

Premium PRO STEEL

**One-of-a-kind levers, ARs and takedown snipers—
Dave Lauck's attention to detail perfects them all!**

By David Bahde

Dave Lauck's custom Texas Ranger lever action is the best kind of art—the kind that works. The .45 LC rifle is built to the highest standards of operation and craftsmanship, and it's a great tribute to the history of the Texas Rangers.



While attending the American Pistolsmiths Guild (APG) annual meeting, the opportunity arose to meet Dave Lauck, who was receiving the APG Pistolsmith of the Year Award. We spoke for a great deal of time about rifles, pistols, and Dave's extensive law enforcement background. As the evening closed, we talked about his move to Arizona's Chino Valley and decided a meeting at his shop should be arranged.

Getting into the American Pistolsmiths Guild is no easy task. It is not an organization you just "join" as a gunsmith. You need to present examples of your work that will be scrutinized by experienced gun makers. The guild includes the likes of Bill Wilson of Wilson Combat, Bill Laughridge of Cylinder & Slide, and Les Baer. The biggest names in the industry like Virgil Tripp, Terry Tussy, and Jim Clark are members. The quality level is extraordinarily high—many builders have crafted guns for presidents, celebrities and government officials.

That being said, these guns are not necessarily weapons designed for museums. Many of these builders specialize

in guns meant to be carried and used, and many of their improvements have moved into the mainstream.

PREDATOR HUNTING ROOTS

Although Dave Lauck started in the law enforcement profession in the 1970s, his experience for hunting and accurate rifles began as a predator hunter. In the western U.S. in the 1970s, hunting predators (coyotes, foxes, etc.) was popular and lucrative. Ranchers and even the state paid for the pelts of coyotes and other animals, meaning you could make a pretty good living at it. Most of these animals were elusive, fast, accustomed to being hunted and nocturnal. This was long before the days of high-tech night vision and thermal devices. You had to be an excellent shooter in all conditions. Most shooting was done with iron sights and at night. One of his earliest innovations involved putting glow-in-dark materials from watches on sights. Although a field-expedient idea at the time, night sights are seen on just about every make and model of pistol these days. Years of having to make do with what he had, and innovate on the fly, prepared Dave for his next mission.



A purpose-built and proven precision rifle, the MR-30PG is suited to harsh extremes.

>>> SPECIFICATIONS

D&L SPORTS MR-30PG

CALIBER:	.308 Winchester
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	35 inches
WEIGHT:	9.6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Custom D&L Sports
SIGHTS:	Optics-ready Picatinny rail
ACTION:	Bolt
FINISH:	Cerakote
CAPACITY:	5+1
MSRP:	N/A



Dave uses state-of-the-art equipment in his extremely clean and organized shop.

In the late 1970s, a local agency had a hostage situation go bad. The police sniper nearly missed his shot. As someone who was shooting very small predators that were moving at night, this seemed odd to Dave Lauck. It spurred him into what would be a lifelong career. He joined the force and went about improving the weapons and equipment used in the law enforcement field.

BUILDING BETTER ARMS

Like many of the best gunsmiths, it was all about building a better mousetrap.



Just like the Texas Ranger rifle, Dave's custom revolvers feature highly detailed scrollwork and gold inlay. It would be hard to beat D&L Sports' renowned attention to detail.

One of Dave's earliest experiences was with a 1911 pistol. Purchased from one of the best-known builders of the day, it arrived and simply did not work. Since the pistol was going to be used for duty, it needed to work, and Dave set about making this one function. Then he began building pistols that were truly duty ready.

Joining the SWAT team in the 1980s, Dave was brought into the world of the police sniper. Having entered this world in the 1990s, I can only imagine its state 10 years earlier. Training was non-existent and the position was often given to the "hunter" in the crowd, or worse yet, the Chief's relative. Many had no idea what they were doing, could not shoot all that well, or were never trained. They were handed a rifle out of evidence, anointed "police sniper" and sent out to save the world. As an avid shooter, Dave observed lots of room for improvement. This became the inspiration for what would become D&L Sports.

Dave started to improve the accuracy of his bolt guns. Like many rifle smiths of the day, he attached accurized barrels, improved triggers, and over the years, he has created some innovations in extractor design. He also started using one-piece bolts as well as simple and rugged bolt handles. Looking for a stronger platform, he was also one of the pioneers in using one-piece aluminum stocks. He learned early on that bedding a fiberglass stock presented its own set of issues. Given his abilities, he built one-piece

Dave Lauck Photos



The Take Down Rifle is solid and built to meet the needs of any urban SWAT operator.

>>> SPECIFICATIONS

PRECISION TAKE DOWN RIFLE

CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	35 inches
WEIGHT:	9 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Custom D&L Sports
SIGHTS:	Optics-ready Picatinny rail
ACTION:	Bolt
FINISH:	Cerakote
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	N/A

aluminum stocks and placed his Remington 700 actions in them.

Dave custom-builds his own rings and bases, making certain they are solid, strong and reliable. Over the years, he has built rifles that stand up to hard use yet maintain the best accuracy possible. He continues to build state-of-the-art precision rifles that work every time, no matter what.

TOP GUN TRAINING

With a better rifle, it was time to focus on training. Over time, Dave worked as a state agent, as well as an officer and deputy for departments in the western U.S. For years, he was the firearms instructor bringing structure and innovation to his officers. Dave also decided it was time to put together a competition that truly tested

the weapons and the operators. The International Tactical Rifleman's Championship (ITRC) was born.

Starting out as open training, the ITRC turned into a good test of man and machine. The rules are simple: You engage targets from 0 to 500 yards with a carbine and 0 to 1,000 yards with a precision rifle. A pistol will be used out to 50 yards. This is a team event where one man operates the carbine, the other the rifle, and both members use the pistol. The only caliber restriction is .338 Lapua or less. The pistols must be in 9mm or larger and must be secured in a holster. Pistol optics are fine; magazines are restricted to +2 basepads. You can use any field-practical sighting system or ranging system. Basically, if you think you can win with it, then bring it and put it to the

test. Considering the shooting conditions, this is no easy task.

Over several competitions, a great deal of equipment failed to make it through the day. Interestingly, it was the simple and reliable equipment that won and lasted. The ITRC allowed Dave to prove what shooting techniques worked and make improvements to rifles so they withstand the conditions. This resulted in a number of his innovations.

His forward-mounted sight for AR-15 rifles is rock solid and allows for quick aiming with rugged repeatability. His Aim-point mounts for the AR-15 are extremely durable and reliable. He has designed his own pistol grip, vertical grip and tactical safety. Recognizing that the weakest part of any magazine-fed firearm is the magazine, he has designed his own Extreme Duty

A "Lone" Texas Ranger Winchester 1892

When Dave Lauck was contacted by the Texas Rangers to build a rifle in their honor, a solid base rifle was needed to match the six guns he had already provided. It needed to reflect the heritage of the Texas Rangers while maintaining compatibility with the .45 Long Colt revolvers. A Winchester Model 1892 lever-action in .45 LC

became the choice. The 1892 is a solid reflection of the lever-action rifles used by the Rangers to tame the old west. It's also one of the most popular choices of weapons used to portray the Texas Rangers in countless movies.

GOLD WORKER: In keeping with Dave's practical side, the carbine was tuned

to perfection prior to adding the artistic touches. As beautiful as it is, it could be taken to work if necessary. The action was hand-engraved with meticulously completed scrollwork. Surrounding this scrolling is solid gold inlay. On the right side of the weapon, a Texas Ranger badge is inlaid in solid gold as well. A gold-plated hammer, trigger, and barrel strap round out the metal work.



Steve Woods Photos

AR-15 and 1911 pistol magazines—some of the toughest I have ever seen. All of these innovations are placed in his custom-built rifles and can be ordered separately as well.

ONE RIOT, ONE RANGER

Given all of Dave's years as an officer, it is easy to forget he is truly a craftsman. Upon entering his shop, examples of this craftsmanship were evident. The first was his Texas Ranger rifle. This lever-action rifle is a work of art. Covered with engraving and gold inlay, it's gorgeous. The scrolling on the stock says it all: "One Riot, One Ranger," the creed of the Texas Rangers. Dave customized every flawless inch of this rifle, and a friend of his made the presentation case.

For all of the artistry presented in Dave's pistols, he is at heart an operator. He brings that same level of attention to detail to his working guns. His MR-30PG Precision rifle is one of the nicest builds I have come across. The attention to detail is amazing. Every curve, line, and sharp edge gets personal attention. It is like having a custom carry bevel on a precision rifle. Everything matches up and mates perfectly. About the only thing on the rifle not custom-made by Dave is the action and barrel. The Remington 700 action is tuned to perfection using a one-piece bolt with Dave's new extractor design. The bolt handle mount is integral with the bolt body, which eliminates the chance of fractured welds and disastrous bolt handle separation in the field. Dave

— Continued On Page 92

>>> SPECIFICATIONS

D&L TEXAS RANGER

CALIBER:	.45 Long Colt
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	37.5 inches
WEIGHT:	6 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Solid walnut with engraving
SIGHTS:	Front post, adjustable rear
ACTION:	Lever
FINISH:	Custom scroll and gold inlay
CAPACITY:	10 + 1
MSRP:	N/A

COMPLETE PACKAGE: The stock is also meticulously engraved with matching scrollwork. On the right side of the buttstock, the creed of the Texas Rangers, "One Ranger, One Riot," is engraved. With its deep bluing and striking detail, this Texas Ranger rifle is a masterpiece. Mounted in a matching case with the Texas flag and a Ranger badge, the one-of-a-kind package is complete.

DUTY CUSTOMS

Continued From Page 29

has been designing aluminum stocks since the early 1990s to increase the durability of precision rifles. The rings and base are his design, too, and they perfectly match like everything else on the rifle.

One of his latest designs is the Precision Take Down rifle. This is another Dave Lauck design that shows his attention to detail and unwillingness to compromise on ruggedness. This particular rifle is chambered in 5.56mm NATO and is built around a unique stock that is incredibly well crafted. The stock can be removed and attached easily, allowing it to fit into a small case or pack with ease. It provides an operator in an urban environment a solid choice for covert deployment.

Dave's AR-15 rifles are no exception, either. They receive some of the greatest attention to detail around. Pretty much everything on the rifle is his design. They are light, rugged, and perfectly balanced. Every corner that is even remotely sharp is removed. Although you can have him build you a complete rifle, he offers all of this work on your rifle as well. Offering both a Perimeter and CQB package, Dave can turn your run-of-the-mill AR-15 into a custom-built rifle designed to withstand anything you can throw at it. All of his innovations and work have been tested at the IRTC, other competitions, and in the real world.

PERFECTION AT A COST

Spending the day with Dave was great fun and a fantastic learning experience. It turns out that we cut some of the same ground when it comes to training officers, just at different times and places. Much of his experience in the SWAT and precision rifle field parallels mine. Dave is a disciplined man able to pay great attention to detail. His work shows that at every step and every level. Everything Dave does is top notch, but remember that he is a custom builder. Like any custom shop, you need to understand this perfection comes at a cost. I don't mean money, either, as his professional-grade guns are commensurate with any custom build. It is an investment in time. Getting this level of detail requires time, so each build is one at a time. He gives you a delivery schedule and sticks with it, but there is no "off the shelf" here.

That said, his rifles will stand the test of time. Whether you are buying a truly custom work of art or the best working rifle you can get, you will not be disappointed. It's an investment that will pay dividends for decades to come. For more information, visit dlsports.com or call 928-636-1726. ☎