One of the most common questions I receive on the phone and at the test range is "What is your cleaning procedure?"

I will share what we do and why. At the range, we clean after every 90-100 rounds. I do not have any of the data, but the engineers from Eley tell me that clean guns shoot better than dirty guns. They get this opinion from all of the data collected from the three Eley Test Ranges. They keep the test information from every rifle that has ever been tested in an Eley Test Range. When testing a rifle we note when we clean the rifle and data is collected on the fouling shots. They have crunched the numbers from this information and come to the conclusion that cleaning is a good thing for rimfire barrels. I have also drawn the same conclusion from my experience shooting benchrest. It has been my experience that every barrel loses accuracy once it becomes dirty, the point at which it loses accuracy is different for each barrel. Almost all of the competitions across rimfire whether 3-P, Benchrest, or Silhouette require somewhere between 25-100 shots before a competitor can easily clean their rifle. I also have not personally seen a rifle that could not shoot at least 100 rounds before losing accuracy due to fouling. So, we settled on 90-100 rounds in between cleanings.

Now part 2, how do we actually clean. We use a bore guide that fits the cleaning rod tightly and the bore guide does not go all the way to the barrel, it stops at the loading ramp. I like to see the rod as it goes into the barrel so I can verify that it is going down the center of the barrel. I use a Kleen Bore Jag because it is the same diameter as my cleaning rod, we use Pro-Shot 1 1/8" square cleaning patches, and we use Pro-Shot 1-Step Solvent. I push one wet patch down the barrel and remove the patch at the muzzle. I then use a Short 10" cleaning rod with a .22 caliber Nylon brush and I scrub the first 2-3" of the barrel with a back and forth motion for about 10 strokes. This is to remove the combustion ring. I then push more wet patches until they come out clean. Typically this is about 4 patches. If we are still shooting the rifle, then I finish with a dry patch. If we are finished shooting, then I finish with a wet patch. I have bore scoped many .22 barrels and I have not found one yet that the nylon brush would not remove the combustion ring. In the past, I used a bronze brush, JB Bore Cleaner, or Iosso polish. They

will remove combustion ring, but JB and Iosso are both removing metal from the barrel. They are removing very, very, little metal, but they are removing some. I do not believe the bronze brush will damage the barrel, but many people do not like to use bronze brushes on rimfire barrels. Now the Nylon brush could not possibly damage the barrel and I know it is getting the job done, so that is what I use.

Also, if you are testing your rifle with us and you have a different cleaning regimen, we will be happy to follow it for your rifle. It is your rifle, and we will do everything we can to accommodate you.

I hope you find this information helpful. Perhaps it is not the best cleaning regimen, but it has served me well. We only shoot lead bullets and the forces for a rimfire are not what a centerfire rifle is subjected to. Cleaning the rimfire is relatively easy and can be done in just a couple of minutes and I think it is extremely beneficial for accuracy. If you are not currently cleaning your rifle on a regular basis, I strongly urge you to do so.

Until Next Time,

Dan Killough