

JOHN M. TAYLOR

PERFECT PRACTICE

New gadgets make it easy to practice your shotgun mount and swing without even leaving home.



The LaserShooter (shown here with the White Lightning Target Projector) allows you to practice your gun mount and swing with an unloaded gun. Trigger a red laser to see where your shot would have gone.

It's cold and raining today, so there goes my trip to the range. Still, I can do some meaningful shotgun practice work at home. Colleagues have noticed my right hand creeping into my gun mount—not much, but any is a real problem. The leading hand should push the gun to the target, and any time the trigger hand does anything more than ride along, it causes problems.

The purpose of a good gun mount is to bring the muzzles onto the flight path of the target, be it clay or feathered, so a good shot can be made. By staying on the flight path we automatically take out the chance of shooting either over or under the bird, and have only to concentrate on being in front of it.

It can be beautiful to watch a truly fine shooter's oily-slick mount moving along the target's path and concluding in a seemingly effortless shot.

The way to develop this mount is easy: Practice makes perfect. Top shooters practice their gun mount several times a day. Most of us don't have the luxury of having our shotgun where we work, but we can take a few minutes at night and/or in the morning to practice our mount.

A great trick I've mentioned before is inserting a Mini MagLite in the muzzle of an unloaded shotgun—AA-battery

size for the 12-gauge and the AAA model for the 20-gauge—and using the light beam as a guide for mount-and-swing drills. Begin pointing with a good ready position with the muzzles about eye level and the butt just below the armpit, then push the leading hand out just enough so that the butt follows. Start with the light focused on the corner of a room and bayonet it into the corner. Once you've perfected a solid move right into the corner with no bobbing up and down of the light, then practice mounting and tracking an imaginary target along the wall/ceiling seam.

What is missing is a way to also fire the gun. That's where the LaserShooter from Robert Louis Company comes in. More costly than a MagLite, it also offers a lot more. It's a laser that inserts into the muzzle of an unloaded shotgun, and when you want to take the shot, a triggering device mounted on a band on your trigger finger fires the laser, showing you exactly where you shot. Louis makes an all-gauge set for those who want to practice with shotguns other than the 12, and the new version has a switch that turns on the laser. The original version had an adjustable metal ring that attached to your trigger finger. When you wanted to make the shot, you touched the trigger or trigger guard and the laser illuminated. Problem is that many new

Cover That Eye

Have eye dominance problems? Right-handed and left-eye-dominant? Try the Dominant Eye Piece Flip Up from Range Sports in England. Around \$20 via air mail, it clips to the top of your shooting glasses, and is worn flipped up until it's time to shoot, then flip it down to cover that pesky dominant eye. Find it at www.rangesports.com; look under "Shooting Glasses."—J.M.T.

repeaters—Benelli, Beretta, Remington, for example—use polymer trigger guards that don't conduct electricity. This new version has a micro-switch in the finger ring that, when compressed against the trigger, activates the laser.

Complementing the LaserShooter is the White Lightning Target Projector. This gadget sits on a table supported by the supplied tripod—it's easier to use a standard photo tripod—and projects moving laser targets on any clear wall. The angle and speed of the targets can be




The Lasershooter works with any shotgun.

infinitely varied by tilting the unit. Yes, this gadget will show skeet and trap doubles plus sporting clay chandelles, springing teal, and overhead driven birds.

The nice thing about the LaserShooter is that you can trigger it at various points in your practice to see that you are indeed tracking along the wall/ceiling joint, etc. If you add the target projector, you never have to miss a day of practice, even when it's raining.

Shifting gears, this past weekend I received my National Sporting Clays Level-One Instructor's certification from John Alexander, a well-known Virginia clays instructor. The most important thing I learned, and I learned a lot, was to keep things simple. So often when we start trying to teach someone how to shoot, we deluge them with all manner of information. It's like a rocket scientist telling us that the ignition of the rocket creates X number of pounds of thrust, pushing the million-pound rocket up at

a specific angle, etc., when all we really need to know is that fire shoots out of the tail and it goes up. The same is true with shooting.

I found that discussing lead with a beginner makes very little sense to them, but showing them a slow, incoming target that lands a few feet from them, or a straight-away low-seven skeet target that they can break, brings excitement and the desire to break another. Once successful, move them a few feet to the side and say, "Now shoot a little in front of it." By then, they have become comfortable with the gun and seen a target break by shooting right at it. They have begun to understand the barrel/target relationship, and are ready to progress to the next step. 

For information on the LaserShooter and White Lightning Target Projector, contact Robert Louis Company at 800/979-9156, www.robertlouisco.com.