

TACTICAL GEAR DIGITAL

VANG COMP IMPROVES THE 870

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TACTICAL GEAR

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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Taking On A New Age

DOING SOMETHING NEW IS ALWAYS A CHALLENGE. BUT WE ACCEPT THAT CHALLENGE TO GIVE YOU THE INFORMATION IN ANY FORM YOU WANT IT. This is no place to start a long discussion on the changes in the publishing industry, except for how those changes will impact the readers of *Tactical Gear Magazine*... which is something you are not holding right now.

This is *Tactical Gear Digital*; an entirely new direction in the distribution of information about self-defense products. We understand that some readers want to hold a paper copy of the magazine, so we will keep doing that. In fact we are expanding the number of times we put that paper product on the newsstand. But we are also catering to those who want instant digital gratification, interactive options and cool features like video and such. *Tactical Gear Digital* will give you all that in an easy-to-use format that allows you to decide what, where and when you read.

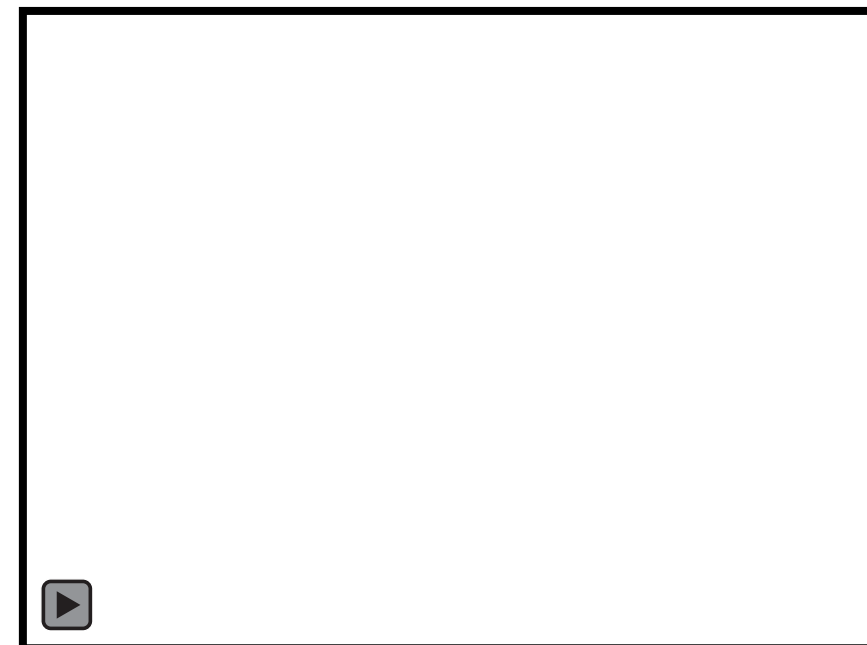
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This is just a sample of the changes that are to come. Each edition of *Tactical Gear Digital* will grow and and change to better serve your needs. We are trying something new and we'd love to hear what you think about it.

Stay Safe,

Kevin Michalowski
Editor, *Tactical Gear Magazine*

*You don't pick the day.
The day picks you.*



(Note: To view the video above you need to have the latest version (9.2) of Adobe Reader installed. To download Adobe Reader 9.2 Click here: <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Vang Comp System improves the 870

By Rich Grassi

This newly finished (in DuraCoat) Remington 870 has LPA Precision Ghosting night sights, the Vang Comp System barrel treatment, a SureFire Weapon Light forend, and the Advanced Technology Six-Position stock.

The RMP Speckle Gray finish even highlights the front sight protective wings. The Vang Comp barrel ports improve buckshot patterns, cut down on recoil and minimize muzzle flash.

The Vang/RMP 870 has the Vang Comp extended safety (button behind the trigger guard) and Advanced Technology stock. The finish is DuraCoat by RMP Gunworks.

The Remington Model 870 is by far the most common police/defense pump shotgun still in use today. While it's not new technology, it has its advantages.

The problem with using the shotgun for tactical applications is precisely what we – earlier in my career – thought the advantage was. That is the ammunition. If you use buckshot, it's likely a pellet will blow free from the pattern even at distances less than 15 yards. That pellet is a “miss” on the range. On the street, in a house, in a school, that “miss” becomes an “unintentional hit.” As we're accountable for every projectile that leaves the muzzle of the gun, that unintended hit becomes a personal tragedy and the highway to liability.

Fixing the Problem

We can horse around with ammunition. If the stray pellet bothers you, it's said, go to a slug.

This single 1-ounce projectile will perforate many things, making it a nice ammunition item to have when the bad guy takes cover. Unfortunately, it can also penetrate things to hit innocents we can't see. The 12-gauge slug may also perforate the human adversary and continue on with enough power to hurt someone downrange.

There are better loads for tactical use. These include the Remington Low Recoil line of slugs and buckshot as well as the Federal Tactical line and the CCI-Lawman brand of slugs and buckshot.

Out of most cylinder bore barrels, the low-recoil stuff throws better patterns. There is still some concern if the barrel isn't properly cleaned. What's the solution?

Vang Comp Systems

The Vang Comp barrel treatment is a product of years of gunsmithing experience. Hans Vang developed a system of lengthening the shotgun barrel's forcing cone and back-boring the barrel to give buckshot a smooth trip to the muzzle. In addition, he cuts compensating ports through the barrel. The porting is optimized for barrel length and prevents expanding gasses from blowing through the shot column, spoiling the pattern. Not only that, the Vang Comp ports reduce the more abusive aspects of shotgun recoil. It also tends to lessen muzzle flash.

Now, that's tactical! While there is no black ballistic nylon fabric or hook-and-loop fastener fabric in the Vang Comp barrel system, it's as tactical as you can get. I've had experience with the system since the late 1990s. I've never seen a bad job come out of that shop.

Apparently the Vang Comp System is finding favor among turkey hunters as

The Vang/RMP 870 has the Vang Comp extended safety (button behind the trigger guard) and Advanced Technology stock. The finish is DuraCoat by RMP Gunworks.

The SureFire Weaponlight Forend features a six-volt light, a constant-on switch and a system-disable switch.

The Advanced Technology Collapsible Buttstock is similar in appearance and design to the collapsing stock of the AR-15 series of carbines.

This Vang Comp/RMP 870 fired an impressive pattern from 20 yards and in with Remington 8-Pellet 00 Buckshot.



Rangemaster Jack Morgan finds the recoil mild between the Vang Comp System and the Advanced Technology stock.



John Burghart fires Remington LE Express buckshot from the Vang Comp/RMP 870.

well. It's about time they found out about it! Tight patterns are essential in that endeavor as well, along with the lessened kick of those long magnum turkey loads.

Add to the improved shot patterns the fact that the Vang Comp System reduces muzzle rise and minimizes muzzle flash, and you have an essential component to the defensive shotgun.

Pete Rafferty of RMP Gunworks, a graduate of the Colorado School of Trades, has taken in some Remington 870 shotguns for repair and refurbish. Working with Hans, RMP built a strategic business alliance with Vang Comp Systems. Hans Vang had been seeking shops to act as Vang Comp dealers and Pete Rafferty stepped up to the plate. The shotguns pictured in this piece are products of the gun mechanic's art, a true collaboration between Hans and Pete.

Transformation

The silvery colored shotgun featured has a Vang Comp barrel, ghost ring sights, a new Vang 870 safety and the new Vang stainless steel follower. Pete added a DuraCoat finish, Speedfeed stocks and a Tac Star Sidesaddle. Hans also installed the Remington Flexi-tab conversion to prevent the rounds in the magazine from jumping the shell stops and tying up the gun. An authorized Remington repair station, Vang Comp Systems has years of experience with the design.

The DuraCoat finish Pete selected was the silvery "stainless steel" color. The effect of this coating was striking on a Remington 870. If a defensive situation occurs during hours of diminished light – like most of them do – there will be no doubt in the predator's mind that the "victim" has a fighting shotgun!

The sights, furniture and Sidesaddle securing bolts are left black. The con-

trast is appealing.

The sights, provided by Hans Vang, are the LPA Precision Sights Ghost Ring sights. The large, thin-rimmed aperture is protected by steel 'wings.' Similarly, the post front sight is centered between protective steel. The front sight has a tritium vial to provide the shooter with a muzzle index during adverse light conditions. Both units, front and back, are rugged and built to withstand hard use.

His 870 safety button is a large, round protrusion. For the right-handed shooter, the trigger finger will encounter the safety as it enters the trigger guard to fire. It features a positive release for the well-trained southpaw as well.

The stainless steel magazine follower won't break. The leader is reasonably long to help keep the magazine spring from kinking.

The other shotgun pictured differs in that Pete installed a Surefire Weaponlight Fore-End, used a different color DuraCoat and put a six-position collapsible stock on it.

Shots Fired

The shotguns were fired at a law enforcement range on a couple of different range trips.

Our "Stainless Steel" colored example was tried out during preparation for a law enforcement agency shotgun qualification course. This course involved firing slugs for accuracy from 40 yards to 20 yards and involved a buckshot course at distances varying from 20 yards down to 10 yards.

The first member of our test team used Remington "Slugger" express 1-ounce slugs. He dropped a slug out, shooting low. He indicated that it was "operator error." On the buckshot course, he used Federal Classic 9-pellet 00 buckshot. There was one pellet over the shoulder of the police silhouette. All but two of the remaining 44 pellets went into the scoring rings of the target. This is "tactical" or low-recoil buckshot quality with express buckshot power!

Jack Morgan, an agency range-master, used ammo by CCI-Speer. Using their Lawman 1-ounce slug, Jack put the first two slugs – from 40 yards – almost touching in the chest! All five of the punkin balls went into the maximum scoring (five) ring.

He used Lawman 8-pellet 00B to fire the buckshot course. Thirty-eight of the 40 pellets went into the "Five" ring. The two "flyers" – if they can be called that – stayed inside the four-ring. This was impressive performance.

I selected Winchester Ranger slugs and put all five inside the five-ring, though low in the scoring box. That's why the gun has adjustable sights! Using Winchester buckshot, I had one pellet

fly free of the centered pattern, still well within the silhouette.

Since the newly renovated gun had a silvery finish, I examined the burn pattern from the ports. The scorching was even, showing that the ports were smoothly finished and they were working as intended.

We fed the new-old 870 from the Tac-Star Sidesaddle. Out of the shotguns I have and use, nearly all have the Sidesaddle. I've had no trouble with them and they've given me the ability to change ammo or to replenish the magazine as needed. I like them.

The Speedfeed furniture was functional. Pete Rafferty got banged up a little as he was unfamiliar with the short buttstock that we insisted on. The short stock is better for a defensive shotgun for reasons of stance and use of protective armor. Morgan and I had no trouble with the short stock.

The second shotgun is striking in appearance. It features the eminently practical and well-thought out Surefire Weaponlight Fore-end. The six-volt light is controlled by a pressure pad to allow for momentary on-and-off, a rocker switch for constant on and a system disabling off switch.

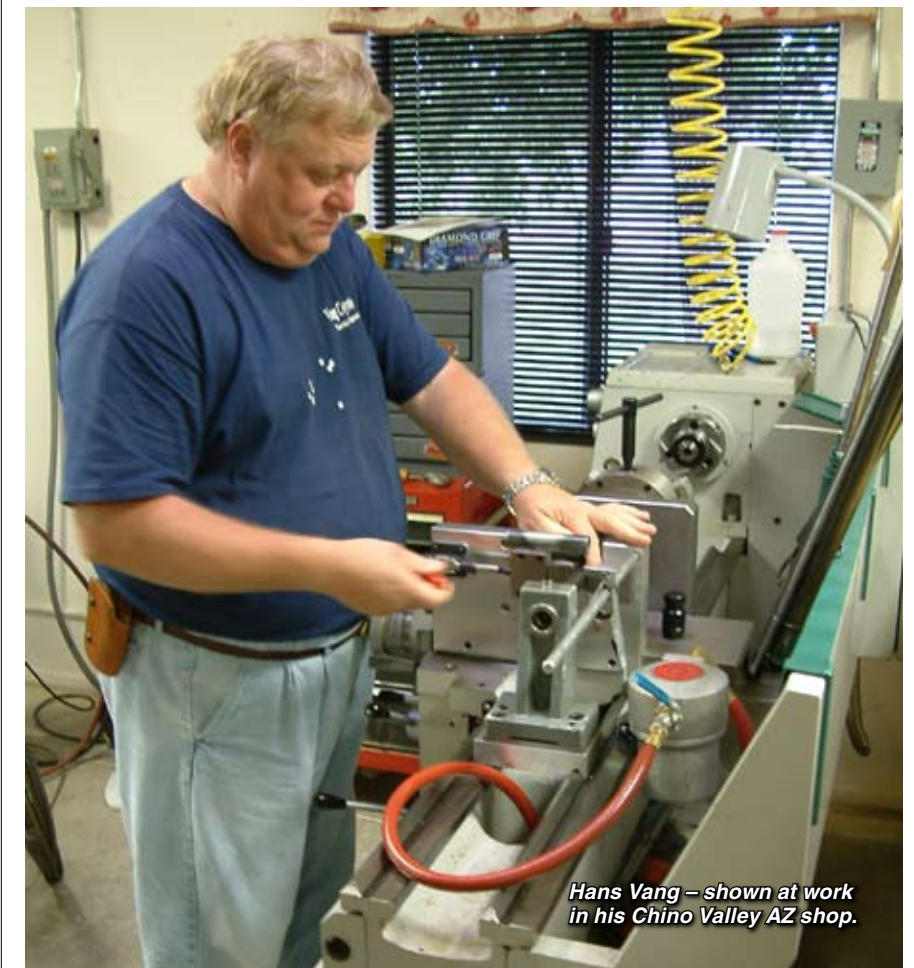
The high output lamp provides 65 lu-

mens output for an hour. This is quite a bit of light. The package makes lighting available without juggling a shotgun and a separate light.

The RMP DuraCoat finish was a gray color with dark specks. Pete Rafferty even put the speckle coating on the protective wings of the LPA front sight, making for a striking appearance.

The stock was from Advanced Technology, Inc. It's a collapsible, six-position "SHOTFORCE" branded buttstock patterned after the collapsing AR-15 style stock. This version is fabricated from a matte black glass-filled nylon material. The stock changes length of pull from 9-1/4 inches to 13-1/4 inches. The included butt pad offers stability and it fits other makers' collapsing buttstocks. The pad has a checkered non-slip surface and provides air-cushioned recoil reduction.

Test team member John Burghart shot Remington Law Enforcement "Express" buckshot – the full-power stuff – into fist-sized patterns from about 10 yards with the Vang Comp/RMP 870 shotgun. He said, "This Express is good stuff." I took that to mean that its power was somewhat more reminiscent of the turkey loads he uses in the game fields than the current law enforcement offer-



Hans Vang – shown at work in his Chino Valley AZ shop.

The Vang Comp Systems Stainless Steel magazine follower for Remington 870 shotguns is a reliability upgrade. It is rugged and prevents the magazine spring from kinking.



ings.

The Vang Comp barrel eats high-velocity ammo like candy, making tight patterns out to 25 or 30 yards.

Morgan also shot the newly refitted 870. He was enamored of the Vang Comp extended safety button, which is a favorite every place it's tried. Likewise, the Advanced Technology Buttstock was appreciated.

Some agency shotguns are fitted with the new stocks to allow for adjustment between users of different statures. The stock is meeting with considerable success.

Total Package

Hans' Vang Comp System is simply superb. This is the fourth Vang Comp creation I've had the chance to spend some time with. While at Gunsite in October 2003 I got to shoot a few other Vang shotguns and saw others in use at that facility.

If the shotgun is there for your personal defense, Vang Comp is the way to go. I see that as the absolute minimum modification I would perform on a defensive shotgun. The RMP DuraCoat finish prevents corrosion, won't chip or peel and it really looks good, too. The LPA sights, Tac Star "Side-Saddle," SureFire WeaponLight and Advanced Technology stock are handy additions as well. Sights are very important on the defensive shotgun and the light – helping to identify targets – is of huge import. The "Side-Saddle" likewise helps keep spare ammo close to hand, necessary all too often these days.

You can't go wrong with the Vang Comp/RMP Team.



Vang Comp Systems makes a vastly improved Big Speed Safety for Remington 870s, as well as magazine extensions (top) and a magazine extension that is extra long for use on door breaching shotguns (not shown).



The 870 is not the only Remington shotgun to get the Vang Comp/RMP treatment – this Remington 11-87 has Vang Comp improvements and an olive drab coating by RMP Gunworks.

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