

## LONGTHORNE RELEASES THE RUTLAND

From Henry Tudor to Charles Windsor, British nobility's romance with fine firearms goes back centuries. Henry VIII was likely the first English monarch to own small arms, George IV patronized John Manton and the current Prince of Wales shoots

Aspreys—a gift from the Sultan of Brunei—while his daughter-in-law, Kate Middleton, just bought a Webley. Holland & Holland calls itself the “Royal” gunmaker, and William Evans offers a model named after one of Queen Victoria's sons.

Now Longthorne (Gunmakers), Ltd., the British firm whose unique marketing proposition is “solid construction barrels,” has a fresh candidate for the debutante's ball: The Rutland model, built in conjunction with Emma, the 11th Duchess of Rutland. (For more on Longthorne's barrels, see “Longthorne [Gunmakers], Ltd.” March/April '11.) Applying modern engineering skills and technologies wed with traditional methods, these sidelock over/unders are 100-percent English made in Longthorne's Lancashire workshops. The company debuted in 2010, but owners James and Elaine Longthorne Stewart have owned an engineering company for the past 28 years that manufactures gun components. In ad-

dition to The Rutland Range, Longthorne offers the sidelock over/under Hesketh and Hesketh Deluxe models. A prepared statement by the firm reads in part “Longthorne Gunmakers feel incredibly honored to have been entrusted by Emma, 11th Duchess of Rutland, to produce The Rutland Range of shotguns. The Duchess is passionate about British traditions, heritage, craftsmanship, creativity and innovation, and Longthorne are proud to be partnering with her in this exciting project.”

The Duchess, who, like

Kate Middleton, emerged from a modest background, married the Duke in 1992. The couple lives in historic Belvoir (pronounced “Beaver”) Castle, which hosted the CLA Game Fair in 2006 and 2009 and would have this past year had it not been rained out.

The symbol of the castle is a peacock, and this provided the inspiration behind the motif engraved on the Rutland. The Duke's family coat of arms is featured on the underside of the forearm, along with a coronet. The first models are 12-bores featuring 18-carat-gold-plated single triggers and gold lettering and are avail-

able with semi-pistol or straight stocks. But as with any British bespoke gun, any configuration can be ordered.

According to Elaine Stewart: “Weight ultimately depends on the final specification; however, for example, a gun with 30-inch barrels with a 38-thou wall thickness, one-half choke and straight-hand stock with a game rib is approximately 7 pounds 1 ounce. Believe it or not, this shoots 50-gram magnum cartridges relatively comfortably and, with the standard load of 32 grams, is often mistaken for a 20-bore due to the lack of recoil.” The price is £24,499, including British VAT. The company is also going to offer a “black” engraved model as an alternative to the silver finish and is currently working on a side-by-side and a 20-bore.

The Brits have never been more comfortable with their royals, but the question remains: Can a marriage

between post-modern space-age technology and one of Britain's oldest noble families benefit both?

For more information, contact Longthorne (Gunmakers), Ltd., 01144-1772-811215; [www.longthorneguns.com](http://www.longthorneguns.com).

—Douglas Tate



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