

*One of our bird-hunting editors **blistered** his biceps on a smoking-hot gun barrel, which tells you just how fast the action was.*



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## LET'S GET CRAZY

**THE FIRST AFTERNOON** of InterMedia's Editorial Roundtable, 25 men and women stood on an imaginary firing line armed with a box of shells waiting for the first bird to fly. The point of the station was for gunwriters and their editors to evaluate exciting never-before-seen shotguns, but the target system stole the whole show.

Barry Bourdage, co-inventor of Crazy Quail, stood at the back of Academi's shotgun range with a remote control. He usually waits about 10 seconds after the last shooter has his or her gun up to launch the first bird because, as he described, "It's hilarious to watch everyone go after the same target." That clay never stands a chance, as several shotgunners will fire a couple of shells just to be the first one to dust it. Then Barry turned up the volume.

The Quad, a platform of four throwers that can traverse while spinning, launches several presentations as if a hunter were walking through a covey and had more birds to shoot at than shells within reach. There is no one keeping score, and you're learning to shoot shotguns more instinctively without realizing you're doing it. When your gun runs dry or gets too hot to handle, you look for another. You don't care how well the shooter next to you is doing because you're too busy trying to reload. When the round is over, spectators and shooters alike are grinning and tossing up high-fives. Editor Skip Knowles of Wildfowl magazine described it best as "short-attention-span super theater for the shotgun-loving clay pigeon smasher." Meanwhile, behind the line, Barry has as many people watching, asking him if they could run the remote control. "If you're not laughing, you're not running it right," he said.

The Quad is Crazy Quail's flagship. It holds 1,632 targets and retails for \$19,500, a steep price if you're a landowner looking for a backyard throwing machine but a smart investment for a shotgun range looking to improve business.

Let's put it this way. Crazy Quail tells customers to sell it

by the box of shells. You can charge \$5 to shoot a round, and on average, a good shooter will put 17 targets down with 25 attempts. The machine's footprint is small and will fit in a trap field without the need for the usual 50 acres. Normally, at a range, the average shooter may go through two boxes of shells. A Crazy Quail shooter will


blast through 10 boxes in the same amount of time. With 20 shotgunners shooting 10 rounds each, there's a \$270 clay cost, but you've earned \$728 of revenue in just 30 minutes.

Barry and co-founder Bob Butterworth worked through the night with friends in a garage welding frames and piecing together gears and motors, and the Quad became the product that launched the company at the 2013 SHOT Show. They sold 12 in four days. Overnight, the two found themselves driving 50,000 miles during the next year when they weren't working their day jobs. In setting up demos, they never charged a penny at an event with 100

people or more, and all the money they did raise went to charities for cancer and veterans.

The Mini machine is Crazy Quail's next big thing. At \$6,000, shotgunners who are geeks at heart will appreciate the added software that utilizes a gyroscope directed by your iPhone. (The machine will actually mimic the manner in which you move your phone.) At the time of this writing, Barry has received instructions from Apple to bring the Mini to California for testing before it will approve an app that'll run an infinite number of user-customizable programs.

Though our guns and ammo have improved, most of us are still using the same throwing machines that have been around for the last 30 years. At the end of the day, everyone's a hero, and everyone finds out just how good they weren't. Taking it to the plug on a 25-shot XRAIL is some of the most fun I'll ever have with a shotgun.

Go to [crazyquail.com](http://crazyquail.com), and see the videos for yourself. It's proof that American ingenuity still exists. 



While spinning 360 degrees, the Quad by Crazy Quail can throw up to 160 targets per minute in any direction by wireless remote.