

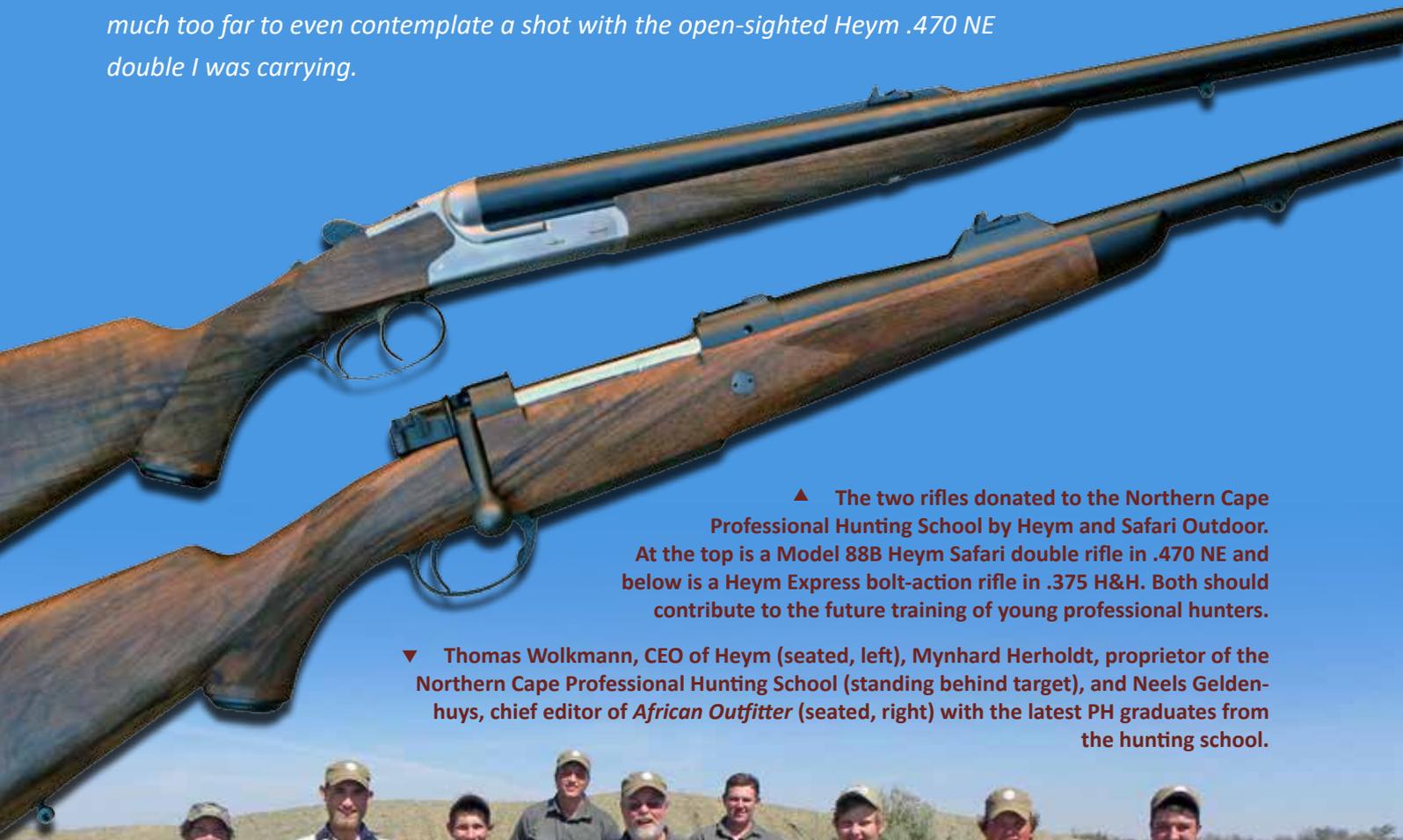


Johan van Wyk

HEYM SAFARI

The hartebeest bull was standing all by his lonesome self in the middle of a windswept plain, looking out towards the east where the waters of the Vanderkloof Dam shimmered like a mirage in the bright, early morning sunshine. As I watched the bull through my binoculars, I could see how he lifted his nose into the wind every now and then to test for any signs of danger. He was not exactly spooked but was clearly wary

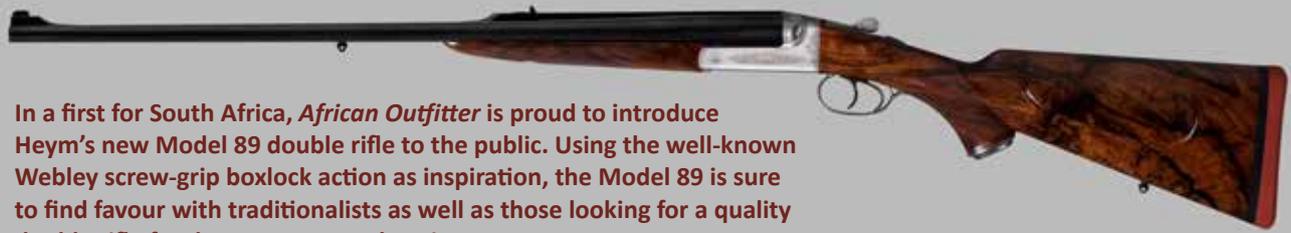
and from where I sat on a koppie (small hill), I could not do much more than wait as the bull was still much too far to even contemplate a shot with the open-sighted Heym .470 NE double I was carrying.



▲ The two rifles donated to the Northern Cape Professional Hunting School by Heym and Safari Outdoor. At the top is a Model 88B Heym Safari double rifle in .470 NE and below is a Heym Express bolt-action rifle in .375 H&H. Both should contribute to the future training of young professional hunters.

▼ Thomas Wolkmann, CEO of Heym (seated, left), Mynhard Herholdt, proprietor of the Northern Cape Professional Hunting School (standing behind target), and Neels Geldenhuys, chief editor of *African Outfitter* (seated, right) with the latest PH graduates from the hunting school.





In a first for South Africa, *African Outfitter* is proud to introduce Heym's new Model 89 double rifle to the public. Using the well-known Webley screw-grip boxlock action as inspiration, the Model 89 is sure to find favour with traditionalists as well as those looking for a quality double rifle for dangerous-game hunting.

A.470 for a hartebeest? Overkill, I hear you say. The stopping power of the big rifle was clearly not needed for an animal the size of a red hartebeest but as I happened to be on the lookout for a hartebeest and as I also happened to be armed with the .470 on the day in question, the decision was made for me. I found myself in the happy position of having to hunt one of Africa's traditional plains-dwelling antelope with a rifle designed more for elephant and buffalo at short range in the thick stuff rather than nimble hartebeest on the open plains of the Karoo. Nothing like a challenge, I say!

After a while, the hartebeest slowly started walking towards my koppie. As he closed the distance, I slowly shifted the .470 to rest on my camera bag, which in turn was resting on a nice, handy rock that provided a good rest for the big rifle. The bull eventually came to a halt right below my small koppie, not 30 m away but too low for me to see him clearly. Again, I had to wait him out. Moments later I heard a few rocks falling as the hartebeest started climbing up the side of my koppie. As he neared the top he halted abruptly upon spotting me, now fully alert and staring intently at the unexpected intruder into his world. The distance was no more than 40 m and with the bead nestled low and behind his left shoulder, I squeezed the front trigger. As the sound of the shot echoed amongst the rocks, the bull swapped ends in a heartbeat and was charging down the koppie, heading straight for a patch of *Acacia karroo* (commonly known as sweet-thorn trees) a few hundred metres away. I watched him running strongly until he disappeared from view into the thorns.

I reloaded the right barrel with another factory-loaded 500-grain Hornady DGS cartridge, made sure the safety catch was in the "on" position and slowly made my way down the small hill towards the spot where the bull had disappeared. His tracks were visible in the hard Karoo soil, strangely without any hint of a blood spoor. When I reached the thorns, I knew he had chosen his hiding spot well. I could not see any sign of him and was just contemplating a walk around the patch of trees when the bull made the next move: with a clatter of hooves on hard, stony ground he made a dash from his hiding place less than 5 m from where I was standing. I swung up the double and sighted on his rump as he was running away. As he swerved ever so slightly to his left to clear a tree, I fired again with the foresight bead on his left flank. The distance could not have been more than about 15 m and the result was impressive – the bull's front legs collapsed in mid-stride, causing his hindquarters to flip over in spectacular fashion. As I touched an eyeball moments later, it was clear

he was stone dead. The .470 had literally dumped him in his tracks, just the way it was supposed to.

The circumstances that brought me, a brand-new Heym 88B Safari.470 NE double rifle and a nice old hartebeest bull together on a big Karoo game farm in South Africa's Northern Cape Province, were more than a year in the making. In a world where hunting and firearms are increasingly in the spotlight and even facing serious threats from certain circles, it is sometimes gladdening to see that certain interested parties are still putting their money where their mouths are and investing in the future of our next generation of hunters. In a very generous gesture, the .470 I used on the hunt described above was donated (along with a beautiful Heym Express bolt-action in .375 H&H) to the Northern Cape Professional Hunting School in a joint venture by Heym themselves as well as their South African agents, Safari Outdoor.

As the name implies, the Northern Cape Professional Hunting School (NCPHS) is in the business of training tomorrow's professional hunters and the school's proprietor and chief instructor, Mynhard Herholdt, does not believe in half measures. In addition to the more frequently encountered two- or three-week PH course, the professional hunter's training course presented by NCPHS lasts a full seven months and covers such diverse topics as fishing for yellowfish with flies, long-range shooting, ethics, trophy judgment, and a myriad of other topics usually expected of such a course.

As can be imagined, the duration of the course allows for much more detailed coverage of the subjects on the curriculum and with the vast Vanderkloof Dam and Mynhardt's own farm, Panorama, close by, the students are not only given a thorough theoretical foundation but they also



The author (left) posing with Thomas Wolkmann, CEO of Heym, and the red hartebeest bull hunted by the author with the Heym 88B .470 NE double rifle.

have the opportunity to attend lectures on subjects such as predator control, leopard hunting and the like by guest lecturers, all experts in their respective fields. The cherry on the cake, so to speak, is the fact that the students also gain a significant amount of practical experience during the course, as they have to hunt with and guide visiting hunters, both South African biltong hunters and trophy hunters from overseas, on a regular basis. The young graduates are thus exposed to a wide variety of hunting and guiding scenarios during the course, gaining valuable exposure to their chosen profession.

During *African Outfitter's* visit to NCPHS during August 2016, the CEO and owner of Heym himself, Thomas Wolkmann, was also present. Thomas, a gentleman of the first order and a keen hunter in own right, was not only there to ceremoniously hand over the two rifles to NCPHS, but was also enjoying his first hunt on African soil. During the course of the three-week hunt he successfully took numerous species such as blue wildebeest, Hartmann's mountain zebra, springbuck, blesbuck, kudu, red hartebeest and waterbuck. The highlight was when he was invited to address the NCPHS's latest crop of graduates and hand over their graduation certificates during a ceremony held at the Selous Fly Fishing Lodge in Vanderkloof on the evening of 31 August 2016. It was very good to see a major manufacturer such as Heym, as well as a heavy hitter in the local firearms retail industry such as Safari Outdoor, team up to invest in the future of hunting, and professional hunting in particular. May the industry reap the benefits of their generous gesture for a long time to come!



A close-up of the Heym 88B action. Note the Greener cross-bolt, Purdey-style double underlugs, bolsters, double triggers and provision for telescope mounts in the rib.

As for the two rifles, Heym as a manufacturer does not require much of an introduction. With a history going back more than 140 years, they are well known for producing quality products at prices that compare favourably with their competitors in a competitive market. Heym offers traditional German quality craftsmanship, combined with the very best materials available today. After testing a number of their products extensively, I can confirm that they are of outstanding quality indeed.

The Heym Express bolt-action rifle chambered for the .375 H&H that was donated to NCPHS, was given an extensive workout on the range by a number of people during our visit and never failed to elicit the highest praise. As *African Outfitter* will be featuring a more in-depth look at the Heym Express in a future edition, it is perhaps prudent not to divulge more about this outstanding rifle at this point but to rather focus on the 88B Safari double rifle in .470 NE mentioned earlier.

The model 88B has been the Heym flagship for many years. It is of conventional side-by-side design with double triggers (the front trigger is articulated, just as it should be on a quality double rifle) and the model Safari I got to play with had ejectors as a standard fit. The action was a modified Anson & Deeley-type boxlock design that had a coin finish, carried no engraving (a myriad custom options are available in this respect) and featured coil springs, bolsters and intercepting sears. The action's characteristic extended shoulders ensure that the 88B has a very distinctive look about it and it is instantly recognisable as a Heym from across the room. Barrel length of the test rifle was 26" (any length between 24" and 26" is available to a prospective customer) and the sighting arrangement consisted of a generous copper bead up front together with two wide V-sighting leaves on a ramp, dovetailed very sturdily into a matted rib between the barrels. One leaf was fixed and regulated for 50 m and the other folding and regulated for 100 m. The rib is machined as standard at the factory for claw-type telescope mounts and can also easily be fitted with other optical sights such as those by Aimpoint, Trijicon and Docter, if the rifle's owner so desires.

As an aside, the 88B is available in three different action sizes. The smallest, the so-called "light" PH, is available in 9,3x74R and .375 Flanged Magnum. Next up is the standard-action model available as tested here in .375 Flanged Magnum (for those who may prefer a slightly heavier .375), .450/400, .450, .470 and .500. A large-frame

JWJ Van Wyk Attorneys

Specialising in Mining, Environmental, Commercial and Firearms Law.

For personal attention and professional service, call Johan van Wyk for an appointment.

Tel: (012) 941 4833
 Fax: (012) 941 4834
 Email: jwj@vanwyk.legal

Address:
 Ground Floor, Block C
 Agri-Hub Office Park
 447/478 Witherite Ave
 The Willows
 Pretoria

hey-m-fabrik.de | heymusa.com | heymfanatics.co.za



When the SH** hits
the fan, you better
have a Heym!



HEYM USA
Chris Sells
ph: 214.606.2566
fx: 214.602.2600
www.hey-musa.com



South Africa
Safari & Outdoor
Hancke Hudson
+27 (0)845800941
www.safarioutdoor.co.za



The Heym's butt stock was carved from nicely grained Turkish walnut. Note the solid, Pachmayr-style recoil pad and Holland & Holland-style cheek piece.

action is also available in .470, .500 and .577. In September 2016, Heym announced the introduction of a new model to their double rifle line-up: the Model 89. The Model 89 should warm the hearts of double rifle traditionalists as it was designed to resemble the famed Webley long-bar screw-grip actions made by the Webley & Scott gunmaking concern in Birmingham prior to World War II. The screw-grip Webleys were renowned for reliability and good handling and have long been an icon of gunmaking, so Heym's bold step in this direction is to be applauded.

On the technical side, the action is jointed by means of conventional Purdey-style double under-bolting together with a Greener cross-bolt for extra strength. It is a recipe that has withstood the test of time and is renowned for strength. The barrels are joined to the action by means of a massive shoe lump, a system traditionally frowned upon as being inferior. With the advent of modern steels and improved technology, however, it is a perfectly acceptable way of doing things and virtually similar systems are used by other manufacturers of double rifles as well, notably in France and Germany. Gold-lined cocking indicators are a standard fit and the non-automatic safety catch worked silently and without fault.

The internal parts of the 88B are made from the finest steel alloys available and are particularly resistant to corrosion. In hard-working rifles such a feature is a must, as one well-known user of Heym double rifles, Ivan Carter, has proven. Ivan's very well used Heym 88B in .450 NE spent a considerable length of time on the bottom of the Zambezi River after an altercation with an angry hippopotamus. After the rifle was subsequently retrieved, all that was required to get it back in action again was a proper cleaning and drying off and a few squirts of lubricant, and everything was back to normal.

Previous Heym 88B double rifles tended to have bulky woodwork. They had too much meat around the grip, cheek pieces that were probably more at home on the target range and semi-beavertail fore-ends that were too thick for most and not the most elegant in shape either (as the late Jack O'Connor once remarked tongue-in-cheek, beavertail fore-ends did not have to look like they had been chopped from actual beavers!). In addition to being unsightly, the slightly crooked woodwork added weight in the wrong places, affecting balance and handling as a result. I am happy to report that Heym has changed all this, and very much for the better.

The fore-end on the test rifle was a nice and elegant splinter fore-end with a generous amount of chequering. It not only looked good but provided enough space to grip the rifle properly and in the process saved an ounce or two of weight as well. The angle of the pistol grip was slightly more open than was the case with older rifles and ensured that the rifle came up like a good double should, allowing easy movement to reach the two triggers. It fitted my hands very well. The cheek piece was a typical Holland & Holland-style pancake cheek piece and was well executed with sharp borders. Hand-executed, wrap-around chequering, quick-detachable sling swivels (the front stud was fixed to the rib between the barrels), and a neatly fitted and finished solid brown Pachmayr recoil pad rounded the butt stock (made from nicely grained Turkish walnut) off nicely.

If I had to nit-pick (a nasty habit I have picked up over the years!), I would have liked two things different on the rifle. Firstly, I would have preferred a solid, red rubber recoil pad such as a Silvers or the Italian BRM. Both are durable in the extreme and I prefer their slightly more traditional look, for what that may be worth on a modern double rifle. Secondly, the chequering on the grip was a touch too sharp for my liking. The primary purpose of chequering is to absorb moisture and to provide a secure grip on the rifle. Unfortunately, many manufacturers of large-calibre rifles tend to go overboard in this respect, applying chequering to their rifles that turns into an abrasive under heavy recoil. Unlike other modern big-bore rifles that I have fired, the Heym's chequering was nowhere near this sharp but I nonetheless felt that chequering with slightly flatter diamonds in the pattern would not have gone amiss. Both these criticisms from my side are minor ones, however, and the next guy would probably not agree with me on either of these points.

The proof of the pudding for any double rifle is in the shooting, and in this respect the Heym shone brightly. Our test rifle had been regulated with Hornady ammunition and it shot beautifully right from the start, punching two neat .474-inch holes through the target within an inch of one another at the required distance. The rifle's intelligent stock design and good balance ensured that recoil was entirely manageable (even at the relatively light weight for this particular rifle of 10 pounds, 2 ounces, unloaded), and pulling the triggers in rapid succession whilst keeping sight of the target was as easy as could be hoped for with a rifle designed for use on the biggest game on the planet.

When all has been said and done, I am confident that Heym offers one of the finest factory-made double rifles on the market today. Although not inexpensive by any means, they do offer excellent value for money and are reliable to a fault, as has been proven many times over by many who make a living amongst Africa's big game. This particular Heym will, I am sure, play its part in teaching many young professional hunters what using a double rifle in Africa is all about for many years to come.

Heym rifles are available in South Africa from Safari Outdoor, Heym's only approved agent in Africa. A full range of custom options as well as after-sales service is available. For more information, please contact your nearest Safari Outdoor branch. Alternatively, send an email to hancke@so.co.za or phone 086 122 2269.

