

# Running boar



In the first of a two part article, Mike Yardley gives advice on modern shooting trips for wild pigs

Pigs may look big, but are usually on the move, so they require excellent marksmanship to be harvested humanely. If in doubt, get some practice in before leaving

Readers of this magazine will know that one of my favourite sporting pastimes is shooting pigs, wild boar that is. I have shot them in Poland, Croatia, France, Africa and Australia so far. I have yet to shoot them here, or in the States, but I look forward to doing so. Downunder was my first experience, some twenty or more years back. You may have heard the story, I was offered the 'opportunity' to crawl down a tunnel with an ancient Winchester semi and a torch. I resisted! I eventually shot a large porker in the long grass with a .270 Sako. It was quite exciting enough thank you very much.

## East European boar hunting

More recently, I have had much more comfortable pig shooting experiences in Poland with Bob Kwisiuk of Poland Hunting ([www.polandhunting.co.uk](http://www.polandhunting.co.uk)) and in Croatia with Bogdan Srejcic (tel.07868317787 or [info@lasarotta.co.uk](mailto:info@lasarotta.co.uk)). In fact, as I write this, Bogdan has just rung to tell me that he has some really good late deals on offer for this season (see box below) because the Croatians have lowered prices very significantly because of the rise in the value of the Euro, and their fear that this might affect the development of



Safety is paramount and in my opinion this shot is far too close for comfort

sport in the country. They are keen to develop Croatia as a hunting destination and don't want this to be spoilt by fluctuations in the currency market. So, if you fancy trying boar, this just might be the year to do it. Bogdan will send you a DVD about boar in Croatia on request too.

Most boar are shot by the driven method with beaters and dogs moving through a wood to a line of 10 – 20 guns (typically 12-16). Safety is paramount. Typically, and it all depends on the safety briefing on the day, you can only shoot at a beast 40 metres or less to your front, you may also be able to shoot to your rear. If deer are on the

menu, there is usually a prohibition shooting them in front because they are taller than pigs and the shot is intrinsically more dangerous. If in doubt, don't shoot, is the rule that must be etched in your mind at all times. I emphasise again, listen to the safety briefing on the day.

## What you will need

Let's move on to suitable kit. Selecting your kit for pig shooting is a serious business, your life may depend on it. It is my opinion that people sometimes take boar hunting too lightly. Don't. You must select the right gun in a suitable calibre,

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with a suitable action. You must zero it well. And, beyond that, you must become proficient in its use. Choice may be restricted by destination. In Turkey, for example, you must use a shotgun. My experience, however, is that shotguns are definitely second best – use a rifle if you can. We will consider this in more detail next month, meanwhile, let me just note that there is much to be said for larger calibres. You may find the hunting association of the country you are going to has its own restrictions – for example, nothing less than a .270 or .30 cal. Frankly, my experience is that Robert Ruark philosophy is the way to go – ALWAYS USE ENOUGH GUN. I have shot pigs with both a .270 and a .308, but I felt much more comfortable with a .300 Win mag. My mate Paul Roberts swears by a 9.3 double, he also uses a .444 Marlin lever gun. More on this next month.

## Special boar hunting deals in Croatia

As we go to press Bogdan Srejc of Lasarotta noted: "I have available especially good value shooting with some of the premier Croatian Hunting Clubs. It is next to river Sava where hunting is charged at only 180-240 euros per day/gun inclusive of trophy charges. Dates are available during early December and January. There is no limit on amount of animals that the group can shoot. During good days, 15 guns can usually shoot something over 50 shots in total. It is an open area.

Bags cannot be guaranteed but the average is just under 10 boar per day/per group. A 3 day trip with 4 nights inclusive of all shooting and non-shooting costs in Croatia and return airfare London – Zagreb is only 1475 euros per Gun. There are no hidden costs, this includes 3 days driven wild boar hunting in an open forest area, dogs, beaters, trophy fees, Croatian Hunting Licence, self drive 4X4, Airport transfers, 3 meals per day, 4 nights in a nice local hotel (2-3 hunters sharing a room with shower). Tips, alcohol and gun hire (for those wanting larger rifles) are extra.

For all further details please contact Bogdan's UK associate, Rupert Ellis (mob: 079 09 888 333, tel/fax: 087 870 0307, e-mail: [Rupert@thehuntingagency.com](mailto:Rupert@thehuntingagency.com))

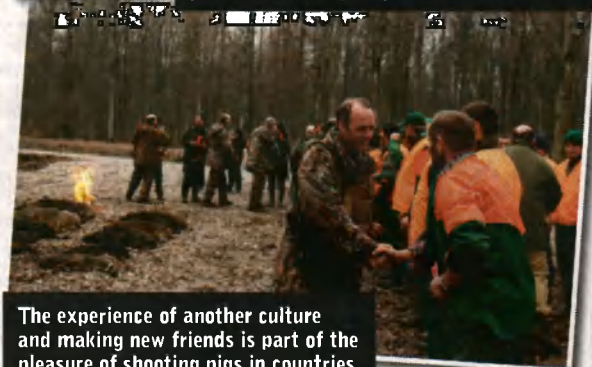
For information regarding hunting areas in Croatia, and any practical question regarding driven wild boar hunting, prospective shooting captains are welcome to contact Bogdan himself on [bogdan@lasarotta.co.uk](mailto:bogdan@lasarotta.co.uk). Meantime, I'll give Bogdan the last word: "The Hunting Agency and Lasarotta are planning to put together over 30 teams from the UK in Croatia and Serbia next season. This is going to be the biggest UK driven wild boar operation abroad to date, with more than 400 UK guns. Low cost, high professional standards, and happy groups that return is our strategy. All bookings require 50% deposits and must be sorted during August and September 2009."



You will be amazed at how brave the dogs are - just be careful you don't shoot one in error - with the red mist up, brown pigs and brown dogs can be confused



European hunting has a quite a lot of ritual - respects are paid between beaters and guns and to the quarry after the shoot.



The experience of another culture and making new friends is part of the pleasure of shooting pigs in countries like Croatia and Serbia



Lunch is all part of absorbing the local atmosphere



Most transport is motorised but horse-drawn shoot wagons have a special charm