

THE INFINITY TRAP BASE WAS THE PRODUCT THAT STARTED IT ALL.



TARGET THROWING MADE EASY

DANA FARRELL REVIEWS THE SUCCESS OF RENAIR SHOTGUN SPORTS

What began a decade ago as a way to practice his shooting has driven Casey Rennert and Renair Shotgun Sports further than he could ever have imagined. It started out simple enough. He was struggling to break chandelles, so he took a couple of shooting lessons with Pat Lieske. Once he learned how to reliably hit the target, he built a base, put an old rusty trap on it and took it to his local gun club to throw practice targets.

The base he designed was very easy to use – adjustable on all three axes without the use of a wrench by way of crank handles and

worked with any brand of trap. It allowed quick and easy adjustment to throw chandelles, teal, or just about any other target presentation imaginable.

He showed it to Richie Frisella and Brett Seibert at Northbrook and Steve Knoll at Wern Valley and they loved it. As word quickly spread, requests came in to buy them. Finally, in 2007, after seeing the public's reaction, his son told him – “*Dad you gotta do something with this thing,*” and the Infinity Trap Base, or ITB for short, became Renair's first commercially available product. “We're still moving forward and haven't looked

back since,” says Rennert. “It's really kind of a dream come true.”

A hydraulic engineer by trade, Rennert spent 10 years on the payroll at Caterpillar and another 12 at Manitowoc Cranes. Later in his career he worked as an instructor at a nuclear facility and more recently as a traveling freelance hydraulic instructor for the automotive industry – a sideline he still dabbles in. Once their kids were grown and out of the house, and he and his wife were financially ready, he became more serious about taking Renair to the next level. The business that was born as a labor of love quickly

outgrew the confines of his basement workshop, necessitating the building of a dedicated workshop next to his house.

ClayBot

Rennert knew he was onto a good thing and had the foresight to apply for a patent, which now protects all Renair products internationally. Other products followed the ITB, with maybe the most notable being the ClayBot – a remote controlled, motorized trap base, which is central to many of his subsequent products.



THE CLAYBOT -- THE CRUX OF THE RENAIR PRODUCT LINE.

The optimal solution for a tower mounted trap, the ClayBot allows the changing of all trap settings, including dialing in the spring, remotely, via a 2 mile rated radio. Rennert thrives on customer feedback and says that's what inspired the evolution of the product line over time from the ITB to the Claybot and beyond. “What's driving Renair is the customer. That's the beauty of it. They're the ones that come up with the ideas – I just came up with a simple machine. I'm a conduit for what they want. Their ideas enhance the product line,” he says.

The ITB sold for around \$400 when it first came out, and he sold thousands of them. He explains the product development process. “You get a customer who asks can

“What’s driving Renair is the customer,” says Casey Rennert. “They’re the ones that come up with the ideas – I just come up with a simple machine.”

you put a motor on this axis – I don’t want to have to spin the trap by hand anymore – so I put a motor on, called it the M model and sold a bunch of them. Another customer asked to motorize the second axis, which I did, and I sold a bunch of those too. Then another customer said I don’t really want to have to swivel the entire base to turn the trajectory – and that brought about the ClayBot 3 Axis MK I.” A couple of YouTube videos later and ClayBots were selling like hotcakes.

Self-Propelled Transporter

An elderly Renair customer who owned three ClayBot MK II units had undergone back surgery and was having difficulty moving his machines, so he asked for a transporter to be built that would allow him to drive his trap on and off his utility trailer. Rennert got to work and built a two-wheeled drive model for him – and the first radio controlled transporter was born. The unit was so convenient, the man soon put an order in for two more. Rennert tried it out himself and was able to work on all types of presentations while standing in one spot. He drove it around his field and adjusted the trap

remotely, realizing there was no presentation that he could not practice. The self-propelled transporter was something he says he himself might never have dreamed up, but like the ClayBot, it was a customer inspired invention that garnered huge interest from the shooting public.

Rennert trailered the first generation radio controlled transporter down to Caney Creek for the 2016 US Open. That area of Texas was deluged with torrential rainfall during the days leading up to the event, leaving the grounds pocked with huge mud fields. Many of the roads were literally impassable, with vehicles of all sorts miring down in the mud. A couple from Arkansas stopped in their tracks as Rennert was driving the self-propelled unit off the trailer and ordered one on the spot. A man from Texas told him, “If you can make it through this mud hole with this machine I’ll buy two of them.” Rennert told him it wasn’t designed for that, but gave it a try anyway. “I drove it through the mud hole, spun it around, drove it back and did some doughnuts in the mud hole and drove it out of there.” The man ordered two of them then and there – and Rennert realized he could have sold 20 more if he had them in stock.

The best four days of Renair Shotgun Sports’ history took place at the 2016 Nationals. The self-propelled transporter was used in the shoot-off stadium Friday night in front of hundreds of spectators watching the Top Gun shoot-off. When the pros changed stations the unit was driven by radio control to a new location and the spring rate and target trajectory was adjusted remotely. The unit performed flawlessly that evening and it was no coincidence that Rennert took orders for several of the units the very next day.

The newest model of the self-propelled transporter is a four-wheel drive version, with a two mile radio. It’ll go through anything and is towable – basically a small all-terrain cart that will drive your ClayBot virtually anywhere you need it.

Fully Programmable

Rennert recently teamed up with a computer programmer on the West coast to add a computer controller to the ClayBot. With the latest version, called the ClayBot FP (Fully Programmable), you can now program any given machine with 30 different presets.



The push of a button can change the layout from a soft, beginner level course suitable for a squad of inexperienced shooters, up to fire-breathing screamers tailored for the highest skilled pros – or anything in between.

The programmable unit really shines in a 5-Stand setting – just imagine the flexibility of having 8 or 10 traps on a 5-Stand layout, all fully programmable. The push of a button can change the layout from

a soft, beginner level course suitable for a squad of inexperienced shooters, up to fire-breathing screamers tailored for the highest skilled pros – or anything in between.

Now in Development

A prototype of a fully programmable version of the transporter is now being tested – the ultimate in convenience and functionality. Projected to become available the last quarter of 2017, it will have an onboard GPS unit that steers the transporter to an exact,

predetermined location, will adjust the angle and spring rate, and launch the desired series of targets. When finished at that location, the push of a button will relocate it to the next

AVAILABLE IN 4 WHEEL DRIVE, A FULLY PROGRAMMABLE VERSION OF THE SELF-PROPELLED TRANSPORTER WILL BE AVAILABLE LATE 2017.



predetermined spot, adjust the presentation, and be ready for the following sequence of targets. Because it's four-wheel drive, throwing targets from rough,

uneven and wet ground is not a problem. The shooter can stay in one place, while the machine moves into position, climbing over rocks, limbs or through wet areas.

Capable of climbing a 30 degree incline, and run on a worm drive motor, it locks in place and will not drift when set up on an incline.

Easily Transported

All Renair products are less than five feet in width and designed to fit in the bed of a pickup or standard utility trailer. The self-propelled unit will crawl over the top of the wheel wells in a pickup bed and nestle itself over them. When ready, it can be driven back out of the bed. All gearboxes carry a lifetime guarantee while electronics are guaranteed for 3 years. "I think when you're buying my product you're buying the service also," says Rennert. "The service means that if you've got a question, anytime, anyplace,

anywhere, I'm there for you. That's what I believe in – and that's how it works."

Rennert and his wife moved last summer from Manitowoc, Wisconsin, near the Lake Michigan shoreline, to a rural area a short drive away. They're now living in a log cabin on a remote ridge, enjoying what he describes as the home of their dreams. When he wants to test a machine he can drive it out of his shop, set up in his field and start shooting without fear of bothering his neighbors.

He'll be taking his products on the road to the US Open, possibly the North Central Regionals, and will also be at Nationals again this year. Find Renair on the web at: www.renairshotgunsports.com or search RenairSports or TheMrRennert on YouTube. ■