

SHOOTING THE BREEZE

Picking the right hunting scope

By Dale Valade

For the Blue Mountain Eagle

We live in a time where the marketplace for guns and related accessories is literally inundated with good quality products. No, I have not personally tested all of the various brands and product lines, but from what I've used and personally witnessed, it's hard to go wrong when you open your wallet after doing some homework.

Most of the readers here undoubtedly have favorite products for various reasons. My grandfather prefers the old school fixed 4x Weaver scopes. He bought one new in the 1960s, and it has been working just fine on his favorite rifle ever since. Don't fix it if it isn't broke.

I am and have always been primarily a fan of the Leupold variable power scopes. For the working man's dollar, I'm not sure you can ask for more. Made here in Oregon, they carry an unconditional lifetime guarantee. And their product line is so vast they carry something for everyone. Most of my hunting and shooting experience has been with this brand. However, I have used Nightforce,



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Swarovski, Schmidt and Bender, Vortex, Redfield, Bushnell, Tasco, Weaver, Simmons and many others as well. Big name brand scopes are not inexpensive, though, and for someone on a tight budget that can be a buzzkill.

From here, there are two ways you could go: save up and get the scope you want, or get something a bit lower grade that is still a serviceable product. Even some of the more economical scopes can and will take care of most hunters' needs.

Leupold isn't the only one with a lifetime guarantee. Other manufacturers have long ago jumped on that boat. Vortex for example costs roughly 60 percent of the price of a new Leupold, and they seem to be comparable in quality in the basic models I have owned, though they are not made in the USA.

Several factors need to be considered besides price and brand name. What application is it to be used for primarily? If you hunt brushier areas, a fixed or low-power variable



Rod Carpenter



Mark LeQuieu

Introducing the new column

Shooting the Breeze is a new weekly outdoors column from three local Grant County writers. Dale Valade, Rod Carpenter and Marc LeQuieu are all avid sportsmen and shooters. Their friendship and mutual passion for the outdoors led to this exciting collaboration.

Their columns will focus mostly on hunting, shooting and the outdoors, including archery, blackpowder, handguns, handloading and fishing.

The main goal of their writing is not only to inform and entertain existing shooters but to encourage and support those who are interested in these sports. Mentoring interested parties not only ensures proper firearms training and safety practices but lays the groundwork for securing a future for hunters and shooters.

Be sure to catch up each week in print and online for the latest and greatest in the outdoor world. Have feedback for these writers? Send them an email at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

range, such as 2-7, may be perfect. If you hunt and shoot wide open areas a higher range, such as 3-9 or 4-12, may be necessary. Perhaps you're outfitting for a target rifle or 1,000-yard long-range match; even greater magnification may be needed for such a setup.

Reticle choice too is important. For years, basic crosshairs or the du-

plex reticle seemed to fit most hunters' needs. However, I increasingly see more of the BDC (bullet drop compensator) reticles in the field. These are very nice for longer shots if the shooter has taken the range time to discover the calibration of the holdover points. These take the guesswork out of making those shots. Some of these reticles are su-

per-engineered and can be confusing, so make sure you know what you're getting into before buying. It goes without saying that a good quality range finder should be factored into whichever setup you choose.

You can buy scopes with custom reticles, illuminated reticles, dial turrets, extended or intermediate eye relief, adjustable objectives, first or second focal plane and more. This is why doing some research is so important. Don't let a crafty salesman pull the wool over your eyes.

The scopes we can buy are as diverse as the various applications they are used for. I tend to recommend that simple is best, as there are fewer things to go wrong. But again, an honest self examination combined with homework will be a better guide in choosing the right scope for you!

A co-worker of mine nailed a coyote at 845 yards last week with his setup. Seems like he knows what he has!

Have a favorite scope to brag on? Write us and tell all about it at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

Dale Valade is a local country gent with a deep love for handloading, hunting and shooting.

Oregon to make hunting regulations more simple

By Phil Wright

EO Media Group

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is making big game regulations simpler for the 2019 hunting season.

Nick Myatt, ODFW Grande Ronde watershed manager based in La Grande, is leading the team tasked with trimming them down.

Simplifying the regulations is complicated, Myatt said, and "a pretty heavy lift for us. And the problem wasn't created overnight. It was many decades in the making."

The team split work into three phases. The first was to focus on making the handbook more reader-friendly,



Contributed photo/Corum Delyria
Corum Delyria of Enterprise shows the bear he killed on a hunt in Oregon a few years ago.

from improving the organization to getting rid of redundancies and reducing legalese.

In this year's handbook, Myatt said the team collected

everything related to youth hunting and collected them in a two-page section.

The team also added more maps and tables to present in-

Learn more

For a full list of the new proposals, go to www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game/

formation.

The second phase is happening now — reviewing the general hunting regs, weapon restrictions and youth programs. The team came up with 32 proposals, and Myatt in Baker City briefed the state Fish and Wildlife Commission about those. Some of the major change are:

- Standardize the minimum draw weight for bows at 40 pounds for all big game mammals.

- Eliminate the prohibition against decoys with moving parts when big game hunting.

- Simplify requirements for legal muzzleloaders and make it clear sabots or sabot bullets are unlawful.

Two other proposals would require legislative approval. The first would limit leftover tag purchases to people who previously applied for a tag but did not draw. This would allow more people an opportunity to hunt each year.

The second would streamline limits on non-resident tags, capping those at 5 percent of all deer, elk, pronghorn, and bear controlled hunt tags.

The team rewrote sever-

al regulations, including prohibiting rifle hunting without a valid deer or elk tag during certain periods and the proof of sex requirements. The team also culled regulations it deemed unnecessary or redundant.

For a full list of the proposals, visit <https://bit.ly/2spD7KJ>.

The commission considers the final proposals when it meets Sept. 14 in Bandon (except for legislative concepts, which would go before state lawmakers in the 2019 legislative session). Myatt said hunters and the rest of the public can come to testify or send comments to odfw.commission@state.or.us.

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