

RIFLE PERFORMANCE

Relative Performance of Production Rifles

Often in the firearms trade a client will ask how accurately the rifle they are looking at buying should shoot. And there are the others who must tell you how accurate their rifles is (SHOOTS .135?) Bla Bla Bla.

In most cases the person behind the counter will not have solicited this information and the response is a far away look in the eyes .

For anyone to make the statement like their rifle shoots .135 is at best from the dream time. Most full blown benchrest rigs would struggle to shoot groups of this size on a regular basis. By this I mean groups of sub .175 size.

MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, the last four words are the main point of this article.

Because your rifle shoots one stunning group one can not say it shoots .135. If you want to prove that this is the case take it to a benchrest competition. The awakening to reality will be quick and decisive!

What any shooter really interested in accuracy should be trying to find out, is the average level of accuracy their rifle is capable of. This means the level of accuracy it can achieve more often than not e.g. most of the time when conditions are fair.

Rifles need a certain platform to achieve excellent accuracy which will in most cases be made up of the following.

1) A Stable stock

Made from Synthetic material, Laminated Ply or well aged Walnut. Preferably with a vertical pistol grip and aluminum bedding block or pillar bedded and of course a fully floated barrel.

2) Action

A strong bolt action preferably single shot. Benchrest rifles are made this way for a reason, the best barrel in the world can only perform as well as the action it is screwed in to. If that action is from some old magazine feed hunting rifle it simply won't perform up to scratch. Because the action is flexing during firing and is simply not stiff enough. This is a key point often over looked.

3) Barrels

Good quality is the only constant. Stainless steel tends to foul less, others favor Chrome Moly, but Button Broached or Cut rifled barrels are the only way to go.

4) Scopes

Target models from Leupold or Burris will serve well. Most spend far to little on their optics, you can only shoot as well as you can see, not forgetting good quality rings.

5) The Shooter m

Must be capable. These components are needed for a rifle to perform above average more often than not and are the minimum requirement for a target rifle be it Positional, Bench Rest or Free Rifle.

Mark my words you can also spend a lot of money on the extras like custom dies and other specialized reloading equipment, and they are equally important to making small holes in paper.

But back to production rifles. Your average well scoped name brand rifle e.g. Winchester, Tikka, Sako, Remington & Browning.

Most hunters should expect about 1" to 1,1/2" groups, if they try different brands of ammunition or hand loads. Their rifle will show a liking for one type over the others. Of course they must be up to shooting these groups.

I am not saying that most people can not shoot well because most can shoot very well. But if you are not shooting groups or targets on a regular basis it can take a little practice to get back in the groove. The point of this article is be realistic. 1 to 1,1/2" groups are all that's needed from any production rifle.

You will have no problem taking deer sized game out to 300 meters. If you have a hunting rifle that shoots 3/4 M.O.A. you are very lucky but only 20 % of production rifles will achieve this higher level of accuracy.

Next time someone tells you about their sub half inch rifle you to might get a far away look in your eye.

WWW.RELOADERS.CO.NZ

12 NEWSOME STREET, ONEHUNGA 1061, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
PH: 64 9 636 5407 FAX: 64 9 634 0267 SCOTT@RELOADERS.CO.NZ

