

# A year in the life...

Top gunsmith **Tim Greenwood** reports on some of his commissions of last year



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

I was recently sent a cartoon from somewhere on the Internet of Batman and Robin. Unfortunately, the language and quality is so poor to publish, but it has Batman smacking Robin in the face with the bubble captions as follows; Robin: "But Tim, I only wanted

my barrels re-blued!" Batman: "shut the \*\*\*\* up, you will have a Jones Adjuster and like it!"

This is why I love clay shooters, what other group could honestly picture me as Batman? It really tickled me, but at the same time made me realise how easy it is for a gunsmith to get allied to just one product, however good it is. Yes, I do champion the Jones adjuster, it is a tremendous piece of kit for those who want to shoot in a more head-up position or have longer necks or higher cheek bones, but it is not the only

way to accomplish this, nor is it the only work I carry out, as regular readers of my articles well know. But, for the individual who sees me in a Batman costume, and for any newcomers, I thought I would start this year with a brief look back at my favourites of last year's work.

January's article saw me start with (you've guessed it) fitting a Jones Adjuster to West Kent Shooting School's Try Gun <sup>(1)</sup>. By the time you read this West Kent will have completed their 100ft tower construction capable of taking up to 12 traps at variable heights to suit both the novice and experienced shooter. It is wonderful to see this ground with such a first class erection and is typical of their investment for shooters, which won them third place in the Clay Shooting magazine poll of best grounds.

I was also challenged with two pairs of Perazzi barrels, which had been run over and needed to be put back to straight and true <sup>(2)</sup> which, with the help of our Kentish barrel maker and my honing machine became as good as new. This was a job I was particularly proud of as the owner also had a bet with me that it couldn't be done. I not only got paid for the job, I also won my bet, which was a great start to the year.

I have always been quite fanatical about how shooters grip their guns, so in the February issue, I wrote about the correct master hand position (right for r/h, left for l/h) and what I consider to be the best grip that can be produced on a shotgun <sup>(3)</sup>. Having the master hand along the side of the gun pointing along its axis towards the muzzle not only helps with natural pointability but also allows the elbow to be raised and form the pocket for the butt to locate into. Having the elbow bent downwards can also restrict the guns mount, causing the gun to mount low in the shoulder which promotes head lift. Many people have visited me and other stock makers who undertake this kind of work to the great benefit of their scores; it is another variable that can be reduced with a little gun fitting.

The March issue saw me giving some advice on information to supply your



1



2



3



# The Gunsmith

gunsmith with should your gun go wrong and how to take your ejectors out to clean them and prevent expensive repairs if you don't, while the April issue gave me the chance to show you some "before's and afters" of stock repairs <sup>(4)(5)</sup>. I always enjoy repairing badly damaged woodwork; let's be honest, you can have the best engraving in the world on your gun, but plain or damaged woodwork will always be noticed by your fellow shooters long before they get close enough to see the engraving. I often think a plain, black action gun with impressive wood work looks better than a highly engraved gun, especially for clay shooting. The plainness of the action really sets off the beauty of the colours in the wood or the contrast in the grain. When someone presents me with their badly broken stock then collects it a few weeks later without a sign of damage, I swear I have seen tears in their eyes.



This was very much the case when I was asked to renovate a Browning 325 12b Grd 6 which had been through a house fire in the August edition <sup>(6)(7)</sup>. As you can see in these pictures and the additional ones published at that time, this was a real challenge; the wood had become super heated and started to char, helped by the stock oil and oil from the hands over 20 years of use. The action and barrels were scorched and the gold amalgam in the engraving had melted and fallen out. It was a real challenge, but the look on the customers face when they came to collect it meant a lot to me.

Over the summer last year in the July, Summer and August issues, I decided to have a play with my old Browning 325, to see if I could turn it in to a gun I could shoot in spite of my neck and shoulder problems. I formed a roll over cheek piece out of layers of veneer, built it up higher and thicker than required then cut and shaped it <sup>(8)</sup>. I extended, fitted a palm swell and cut the grip to form a comfortable anatomical fit <sup>(9)</sup>, then fitted a Gracoil LP adjustable recoil system to the butt before finishing it <sup>(10)</sup>. The gun is perfect for me to shoot as it causes no recoil problems and with the cheek piece, the Gracoil and the hand grip, mounts consistently to the right place. It is unfortunate that I have hardly been able to use it this year due to the kindness of all of you shooters out there who have given me so much of your work to do. I totted it up the other day and I have been fortunate enough to work on over 500 hundred guns in the last year!

The last two pictures brings me back neatly to my opening paragraphs regarding the Jones Adjuster. They show a venerable Browning B1 that I had been asked to fit and restore for a very exacting customer. Being tall with a long neck and high cheek bones, a Jones Adjuster would have been a great help in fitting



the gun to him, but we both agreed it would not suit this gun and with shorter barrels, may have upset the balance. So I hollowed the stock and fitted in pieces of wood to form a monte-carlo type drop, the principal effect of a Jones Adjuster <sup>(11)</sup> and then, with some colour and stains, blended in the alterations to make it look like a custom made stock which could have cost up to £2,500 <sup>(12)</sup>; much more than the value of the gun.

So you see if you want your barrels repaired and blued I will undertake that work for you gladly and there is always an alternative to a Jones Adjuster if you need your gun altered.

P.S. i could never wear a Batman costume; I am sure my legs would look awful in tights. ■



9



10



11



12

## 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](http://www.greenwoodgunsmiths.co.uk) or ask Tim's advice by emailing [asktheexperts@blazepublishing.co.uk](mailto:asktheexperts@blazepublishing.co.uk)