

# 40 YARD DASH

## for a Turkey

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #52 —

It took a while for me to decide to tell this story, because I was running with a loaded gun; so hopefully everyone understands that as an experienced hunter, and someone who has participated in shooting competitions that require moving with a loaded gun, I felt perfectly safe. Please don't try this if you don't have the experience to do it safely.

Spring turkey hunting in Missouri can be frustrating; sometimes the gobblers go quiet and other times they gobble their heads off -- hung up just out of range. This morning was the latter. I was positioned in the edge of a woods near the bottom of a long, narrow field that

came to a point. The woods behind me was called "Turkey Hollow" -- and it's one of my favorite hunting spots.

A lone tom was with some hens on the other side of the field about 70 yards out; and I'd been working him for twenty minutes or so -- but to no avail. The field was slightly higher in the middle, so that when down on my knees I couldn't see the

turkeys and they couldn't see me. Standing up behind a tree, the top half of the birds were in sight and the gobbler was in full strut at the edge of the field, with a few hens. The rest of the hens were moving out through the woods; it was now or never, but I needed to get 40 yards closer!

After checking the safety on my Winchester Model 12, I took the position of a sprinter, ready to spring out of his

blocks; then I gave a cluck. Knowing that it took a tom turkey a second or two to come out of strut, as soon as the next gobble hit my ears I made my dash, keeping low with shotgun in my right hand.

As I neared the top of the ridge, the first birds to fly were the hens; then, there was the gobbler -- just coming out of strut. I kept going straight at him; he started to run downhill to my left and took flight. As soon as he got in the air, I straightened up, stopped and shot him from about 30 yards, just like you would shoot a clay pigeon. And that was the end of my 40 yard dash for a turkey.

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"...it was now or never..."

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Larry Potterfield

Midway Farms  
Fayette, Missouri  
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**USA**  
**Midway**

This old Winchester Model 12 was made in 1938 and has been my favorite turkey gun for many years.



Larry at the Cabin, with Turkey and Model 12.



An Eastern Gobbler, up close and in full strut, is a magnificent sight.

