

TEST REPORT



Victory's competition cartridges have proved highly successful on sporting clay courses all over Europe and are set to take off here. These are colour-coded allowing instantaneous identification when changing stands and facing various game simulations.

VICTORY SHOTSHELLS

BY OUR TECHNICAL EDITOR

Victory Cartridges Australia are importing a quality European line of shotshells which are destined to develop a strong following in both competition and hunting in this country. We found our test loadings deserving of high marks for superior components, construction and performance.

This Cyprus-made ammunition has only just been introduced on these shores, and therefore is an unknown entity among Aussie shotgunners. But in Europe, and in other parts of the world, it's an entirely different story. Wherever Victory has been put to the test at competition level, it has speedily earned for itself an enviable reputation.

Victory cartridges are produced by a company called G&L Calibres of Nicosia, Cyprus. To supply the international market, G&L Calibres built an entirely new produc-

tion facility, equipped with the latest tooling and computer controlled machinery.

In addition, the factory developed its own plastic formula for their hulls, which are of the Reifenhauser type (ribbed exterior and no internal tape). They are of three-piece construction with base wad insert and high quality brass head. The primer pocket is of standard 209 size. Handloaders will very likely develop a fondness for this Victory hull; not only because it will accept standard — size American-made primers, but also because it offers a lot of capacity along with easy recrimping.

Victory cartridges are renowned for setting speed records and when I tested the company's Sonic load, I was surprised to find it's the fastest competition shell I'd ever clocked. But I got an even greater shock when I ran a number of 24 gram

Stryker over the skyscreens. The Skeet version with 9s streaked along at 1570 fps at the muzzle and averaged 1200 fps over the first 20 metres.

One thing I should mention, however, is that with the high velocity Victory shotshells you'll soon find that you require less lead. I found myself missing in front instead of behind targets as is normally the case. On targets angling away, I found that I only needed to swing along with the bead just on the front edge of the clay. The lead on passing targets was almost cut in half!

Victory cartridges have been popular in England for more than 12 years and are steadily gaining ground in the USA ever since their introduction there two years ago. Going on my tests, Aussie gunners, particu-



Left: In sporting clays the thrown targets come in various sizes and shots are taken at all angles — high and low — but with Victory you change loads rather than chokes. Below Left: Harvey checks uniformity and density of 0 metre pattern with No.9s in a Super Sporting 32 gram load.

larly sporting clay shooters, should be impressed with Victory's looks and performance, especially when you consider all their special features and advantages they have to offer.

G&L use a unique system of colour-coding on their shells so that the gunner can instantly see what he's shooting. For example, with the Challenger 28 gram Sporting Series, the loads with No.9 shot are light gray, No.8 royal blue and 7-1/2 dark green. You can look down in your pocket and immediately distinguish which shells you want.

Victory offers a wide of variety of loads in its line of shotshells and there's something to suit everyone — trap, skeet, sporting clays. Victory's marketing thrust in Australia is not aimed exclusively at the claybird shooter; hunting loads are also being imported. All are 70mm in length and are duplicates of the loads being marketed worldwide.

With 15 specific target loads designed to handle any kind of gunning situation, Victory shells are all the colours of the rainbow. I predict that the spent hulls in green, purple, blue, teal, tan, rust and gray will soon be littering the ground around sporting clay stations in every state.

The shot itself is of excellent quality, based on visual examination. It is bright and clean, of uniform size and roundness, with a total absence of imperfections such as flats and dimples.

When I dismantled three of the skeet loads I found there was a 2/10 grain variation in the powder charge which speaks highly of the G&L loading machines. Here again the shot pellets were bright and clean, with the pellets appearing to have perfect roundness. The average payload weight was 1.5gn under full weight, and the pellet count (averaging 568) varied by five pellets, which is hardly worth mentioning when dealing with pellets of such small diameter and high per gram pellet count.

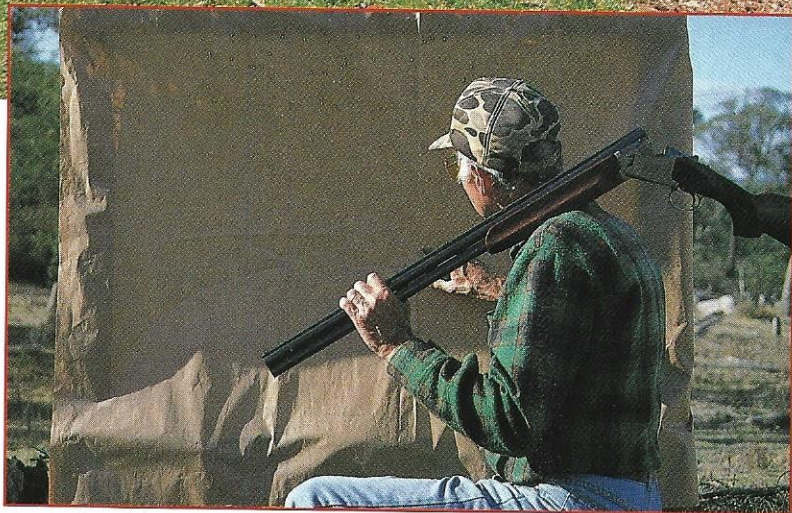
Five rounds of Stryker Skeet No.9 were fired for pattern at 23 metres using a Beretta A-303 autoloader with 64cm cylinder barrel. The shot spread opened up to roughly 120cm, with the width of the effective pattern being close to 90cm. Pellet distribution was evenly balanced throughout the 70cm circle.

CHALLENGER SERIES

Victory literature lists Challenger was a light skeet loading (2-3/4 dram equivalent). The series starts out with 28 grams of No 7-1/2 in a dark green hull. This load has been widely used for all disciplines of trap shooting, (the national team of CIs used Challenger during the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona) and by Sporting FITASC disciplines such as Edith Barnes of UK.

V1 SONIC SERIES

Sonic comes in three colours and shot sizes: 7-1/2 in a dark blue hull, No.8 in red and No.9 in a



gray hull. These are super shells designed to work as a system for sporting clay shooters and show unusually high performance. Propellant in the No 7-1/2 loading is 25.3gns of a mixture of pink and sage green flakes.

The shot carried in a plastic cup was very uniform as to size and so hard that I ran a crush test on it several times to verify that it checked out at 17 percent! This is easily the hardest trap shot I've ever tested. Velocity at the muzzle was 1505 fps and shot to shot consistency was equally as good as with all the other Victory loadings tested.

SUPER SPORTING SERIES

This is a 32 gram — three gram equivalent especially designed for sporting competition No 7-1/2, No.8 and No.9 shot comes in teal, red and green hulls respectively. I shot a box of No 7-1/2 in the field on rabbits with pretty good effect. Then I got a friend to fire the 32 gram 8s and 23 gram 9s interchangeably and they functioned perfectly through his Beretta A-303.

Typical results of three shot tests showed the 32 gram 550 Super Sporting Load with 9s filled out the 70cm-diameter circle very evenly, and some shot even impacted on the fringe area. On each pattern sheet, the 9s gave a full 70cm spread that would have scored the target.

However, when the Victory 550 Super load with 32 grams of 8s was patterned, the entire picture changed. Shot showed a tendency toward centre density at 23 metres, indicating that the shot strings main expansion took place between 23 to 30 metres.

VICTORY HUNTING LOADS

This end of the Victory line-up was represented with samples of three different 70mm high — base shells — all with 16mm brass-plated heads, power piston wads and six-point crimps — Victory, Europa and Mini Magnum. Victory is assembled in a white hull with a chukar partridge and rabbit on the side. My sample held 35 grams of No.6 shot but it's available in shot sizes from 3 to 7. Europa which is put up in a tan-coloured hull, holds 32 grams of No.6 shot but can be had in shot sizes from 1 to 10.

The Mini Magnum is Victory's answer to the ever popular high velocity (1330 fps) hunting load with 40 grams of No.4 shot. It is put up in a black hull and pellets are extra hard for top flight pattern performance.

I used the Victory and Europas on a rabbit shoot with excellent results. This didn't surprise me because prior to using them in the field I patterned them in my Winchester 23 and SKB auto and got beautifully dense, uniform patterns at 37 metres.

This Mini Magnum ought to be an exceptionally effective long-range duck load for pass shooting out to 50 metres judging by the patterns I got at that distance.

Victory covers the entire shotgunning spectrum: on the light end, I'd recommend Super Sport 7-1/2 and 8s for quail and snipe. When we move up the scale in bird size to ducks and pheasants the hunting loads — Victory and Europa in 4s and 6s will handle the job in an exemplary manner. Some hunters who choose 7-1/2s have taken plenty of game birds with the smaller shot, but enjoy most success where the range is relatively short and the birds get hit with a lot of pellets. As ranges lengthen too many cripples result with 7-1/2s and for this reason I prefer the extra penetration afforded by the larger shot sizes.

It can be said that the Victory shotshell line is deserving of pretty high praise. This is quality ammunition; there is no question about it. And when I say *quality* I am not only referring to the various components used in putting the loads together, but also to the uniformity of the powder and shot charges and performance in general.

For more information, contact: Victory Cartridges Australia, 17 Harris Street, Condell Park, NSW 2200. Phone/Fax:(02) 773 5333.



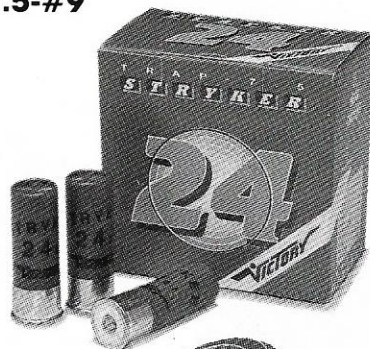
VICTORY

The Ultimate Load



#7.5-#9

#7.5-#9



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