

# Sniping

by Jack Swenson

Snipers shoot targets that are far away. Because the bullet shot by a sniper has to travel a very long distance, the sniper has to be very careful when taking aim. There are three main things that have an effect on the accuracy of the shot. (See *The Sniper's Field Guide*, p. 23.)

The bullets used by snipers are heavy. They are powered by gunpowder. This makes the bullet travel very fast. A fast bullet reaches a target quicker. Large fast bullets do more damage to the target than lighter or slower bullets.

A sniper is trained to be able to hit a target over 800 meters (2,625 ft), or half a mile away with almost every single shot. Some snipers are so accurate that they can shoot something out of a person's hand.

A sniper uses a special kind of rifle called a sniper rifle that is equipped with—you guessed it!—a sniper scope, a special telescope that allows them to see targets very far away.

Snipers wear camouflage clothing to avoid being seen. It wouldn't do for a sniper to be seen because then the sniper might become the snipee. Snipers sometimes paint their faces green or black to blend in with the surroundings. This works best in the jungle. On the streets of New York City, a sniper might wear a suit or a blue jumper.

Military snipers are chosen for their intelligence and their ability to shoot very well. They also have to have good eyesight.

Police departments train and use snipers. These snipers mainly serve on the SWAT team for their department. Often they can be seen at various locations in an urban community. SWAT sniper sightings are often reported at local Starbucks.

Snipers are often used in video games as elite soldiers. Getting a headshot with a sniper rifle is thought of as a hard skill to learn. Sometimes snipers have a bad reputation in the media; for example,

in October 2002 two men went on a month long killing spree using a sniper rifle in the Virginia and Maryland area.

Sometimes snipers are seen on TV. Occasionally they are interviewed by news people. For example, not long ago a sniper responded to questions by a famous television personality who during the course of their talk asked the sniper what he *felt* when he fired a shot at an enemy combatant who was, after all, another human being. "Recoil," the soldier said.

