

THE BLACK POWDER SHOOTING UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Formerly The Historical Firearms Shooting Union Founded in 1958



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Affiliated to:

MUZZLE LOADER ASSOCIATIONS' INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

SOUTH AFRICAN BISLEY UNION (SABU)

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NEWSFLASH NO 7 OF 2016 NEW SPORTING BLACK POWDER IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dear BPSU members

After 3 years of planning, negotiations, developments, etc. the final product has arrived. As you all know by now, Obatex, a company outside Rustenburg, was eventually awarded the necessary permits to locally manufacture sporting Black Powder. This will be the only option for the survival of Black Powder shooting in SA. AEL, the previous importer, was not prepared to continue supply due to the high cost involved. The owner of this new company had to build a new factory and had all the machines developed and manufactured to suit this endeavour. Lots of time and money went into development of the product with various experts. The current Management Committee of the BPSU had been involved with the testing and other input from the very early stages on invitation by the owner to ensure a great product for all our shooting needs.

All the previous developments were done on small scale in the Obatex laboratory. After the last test we asked him to attempt to lift the ignition speed and velocity quite substantially. The final small scale tests were conducted on the shooting range by Black powder Protea shooters Merwe van Rensburg, Shaun Kennedy and Chris van Gaalen. The results were very promising and as we were satisfied, the first normal scale batch was made in the factory two weeks ago. Please keep in mind that there was probably going to be a difference in the results between a small handmade product in a laboratory compared to a full run in a factory.

The owner and his partner drove to Cape Town on his own cost last Thursday to deliver it to us and be present for our final test. We spent the past weekend doing extensive tests with a wide range of firearms. These were done by 3 Black Powder Protea team members and 2 WP team members together with the manufacturers. Pieter Truter, Corena de Beer, Johan Truter and Wilfred Anderson shot their firearms under guidance of Johan de Beer (Protea Long Range Team Captain). Another Protea shooter, Andre Stander, did the same test on another range with his Gibbs and recorded his results. We do not wish to prescribe to anyone how to shoot their black powder rifles, but we need to share an overview of the results. We did general comparisons to other powder, but did not have time to do load developments, as each shooter will have to do this for their own firearms in any event.

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The main result is that the powder is really good and performed exceptionally well. Probably due to our request for faster powder, this powder is now extremely fast. The ignition speed is the fastest I have seen compared to any other black powder. The velocity is also a lot faster than any other powder previously available.

We tested and compared the new powder to Swiss 1½ F, Swiss FFF, Wano FF and Wano FFF. As we never shot Sanadex under MLAIC rules, we did not compare that. This powder is a lot cleaner than Wano and probably Swiss as well with less fouling. It also works perfectly with standard as well as magnum caps.

In comparison to weight and volume it was clear that Obatex is as a general rule a lot faster than Wano and Swiss. **No more than 55% of your loads for Swiss or 50% for Wano should be shot with this Obatex. If the same equivalent by weight is used, the velocity is much too high and the extremely fast ignition will burn through the nipple very quickly, leading to other possible damage on your firearms.**

We simply used the loads that the owners of the 7 firearms tested normally use and compared it with the 3 powders by weight and volume. A summary of the results are as follows:

1. Revolver:

Average speed for Obatex FFF was 180 f/s faster than Swiss FFF and 240 f/s faster than Wano FFF with the same weight load.

The extreme spread for 5 shot group was 28f/s.

2. Single Shot Pistol:

Average speed for Obatex FFF was 220 f/s faster than Swiss FFF and 260 f/s faster than Wano FFF with the same weight load.

The extreme spread for 5 shot group was 41 f/s.

3. Ferriss .40 cal Match Rifle with 400 gr Paperpatch Bullet:

70 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 1 280 f/s, and 70 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 400 f/s.

50 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 1 030 f/s, and 50 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 227 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (28 gr) the average speed was 1 020 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 12 f/s.

4. Ferriss .45 cal Match Rifle with 600 gr Paperpatch Bullet:

90 gr Swiss 1½ F – avg speed 1 260 f/s, 105 gr Wano FF – avg speed 1 200 f/s and 90gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 450 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (50gr) the average speed was 1 190 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 29 f/s.

5. Pedersoli Gibbs .45 cal Match Rifle with 600 gr Paperpatch Bullet:

90 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 1 200 f/s, 105 gr Wano FF – avg speed 1 180 f/s and 90 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 420 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (50 gr) the average speed was 1 180 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 38 f/s.

6. Pedersoli Gibbs .45 cal Match Rifle with 398 gr Lube Bullet:

40 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 953f/s and 40 gr Obatex – avg speed 1 152 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (23 gr) the average speed was 920 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 21 f/s.

7. Zouave .577 cal Military Rifle with 590 gr Lube Bullet:

55 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 968 f/s and 55 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 189 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (30 gr) the average speed was 852 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 7 f/s.

8. Zoli .577 cal Military Rifle with 281 gr Round Patch & Ball:

75 gr Wano FF – avg speed 1 109 f/s and 75 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 528 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (41 gr) the average speed was 1 180 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 38 f/s.

9. Lyman .50 cal Deerstalker Rifle with 394 gr Lube Bullet:

55 gr Swiss 1½F – avg speed 1 111 f/s and 55 gr Obatex FF – avg speed 1 329 f/s. With the equivalent volume of Obatex FF (30 gr) the average speed was 960 f/s with extreme spread for a 5 shot group of only 13 f/s.

The original tests done in Gauteng with a pistol, revolver and Gibbs rifle produced similar results.

Due to the huge success with the powder and the tests it was agreed that the first batch will be sold by City Guns in Cape Town. It was delivered in bottles of 500 grams each and there are 13 kg of FF and 4 kg of FFF. Thanks to Martin who agreed to store the powder for us to test and we managed to negotiate with him that this Black Powder will be sold for **R400 per 500 gram**. There is huge interest for this, so it will be sold to the first customers as from Tuesday morning. I suspect it will be sold out in a few minutes as I cannot ask him to hold some for all the requests I already had. You need to provide your Black Powder permit as well as your ID to Martin (every time) when you buy Black Powder.

The manufacturer will take these results and do the necessary adjustments and the final product will be available very soon in those gun shops dealing with Black Powder. We will inform all in due course.

I cannot thank the manufacturers from Obatex enough for his commitment and willingness to assist us with developing and supplying probably one of the best sporting Black Powders in the world. Let us ensure we support them by buying and shooting lots more as we will soon have very affordable

black powder readily available. This should be the biggest boom in Black powder shooting, so get your friends to start taking out their rifles and getting ready to join and shoot a lot.

Please remember to only load 50% of what you were used to and be safe.

Kind regards

MR JOHAN DE BEER

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