Group discussions then centered on the six prototypes, with their different combinations of functional and aesthetic elements. Statistics for these issues -- compiled on the basis of respondents' ratings and rankings at the end of the group session -- can be found in the Appendix.

Studs Versus Barrel Bands and Fore-end Contour Design

These two issues are interrelated because of the fact that a schnabel design, due to its shape, can only accept barrel bands versus a regular fore-end contour design which can accomodate studs. This fact clearly affects the preference of the fore-end design. More than half of the sample in discussion find the schnabel design (Models Q and S) appealing both aesthetically and functionally. However, because of the overwhelming strong preference for studs (Models T and R) versus barrel bands (Models Q and S) and hunters' refusal to give up studs for the schnabel, they change their preference to the regular fore-end contour design (72%) with studs:

> "I'm a little man and I have little hands. I like the feel of the schnabel but I sure wouldn't want barrel bands."

> "If I couldn't have studs, I'd rather not have anything."