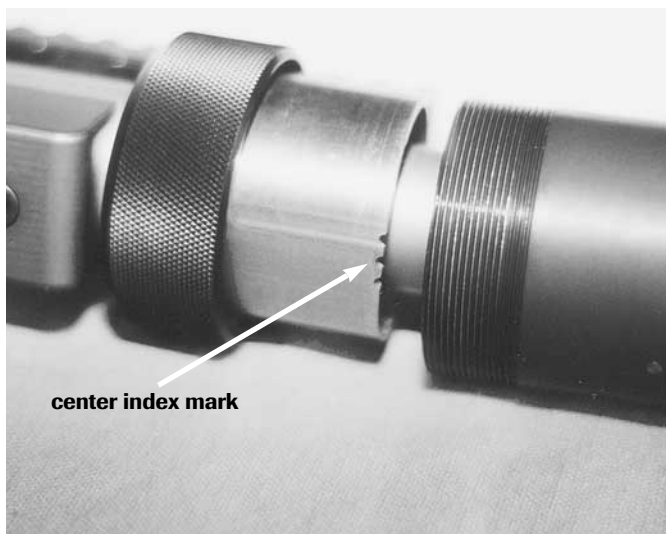


TUBULAR FORENDS

Tubular forends are the way to go. It's like holding a piece of pipe: it finds its own natural position in the hand. Tube forends also allow other engineering elements like ventilation for barrel heat and mirage blocking (if properly designed), and that's a great combination. It's all dependent, of course, on the location of the vents. A round forend can roll in the hand to fit cant in either direction, and if the forend can be rotated to provide options in handstop orientation, that's even better.



On my T2K, I set the forend in the center position (the handstop would be vertical if the rifle were vertical). I shot the SR-25 for some time with the forend rotated 10 degrees clockwise (shooter's perspective) so the handstop would be more nearly vertical with the rifle canted in my prone position (I canted that rifle more). On the Model 70 I couldn't do much since the forend was fixed, but I did inlet the stocks so the action set a few degrees clockwise and milled the accessory rail so it was off set about a quarter inch to the left (shooter's perspective).

wide or too flat, or a combination, forces the hand to spread. The forend tube on the TUBB 2000 is 2.5 inches in diameter, which I found the optimum diameter to keep the hand in a natural position and not force it to flatten or spread. It's a little smaller in diameter than what I used on the SR-25, but it was on that rifle that I found the benefits of the tube.

HANDSTOP

The handstop simply functions to "stop" the hand or set its forward boundary along the forend for the sitting and prone positions.

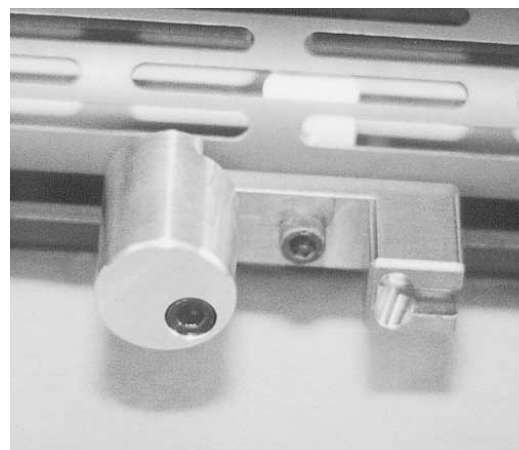
As said, for prone, a good place to start is setting the handstop approximately the same distance from the trigger as the buttplate is from the trigger. I find that I usually have the handstop moved farther back than that prone, but its position also can vary slightly from range to range.

It's different in sitting for reasons

explained in detail in the segment on that position. The handstop comes back more than the stock lengthens. I pull mine back almost two inches from its prone setting, and recommend that shooters experiment starting the handstop all the way back and then moving it out rather than approaching it from the other direction. I also think that's good advice, in effect, for prone as well. I'd rather see someone start short because I see too many shooters on the line that I think have their stops too far out.

Although I spent more time discussing handstop design when covering the prone and sitting positions in their own segments, to keep such related material fresh in mind, following is an overview of handstop design elements I think are important, and the easiest way to tackle this is following my own chronology of experiments that led to what I'm using now.

Following the lead of other shooters when I first started competing, I used one of the oversized handstops that are still very popular today. One of these "jumbo" handstops, though, is about the worst thing I can imagine using now. I then shot for years with an Anschütz® adjustable handstop and still like the concept behind it, although I've since taken it my own direction. The first Anschütz® adjustable stop I tried was a smaller version of those huge aluminum stops and still had the same horseshoe-style contour. I eventually had switched to another



Anschütz® adjustable stop that was round plastic and that was better because it was smaller and fit my hand better. I don't have small hands, but I don't like a handstop forcing my hand to accommodate its contour; it should be the other way around. From there I took Anschütz® hardware and fashioned my own handstop from a barrel Staub. Better still. However, best yet was right around the corner.

My left hand used to get sore where it hit the handstop and that was the reason for the padded mitt I wore in the sling supported positions. After looking at the handstop and first deciding its width was a factor in it not fitting me as well as I felt it should, I went to the smaller, round stop. That was better, but after looking at the height of the handstop I realized that it kept the sling off the back of the hand, and that was a missed opportunity. I shortened the handstop height enough that the sling pinched down on the back of my hand. Getting this support from the sling took away some of the forward pressure of the hand against the stop, which was before this change the only sensation of contact with the

rifle in the left hand. Now I have support at the front of the hand and at the back of the hand. It has equalized, more or less, and it is worlds better. This sling pressure against the back of the hand is something the Service Rifle shooters, as well as ISU Standard Rifle shooters, have had to rely on, and now I've incorporated it with the handstop.

Ultimately, I used all these experiments