

The 10s Finest Hour



I truly never got on with my SP10, it never really fitted me, I always felt it was too short in the stock, also the trouble I had with the side link pivot wearing out, and then the movement between barrel and receiver constantly played on my mind. Or perhaps ultimately I wasn't a good enough shot to warrant having a 10 in the first place, this reason I feel is more to the point. I had 2 good flights with it, one on the larger estuary at the Canadas and this mixed flight on my local estuary.

The nights were beginning to draw in now and it was a case of getting out for a flight at nights after work before it was too late and we lost the chance. Driving to the estuary in the early evening, a stubble field behind the river was seen to have 500 + pinks on it, so it was the river I headed for. Parking by the road myself and Mal were soon suited and booted and striking out over the road bridge then on to the path that runs alongside the river. When the trees end on this path there is always a scene that gladdens my heart, the river shining like a sword and at full tide. The sound of feeding geese way up river quickened my pace again as the place I wanted to be was a good $\frac{3}{4}$ mile away. Arriving at my chosen spot in a muck and sweat, I decided to cross the burn and go on the other side of the fence that is the boundary between to farms. Sliding off the bank onto the mud, so I was legal, I pulled the SP10 out and loaded it up with 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ oz of steel BBs then I settled down to wait for the flight. Just before dusk I heard the "neeeep neeeep" of a drake mallard from down river then looking up I saw a pair of mallard bearing down on me. I had time for one shot and amazingly the steel BB secured both of them. The drake landed on the saltmarsh over the burn, and Mal with a giant leap over and back returned with it. The hen had fallen in the river and disappeared, Mal returned empty handed, it had gone!! At my shot I had been worried it would have flighted the geese from the stubble, but they happily remained munching on the split grain. Time marched on and the tension was increasing, as the darker it got, the nosier the geese got, I was very aware it was a matter of time before they came off. A couple of small skeins came over the land offering no shot then came a big lot. They were on a better line for me, on and on they came. When they were right over me I waited a couple of seconds until I had the middle of the skein over me jumping up I swung through one, the 10 thumped and a goose dropped onto the saltmarsh. Another goose was chosen and swung through, 2 shots were fired to no effect. I kept an eye on the skein to see the goose I had shot at drop into the river 200 yards behind me. I picked the goose on the saltmarsh and urged Mal on down the river.

After a brief mess about he was on it and had it to hand. Walking back to the fence and my hide a small skein of 6 came over and a quick single shot had me another goose. The river then was empty, all was quiet bar the rustling of the wind in the rushes, time to head for home. That I suspect will rank as the 10's finest hour, 5 birds for 5 shots! No fowler would grumble at that!



What did leave me grumbling was the SP10's capacity to throw empty shells to all points of the compass, finding these cases for reloading was neigh on impossible, and as a true Fifer that rankled beyond belief !!!

SW TVWA Club Member

