



Caldwell ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ Wins 2026 Frank Desomma Innovation of the Year Award

August 19, 2026

(Columbia, MO) August __, 2026 – Caldwell®, a leading innovator in shooting and range equipment, today announced that its ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ Pro Kit has won the 2026 Frank Desomma Innovation of the Year Award from the Industry Choice Awards (ICA), marking the second consecutive year that Caldwell® has earned the prestigious honor. The annual award recognizes a single product that demonstrates exceptional innovation, design, or performance that stands out in the outdoor industry – this year, ICA chose to recognize the latest evolution of Caldwell's ClayCopter® platform and its most advanced launcher to date, the ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ Launcher.

Introduced in 2025, the original ClayCopter® gave target shooters an exciting new alternative to traditional clay targets with a lightweight, handheld motorized launcher capable of sending biodegradable ClayCopter® targets out to 100 yards. Caldwell® has since expanded ClayCopter® into a connected ecosystem that establishes an entirely new target throwing platform for recreational shooters, competitors and commercial range operators.

At the center of that expansion is the ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ Launcher, a portable, ground-based system that provides hands-free operation and varied target presentations, including incoming, crossing, wobbling and oscillating throws. Integrated with the Caldwell Clays™ App, the ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ enables full control over multiple wireless launchers using Caldwell's proprietary Touch-to-Launch technology – creating a dynamic, customizable sporting clays experience virtually anywhere.

"We are incredibly honored to have the ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™ recognized with the Frank Desomma Innovation of the Year Award," said James Tayon, Chief Product Officer. "This recognition means a great deal to our team because the award is an unbiased evaluation of all products in the shooting sports industry – and Caldwell® came out on top. The Surface-to-Air represents what we believe innovation should be – solving consumer problems, challenging the conventions of established categories, and creating entirely new experiences rather than simply incrementally improving what already exists. Our goal is to develop products that make shooting sports more engaging and accessible, create new reasons to participate, and ultimately bring new consumers into the sport. I'm extremely proud of the team that turned that vision into the ClayCopter Surface-to-Air™, and grateful to the Industry Choice Awards for recognizing what they created."

The Industry Choice Awards, sponsored and administered by Oneida Molded Plastics, use a structured evaluation process with 20–30 experienced firearms-industry evaluators unaffiliated with participating companies. Products are assessed in retail- and range-type environments across fit, form and function, with Oneida having no influence over evaluation data or rankings. The Innovation of the Year Award honors Frank Desomma, a three-time ICA Rifle of the Year winner and 2018 American Rifleman Golden Bullseye Award recipient.

About Caldwell®

Caldwell® is a leading shooting accessory brand within the American Outdoor Brands, Inc. portfolio. Trusted by firearms owners for over two decades, Caldwell® innovates new products to Eliminate the Variables That Make You Miss™. The Caldwell® name represents the brand's ongoing commitment to bringing innovative and problem-solving products to the target shooting category. For more information on Caldwell® products, including the Caldwell Clays™ App and the entire family of smart launchers, visit <https://www.caldwellshooting.com/claycopter>.

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