



CAOSA Gunners Hints

Index

- Hint 08 Gunners box
- Hint 09 How not to forget to prick
- Hint 10 New Obatex Black Powder

Gunners Hint 08

Always keep your Gunners Box close to you at a Public firing, especially when firing at an event that requires the shot to be fired at an exact time.

Last year at a firing I decided to leave my Box in the car and only took the necessary loading tools, cannon and charge to the firing area. Going about all the safety procedures well before time and eventually the loading, I had forgotten to prick the charge before priming. Trying to correct the situation the reamer that I had used was now not clearing the priming powder as it was not thin enough.

Needless to say that the shot was not fired! My first misfire.

Gunners Box has the necessary tools and aids, and in this instance a much thinner reamer which was in the box would have pierced through the priming powder and into the charge.

Comments: (By Erick Kellerman)

John is priming with FFFG and states he would have been able in pricking with a very thin pricker through the FFFG primed vent hole. This will not be an easy task once one has primed with G 12 or FFG.

John Farelo, April 2016

Gunners Hint 09

I once had a misfire in front of + - 200 spectators..... I forgot to prick.

What an embarrassment!!!!

Well, that was the last.



Once pre fire inspection is completed, the priming container gets attached to the pricker with a rubber band, reminding one to prick before priming.

Should you now still prime without pricking, give up as a gunner and try golf.

Erick Kellerman, May 2016

Gunners Hint 10

THE NEW OBATEX GUNPOWDER

APPEARANCE

The OBATEX looks just like the gunpowder with which we are familiar. It was available in grades FFG and FG.

We noticed that the weight of a given volume of OBATEX was lighter than that of the same volume of the old powder - BE CAREFUL !

GRAIN SIZE

The FFG grain size looked a little bit larger than the WANO FFG and looked like the old FG grade powder earlier used in cannons of small calibre.

TRIALS BY THE BBSU

Members of the Black Powder Shooting Union conducted trials with black powder rifles using a chronograph to measure muzzle velocity. They discovered a marked increase in velocity with the new powder when used in the same quantity as the old powder.

Here a caution – the increase in velocity in relation to chamber pressure is not linear, a 20% increase in velocity may indicate a 50% increase in chamber pressure.

TRIALS BY CAOSA

I attended trials at Bloemendal where four members of CAOSA fired blanks with the new powder in various sizes of cannon. They noted an increase in the violence of each shot and eventually decided that using a charge of OBATEX should be half as much powder as was previously used.

The critical question here is, "Is it half the weight or half of the volume" ? It must be clearly specified.

EXPECTATIONS

It is worth noting that different users of gunpowder want or need different characteristics from the product.

- Marble and other stone miners need a relatively slow burning gunpowder (Blasting Powder) that will split the rock along a line of holes drilled into it, and not blow the rock to pieces.
- Rifle and pistol target shooters require consistency and accuracy. They also need a product that is accepted as a reasonable equivalent for gunpowder by the international shooting community.
- Cannon gunners (firing blanks for re-enactments) want a noise, some flame, grey smoke and the smell of hard boiled eggs.

MY OBSERVATIONS

I also heard that the bang was louder and sharper, an indication of a fast burning powder. I noted comments about the recoil of the gun being tested, an exceedingly unreliable indicator of chamber pressure experienced.

I smelled the smoke and the gun after each firing and the boiled egg smell was not there, rather a sweetish smell something like a sweet factory on fire.

I did however agree with the other four gunners that a drastically reduced charge was what was required.

Perhaps slightly more scientific trials should be conducted where the grain size, the wadding used and the force of the ramming remains constant.

CAOSA RESPONSIBILITY

CAOSA has to re-issue all proof certificates which must indicate the weight of the proof charge and the standard charge in both the old and the new powders. If Piet sells his cannon to Ben and gives Ben the old proof certificate, Ben may try and use the same weight of the new powder with possible catastrophic results. On whose shoulders would that come to rest?

RUMOURS

I suggest that all readers of this document ignore all rumours about availability, price, possible changes to the product, unless they emanate officially from one of the recognised black powder organisations. Wait for supply and demand to settle down.

SAFETY

- Accept that gunpowder is never understood nor tamed.
- Do not think that you are cleverer than the manufacturer of the powder.
- Always start smaller and work upwards to a safe, satisfactory result.

Gerry de Vries (Researcher to CAOSA), May 2016