

## Mr. October

October is my favorite month of the year for two reasons. First and foremost it marks the beginning of primitive weapons season in the area where I hunt. More specifically, Black Powder season begins. Secondly the temperature has usually started its slow progression towards cooler mornings and that means that game will be up and moving around a little more.

To me, there's nothing like the crisp cool air of a late October morning combined with the smell of spent black powder.

Walking attentively down an overgrown logging road wearing a coon skin cap, a buck skin jacket with .50 caliber Hawken in hand is just the way October ought to be.

Ok – I really don't wear that stuff but it's still the way it ought to be.

All of that fluff brings me to the point I want to get across here. Put simply, the use of hi tech in line muzzle loaders has diminished the real meaning and intent of the primitive weapon season that some of us hold sacred.

With the advent of the in line muzzle loader came the down fall of reenacting a deep rooted black powder hunting tradition in America.

As I see it, most of the in line muzzle loaders should not be classified as primitive weapons and are really not much different than hunting with any single shot rifle or shot gun.

While I will admit to using some of the new fangled ammo, i.e. power belt bullets, I only do so in order to insure a cleaner kill. However, I would never trade traditional black powder for powder pellets, sabots and shotgun primers. To me that would be going a little too far.

Additionally, I would never replace my old Hawken or double barrel with any synthetic stocked, shotgun primered, nickel plated so called black powder rifle.

That type of muzzle loader doesn't even look primitive. In fact, most of them look like carbon copies of popular center fire rifles such as the Remington 700 or Winchester model 70.

These days most of the hunters I see with that type of "Primitive Weapon" have even gone the extra step of adding a scope which is, in my book, equivalent to, "Black powder blasphemy."

I'll bet Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone roll over in their respective graves every time someone stuffs one of those powder pellets down the muzzle of one of those Remington repeats. I'm not even so sure their still loading them down the muzzle – they may be loading them into a magazine and slamming a bolt shut on them by now.

I think most folks that use in lines purchase them because they think they are more accurate than traditional black powder weapons and will give them an edge. Those folks

are missing the boat when it comes to primitive weapons hunting. The idea is not to gain an edge but to reproduce the hunting scenarios of those that came before us including reproducing the limited edge that is inherent to all real primitive black powder weapons.

That said, I'd be willing to match any in line rifle shooter to a shooting contest, scope or no scope, with my open sight Hawken at 100 yards. I've done it before and have produced better results than those in line shooters I've come up against. Yes - even better than those who have mounted optics on their so called primitive weapons.

To me, the real disappointment regarding all the hi tech muzzle loading going on out there is that a lot of young hunters will never use, and in some cases, never even see a real black powder weapon in action. That means that the real meaning of the primitive weapons tradition and hunting season may not be passed on to future generations.

Though I'm disappointed to see that so many hunters have chosen in lines over more traditional black powder weapons I intend to remain open minded about it. I understand some of you have made the very huge mistake of purchasing an in line muzzle loader, I hope to persuade you to do the right thing and disassemble it, walk out to the garbage can and toss it in.

There is still time for you to enjoy the real primitive weapons tradition and make amends by purchasing and hunting with a "Real" black powder weapon and hunt this year's primitive weapons season as it was meant to be hunted.

P.S. Yes, I am the same guy who wrote the article about constructing a new wave hunting rifle with all of the latest and greatest components but one must remember that there is a time and place for everything. Primitive weapons season is not time for new waves of anything.