



"The wildlife of today is not ours to dispose of as we please. We have it in trust. We must account for it to those who come after."
KING GEORGE VI

SHOOTING TIMES

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Photo courtesy of P. Hofer-Jagdewaffen



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COVER STORY

PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Geoffrey Boothroyd presents the gunmaking achievements of Austrian master craftsman Peter Hofer

IT IS now some four years since I shared the pleasure of looking at some sporting rifles by Peter Hofer with you. The response at that time to the artistry of this young gunmaker was such that I made a promise to myself that I would ask Peter to let me see more of his work. To my delight, this has been possible.

Peter, now in his thirties, runs one of the smallest gunmaking workshops in Ferlach, which is a

few miles south of Klagenfurt. He first came to my attention when a group of European gunmakers saw his work at an international trade exhibition some years ago and told me of their admiration for his work. Praise from fellow gunmakers is high praise indeed.

Peter Hofer attended the famous school of gunmaking in Ferlach, gaining his diploma at the age of 21 in 1979. He set up in business on his

own in 1986 and recruited a team of specialists including some of the world's finest engravers.

Since then the work of Peter Hofer and his small team of craftsmen has been seen at exhibitions in Brussels, Paris and in Nuremberg, as well as in Dallas and Las Vegas, United States. His work has been admired within the pages of sporting magazines in many countries.

The materials employed to make the guns are of the highest quality; the steel for the barrels is bought by Gunmaker's Co-operative from the famous steel makers Bohler and the wood for the stocks is of exhibition quality in terms of colour and figure.

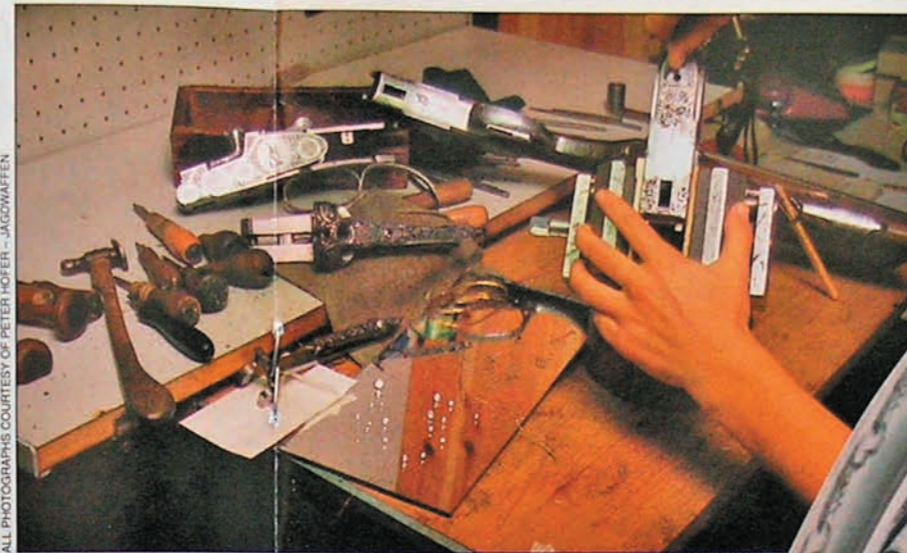
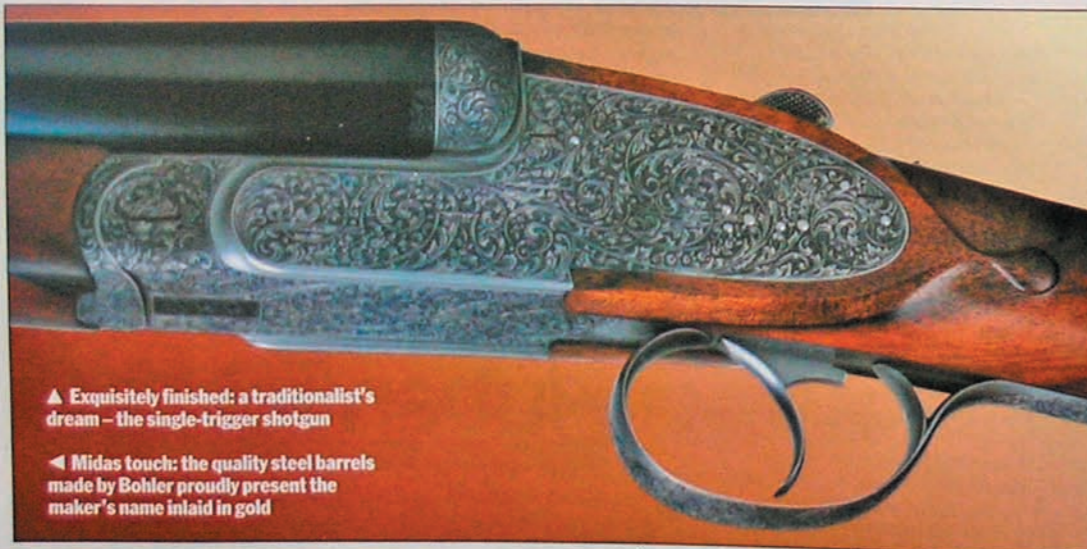
Hofer shotguns are made in 12, 16 and 20-bore, while stock shape and dimensions are to the customer's wishes. Rifles are a

◀ Work of art: Hofer guns are engraved by some of the world's best craftsmen



▲ Exquisitely finished: a traditionalist's dream - the single-trigger shotgun

◀ Midas touch: the quality steel barrels made by Bohler proudly present the maker's name inlaid in gold



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF PETER HOFER - JAGDWAFEN

◀ Perfection in the making: the delicate art of setting gold inlay

▼ Proud portrait: the pistol grip cap of this single hi-power rifle is magnificently finished

speciality as they are available in a range of more than 100 calibres in single shot, side-by-side, or over and under formats. In the European tradition, combination rifle/shotgun weapons are also built.

Unique creation

A LIST of prosaic specifications would serve little purpose, since the products of the Hofer workshop are individual creations of both the gunmakers and engravers as well as the customer. The result of this collaboration is something personal and unique.

It is equally difficult to provide details of the cost. I suppose the answer is that if you have to ask the price then you cannot afford it!

If, like me, you cannot, take pleasure and satisfaction from looking at the illustrations which, better than words, express something of the quality and superb craftsmanship which can only be truly appreciated with the gun in your hands.

If, on the other hand, you have won the pools, then the address of the maker of this magnificence is: P. Hofer-Jagdwaffen, A-9170 Ferlach, F. Lang-Str 13, Austria. Telephone 010 43 4227 3683.



◀ Wooden splendour: the finest materials are used for the stocks



Peter Hofer

Ferlach-Austria