading. Then we will do a new routine. Each time they are catered specifically for whatever needs I am having for that month or two months. Recently I have been doing a lot of core work and balance work. When it comes to diet, I have been working with a sports nutritionist at the training center. She's curated a nutritional plan that is about recognizing the amount of balance that I have in my daily nutrition and finding out what things I need to balance and fuel myself most efficiently for training. During morning training, I have a Shaklee protein shake. I have been working with Shaklee for about a year and a half as a sponsored athlete, and I love their products. I try to have a nutrition bar or snack just after training. Then I'll have lunch after my workout. Then I will have another snack around 4pm, and dinner is after 6pm. Dinner is something balanced, lots of veggies, lots of protein, and some carbs to keep me fueled for the next day.

I think the thing that we work on most as athletes is just being really aware of our bodies and aware of what is going on around us. Allowing things to happen to you and not having a plan for what is going to happen in the future does not cater well to the athlete's mindset. Having a plan, not just in my training and my workouts but also in my lifestyle, is what I expect of myself and aides in accomplishing my goals



and overcoming obstacles. It all comes down to just helping prepare myself for training and being more prepared for training.

■ What is your Mental Game philosophy?

I started off with the book, "With Winning in Mind" by Lanny Bassham. It was something that one of my coaches really advocated. I do agree with a lot of what Lanny wrote in the book—however, as I've grown as an athlete, I've learned to pick and choose what I want from that book as well as other books. One book that I really advocate and go back to all the time is, "Bullseye Mind" by Raymond Prior PhD. He's a sports psychologist that I have worked with and has an extensive professional background. I like that book because it compares real life situations with some of the lessons that he's trying to instill. Each chapter is pretty quick and little, so it's not something that you have to take a lot of time to digest, but it really pushes the main points of "what can I get out of mental training" and "how to build up that mental endurance for some of these big competitions". I do a lot of mindfulness sessions—I work with a sports psychologist regularly. Mental games are not something to shake a stick at, you really have to work very hard, especially in shooting sports. People will say that in general sports, competition is 70% mental and 30% physical. In shooting sports, it becomes a

really big 90% mental and 10% physical.

Another great book that I started off with early in my shooting career is called, "The Inner Game of Tennis" by Timothy Gallwey. It is a mental game book about playing tennis, but it will baffle you when you start reading it and comparing. So many of the mental aspects of tennis are very similar to the mental aspects of shooting, golfing, and other sports that are highly mental.

■ What comes next for you after the Olympics?

At this point, I am wanting to go to the Paris 2024 Olympics and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics, but in this particular sport, anything can happen, plans change all the time. Sometimes they get rid of certain sports, which is what led to Jason Turner becoming my coach. It is really difficult for athletes to prepare for anything other than competition. Once you start thinking about what you're going to do when you leave competition, the mental game kind of transfers over to that. I try not to worry about the future too often, however I have put some thought into the idea of becoming more involved in USA Shooting on a management level. I have worked with USA Shooting as an athlete, an administrative assistant, an intern, and other roles that have given me perspective of what a management role could be like. I feel like I have an understanding of what is working and what doesn't work at USA Shooting, and learning more every day. Again, it all depends on what happens in these next four or next eight years, not only for USA Shooting, but also for the Olympic committee and any decisions they make for shooting sports moving forward.

■ How do you deal with naysayers or other females that you just can't get along with but have to shoot alongside of?

When it comes to negative people on the range, the best advice I can offer is to find your advocates and support team to help keep your focus on your goals. When I began in competitive shooting, I was relatively unknown. Being unknown can bring both positive and negative attention. Through the good and bad, I was able to find support through my family and my coaches. By building trust with my coach, I felt comfortable to turn to him when I was struggling with issues on and off the line. It helped me stay focused on my shooting when I knew I always had my support team behind me.



Something else I have found important to remember is just because I haven't had the same experiences as my competitors and teammates doesn't invalidate my talents as an athlete. Through hard work and direction from my coaches, I have been able to develop my talents and accomplish my goals including obtaining my Olympic dream. I believe that anyone despite their ability, lifestyle, age, size, etc. through determination, hard work, and good coaching can be successful in the shooting sports. I encourage new shooters to reach out to me, and I hope I can lead by example in being welcoming and sharing my experiences to help athletes that were like me when I started.



MARY TUCKER

WOMEN'S AIR RIFLE & WOMEN'S SMALL BORE

Our second leading lady is Mary Tucker, 19. Hailing from Sarasota, Florida, Mary is very excited to see her Olympic dreams come true.

"It's been super weird getting all excited, and un getting excited, and getting excited again." Technically a sophomore at University of Kentucky studying Kinesiology, Mary hopes to get into coaching one day. Mary and her mother did not agree on the high school that Mary wanted to attend, but struck a deal - Mary could attend the high school of her choice pursuant of her participating in a sport. Any sport except rifle shooting. Naturally, Mary decided that rifle was the only sport for her. She started in the sporter class which required no special outfits or fancy equipment. "I was terrible at it. We had about 25 people on the team, and I was the worst." Her dad had guns around growing up, and Mary had been shooting before, but mainly pistol. "What

to herself, "Wow, I must have done terrible." Jayme came up to Mary and asked, "How did it feel?" As Mary explained how she felt about her performance, she noticed people were looking at her like she was crazy. Jayme asked her to go look at the score board, and Mary realized she was in third. In that moment she understood she was good at this sport, but her initial reaction was "I don't know if I am good, or nobody else is good?" Looking back, Mary recalls that it took her a few months to get back up to that score from nationals. She admits she freaked out a little bit. People had started to notice this newcomer that pulled out third place on the first day at nationals, her first time out on the scene. Making new friends and winning competitions made her fall in



really got me into it further was my coach at the time didn't like me very much, kind of told me that I was never going to be very good and that I wasn't going to make it, so I quit his team and bought all my own stuff. I used YouTube a lot to teach myself." After Mary told me this, I thought to myself, I can never tell my son to quit wasting his time on YouTube again! A couple months after training on her own, Mary found her coach, Jayme Shipley. Jayme competed in the 1996 and 2000 Olympics and is a resident of Naples, Florida.

As Mary's shooting progressed, she won the state championship, and at her first national match, proceeded to pull out third place during the first day. Mary didn't realize her ranking during that first national competition until she stepped off the line and saw her coach Jayme and Jayme's husband, and he was crying. She thought

love with the sport rather than being "out for blood to prove everybody wrong," as was her previous motivation, courtesy of her high school coach. "A lot of people start Air Rifle when they are eight to ten years old. I didn't start until I was 16, so I haven't been shooting very long."

Mary has had horses since she was very little, and at eight years old, she was riding a 500lb horse trying to get it to jump over something it didn't want to jump over. She is confident these skills helped her in her shooting. However, she is currently forbidden to ride in order to avoid any injuries before the Olympic games. Another interesting fact about Mary is that she has no sense of smell. Her teammate, Ali Weisz, who will also be attending the Tokyo Olympics, can't smell either. They like to joke that they are either going to be very good roommates or really bad roommates because they can't smell each other,



but everyone else can smell them. As a young college student during a pandemic and as an internationally traveled athlete, most of her friends are involved in shooting sports or sports in general. In fact, one of her best friends is based in Italy, and Mary has only met her in person twice, but they talk on the phone every day.

One of Mary's least favorite aspects of the sport is the gear you have to wear. Air rifle on this competitive level requires a special outfit made of heavy canvas leather and weighs about 15 lbs. I said it looks like a strait jacket, and Mary said it pretty much feels that way. They are custom made to all of your measurements, fit securely and you can't really move. Since the targets are really tiny, the least amount of movement possible is ideal for this sport. There are even special shoes that help keep your ankles from moving too. It is impossible to sit in the outfit, and in fact, the athletes have to walk down the firing line in the suit. There is an actual rule that states there is a two point penalty if an athlete walks like a duck. If you watch any videos on YouTube of Mary shooting her Olympic sport, you will see the athletes have to walk really slow in order to not resemble a duck. In Rifle, there is upwards of 60 people on the firing line at the same time, and they have 60 shots they must take in 75 minutes. During competition the event must play music

while the shooters are shooting. It is meant to be a means of distraction, but Mary has ADHD so it actually helps her focus a lot.

I had the chance to catch up with Mary the day after she got back from the World Cup in India. Her spunky attitude and witty responses really resonated with me, and I hope they do with you too. She had me cracking up within the first few minutes, and the one-liners did not let up. She is bold, confident, and not afraid to tell you what she really thinks. Here are her answers to my biggest questions.

■ **When did you realize you were going to Tokyo, and how did you feel when you found out it was postponed?**

It wasn't until the first part of Olympic trials during October of 2019 that I realized I actually had a chance to make it to the Olympics. I'm very young in this sport so I don't have very much experience. August of 2019, my scores finally started getting better, and then everything was cancelled not long after that. I think I would have done fine, but I am definitely a lot more confident in everything now. I am one of those people that will set their goals too high. People tell me my goals are too big. I had been telling everybody since the year before "I will make the Olympic

team, I am going to be an Olympian." I remember my mom specifically told me, "If you don't make it, it's ok," and I thought to myself, that's not even an option, I'm going to make it. It took about two weeks for it to set in. I was sitting in my room here at university, and I just started crying. It happened. This is real. When I found out that we weren't going to Tokyo, it was right after our national championships got cancelled. It was the first time NCAA had ever been hosted at Kentucky. It was a really big deal for us, and the venue was beautiful. We had already had our practice days. I remember walking onto the range to say something to my coach, and I saw somebody in the corner, one of the directors was on the phone. He just looked at me, and as soon as we made eye contact, I knew it was over. I was devastated. We had just watched them cancel basketball, and we knew it was coming. It was a really sad moment for our team. We knew we were going to win the nationals. Two days later, we got kicked out of the dorms, and two days after that, Tokyo was cancelled, and then it was just a snowball effect. They sent everybody home immediately. We had about a week to get all of our stuff out. I put everything in my car and left. It felt like I had unfinished business. I had prepared so much for NCAA, and I knew that there was a score that I was about to shoot. I don't know if all sports have it, but in rifle, athletes talk about having ups and downs, peaks. I had set my peak to be at NCAA, and then I didn't get to shoot it. So it was that lingering inside my body saying, "Hey... I have this score here, what am I



supposed to do with it?" It was just pent up, and I couldn't get it out. I couldn't even look at my gun for about three months after. I would walk up to my gun and think I would want to practice, and as soon as I would open the case, I would say no, can't do it, walking away. I started training again in July 2020 once I knew that we were going back to campus in August. I had never taken that much time off before. I am adamant about over training. I think it was really a good thing. I was able to come back in and see a lot of things that needed to be fixed, and the solutions came to me pretty quickly. My scores immediately went up, and they are higher than when I stopped. That was something I had not prepared for. I was already a strong competitor and everything just clicked back into place. I was like wow, I guess I can take a break and be ok, but also, I am kind of scared for everyone else.

■ **What are your thoughts on getting an Olympic Rings tattoo?**

I already have mine actually... I got it in August because I had set my appointment to get it after Tokyo happened, and I was going to get it with my coach because she is also an Olympian. I went to cancel it, and they wouldn't let me cancel it. So, I thought, you know what, I am just going to get it. My coach and I have matching Olympic rings tattoos. It's on my forearm, and there's a lot of meaning behind the entire thing. It's a band around my forearm. The band itself looks like rock which symbolizes a solid foundation. Then there are cherry blossoms which is the national flower of Japan. Then there are iris flowers which

is the national flower of France. and 2024 Olympics will be in France. So, it's kind of like setting my goal to also make it there. Then there are also Greek olive branches for the foundation of the Olympics being in Greece. It also says "Citius, Altius, Fortius," on the inside which is Latin for "Faster, Higher, Stronger." I think it's good that I did it because it's another thing for me to look at and say this is not over, this is happening and it's real, and you earned it.

■ **What is your training like, including health and wellness?**

The team trains a lot together, but like I said I train way more than anyone I've ever met. I am in there alone a lot. The team does strength and conditioning three times per week. I do balance training every day on a Airex® Balance Pad. I do a couple other things; I have some bands here that I can do for certain exercises using smaller muscles, and I also do a lot of visualization.

We always say this sport is 95% mental, but people who actually train their brain 95% of the time is low. My favorite book is "With Winning in Mind" by Lanny Bassham. He is also a very well-respected Olympian in Rifle. His book is my favorite, I have gone through three copies already because I take way too many notes in them. I tell people, especially people starting out in shooting to read this book. It will change your life. A lot of the stuff that he pushes is believing in it. Setting your goals too high but also, it's not just a goal, you actually believe that its going to happen. I think right now, something that he talked about that I just started implementing is, he talks a lot

about "his medal." You go into the Olympics saying, "I wonder where they are keeping my medal, and nobody is going to take my medal from me." Talking about the Olympic gold medal as if it's your own. I did it going into this India World Cup as well as NCAA championships. I was like, "I wonder where my trophies are, nobody is going to take this gold medal away from me, it's already mine, I've already won it." So now, I've already won it in my mind, and it just has to happen. Then going out there and actually winning it was a lot easier than I expected it to be. I must have read it at least 100 times by now, and I still find something new every time.

■ **What comes next for you after the Olympics?**

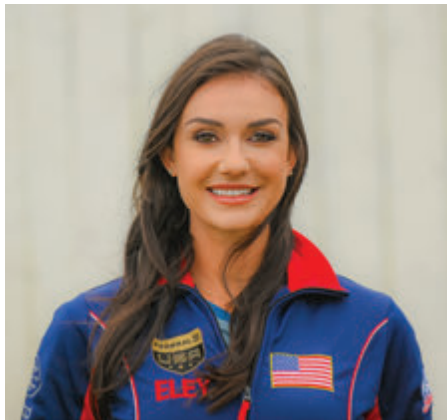
I have already had a dream about being on the podium. India was interesting because I won gold and my teammate Ali won silver. The national anthem was playing, and we had our medals on and I turned to her and I said, "This is going to happen in Tokyo. This situation right here, I can already see it, I can see the stadium, we are in Tokyo right now, and this is our Olympic gold medal and Olympic silver medal." We both saw it at the same time.

I don't know if I want to get into collegiate coaching or private coaching but definitely coaching besides more Olympics. I don't think there is anything specific that I am looking forward to. It's honestly just another practice, and practice for the next one.



■ **How do you deal with naysayers or other females that you just can't get along with but have to shoot alongside of?**

I definitely don't get along with everybody. I've never really been "liked" because I did pop out of nowhere and was automatically good. The first couple of World Cups, nobody would talk to me. They had all been shooting for 10 years, and this was their 20th World Cup. They had worked so hard to be there, and here I am shooting for eight months at the same World Cup that they're at. I know personally I don't have any hard feelings about anyone in particular. I honestly don't pay attention to who I am shooting next to which I think gives me a big advantage. I kind of realized this in India. Someone I was shooting with was practicing pretty far away from the rest of the American shooters. So, I asked her why, and she said that she wanted to shoot in-between non-Americans before she had to do it in her match. That's something that I don't pay attention to, I don't care who is on either side of me.



KAYLE BROWNING
WOMEN'S BUNKER TRAP

Our third leading lady is Kayle Browning, 28. Kayle is a sweet southern girl from Conway, Arkansas. Besides joining Team USA as a Bunker Trap shooter, Kayle is also in the process of building a lodge for her new gun club, Cypress Creek Shooting Lodge. Living every shooter's dream come true, Kayle is expertly balancing training and building her business. The venture originally started when Kayle had started training in Bunker Trap, and the national coach told her and her dad that Kayle needed to move to the

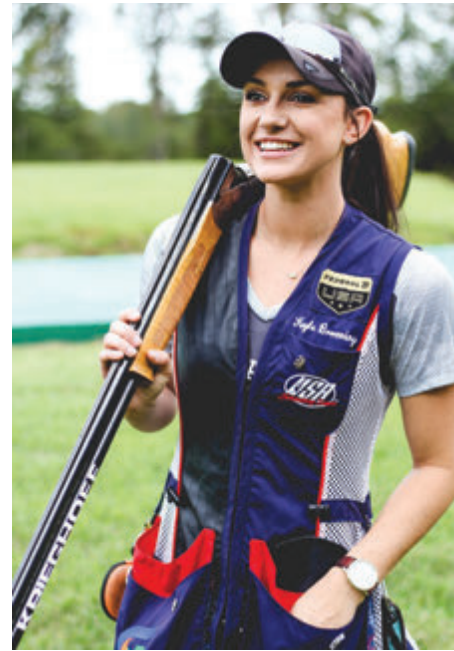


training center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Her dad said, "No thanks, we will build our own bunker here." Kayle's dad was a competitive shotgun shooter, and Kayle started her first sporting clays tournament at eight years old. He had taken her out to shoot BB guns at cans in the woods, but nothing compared to her first tournament which happened to be a big one, a US Open she recalls. "He never made me feel like I had to do it, he always made it a really fun experience."

Kayle ran track, played basketball, and softball until about 8th grade when her parents decided it was time to consolidate and pick just one or two sports. She chose shooting and basketball, but her basketball coach made the team run with the track team too. Kayle transitioned from sporting clays to Bunker Trap when she was about 14 because sporting clays was not offered in the Olympics. She recalls growing up and watching the Olympics every two years with her family, "It was a family sentimental thing, always a unique experience I had with my family." Having always been fascinated with the Olympics, she switched as soon as she found out that Olympic dreams were possible with shooting. Once she made her first Team USA traveling team, she decided to cut back on the sporting clays and focused fully on Bunker Trap. In 2012, Kayle made the Olympic team as an alternate—at the time the team only took one woman and two men. If at that time they had taken two

women, Kayle would have been at the London Olympics in 2012.

Kayle's boyfriend, David Radulovich, is a world champion shooter in sporting clays and FITASC. When I asked Kayle if she ever gets coaching from David, she said, "Heck no, not in bunker!" Kayle shot her first FITASC competition which was actually a world FITASC at E.J. Churchill in England two years ago. She had her Bunker World Championships in Italy the week before, and David suggested she come



to England and watch the FITASC. Her response, "If I'm gonna fly over there, I'm gonna shoot." Her gun ended up getting detained for five days, and she had to borrow someone's gun. She had no idea of the rules, and she had never in her life shot "low mount" as is the rule in FITASC. Her first parcours was the Gamebore field which is also David's sponsor. She got her low mount ready, saw the target, and by the time she mounted the gun, the target was almost on the ground. So, she quickly figured out she needed to be faster and figured out a low mount that worked for her. She ended up shooting a 24 out of 25 on that parcours. Fast forward to the end of the tournament, and David's last parcours was that one. He had the mindset, "If my girlfriend can hit 24 surely, I can hit 24 or 25." He ended up shooting a 22, and she has never let him live it down. The worst part is that if he had shot a 24 like Kayle, he would have won the World FITASC. Kayle tells this story with more giggles than pride, and it just goes to show that the years of shooting sporting clays before were not lost on her. I was too shy to talk to her at NSCA Nationals last year, but that will no longer be a problem after getting to know her. Just listening to her honey like southern accent and the genuine excitement in her voice as she talked with me left me feeling warm and happy. I know that Kayle is nothing but a gem—as approachable, kind, and down to earth as anybody you will ever meet.

■ **When did you realize you were going to Tokyo, and how did you feel when you found out it was postponed?**



This is a really funny story. Going into the finals, I was ahead by six targets. I had a pretty good cushion going into it, but I was still very nervous. Six targets when you are shooting 50 shots and you only get one shot per target, anything could happen. Somebody could be really on their game and you could miss a couple, and then you're tied. The whole time I was like ok, just pick one thing and focus on that, and let your attention be focused on that so that you don't get so nervous. I was focusing on one target at a time and going through it. I ended up shooting a 23 out of 25 during the first half of the finals. So, I go in there, and we are getting ready to shoot the next 25, and I'm like ok, same thing, keep going. Well about halfway through, I am looking at the score board, and I had not been keeping up with what everyone else was doing, but I was paying attention to second and third because that's who would keep me from going, and I am trying to do the math and all of sudden it's my turn to shoot. I'm like, "oh crap, it's my turn!", so I shot and I missed. So I thought well that's one more down. I looked back at the score board, and I'm trying to add it again and then it was my turn again so I shot and missed again. Finally, I said forget the math, don't try to do this, just finish it out. What I didn't know at that point, I had about 12 shots left, and I didn't know that I had already made the team. I still thought there was a chance that I couldn't make it. I remember coming off of station 5, making that turn to station 1, and I saw my mom and dad, they had their fists in the air and my dad was giving me the thumbs up. I thought, "Aww man, I must have made it." That's



when all the emotions just came over, it was a pretty surreal moment, and I still had 12 shots to finish and those didn't go so well. I ended up having a 17-bird lead over second place. I remember my mom and dad and my boyfriend David running up to the field, and they were all giving me a hug and it was that moment that you work your whole career for.

As the pandemic was unfolding, I originally thought there is no way they are going to postpone that and lose billions of dollars after reading that Japan has spent more than any other host country in history on the Olympics. I originally thought they would do something like what they are doing this year, letting us go but with restrictions on spectators. I found out the Olympics were being postponed from an email. The Olympic committee sends out weekly emails, and they sent one letting us know. Initially I was really bummed out. I think everybody was. But then I realized, I have my own training facility here, my training won't be affected by COVID because I don't have to go somewhere to train. I have a whole extra year to prepare for the games. That's super rare. Normally you have the stress of training, then the stress of the first half of the trials, then the stress of the time between the first and second half of trials, and then the stress of the second half of the trials. And then if you make it, then you have the stress of training for the Olympics, and you only have a short window there. I thought this is a cool opportunity to take and use it to relax and be able to train more. I turned it into a positive thing which has allowed

me time to soak everything in. I don't want to miss that feeling and that experience and be overwhelmed with training and have stress with it. Recently they announced that we aren't going to have spectators there, like my family. Now they can't go watch what I've worked my whole career for. It kind of takes away what you envision an Olympic experience being like. Half of the fun of the Olympics is the opening ceremonies, having your family there, getting to compete in your event, and going to watch other events. I am kind of in a day-by-day thing here. I don't really know what to expect from it.

■ What are your thoughts on getting an Olympic Rings tattoo?

When I first started making Team USA and making the World Cup team to travel, I told my mom, one day I'm going to make the Olympic team. She said if you do, I'll get the Olympic rings tattoo. You have to know my mom, she's afraid of needles, freaks out over shots and is definitely not a tattoo person—the total opposite of what you think is the kind of person that will get a tattoo. So, 2012 comes around, and I make the alternate. She said, "Nope, gotta make the team." 2016 comes around, and I just barely missed it, and she said the same. Now 2020 comes around, and I made the team. I said, "You know what you have to get now." She said, "I know, I didn't think you would remember, but I know I have to get a tattoo." I was initially going



to wait until after the games to get one, and we were going to get it together. But we decided to get it when the original games would have been last July. We did that together—it was when I would have gone to the games. You know, you make the 2020 team, you want to have something to remember making the 2020 team. We went back and forth on the idea of waiting, but we decided that truthfully, they postponed it this time. Who knows what will happen in a year. Let's just celebrate the moment that we have right now, and if it happens that we actually get to go then we will figure out how to celebrate that then.

■ What is your training like, including health and wellness?

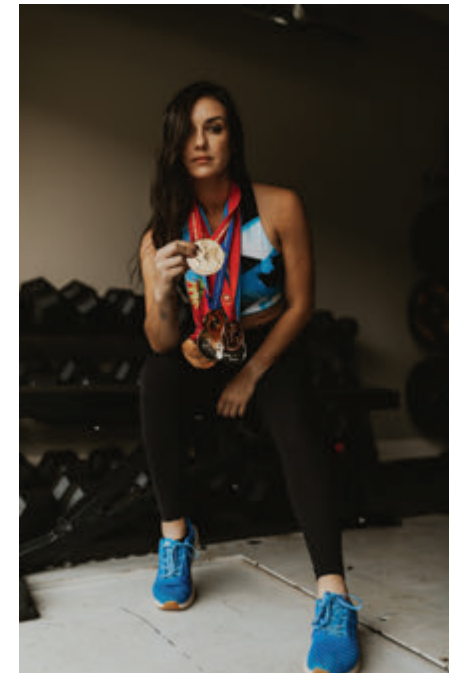
What I find that helps me most is working out to some degree. I really like spin classes and being in the gym. I find that if I do those especially leading up to a competition, it's kind of like a routine. I get into the habit, and I'm comfortable. If you're comfortable, then there's less tension and less stress. I have been thinking I should get into yoga more. With all of these things being cancelled or postponed, it's really hard to get into the mindset of training when nothing is happening, and they can't guarantee that we are going to go. You want to hit your peaks at the right times. When you leave to go for a competition, you want to be as close to your peak as you can be. If you keep training and you keep having those peaks and things get postponed, then you just keep repeating those peaks. Not really knowing what's going to happen and what's not going to happen makes it difficult to train. The best way I have found to deal with it is to not really train, but just not lose anything. Just keep everything in tune, that way hopefully when we

get word that we are going somewhere, it's enough time to pick up training again. Our coach tries to have as many training camps as we can just to get us out there and travelling so we are not stuck at home.

I did work with a mental coach, Dawn Grant, for about a year. She had some good insight for me for the time period that I was in. I would say most of my mental training has come from trial and error. I am big into listening to podcasts and reading books and just any insight that I can get into what works for other people and seeing if that works for me. Most of it has been me figuring out what makes me nervous, what makes me pumped up, what makes me feel relaxed, and being really self-aware through those things. I have kind of created my own mental game in that way, but just being self-aware of how I react to things, that way when those things come or adversity comes, I know how to handle it and what to do to get the task done. This also comes from a 20-year shooting career. My dad has been my only coach. I have gotten advice and had team coaches along the way, but my dad has truly been my only coach.

■ What comes next for you after the Olympics?

I thought if I made the Olympic team, that's the pinnacle of your career. I have always kind of thought if I made it then I would take a break and do other things. I really enjoy shooting sporting clays. Now that I've made it, I don't know that I would be able to quit it. I feel like I'm going to want to make it as many times as I can. It's a lot of training, a lot of dedication, and a lot of work. You have to be on for one specific shoot, and then you don't get another chance for four



years. It's draining mentally, physically. It's a lot of time, a lot of money. It's a lot of training, and it's a commitment. If you decide to do it again you have to be committed. Being committed to it for so long and not making it, and then finally making it, it was a relief. I got that done. After my dad bought some land to build me a bunker, I decided I wanted to build a little house right there. When I told my dad, he kind of rolled his eyes and said, "Ok, how are you going to pay for that?" I worked for a year straight. I was doing lessons like crazy. I was 19 years old, and I went to the bank and said this is how much I have for down payment and this is how much I think I need to build the house. They told me I needed a cosigner, and I asked my dad, he said, "Sure, that's not problem." I was able to get a loan and build a little 1200 sq ft. house - one bedroom, one bath, and I would get up and work out and train every day. Now that I have been more established on Team USA, I have sponsorships, and I give lots of lessons. I also have a side job; I am a realtor. I flip a lot of houses, and it's a nice break from shooting. It's totally different and allows me to stay sane. I actually do a lot of the contracting myself on the houses, but I pretty much do all of the design and even some of the demolitions. I am involved as much as I can be involved in it. I also coach a lot of American trap because there are not a lot of bunker shooters around here. With our new Cypress Creek Shooting Lodge here on the property, I should stay pretty busy. I like to stay busy.

■ How do you deal with naysayers or other females that you just can't get along with but have to shoot alongside of?

That has definitely happened to me. I think bunker is such a cut-throat game. When things are on the line like the Olympics or a medal, people can be kind of cut-throat. At first when I experienced a little bit of that, I took it personally. Like, why does it have to be that way? What I have come to realize is that most of the time everybody gets along, and everything is great. Every now and then you have someone that makes the team, and you struggle to get along. Coming from sporting clays, I feel like most people are happy if you win. It's a good community to be around, the environment is great. Then going to a sport where you are on a team but competing individually, it was a little bit of a culture shock to me. I remember talking to my dad about it, and he said "Look, even though you are on Team USA and you can get a team medal—your goal is to be the best you can, and you want to win a medal, and they want to win a medal. You can't take what anyone else does personally and let it affect you. At the end of the day, they are just trying to get their goals accomplished too, and you can't let that affect what you've got going on." If you have an expectation of how something is going to go, or if you know there is some animosity then it takes away that ability to hinder your performance. It can't affect you if you expect it. Not everybody can get along all of the time, especially if you're traveling to make the Olympic team, you're in your sixth country, you haven't seen your family and you've been on a plane for 48 hours.



CASEY KAUFHOLD ARCHERY

Our fourth leading lady is Casey Kaufhold, 17, a junior in high school. Casey is also our only leading lady that is still awaiting the conclusion of her Olympic Trials. The pandemic caused the Olympic trials for Archery to be put on hold until now. Casey has been competing against adults since she was very young, shooting alongside past Olympians and then making the World Cup International Team. The travel schedule is intense for this level of competition, so before the pandemic, Casey was already doing half of her school in person and half online. She is now doing 100% online and is really enjoying the freedom to make her own schedule.

The first time she shot a bow, Casey was three years old. She doesn't remember, but this is what she's been told by her father. It was a traditional bow, nothing like what she shoots now. It was at a foam 3D target, and the story is that the arrows never made it even close to the target. Her dad is a fourth generation archer, coming from a hunting background, and then her father and grandfather began competing in Olympic style recurve. Her mom also grew up hunting with a bow. Casey and her brother started shooting bows at a young age and backyard practice was a regular activity. Her brother is currently attending Texas A&M University on an archery scholarship.

At eight years old, Casey began competing in Olympic recurve. Her father owns a business called Lancaster Archery Supply. Started in 1983, it is now the largest archery retail store in the country. The store in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where her family lives, would hold small competitions, Junior Olympic Archery Development. Casey recalls not shooting well the first time but was really excited to just be there



and watch the older kids shoot. “He has helped a lot in terms of equipment, and he was my first coach. He got me started, and he’s the reason I am the archer I am today.” Basically, Casey was born to do this.

Casey is now coached by Heather Pfeil, an employee at Lancaster Archery Supply for many years and a former Olympic-level competitor. Knowing next to nothing about Olympic archery at the time I conducted Casey’s interview, I decided I should at least do a little research. I found a video on YouTube in which Casey and another archer named Gaby Bayardo were doing a virtual competition called Lockdown Knockout. Watching this young lady shoot was really exciting from the moment it started. Her poise and precision unmatched, her calm face and seriously focused eyes were a complete alter to the smiley and bubbly Casey that answered all of the commentator’s questions. Casey lost the shoot-off against Gaby during this match, however you could not have guessed that was the outcome based on her post-match interview. This being her first tournament since the worldwide lockdown, the excitement of just being able to compete exuded from her being like the blooming of a spring flower. Her passion and respect for this ancient sport is obvious and can be felt in her responses. She is the embodiment of a born competitor and sportswoman, wise beyond her years. Here are her straightforward answers to my questions.

■ **When did you realize you could be going to Tokyo, and how did you feel when things were postponed?**

We started trials in 2019 and throughout that, I had been shooting really well. I am in first place for the Olympic trials right now, and I have a fairly comfortable lead so I am confident with how my training has been going over the past year that when we finish trials I will end up in the spot where I want to be.

Over that year in 2019, I put a lot of hard work into it, and I realized that this is what I want most in my life right now so I put everything I had into it. I qualified a singular women’s spot for United States archery in Lima, Peru, during the Pan-American Games. I qualified that by placing first with Brady Ellison who is the world champion at the moment. He is currently in the lead for the men’s side of trials right now. So, by



winning that mixed team event, we qualified that women’s spot. Brady had already won a men’s spot at a previous tournament. We have another chance later this year to qualify for a team spot which would allow three women to go. Right now, we just have the one spot. It’s not “my” spot, it’s just “the” spot, whoever ends up first at Olympic trials will fill it. The trials are scheduled for May 27 - June 1 in Salt Lake City, UT. I am pretty confident in how my training is going. I haven’t shot an outdoor competition since November. I am definitely looking forward to getting back out on the field. The pandemic affected competitions to the point that I was home for four months. That was the longest I had been home in three years. I had never taken that much of a break because of how often tournaments are. There is a phrase called “tournament callus” where you get used to shooting so many tournaments that it just starts to feel like practice, and those nerves go away. Not having that tournament callus definitely affected my performance once I got back on the field.

I did practice less for the first couple of months because it was really hard to stay motivated, if I’m honest. You didn’t know what the next competition was going to be. I would still shoot, but I didn’t shoot as often as I had been. I talked with my coach, and she said tournaments will eventually come back so I might as well take the time to prepare rather than be lazy. I really took that to heart, and we had a good conversation. I started to practice a lot more because I knew that I wanted to get a leg up on the competition. I knew if they were doing the

same thing, taking a little bit of a break, I could use that to my advantage and start working harder.

■ **What are your thoughts on getting an Olympic Rings tattoo?**

I actually made a deal with my parents that if I make an individual medal, then I can get the tattoo before I turn 18. If I don’t medal, then I can get one after I turn 18. I have a sketch of what I want it to look like. I think it’s a big thing to have that. I know a lot of Olympic athletes have it. It’s like the thing you do when you get to the Olympics. It’s a lifetime memory of the biggest thing I’ll probably ever accomplish, and I want to go to multiple Olympics.

■ **What is your training like, including health and wellness?**

I have... not the best diet if I’m honest. I do enjoy the occasional sweet or dessert. I have a decent breakfast, bigger lunch and smaller dinner. I always sleep better if I don’t eat much at night. As far as exercise in the summer, I like to swim laps in our pool in the backyard. Over the winter, I try

to do some sort of cardio, whether its biking or running. Recently I started taking self defense classes and conditioning. I did that yesterday, and I woke this morning and I couldn’t quite sit up out of bed. I think a combination of all of those things holds up your stamina and muscular strength. That is really needed for archery because you have long days in trials where you shoot 144 arrows which takes up time between the morning and afternoon so you want to have that stamina. With doing the self defense classes, it keeps up my muscular strength to pull more poundage. For most people, the higher poundage you pull on a bow, the more accurate your arrows are. I pull just above 40lbs, but I want to get to 42lbs by the height of the season. For recurve there is no maximum weight limit, most women shoot between 38-45lbs, and men shoot closer to 50lbs.

I don’t have a super regimented training schedule. It just depends on what tournaments are coming up, I’ll work on certain things. With trials approaching, my coach had me do the 144 arrows, double 72 round. So, I shot 72 arrows for score in the morning, took a lunch break, and then did another 72 in the afternoon just to get the feeling of what that trial state will feel like. On



a normal day where I am not working on a specific thing like that, I will shoot in the afternoon from about 1-4pm. I will do all my school work in the morning and then eat lunch. After dinner I will shoot from 6-8:30pm. I shoot with one of my good friends every day. She’s a little bit younger than me. She started a couple years ago and I think I enjoy shooting with her because I get to teach her some things, but I think she also enjoys shooting with me because I push her. We do matches just for fun against each other. The more we do that and she sees her scores get closer to mine, it motivates her to shoot more.

I actually went to Texas and talked with Lanny and Troy about the whole mental management system, and that’s what I have been using since I was there in September. Lanny Bassham wrote, “With Winning in Mind.” I think it was really helpful. Everything they talked about made sense to me. It’s a very simple yet in depth way of thinking, it can be used for any big repetitive sport. I was kind of like, why haven’t I thought of this before?

I write down all of my goals. I think that’s an important part of any sport, just writing down what you want to accomplish. It reinforces it and helps you look back on it. I’ll sit down with my coach, and we’ll write down everything I want to accomplish. It usually consists of a score goal and a mental and form goal. For example, a score goal could be, “I am going to shoot a 660 even though the wind will be challenging,” because wind is a big part of the conditions that can affect where your arrows go. I usually incorporate why I think that score is reasonable for me. Form goal would just be any part of my physical process. Right now, I am working on having a strong follow through out of the shot. I always like to write my goals with an “I am or I will” statement just to reinforce that I’m going to do it. So, I will write “I will have a strong follow through on all of my shots.” Mentally, I’ve been working on mental practice which is something I do before I fall asleep each night. I just visualize myself shooting shots in a competition and seeing myself score them, knowing in my head that I can shoot great scores at a competition. For me and I think for most people too, they perform better in practice than in competition because of pressure. I want to get used to shooting equal scores between practice and competition. An example of a mental goal would be, “I will live up to my mental practice while I am at a competition.”

What comes next for you after the Olympics?

I haven't put too much thought into college. After these Olympics, I will still have another year of high school left. Looking at college options, I am not sure if I would do online or in person college. It depends on what my travel schedule would look like that year. I am really into sewing. It's something that I taught myself during the whole lockdown last year. I would really love to be a tailor or a seamstress. I make my own dresses and outfits. Something like that would be very fun and very creative and that's just the type of person I am. I had a sewing machine for years, and I never learned how to work it so I had a friend come over and fix it up. I just taught myself how to sew from there.

How do you deal with naysayers or other females that you just can't get along with but have to shoot alongside of?

I have had it happen before unfortunately. Not everybody is like this, but at times there will be a female competitor that will make a comment, and it will come out a certain way. When I was very young, a lady made a comment that she wasn't going to let a 12-year-old little girl beat her. It was in a shoot-off setting at an indoor competition. I ended up beating her and winning silver. It felt good to have that comeback and be like, it doesn't matter if you're a girl or a guy, or young, or experienced, it doesn't necessarily matter. If you're a good shooter, you're a good shooter. To



me, her comment was unsportsmanlike behavior. It just means that they think they need to say a certain thing to rattle someone rather than beat them with their skills. I don't participate in any "smack talk." I would never say anything to be purposefully mean. To me, for somebody to say that, it shows a lot about their character and their belief in themselves. They know they can't win just by skill, so they have to play mental games just to get a leg-up.



CONCLUSION

After talking to these four amazingly talented and driven ladies, I found myself feeling nothing short of inspired. Talking with them about their experiences made me really take a step back and think about the life of an Olympic athlete. It doesn't matter if you have been training for this since you were a young child like Casey and Kayle, or you discovered you had Olympic dreams when you were older like Alexis and Mary. Olympic dreams can really come true if you put your mind to it and work hard. Mental training is more important than the physical training too. It isn't easy, it isn't for everyone, and it certainly isn't cheap. There may be people that discourage you. Alexis and Mary both had their own coaches tell them it was an impossible dream, and they would never make it. Look at them now. I sure would love to send both of those coaches a copy of this article and thank them. Thank them for being honest because it must take a lot of guts to tell a young lady that she sucks. For



Mary especially, it was her coach telling her she would never do well in her sport that lit a fire inside her to prove him wrong. Alexis also found her coach's opinion irrelevant and stuck to her plan and went for it. I would almost venture to say that for Mary, if her coach had not told her that, she would have never been as driven to train and perform like she has. Then there are the loving and devoted fathers of Casey and Kayle that shared their passion for their shooting sport with their daughters, and look at how far they've come. I imagine that they could not be prouder of their children. If I learned anything from these ladies, it's that if you really want something, if you have a big dream and a big goal, you must believe in yourself 100%. But it certainly helps to have family, friends, coaches, and a community of people that love and support your dreams too.

As I was writing this article and listening to my interviews with each lady, I was stunned at how different each one is. Their personalities, their backgrounds, and their answers were all vastly different, except for their respect for Lanny Bassham. The realization that there isn't just one type of person that can be an Olympian, it's not just for certain personality types, or for people who started as soon as they were out of diapers. Anyone CAN achieve their goals. You just have to want it bad enough. They do all have one thing in common, mental strength. Without mental strength it is impossible to compete at the worldwide level. Though each one has her own mental game strategy, they were all studied on the mental management system detailed in Lanny Bassham's book, "With Winning in Mind." I would venture to say that anyone with serious competitive goals might want to check this book out. I myself have read it and also have the audiobook. Though after talking with these leading ladies, I think I will make it a goal to reread the book and not just once.

As the Tokyo Olympics draw near, it is important to really show support for these leading ladies. As Alexis mentioned, funding for shooting sports is low, and the threat of the Olympic committee dropping some of these sports from the Olympic agenda is an ever-present reality. Be sure to show your support by giving these ladies a follow on social media and sharing this story since the media at large refrains from promoting shooting sports. We have to do what we can to ensure the survival of the sports we love so that little girls reading this now, dreaming Olympic dreams, can grow up to be Olympic shooters too! ■

FOLLOW ALONG!

<p>SHOOTING</p> <p>SATURDAY, JULY 24TH</p> <p>10m Air Rifle Women's Qualification 10m Air Rifle Women's Finals 10m Air Rifle Women's Victory Ceremony 10m Air Pistol Men's Qualification 10m Air Pistol Men's Finals 10m Air Pistol Men's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>SUNDAY, JULY 25TH</p> <p>Skeet Qualification - Day 1 10m Air Pistol Women's Qualification 10m Air Pistol Women's Finals 10m Air Pistol Women's Victory Ceremony 10m Air Rifle Men's Qualification 10m Air Rifle Men's Finals 10m Air Rifle Men's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>MONDAY, JULY 26TH</p> <p>Skeet Women's & Men's Qualification - Day 2 Skeet Women's & Men's Finals Skeet Women's & Men's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>TUESDAY, JULY 27TH</p> <p>10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Qualification 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Finals 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team Victory Ceremony 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team Qualification 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team Finals 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team Victory Ceremony</p> <p>WEDNESDAY, JULY 28TH</p> <p>Trap Women's & Men's Qualification - Day 1</p> <p>THURSDAY, JULY 29TH</p> <p>25m Pistol Women's Precision Stage Trap Women's & Men's Qualification - Day 2 Trap Women's & Men's Finals Trap Women's & Men's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>FRIDAY, JULY 30TH</p> <p>25m Pistol Women's Qualification 25m Pistol Women's Finals 25m Pistol Women's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>SATURDAY, JULY 31ST</p> <p>Trap Mixed Team Qualification Trap Mixed Team Finals Trap Mixed Team Victory Ceremony 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women's Qualification 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women's Finals 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women's Victory Ceremony</p> <p>SUNDAY, AUGUST 1ST</p> <p>25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men's Qualification - Stage 1</p> <p>MONDAY, AUGUST 2</p> <p>25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men's Qualification - Stage 2 50m Rifle 3 Positions Men's Qualification 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men's Finals 25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men's Victory Ceremony 50m Rifle 3 Positions Men's Finals 50m Rifle 3 Positions Men's Victory Ceremony</p>	<p>ARCHERY</p> <p>Mixed Team 1/8 Eliminations Mixed Team Quarterfinals Mixed Team Semifinals Mixed Team Bronze Medal Match Mixed Team Gold Medal Match Mixed Team Victory Ceremony</p> <p>Women's Team 1/8 Eliminations Women's Team Quarterfinals Women's Team Semifinals Women's Team Bronze Medal Match Women's Team Gold Medal Match Women's Team Victory Ceremony</p> <p>Men's Team 1/8 Eliminations Men's Team Quarterfinals Men's Team Semifinals Men's Team Bronze Medal Match Men's Team Gold Medal Match Men's Team Victory Ceremony</p> <p>Men's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations Women's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations</p> <p>Men's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations Women's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations</p> <p>Men's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations Women's Individual 1/32 & 1/16 Eliminations</p> <p>Women's Individual 1/8 Eliminations Women's Individual Quarterfinals Women's Individual Semifinals Women's Individual Bronze Medal Match Women's Individual Gold Medal Match Women's Individual Victory Ceremony</p> <p>Men's Individual 1/8 Eliminations Men's Individual Quarterfinals Men's Individual Semifinal Men's Individual Bronze Medal Match Men's Individual Gold Medal Match Men's Individual Victory Ceremony</p>
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Dates are Tokyo time (14 hours ahead of CST). Please check local listings for dates, times, coverage & available streaming



Meemo's Farm



THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION FOR THE LADY SHOOTER
SAYS **ANDREA BOGARD**

Are you looking for that perfect girls getaway? A romantic adventure? A family vacation? Or, simply a place to go recharge the soul, then check out Meemo's Farm in Ewart, Michigan.

The first question you'll ask yourself as you drive along the quiet gravel road is "Are we lost?" Don't worry, your GPS is correct. You are in fact about to embark on a wonderful journey of sporting hospitality free from the chaos of normal life.

Come along as we explore the diverse and wonderful destination of Meemo's Farm!

Are you a sporting clays shooter? Then check out the beautifully designed 13-station clays course set in the rolling hills of Michigan. If you're looking for a warm-up, they offer skeet, trap and 5-stand courses all set within the lush landscape.

Do you prefer live birds? Then look no further. Meemo's brings the fine English tradition of the Tower Hunt to Michigan. In addition,

they offer walk-up pheasant and chukar hunts throughout the year. The season runs August 15th through April 30th.

A word here about the walk-up fields. Many walk-up hunt destinations feature bland landscape and minimal cover. Meemo's boasts a variety of topography, foliage and cover. From mixed hardwoods and sorghum to corn and conifers, the rolling hills and expansive fields create a visually intriguing hunting experience.

Are you a pistol/rifle shooter? Meemo's has





Meemo's Farm offers a magnificent sunken indoor spa, authentic sauna and therapeutic massage services.

With top-notch amenities and activities, the food and hospitality have a high bar to meet. And meet it they do. From the moment you walk in the door of the main lodge, your every need is met with a smile and a "yes!"

The chefs create magnificent meals that blend iconic regional dishes with elegant artistry. All is prepared with creativity and care and served with a spirit of welcome.



fun to be had in that arena, as well! Come enjoy rifle targets from 100 to 600 yards. You may bring your own firearms or shoot the Farm's. The rifle package includes a range of calibers from 22-250 to 50 cal. The pistol range is composed of discipline appropriate distances and can be shot with .22 to 50 cal.

Let's change gears a bit. In addition to the shooting and hunting activities, Meemo's is a marvelous recreational destination. You can rent 4-wheelers and snowmobiles, go canoeing or kayaking, check out the ropes course, ski or hike the onsite nature trails or wet a line in one of the numerous ponds on the property.

After long days of fun outside, what better way to relax than with a spa experience!



For many, the goal of a getaway is rest for the body, soul and spirit. The accommodations at Meemo's Farm offer something for everyone. Are you looking for a romantic and quiet escape? Then look no further than the Lake Cottage. Nestled alone beside a beautiful lake, enjoy the peace and serenity of your own private firepit, outdoor hot tub and covered front porch.

Do you want a family vacation or group getaway? Then check out the Lanes. It has a real bowling alley, complete with everything you need to outfit your crew with shoes and bowling balls of various sizes.

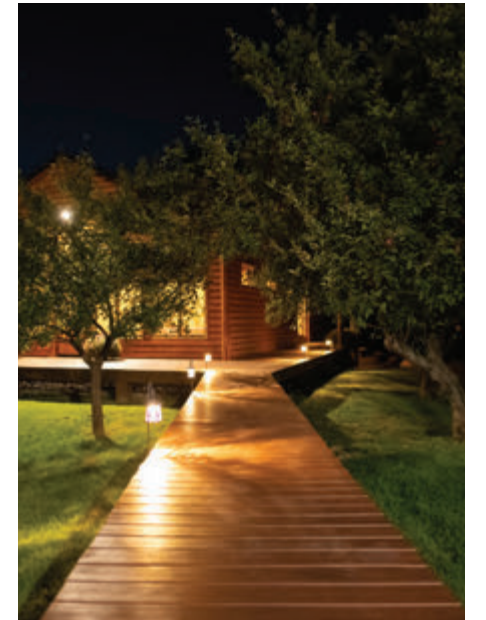
In addition to the Lake Cottage and the Lanes, the Annex, the main lodge and the new Pecks Lakehouse all can house various group sizes. These are great for larger groups and events! Meemo's can help you define the best



lodging option for your group size and desired goals.

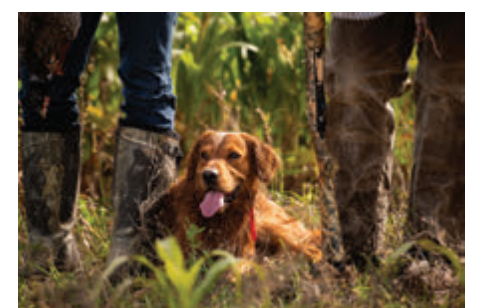
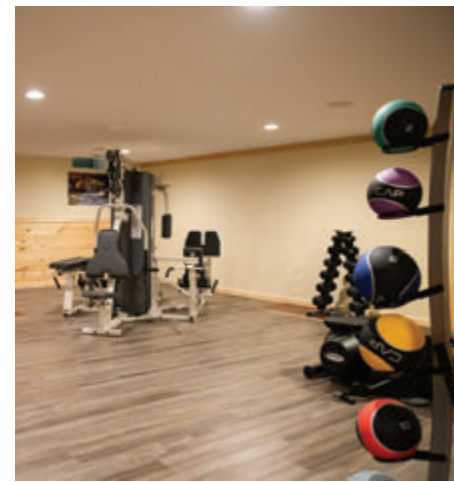
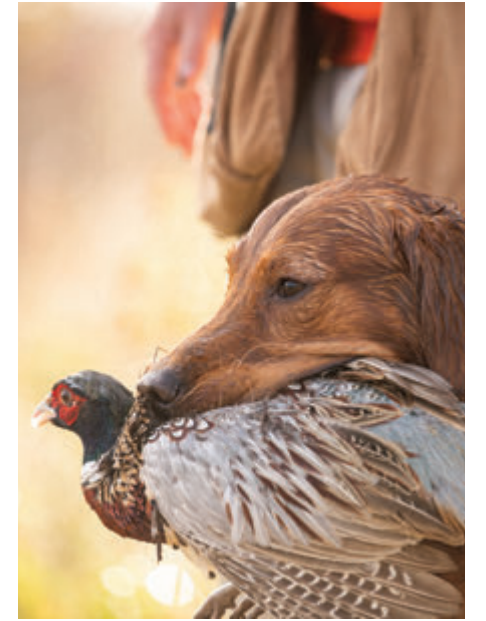
Meemo's Farm in Ewart, MI is the ultimate sporting destination for the lady shooter. Whether a clays shooter, hunter or overall outdoor enthusiast, Meemo's is the premier oasis to recharge and revitalize. Once you visit, you'll find yourself coming back year after year. Contact them today for availability and booking information! ■

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MEEMO'S FARM





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How Women Can Stay Focused



BY VICKI ASH

Ladies, how many times have you gotten into the stand and ready to call pull when, for whatever reason, another thought comes into your head when you should be focused on hitting the next target? How does that happen?

Well, here is the reason—women think of 8 things at once. That is how we get kids to school, our work done, laundry done, dinner done and everything else that we have to get done in a 24-hour period. Why is it that men don't have that problem—because men think of one thing at a time. When they are shooting, they are only thinking about the next target that they can crush. When at work they are thinking of how to get their work done and nothing else and so on. So how can women get in the frame of mind to crush targets? Think about this—When is a woman the most focused? She is really focused when she is not happy, or should I say when she is pissed about something and then nothing else matters but to get back at that which made her angry. Then she is really focused!

I'm not telling you to be mad at the targets, but you have to put yourself in the state of mind to be very assertive about hitting that target. I find that if I can get a woman to be in the frame of mind to "kill" the target instead of just get in the stand and shoot, then she will shoot better. I

remember a writers clinic years ago and we were talking about how important the pre-shot routine was and they asked what my routine was. I walked into the stand and my whole appearance change to being very determined to hit that target. The writers stopped me and said you physically changed by walking into the stand. Yes, I became very focused with the job at hand of making a plan and executing the plan, so I had to become more assertive with my thought process. By doing that, it relaxed my mind with all the other things going on around me and allowed me to only think of making that target disappear, then when I got out of the stand, I could talk to everyone and enjoy the day. Leaving that stand and go on to the next one.

Another issue for every shooter is the emotion they put into a miss. You want to always be in a neutral state with no emotion to the miss so that you can stay with your routine and then execute the next shot. You need to leave the result of that stand there, so it doesn't make a difference for the rest of your round. That target is gone so don't fret about it and don't let it keep you from finishing the round with a strong finish.

Let me know if there is anything else you would like to hear about by emailing me with topics at vicki@ospschool.com.

IT'S TIME TO SHOW WHO WE REALLY ARE.

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Gun owners care about the safety, preventing unauthorized access to firearms, bettering communities, helping those in need and conserving wildlife and wild places for generations to come.

You won't hear these positive stories about real gun owners and pro-gun advocates in the mainstream media. In fact, you're more likely to see insulting messages that try to shun or even shame gun owners due to some heinous acts of criminals. It's time for gun owners to tell their stories, to show how we're making a difference, to show that we don't fit under one identity and to keep others accountable for trying to villainize lawful gun owners.

We're calling on all gun owners to join us.

**WITH YOUR SUPPORT,
WE CAN DO THIS — TOGETHER.**

GunOwnersCare.org

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Macy Strong

On February 21, 2020, before the world knew that life would be forever changed, Macy Ledet's entire world changed in a way we can only pretend to empathize with. Macy and her two children, Cullen and Fiona, were driving in her car like it was any other normal night until IT happened. IT is the moment that forever changed the course and purpose of Macy's life here on earth from that moment forward. A horrific car accident left Macy paralyzed from the chest down. Don't worry, this story has as happy of an "ending" as far as anyone could have ever imagined. This is the Story of Macy Strong, a different kind of strong.

I first met Macy when she drove all the way to the Greater Houston Gun Club from Houma, Louisiana, to shoot in the Houston Safari Club Tournament. She drove right back when we finished shooting because she is a bad ass lawyer and had work to do. I had been asked by Haley Satterwhite-Day if I knew of any other girls that would be interested in joining our all-ladies squad. I didn't know Macy yet, but I had seen her on her boyfriend's (Hayes Garrett) social media and she just seemed fun. Long story short, we had



Natalya Gonzalez, Holly Patton, Haley Satterwhite-Day, and Macy Ledet at the Houston Safari Club Tournament, 2019

the absolute best time. Even from this first get together, I knew she was a strong lady. Macy is a full-time lawyer and a single mom. She has impeccable taste in fashion and in people and isn't afraid to speak her mind. She is a no-nonsense, straight shooter and performs extremely well under pressure. I was so impressed by her that I genuinely asked if I could come to Louisiana and see her do her lawyering in court one day. I love to argue and have always been told that I should have been a lawyer, and if I was a lawyer, Macy would be my Kim Rhode.

We followed each other on social media and became instant friends. Macy was always posting videos of working out, life with family, and busy work happenings. Social media was how we stayed in contact as has become the new normal in society. It comes as no surprise that it was through social media that I was made aware of IT. Hours after the accident, Hayes began to post on social media asking for prayers but not giving any specifics. Then the story started to come to life as he came to the realization that Macy, the woman he dearly loved and was planning on spending his life with, might never be the same. Over the course of the next few days, Macy began to share what had happened. It was obvious that she had begun the mourning process of the death of her old life and the acceptance process of the beginning of her new life, almost immediately. This right here speaks to her character. Macy did not waste time "crying over spilled milk" as they say. Don't get me wrong, Macy will be the first one to tell you that it has been beyond imaginably hard, that she has cried countless tears and still does regularly. At first, she even wished that the accident had just taken her life instead of her mobility. She mistakenly thought that she was no good for her children in this state and they would be better off without her. "I had nothing to offer them—I was told I had no hope," Macy says. Thankfully, this thought faded as quickly as it had entered her mind. Her overwhelming, never-ending love for her children

A DIFFERENT KIND OF STRONG BY NATALIA GONZALEZ

gave her all the motivation she needed to fight.

Macy was released from the hospital on June 17th, 2020, with a diagnosis of incomplete quadriplegic, with little to no hope to change those circumstances—that is, without additional surgeries. During her five months in the hospital, the world turned upside down with a pandemic and she was not allowed to see her children. Throughout her journey of learning to live life in a wheelchair, she shared stories on social media thanking everyone for their love and support, showing her progress, and her unwavering joy. That's right, I said joy. Macy was able to find joy in the knowledge and security that she was incredibly blessed not only to still be alive, but that her children suffered no more than broken arms in the accident, at least physically. Mentally, the accident has taken a toll on everyone in the family including her parents and sisters. Even I struggled with the reality of what was happening to my friend, this incredibly strong woman with a raspy voice and a streetwise sense of self that made me certain I never wanted to cross her. I found myself fighting back tears every time I would talk about her. For the first few weeks, I was almost in a daze. It's not like she was my best friend and we were super close, but it was that I cared about her as a human and this accident brought to life the reality of how fragile life can be. I looked up to her as a woman. I was inspired by her resilience and mental toughness when I saw her shoot her first shoot-off ever on a stadium field at the Nationals in 2019. With hundreds of people watching in the stands, under the lights, Macy knocked out master class shooter after master class shooter until she was beat by someone that Hayes said, "Even he would have lost to." Here was Macy, in probably one of the most helpless situations I could ever imagine. It hurt and saddened me. As a person who worked out regularly and could have easily modeled in fitness competitions, she was not a person to take her body and mobility for granted. She did not have irresponsible tendencies or put her life at



Macy finally reunited with her children, Cullen and Fiona

risk, it was just a random accident. Yet, I kept asking myself, why Macy?

In September of 2020, Macy was chosen for an experimental surgery that would potentially help her regain the use of her arms and hands. Macy was faced with the most difficult decision. Stay as she was, or risk what little she had in terms of mobility, for the promise of more. She chose the risk, the hope, the dream that she would one day be able to hug her children again, cook them dinner, drive them to school.

One very important thing I forgot to mention, can you believe this lady went right back to working as a lawyer at her own practice? I wasn't joking when I said Macy was already strong. Just so we are clear, Macy has gone back to her challenging job and raising her two children from a wheelchair, and she has raised the stakes by



A regular social media post for Macy before the accident. Work out and work hard.

filming a documentary, researching surgery options, dealing with the joke of a health insurance system we have in this country, advocating for Americans with disabilities, and last but not least, she volunteered to take on the Fashion Editor position here at Lady Shooter Lifestyles. When I put out a post on social media asking if anyone would be interested, she immediately replied. She needed something fun to do, something that didn't have to do with relearning to do life with a handicap, lawyering, or research on experimental surgeries. Lucky for us, Macy has impeccable taste and continues to be a fashion inspiration, despite the wheelchair being her least favorite accessory. Macy is just so fashionable and iconic that she has been chosen to be Miss Wheelchair USA Louisiana and will be travelling to Ohio this summer to compete in the Miss Wheelchair USA pageant!

Her purpose has now shifted to this cause, her cause, the cause that unites everyone living without hope that they will walk again. This cause is not just for Macy but for all quadriplegics. "I want to create an environment of hope when it comes to my specific type of paralysis. Not to mince words and diagnosis, but paraplegics have it a lot easier. They really, really do. Quadriplegics want to be paraplegics, paraplegics want to be T1, and T1's want to walk. Everybody wants to be the person that's in front of them. What makes quads so unique is that we can't function independently with our hands, we can't push a wheelchair, we can't hold utensils, I can't even

wash my hair; if my head itches, I just have to go to my Zen place and tell myself it doesn't itch. Until I knew about this surgery, I was holding on to my personality and the type of person I am to get me through it, but this is a light at the end of the tunnel situation. Because if this works, this could work for everyone, and that would be amazing because then guess what? We're not stuck like this. My kids have something to look forward to because it's not just about me; it affects your relationships, your marriage, your children, your work peers, how you present yourself in the community, how you function in your home."

Macy requires 24-hour care and will continue to require this as she recovers from the surgery ahead. On November 2nd and 4th, Macy underwent two of the four planned surgeries. A third surgery took place on March 10, 2021, shortly after the Macy Strong Shoot. Her final surgery will take place in a few months. Financially, this entire ordeal has been incredibly challenging. Amidst these financially challenging times as Macy focused not only on rebuilding her life but also her body, the Macy Strong Shoot was born.

"It was Hayes' idea actually, and he discussed it with some people and then presented the idea to me. I wanted to raise money; we were looking at ways to make money and we had just started working on the documentary and I thought what a fabulous way to raise money doing something we love. I think for a lot of people, they were used to seeing me in a certain light. I was one of the people that went to charity shoots and donated and did all of those things. To be on the receiving end of that is a totally different ball game. You



Macy figuring out how to do life in her new way, on a beach vacation with her best friend, colleague, and sometimes caregiver, Sarah Welch



Hayes Garrett and his son Hayden at the Macy Strong Shoot

Briley Manufacturing and Michelle Miles (who flew in from Florida), and someone I had been wanting to meet for a long time, Josie Richard of Wilderness Gun Club in Lafayette, Louisiana to complete our squad. The weather could not have been more perfect for shooting if we had asked for it directly from God. The shooters started arriving early and the Bayou Country Sporting Clays range in Houma, Louisiana was abuzz. An astounding 52 teams had signed up to shoot in the first annual Macy Strong Shoot and even more people showed up just to hang out. There was a sporting clays event and 5-Stand event. There were games such as Long Bird, Make-a-Break, and Flurries...and there was even a small area for kids to shoot BB guns at stationary targets! The sporting targets were not easy, but they were fun, and laughter was heard throughout the course. Haley Satterwhite-Day shot an incredible 93 and took home the top female shooter trophy. "I have never had so much fun at a shoot before. Not because of the vendors, food or targets, but because when I looked around, I genuinely saw that everyone was there to support Macy. From novice shooters to NSCA champs and everyone in between, they were all there to support a girl that has gone through so much, but has still found a way to be an inspiration to others and a light in a dark room. I cannot begin to express how lucky I am

never think you're going to be in a situation where you're going to need money for experimental procedures, or where you feel entirely helpless and the world looks at you in a way that makes you feel even more helpless." Thankfully, the shooting community is strong, just like Macy. Along with a board of six, Hayes refused to let Macy help and took on the overwhelming task of organizing a charity shoot.

March 6, 2021, turned out to be a day that will forever be engrained in my memory. I had called in my two best friends, Jason Menke of



Jason Menke, Natalia Gonzalez, Michelle Miles, and Josie Richard: AKA Team Macy Strong/Briley



Haley Satterwhite-Day and Macy, staying warm in the clubhouse

to be able to call her a friend." says Haley. The shoot was promptly followed by a cook off. Some of the best cooks and vendors in the area came out with their best Louisiana dishes, and each shooter was able to try any food from any vendor for free. We all got tickets to vote on our favorite and of course, the winner won a cool prize. There was live music, drinks, games, and best of all, Macy showed up just as the shooting part was wrapping up. Being Macy, she showed up in some cute leggings and an athletic top, her hair all done and make-up perfect. However, it was just too cold outside. For Macy, and anyone with a spinal cord injury, it is almost impossible to regulate their own body temperature. Basically, she doesn't know she's cold until she's freezing, and she doesn't know she's hot until she's sweating like a... you know the expression. As soon as I was done shooting, I found Macy practically making out with a little space heater inside the tiny office because while it was only in the low 70s with bright warm sunshine, to her, it felt like Antarctica. I immediately jumped into action and my squad and I raced to our Airbnb to gather warm clothing for her. We came back shortly with a blanket, my favorite beanie, and a Sitka softshell jacket. I helped her put on the jacket which was my first time helping her do anything, which is not easy, and adjusted the beanie to make sure she still looked cute. As you can see, Macy is not only beautiful on the inside, she's a knockout on the outside. I wrapped the blanket around her legs and then foolishly asked, "Does that feel better?" She didn't make me feel stupid for saying it, but I sure felt it. You see, Macy has had to deal with a lot of stupid and insensitive comments from people since being in a

wheelchair. Her least favorite, "You're too pretty to be in a wheelchair." As if her looks has any effect on the series of events that led to her current state. You'll notice that #youretooprettytobeinawheelchair is one of Macy's go-to sayings.

For the next few hours we socialized, listened to music, and then the real fun began—the auctions, raffles, and speeches. Macy helped the auctioneer drive up some of the prices and then she signed a Red Ryder BB Gun (this is a big deal) which someone paid a pretty penny for. "We raised approximately \$70,000 and we cleared about \$50,000. A percentage of it is going to the paralysis center at Boston Massachusetts General Hospital where I am having my surgeries. We have left the fund open so people can donate all year long and we hope to make this an annual shoot every spring as the seasons are changing and the people are changing too. The changing of the seasons I think is reflective not just of nature, but of individuals as our human form, every year we grow. My next goal is to meet with my documentary team and get the ball rolling on the next round of interviews. I am really looking forward to this summer; I am looking to become a part of a walking study; it's been proven, it's not cheap, it will cost more money than I have, but if I can do this too, then the road doesn't end. Every time I succeed at something, someone else will succeed at it too. I just have to prove the theory, that it works. I'm okay with being the person to do that, that doesn't scare me. What scares me is people quitting or giving up or feeling hopeless. I don't want that. That shouldn't happen; this is why we are doing this, not just making someone's



Macy and Hayes, the only photo of them together at the shoot



Natalia, Macy, and Michelle bundled up for the cool Louisiana night

life easier but saving a life." "I was able to fix a meal for my kids for the first time about two weeks ago. We did roast chicken, carrots, and garlic bread. It was pretty simple; I didn't want to go all out. I was able to put the plates in my lap and drive to them to give it to them, the whole thing. I knew I had to prove that I could do this. I no longer take the simple things for granted." This statement has resonated with me since I called Macy to talk about the goals of this article. Earlier, I mentioned how I questioned why something like this could happen to someone like Macy. I could say she doesn't deserve this, but the truth is, nobody does. I know now, in my heart, that Macy was born to inspire people. She has inspired me to value, appreciate, and be grateful for every single thing in life, regardless of the present circumstances. Let me say that part again, regardless of the present circumstances. Even the smallest things, like being able to do my son's laundry for him, or being able to go to yoga, or even being able to scratch my own head have become a source of gratitude. It is through Macy that hope is kept alive, that faith is made strong, that love is made real. I pray that as you read Macy's story you reflect on your blessings and take a moment to be grateful for every single one. When life throws you obstacles that seem like life is no longer worth living, I pray you remember Macy. Remember Macy's strength and let it help you find yours. ■

To donate, please visit givebutter.com and search the Macy Strong campaign.



Macy getting a hug from her daughter, Fiona, while helping the auctioneer.



2nd Amendment Discussions

CURRENT THREATS, DEMYSTIFIED
BY ANDREA BOGARD

Welcome back to 2A Discussions! This is a conversation that is moving so quickly on a federal, as well as individual state level, it can make your head spin. Today we're going to take a look at a few of the current legislative threats to our right to keep and bear arms. We will look at Red Flag Laws, the language and logic surrounding so-called "ghost guns" and the new ammunition licensing proposal.

RED FLAG LAWS – THE ULTIMATE THANKSGIVING DISASTER

Have you ever sat around a table at a holiday gathering, looked over at a family member and thought, "Wow. They're nuts." Whether it's Uncle Frank going off about the latest political debate or cousin Zoey's appalling tattoo choice, we've all had those moments where we just shake our head in wonder about members of our shared gene pool.

Now, imagine any one of those people around the table could dramatically alter your ability to both purchase firearms and retain the ones you have. Welcome to Red Flag laws.

Red Flag laws allow family members or law enforcement to petition the state to have an individual's firearms removed from their possession. The caveat to this is it is supposed to be under a pretext of the individual being in imminent danger to themselves or others. Conceptually doesn't sound bad, right?

Now think about your relative with the worst judgement, biggest mouth and most obnoxious personality. That person has the ability to petition the state to take away YOUR firearms with minimal justification. Not good.

Red Flag Laws strip the rights of the gun owner and place them in the hands of family and government. This can be a very slippery slope toward loss of rights entirely.

"GHOST GUNS"

Am I the only one that sees the "Mystery Machine" from Scooby Doo when they hear the term "ghost guns?" Just me? I digress. So, Scooby references aside, what is a "ghost gun?"

Basically, it is a gun assembled from parts by an individual. Kind of like a pinewood derby car. It requires time, effort, forethought, planning, parts sourcing and then some kind of ability to put it all together. The argument is that they are diy kits and are not serialized/traceable at all.

First off, if you're bent on committing a crime with a firearm, do you really want to turn it into a craft project? Second, most receivers/lowers purchased are serialized and thus traceable.

We now have a labor intensive ballistic version of the pinewood derby car that is easily traced. Does this seem like a logical go to for someone bent on committing a crime with a firearm? It sounds like a waste of time, tax payer dollars and legislative energy.

AMMUNITION REGISTRATION

The last point of discussion is the proposed ammunition registration. It is a part of a larger bill including a national (and very public) firearms database, restrictions on magazine capacities and highly restrictive licensing practices. *See H.R. 127 (Sabika Sheikh Firearm Licensing and Registration Act)*



Let's look specifically at the shotgun sports for a moment. If this passes, it would mean that pallet of ammunition you buy every year requires a special license to purchase and also lands your name on a list based on the amount of ammo in your possession.

Continuing, do you want it to be public knowledge that you have a pile of rifles, shotguns and pistols in your home as well as that Purley passed down from the last generation? I don't know about you, but I wouldn't want the world to know with just a few keystrokes how much money I had sitting in my gun vault.

These measures are not only intrusive and over-reaching, they place our 2nd Amendment in danger. Stay informed and stay aware. Check back soon for our next installment of 2A Discussions! ■



“Tell Me the Story”

A CALL TO ACTION BY **ANDREA BOGARD**

As a hunter, I have fallen in love with both saying and hearing these four simple words – “Tell me the story.” Why? Because a hunt is so much more than an animal on the ground. It’s the stories both heard and told, as well as the lessons learned along the way.

Today, I’m going to tell you a story. But, there’s a catch. Next time, I want to hear yours. I want you to tell me a story from your hunting memory book. Was it a first hunt? A hunt without a punched tag at the end? A hunt that made you smile? Or, were there tears? Whatever the case, tell me the story.

Until then, here is a story of mine from fall 2018. I hope you enjoy it, and I can’t wait to hear yours!

“MOM! I GOT HIM!”

Hi. My name is Andrea. I am an adult-onset hunter. I didn’t grow up hunting. I didn’t grow up knowing about conservation. I don’t have warm hunting stories with my mom or dad to relay around a campfire. I can’t tell you tales of “this one time back when...”

What can I do? I can walk into the darkened woods with my 12-year-old son, Colton, with the same wonder and trepidation. I can drop to my knees in the mud and examine scat and tracks



with the same excitement as my boys (poop is cool no matter how old you are, right?). I can get the same butterflies when a big buck walks out. I can feel the tears when my son takes a shot and a life. I can put my arm around him and not ask what he’s feeling, because I am feeling it too. I can wrap his fingers in mine and there is no distinction between his tremors and mine.

Why? Because this is new for me, too. I am his mom, but also his peer in many ways. He can skin rabbits and squirrels and I’m still learning. A few years ago, it turned my stomach. Today, I take pictures and videos and ask him to dissect it and name the parts. A few years ago, I hated it when he shot bunnies because they were “cute.” Today, I welcome him and his fuzzy fare with open arms, a Food Saver and a board full of Pinterest recipes.

We put five deer in our freezer this year between us. The first one was on the Youth Hunt. My husband, Brandon, took him out the first three sits. Saturday am/pm and Sunday morning. Brandon offered to watch Dwight, our toddler, Sunday night so I could go sit with him. I was simultaneously elated and cautious.

What if I mess this up for him? What if I don’t make the right stand choice? What if I’m not a good guide? What if I tell him to take a bad shot? What if I hold him from a shot he should take?

That night, I meticulously managed my scent, and took my son to a pit blind on the property he’d hunted the last few sits. I ranged about 30 different landmarks, took a deep breath and settled in.

“Mama, you got this. There are tons of deer here. He’s a great shot. He’s solid and practiced.” I told myself all these things as we sat there and watched the 2018 youth season slip away.

After a while, he giggled and pointed towards the opposite hill. He was pointing toward a hawk that was hunting the field and hill across the valley. “Wouldn’t it be cool if it got something while we watched?”

Then it hit me. He’s taking this in as much as I am. He’s soaking in the feelings and experiences as much as me. Is his goal to shoot a monster buck? No. Would he love to? Yes! Does he want to



grow as a hunter this deer season? Yes! Would he still be elated if he shot a doe? Absolutely.

I sat with that and enjoyed the warm glow of the late September sun as it dropped over the hill. I sat beside my (then 11-year-old) son and watched does come pouring over the hill into the field below us.

Just then, another group of does came flying over the hill and raced into the field. I told Colton, “Get ready, there’s something coming after them.” He looked at me with a question in his eyes, but settled in behind his rifle. I had my rangefinder in one hand and my binoculars in the other. Suddenly, a large bodied buck came barreling over the hill and into the field.

I said, “He’s a shooter.” I softly whispered ranges to Colton as he watched him come across the field. He was calm and smooth behind his rifle as the buck traversed the field below. The buck stopped. “Do you have a shot?” I whispered. “Yes,” was the firm response. “Okay, 167 yards,” I murmured back.

Bannngggg! “I hit him! He’s hit good, Mom. Mom! I got him! Mom! I’m shaking!” I was watching the buck through my binos, saw he was hit and knew it was a good shot.

I watched him race over the hill, fueled by adrenaline. My son was shaking with the same adrenaline. He clicked his safety on, laid his rifle on the rest and enveloped me in a camouflage hug.

When Colton found him just over the hill, he hit his knees in the crunchy leaves and wrapped his arms around the thick, brown neck. I took pictures of him with his deer, tagging him, cleaning him and holding the heart.

There is one moment above all the others that I love to look back on. It is the picture of Colton and I with his deer in the woods when we found him. For him, it might just be a picture of him with his mom. For me, it is the moment I realized that it’s not important whether I am the teacher or student, mom or mentor; it is the fact that I am there. I am learning. I am present. Despite my lack of experience or knowledge, I am there. Seeing this world through his eyes and reveling in it every. step. of. the. way.

Now it’s time for you to “Tell Me the Story!” Email your story and three to five images to andrea@ladyshoooterlife.com for an opportunity to be featured in our upcoming issue! If your story is selected for publication, you receive a free one year subscription to Lady Shooter Lifestyles! ■

#tellmethestory



You met these awesome leading ladies earlier, but we didn't ask them what a Lady Olympian carries in her bag...

ALEXIS LAGAN

Things I always have for the range:

- SKB Gun Case
- USA Shooting Backpack
- Pardini .22 Sport Pistol
- Eley .22LR Tenex Ammunition
- Pardini .177 K12 Air Pistol
- RWS .177 Pellets
- Peltor Tactical 500 Earmuffs
- Peltor Shotgunner Earmuffs
- Peltor Tri-flange Ear Plugs
- Knobloch Shooting Glasses with colored lenses for different lighting conditions



Alexis Lagan
@lagan1515
FB - Lexi Lagan

What's in My Shooting Bag?

THE OLYMPIC EDITION

- Bib holder and safety pins
- USA Shooting towel for the shooting bench
- Small grey bag for shoes and organization
- Adidas weightlifting shoes for shooting in (stiff flat soles are great for precision shooting)
- USA Shooting hat
- KT Tape for after long training sessions and quick recovery after competition
- Icy Hot also for recovery (I like getting it in stick form, so it doesn't make my hands messy)
- My spiky ball to roll out my feet for recovery
- Lavender oil in a roller for bugs
- Locks for my box and the keys
- InTheLeafyTreeTops planner for daily training journaling and for training plans (an essential for every competitive shooter)
- My cute tool bag with extra gun parts and cleaning supplies
- Screwdriver
- Stopwatch
- Shaklee meal and snack bars (my favorite is blueberry and almond)
- Shaklee energize chews
- Stride gum in peppermint (the really big pack because I go through a lot during competitions and training)
- Samsung wireless earbuds in rosegold
- And last, but not least... my water bottle (stay hydrated out there!)

If you have any questions about what I use, please reach out to me on Instagram or Facebook!



MARY TUCKER

What is all this stuff? Truth be told, there is a lot of it and it is very complicated, but I will try to explain everything. Let us first cover all the stuff that actually goes on my body, keep in mind also that this does vary for every shooter, but here is what I have.

Starting at the bottom we have the socks, I wear a pair of fuzzy socks over a pair of knee-high socks, this is because I like to get my boots as tight as possible so wearing double socks fills in extra space. The shoes themselves are flat soled, ankle high, full lace up boots. The laces as well as the two straps on the back allow athletes to, essentially, lock in their ankles to restrict movement.

Next some shooters wear specific under clothing, but I just wear leggings and a sports bra with one of the two jackets you can see over top. The jackets are just to add a little bit of extra padding in places like the armpits, hips, and elbows (unfortunately it still doesn't stop the bruising). Next the shooting suit itself, mine is made by Capapie but there are many brands, which looks very strange and is extremely stiff. Suits are made of canvas leather and are custom made to fit the shooters body, it is customizable with colors and names. The purpose of the suits is to minimize movement, serve as a buffer for heartbeat, and to hold shooters in the proper positions. I also wear a leather belt around the pants to hold them in place and support my back. In a sport where the ten ring is the size of a period in 12 point font, it is very important that

we are as still as we can be, so the outfits help. Still in clothing we have my visor and gloves. Personally I use a visor to block out any lights that may be overhead so my eyes do not get tired as fast, my visor also holds my blinder which covers my left eye. In rifle, shooters leave both eyes open, but cover the one that is not looking down the sights, this is to reduce the muscles being used to again, be very still. I use gloves on both hands, the trigger hand glove helps my hand stay on the grip when I am sweating. The offhand glove is solely so my hand doesn't slip on the palm block and the sling glove is made of hard plastic to help reduce the amount of pain we are in during the sling positions. Speaking of slings we have one, and we wear it in the kneeling and prone positions to attach the gun to our shoulders. This helps us keep the gun in the same position and very steady, but it is not allowed in standing. Moving onto the guns themselves now (finally). The red one is my smallbore, which is a single shot bolt action .22 made by Bleiker. I have three sets of sights, butt plates, and cheekpieces for my smallbore. They are all at different heights, lengths, and weights so my positions are the best I can get them. Having three separate ones also helps in finals where time limits are very short. On the smallbore there is also a sling stop (to attach the sling to the gun) and a stabilizer which helps absorb recoil and add weight to (yes I'm going to say it again) minimize movement. Moving down you can see my airgun, which is also single shot bolt action but shoots



Mary Tucker
@mtucker10.9

.177 pellets and is a Pardini. This gun is only shot in standing, so there is only one set of everything on this one, there is an air cylinder adapter though that allows us to actually fill the cylinders to about 200psi (shooting roughly 500-600 feet per second). Speaking of ammo, both pellets and bullets are specifically tested to each barreled

action to allow for optimum accuracy (I use Eley and RWS). Lastly you can see some tools in the photo, my offhand stand is also there which is where athletes rest their guns in standing between each shot (it holds ammo too). I carry a shooting journal too that I write in almost everyday and have had since I started in 2017, I am hoping it makes it through this Olympics so I can have my first match ever in the same book as my Olympic matches.

CASEY KAUFHOLD

I bring my whole equipment set up to practice including my bow, arrows, tab, finger sling, and arm guard. My bow is a Hoyt with the Xi riser and Velos limbs. I use Easton X10 arrows. I have a Vortex scope set up for long distance shooting. This helps me see where my arrows group on the target.

I keep tools with me like wrenches in case anything needs adjusted, tightened or cut. I take a pen and arrow puller when I need to score. I can write my arrow values and use the puller if the arrows are far into the foam on the target. ■



Casey Kaufhold
@crazy.casey.04
FB - Casey Kaufhold

Distressed Mommas

It's more than a feeling, it's a whole vibe



GET THE LOOK:

Romeo Rolled Cut-off Shorts, \$88, freepeople.com |
 Long Live Cowboys Tee, \$39.99, accentuatejh.com |
 Belt Lazo, 33€, cosadecuero.es |
 Spitfire Boots - Taos Turquoise, \$250, laneboots.com |
 Carryall Tote, \$109.99, thebrim.co |
 Teal Oxidized Leone Necklace, \$220, reagancharleston.com |
 Viper Earring, \$105, reagancharleston.com |
 Brown Leather Apple Watch Band, \$39.50+, etsy.com |
 Code of the West Hat, \$689, annsturquoise.com |
 Inlaid Turquoise Ring, \$4.60, cowsgirls.com |
 Very Sweet Anti-Aging Blush, \$39, tataharperskincare.com |



The Practical, Tactical Mom

Because motherhood doesn't come with a manual. Be prepared



GET THE LOOK:

The ATHENA Legging, \$109, alexoathletica.com |
 Mission Belt, \$34.95, missionbelt.com |
 Crew Neck Vintage Shirt, \$16.12, cowsgirls.com |
 Cloudflyer Waterproof Shoes, \$180, on-running.com |
 Aurora Concealed Carry Backpack, \$109, classyconceal.com |
 Johnny Cash Personalized Stamped Jewelry, \$73, etsy.com |
 Viper Earring, \$105, reagancharleston.com |
 Vintage Silver Equestrian Cuff Bracelet, \$98, etsy.com |
 Chanel Four Leaf Clover Ring, vintage329.com |
 Springfield Armory 1911 EMP Champion 9mm, \$1220, springfield-armory.com |
 Butter Soft Bandana, \$25, soulvationsociety.com |

Chic Moms & Ladies Who Brunch

It may be hot as a mother, but we found the perfect brunch outfit to keep you cool and chic - and protected to the fullest



GET THE LOOK:

Kendra Indigo Supersoft Jeans, \$98, us.mavi.com |
 Monaco Silk Blouse, \$245, shopravella.com |
 Horse Belt, 46€, cosasdecuero.es |
 Mabel Shoe, \$195, freebirdstores.com |
 The Bunting Concealed Handbag, \$845, kimberlybags.com |
 Antique Gold Feather Necklace, \$70, wildlifewonders.com |
 Lotus Earring, \$200, reagancharleston.com |
 Sig Sauer P365 Nitron Micro Compact, \$499, cabelas.com |
 Bhoird Harvest Covey Scarf, £159, onthepegclothing.co.uk |
 Urban Decay Vice Lipstick, \$19, nordstrom.com

Retrofit Your Wardrobe

A classic, casual look never goes out of style...



GET THE LOOK:

The Perfect Vintage Jean, \$128, madewell.com |
 Raising Wild Things T-Shirt, \$20, etsy.com |
 Chuck Taylor All Star Sneaker, \$55, dsw.com |
 Vintage Boho Wristlet, \$399, vintagebohobags.com |
 Eye of Protection Amulet, \$244, aprespluie.com |
 Arriba Ivory Tassel Earrings, \$12, lulus.com |
 Mala Tassel Bracelet, \$108, sevensaints.life |
 Ponytail Re-Purposed Cap, \$60, anagails.com |
 Luna Moth Guardian Ring, \$244, aprespluie.com |



BEAUTY Sunburns. Just No.

BY NATALIA GONZALEZ

Shoulder burn. The worst possible thing you could do to your skin. The most dreaded feeling after a long day on the range in a tank top, on the lake in a bathing suit, or even just doing yard work at home. The heat. The sting. The burn. Pain every time you put on a t-shirt. Bras? No, thank you. Loose-fitting, soft fabrics and lukewarm showers are suddenly your new life. Flinching every time someone comes in for a hug, even a few days after the pain is gone. Sometimes this feeling lasts only for a day or two, depending on your skin type. Sometimes it last for days. These are just the immediate effects of sun damage, by the way. The long-term effects include dark spots, wrinkles, premature aging, dehydration, and of course, the “C” word; you know the one. Now that I have scared you into possibly losing your interest in this article, if you are still reading and would like to learn how to prevent and treat a sunburn, then keep reading—I am about to change your life.

Rule number one. Always wear sunscreen. I don't care if you're going out to run just one quick errand, if it's kind of cloudy outside, or even if it's snowing. In many places, the weather can change so suddenly on any given day, you need to always be prepared. Personally, I can't tell you how many times I have been packing for a shooting trip and looked up the weather at my destination, only to discover that I will need both flip flops and a winter coat. Always choose a mineral sunscreen; the only two **active ingredients** you should see are: *zinc oxide and titanium dioxide*. Personally, I prefer a tinted moisturizer with sunscreen.

Rule number two. Always treat a sunburn like a real burn. You have injured your skin by exposing it to the sun's harmful rays, made even worse by pollution in the atmosphere.

If you get a sunburn, you must treat it immediately and avoid the sun until it has healed completely. If you cannot avoid the sun because

you have to shoot a tournament for example, then you must use long-sleeve or full-length pants made of UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) fabric. These fabrics are amazing and incredibly effective at reflecting the sun and its heat from your skin. You will often find me wearing long pants and long sleeves, even on the hottest of days on the range. This is because I would rather wear that than have to constantly be worried about reapplying sunscreen—the endless cycle of spraying sunscreen, washing my hands, risking potentially getting it on my gun, etc. It's a distraction and it's the last thing I want to worry about when I am trying to focus on my shooting.

Alright, I have to come clean now. I broke rule number one the other day at lunch with my gal pal. Ok, another confession...I also broke it during the Blooming Babes event two weeks before that lunch. I had the dreaded, horrible neckline tan on the back of my neck. So, I thought to myself, why don't I wear something with spaghetti straps, sit outside for our meal, and try to even it out. Worst idea ever! I of all people should know better, but I did it anyway. If you are in the same boat as I was, remember to give yourself a little grace. However, if the fate of a sunburn does befall you, then please follow this advice.

I have found only two effective methods for not only treating a sunburn, but stopping the progression of the burn. I will say that both options have a little sting to them. However, neither hurts more than leaving a sunburn untreated.

Option One: White Vinegar Soak

- white vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- water
- paper towels

Soak a paper towel in a vinegar and water mixture of equal parts. Place the soaked paper

towel directly onto the sunburn. This is the part that stings. Leave for a few minutes. Once you feel the paper towel hot from the burn, resoak the paper towel and reapply.

Disclaimer: If your sunburn is severe and the skin has blistered, please use only option 2.



Option Two: Homemade Aloe Pads

- aloe vera leaf
- cutting board
- knife
- air tight container or resealable bag
- Gorilla Tape (*not necessary for the use of the aloe*)

Begin treating the burn on the same day as the sun exposure and you will experience not only relief from the pain, but actual healing of the burn. Purchase a leaf of Aloe Vera from your local grocery aisle or cut a leaf from your own plant. (No, you can't use anything you bought at the store that says aloe on it). Thoroughly rinse the leaf of aloe. Grab a cutting board and a knife and begin to cut off the spike sides of the aloe and the top and bottom. Then cut the leaf in half. Take each half and cut it down the middle so that you have two new pieces with one outer green leaf side and one inner side (the clear gooey side.) You should now have four pieces. Lay out all of your pieces with the green outer leaf facing you. Arrange them side by side into two bunches. Tear off a piece of gorilla tape approximately twice as long as the width of each bunch. Tape the aloe from one bunch together along the leaf side, flip the tape, and tape down what is left making a V shape. Repeat for the other bunch. Use the newly created pads to rub the clear side gently over any sunburn on your body or face. Store the pads in the airtight container or resealable bag in a fridge or ice chest. Rub on the sunburn multiple times a day, whenever possible, as much as possible.



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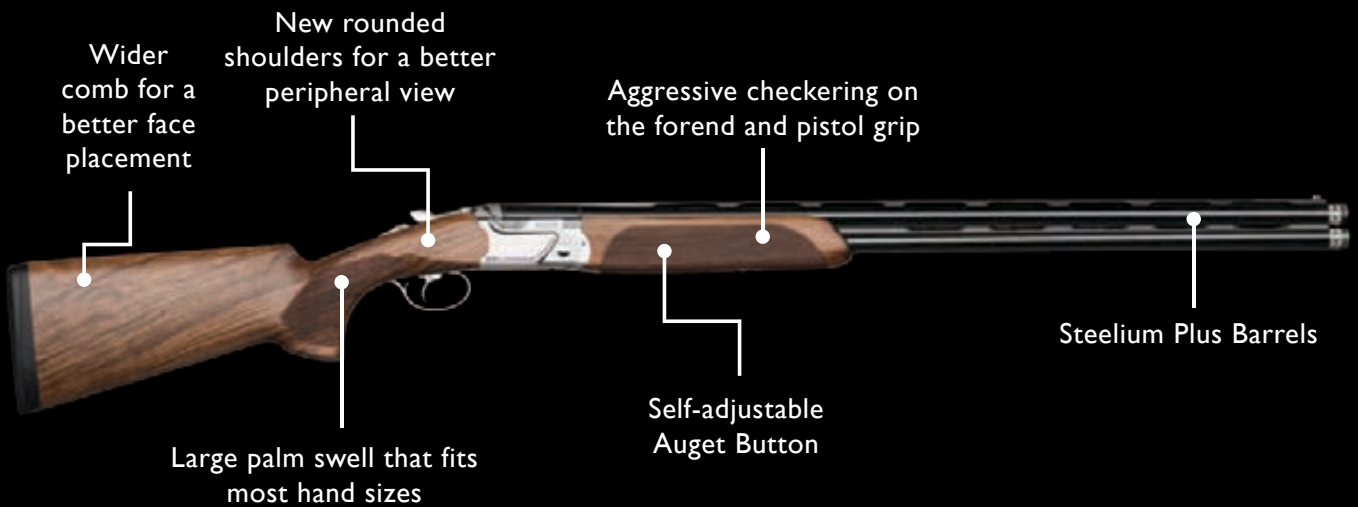
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