

The Inception of Big Horn Armory and the Creation of the Model 89

It all started with a conversation. Shortly after Greg Buchel moved to Wyoming, he spoke with a neighbor of his, Frank Ehrenford. Frank was intrigued by Smith & Wesson's recent introduction of the 500 S&W revolver cartridge. He suggested they should build a Browning type, lever-action gun in 500 Smith & Wesson Magnum and thought the market was ripe for such a gun. It's a marvelous, wonderful cartridge, so they decided to make it happen.

They started by playing around with the different lever gun actions and found out what many before them had already discovered, that it just wouldn't work with a Marlin or anything else that was readily available. Testing this big-bore caliber in these lever actions actually bent several of the guns. They knew what they had to do: build their own.



And that's what they set out to do with modern steels like 17-4PH stainless and CNC machining techniques. BHA overbuilt these guns, which was good because it meant the guns would be incredibly strong. This gave rise to BHA's first firearm, the Model 89. This process to perfect the gun and internals took several years from the initial founding in 2008, with the first guns shipped out in September of 2012.

Based on the 1886 and the 1892, the Model 89 is a blend of the best parts of both rifles. In developing their first big-bore lever action, the BHA team took apart several guns to figure out what they really needed to do. The 86 action was too long, and the 92 action was too short, so they realized they had to purpose-build the action size for their creation. In the process, they looked at the internals of the 86 and 92 and discovered that the 86 had parts that were a little too complex to machine. This discovery led them to the decision to use the outside body design of the 86 in conjunction with the internals of the 92 to power the gun. It became a true blend and with the size being halfway in between the 86 and 92, settling upon the name 89 just seemed right.

The Model 90 in 460 S&W, Model 90A in 454 Casull, Model 90B in 45 Colt, Model 89A in 500 Linebaugh and the Model 89B in 475 Linebaugh all came along in successive years.

BHA was so enamored with the power of the 500 Smith & Wesson in a rifle, that the company decided to keep going BIG with its latest project, the AR500 in rifle and pistol models, which became available for purchase in 2018.

BHA only makes guns its own team members would be proud to own themselves. As such, its commitment to quality, fit, and finish rival that seen in many custom only guns. Sometimes that commitment slows things down, but BHA hopes its customers think their products are worth the wait.



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