





LETTER FROM EDITOR

This part of the catalog is for you, #VortexNation.

So, what the heck is “Vortex Life” anyway? Well, more accurately, it’s your life – a life we are stoked to be a part of. Hunting, shooting, gun culture, home defense, our military, and law enforcement aren’t just hobbies – they are as essential and important as breathing. Some of your friends may not get it. Heck, your spouse might not even get it... But we get it.

We know you appreciate meticulously-designed, precision-engineered optics – because what you do is too important to risk not having the best tool for the job. This year, we wanted to give you more than a typical product catalog.

In this section, we showcase a piece of the lifestyle you live. Stuff you care about – stuff that makes you, YOU. Here, you’ll find articles and spreads on public land, recipes, impactful stories, staff picks, gear tips, and more.

This is the first time our editorial team has produced something like this, and hopefully won’t be the last. Here at Vortex, we continuously strive to make the best possible experience for you. Turn the page and dive headfirst into “The Vortex Life”. We hope you enjoy.

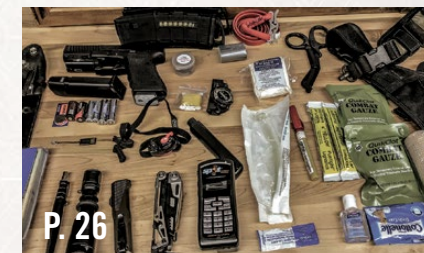
STAY GLASSY,
ALL YOUR FRIENDS AT VORTEX



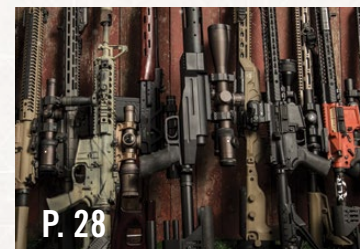
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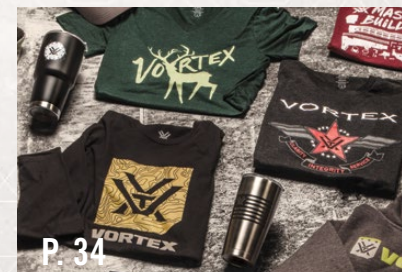
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HOLD THE LINE

You know what it's like, to be in the heat of battle.

To feel the dust and the grit. The sweat and the pain.

In a world of uncertain situations and unforeseen enemies, you need clear vision and gear that won't fail. To see ahead, but remain hidden.

When precision is the difference between failure and success...

When years of training, countless hours of blood, sweat, and tears...

...all come down to one moment...

YOU, HOLD THE LINE.



STORIES FROM THE LINE

Domestic or abroad – Adrenaline-pumping action or a helping hand – The stories you are about to read had an impact on their authors, and all of us, directly and indirectly. They are true acts of heroism, service, selflessness, and sacrifice. Take this rare opportunity to peer behind the veil, looking into these incredible accounts from the perspective of those who HOLD THE LINE.

If you would like to share your stories from the line, feel free to contact us at VortexNation@VortexOptics.com

PRINCIPLE VS. POLICY

“I was pregnant, gave birth, and spent 6 months with our baby while my husband was deployed.

The life of a military wife is often overlooked - often under-appreciated by the outside world. We do our jobs, raise our families, and support a hero at war in good times and bad. The life of a military wife is not a glamorous one, but it’s my life.

The moment I realized how different my pregnancy would be was at my 20 week ultrasound. This appointment is arguably one of the most significant milestones in any pregnancy, especially in anticipation of learning the sex of the baby. My husband and I coordinated a call at 11 PM (Iraq time) so he could be as much a part of the event as possible. My mom and cousin had also accompanied me, so I wouldn’t be alone.

As they set me up for my ultrasound, we got my husband on the phone. Right away, the technician rudely told us we needed to hang up. Assuming she didn’t understand, we explained the situation, but she wouldn’t budge, and insisted we could not use cell

phones in the room. Claiming it was “Policy” (true) and that cell phones “Mess with the equipment” (untrue), the technician adamantly opposed our arguments to keep my husband on the phone.

At this point, after many failed attempts, we had to hang up. I was upset and wanted to leave. I remember thinking to myself “These two women in the room with me have taken time out of their schedule and traveled to this appointment - I must carry on.”

It’s unfortunate that this is my memory of one of the most treasured moments in my life, and one that I am not able to “redo”, as we have been unable to have more children. Despite hard times, loneliness, anger and frustration, military wives must stay strong for our families and loved ones. Delivering a baby, four more nerve-racking hospital

"OUR HUSBANDS PUT THEIR LIVES IN DANGER EVERY SINGLE DAY, YET THE WORLD AT HOME CONTINUES - MOSTLY AS IF NOTHING IS HAPPENING."

visits after the birth, and my father being diagnosed with prostate cancer during the experience tested every last bit of my physical and emotional strength - But I had a mission of my own, and there was no giving up.

Our husbands put their lives in danger every single day, yet the world at home continues - Mostly as if nothing is happening. When following up with my OBGYN, the health care facility sent someone to talk about policy and how the technician was correct in her actions. I expressed my disappointment in their stance and pleaded to make exceptions when there are extenuating circumstances such as this, and that I hoped no one else had to experience this.

Perhaps some silver lining to our story – I’ve heard hospitals have become more accepting of calls like mine in recent years. Most importantly for me – I came out on the other side with my little buddy, and we’ve since had many happy, healthy years together as a family.”

-CHRISTINA DENSON





RIVER PURSUIT

"In June 2017, my team was called to assist in locating and capturing 3 escaped inmates in a very rural part of the state. One of the inmates was awaiting trial for murder – All were believed to be violent. I was given information that at least 2 of them were possibly camping along a river just outside a small rural community, so I drove to a location near their rumored location and continued on foot.

Immediately after reaching the riverbank, I observed one of the escapees drinking from the river, and notified air and ground assets to converge on my location to set up a perimeter. After several of my partners arrived, we began to move closer to the subject while the helo approached and confronted the escapee across the river. I had shouldered my AR and my partner began giving commands. The escapee turned and rushed up the embankment to disappear into the thick woods, evading the eyes of our aircraft overhead.

I remember looking at my partner, asking him if he could swim as we both darted for the river. We made our way through the water just fine until a channel in the middle had us completely submerged, including our gear.

As a young infantry soldier, it was instilled in me to keep my weapon operational at all cost. I could only think about how disappointed my TL would be if he were watching...

After several hours and a 1.5-mile foot pursuit to test our endurance, we took the accused murderer into custody, along with his fellow escapees.

Fortunately, these extreme events don't occur every day, but they are happening

**"I REMEMBER LOOKING AT
MY PARTNER ASKING HIM IF
HE COULD SWIM AS WE BOTH
RAN FOR THE RIVER."**

more frequently. I continue to learn from every event I find myself in - Good and bad. Looking back as a kid, growing up bow hunting, learning to track in the woods, and getting the most important firearms lessons from my Grandfather, a WWII Vet, one could say I've been training for this my whole life. Certainly, being polished by the US ARMY and all the LE Training I've taken along the way have honed my abilities as well. We never know when our life experiences will come together and give us the tools necessary to navigate an extreme scenario like that night on the riverbank, but when they happen, we must be ready to use them without hesitation, at a moment's notice.

My credo for operational success; "Always testing myself and my equipment"

-DLONG

20 Year LEO/SWAT Team Ldr/FA Instructor/Federal
Fugitive Task Force Officer/11B!!

EYES FROM ABOVE

“As a pilot, seeing the flooding and storm damage of Hurricane Harvey from the air was remarkable. Flying over the huge span of Houston and seeing cars traveling at seemingly normal speeds, gave the impression that all was normal. Sadly, just off of that same highway were houses, businesses, and apartments with floodwater up to the eaves of their roofs. Cars were submerged with lights still on, underpasses of major tollways had water up to their bridges, and feral hogs along with other wildlife sat stranded on the back porches of evacuated, upscale, neighborhood homes. It was straight out of a Hollywood end-of-the-world movie.

This was not my first exposure to a hurricane’s devastation. In the early 90’s, I flew relief efforts in Hawaii on the island of Kauai the days following Iniki. The damage was bad there, and lives were forever impacted by that storm, but the flooding in Houston was much worse. Hurricane Harvey’s damage was so random, insidious, and utterly complete.

The core of our mission in Houston was to provide “eyes from above” for law enforcement seeking information on victims in distress. Providing real-time information to rescue boats was vital to the people still in harms way. The second mission was to help distribute medical supplies, food, and water as the storm progressed east. Shouldering this load allowed the Coast Guard and other military aircraft to continue with their own life-saving mission as the storm progressed.

Working with the Red Cross as they used new technology to survey the damage and provide better, more accurate and more rapid information to FEMA proved vital for the victims of Harvey as well. This information helped provide funds to victims faster than ever, getting folks from Corpus Christi to the Louisiana Border out of shelters and into hotels – one step closer to starting their long road to recovery.

The outreach of Texans and the entire country was breathtaking. Seeing people’s resilient community spirit and willingness to give, help, support, and most of all – Pray – was, and still is, moving. Food, water and medical supplies were donated by the ton. Delivering these important resources it to those in need makes a person proud to be, not just an American, but a human being.”

– RICHARD POTTS OF LAST SHADOW

**“THE OUTREACH OF
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STORIES FROM THE LINE

TIME IN THE DESERT

“You lose track of time when you are deployed. You’re not really sure what day it is - Let alone the month. The way I tracked time was by events. Things like holidays, and birthdays work out well when you are with a bunch of friends - Someone is always getting ready to celebrate something. “Sherm” was one of the guys in my platoon. He was an awesome guy. Always had a smile on his face, and always had a lighter even though he didn’t smoke.

One day, we were getting ready to roll out of the compound for a mission and Sherm walked to the vehicles with me even though he wasn’t rolling with us that night. He reminded me that it was almost Thanksgiving and said I’d better make sure I didn’t do anything stupid, because he didn’t want to set my place for me at the table in the chow hall. See, when deployed, we set a

**“SEE, WHEN DEPLOYED,
WE SET A PLACE AT THE
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BROTHERS AS A WAY TO
HONOR THEIR MEMORY.”**

place at the table for our fallen brothers as a way to honor their memory. We geared up and headed out. That night, my vehicle was hit by an IED. A big one. I ended up breaking my leg and got evacuated to the CSH. As soon as I could sneak out of my hospital room, I hobbled outside for a smoke. Just as I started to get frustrated because I couldn’t find a lighter, I heard a familiar North-eastern accent in the dark say “What the hell did I tell you?”. I looked up and saw Sherm’s face in the dim flicker of his lighter’s flame. He’d jumped on a convoy that was headed to the base I was at, to make sure I was alright. He was a good dude like that.

Thanksgiving came and went and we checked that marker off of our mental calendar... That much closer to going home. A few weeks and a few missions later, Sherm and I found ourselves headed up to the main base, escorting the command element of our company to a meeting. This was great news for us because it meant hot showers, soft beds, shopping at the PX and best of all, we were picking up mail. Christmas was getting close, so the packages were coming from home, full of good food and memories of loved ones.

When it was time to head back to the company, we ended up swapping places in the convoy. His vehicle was full of mail and packages, so he couldn’t bring up the rear of the convoy. That meant my vehicle was pushed to the rear position and Sherm was in front of me. We did our checks and staged to roll. As we were driving through the dark, I remember thinking that this place wasn’t so bad. I was full, rested, and bringing a Stryker full of Christmas presents back to my friends. Looking at the glow of Sherm’s vehicle in my thermals - it was that moment that I saw the flash. The deafening blast sucked the wind out of my chest. Sherm’s vehicle was hit. When we stopped, I could see the burning letters floating through the sky like giant fireflies.

That Christmas, I set Sherm’s place at the table for the fallen.

Every holiday, deployed or at home, I set an extra space. There is always a plate and a drink for my friends that can’t make it. They are warmly remembered for the small things, and they will never be forgotten.”

- STEVE M.
US Army Retired.

HOW TO'S: PROPERLY MOUNT YOUR RIFLESCOPE



Mounting a riflescope may seem like a daunting and overly technical task, but with the right tools and a little patience, you can ensure your optic is mounted properly, right at home, providing season-after-season of performance.

A FEW TOOLS WE HERE AT VORTEX WOULD RECOMMEND FOR MAKING THE PROCESS EASIER:

- A well-lit, sturdy bench with a gun-vise.
- Quality hand tools that match the fasteners on your rings and mounts.
- A torque wrench.
- A small bubble-level – better yet, a few small bubble-levels! Check out the Wheeler and CTK-Precision line for excellent options.

QUICK WALKTHROUGH



Assuming your firearm has the appropriate bases already properly installed, and your firearm is unloaded:

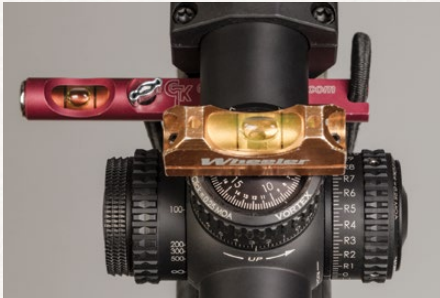
STEP 1. Secure the scope rings to the base at the recommended torque-value. Most rings are held secure between 35-45 inch pounds.



STEP 4. Place your rifle into your vise or secure work surface, and finding a flat-spot on the rig, such as the base, place a level atop it and level-out.



STEP 2. Install the optic in the rings at the highest magnification, but don't completely secure the ring-screws quite yet. We recommend spacing the rings no closer than 3/8" from the magnification adjustment ring in the rear, and centered, or slightly forward of center on the tube in the front.



STEP 5. Consider removing your turret cap, and if possible, your rotation dial. This will allow you to level as close to the turret adjustment screw as possible, providing the highest potential for accuracy in leveling. Place the level atop the turret and level-out.



STEP 3. With your rifle shouldered, you should have a full sight-picture with your head in a natural position. Move the riflescope fore-and-aft in the mounts until that is achieved.



STEP 6. Incrementally tighten your scope ring screws to our recommend torque-poundage – about 15-18in.lbs, without the use of any thread-locker. If you're mounting horizontally-split rings, be mindful of the gaps on either side of the rings, trying to keep them evenly spaced.

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT!

This quick step-by-step guide should have you covered with most mounting solutions, but if you've got something unique or proprietary, or would like to chat through this with one of our technicians, drop us a line! 1-800-426-0048 x5 or info@VortexOptics.com



CAVEMAN GOURMET
STEVEN RINELLA OF MEATEATER TV



ABOUT THE AUTHOR »

STEVEN RINELLA is a lifelong outdoorsman and the host of the MeatEater TV show and the MeatEater Podcast. He's written five books, including The Complete Guide to Hunting, Butchering, and Cooking Wild Game, Volumes 1 and 2.

END OF THE HUNT – THE MEAL PREPARATION BEGINS

HARVESTED FROM THE WILD

- Bone marrow extracted from caribou femurs & moose shins.
- Collected wild blueberries, cranberries, and crowberries.
- Medallions of moose & caribou tenderloin.
- Collected wild bolete mushrooms.

PACKED IN

- Benchmade Steep Country knife.
- Lightweight cookware.
- Bone saw.
- Meat hook.
- Folding grill.

FROM FIELD TO CAMPFIRE

1. We have a tradition of preparing big meals at the end of a hunt, and we make them as wild as possible. For this one, we were planning on extracting bone marrow from our moose femurs but a wolverine dragged them off and we couldn't find them.



2. Instead, we sawed up some caribou femurs and moose shins into small discs. After roasting the discs in a pan over a fire, I poured off some of the rendered oil. I used some to fry a batch of small mushrooms, and then added the rest to a sauce made from wild blueberries, cranberries, and crowberries.



3. With the sauce and mushrooms ready, I grilled some medallions of caribou and moose tenderloin until the surfaces were seared and the middles were just barely warm. Top the medallions with a slice of fried mushroom, some of the berry sauce, and a slug of the marrow. That's what I call caveman gourmet.



"MY FAVORITE HUNTS ARE SELF-GUIDED ADVENTURES IN REMOTE WILDERNESS SETTINGS. THESE KINDS OF TRIPS ARE HARD WORK, AND THERE ARE INHERENT RISKS, BUT THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO TEST YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PREPAREDNESS AS A HUNTER."

— Steven Rinella reflecting on his Alaskan moose and caribou hunt, with his friend Janis Putelis and Janis's father.





PIZZA OVEN RECIPE

@VORTEXOPTICS

Inspired by an Instagram challenge from our friends at JP Rifles - Chicken and Waffle Quesadillas were born out of a no-nonsense, fight-or-flight, Wisconsin vs. Minnesota, need to do something “Big” frame of mind. The result? A delicious mashup of sweet, salty, savory, crunchy, meaty goodness. We love this belly buster not only because it is insanely delicious, but also because it can be made in a half hour with cheap ingredients you usually have lying around the house already.

**A NOTE ON CHEESE: While any cheese can be used, and we invite you to experiment, we do recommend the use of a white cheese like Monterrey Jack. White cheeses, in general, pair much better with the sweet flavors of the waffles and syrup.*



CHICKEN + WAFFLE QUESADILLAS

SERVES: 1 if you're a monster, 4 if you don't want to go to the hospital today.

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 Frozen Waffles – Thawed
- Chicken Tenders – Unfrozen
- French Fries, Hash Browns or Tater Tots
- Shredded Monterrey Jack Cheese
- Bacon (Duh)
- Pure Maple Syrup

DIRECTIONS:

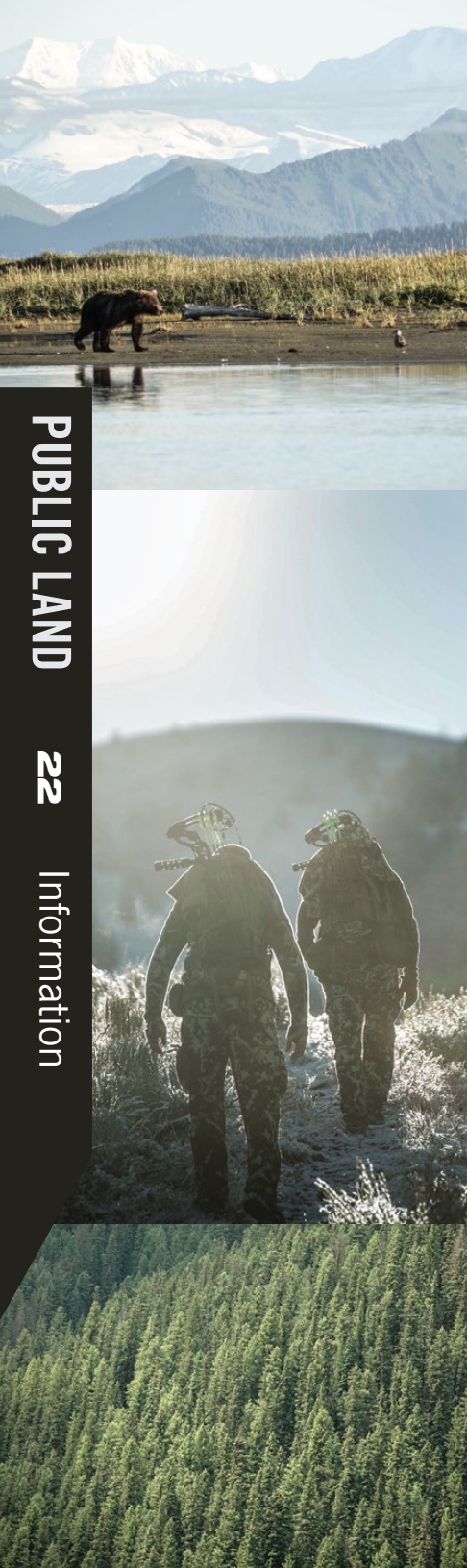
1. Preheat pizza oven to “High” if using a two-temp unit. If more exact temps are possible, 400° will do great.
2. On a bed of tinfoil, make a bottom layer of 4 waffles.
3. Because most frozen waffles are circular, rip up 2 more waffles to fit between all the spaces so that there is little to no tinfoil showing through.
4. Add a thin layer of monterrey jack cheese to act as a bonding agent for all the waffles to join them together.
5. Situate your chicken tenders and desired potato dish so they are evenly spaced across the waffle base. Try to avoid any meatless gaps – no one likes that.
6. Add another layer of Monterrey Jack Cheese atop all of your chicken tenders, again to act as a bonding agent to keep everything together when melted.
7. Use your remaining 4 waffles to make a top layer, not worrying this time about filling in any gaps between each waffle.
8. Lay as much bacon across the top of your stacked quesadilla as possible. How much you use will depend on the size of your bacon and your own personal preferences. Don't ever let anyone tell you how much bacon you can or can't use.
9. Heat in the pizza oven for 10-15 minutes, or until the bacon on top has become crispy.
10. Remove from pizza oven to top with pure maple syrup – use your own best judgement as to how much is appropriate.
11. Top with one final, thick layer of monterrey jack cheese and put everything back in the pizza oven for 10 more minutes, or until your cheese has reached your desired brownness.
12. Remove from pizza oven and allow to rest for 5 minutes.
13. Slice - Eat - Enjoy - Nap - Wake up - Do work.





THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

LEARN HOW WE KEEP IT PUBLIC »



THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND. FNA-right this land is your land/my land/our land. It's also not guaranteed to be there tomorrow.

Public land, the game it fosters, and responsible multi-use (recreational and extractive) opportunities it represents are one of the brightest, most-valuable, most-utilized treasures of this great nation. The fact some of our forefathers had the foresight to protect certain regions during a time when those ideals were less than popular is nothing short of amazing. It's like they had a crystal ball and said, "Oh snap, we better save some of this before it's gone."

Our public lands are also one of the most misunderstood and taken-for-granted things we as sportsman should be paying attention to. And there are things/ people/entities threatening them.

Here are three organizations who are in the fight every day to make sure when you show up at your favorite spot - boots laced, bow, rod or gun in hand - you don't come face to face with a no-trespassing sign telling you why you can no longer do the things you love, in the places you love even more.



BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS + ANGLERS (BHA)

Formed around a campfire in 2004 by 7 visionary sportsmen, BHA has become a megaphone for the sportsmen's voice when it comes to wild public lands, waters and wildlife. With members in all 50 states, chapters in more than 35, and 2 Canadian provinces, BHA acts swiftly when issues arise affecting public land sportsmen and women. At their core, BHA focuses on three key issues. 1: Access and Opportunity - ensuring public lands and waters remain in public hands. 2: Conserving Priority Landscapes - members identify key landscapes and migratory routes crucial to fish and wildlife – then work to protect them. 3: Fair Chase – preserving our hunting and fishing traditions and maintaining the challenge of the pursuit with integrity. Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is a membership-based organization and every new member amplifies your voice – the voice of Public Land Owners. For more information, visit www.backcountryhunters.org



THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP (TRCP)

A national conservation organization, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership steers their ship bow first into the fray, to guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. Partnership is in their name for a reason. The TRCP, with 56 diverse partner organizations, 79,000 grassroots supporters, and more than 1,500 state and local sportsmen's groups, unite to magnify the impact American hunters and anglers have on major conservation issues of our day. Access to and responsible management of America's public lands, private lands conservation, clean water initiatives, drought solutions, marine fisheries management, and ensuring robust conservation funding are at the heart of the TRCP. Make an impact by joining the TRCP, as well as becoming a citizen of Sportsman's Country at www.sportsmenscountry.org



KEEP IT PUBLIC (KIP)

What's in a name? Absolutely everything when it comes to the volunteer-run, nonprofit, Keep It Public. From hunters and fishermen, to backcountry skiers and photographers, KIP brings together and educates all who enjoy, depend on and care about our public lands. We may not always agree on every issue, or see eye-to-eye on how we like to use our public lands, but dammit, we agree they are too important to lose. Keep It Public creates educational content about the American public land system, coordinates hands-on conservation, and provides a voice for sensible policy. They make sure when we're discussing public lands issues, we know what we're talking about and can look smart doing it. Thanks guys! For more information visit: www.KeepItPublic.org

If wild places are as much a part of your heart as they are our great American landscape, let's fight for them together. Join one or all of these fantastic organizations today.



WHAT'S IN YOUR PACK?

BY: JOHN WHIPPLE & CASEY DINKEL OF 60TH PARALLEL ADVENTURES

“At 60TH PARALLEL ADVENTURES, we do a lot of fly-in backpack hunts in remote corners of Alaska, so selecting the right gear is of paramount importance to us. Since we carry everything on our backs, each piece of gear must serve some vitally important function – or it doesn’t make the cut. It also must be extremely lightweight, yet still stand up to rough use and harsh conditions. This is an ever-evolving process, and after every trip we reasses our load-out, trying to look for ways to make improvements. The following is our most current pack list for early season mountain hunting in Alaska. We hope it is helpful in putting together or tweaking your own mountain hunting kit!” » John Whipple & Casey Dinkel



K KOFLACH BOOTS » Footwear is a very personal choice, and what works for some, may not work for others, but we have found that this plastic mountaineering boot is our all time favorite for mountain adventures. It consists of a hard plastic shell with an inner removable booty liner. This two-part system is the key. The plastic shell is incredibly tough, supportive, and truly waterproof. The inner booty eliminates friction between your foot and the boot reducing blisters and hot spots.



TREKKING POLES » A piece of gear overlooked by many, but an integral part of our system. Trekking poles relieve some stress from the legs and provide much needed stability when packing heavy loads across mountains or fording streams.

B THE PINNACLE PACK » Made by Frontier Gear of Alaska, this is our go-to pack when we know we are going to be carrying heavy loads through the mountains. It is designed in every aspect to provide stability, support, and reliability with truly heavy loads. When you have 100 or 150 pounds of gear and meat you need to carry, you want a pack that will properly distribute and support the weight.



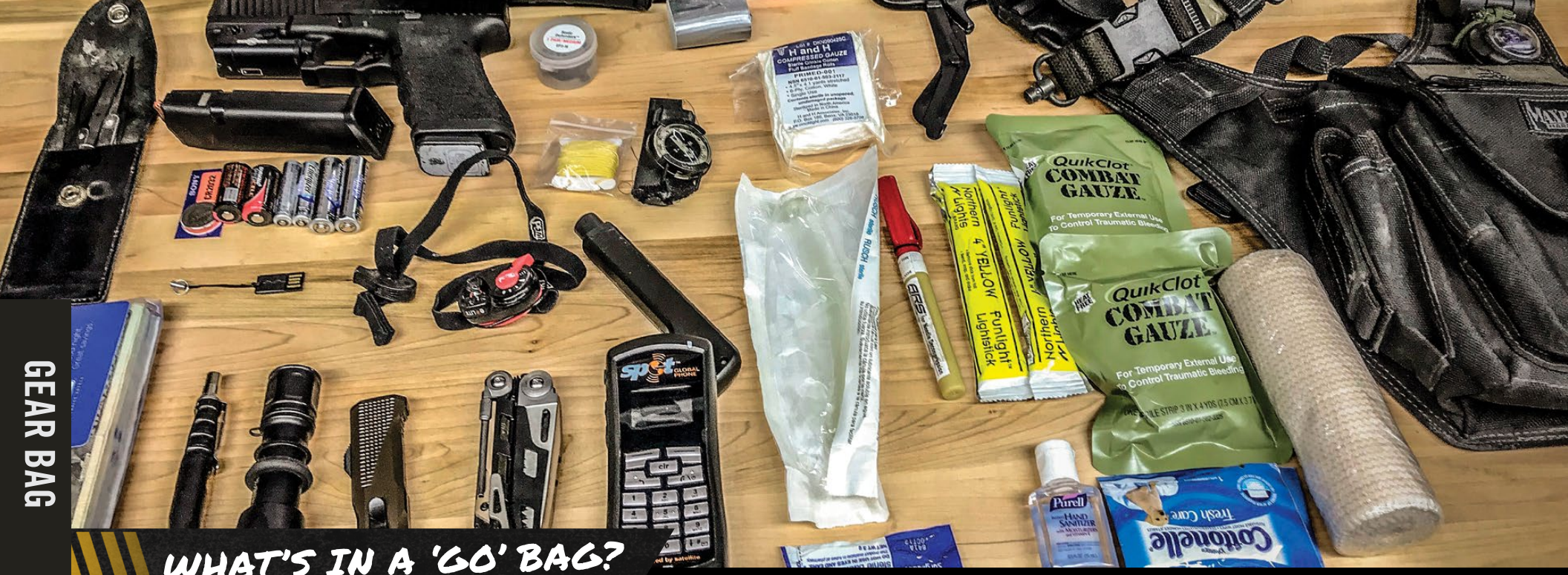
L GOOD OPTICS » When hunting in the mountains, every move is made with consideration, as traversing terrain is difficult and time consuming. Experienced hunters know it is best to find a vantage point and let your glass do the walking. Good quality optics allow you to effectively assess an animal without spending all the time and effort hiking over to it for a better look.



GEAR HIGHLIGHTS »

- A » Kimber Mountain Ascent .308 w/ Vortex Razor HD LH 3-15x42 Scope
- B » Frontier Gear of Alaska Pinnacle Pack
- C » Water Filter - Katadyn Hiker Pro
- D » Headlamp - Black Diamond Storm
- E » Garmin GPSmap 60CSx

- F » Rain Coat & Pant - Sitka Dewpoint
- G » Game Bags - The Carnivore III High Country Predator Pack
- H » Skinning Knife - Cold Steel Finn Bear
- I » Sleeping Bag - Western Mountaineering Alpinelight
- J » Tent - Hilleberg Niak



WHAT'S IN A 'GO' BAG?

BY: JIM STALEY OF DELIBERATE DYNAMICS

When the going gets rough, preparation can mean the difference between life and death. Even the most savvy of specialists needs the right tools to get the job done – and needs them ready to grab and go at a moment’s notice. Outfitting your “Go Bag” for any situation requires first defining its purpose. The bag that sits in your car for when you break down and need to hike out, is going to look a lot different than the grab-and-fight bag that sits next to your carbine at home. General rule of thumb – the bigger the bag, the more stuff you'll find to put in it. If it’s a fighting bag – Keep it lean.



JIM STALEY is a Recon Marine and Scout Sniper who served as Team Leader (Dive Team) in 1st Recon Bn and ATL (Freefall Team) at 1st Force Recon Co (97'-05'). From 05'-07', Jim served as Shift Leader at Triple Canopy in Basrah and Baghdad, working high-profile DoS security detail. From 09'-12', Jim worked on an OGA contract doing low-profile security overseas. Such a wide variety of profiles and missions over the years has helped diversify and improve Jim's skills and abilities.

FIGHT

Ammo is number one. Big fighting knives take up weight and space. When you're in a gunfight and just expended your last round – you're going to want a fresh mag over some big fixed blade Rambo knife.

3-6 CARBINE MAGAZINES » I use pull tabs on mine because you are not going to be able to get the grip you are used to looking for when loading from a bag. The Magpul tabs give me a more consistent reliable reload.

KNIVES AND TOOLS » I like to have a multitool in my bag, and a basic light pocket knife on my body. Multitool is critical in my opinion, pocket knife is convenient.

FLASHLIGHT » Make sure you have at least one good combat light (momentary on)

MEDICAL

Other than ammo, an IFAK (Improved First Aid Kit) or similar is critical. Items only have utility if you actually know how to use them, so prepare your mind in addition to your gear here.

TOURNIQUET » The single most important medical item to have, 2 is better than 1.

COMBAT GAUZE » this is a universal item, make sure you have some.

TAPE » Avoid medical tape and get something like 100mph tape mini roll that can be used for other things too.

ACE WRAP » Once you patch something up, this works great to keep pressure and seal things up.

CHEST DECOMPRESSION NEEDLE » It is used to decompress the chest if you are dealing with a pneumothorax.

J-TUBE » Airway, make sure you have lube.

ADMIN/LOGISTICS

This is where you really have to tailor to purpose and environment. The dirtier and nastier the area you find yourself in, the more you're going to want to include things like hand sanitizer and baby wipes.

MINI HEADLAMP » I have the ninja Surefire headlamp and use it all the time. But when size matters, I haven't found much better than the Petzl e+LITE.

CHEMLIGHTS » Ideal is one green or yellow and one red mini lights.

BATTERIES » make sure you have 1 reload for everything that takes batteries.

EAR PRO » normally keep my MSA's hanging off my bag strap, but also keep at least one set of softies in my bag.

URBAN SERE KIT » I rock the Deliberate Dynamics kit that comes with some lock pics, kevlar cord, handcuff key, and some other useful yet small lightweight items.

MINI FLASH DRIVES » I would keep key files and scans. ID cards, passport, a credit card, contact numbers, etc. It should be encrypted/ password protected.

SURVIVAL ITEMS » GPS, wrist compass, fire starter, etc.

SAT PHONE » There are some cheaper options these days. A Sat Phone normally provide dual function as GPS. Make sure it is charged.

LIVE AND LEARN – BAG TIP: A lot of the bags have the magazine pouches on the outside (away from the body). Avoid those styles, they don't work well when you put loaded magazines in and cause the bag to roll when you start running around. Mags should be near the back and closest to the body to keep it upright and mags where they need to be when you reach for them.



GUESSING GAME

People often ask us “What rifle/caliber is your favorite”? This is a great question, but we’d be lying if we said you’ll get a consistent answer from the whole team. Aside from creating new shop rivalries, we played this elaborate guessing game to show the wide variety of firearm preferences here at Vortex. When you call, e-mail or hit us up on social, you’ve got a true melting-pot of shooting enthusiasts, hunters, competitors and aficionados at your disposal – Ready to help with any question, comment or concern you may have!

LETS BEGIN

10 of our in-house “Gun-Enthusiasts” were asked to guess their fellow co-workers go-to rig. Some guesses were spot on, some were way off – All are entertaining. Read below to get the skinny on some of our staff’s favorite firearms.



STEVE MORGAN

.300 Norma Mag in a custom AI MC.

STEVE MORGAN – GUESSED BY JIMMY H.
Steve is a trained killer. A former sniper, he can kill any of us, at any time, from any location, and without anyone else knowing what the h*** just happened. Surely, he loves something long-range capable and chambered in .308. British-born, he’d be shooting that out of an AI AXMC.

STEVE MORGAN – ACTUAL ANSWER
You can tailor this load to do anything. Heavy bullet at 3100+ FPS for serious long-range work? Check. Or load a 130 gr and push it so hard you create a rift in the space/time continuum, transporting you to the Mesozoic era to eat a mastodon egg omelet... As for the AI - it’s built like a brick s*@t house.



MARK BOARDMAN

My favorite gun is my Browning A-bolt Stainless Stalker in 300 WSM.

MARK BOARDMAN – GUESSED BY SCOTT P.
Mark “I can’t make up my mind” Boardman - From feather-weight mountain rifles to ultra-custom AR’s, Mark’s wanted them all. He’s never bought any of them, but he’s come very close. Except for one time – That Browning A-Bolt in 300wsm. Since buying it, his attachment to it is borderline unhealthy.

MARK BOARDMAN – ACTUAL ANSWER
Got this rifle in ‘04 for a DIY SE Alaska bear hunt. It’s truly a do-all killing stick. Too much gun for smaller ungulates like antelope? Has anything ever been too dead? It’s the civilized-man’s, modern-day 30-06. Plus, that thin rubber butt plate lets you know you shot a f#@\$%g rifle every time you squeeze the trigger.



RYAN MUCKENHIRN

The 1903 Mannlicher-Schoenauer chambered in 6.5x54MS.

RYAN MUCKENHIRN – GUESSED BY KEN C.
Ryan is a good shot (don’t tell him I said that) but something like the 6.5 Creedmoor is too mainstream for him. To me, he just screams “Weatherby Mark V Lazermark chambered in .300 Weatherby Magnum”. Something that really “puts em down”, but looks classy while doing it.

RYAN MUCKENHIRN – ACTUAL ANSWER
The Mannlicher-style full-stock, and iconic “butterknife” bolt-handle represent a period of elegance and form in riflemaking. Second-to-none in fit and finish, the 1903’s action is smoother than most any modern rifle. With a well-placed 160gr. round-nose projectile, the 6.5x54ms does great with deer, antelope and other similar-sized game.



SCOTT PARKS

Custom short action Bolt gun with integral base action, chambered in 6mm

SCOTT PARKS – GUESSED BY JIMMY J.
Ol’ Scotty is a man of precision. His ideal rifle would be custom-built by Jim See of Elite Accuracy and chambered in 6.5x47 Lapua. Finished with a surgeon action, heavy-taper cut-rifled barrel with Silencerco Omega suppressor, AI chassis, and a Razor HD Gen II 4.5-27x56.

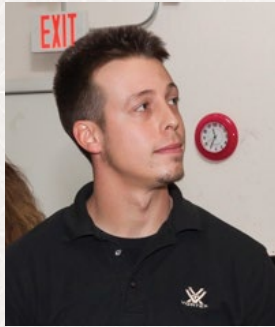
SCOTT PARKS – ACTUAL ANSWER
As an avid precision rifle competitor, my gear has to be reliable and extremely accurate. A custom short action from Impact, LonePeak, Defiance or Surgeon will start it off. Chamber it in 6mm Vortex with an AI classic chassis, Cut rifled barrel, Silencerco Omega and Gen II Razor - I’m set!



JIMMY HAMILTON
VEPR .308 dressed up like an SVD Dragunov

JIMMY HAMILTON – GUESSED BY TOM L.
A profiler's worst nightmare. When not installing lights on his truck, he's cooking Chicken and Waffle Quesadillas in a pizza oven. Despite a vast firearms collection, I'd guess his favorite is the beloved custom VEPR in .308. If I'm wrong, I do know it'll be something in some way obscure or customized.

JIMMY HAMILTON – ACTUAL ANSWER They don't call me AK-47 Jim for nothin'. The easy choice for me is something in the AK family. Now, not just any ol' AK – My favorite would have to be my VEPR SVD clone, chambered in .308. An iconic communist design, breathing pure, unadulterated, American fire.



JIMMY JORDAN
Cooper Firearms Western Classic chambered in 6.5x47 Lapua

JIMMY JORDAN – GUESSED BY STEVE M
Going to the gym, making trucks rusty, collecting bald headed Troll® dolls, and clearing malfunctions are Jimmy's favorite pastimes. His special AR, dubbed the "Fail-boat Mk. 44 1/3" consists of every component necessary to ensure that 60% of the time, the gun only goes "Bang" one time.... Every time...

JIMMY JORDAN – ACTUAL ANSWER
My ideal/favorite rifle and cartridge combination on the planet would be a Cooper Firearms Western Classic chambered in 6.5x47 Lapua (Or just the "By 47" for us hard core enthusiasts). Sitting on top would be a 3-15x42 Vortex Razor HD LH.



KEN CALHOUN
Ruger Precision Rifle chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor

KEN CALHOUN– GUESSED BY RYAN M.
Despite being built like a regal silverback, Ken appreciates less recoil than more. A man of great practicality and reason, when Ken went for a big-game rifle, he couldn't resist the smooth-pumping Remington 7600, chambered in none other than America's quarter-bore - The .25-06 Remington.

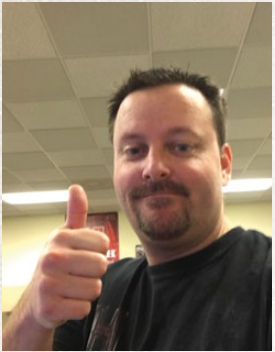
KEN CALHOUN- ACTUAL ANSWER – After much deliberation, I'm going to go with my Ruger American Predator in 6.5 Creed with a Viper HS 2.5-10x44. Dumb accurate, wallet-friendly, very light, and fun to shoot. Perfect for coyotes, whitetails and steel.



REUBEN ALECKSON
Suppressed Remington 700 AAC-SD in .300 Blackout

REUBEN ALECKSON – GUESSED BY DAVID H.
Reub can do it all – Long range, run and gun, pistol and shotgun. With his AR, though – He's magic. He decimates stages of targets at blistering speed, and makes it look easier than Oprah handing out 100 Pontiacs. He chooses to do it with his Lan Tac Raven, chambered in none other than 5.56.

REUBEN ALECKSON - ACTUAL ANSWER
My favorite rifle and cartridge combo is my Remington 700 AAC-SD in .300 Blackout. It's in a McMillan A3 stock in desert camo with Badger M5 bottom metal and a Dead Air Sandman Ti suppressor. I've never not heard something so unbelievably not loud... Or something...



TOM LEATHERBERRY
"The 6mm Creedmoor"
(No specific firearm listed)

TOM LEATHERBERRY– GUESSED BY MARK B.
Tom's favorite gun has a 72-inch barrel, weighs 96 lbs. and is chambered in 6mm. He shoots at the 100-yard line, testing loads until he finds the one that...ZZZ... zzz...ZZZ.... Whoa! sorry about that. Anyway – Once he reaches absolute perfection, he sells the thing and immediately starts over. Thus, I cannot say a specific rifle, and only a set of characteristics.

TOM LEATHERBERRY – ACTUAL ANSWER
Yes, I'm "Tommy Grendel." I love the 6.5 Grendel, but can't say it's my "Go to." I doubt my guesser knows my favorite is my custom 6mm Creedmoor. It's stupid accurate and perfect for new LR shooters. It instills immediate confidence and I'm entertained the first time someone pulls its 8oz. Trigger.

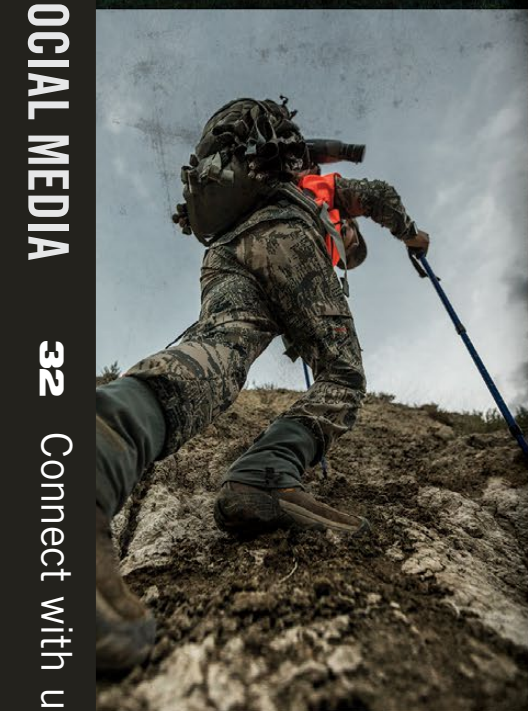


KATE JORDAN
Broken beer bottle.
Nothing else.

KATE JORDAN – GUESSED BY REUBEN A.
Kate can empty a mag while fixing her truck faster than you can ask why she roundhouse-kicked you in the neck. I really can't say what her favorite rifle is, because frankly, I'm scared to know and too afraid to ask. If I were to hazard a guess, it's a member of the AR-15 family in 5.56 and a breathtakingly fluid extension of her body. Please don't tell her I said any of this.

KATE JORDAN – ACTUAL ANSWER
Broken beer bottle chambered in any one of our fine, local IPA's.





We are here to answer any questions you may have and look forward to personally welcoming you to

#VORTEXNATION



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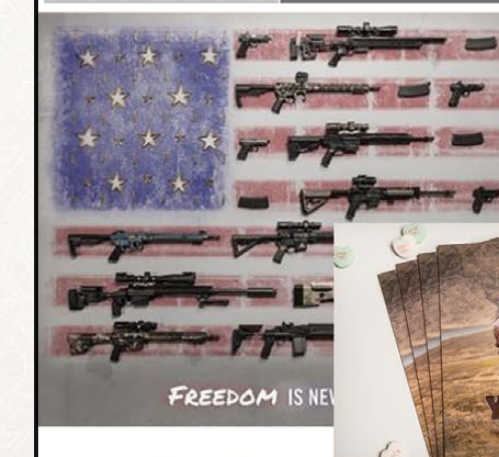
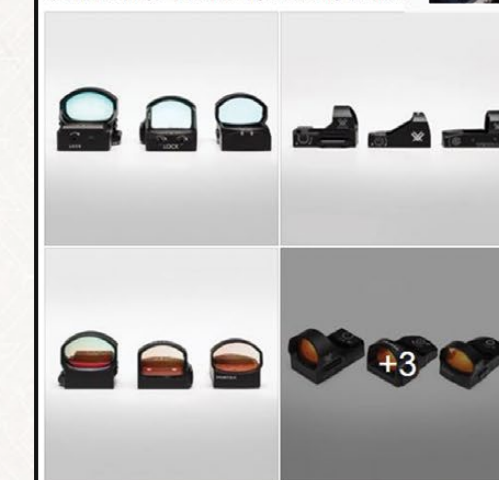
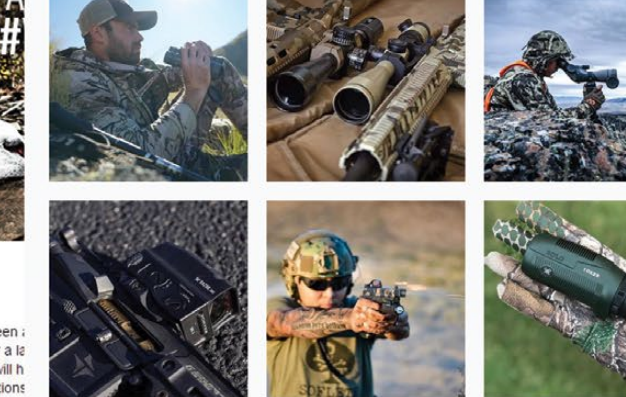


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WANT A FREE HAT?

Of course YOU do! Just send an email to vortexgear@vortexoptics.com with the code **VTXFR33HAT** in the subject line, why you chose Vortex and your address, and we'll send one your way. One free hat per person. Offer good through 2018.

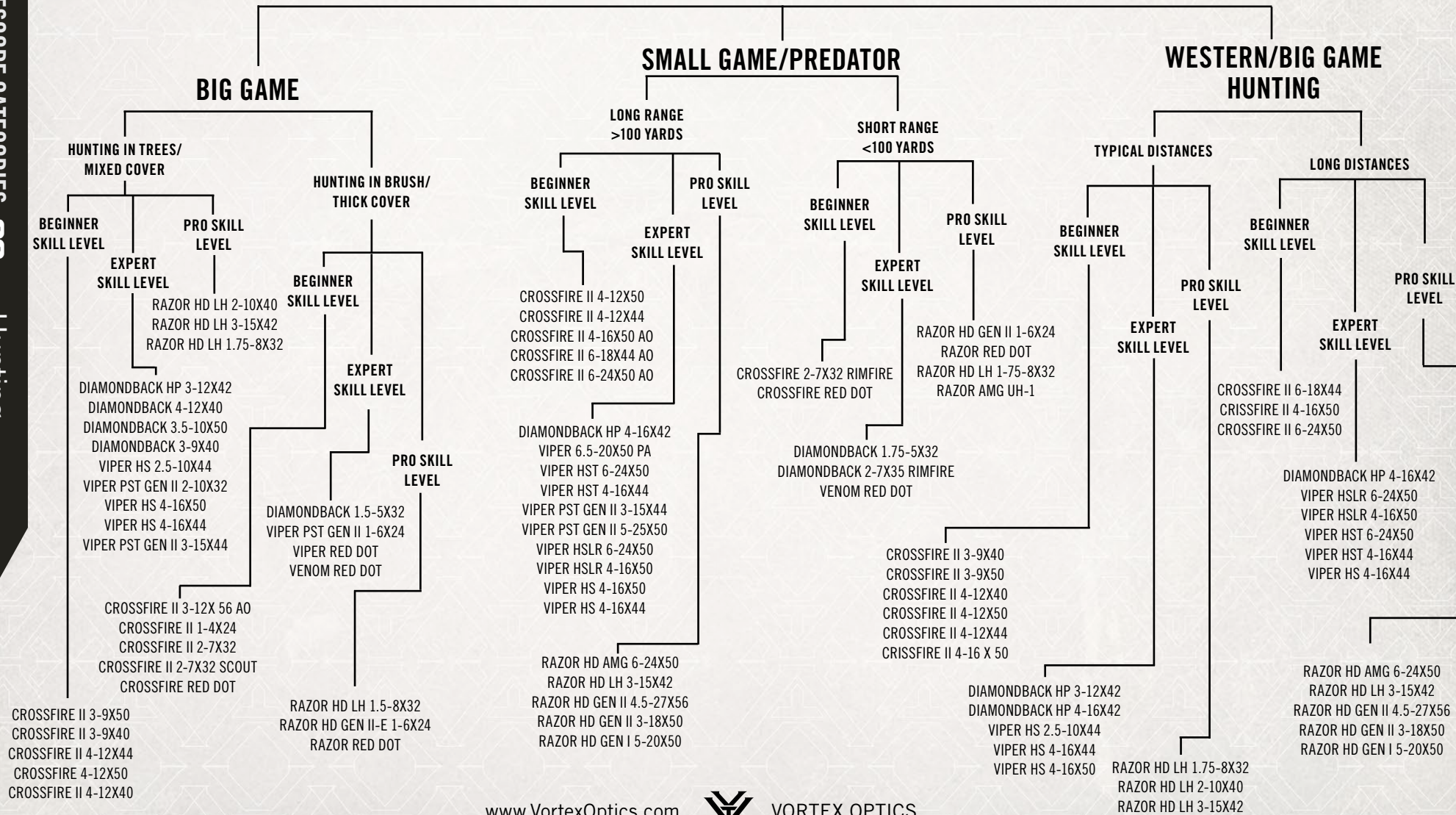
HUNTING CATEGORY

If you see this icon, you're on the right track to picking your next hunting riflescope. The game pursued, terrain encountered, firearm chosen, and budget will dictate the best riflescope for the job. Dark-timber to long-range, cross-canyon shots - We've got you covered.

These are our suggestions, but our riflescopes can be used for many applications.



WHAT KIND OF HUNTING



www.VortexOptics.com

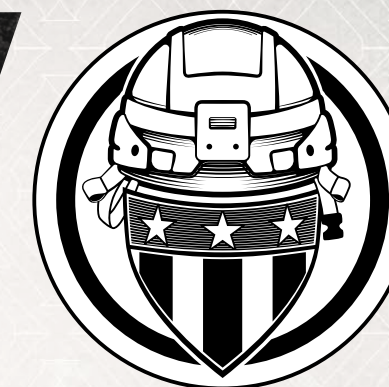


VORTEX OPTICS

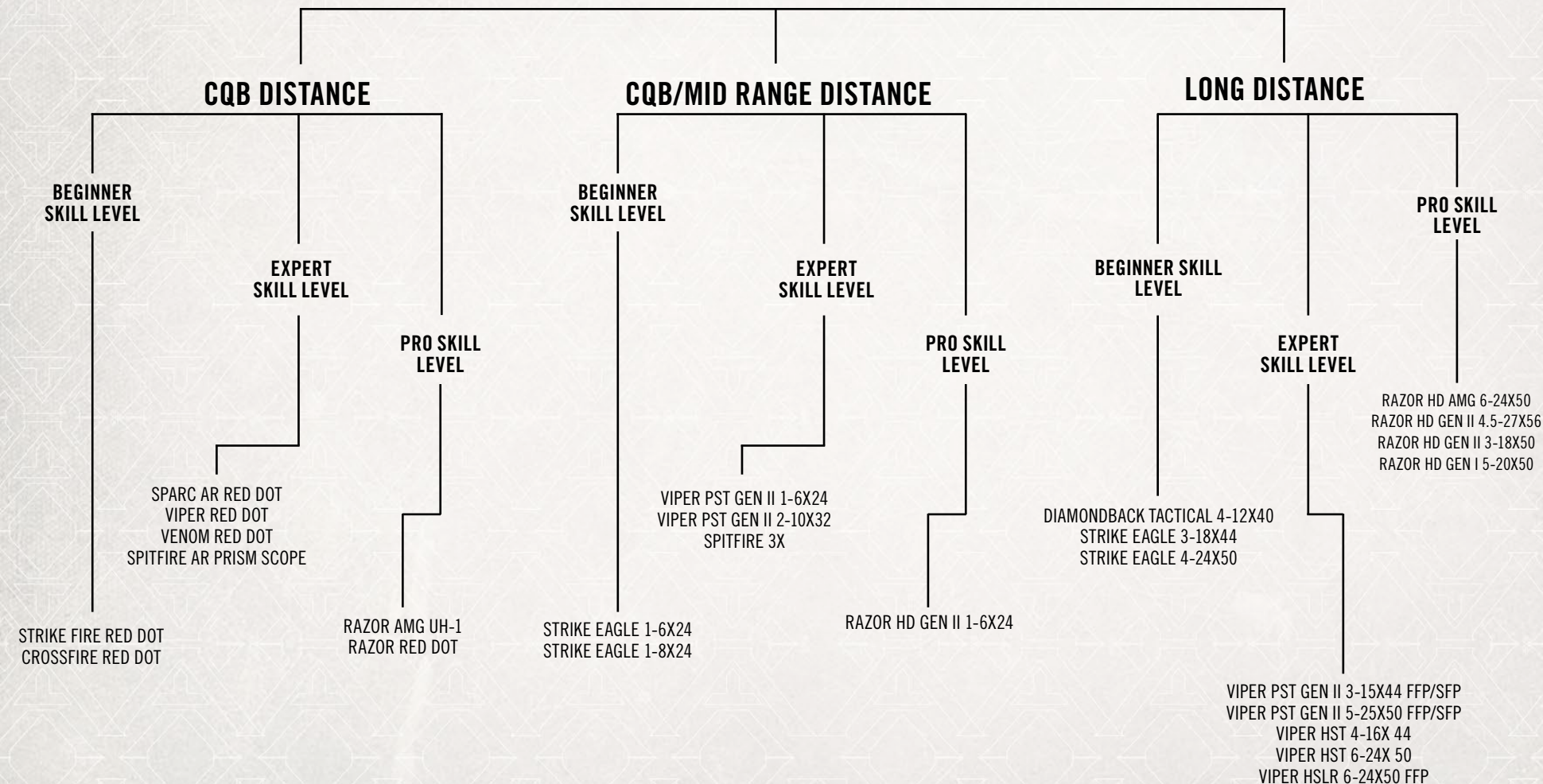
TACTICAL CATEGORY

Tactical shooting scenarios require specific features to best accomplish the task at hand. If this icon appears next to one of our riflescopes, it has those features. Law enforcement, military, home defense, range rat -- close quarters, to extreme long range. No matter where your "Tactical" hierarchy of needs falls, Vortex has a riflescope to get the job done.

These are our suggestions, but our riflescopes can be used for many applications.



WHAT RANGE DO YOU SHOOT AT THE MOST



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VORTEX OPTICS

TARGET CATEGORY

There's more than one way to pew pew pew. The good news is, we make optics for all of them. Break down the who, what, where, when, why of your next shooting adventure, and we'll supply the "how" - with the best optic to fit your needs. If you see this icon when selecting a riflescope, you're right on target.

These are our suggestions, but our riflescopes can be used for many applications.



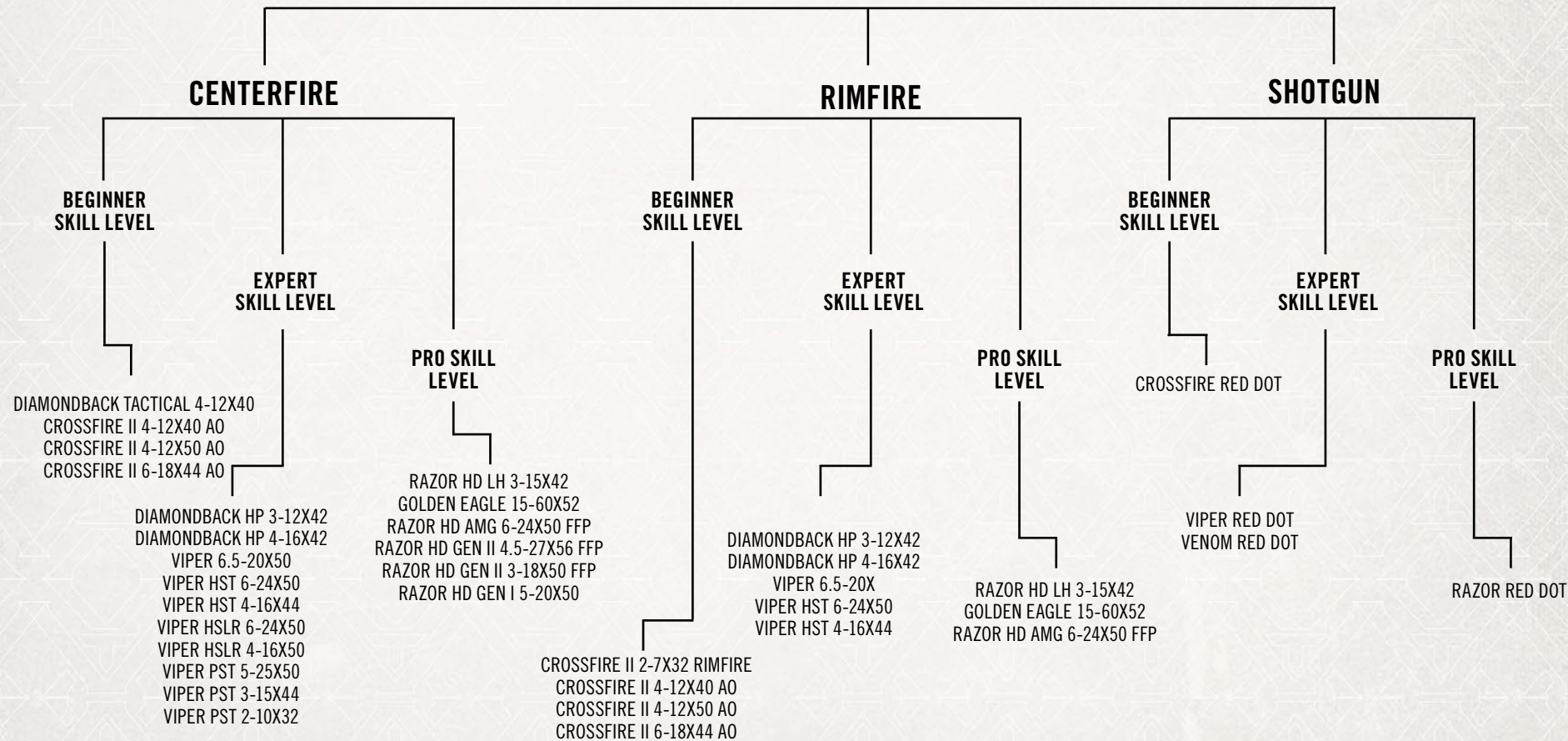
COMPETITION CATEGORY

If you see this icon, you're one step closer to winning your next match. 3-gun to Precision Rifle, USPSA to F-Class - whatever your competitive shooting discipline(s), we have the optic to assist with your trip to the podium.

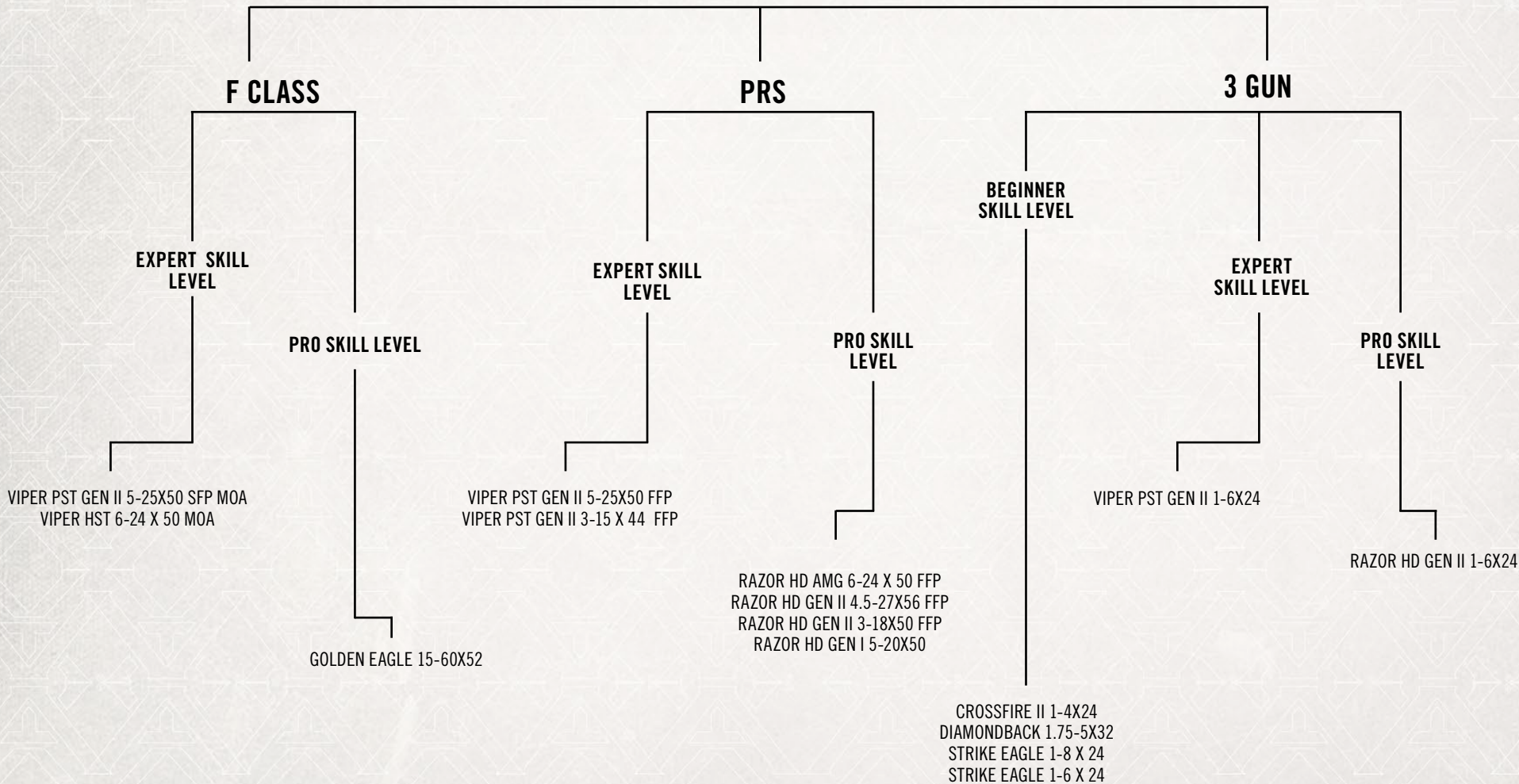
These are our suggestions, but our riflescopes can be used for many applications.



WHAT STYLE DO YOU PREFER?



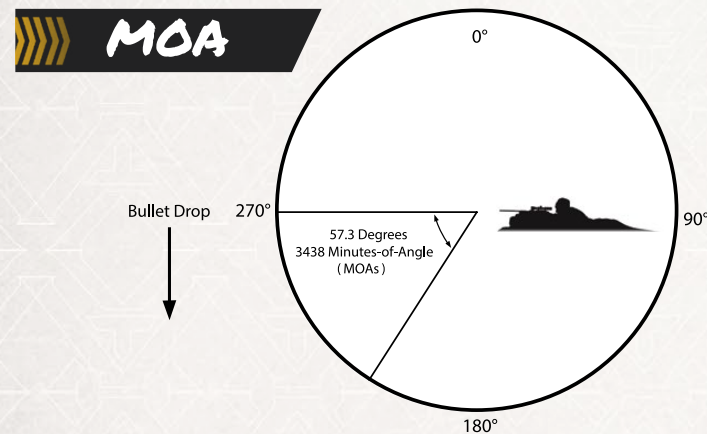
WHAT KIND OF COMPETITION



MOA MRAD

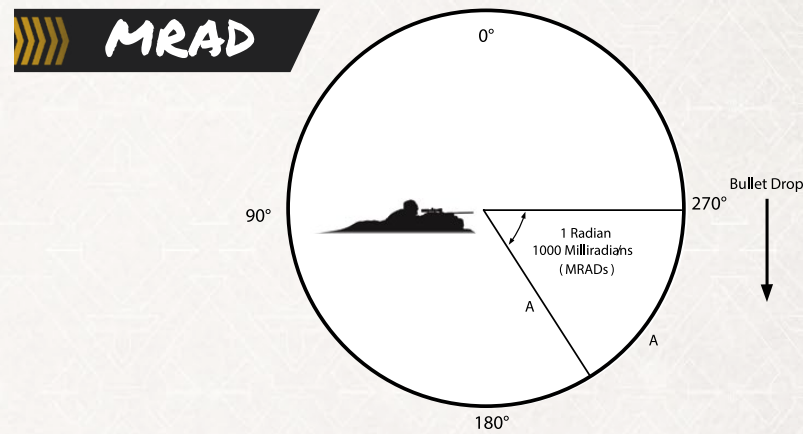
WHICH IS BEST?

Unfortunately, the best answer is “Neither”... Allow us to explain. MOA and MRAD are both angular units of measurement – much like inches and centimeters are linear units of measure. If you asked two people to build the exact same house, but gave one the directions in inches, and one in centimeters, they’d still build the same house, just measured in different numbers. The same goes when accounting for change in bullet impact or drop – MOA and MRAD are two ways of doing the same thing. While we recommend sticking with whichever you’re most familiar, if you’re new to the game, unfamiliar with the difference, or looking to switch, perhaps this will help:



MINUTE OF ANGLE (MOA)

- » Most commonly associated with “Inches at 100 yards”, the angle created by 1 MOA roughly equates to 1 inch on a target at 100 yards.
- » The correlation to linear units like inches breaks down after 100 yards – it’s not exact, so the margin of error becomes much larger over distance.
- » Units of MOA are given in fractions like $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{1}{8}$ – Unless you are used to these fractions, they can be hard to add or subtract when making adjustments on the fly.



MILLIRADIAN (MRAD)

- » Not as easily correlated to linear units like inches at 100 yards, but that’s OK – 99% of the time, you should only be thinking in angular terms of MOA or MRAD anyway.
- » Units of MRAD are given in .1 increments – for many, this is easier add or subtract when making adjustments on the fly.

FFP SFP

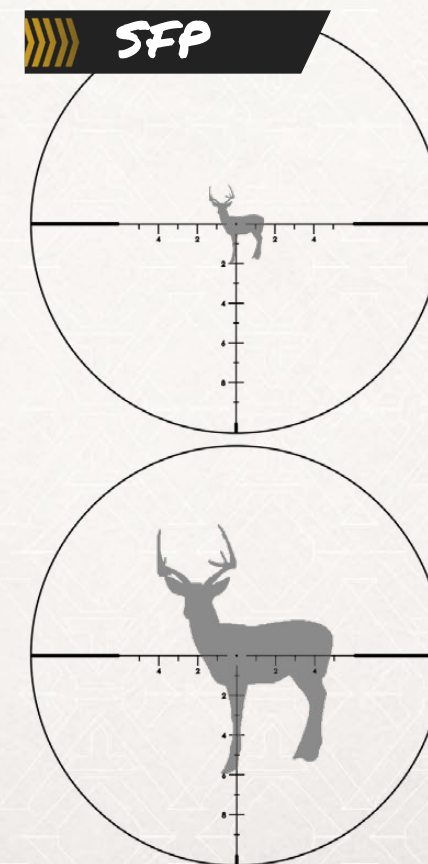
WHICH IS BEST?

Again, the answer is “Neither” – don’t you love us? Second Focal Plane (SFP) and First Focal Plane (FFP) indicate where the reticle is placed inside the scope’s optical system. Reticles in the First Focal Plane are mounted ahead of the major optical train – they basically “Meet up” with the image you’re viewing before everything is magnified, so your image and reticle will “Grow and Shrink” together and maintain the same scale to one another regardless of magnification. Reticles in the SFP are mounted oppositely – they “Meet up” with the image you’re viewing after it’s already been magnified, so they won’t appear to “Grow and Shrink” with the image as magnification changes, and are only calibrated to be scaled to the image on one specified magnification level. While neither is really better than the other, there are times when you may prefer one over the other – Perhaps this will help:



FIRST FOCAL PLANE RETICLES

- » Competitive long-range shooters who engage targets at a wide variety of distances, and with minimal time to dial lots of adjustments to shoot off center reticle will prefer FFP. PRS is a perfect example of this type of competition.
- » Because the measurements on FFP reticles can be used on any magnification, they often contain more information or holdover points – Most popularly, the “Christmas Tree” style reticles are usually FFP.
- » On max magnification, the reticle will appear quite large, and on minimum magnification, it will appear quite small. If you prefer the reticle to always appear the same, FFP might not be best for you.



SECOND FOCAL PLANE RETICLES

- » Generally speaking, choose SFP if you almost always shoot off center reticle – Though the scale of the image to reticle is only correct on one specified magnification, the center reticle is always correct, regardless of magnification
- » If you use your reticle to “Hold over” occasionally (Like in the case of a BDC), simply make sure you are on the correct magnification level before shooting (It’s almost always the maximum magnification)
- » All things similar, SFP scopes will be more affordable than the comparable FFP option due to the relatively easier manufacturing process for SFP scopes.

