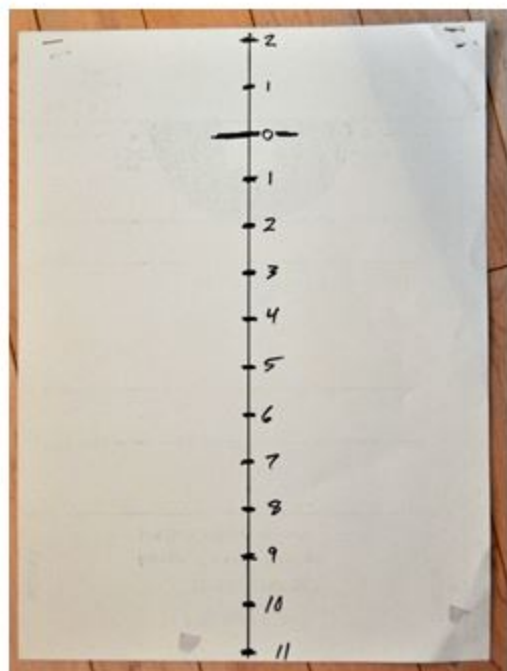


Even though long shots are possible here, the first coyote showed up at 75 yards. I missed it completely . . . arrgh! Then I redeemed myself by hitting the next two at 400 and 525 yards, respectively. The gun that morning was a Ruger American in .22-250, with a Quigley-Ford scope attached. This is an interesting scope that features a custom reticle with range-specific hash marks running down the vertical wire. In use, you determine the range with your laser, put the appropriate distance mark on the dog, then squeeze the trigger. It's exactly what I did with the two long-range hits mentioned above.

I'll do a full review on this scope and rifle in future posts, but for now, want to mention a trick I use whenever I'm setting up a scope that has any kind of secondary aiming points that can be used for long-range holdover. This includes everything from the single point provided by the tip of the thicker crosshair in the standard duplex reticle, to the extensive marks on the Quigley-Ford reticle. The more aiming points the scope has, the more useful I find this.

The first step is to use a ruler and felt marker to draw a highly visible line marked with 1-inch graduations on a large piece of paper. It ends up looking like the photo below.



Staple the paper up at 100 yards and support your rifle on sandbags. Then, with the scope's crosshair centered on the grid's zero point, you can see where each of the reticle's long-distance aiming points fall. Write these down for comparison to your load's predicted and actual trajectory.

For example, a secondary aiming point that aligns with the 3-inch mark at 100 yards tells you that aiming mark is offset about 3 minutes of angle (MOA). Examine your trajectory data using a ballistic program that will provide drop figures expressed in MOA, and wherever the drop is listed as being 3.0 MOA, is the distance at which to use that aiming point for a centered hit. Just remember that for most variable power scopes, changing magnification will change the distance at which a secondary aiming point will cross the bullet's path. Always use the same magnification setting when taking long shots and using those secondary aiming points. Quigley-Ford scopes, in keeping with this principle, are calibrated for one magnification setting only, typically the highest setting on each model.

Unlike them, most scopes have no markings to indicate which range those long distance marks is good for, so you have to figure it out for yourself. But even with Quigley-Ford scopes, it's a good way to confirm the mark's spacing. Using a grid as outlined above will provide the offset of each aiming point in MOA, and a good ballistic program will tell you where they intersect the trajectory. All that's left is shooting under field conditions to verify and your holdovers will be as accurate as you can make them.