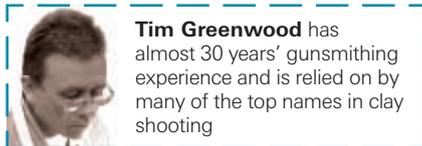


Drying out

After a wet start to the summer, **Tim Greenwood** reiterates the need to dry out your metalwork



Tim Greenwood has almost 30 years' gunsmithing experience and is relied on by many of the top names in clay shooting

The other weekend, after years of Trap shooting under cover, I was caught out on a Skeet range during a competition in one of the worse downpours I have ever experienced. Several hours later when I got home I could still wring out water from my socks and my supposed waterproof jacket had completely failed in preventing the rain from soaking me to the skin, both above and below the waist. I am sure we have all been through this at some time this year having experienced one of the wettest summer's on record; all we need when we get home is a good hot shower and an even hotter cup of tea and we are fine, but what about our guns? They also had to endure this deluge and wood and metal are not good friends with water...

By the time you get home from shooting it is all too easy to leave the gun in a wet gun slip while you have your dinner, then fall asleep in front of the TV; then it's work the next day and before you know it, you will be pulling out a gun that is red with rust because you haven't got around to cleaning it since last weekend.

Over the last 33 years as a gunsmith, I have seen some pretty horrific guns arrive in my workshop after not being cared for when they have got wet, yet follow a few simple rules and a lot of damage can be avoided.

Always carry a kitchen roll in your car to wipe off any excess water from the outside of the gun; take the forend off and the barrels from the action, so you can get to all those hidden corners.

Start your barrel cleaning at the ground by spraying a good quality bore cleaner such as 009 or Phillips into the barrels and never, I repeat NEVER put your gun away into a wet gun slip. Either carry a second dry one with you or lay the gun in pieces in the boot of your car covered over with an old, dry blanket or towel. If possible take a tin of good quality gun oil with you such as Browning Legia; spray this onto some kitchen roll and wipe it over all the metalwork of the gun. At least by carrying out these few basics at the ground you should be able to avoid any major damage to the gun, even if you do forget about it for a few days.

The above precautions may help to prevent immediate surface deterioration but more in depth maintenance should be carried out as soon as possible, especially around the ejectors. While waiting to shoot, your gun should be open, exposing the breach face and the ejectors to the elements. Even if you cover them with a small towel, water will still find its way behind and into the ejector mechanism but this can be easily rectified by removing the ejectors.

Let's start with the Beretta o/u; hold the barrels across your lap and place a cloth over the top barrel ejector. Push the ejector in towards the breach face until the lug is in line with the cut out on the side of the breach then twist the ejector clockwise to free the lug from the cut out.



Gently release the pressure on the ejector and it will slide forward away from the breach face. Lift the ejector away and remove the ejector spring guide and the ejector spring.



The Gunsmith

Clean the back of the ejector and the ejector recess with an old tooth brush and maybe even wipe out the hole which the ejector spring sits in with a cotton bud.



Re-fit the ejector spring and guide. Re-fit the ejector by placing the top edge underneath the top lip of the recess, then compress the ejector against the ejector spring until the lug lines up with the cut out. Twist anti-clockwise until the lug is fully inside the recess then release the pressure on the ejector gradually until it returns to its normal extended position. Repeat this for the other side.



Re-lubricate with light grease; I always use a syringe for this job filled with LM grease available from Halfords, but any good quality grease will do leaving a film in the ejector recess.



If you are feeling particularly adventurous you can also remove your stock using the stock key provided and give the inside of the action a light spray with oil, but ensure that it is a light spray; do not soak the action then put it back into the stock or the excess oil will be soaked up by the wood and cause even more problems later on. As with the forend, it can over a period

cause the stock to split or soften.

Lastly, whatever finish is on your stock, a light wipe over with Boiled Linseed Oil will help keep it in good order and improve its water resistance. Don't forget, after about 10 minutes, buff the oil off or it will dry to a sticky mess.

All of the above should help your gun to not fall foul of this very wet weather

we have been having, but in no way is a substitute for a good, regular service from a competent gunsmith. However it should prevent you spending additional funds correcting rusting or woodwork problems at that time.

Let's hope we have a dry and sunny September and October before the winter is upon us again. ■

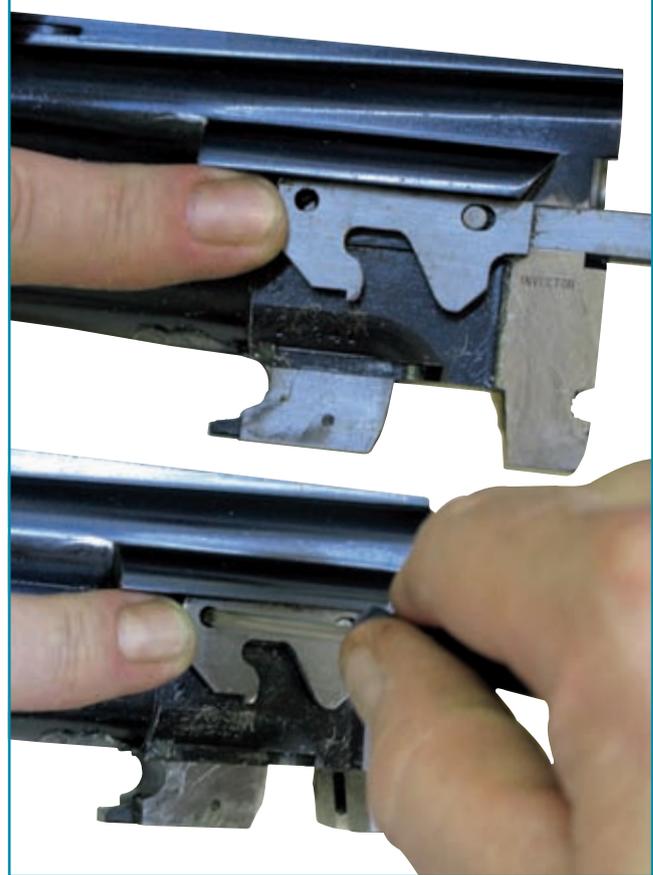
What can Tim Greenwood do for you and your gun?

- Tim offers a full gunfitting service and free help and advice
- He can do anything required to your stock, barrels or action
- He specialises in wooden stock extensions matched to your existing stock
- Tim will also make any specialist parts as required and offers full servicing and maintenance services
- Visit the website: www.greenwoodgunsmiths.co.uk or ask Tim's advice by emailing asktheexperts@blazepublishing.co.uk

The Perazzi has a very similar ejector system, but with stronger springs and a disk retainer. I always find it easiest to push the ejector against the edge of a bench until the disk is exposed.



The Browning/Miroku system is even easier. Lay the gun onto your lap and push the ejector out until you can see the retaining screw in the rear hole of the ejector. Use a small screw driver to undo the screw then turn the barrel over and "wiggle" the ejector until the screw falls out (you can now see why I wear an apron to catch all the bits).



Hook out the disk with either the 2mm plain rod supplied in your spares kit or with a pair of long nose tweezers. As with the Beretta, slowly release the pressure on the ejector and it will slide out from its recess, ready to carry out the cleaning and re-greasing process.



Turn the barrel back over and withdraw the ejector. Once again it is ready for cleaning and re-lubricating. The ejector springs in this case are in the forend and should have a squirt of light oil, but do remove any excess or the forend wood may become soaked in oil and split.

