

Musings of the Rookie

Sharing the Journey Part 3

In my first submission, I mentioned my old friend the 870 pump shotgun. I knew that sooner or later, I'd have to replace it – or at least clean it better. < smile> That begs the eternal question of “What shotgun should I buy?” (Spoiler – I'm not going to answer that question.)

Silver Willow's Blog has a very comprehensive article on shotgun selection. When you have a bit more time, check it out, along with the other articles there. While a pump will work, most of sporting clays is done as pairs and that pluming costs you a bit of efficiency between the first and second targets of a pair. I think it fair to say that most sporting clays shooters choose either a semi-automatic or an Over / Under. This semi is generally less expensive and thought to have less perceived recoil. It also holds a third round if you want to hunt with the same gun. The Over /Under has the advantage of using different chokes in each barrel, to accommodate widely different targets in a pair and the extra weight can both smooth out your swing and soak up some of the wallop. Both are shot extensively at all levels of competition and fun shooting. Some have beautiful figured wood and exquisite engraving, while other focus mostly on economical and reliable function. With shotguns, the “try – before – you- buy” process can save a lot of grief. There are \$10K = wonders of art and engineering available and if they aren't right for you and your shooting style, they will soon be beautiful and well engineered wall hangers. Fortunately, Silver Willow and many other clubs have dozens for you to choose from and many of them are available as rental guns that you can try out. I checked one out in the store that just wouldn't come to shoulder for me. Another I thought might be good but a trip around the course convinced me we could be civil, but not besties. The third one felt right in the shop and even more so on the course. Squad mates, sale staff, instructors and fitters are all available at Silver Willow, and don't ignore the spirited discussions that come up around the wood stove in the Gun Brothers Cafe.

Rob Ridley
Rookie!