

**March 2009**

*I bought a Miroku Grade 10 Sporting shotgun about 12 months ago which I really enjoy shooting, but I seem to be looking down the left side of the barrel after I have mounted the gun. I was told there is only two solutions to this. Grinding the wood off the left side of the stock or actually bending the stock over to give it more cast. I think filing wood off the stock will ruin the guns appearance. Would you recommend bending the stock to the desired cast instead?*

*Ian Little, Lismore, NSW*

Bending a stock to have more (or less) cast can be a tricky, and sometimes heartbreaking, business. The process is carried out by heating up the wood around the pistol grip of the gun with a variety of methods that can include hot oil, heat lamps or steam then after the wood is sufficiently heated weight and stress is slowly added through clamps or even bags of shot to “drag” the wood in the desired direction. Ian let me assure you this method does not come with any guarantees. “Stock Benders” give the same assurances of success as “Witch Doctors”. There are more variables in getting the cast correct than sending a rocket to Mars, but after saying that I have seen the odd one work. Wood density, quality of the heat and clamps, the guns metal action and design and the ability of the actual Stock Bender to stop the bending process at exactly the right point all come into play. I have known stocks that were bent to the right dimensions bend right back again the first time that they were left in the boot of a car on a hot day. I take your point about carving wood off the side of the stock may hurt the appearance of the gun, but any decent gunsmith could restore the finish to new with some time. Bending the wood may also hurt the finish on your stock especially if it is a lacquer based as opposed to an oil finished one.

My gut feeling is that if you want to go down this path based on cost and the worry about sanding wood of the side of the gun, then have an open mind about what you expect at the end. Find someone who has bent a few stocks with some success and in particular bent your model of shotgun. In a perfect world in would be great to borrow a gun of someone you don't like and bend their stock to see if it works or not. If that's not possible then get your stock bent on a Sunday after Church. You may need all the help you can get!

**Questions: [russell@corporateshootingstars.com.au](mailto:russell@corporateshootingstars.com.au)**