

A high visibility rib is one of several customisations made to this shotgun by John Jeffries, who offers a bespoke fitting service, as **Mark Heath** describes.



Perugini & Visini HVR

The Perugini & Visini shotgun we're examining this month is a custom version, the brainchild of John Jeffries. John has been involved with shotgun customising for more than 50 years and looks to improve the performance and handling of existing products, matching these improvements with a bespoke fitting service. John has been putting together custom versions of Perazzis for many years now and also, more recently, Zoli.

Perugini & Visini was founded in 1968 in Brescia by Vincenzo Perugini and Darko Visini, who built a reputation for making sporting and hunting shotguns along with double- and bolt-action rifles.

The custom guns are made in the Perugini & Visini factory to John's specifications and are delivered with the stocks headed up to the action but unfinished. The stocks are also longer than required at this stage to facilitate the

fitting process. The guns have detachable locks and can be fixed or multi-choke (Briley or Teague) and have an adjustable trigger. Upgraded wood can also be selected and the stocks, when completed, are given an oil finish.

The grip can also be customised and includes the option of an ergonomic pistol grip, pistol grip with or without a palm swell or a more open radius as preferred by some game shooters. They are available in 12, 20 and 28 bore and can also be specified with custom engraving.

The signature elements of a John Jeffries custom gun are the barrel lengths – which are available up to 34in – the balance and manoeuvrability together with the fit and also the various rib options, which are unique to the man himself. The two that are available on the Perugini & Visini are the Reverse Slope Rib (RSR) and the High Visibility Rib (HVR), which is the

John Jeffries has certainly left his mark on the gun.



In the field

Having tested John Jeffries guns previously I should have known better than to approach the test with a degree of scepticism. Having handled the gun in the lodge at the shooting school, however, I couldn't help it given that the gun felt like a mini howitzer. Given our proximity to Northolt and Heathrow I was concerned for passing aircraft.

The gun had attracted the attention of a number of instructors and so it was out to the 40ft tower with a small gathering keen to pass comment. I was expecting it to be a bit of a handful here and no-one was more surprised than me when all the clays ended up as balls of smoke with minimum gun movement and effort. A couple of shots for the other three instructors – I didn't

want any suggestion of unfair advantage on the high tower – with pretty much the same results, at which they were equally surprised.

On to the 90ft and 130ft towers, where the gun was just a pleasure to shoot on everything from high, straight birds to extreme angles. We were shooting 32gram No.6 shot cartridges at this stage, which produced devastating breaks on some ridiculous distances. Even Mickey Rouse, with his spattering of world and European titles was awake by now and actually enthusing about the gun. The attention that John Jeffries gives to the balance of the gun makes all the difference. I subsequently tested the 20 bore version with the same 33in barrels, which was also an absolute pleasure to shoot on the same targets. ■

The addition of a high visibility rib gives this modified gun its name.



All the bespoke models have an adjustable trigger.



Scores

Engineering: 9/10

These guns are tried and tested and have no known vices. They come with a three-year warranty.

Looks and finishing: 9/10

The version being tested had a plain silver action without engraving, however, the wood had some great figuring that would look amazing with an English oil finish.

Handling: 10/10

This gun handled amazingly. I can see why the 33in barrel length is the most popular by far of the options.

Reliability and customer service: 10/10

John goes to exceptional lengths to provide a first-class service, in particular in relation to one of the unique selling points: the custom fitting. The brand itself is also tried and tested.

Value: 9/10 It's a great gun to handle and it works incredibly well. At £16,500 it's not especially cheap but you get what you pay for, which includes all the tweaks. The 20 bore comes in at £17,500.

Overall: 47/50

latest incarnation and the option on the gun we are testing. The gun was fitted with 33in barrels, which I was keen to test to see if the extra length was of any benefit. All guns are balanced to the customer's requirements. However, if asked for advice John's preference is to balance the guns just in front of the hinge pin. For the technically minded amongst you, the balancing is done to within ¼oz.

This gun was originally aimed at shooters looking for a gun to take on high, driven days but it would be great for competitions, too. The test gun weighed in at 8lb 3oz. The barrels were 1,523g, which is a little lighter than some competition 32in guns; my preferred weight would be between 1,560g to 1,570g.

The weight of the barrels is a key element in the handling of these guns and can be specified between 1,520g and 1,600g. The thinking being that the lighter barrels are more suitable to game shooting while a slightly heavier barrel weight would work better for the competitive clay shot to give steadiness on a wide variety of targets. It comes down to personal choice and shooting style.

John's fitting process for each gun, which is included in the price, is done over three sessions: the initial fit, followed by a further session with the alterations and then the final session with the fully finished gun. John guarantees his gun

fit and will make subsequent tweaks and changes without charge. But to ensure this he does require a reasonably consistent gun mount from the client.

The guns are guaranteed for three years and the wood for a year. To talk about the measurements on the test gun is of limited value as each gun is bespoke fitted, as discussed. However, it is of interest that the drop measurements were 1³/₁₆in at comb and 1³/₈in at heel; you would expect these measurements to give a massively high point of impact yet the gun shot to point of aim. This is down to John Jeffries' approach: to provide a gun where you have a clear view of the target with the raised rib at the front of the gun with the HVR.

The gun was well put together with good wood-to-metal fit. The wood on the test gun was well figured and with a little elbow grease and stock oil would look amazing. Perugini & Visini has a good reputation on the reliability front. There are options around manual or auto safety.

It's slightly difficult to know where to take the comparison. I think the best options are probably the equivalent Perazzi and perhaps the Krieghoff Parcours. All of these guns, properly fitted and in the right hands, will do a great job, it comes down to personal choice. ■

The customised gun is available with fixed or multi-choke.

