

Take-Down African Shooting Sticks

A consumer review just in time for Christmas

By Randy Rieman

One of my favorite images is an oil painting by Howard Terpening entitled “The Long Shot.” It depicts three plains Indians sitting on a grassy hillside, one of whom has a Sharps buffalo rifle shouldered and nestled into the fork of two crossed arrows.

It’s a beautiful painting with a practical message – use a steady stick for a long shot. It’s also a reminder that “shooting sticks” are nothing new.

The folks at Sporting Woods Creations have been making fine shooting sticks and other “safari-inspired items” for years. A welcome addition to their product list is the new “take-down” version of their best quality shooting sticks.

The “sticks” are still made of premium hickory but now feature a high-strength aluminum take-down connector in the center of each piece. This means your 70-inch shooting sticks can now simply be unscrewed to 36-inch lengths, which not only allows you to use them from a kneeling or sitting position but also makes them much easier to stow in your luggage or rifle case when traveling.

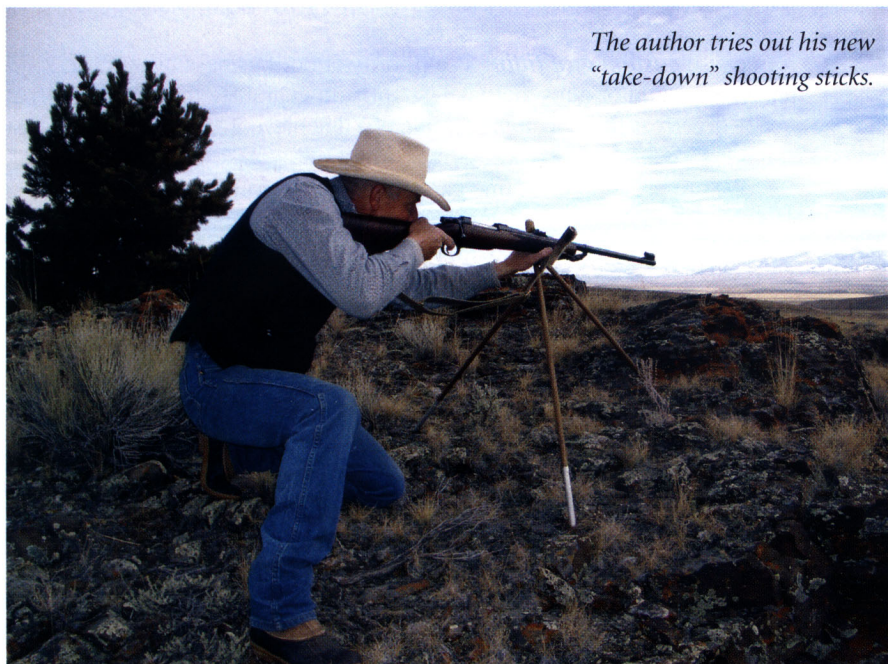
These shooting sticks are well constructed. The premium hickory shafts are perfectly fitted to the non-reflective aluminum take-down connector. The connector’s screw joint is engineered for strength and longevity and has a rubber gasket that prevents the joint from



vibrating loose when assembled. The sticks come with three screw-in inserts you can use to keep the connector channel free of obstructions if you are using only the top portion.

The sticks are held fast at the point where they cross by a strong nylon stretch cord that is effective and durable. The top six inches of the sticks are padded with zebra, fallow deer, Cape buffalo hide or rubber to help minimize unwanted dings in the fore stock of your rifle. The whole package comes in a safari green Red Oxx carrying case with the Sporting Wood Creations logo.

I am definitely not a “gadget guy.” I like traveling light with as little “equipment” as necessary, but these shooting sticks make the cut. I like that they are made of wood which will, with use and time, take on the warm patina of a well-used tool. I also like the fact that they are a simple and practical solution to the centuries-old dilemma of securing a “steady hold” with a favorite rifle for “the long shot.”



The author tries out his new “take-down” shooting sticks.