

Frivolous Fun with Precocious Pistols

Serious target shooters might consider it blasphemous to utilize the tools of ten-meter competition for FUN! But never the least bit attracted to the psychological abuse I imagine ten-meter competition to be, I do find many of the pistols employed irresistible.

Olympic-level competitors justifiably demand top-of-the-line European pre-charged pneumatics, but any number of less-precious PCP, single-stroke pneumatic and 'obsolete' Co2 target pistols can serve excellent and diverse duty in the hands of mere mortals. It's hard to imagine any handgunner not appreciating the performance of a ten-meter gun when employed for precision perforation of more gratifying targets than paper bulls-eyes; such targets ranging from insects to small-game, and bottle caps to beer cans.

No other pistol type so effectively removes all excuses by empowering the shooter with the finest ergonomic interface, awesome balance, telepathic trigger-action and uncanny accuracy than a ten-meter air pistol. Just as one needn't be Hugh Hefner to appreciate the allure of a fine female form, one needn't be a ten-meter stiff to appreciate the endowments of a fine target pistol. Thankfully not all examples cost a Playboy's fortune, and the careful shopper might uncover a bargain in a past-her-prime 'model'.

My first ten-meter pistol was a Beeman/FWB Model 65 recoilless springer. Nice as it was, power was considerably below the good doctor's claims and I was unwilling to deface the piece to mount optics. That being before I'd developed the skills and conscience for humane small-game hunting with an air pistol, I plunked a Silver Jet into the chest of a squirrel that took 30 seconds to expire; about 29.9 seconds slower than I can abide since my skills and empathos have matured to a level more befitting my age.



The Feinwerkbau 65 was a wonderment of engineering and recoilless spring-gun firing behavior.

In a short-sighted slight to sportsmen and silhouette shooters, most ten-meter pistols are not easily scoped; something of a catch-22 given their incredible accuracy potentials. However, where there's a will, there can sometimes be found a way.

Though it often seems mounting a scope might require drilling and tapping of an expensive piece, various clamp-on mounts intended for entirely different applications can sometimes be used to scope a recoilless airgun. A myriad of flashlight and laser-sight mounts can sometimes be used for 'creative scoping'. Many mounts are available from many sources. The best selection and prices are found on the internet machine, prices typically ranging from \$2 to \$15 per mount (sometimes including shipping from as far away as *China*). At such prices, an assortment of promising-looking mounts can be squirreled away in a cubby-hole marked 'creative mounts', to scope the unscopeable.

Not to suggest optical sights are always to be preferred, or that iron-sighted ten-meter guns aren't also a thrill a minute. Certainly they are! In fact the iron sights used on ten-meter pistols are the best, most adjustable and precise iron sights to be found on a pistol. Combined with superior triggers, ergonomics and inherent accuracy, precision pistol work can be accomplished to defy the imagination (and previous abilities of the shooter). The crisp sight-picture and long sight-radius of ten-meter pistols also seem less vulnerable to lighting variables than other open sights; but of course not immune. Iron-sight results vary greatly with available light (angle and intensity), but not to such extremes with ten-meter pistols. Nevertheless, your results will vary (with lighting).

Unfortunately experience proves what can be described as sporting challenge in the right hands too often becomes cruel stunt when attempted by the wrong hands. While it is an entirely sporting proposition for an experienced air pistol competitor to humanely harvest squirrel or rabbit by employing carefully selected brain shots, too regularly do the airgun forums bear 'graphic' display to the antics of nimrods wondering why chest-shot game doesn't instantly flop over dead. However I digress.

For the air-oriented handgun hunter, ten-meter pistols are the ideal choice for delivering meager amounts of energy to such challenging targets as squirrel and rabbit noggins. As little as 3 to 4 properly-delivered foot-pounds equals a humane lights-out for such small game. This esoteric pursuit is not for everyone; especially not those disposed to blood-sport excess. However, for the sportsman looking to put the hunt back in hunting and willing to accept the handicap of just enough power to do the job if the hunter has skills enough to do his, air pistol small game hunting can be intensely gratifying.

A nice ten-meter pistol can be an excellent tool for the job 'at hand'.



Poetic justice! - Unfortunately a well-placed JSB from the snakeskin Tau 7 arrived too late to save my prized bull-frog from this glutton. Though non-poisonous, these water snakes are aggressive and efficient predators! Think a squirrel's brain is a small target from offhand?