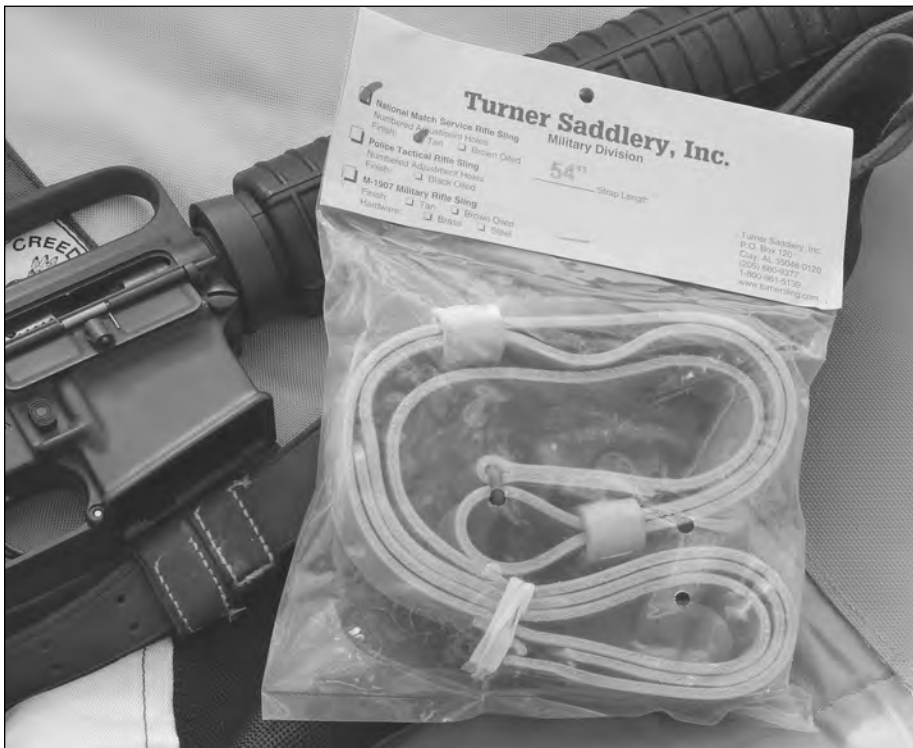


makes it last longer. My experience is also that oiling a sling prolongs or extends its stretch-in period. I've used light spray oil treatments, and that's harmless if not helpful, as long as it doesn't fully penetrate the strap. Something like WD-40 works well, sparingly – like once.

When slings go bad, by the way, they break. It's wise to have a spare.

Water won't hurt leather, after the fact. It's necessary to let it air dry, meaning no efforts are made to "dry" it, but water won't in itself hurt good leather. It performs poorly when wet, though, because it gets slick and will stretch like a big dog. When people work leather they wet it down. That's how they get it to take tooling and the like. I carry a web sling for use in downpours. Cotton web doesn't slip in the wet.



- Carry a spare sling, if you are a leather sling user. Never know when a clumsy steer's barbed wire scar will bite you and perforate a sling. As mentioned in the text, I also carry a cotton web sling with me for use with either a Match Rifle or Service Rifle when there's a downpour.

Changing The Oil

I do not recommend oiling a leather sling, or at least not with a traditionally-used product like neatsfoot oil. Some strongly disagree with that. I recommend deciding that a sling is a supply item rather than something made to last the life of the gun. Oil will make a sling last longer but it also makes it stretch more and takes some of its "bite" away. There are a whole lot of good shooters who never go more than a season with a leather sling. Synthetics can last a good long while.

Gloves

This next here is going to look something like a catalog, but that's okay. There are a lot of options and this is a very important piece of gear. I've tried at least every glove type I've ever seen or heard tell of, and that's why I had so many to take pictures of. A good-quality full-fingered glove is probably the easiest thing to recommend, and therefore the first thing to try. Not a knock, but "our" gloves are not as good as "theirs," and I'm talking about furin-made compared to domestically-produced. There's a huge price difference also, but it's worth it. The Euro-gloves usually have better leather, better lining, and an overall increased stiffness to them that helps us shoot better. Speaking of that, if you're shopping a maker that has such options, there may be different degrees of stiffness available in the full-fingered gloves. For offhand, this type glove is indispensable for most position mechanics.



- This is a Gehmann full-finger glove with Euro-style rubber, the "gravelly" kind. There's not much padding in this glove style due, primarily, to strict ISSF equipment rules regarding such. These are also available as "summer gloves" that have less than full fingers to provide ventilation. Other top glove producers are Monard, Kustermann, and Anschütz.

Dropping out of Old School.
 The longer I go along the more everything I do seems to be Old School. However! The good of that is having experience can be counted on. The bad is overlooking new experience that can likewise be counted on, farther. Glue is a good example. I use it. Still do, sometimes. I have more recently found adequate retention from the "white" rubber on Monard gloves. These don't last too long, but they do stick better than the "pebbly" rubber I had given up on. I use a conventional glove in the book photos because it's a fair example of what most shooters use, and also because I didn't want to get glue all over some of the clean and new things we photographed.