

Are you a hot shot?

here's the acid test

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The GlowShot Double Action Self-Healing Knockdown gong can be screwed to a board or log.

When it comes to what we shoot at, targets come in all shapes and sizes and are made from many different materials. They can be technical examples of modern manufacture or simply something improvised in the field such as a rock, knot in a tree or just a cardboard box with a circle drawn on it. Targets can be uniform in design for use in serious sporting or even Olympic competition or abstract of shape and made more for fun and entertainment. So whether you punch paper, roll pins, smash clay or ring steel, targets are an integral part of the shooting sports.

In recent years I've covered the GlowShot array of targets so just to recap, GlowShot are best known for their assortment of reactive paper targets. These are the ones that, when shot, expose the point of impact in different bright fluoro colours dependant on the scoring ring impacted. Available in adhesive and non-adhesive versions they make accessing target impact, especially at distance, a lot easier to observe and identify.

Other GlowShot products include their caltrop-shaped .22 Flipping Jack reactive steel target which jumps and rolls when shot, always landing with one paddle upright and providing hours of fun if you have a pair to race over a paddock against a mate using .22 rifles. They also make handy clay target hangers - metal strips which clip over the edge of a clay target

to allow you to string them from a wire or whatever's practical and safe.

The last GlowShot item I reviewed for *Australian Shooter* was their Last Stand Target Stand Kit, a system which turns six lengths of rebar into a stand to support a gong, paper targets or anything else you care to hang off it. All GlowShot items I've used have been innovative options which add practicality and enjoyment to the shooting experience, so I'm always interested to see what's new when their latest offering lands.

This time round I was sent some new Double Action Self-Healing Target Gongs which, similar to GlowShot target hangers I've used previously, are made from self-healing ballistic rubber polymer. With this material, as suggested, once a bullet passes through, the hole closes in on itself and appears to heal, though I'd note it's advised that hollow-point projectiles should be avoided.

The big difference with this creation is not only does it self-heal, it's also somehow thermally active in that it changes colour when exposed to heat. As bullets are red hot, this means the colour changes at point of impact to leave a tell-tale sign at the bullet strike and this fades once point of impact cools. It works like this - below 29C the targets appear black and bullet hits show as red or yellow, above that temperature targets appear red and bullet hits yellow.

I received two gongs - 100mm and 150mm in diameter (4" and 6") - and to check the thermal colour change effect

I hung one over the other on the black tailgate of my truck in full sun and, within minutes, both faces turned red. Removing the top gong revealed the smaller outline remained black. Placing the smaller gong back over the larger one, I then left both targets exposed for a further half-hour. It was so hot at that stage the larger had started to turn orange heading towards yellow but again, removing the smaller gong revealed its shadow stayed red.

This wasn't a scientific experiment by any means and I didn't have a thermometer on hand, so can't say at what temperature the target would actually turn yellow, but this exercise clearly proved the colour change effect. In practical terms, in use these targets would be hanging and not lying flat



Again, removal of the top target reveals its silhouette on the lower still displaying red.



splatter coming off the target, so I imagine these would be ideal on ranges where steel targets are prohibited for safety reasons. Of course bullets pass straight through so, as with any form of shooting, an appropriate backstop is essential. The self-healing gongs have a long hang tag or tab incorporated into the moulding to secure the target off whatever you're using as a frame and, depending what that frame's made of, can simply be screwed to it with a single screw or tied on.

For testing under fire I dug out the GlowShot Last Stand Target Stand frame from my previous review and, rather than the heavy steel gong, after setting up the frame I just used a couple of tie straps and zipped the targets on with them. As fate would have it, the temperature that morning as I set up on my range was hovering around 15C, though I guess that's one bonus of your property sitting around 800-900m in elevation.

It did warm up but a moderate breeze ensured that while the targets were within operating temperature they were never going to show as red that day. Even so, when struck the point of impact registered and was clearly visible, likewise the targets swung back and forth with the force of impact providing both an immediate and lasting strike indicator.

In similar vein is the GlowShot Double Action Self-Healing Knockdown Gong. Made from the same material, this one's a 150mm (6") gong mounted in its own adjustable knockdown bracket which itself is made from self-healing ballistic rubber. This one can be screwed on to a board as a free-standing knockdown gong or you could secure a series of them along an old plank, log or piece of 4x2 timber to create an effective plate rack.

In this capacity it would be ideal on ranges which prohibit steel targets or where engagement ranges would generally make shooting steel problematic, such as with high-powered rifles under 100m. Hung upside down they behave exactly like standard double action self-healing target gongs but without the need to reset after each successful strike, so there are several options for use.

GlowShot have a variety of interactive targets to suit just about any application, available from dealers and GlowShot's online store. There are also plenty of videos on YouTube if you'd like to see the targets in action.

More at glowshottargets.com.au ●



Targets both started off black (or very dark brown).



After several minutes both are turning red as they heat up to more than 29C.



Half an hour later the lower target is turning yellow as it nears its maximum 40C maximum operating temperature.



In cooler weather on day of testing, impacts displayed as yellow with a pinkish outline before fading back to black.

on an exposed hot surface so I doubt you'd ever see them become so hot you'd lose the colour change effect. However, the makers list an operating scale of 15-40C.

The advantage of this system is you can place the target at distance and, when shot, not only do you have the visual effect of the strike as the target wobbles and swings, the point of impact is immediately identifiable as it appears red or yellow. As mentioned, the impacts remain visible before eventually slowly fading, so you can shoot a group and unless you take an excessively long time to do so, should still be able to see previous hits. The marketing blurb says this means you spend more time shooting and less time changing or resetting targets.

Another advantage of the ballistic rubber polymer is it can be used at any range without the risk of either ricochet or lead