

Have Open Chokes, Seek Longer Targets

Bruce,

I have an old LC Smith 12 gauge that I really like to shoot and it likes me back. It has open chokes, Sheet-Right barrel and IC+ we can call the left barrel. I've patterned some of the popular and cheap rounds used by many shooters and found that they don't pattern worth a darn after 30 yards. There are shells on the market that open up. I'm looking for one that I can reach those 35-40-45 yard clays with my open fixed chokes. Any suggestions. Open throated and singing loud only at short distances.

Many thanks

Kimball
Yours in Sport

Dear Kimball,

There is just so much that you can expect from an open choke at long distance. Cheap shells are cheap because they use lead shot with less expensive antimony hardener. Softer shot patterns wider. I tested Remington premium STS shells vs cheap Remington Gun Club shells and got 10% more open patterns with the cheap stuff. If you reload, high quality components, especially hard lead, will give you the tightest patterns IF (big "if") you keep the velocity low. High speed is the enemy of tight patterns because the setback required for high speed damages the shot more than a mild load. For the tightest pattern, use the lowest velocity practical.

Jay Menafee at Polywad <www.polywad.com> 1-800-998-0669, markets some really tight patterning buffered lead shells. These are definitely state of the art. Give him a call. I was amazed at the performance of his buffered shells at bunker trap, where the second barrel is taken at a loooooong bird. Check out <http://www.polywad-shotgun-shells.com/buffered-biowad-vintager-xxtra/> and <http://www.polywad-shotgun-shells.com/buffered-biowad-gram-crak-r/> These are amazing shells. The Vintager shell will be friendly to your nice old gun with it's low pressure and low recoil.

Best regards,

Bruce Buck
Shotgun Report's Technoid