

PEDERSOLI
USA 418
(BOLT)
CREEDMOOR

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Sights for **Sore Eyes**

Pete Moore adds some extras to Pedersoli's 1886/71 lever-action rifle that should improve accuracy



The Pedersoli Winchester 1886/71, here we see the standard iron sight version but other sighting options are available

You may recall in the last issue I looked at Pedersoli's reproduction of the Winchester 1886/71 lever-action rifle. Chambered now in 45-70 Government and 444 Marlin it has been reintroduced more as a sporter for driven boar or large game than a classic for competitions like the Trafalgar Meeting at Bisley. A fact attested to by the Boar Buster models, which are the same as the full length rifle but with a 19" barrel, fibre optic insert front sight and rear optical base with fixed iron sight included. The only difference being that one is in walnut and the other shows a blaze, orange camo stock, which fits in with the European rules on this sort of hunting.

The full-length (24" barrel) 1886/71 shows classic sights, with a semi-Buckhorn elevator wedge mounted on the barrel and a ramped, brass-tipped blade with removable protector up front. Depending on your needs these are adequate, but if more

precision is required then Pedersoli's USA 418 Creedmoor aperture sight can be substituted, which is the first of two sighting upgrades that I was sent.

COMPROMISE

Aperture sights for classic BPCRs (black powder cartridge rifles) such as Pedersoli's Sharps 1874 usually take the form of a flip-up ladder located on the tang of the butt. This offers a micrometer, windage/elevation-adjustable disc with aperture, which tends to centre the eye better in terms of precision aiming. This can further

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be improved by replacing the front blade with a second aperture in a tunnel up front.

However, given the more hunting-orientated nature of the 1886/71 that little lot might be a bit too big and fragile, so Pedersoli have come up with a compromise with their 'Bolt' USA 418 Creedmoor sight. Another factor with tang sights is that lever-action rifles often cannot mount them due to the fact the breechblock (bolt) opens rearwards (over the tang). Certainly the case with the longer (45-70 cartridge overall length) of the 1886.

The bolt of the 1886 is pre-cut (slotted) for the USA 418, which consists of a long base with a small, windage-adjustable aperture at the rear that drops into the slots. Also included are an elevation thumbwheel stud, keeper screw, tension spring and pivot/hinge pin, which passes through the side of the bolt. The design is such that all of this sits above the firing pin channel so does not interfere with function and offers limited windage and elevation correction. In use it's better to remove the rear Buckhorn unit as it can get in the way. In terms of what you see you get the circular aperture with the pawn-shaped blade sitting neatly in the middle. The only problem is that in low light things get harder to see.

Fitting is a little involved and it was easier to remove the bolt and firing pin, as it makes access easier. This route will not be for everyone, so given a medium/high skill level is required it's worth paying the extra and getting a competent gunsmith to do the job.

SOLUTION

Eminently more practical if not historically correct is the optical sight



Detail of the 'bolt-mounted' USA 418 Creedmoor sight, not quite a Sharps tang but adding a degree of precision

base, which is the only answer for mounting a scope on an open-topped, top-ejecting receiver design like this. Unless you want to drill and tap the left hand side plate and have an off-set mount, which is both awkward and ugly!

The 1886/71 comes with rear of the barrel drilled and tapped for the forward base. Removing the Buckhorn sight reveals two more such fittings. The base comes with the four screws required to fit it. Once on inspection shows that Pedersoli have gone with a basic, 1/2" dovetail, so unless you use corresponding claw mounts you will have to get some form of 1" Weaver/Picatinny adaptor. In their catalogue they show a Boar Hunter with a QD, Picatinny adaptor to which a red dot is fitted. Scope-wise it's either a dot of some sort as that has no eye relief issue. But if you wanted to fit a magnifying sight it would have to be an intermediate eye relief (IER) type such as Leopold's x2.8 Scout Scope. Chances are most will opt for a red dot.

However, they have been cleverer with the iron sights and included an



The scope base replaces the rear sight and offers an integral, adjustable hi-vis, U-notch and is purely aimed at the hunter

integral U-notch unit with red fibre optic inserts either side. This sits on a short, angled, Williams-type dovetail base at the front of the mount that gives elevation correction and a limited amount of windage too, both planes being locked by screws once zeroed.

In terms of style the USA 418 Creedmoor is an elegant solution to improving the 1886/71s iron sight and accuracy potential. However and

looking much more out of time the scope base will turn your classic rifle into a far more effective hunting rig as it allows easy optical mounting.

{ TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS }

- Pedersoli USA 418 (bolt) Creedmoor
- 1886/71 barrel-mounted scope base
- Price: POA
- Contact: Henry Krank & Co Ltd, 0113 256 9163
- www.davide-pedersoli.com

↑ FOR

Two practical solutions for improving the 1886/71s sighting possibilities

↓ AGAINST

Creedmoor probably needs fitting by a gunsmith, scope base could do with being a Weaver/Picatinny type

→ VERDICT

Pedersoli's solution to improved accuracy and shootability