

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

From the thousands of questions and letters on guns, ammunition and their use that the *American Rifleman* receives every year, it publishes here the most interesting. Receiving answers to technical and historical questions is a privilege reserved to NRA Members.

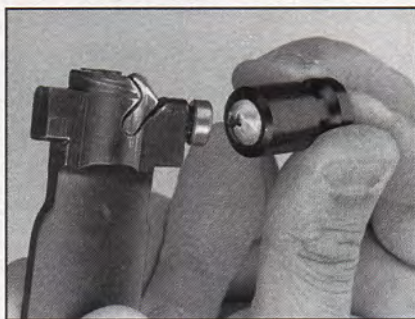
Questions must be in the form of letters addressed to **Dope Bag, NRA Publications, 11250 Waples Mill Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030**, must contain the member's code line from an *American Rifleman* or *American Hunter* mailing label or membership card; must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed, legal-sized envelope, and must be limited to one specific question per letter. Non-members may submit a question with membership application. **We regret that we cannot answer technical or historical questions by telephone or fax, and that we cannot place even an approximate value on guns or other equipment of any description.**

M14/M1A BOLT ROLLER GREASER

Q I've been told that the bolt roller on my M1A rifle should be greased occasionally, but mine has no grease fitting. How do I do this?

A Grease can perhaps best be applied to the roller and its lug on the bolt body when the bolt is detail stripped, but removal and reinstallation of bolt rollers should generally be done only with the proper tools by a qualified gunsmith.

Greasing the roller in the field or on the firing line can be done by working grease between the roller and its lug with the fingers—an awkward, messy process. Badger Ordnance (Dept. AR, Box 3277, Rapid City, SD 57709-3277), makers of tools and parts for M14/M1A and M16/AR-15 rifles, as well as complete guns, has recently introduced a new product that promises to make this job easier. Badger's M14/M1A Bolt Roller Greaser



is a short synthetic cylinder having at one end a 1/4"-deep cup dimensioned to fit snugly over the bolt roller.

To use it, first remove the bolt from the rifle. Then fill the cup about 3/4 full with grease, and press the roller into the cup, forcing the grease into the space between the roller and its lug. When grease flows out the back of the roller, remove the Bolt Roller Greaser, wipe off any excess grease, and reinstall the bolt. Proper lubrication is important to reliable functioning of the M1A in competition—S.L.W.

SKEET VS. TRAP WOOD

Q I have heard that all the big manufacturers reserve the best wood for their trap shotguns because trapshooters are more affluent. Is there any truth to this?

A This is a piece of folk wisdom that has been passed on for years that needs to be put to rest. We posed the question to a top Remington plant executive who said he'd often heard it, too.

The truth is, at Remington anyway, that no differentiation is made between trap and skeet wood. Our source speculated that good wood turns up more on trap guns than skeet guns simply because they outnumber skeet guns by about four or five to one.—R.W.H.

CROATIAN 20 MM RIFLE

Q I recently saw a TV news report in which a Croatian soldier was firing what the reporter called a "20 mm rifle" at Serbian enemies. Surely he meant .20 cal., though the gun was quite large. What could this arm have been?

A *International Defense Review* recently reported on an unusual 20 mm rifle developed by the very active Croatian arms industry.

Various 20 mm anti-tank rifles like the Lahti, Madsen and Solothurn were made up through World War II. But as tanks became heavier and more thickly armored during that war, shoulder-fired anti-tank rifles were replaced by cannon and weapons like the bazooka, the British PIAT or German *Panzerfaust*.

The Croatian RT-20 is not intended for taking on tanks like previous generations of 20 mm rifles, but rather for shooting at trucks, airplanes, helicopters or other high-value but lightly armored targets at ranges up to 2000 meters. It fires a 2160-gr. projectile at almost 2800 f.p.s.

Recoil could be truly grim, even given

SMOKESTACK JAMS

Q I sometimes hear fellow shooters refer to something called a "smokestack" jam with automatic pistols. Could you explain what a smokestack jam is and what causes it?

A A smokestack jam is a condition in which a fired case becomes trapped upright between the returning slide and the chamber opening. In this position, the case mouth points upwards resembling a chimney or "smokestack" sticking out of the top of the gun. There are many possible causes for this type of malfunction, though they can most often be traced to an underloaded cartridge failing to fully cycle the action, a dirty and sluggish gun or a bent or broken ejector. If you experience repeated smokestack jams with a particular type or brand of ammunition, try another before seeking the help of a qualified gunsmith.—S.E.M.

A "smokestack" jam is a very common failure in semi-automatic pistols and can indicate any of a variety of problems with the pistol itself or with ammunition.

