

Cleaning Your Stainless Steel Rifle Barrel (By Angus Bell)

Most successful shooters have quite similar cleaning techniques for their rifle barrels. In general most barrels shoot better when clean. Below is my barrel cleaning recipe that works, it doesn't take very long yet its quite thorough. Ask other A graders what method they use so you can develop your own effective technique.

My long established method of barrel a stainless steel barrel is as follows :

1) Remove powder fouling

- a. Remove the powder fouling by using a bronze brush (Hart type preferred) soaked in a suitable solvent, I am currently using Boretech Carbon Remover, scrub out 20 times – that's one scrub forward, and one back = 2 scrubs, continue until 20 passes is completed
- b. Patch clean with a ½ size piece of 4 x 2 on a proof jag and push out in one direction only

2) Remove Copper fouling

- a. Remove the copper fouling by using a bronze brush (Hart type preferred) soaked in a suitable solvent, I am currently using Boretech Eliminator, scrub out 20 times – that's one scrub forward, and one back = 2 scrubs, continue until 20 passes is completed
- b. Patch clean with a ½ size piece of 4 x 2 on a proof jag and push out in one direction only

3) Soak / Further Clean

- a. Remove any residual and stubborn fouling by using a bronze brush (Hart type preferred) soaked in a suitable solvent, I use the Gnome Accessories solvent, scrub out 20 times – that's one scrub forward, and one back = 2 scrubs, continue until 20 passes is completed
- b. Let soak for as long as possible, min 20 mins but I sometimes like to let it soak overnight
- c. Patch clean with a ½ size piece of 4 x 2 on a proof jag and push out in one direction only

4) Periodic Inspection and Cleaning Of Very Stubborn Fouling

- a. Once A Month (or earlier), I do the above first two steps then I flush down a litre of boiling water through the barrel using a funnel / garden hose / silicon gun plastic nozzle tool. I then scrub the barrel by using a bronze brush (Hart type preferred) soaked in a suitable solvent, scrub out 20 times – that's one scrub forward, and one back = 2 scrubs, continue until 20 passes is completed. You will be surprised how much crap comes out of a supposedly clean barrel
- b. Immediately patch clean with a ½ size piece of 4 x 2 on a proof jag and push out in one direction only
- c. Repeat step 4a again and let soak for 30 mins then patch clean with a ½ size piece of 4 x 2 on a proof jag and push out in one direction only. Again you will be surprised how much more crap comes out of a supposedly very clean barrel

5) If Stubborn Fouling Persists

- a. You should look down your barrel occasionally with a bore scope to see how effective your cleaning methods are, if you find black carbon

streaks persisting between the barrels lands, especially just forward of the lead you may need to scrub the barrel with a suitable bore paste, I use JB Paste but this is an aggressive paste so I sometimes use the Autosol car cleaning paste, its very cheap and effective. Another good paste is Iosso.

- b. Apply a small amount of bore paste on a loose patch (½ width patch) over a worn stiff nylon brush and scrub the lead of the barrel working towards the muzzle end of the barrel. When complete patch out by removing any remaining residue with a stiff nylon brush and suitable solvent. Repeat process then patch out until clean. When doing this you will find the patch quickly becomes black.
- 6) I note that when starting a new shoot with a clean barrel my first sighter can often fall 0.5 to 1.0 MOA lower, this can be minimised by having some oil in the barrel prior to shooting, by pushing a 4x2 cloth with oil in it through the barrel, then dry it out with a clean patch, this will leave some residual oil in the barrel and provide some friction and therefore increase speed on the first shot.
 - 7) Do not use Sweets solvent on a stainless steel barrel after running in !

James Corbet has a proven recipe for cleaning his rifle barrels being :

- 1) Remove the residue with first patch and solvent (currently use Boretech Eliminator) pushing out the barrel. Then anoint a stiff copper brush with solvent, scrub twice only and patch clean. Repeat 1 - 2 times as determined by the amount of black streaks on the patch.
- 2) Every 100 rounds or more, apply a small amount of paste (currently using Iosso bore cleaner) on a ½ patch over a worn stiff nylon brush and scrub the lead working to end of barrel. Patch, remove remaining residue with a stiff nylon brush and solvent. Patch out until clean.
- 3) James recommends using a starting oil (currently using Gnome's Oil) applied just prior to shooting. Soak one patch and wipe clean with several patches.
- 4) Prior to shooting, patch out barrel to ensure no obstructions.

James also recommends Boretech proof jags, Iosso Nyflex brushes and Hart copper brushes