Thoughts On Owning Guns

Recently, and for a few good reasons I will not go into here, I have decided to become an "active" gun owner. So, <u>I have purchased a couple more guns</u>. As a result, learning to shoot these guns and how to take care of them, in between trips to the range, etc., has been quite aa experience. What follows (a note log of sorts) are some lessons I have learned along the way.

Handgun Impressions

First, let me share some information about the new semi-auto **9mm Smith and Wesson M&P 9L pistol** (apx \$675) I have found out. In particular how a person with less than ideal eye sight might want to equip this type of handgun so you can hit your target in a fairly reliable way.



I did a LOT of research on today's high tech weapons and optional add-ons. Of all the so called "Laser" sights (that I found), which are under a \$500 purchase price and are sold to the public (vs. military grade stuff), the TLR-8 Streamlight (apx \$220 US) seemed like the best bang for buck option. There is another good combo light/Laser unit made by one of their competitor's (I'd have to search for it again) but it is hard to come by in the states and costs even more... probably due to regulations making such technology more expensive.

Having used the TLR-8 a few times at the range I have found it is pretty much useless out doors <u>in broad</u> <u>daylight</u>. When I went to Cabela's (in doors) to buy it you could turn it on and point it perhaps 50-75 yards across their huge store and see where the beam was hitting quite easily... under store lighting. I wanted it mostly for indoor situations and was impressed enough that I bought it on the spot (I pretty much decided on it before getting there too). But, as soon as I mounted it and tried it outdoors, in "broad daylight" conditions, I soon realized it was not going to work except in ideal conditions (darker days, in the woods, etc.). The TLR-8 is perfect for indoors in dim light situations (i.e. when killing school shooters, home invaders, etc.). Plus, it comes with a very bright LED type flashlight coupled with the Laser and it is easy to turn on/off and toggle between combinations (light+Laser, light only w/open sights, Laser only). Once the day was cloudy enough at the range, I was able to finally dial the Laser in at 10 yards. But, it was still hard to see from 15 yards on out at my local outdoor range.

What about movement or "wavering" on target? This factor is more surprising than you may think. Once I started using both the Laser (and the DP-PRO red Dot sight I mounted up top) I soon realized just how shaky the average newbie shooter is when pointing a pistol at a target. Open sights just don't tell me what these techno-sighting systems tell me. These small point and shoot "Dot" type sights make me feel like a real "jerk" that couldn't begin to hold steady on target even if my life depended on it; no pun intended. The Laser sight jiggles all over the place; so much so that it was almost frustrating. The red Dot sight is not quite as bad because it displays a bigger Dot projected on the sight window vs. on the target way down range. Open sights are, apparently, total guesswork (in reality) and show very little wavering at all, no matter what the range or how much you are shaking the gun; they mask reality, so to speak.

I am sure there are rangefinder w/lock-on technologies out there, but offering them to normal tax payers at a reasonable rate is going to be another story. And, no matter what, holding a pistol or hitting on a target at longer ranges, bare handed, probably isn't going to happen either way <u>unless</u> you have a computerized system that unloads a round for you <u>only when</u> the gun itself is determined to be "on target" per some algorithm and nanosecond programming to compensate for human error. A system smart enough to do that (a.k.a. and expert shooter) would sure save a lot of ammo though. ;^)

On the flip side, the Leupold DP-PRO red Dot sight (on top) works a lot better in daylight, and probably even in darker conditions (when you can still see your target). It does not send light down range. It projects a "dot" on the glass screen instead.

Another thing I have also found out is that it is hard to get the Dot type sights on target to begin with. That's why I also bought the higher front sight and rear open sight option when I bought the red Dot (at least Leupold supports this kind of setup). With the Laser (in dim lighting) you don't even have to look down the barrel of the gun to shoot something. Just get the beam on target and pull the trigger. But, with the red Dot (or open sights) you still have to get your line of sight down the barrel, find the dot and/or sights, then aim... and shoot... if you can hold steady enough.

Now, about distance vs. accuracy; <u>from a newbie point of view</u>. I'm coming to the conclusion that a pistol can hit things a long ways out when in the hands of a seasoned, expert marksman who has been shooting a LONG LONG time and knows what they are doing. But, for someone like me, who has had very little practice thus far, a hand gun is going to be an up close and personal, self-defense or target practice only, weapon system. I have found that the primary sight will be the good old fashion open sights. But, the red Dot comes in a close second (in most normal situations) assuming you turn it on fast enough and learn how to use it sufficiently.

Note: The Leupold red Dot system actually shuts down when the pistol is set down and not moving for several minutes, and it activates once it senses motion again. I usually turn it off manually, but it is good to know that once you put the gun away it will save the battery if you forget to shut it off also.

I won't be using the Laser that often, except in dim light or in the dark; for example at home at night when some intruder breaks in or perhaps if you are a policeman searching for criminals at night, etc. But, in all cases, a newbie won't be able to score many decent hits w/o a good amount of target practice to gain confidence, improve technique and establish some good old brain programming. And the distance to target will be your worst enemy. With a beginner coupled to a pistol, accuracy simply drops off rapidly with distance, no matter the sight system you are using.

One more thing. I set both my Laser and red Dot up to "co-witness", were the red Dot shows up just above the open front sight when aiming down the barrel. This also helps when looking for the dot and trying to get it on target...



Once all three of my sight systems are dialed in, the result is that my open sights (where my front sight is probably .01" too short) will hit slightly high, but inside a 6" diameter zone, from 7 to 15 yards on out. Beyond that range I'll probably hit higher yet... because you will raise the gun up slightly when just using the open sights. My rear sight is adjustable up, down, left and right, though. So, I can dial it in. But, if I do, then I'll have to reset the dot sights to co-witness it once again; in which case it will probably hit too low at the same range when using it as the primary sight instead. Either way, I think this is a good compromise method for sighting in the gun, as configured, once the red Dot (on top) is pretty much parallel with the actual barrel as much as possible.

If I dial in the red Dot, I also find I can then use it to reset my rear sight to hit on target also, but just below where the red Dot says the bullet will hit at any shorter range. Thus, the open sight and/or red Dot are probably my most accurate sights down range as well. My red Dot seems to be pretty much dead on at 10 yards currently, where the bullet must rise a bit (so to speak) to hit at the cross over point, yet it does not seem to be going too high at 15 or 20 yards either; although, that remains to be seen. Some of my shots at 20 yards did seem to creep up as range was increased... so I shot below the point of desired impact on the 20 yard targets and still got more hits than misses.

The Laser sight, as shown in the diagram, is quite a ways below the barrel, vs. above. So, for it to hit the cross over point at 10 yards is the opposite of the red Dot on top. In that case the bullets should start hitting lower the farther down range one shoots.

The next page has a diagram showing what I am talking about. How is that for confusing?



The question is; what about the open sights? It very well could be they split the difference (when set up to co-witness) and might be the actual sight of choice farther down range.

Personally, my problem is <u>my old near sighted eyes</u>. I can use the Laser or red Dot with my glasses and both eyes open. The open sights (for me and my old, tired eyes) seem to be blurry... but it works OK once I put that red Dot over it and shoot like that. Or, if I have the red Dot turned off, I can simply aim a smidge low with the open sights and be pretty sure the bullet will hit just above, out to 15 yards anyway. In the right conditions I can use the open sights. But the light has to be just right for me to focus on target OK. The red Dot, on the other hand, seems to be in focus all day long. That's the main reason I wanted to try the Laser and red Dot sights out instead; to find out which ones work best in different situations.



By the way, I find that using 124 grain American Eagle Full Metal Jacket (FMJ) or Speer Gold Dot Hollow Point (GDHP) ammo works best to prevent jams with this pistol. The heavier punch bullet being pushed down the barrel also moves the action back better, I am guessing; which might be the reason why.

Semi-Auto Rifle Impressions

Even my rifle scopes have to be new tech now, at my age, where I can dial in the focus to compensate for my eyes, glasses and range. All this costs extra. But, thanks to modern day capitalism and technology, even us old farts can still hit targets and kill stuff when our eye sight is less than desirable and our pocket books are limited. Given that...

I decided to obtain a reasonably priced, but fairly effective – and moderately hard hitting – .308 Win caliber, semi-auto, Smith and Wesson M&P 10 rifle with an 18" barrel, a 20 round mag and a couple extra 25 round mags (under \$1,600).

I decided to equip this rifle with a Nikon PROSTAFF 5 scope (apx \$390). This scope offers 3.5 to 14 power variable magnification with a 50mm diameter objective up front (3.5-14x50) and a 1" diameter tube. The eye piece is adjustable for focus. And it incorporates ¼ MOA (i.e. ¼") at 100 yards per click elevation and windage adjustments (top and right side); with parallax adjustment (left side). It also comes with Nikon's **Bullet Drop Compensation** (BCD) reticle (see photos below). The price was right and it seems to work fine for someone my age who wears glasses while shooting things down range.

I mounted this scope to the M&P 10 using a Burris P.E.P.R. scope mount w/1" rings and base (apx \$90). Then I also bought a JINSE 6-9 Inches Tactical Bipod (\$25) and a Blackhawk sling (\$30) for it. **Awesome!**







After shooting about 25 boxes of 165 grain Hornady SST (Super Shock Tip) ammo through this rifle, and learning how to break it down and clean it (not nearly as easy a task as the pistol or my Weatherby bolt action rifle), I have found out how much FUN target practice can be at the range. This rifle has some punch behind it, so you are not going to rip off 25 rounds in less than 10 seconds and score a lot of bullseyes at 100 yards by any means. But, it is possible to put a 5 round group into a 3" circle at 100 yards in under 20 seconds.

In other words you can easily take down your average Marxist Libtard Demoncrap or pretty much any North American big game with this puppy, from 25 yards on out to 200 yards, without much effort. Having the ability to slap in a 25 round mag, drop it out once empty, slap another one in to unload another 25 rounds, followed by yet another 20 more rounds – as desired – makes it fairly easy to spend \$75 on ammo in under five minutes of FUN... w/o much effort!! And, you won't go home with a sore shoulder when you are all done either (keep reading to find out how a .300 Weatherby Mag, bolt action, hunter/killer stacks up).

Good Old Reliable – .300 Mag Rifle Impressions

I got my hands on a great .300 magnum caliber Weatherby Mark V Deluxe rifle with a 26" #2 contour barrel <u>vears ago</u>. It was, and always will be, my go to gun for hunting anywhere in North America. This rifle will kill just about anything, short of a M1A2 Abrams tank, dead. Period. My particular Weatherby has been customized (see photos). And I recently upgraded it with a much better Leupold VX-3i scope (\$630) up top. This scope offers 4.5 to 14 power variable magnification with a 50mm diameter objective up front and a 30mm diameter tube (4.5-14x50). Like the Nikon scope on my M&P 10, it also has an eye piece that is adjustable for focus. And it incorporates ¼ MOA at 100 yards per click elevation and windage adjustments (top and right side); with parallax adjustment (left side). A new Mark V Deluxe rifle runs around \$2,700. A customized one should be worth even more...naturally. A used one like mine should be valued in the same ball park.

I mounted the scope to the Weatherby using a typical two piece scope mount w/30mm rings for apx \$80. I also added a Bipod (apx \$25) and simple leather sling (\$50). **Double awesome!!**

My preferred ammo for this game getter, which holds one round in the chamber and 3 in the mag, is 165 grain .300 Weatherby Select (Spire Point), when I can find them, or 150 grain Weatherby Select Plus (Hornady Interlock). The 150 grain is actually the more expensive second choice of the two. Now days I have concluded that factory ammo (even at today's prices) is more cost effective than reloading (which takes a lot of time, effort and expense to cook up a good load) and just as accurate; if not more so.

Shooting the .300 Weatherby magnum is a much different story than shooting the .308. By the time you run a box of ammo through it chances are you will have a bruised shoulder for the rest of the week. But, it can really reach out and touch someone and, as long as you don't flinch, it is 50% more accurate at any range.

Here are a few photos to scope out...











