



# SMOKE SIGNAL

**Newsletter of the Alamo Muzzle Loading Gun Club, est. 1964**

20

August

20



The August Board of Directors meeting, discussing the AMLGC range during the current high numbers of Covid-19 cases in nearby Bexar County and other parts of Texas.

*Range News:* It is hot. Über-súper-hot. Triple digit temperatures have scorched the range. The road leading to the gate was repaved recently, although this heat must be bringing some tar up to the surface.

*September family day outing and picnic has been cancelled.* We had a nice July picnic last year, and thought we might do it again this year, but in late September when the temperatures drop to a more pleasant temperature. Unfortunately, given the way things have been going, and the cancelation of kindred National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association and North-South Skirmish Association events, it was thought advisable by the plurality of the officers serving on the Board [see above picture] to cancel the planned event for this year.

The McCullough County, Texas guidelines may end up cancelling the Texas State shoot. Prospective attendees are urged to see if that is the case before they head up that way.

Saturday August 22, 2020 Reenactor Shoot: This is still on. Modify your uniform and equippage accordingly due to the weather, bring plenty of water. But the

reenactor shoot is on schedule. The event gets underway at 8am and should wrap-up at approximately 1pm. Bring your gear and rifle muskets and bone up on Casey's or Hardee's drill.

Civil War Skirmish—Saturday 19 September: Since social distancing at a skirmish is nigh-impossible given that the competing teams are standing cheek by jowl along the firing line, this event will instead be a series of matches by individuals using Civil War-era firearms. There will be a rifle musket match, a breech-loading carbine match, and so on. So get those bullets made, and load up some cartridge tubes, but the team event is a no-go due to the current situation with the pandemic. The writer of this missive, for example, lives in a neighborhood in San Antonio that reports the 8<sup>th</sup> highest infection rate, while just south is the number one district...

Last events of the year: There will be the first Sunday Match on 6 Sep. with animal targets at 25 & 50 yards and a 25-yard pistol match. Now that nutrias have been found in Bexar County, we just might have to go after those critters like in, say, Louisiana—where bounties have been offered for these critters. Future newsletters will post a couple recipes.

The first Sunday in October is the 4<sup>th</sup>. It was mistakenly posted on the website as the "6<sup>th</sup>" but that is not the case. That match will bring out the cross sticks again to shoot at silhouettes at 50 and 100 yards.

The first Sunday in November is actually the first, not the third. That'll be the Thanksgiving turkey shoot! So bring out your cross sticks again, to shoot at targets at 50 and 100 yards. There will also be a 25-yard pistol shoot as well. Lastly, on 6 December we will have our holiday knife shoot with round bull targets at 25 & 50 yards and the last 25-yard pistol match.

#### AUGUST Match Scores

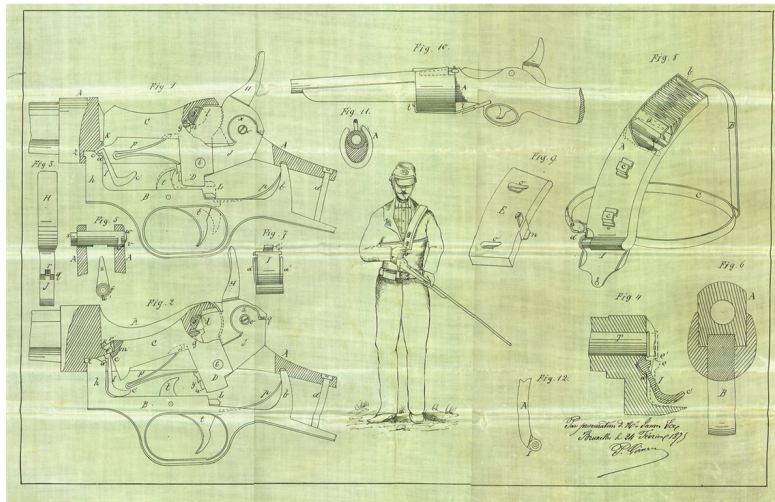
<b>Class A:</b>	50-yd 1-bull	50-yd 6-bull	100-yd 1-bull	100-yd 3-bull
	1. Clif D. 48 2x	1. Dennis R. 46	1. Dennis R. 44	1. Dennis R. 35x
	2. Bill K. 46	2. Clif D. 42	2. Bill K. 41	2. Clif D. 31
	3. Alex M. 44x	3. Bill K. 37	3. Clif D. 40	3. Bill K. 31
<b>Class B:</b>	1. Rich B. 48x	1. Rich B. 42	1. Gary Q. 42	1. Rich B. 40
	2. John B. Sr. 42x	2. Gary Q. 36	2. Rich B. 39	2. Gary Q. 34x
	3. Gary Q. 40	3. John B. Sr. 29	3. Ian S. 34	3. Ian S. 19
<b>Class A agg:</b>	1. Dennis R. 169	2. Clif D. 161 2x	3. Bill K. 155	

**Class B agg:** 1. Rich B. 169x 2. Gary Q. 152x 3. Ian S. 110

**Breech-loading special ahead of 16-17 October 2020 TEXAS SINGLE SHOT  
RIFLE ASSOCIATION FALL MATCH at Dietzville, New Braunfels, TX**



Above: The wonderfully simple single-shot breech-loading action of the Model 1875 Springfield-Lee Vertical Breech—only 143 ever built—patented in 1875. This action could not unseat the Erskine Allin-designed “trapdoor” Springfield mechanism. Starting with the Peabody pivoting block mechanism that is perhaps most famous for its use in the British Martini Henry service rifle, Scottish American designer James Paris Lee developed it such that a blow from the heel of the hand on the back of the hammer would open the action, revealing the chamber. A .45-70 cartridge was introduced into the chamber, and the rim of the cartridge acted on the extractor, pushing it forward, which then automatically closed the breech. Cocking the hammer then locked the action. After firing, the thumb-piece on the hammer was pushed forward again, which opened the breech and ejected the empty cartridge case. It was found to be very rapid in use. Even taking each cartridge out of a cartridge-box, Lee claimed he could fire 30 cartridges in 45 seconds. According to the *Springfield Republican*, Ohio Congressman and ex-General James Garfield examined it in 1874 and pronounced it the best gun he had ever seen. There was no half-cock, so the action was viewed as unsafe. An improved version in 1877 had just 15 parts. By that time, however, the days of the breech-loader were giving way to metallic cartridge repeaters. Lee is most famous for the moniker “Lee-Enfield” and is credited with developing the detachable box magazine. His straight-pull manually-operated bolt-action 6-mm rifle—the Model 1895 Winchester Lee was used by the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps in the War of 1898 and the suppression of the Boxers United in Righteousness Rebellion in China at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, but the cartridge was too hot for the metallurgy of the day and caused excessive bore erosion such that the rifle was withdrawn from service and scrapped.



In addition to the rifle-action patent drawings, Lee designed some snazzy accessories, including a spring-loaded over-the-shoulder-box that would deposit a fresh cartridge at the opening—a box magazine, just not one mounted to the rifle...Yet!

## TEXAS SINGLE SHOT RIFLE ASSOCIATION

FALL MATCH: OCTOBER 16-17, 2020 @ 8:00AM

Old Muzzle Loader Range at Dietzville, on Range Rd. New Braunfels, TX

### COURSE OF FIRE

**ALL MATCHES 10 SHOTS AND RE-ENTRY EXCEPT NOS. #5, #10, #11**

#### 200-YARD Matches:

- #1 Any Sight Bench Rest/ ASSRA Target 5
- #2 Any Sight Offhand/ ASSRA Target 3 or 4
- #3 Iron Sight Bench Rest/ ASSRA Target 3 or 4
- #4 Iron Sight Offhand/ ASSRA Target 3 or 4

Jed Kraai Memorial Aggregate of Match 1 & 3

- #5 Cliff Payne Memorial-1 OH & 1BR

#### 100-YARD Matches:

- #6 Any Sight Bench Rest .22rf/ ASSRA 6-bull
- #7 Any Sight Offhand ASSRA #1 or 1-1/2
- #8 Cowboy Lever ASSRA Target 3 or 4
- #9 Military ASSRA Target 3 or 4

#10 **Chrenscheibe** 1 shot at a painted target 100 and/or 200-yards (Winner provides next year's target).

#11 **100-shot bench rest at 100 or 200-yds. (May be fired over 2 days)**

### SCORING

Rimfire matches are scored to *leaded edge*; Centerfire matches are scored to center of hole *except match #11*. Shots outside scoring rings will be scored by measure down to ten.

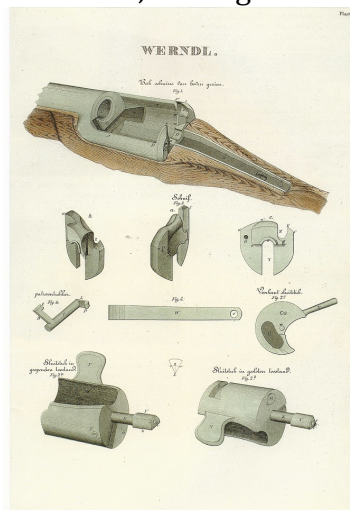
### ACCOMMODATIONS

Snacks provided for lunch. Bring your own drinks, lawn chairs, etc.  
FREE dry camping with outhouses, no electricity.

For more info: Geo. [Harris—georgeharris94@yahoo.com](mailto:georgeharris94@yahoo.com)  
Bill Wimberly [vesperb1941@gmail.com](mailto:vesperb1941@gmail.com) 830.832.8884

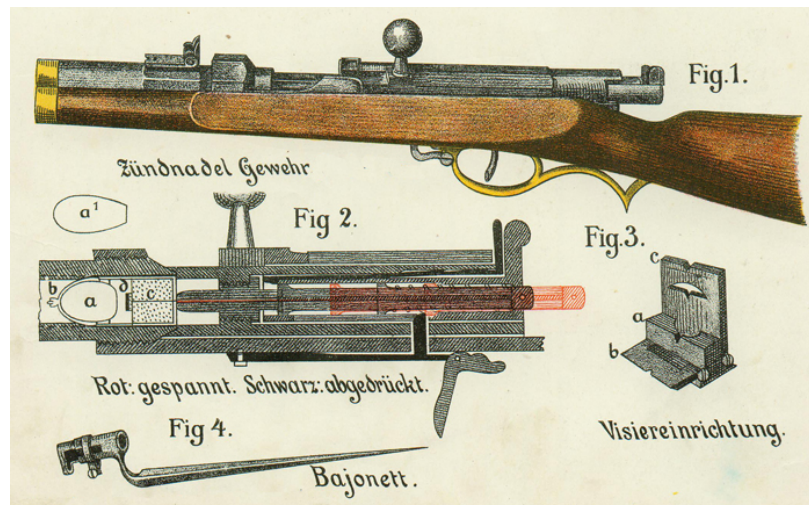


*Source:* The Royal Armouries—National Firearms Ctr. Leeds, UK. The wonderfully simple breech loading action of the Remington rolling block. The hammer is cocked, the breech rolled back to expose the chamber, simultaneously forcing the extractor back, a new cartridge is inserted into the breech, and the chamber rolled forward to close. On firing, the articulated block that mounts the hammer under-rides the breech block, locking the action.

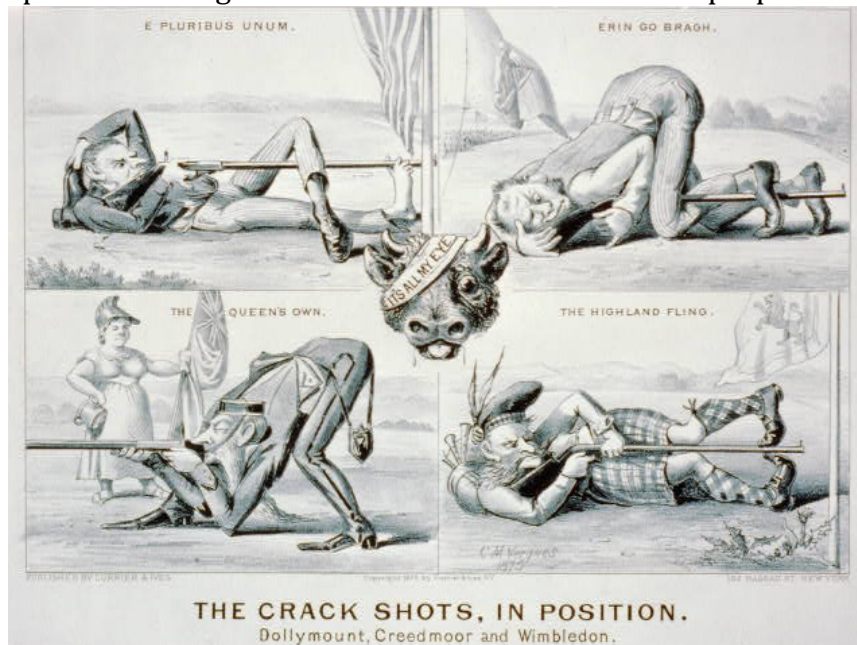




The Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian army, having received a bloody drubbing at the hands of Prussia in 1866 while their infantry were equipped with the M1854 Lorenz muzzle loading rifle while the Preußen used the Dreyse needle-fire paper-cartridge breech loader, adopted the Werndl-Holub action breech loader designed by Josef Werndl and Karel Holub, pictured above. This used a fairly typical side lock firing mechanism, but employed a unique breech mechanism that rolled from left to right to open, revealing a groove cut into the underside such that a cartridge could be slid down it into the chamber.



The relatively unsophisticated paper cartridge breech-loading **Preußen Dreyse Zündnadel Gewehr** allowed that German state to defeat Denmark, Austria-Hungary and France (equipped with the similar-if-improved Chassepot rifle) in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. On firing, a needle punches through the paper base and powder charge to strike a percussion cap at the back of the bullet. Extra needles had to be carried by a soldier so equipped, but it was a fairly rapid system, if subject to the same black powder fouling issues as other arms that used the propellant.



*Source: Library of Congress.* In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the days before the willful misuse of rifle ranges to build *golf courses*, long-range rifle marksmanship was a very popular sport. The Creedmore matches in particular elicited a lot of sports readership and a keen sense of rivalry. The winning score was frequently claimed by a marksman who employed a supine shooting position, which often edged out prone shooters. This cartoon lampoons some of the firing positions, showing a North American, Irish, British, and Scots shooter vying for the top score and winning prize.

Clif Denny, the match chair on the Board of Directors, was tinkering with his ~~trash door spring~~ loose *ahem* Trapdoor Springfield/ Allin-Springfield .45-70 rifle and thought he'd share this fascinating article about the Sandy Hook Tests of 1879, in which one R. T. Hare of Springfield Armory in Massachusetts made hits on a 6' diameter bulls-eye at 2,500 yards with thee different rifles—including the Allin-Springfield with its 7-pound trigger!—and another hit at 3,200 yards with only the muzzle supported, and the butt clutched under the arm to use the extreme range fold up *iron sights*.

W. John Farquharson, “.45-70 at Two Miles: The Sandy Hook Tests of 1879” *Rifle Magazine* (Nov-Dec. 1977): <http://usarmorment.com/pdf/45-70.pdf>

Wishing you all best in health,  
AMLGC Secretary---D. Carlson.