

## WIFE'S GUN

OH Guru of Shotgun Lore.....

I need a bit of advice on the purchase of a shotgun for my wife. She has recently become interested in shotgun sports after putting up with me for five years of trap and skeet, (we have no Sporting Clays ranges here in New Mexico)

I have taught her to shoot using my 870 Remington 12 Ga. but the recoil is a bit much for her. (1 1/8 oz #8 3 1/4 dram eq) I have tried using the newer 1 oz 12 ga Federal loads but in they still beat her around to much. I know that an autoloader reduces "felt" recoil but I am not the biggest fan of gas guns.

She would be shooting mostly at targets with very little upland hunting. I would prefer to stay with a Remington 870 series for two reasons, 1 I love and my wife likes the way a pump handles, and 2 My grandfather used to shoot a 46 year old 870 before he passed on, and which I have now, and my father still shoots his 30 year old Remington and I have one that my wife bought me for Christmas. Stupid reasons I know but I still use Hoppes #9 because it "smells" right.

However today I ran across a used Browning A5 in 20ga that feels like it has enough weight to take the sting of recoil out of a hot 20 ga load, but I confess that I don't know much about the A5 and I sure need your help. The cost of the Browning is about \$75.00 less that a new 870 Wingmaster in the same gauge.

So what's your pick for a ladies shotgun O master of the Bluerock. A used A5 or the 870 Wingmaster?

Thanks for any help in advance, and keep busting 'em

Chuck

Dear Chuck:

Tough question and I am not really clear on what you want. You don't like gas guns, but you are considering the A-5? Sure, I know it is recoil operated, but it is the same as a gas gun in every other respect except that the A-5 kicks more and moves around more on firing than the gas guns do. Gas guns are softer shooting than recoil operated guns.

Make no mistake, the A-5 20 gauge is a neat gun. Nicely made, fairly malfunction free (if you get the right shell) and durable. That said, I think that it would be a lousy choice for clay targets. Now if your long suffering (5 years with a confirmed shooter is an eternity) wife was going to shoot mostly upland bird and a bit of clays, then maybe the A-5 would be a good choice. The other way around, I don't think that it is.

As to the 870- I just love 'em. My first gun was a 20 gauge 870 and I still admire the 870 trap guns with the straight trap stocks (I shoot straight trap stocks on all my guns). Like any relatively light weight, fixed breech gun, they can be kickers.

If this gun is really for your wife (and not you- I know how that works), and SHE (again, it is for her) just loves pumps, perhaps a 20 gauge 870 would be a good choice. Women usually require higher stock than men, so be prepared to raise the stock with a pad or by other woodwork. Many of the older A-5s had extremely low stocks and were harder to bend or shim upwards than the 870 due to the A-5's tangs. Properly done, a higher stock will reduce felt recoil for her also. Also, just because it is a 20, doesn't mean that it isn't going to kick. Don't use "hot" 20 gauge loads. Use regular 7/8 oz 1150 or 1200 fps loads. Faster isn't better at clays. It just hurts more. Be prepared to add some weight in the magazine tube and some in the buttstock if she objects to recoil. Make sure that you put on a decent pad. Kickeeze makes a very good one. Also make sure to round the toe of the pad. Ladies are built a bit differently than we are- (thank you, Lord).

So, between the A-5 and a 20 gauge 870, for what you want to do, I would pick the 870 for sure. I still think that a 20 gauge 1100 or one of the Beretta autos would be a better choice though.

As to the Hoppe's- there are a number of products that work better today, but NOTHING smells better or brings back so many fond memories. I use it all the time.

Best regards,  
Bruce Buck  
Shotgun Report's Technoid