

a friend or relative, or through ample exposure to some advertising medium. The "plinker" would expect accuracy required to consistently hit small targets such as cans, pie plates and small game, with relatively few malfunctions across a broad range of ammunition offerings (especially price point ammunition).

- The "enthusiast" can be classified as a smaller yet more discriminating customer base. The "enthusiast" may be a competitive or semi-competitive target shooter, or varmint hunter relatively well versed in firearms technology and ammunition capabilities. Accuracy expectations from this customer will typically be 1 Minute-of-Angle or less with a very low tolerance for malfunctions of any kind. While more discriminating in tastes and expectations, the "enthusiast" is less influenced by price point and more apt to make their purchase decision based on reputation, technical write-ups and word of mouth throughout elite shooting circles.

## 2. Brand Perception

- Although no known comparative study is known to exist with respect to measuring brand perception exclusive to rimfire rifles, some conclusions can be drawn from Sports Market Research Group's (SMRG) 2000 study of the overall (centerfire & rimfire) market<sup>3</sup>, as well as through general knowledge gained through discussions with consumers and the monitoring of internet message boards. Listed below is a summary of Remington's brand perception, along with the perception of the three dominant brands within the rimfire rifle category.

- **Remington** – Over the years, Remington has established the reputation of delivering exceptional value for the money. The SMRG 2000 study of the rifle market supports this as the price/value factor was the number one reason for choosing a Remington rifle. This study, however, covers both centerfire and rimfire rifles. It is the belief of this writer that Remington's brand perception is much stronger for centerfire rifles than it is for rimfire rifles at the present time. Remington's position in the rimfire market is very weak as a result of the failure from a quality standpoint of the Model 522 Viper and early stumbles with the Model 597 which plagued the product with a reputation of unreliable feeding. In addition, Remington spends relatively few advertising dollars in comparison to other key players, attributing to shortfalls in brand recognition.

- **Ruger** – Ruger's position in the rimfire market, primarily with the Model 10/22 is an enviable one. Priced moderately, Ruger products are not considered as low-cost, price point products, but as high on the price/value scale. The results are products which successfully penetrate

<sup>3</sup> SMRG's U.S. Marketing 2000 Annual Report - Rifles