

Misplacement of neoprene washer in fore-end. It is possible through faulty assembly, particularly if the fore-end is assembled with no barrel in place, to misplace the neoprene washer. To reduce the possibility of this, consideration is being given to replacement of the washer and the spacer next to it by a coil spring. This is still under investigation by Research and Development.

Hard opening. The problem of balancing ease of opening with reliability of functioning has been recognized throughout the development of the Sportsman-58. All that has ever been promised has been that the ease of opening would be comparable on the average to the 11-48. The Plant reports that this is so, and Sales agrees. No further improvement is to be anticipated, but the Plant and Research and Development will bear in mind the desire of Sales for easier opening, should means for its accomplishment be devised.

The Plant and Research and Development discussed several other quality questions which had come to their attention. These included the following:

Functioning of trigger. Shooters have experienced occasional trigger failures due to failure to connect. This has invariably been due to an accumulation of foreign matter in the fire control mechanism, and has usually been overcome by simple cleaning of the fire control. The Sportsman-58 is not different in this regard from the Model 870, except that there may be slightly more fouling from combustion products in the gas-operated gun.

Failures to feed. Failures to feed Winchester-Western 2-3/4-inch magnum shells have been experienced. In a recent test, one particular gun gave as many as 35 per cent malfunctions with Western 2-3/4-inch magnum shells. However, in this test comprising 3,250 rounds of various types of ammunition, ten guns gave a total of 31 malfunctions for a rate of 0.95 per cent.

Of these 31 malfunctions, 29 occurred with Western 2-3/4-inch magnum shells. In addition, Research and Development pointed out that some guns gave