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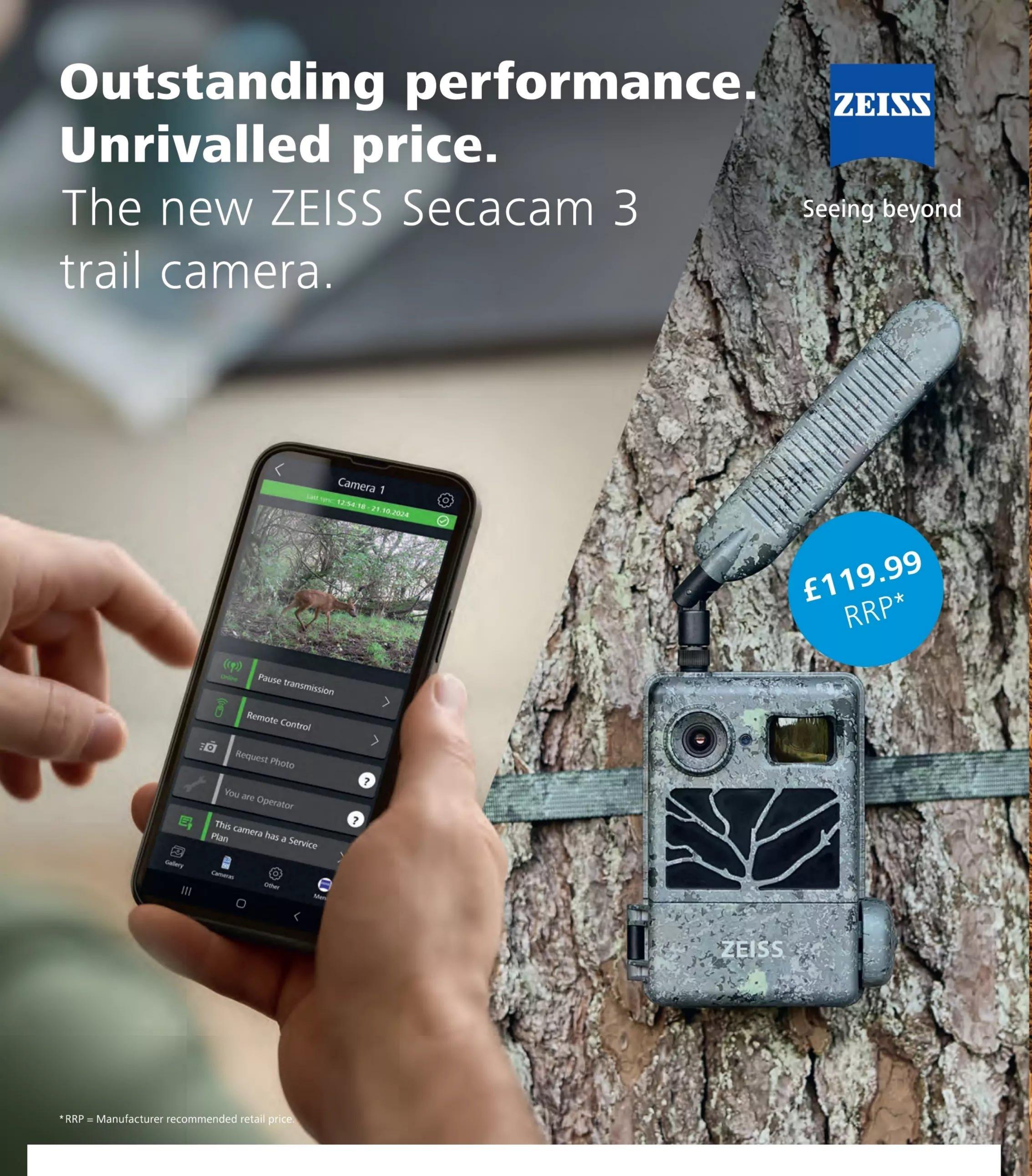
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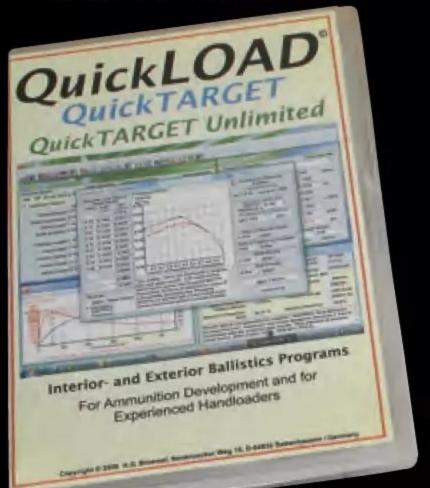
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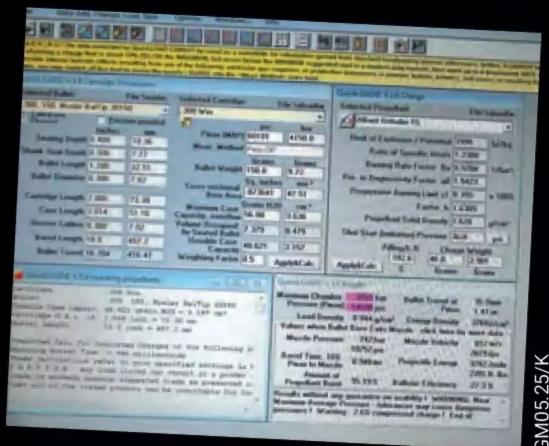
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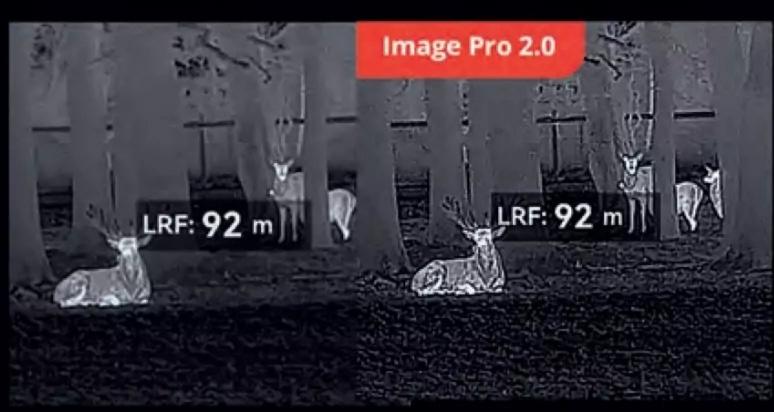
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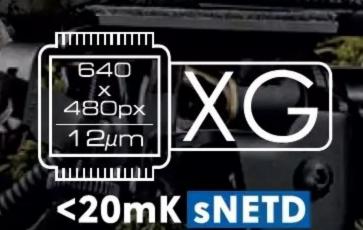
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Thermion 2 LRF XL60	PUL-76575	£5,599.95	1024x768, 12µm	60mm f1.1	2800m*

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DISCOVER

^{*}All Pulsar detection ranges are based on standard 1.8m tall human or deer shaped objects.



























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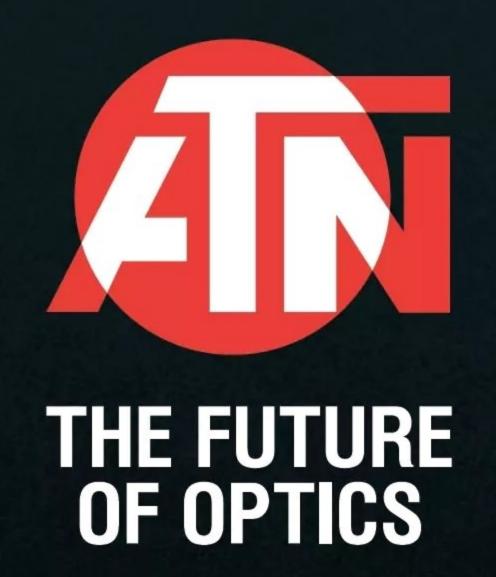


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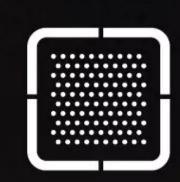
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EDITOR'S COMMENT

Right then, the latest issue of Gun Mart is here, and it's absolutely brimming! Kicking things off, I managed to unshackle myself from my desk and take a trip to a new underground rifle range tucked away in rural Suffolk. You can check out my report on page 38.

Now, over in the airgun section, Mark Camoccio is back with a stack of reviews. He gives the Air Arms S510R Core a thorough going over and finds it to be a lightweight hunter with real pedigree. Fans of classic wheelguns will want to check out his take on Umarex's replica Smith & Wesson Model 29. It looks the part and performs beautifully. He also runs the Konus Glory 2-16x50 scope through its paces and tests the FX Dynamic Compact Takedown, a precision airgun designed for stealth and versatility.

In the firearms section, Chris Parkin enjoys some time with the brand-new, super-slick Mauser 25 Max and the robust WBP AK-47 straight-pull. Jules Whicker tests two thermal monoculars from Pixfra, while Bruce Potts offers a useful rifle moderator round-up. For the handloaders, Mark Underwood shares some tips on bullet seating.

Finally, in Country & Shotgun,
Bruce Potts assesses Browning's
latest 825 Pro Sport Adjustable
and takes a pretty detailed look
at some of Sellier & Bellot's
Practical Slug ammunition.
Meanwhile, Rob Smith gets
hands-on with the Fabarm Elos
N2 RS Sporting, a quality shotgun
that won't break the bank.

Enjoy, and as always, safe shooting!

Ed Jackson

Managing Editor



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- **026 Kit Box:** We look at some of the latest gear and equipment to hit the market
- o30 Best on Test: Our expert reviewers bring you a selection of shooting's top new products
- o38 Visit: Ed Jackson visits an up-andcoming underground rifle range that has popped up in rural Suffolk

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- O44 Gun Test: While testing the
 Air Arms S510R Core, Mark
 Camoccio discovers a refined,
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 offering top-tier performance
- **054 Gun Test:** Mark Camoccio takes a close look at Umarex's stunning replica of the legendary Smith & Wesson Model 29
- O60 Qualification: We look at the Airgun Proficiency Course offered by the Shooting & Hunting Academy
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O68 Gun Test: Mark Camoccio puts the FX Dynamic Compact Takedown through its paces, revealing a precision-driven air rifle built for both stealth and performance

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- 090 Product Test: Jules Whicker tries out a brace of thermal monoculars from Thomas Jacks' affordable Pixfra brand
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All the latest news and views from the shooting world

Range Right appointed as exclusive UK distributor for Taipan Airguns and Valiant Optics

> Range Right has secured exclusive
UK distribution rights for Taipan
Airguns and Valiant Optics. The
announcement follows successful
discussions between the businesses
at this year's IWA show in Nuremberg.

Harrogate-based Range Right is a leading distributor of airguns, optics, shotguns, rifles, and shooting accessories.

Managing director Gill Peters said: "This is very exciting for us.

Taipan Airguns are at the top end of the market and have a reputation for excellent performance, not just with pellets but also with slug ammunition, which has rocketed in popularity in recent years.

"Valiant Optics has an equally enviable reputation for solid build quality and class-leading performance. We look forward to bringing



both brands to British shooters and have no doubt that they will quickly become firm favourites."

Based in the Czech Republic, the Taipan Airguns range is made to the highest standards. Each of these pre-charged air rifles is tested on completion and leaves the factory with a range card confirming its

accuracy at 40m. The 2025 lineup includes the self-indexing Slash, the Veteran II, and the Veteran II Tactical.

Range Right will be bringing the entire Taipan Airguns range to the UK in a variety of barrel lengths and calibres, including .177, .22, .25, and .30. Options will include sub-12ft/lbs and high-power models in various configurations.

RSPCA show support for proposed anti-countryside wildlife bill

> The RSPCA has kicked off a campaign supporting the creation of an updated Wildlife Act that could spell disaster for wildlife managers and conservation.

Backed by the Americanfunded Humane World for Animals organisation, the RSPCA hosted a launch event in Parliament for the proposed legislation, attended by Defra minister Mary Creagh.

The charity's call for a single consolidated and updated Wildlife Act was accompanied by a 70-page report produced

by Professor Angus Nurse of Anglia Ruskin University.

The report includes measures such as the application of the 'precautionary principle' to general licences for pest control, the provision of further legal protection for the fox as well as the instigation of a close season for hares, vicarious liability for farmers on whose land wildlife crimes occur, and a presumption of innocence for individual animals.

Chief executive of the Countryside Alliance, Tim Bonner, said: "The report makes unhappy reading for anyone



involved in wildlife management, game shooting, hunting or fishing."

"The practical implications of this would make wildlife management nigh on impossible.

"Reducing wildlife populations over time through landscape-scale control to reduce the damage they do to wildlife, crops, and habitats would be illegal under such a regime."



Mixed news as general licences for gamebird release face further delays

The shooting sector has received confirmation from Defra that GL43 will be issued within the next few weeks, but that they do not plan to reissue GL45 for the remainder of this year.

GL43 is the general licence which permits the release of pheasants and red-legged partridges on or within 500m of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), while GL45 applies to the release of these gamebirds on or within 500m of Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The government claims that it will not be renewing GL45 due to the current risk levels of avian influenza. Shoots that wish to release birds in these areas will be forced to apply for an individual licence from Natural England, Defra has said.

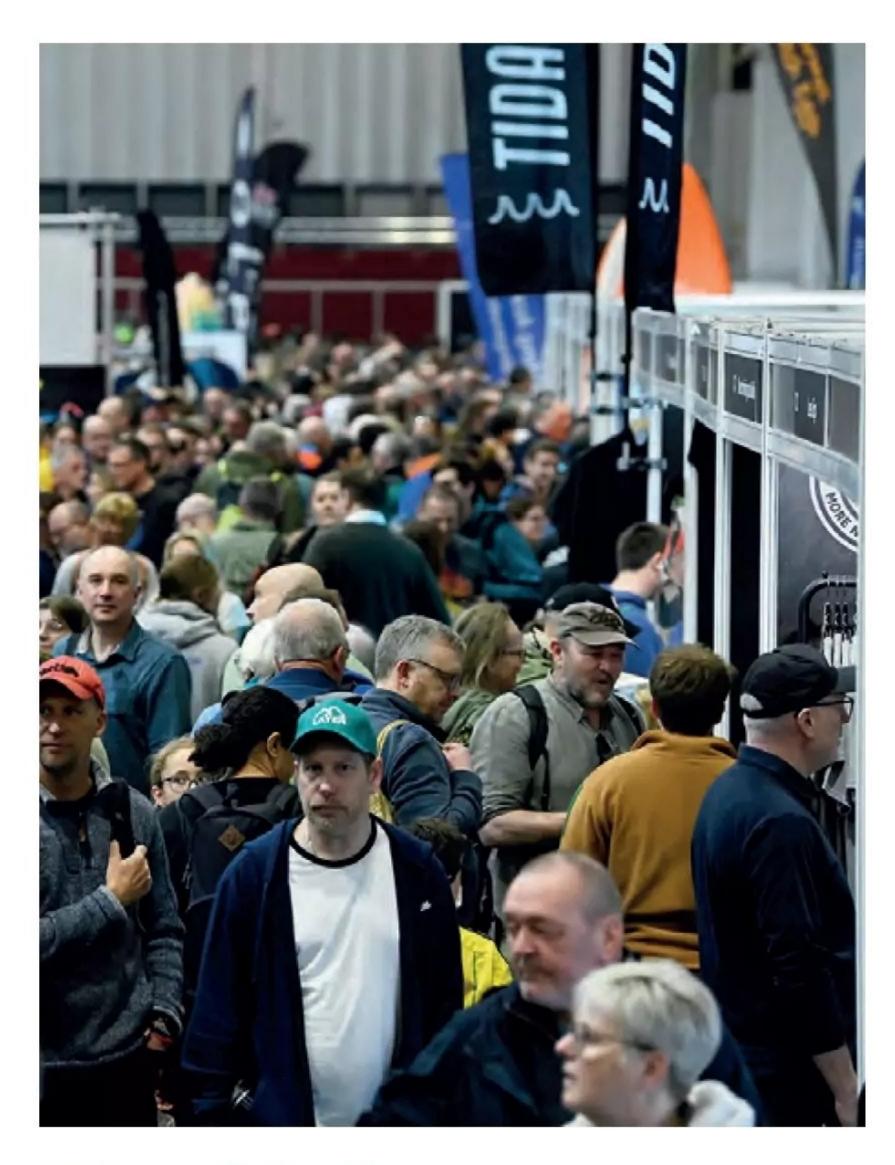
This will dramatically increase the bureaucratic burden for shoots that, in previous years under GL45, would simply have had to adhere to the conditions stipulated by

the general licence with no paperwork necessary.

Director of conservation, policy, and uplands for the National Gamekeepers' Organisation (NGO), John Clarke, told GM: "After the GL43 debacle of 2023, the NGO ensured that we engaged with the Defra gamebird licensing team at every stage, and we had recently written to the Minister responsible for the issuing of these licences asking why there was a delay in issuing the two general licences.

"This makes it even more frustrating that Defra has made the decision not to license GL45 this year. Individuals operating on or near SPAs will have to apply for individual licences, which once again puts businesses in jeopardy and risks repercussions for both employment and the wider rural economy.

"Shooting is a key driver of rural economic growth, and delays and restrictions are not helpful in already struggling rural communities."



Fiocchi aims to change perceptions of shooting sports

Italian ammunition manufacturers,
Fiocchi, have attended The National Outdoor
Expo (NOE) in Birmingham as they aim to
introduce new audiences to clay shooting.

Fiocchi's presence at the NOE was the first time they had showcased shooting sports outside of the sector. NOE attendance tops 20,000, with an even gender divide offering a strong opportunity to increase the involvement of girls and women in clay shooting, where they currently make up just 6% of participants.

The Fiocchi stand offered a virtual reality clay shooting experience, affordable lesson opportunities, and appearances by key industry figures to promote the sport in a positive light.

The Marketing Manager for Fiocchi,
Jack Dennis, told GM: "With active shotgun
certificates at their lowest since records began,
the industry can't afford to compete over a
shrinking market. We need to expand it.

"That's why we're taking action, engaging with the wider outdoor community to showcase shooting as an accessible, exciting, and rewarding sport.

"The biggest challenge we see is that clay shooting remains segregated from the wider outdoor sports world. We want to change that by bridging the gap and showing that shooting sports have a place in this space."

Game feed firm discovers ground-breaking new ingredient

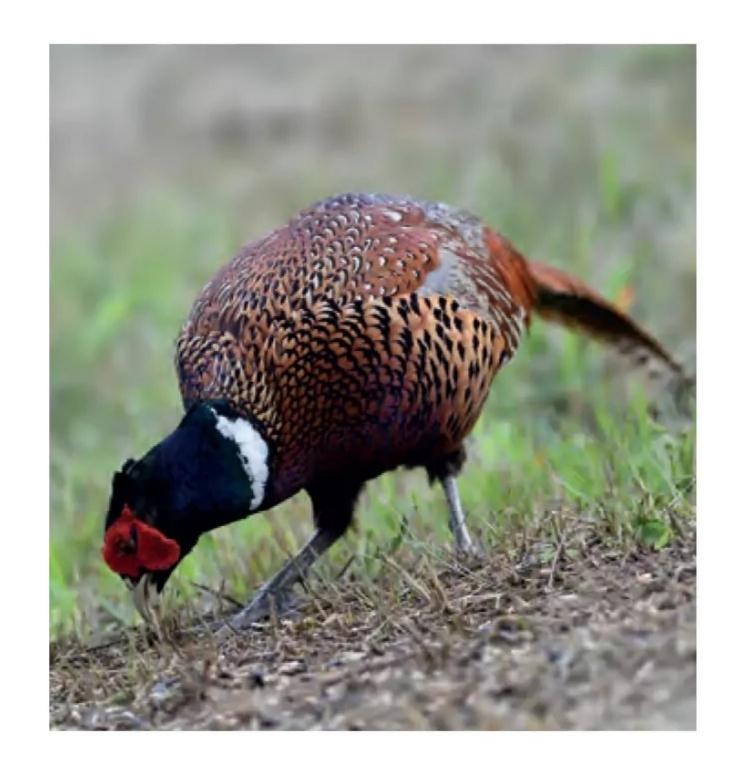
A Scottish game feed company has launched a new probiotic additive for their feeds that has been proven to mitigate disease in gamebirds.

The breakthrough has come following trials undertaken by Spratt's Game Foods in conjunction with vets and nutritionists. The triplestrain probiotic additive is now being produced by Danish bioscience company Chr. Hansen before it is added to the feed at Spratt's mill in Drumlithie, Aberdeenshire.

During tests, the probiotic improved the intestinal health of game birds early in the season and reduced cases of coccidiosis.

The three bacillus strains of probiotics have been selected for their individual properties against potentially harmful pathogens such as Salmonella, E. coli, and Clostridia. The bacillus colonises the gut and forms a protective layer to shield the intestinal lining from harmful bacteria.

Laura Hoving, the company's Poultry Technical Sales Manager, said that the probiotic "ensures a robust and healthy microbiome that is able to minimise negative effects of infection, resulting



in a healthier flock, more uniform birds, improved feed conversion, and lower mortality. Happy and healthy birds mean happy gamekeepers!"

Spratt's says that the addition of their new probiotic is the "last piece of the puzzle".

Luton shooting causes re-examination of licensing law by Home Secretary

The private firearms sales process has "deep and longstanding weaknesses", says Home Secretary Yvette Cooper.

A shooting that took place in Luton last September, with an illegally obtained shotgun, has prompted deeper scrutiny of current shotgun and firearm licensing laws.

Last autumn, Nicholas Prosper, 19, murdered his mother, sister, and brother in their home in Luton with a shotgun bought the day before using a fake licence.

Prosper was recently jailed for life and will serve a minimum of 49 years for the murders.

In August 2024, Prosper tried and failed in his first attempt to buy a gun. However, later that month, he contacted another seller on a legal gun sales site, paying £650 to the man for a shotgun and 100 cartridges.

He had researched the logos, signatures, and even the type of paper licences were printed on to dupe the seller, who committed no offence.

Private gun sellers need to inform police of any sale, and the person who sold the shotgun to Prosper did this on the 12th of September.

Yet because this was done outof-hours on the day before the killings, there was no opportunity for anyone to realise the gun had been sold to someone who was not a legitimate licence holder.

Yvette Cooper said: "This terrible case has exposed deep and long-standing weaknesses in private firearms sales, and we are urgently looking at how we can tighten these controls."

In response to the sentencing of Nicholas Prosper and the Home Secretary's comments, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) released the following statement: "First and foremost, every life lost is a tragedy. The goal should always be to prevent harm wherever possible.

"BASC works for a licensing system that protects public



safety and has consistently advocated for a more efficient and effective licensing process.

"It is important that the full facts are known and understood, and that no solution is decided upon as a knee-jerk reaction to horrific killings. BASC would urge ministers to examine the failings of the existing system, which has 43 different licensing authorities, all with differing interpretations of the law and guidance.

"They should consider establishing a national body for firearms licensing and a robust system for ensuring that any buyer is legitimate and properly authorised to purchase the firearm in question."



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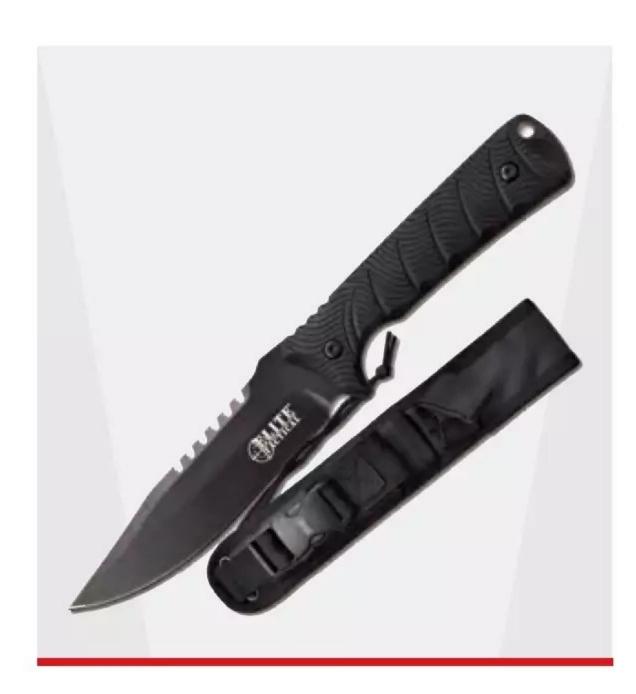


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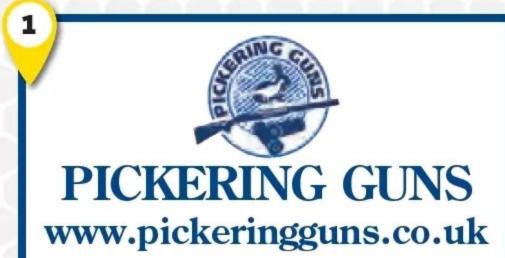
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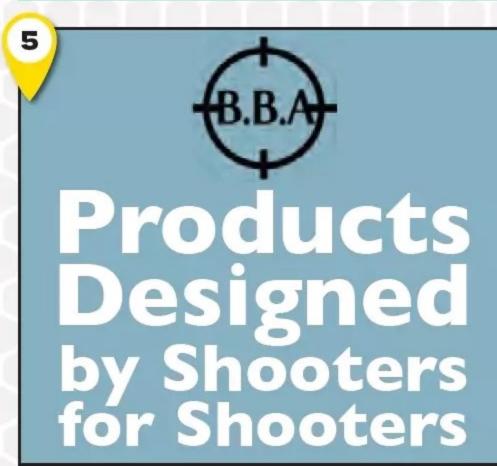


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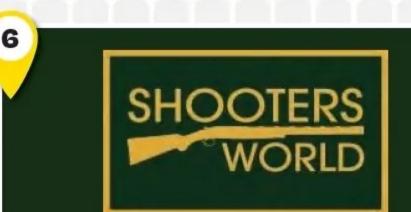
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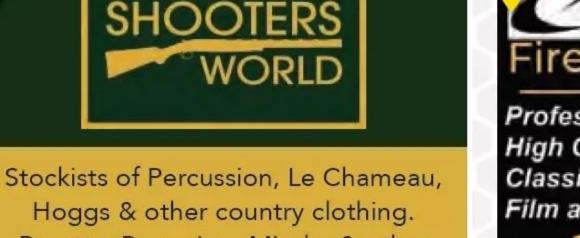
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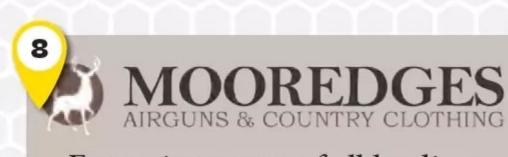
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Ballistol Universal Oil

> Gun maintenance is one of those necessary evils that some, myself included, neglect, but do so at your peril, as corrosion and fouling buildup can wreck a rifle very quickly.

Ballistol UK distributes a range of dedicated cleaning and preservative products, including their highly versatile Universal Oil, which I use frequently. This product is available in various formats, including a 350ml Vairo Flex Spray with a flexible hose dispenser for £15.25, a 200ml spray can for £8.95, a 50ml bottle for £4.25, or a pack of ten wipes for £5.95.

This type of universal oil is equally effective for maintaining and preserving metal, wood, leather, rubber, and synthetic materials, as well as for a wide range of household tasks.

Specification and uses

It is an alkaline-based product that poses no health risk if ingested, is skin-safe, and is biodegradable. It also effectively neutralises combustion residues in firearms.

Its main attribute is its ability to creep into all crevices due to its low surface tension, allowing it to penetrate more effectively for better cleaning.

On metal, it provides a protective alkaline film on the surface, neutralizes hand sweat and other acidic corrosive residues, and ensures that the surface is protected from corrosion.

It is safe to use on gun stocks and is actually recommended in climates with frequent rain and/ or high relative humidity, where a wood stock might absorb water.

Ballistol seals and protects wooden stocks, enhances the grain and shine/ depth of old wood, and prevents it from drying out in hot, arid climates. Importantly, it is also safe to use on composite/polycarbonate stocks.

On leather slings, it protects the leather from becoming hard and dry,



while also shielding it against water, insects, and fungi. Additionally, it maintains and protects oil-resistant synthetic materials, such as plastic, helping them retain their elasticity and prevent them from drying out.

Ballistol effectively cleans and removes all types of bore fouling, dissolving traces of copper, zinc, lead, powder residue, and tombac gilding metal. It dissolves the carbon deposits in the barrel and chamber that are left by smokeless powders.

Due to the antioxidants contained in it, Ballistol will never harden or gum up, retaining its lubricity over extended periods of exposure. Most corrosion-inhibiting lubricants can only protect against normal oxidation, but due to its alkalinity, Ballistol can also protect against galvanic corrosion, acidic corrosion, and saltwater corrosion. In fact, sweat from the hands can be one of the main causes of external rust on a gun, as it is composed of amino acids and is thus slightly acidic. Ballistol eliminates this risk.

Furthermore, it is great for all external surfaces on a gun, as it can

emulsify with water. So, Ballistol mixes with the water, penetrates it, and as the water evaporates, the oil remains behind, continuing to protect the metal, plastic, or wood surfaces.

Conclusion

oil wipes in the truck so I can wipe my rifle down after a downpour or after hot, sweaty roe-buck stalking in the summer. The spray can is an effective barrel cleaner, with Ballistol's GunCer and Robla Solo Mil products being even more potent. I will test these in greater depth next time, but check out the website, as there is a Ballistol product that will work for you. GM

REVIEWER: BRUCE POTTS

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Ballistol Universal Oil Price: £15.25 (Vairo Flex Universal Spray 350ml) Contact: Ballistol UK www.ballistol.co.uk

Alpinus Men's Thermoactive Base Layer Sets

> Excessively bulky clothing and rifle shooting do not go together well, making it essential during the colder months to recognise the benefits of insulating base layers for retaining body heat.

Dynamic hunting generates a lot more body heat to keep you warm, but the more sedentary options, specifically long waits in a hide or high seat, can be bone-tinglingly cold. Sometimes, all that moves are your eyes!

Dynamic or sedentary

Alpinus is a Polish brand, and I was sent two of their base layer options to use during the winter. The 'Active' set is pretty much self-explanate

is pretty much self-explanatory, while the 'Tactical' set is for more static adventures. Both sets are visually similar, other than the colour options, with leggings and a shirt featuring seamless construction to prevent any abrasion. The fabrics differ slightly in composition, with the Active being comparatively 'silky' compared to the slightly more fibrous texture of the Tactical set. The materials used are incredibly flexible, and when you first open the box, they all look miniature, but step in, and the material becomes a second skin. It's a strange feeling at first, but it feels like it bonds to you and is never uncomfortable or restrictive, nor does it feel clingy.

Similar but different

Both fabrics are advertised as wicking, and they certainly achieve this. The



Active is stated to be anti-static, whereas the Tactical set is described as anti-allergic, yet both have an almost gossamer-thin double layer to trap heat, and they are quick-drying too.

I have worn both sets in appropriate conditions, and while the fabric differences are subtle, they are more noticeable when first putting them on than after prolonged wear. The Active set contains slightly more elastane (7%) for added flexibility, whereas the Tactical set has 5%, though it is by no means restrictive.

The key difference lies in the polyester and polypropylene content, alongside the polyamide base of the fabric, which determines the level of insulation and the texture of the material. Importantly, both garments are phenomenally comfortable and grip well against your skin, and they don't

sag or slip throughout the course of the day.

I would also say that both provide immediate warmth, but the Tactical set can feel almost uncomfortably warm until you step out into the cold. The Active set functions more as an insulating undergarment, while the Tactical set is better regarded as a foundation for thermal comfort when facing very cold conditions, even if it feels slightly uncomfortable at first. Neither set restricted movement, and both appeared to wick naturally produced moisture effectively.

Roles

Overall, the Active set is good for a night out foxing, with broken-up movement patterns, never staying in one place for too long, whereas the Tactical set is definitely for times when you won't be moving for hours on end. GM

REVIEWER: CHRIS PARKIN

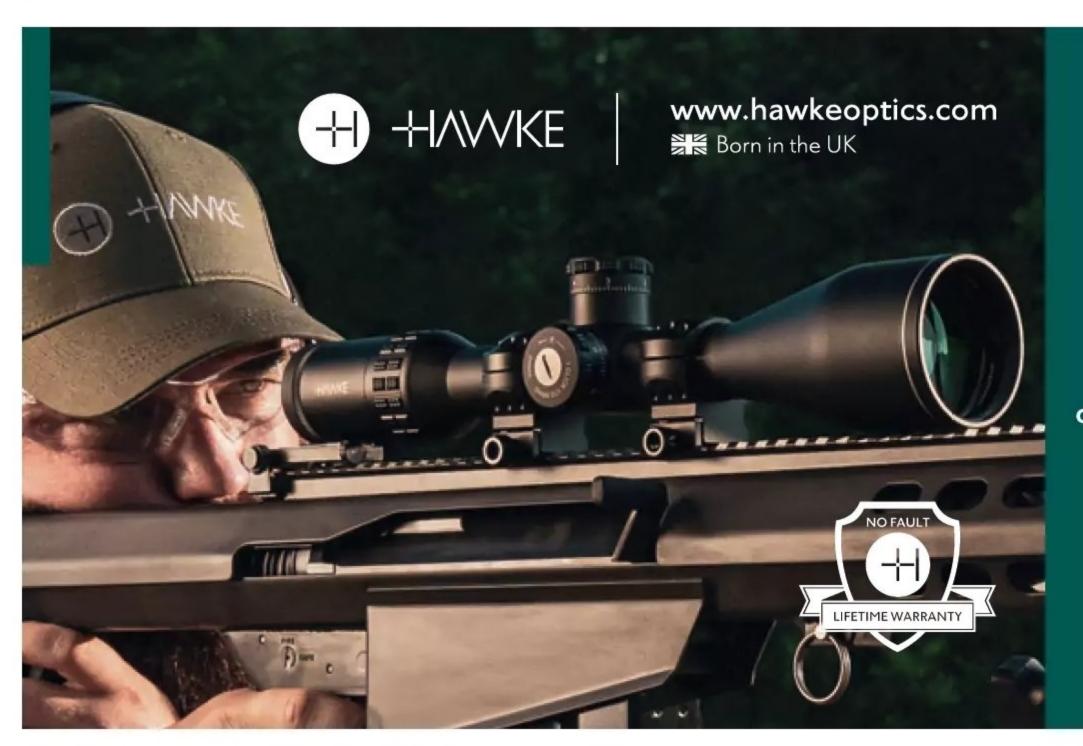
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Alpinus Men's Tactical and Active Thermoactive Base Layer Sets

Price: £62.06 and £40.64,

respectively

Contact: Military 1st - www.military1st.co.uk



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Lapua Midas+ and Remington Subsonic Hollow Point .22LR Ammunition





The .22LR cartridge is undoubtedly one of the greatest of all time, not just because it's arguably the ultimate rabbiting load, but also because it's the cartridge many of us first learned to shoot with.

The two cartridges featured here sit at opposite ends of the price and performance spectrum, but each has a well-defined role.

Match load

Lapua Midas+ is a premium, targetfocused load that was once solely associated with paper punching. However, with the rise of precision rimfire shooting, a new purpose has been found at longer ranges.

The ammunition is made in Germany and shows impeccably uniform finishing on both the brass case and lead bullet. Lubrication is a dry film with uniform dispersion over the domed meplat and circumferential driving bands, ensuring consistency. The bullets are packed in boxes of 50 with individual slots within the polymer liner to ensure no damage in transit.

The 40gr bullet's G1 ballistic coefficient (BC) is advertised at 0.172 alongside a velocity of 1,073fps. The BC was accurate through my 20" barrel, although the muzzle velocity crept up to 1,094fps with a distinct, if consistent, supersonic crack. The 1.3gr of powder within consisted of tiny, dark grey/green kernels.

I used this ammunition exclusively on targets at 75 yards and was rewarded with a 0.480" five-shot group, which I found highly satisfying in the light breeze. I encountered few flyers, and since I was shooting outdoors, I was confident that the wind was the culprit rather than any inconsistency in the ammunition.

Rabbit round

For hunting and plinking, subsonic rimfire ammunition is delightfully quiet, and with a hollow point to ensure adequate expansion, Remington's Subsonic offering is an ideal choice. This ammunition is made in the USA, features a copperwashed bullet, and comes packed loosely in cardboard packets, which is more appropriate given its lower price point and bulk usage scenarios.

The muzzle velocity is advertised at 1,050fps, and I recorded the BC at 0.125 with my radar chronograph over the 50 yard test distance. Again, the muzzle velocity was a little higher from my gun at 1,068fps.

I measured the dark grey flake powder load at 1.4gr, and the performance on paper at 50 yards was 0.84", well within the limits for plinking or pest control at reasonable ranges.

After use

I cleaned the rifle after each ammunition cycle and found the

Midas+ to be the cleaner of the two overall, particularly around the chamber area, where there was no risk of minute copper shavings being produced, unlike the Remington. However, these two types of ammunition serve distinctly different purposes within the realm of rimfire shooting.

If you don't mind the supersonic crack for target shooting, the Midas is a superbly consistent performer, with an extreme spread of less than 14fps over a ten-round string, whereas the Remington varied by 63fps under the same conditions but at a considerably lower cost per round.

Both are equally enjoyable to shoot, but for the most serious competitions or specialised long-range applications, the Lapua's higher BC provides a clear advantage. However, it won't perform like a hollow point on small game. The Lapua is, without a doubt, expensive, but it is well worth it if precision is your priority. GM

REVIEWER: CHRIS PARKIN

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Lapua Midas+ and Remington Subsonic Hollow Point .22LR Ammunition

Price: £342 and £130 (per 1000), respectively

Contact: Viking Arms -

www.vikingarms.com

Pocket Chainsaw and Live Fire FireCord

With summer due sometime soon, the great outdoors beckons, and EDC Warehouse carries some very useful small accessories that are well worth taking along.

As a very handy alternative to a bulkier axe or rigid saw, the Pocket Chainsaw folds neatly into its own carry case and takes up virtually no room at all. Despite its small size, this is a formidable cutting tool, and the 20" long chain holds 26 razor-sharp teeth. They cut in both directions, giving you maximum effectiveness on both the forward and backward strokes, making this tool ideal for removing obstructive branches or cutting firewood. Durable polyester wrist straps provide a safe and secure grip and keep your hands away from the cutting teeth.



A length of rope has countless practical uses outdoors, and 25ft of exceptionally strong 550-nylon paracord is an excellent choice. The Live Fire FireCord has a useful extra feature: its eighth inner strand is a waterproof fire tinder that ignites

easily. It is colour-coded for easy
identification and can be
removed from the cord
easily. The fire tinder strand
will ignite even when wet,
making it easy to light a campfire
or a stove, and after it is all used
up, the rest of the cord remains a
strong and versatile accessory.

These are just a couple of the outdoor accessories that EDC Warehouse carries, and their website is well worth a visit to see more. GM

REVIEWER: MARK UNDERWOOD

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Pocket Chainsaw and Live Fire FireCord Price: £22.99 and £14.99,

respectively

Contact: EDC Warehouse - www.edcwarehouse.co.uk



Hornady Binocular Case

Hornady's Binocular Case is a versatile, all-in-one solution for your essential hunting gear. Designed for convenience, it features a secure pouch to protect your valuable optics, held firmly in place by adjustablelength, quick-release buckles that evenly distribute the weight across your back. Elastic, adjustable-length straps connect to a breathable mesh panel between your shoulder blades, ensuring a stable, close-tochest fit that prevents unnecessary movement. This secure design minimises the risk of the case getting snagged or covered in mud when you're hunched or crawling.

The rain cover is elastic and stretches over the case with a lanyard to lock it down and prevent rainwater ingress. A larger front pocket provides space for additional accessories, such as a small thermal imager or Kestrel. This pocket has four ammunition loops within, as well as

broader loops for a call, batteries, or a multitool. There are eight additional larger ammunition loops accessible from the sides, sandwiched between the main compartment and the zippered front.

The binocular pouch measures 22x19x8cm (8.5x7.5x3") and will hold most hunting-specification binoculars. For an idea of scale, my Leica Geovid 10x42s slotted in easily with room to spare. The padded Cordura construction is reasonably rigid, so you can insert and remove items without snagging, and it helps minimise potential damage from rough handling.

The 15x15x8cm (6x6x3") front pocket encourages you to really think about the accessories you need to carry, and I found the case



ideal for absolute 'can'thunt-without' essentials when I was in a hurry to travel light. **GM**

REVIEWER: CHRIS PARKIN

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Hornady Binocular Case

Price: £64.99

Contact: Edgar Brothers - www.edgarbrothers.com



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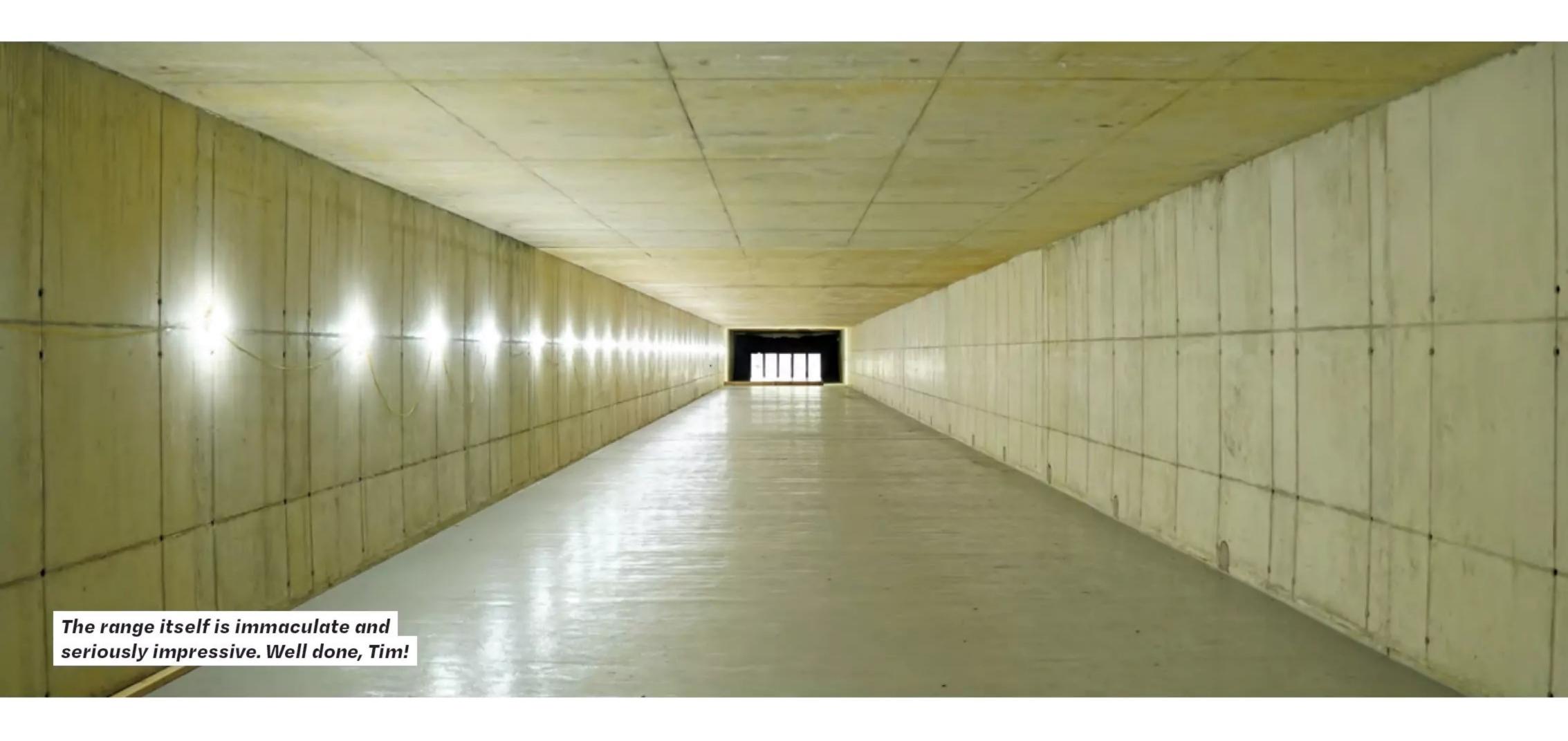
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Always on the lookout for new places to go shooting, **Ed Jackson** visits an up-and-coming underground rifle range that has popped up in rural Suffolk

Tim Denton-Cardew has been building this range for five years, all while being a full-time paramedic



Rifle ranges play a vital role in the UK's shooting sports community, providing a safe and controlled environment for target shooters and hunters to zero their rifles, refine their skills, develop their reloads, and compete. However, ranges continue to close, and some military facilities have become either inaccessible or prohibitively expensive, increasing the demand for new venues. Despite this demand, new ranges remain rare, particularly those designed with modern facilities and forward-thinking features. The challenges of securing planning permission, acquiring suitable land, and obtaining the necessary funding mean that many proposed projects never come to fruition.

This is why the opening of a new rifle range in rural Suffolk is such a significant event. Even more remarkably, this range has been built with an innovative underground design, making it one of the most distinctive shooting facilities in the country. The project has been the work of a lone man on a mission, Tim Denton-Cardew, a former Royal Marine who has spent years planning, funding, and constructing a range that caters to deer stalkers, target shooters, and shooting clubs.

The mission

Having struggled to find a reliable and suitable place to practise, Tim took matters into his own hands and set out to build a modern rifle range that would meet the needs of the shooting community. His goal was to create a facility where shooters could train without concerns about weather, noise or accessibility issues that often make regular practice difficult.

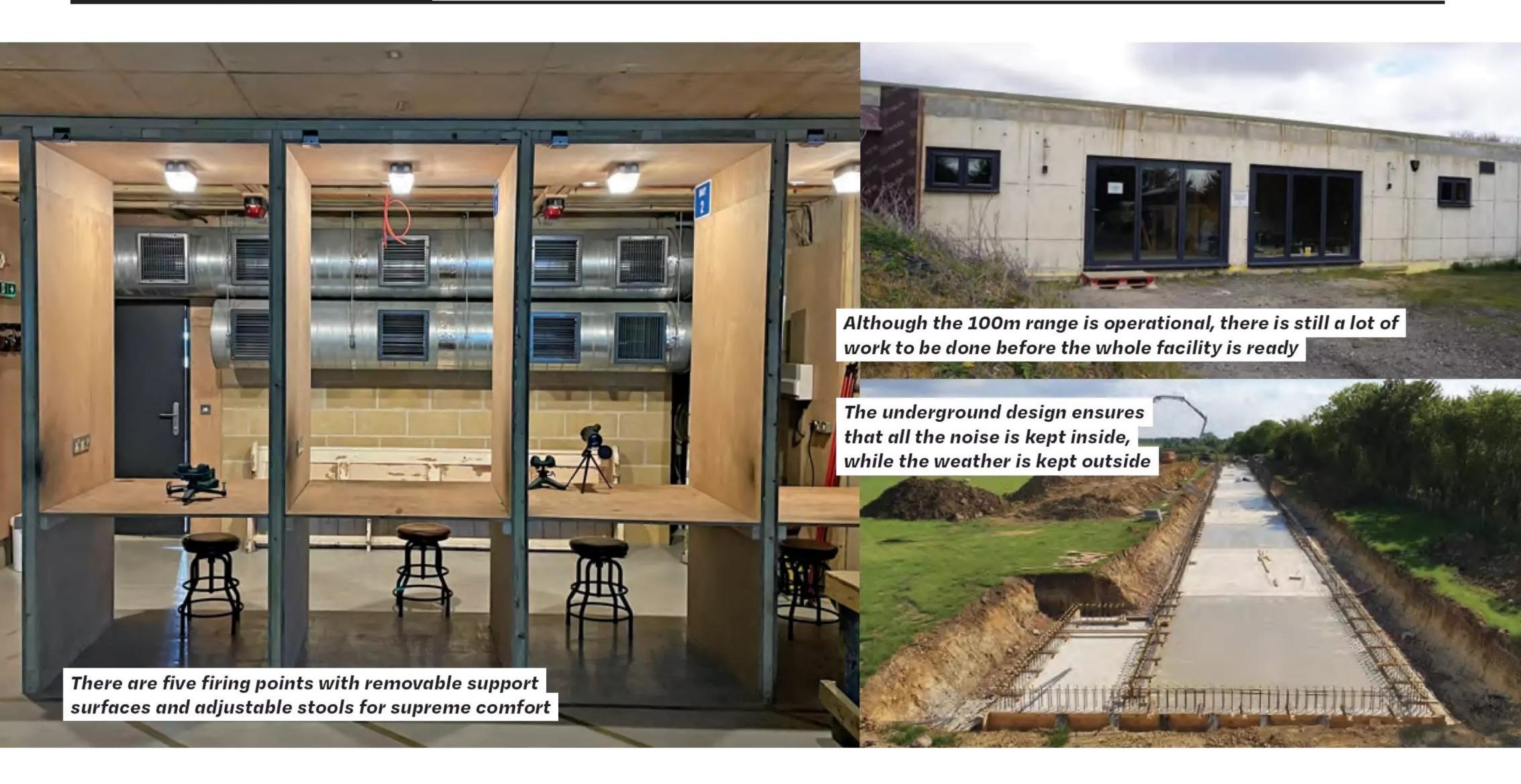
For many rifle shooters, particularly deer stalkers, finding a safe and convenient location to zero rifles and refine techniques like shooting from sticks is a constant challenge. Many avoid using their own permissions due to potential noise issues, unsuitable terrain, or the risk of disturbing wildlife. Traditional outdoor ranges can also be hard to access, often requiring a membership of sorts, and being able to do the specific training or type of shooting you want is not always possible.

Tim faced these same obstacles and saw an opportunity to create a solution. After extensive research and visits to other ranges across the country, including Carlton Moor Tunnel Range in the Peak District and Rifleman Firearms in Somerset, he concluded that an indoor facility was the best way forward. Given the challenges of securing approval for an above-ground range, he opted for an underground or partially subterranean design. While the range is now fully operational, work continues on the reception, conference, and social areas. Well, he is only one man!

After years of planning, securing letters of support from various shooting organisations, and successfully applying for a rural development grant, he finally received planning permission. The build began just before the first COVID lockdown in 2020, but progress was slowed by the challenges of the pandemic and the difficulty of funding such a major project. Despite these obstacles, the range is now in operation, providing a vital resource for shooters in the region.

The range and its facilities

The 100m range is situated on a ten-acre site in the beautiful countryside near Kenton, Suffolk, and it can easily be found using Google Maps. There are five fixed firing points, and the design ensures that shooters have a comfortable and controlled environment in which to practise,



while the underground nature of the range significantly limits the amount of noise coming from the site. The facility accommodates all common rimfire and centrefire calibres, and shooters can fire from the prone position, sticks, tripods, and even barricades, allowing for both precision shooting and practical rifle training. This part of the building is fully operational.

As well as providing a high-quality shooting environment, the range includes several additional facilities. As previously mentioned, there is a reception area, some toilets (including disabled facilities), a social space where shooters can gather before or after their sessions, and a conference room where training sessions, courses, and group meetings can be held. However, other than the standard toilet, all these areas are still being finished.

Future plans include the creation of a dedicated reloading area for load development, as well as a patio space where clubs can host social events, such as barbecues, during the summer months.

How to visit

Currently, Tim is keen for as many clubs and individuals as possible to visit the range, which operates on a booking system, and shooters who wish to use it should contact Tim directly. Since he works full-time as a paramedic, the availability of the range depends on his shift patterns, so just get in touch and he will do his best to accommodate you or your club.

The range is currently approved to open seven days a week, with standard hours being from 10am to 8pm Monday to Saturday, and from 10am until 5pm on Sundays. An application is in place to extend these hours, which may allow the range to operate from 9am until 9pm in the near future.

For private shooters, the cost of using the range is £20 per hour, while clubs benefit from a 50% discount when they make a block booking, allowing groups to spread the cost and make training more affordable. The range also welcomes commercial clients, such as ammunition manufacturers looking for a controlled environment in which to test their products.

Supporting the future of shooting

I think it is fair to say that more ranges are closing than opening in the UK these days, so it is more important than ever to support new facilities. Without well-maintained and accessible ranges, shooters will have fewer opportunities to practise in safe, controlled environments, which could ultimately harm the future of shooting sports in the UK.

Rose Hill Farm Rifle Range in Suffolk is a passion project that represents a significant investment in the shooting community, and all money generated from bookings is being reinvested directly into completing and improving the facility.

For those who are looking for a high-quality indoor rifle range that allows for proper training and development, this facility is an excellent option. Whether you are a deer stalker needing to zero a rifle, a target shooter looking for a new place to train, or a club seeking a venue for regular practice, this range has a great deal to offer. By booking sessions, spreading the word, and supporting its development, shooters can help to ensure that this valuable new facility continues to grow and thrive.

Contact: Tim Denton-Cardew

Email: rosehillfarmriflerange@gmail.com

Phone: 07742 041 600









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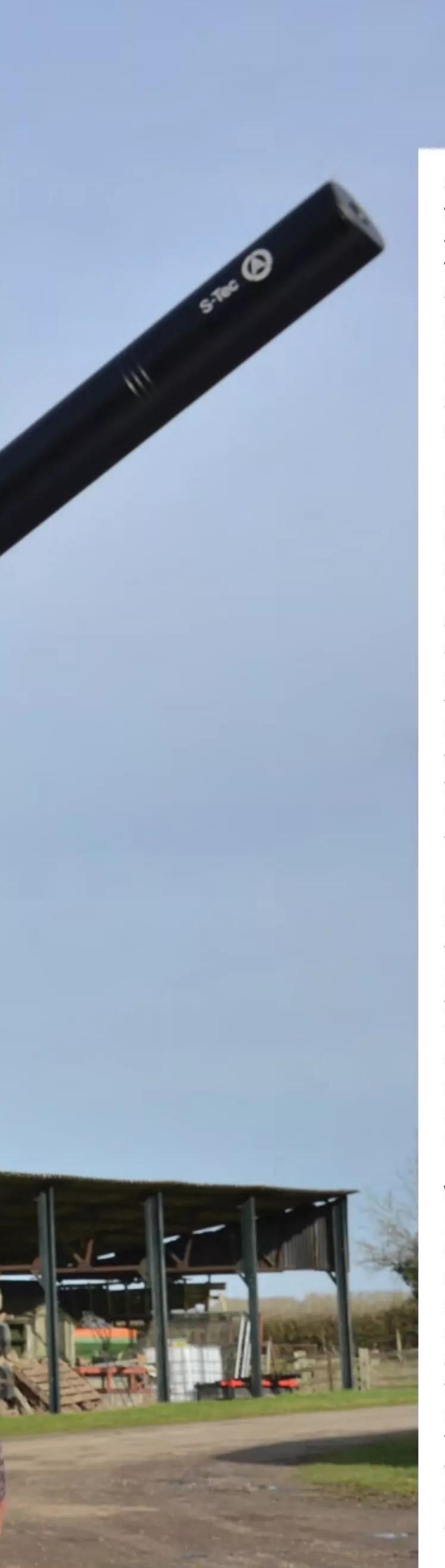




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Sussex-based Air Arms has been in the game for a while, celebrating its 40-year landmark back in 2023, and the brand has gone from strength to strength. Hugely successful in outdoor competition, be that Field Target or HFT, it's the combination of 'racebred' features, precision engineering, and a classy finish that maintains its elevated position within our industry.

Looks familiar

On test here is the Air Arms S510R Core, and whilst this is a new name on the product list, the company is at pains to stress that this is not a new model as such, but rather a variation on a theme. The Core satisfies the call to combine the features of the S410 and S510, and I have to say that, in this regard, it all works rather well. Inevitably, negative types will insist this is nothing new, merely rehashed old designs, but that rather misses the point.

What we get here is the thinner barrel of the S410, supported with a soft 'O' ring in a figure-of-eight support, with no shroud, but then the side-lever action of the S510. The 'R' in the name signifies that the action is indeed regulated, and with an upgraded silencer as part of the package, the result gives Air Arms a simplified, super-compact, lightweight hunting rifle with regulated power from the off.

Value for money?

My initial reaction was that the Core looked a bit on the pricey side, but a quick glance at current retail prices soon showed it made sense. Firstly, bear in mind the boltaction S410 in walnut now retails for just shy of £1000, which comes unregulated without a silencer. Then we have the S510 Carbine in walnut with a side-lever, shrouded barrel, but again, an unregulated action, and this comes in at £1079.

So, my test model—the S510R Core in walnut—makes sense at £1159, as it comes with the latest silencer and a factory-regulated action. Consider that quality aftermarket regulators can cost £200-£250, and it all begins to compute.

Alongside the rifle, we also get a charging adapter, three magazines, a silencer, Allen keys, and an instruction book. Again, offering three mags is generous, so this needs to be factored in.

S-Tec spec

The Core just screams quality, with deep, rich chemical bluing; classy, detailed walnut; and precision CNC-machined components—this is what we are paying for compared to many cheaper rivals.

Fitted up front on the Core is Air Arms' brand-new S-Tec silencer, which not only looks the part but works rather well too. Inside, there are a series of baffles and significant wadding, all designed to eat decibels and reduce the muzzle crack to a muted hiss. Interestingly, the S-Tec comes in 15% lighter than its predecessor and, all-importantly, 5% quieter! The old Q-Tec was good, so this really is quite an achievement, and this is great news for anyone wanting to take it into the field.

If you remove the silencer, the relatively short 15.5" Lothar Walther barrel produces a noticeably loud crack, making the silencer essential. Additionally, it provides the Core with perfect balance, in my view.

Filling station

With this model featuring the factory-fitted regulator, Air Arms specifies a higher maximum fill pressure of 250bar. Unscrew the stylish valve cover up front, snap on the adaptor cup supplied, and slowly charge. Peace of mind comes with the locking 'T' bar, and with an in-line 20-micron





filter built in, we're talking attention to detail for sure. A clearly marked, easy-to-read manometer is neatly recessed into the underside of the fore-end, but, as usual, standard guidance is to follow the manometer on the charging gear initially.

During my test, my bottle was slightly low on air and maxed out at 235bar, which I used. However, under normal circumstances, I would recommend sticking to 200bar to reduce strain on the rifle over time. You'll still get plenty of shots either way.

Magazine feature

To be honest, I've always thought that the Air Arms magazine system looks clumsy, with the sideplate mechanism looking like an afterthought. And I think I'm right, but I'm also aware that is purely in terms of aesthetics. Once you ignore the



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MARK CAMOCCIO

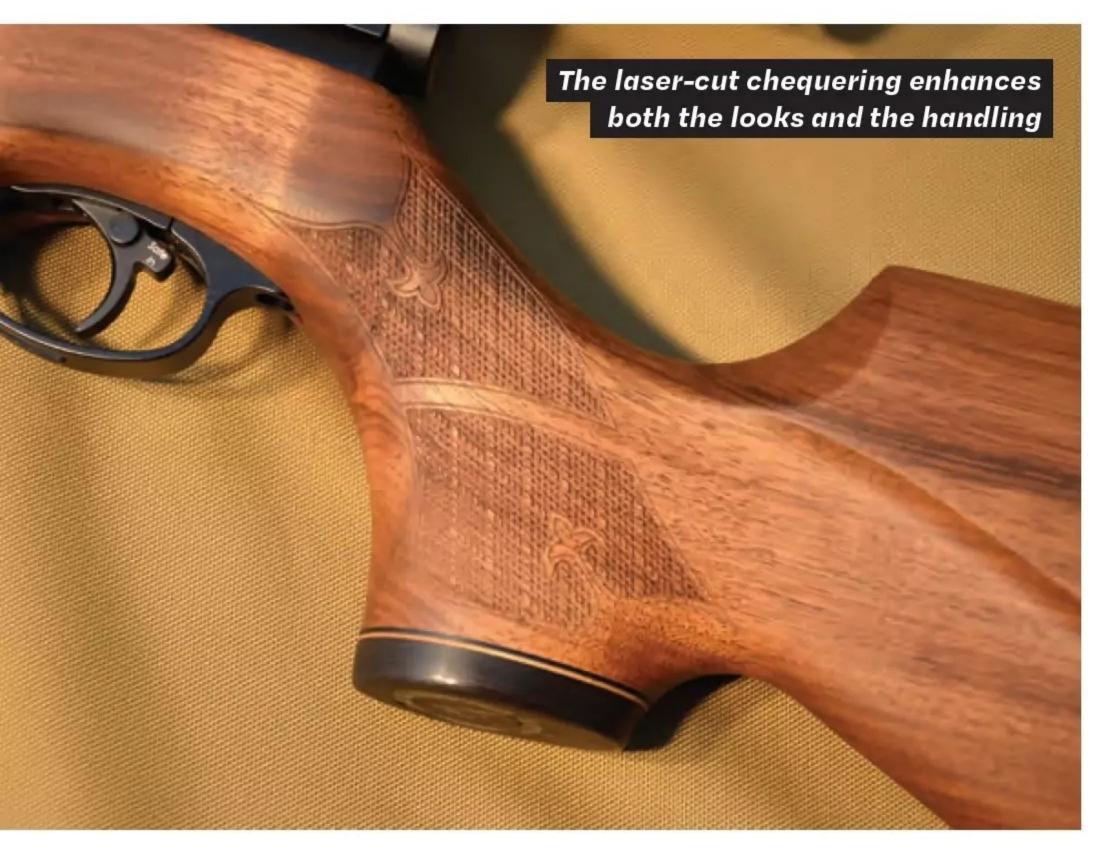
looks, it's hard not to conclude this is actually one of the very best magazine systems on the market—brilliantly simple, precise, and extremely reliable.

Firstly, the cassette magazines feature a drum that can be filled at any time and turned in either direction. No spindly internal wind-up mechanism here—just insert a pellet and fill the chambers as and when. Secondly, the magazine snaps into the breech and sits flush against the side support, which holds it tight

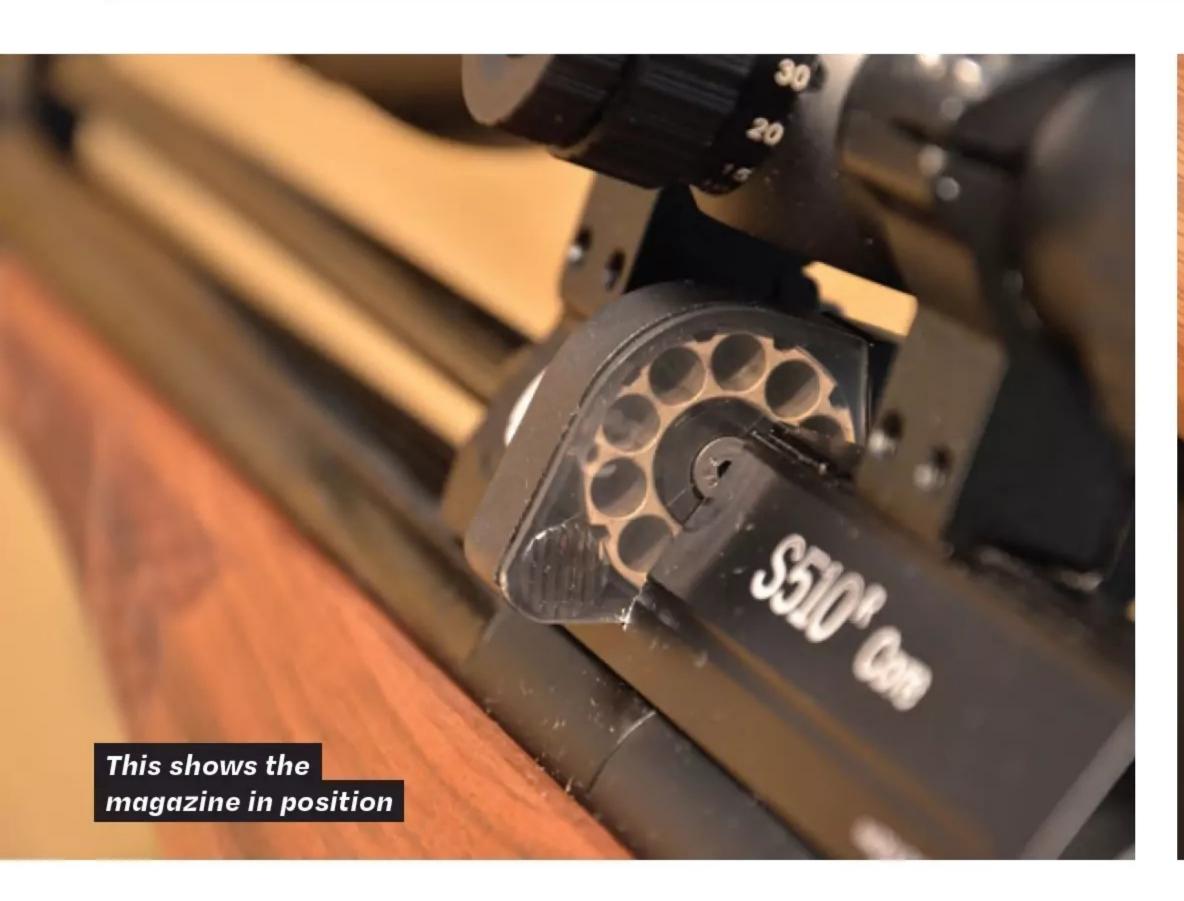
and true. The result is no play in the system, and it works really well.

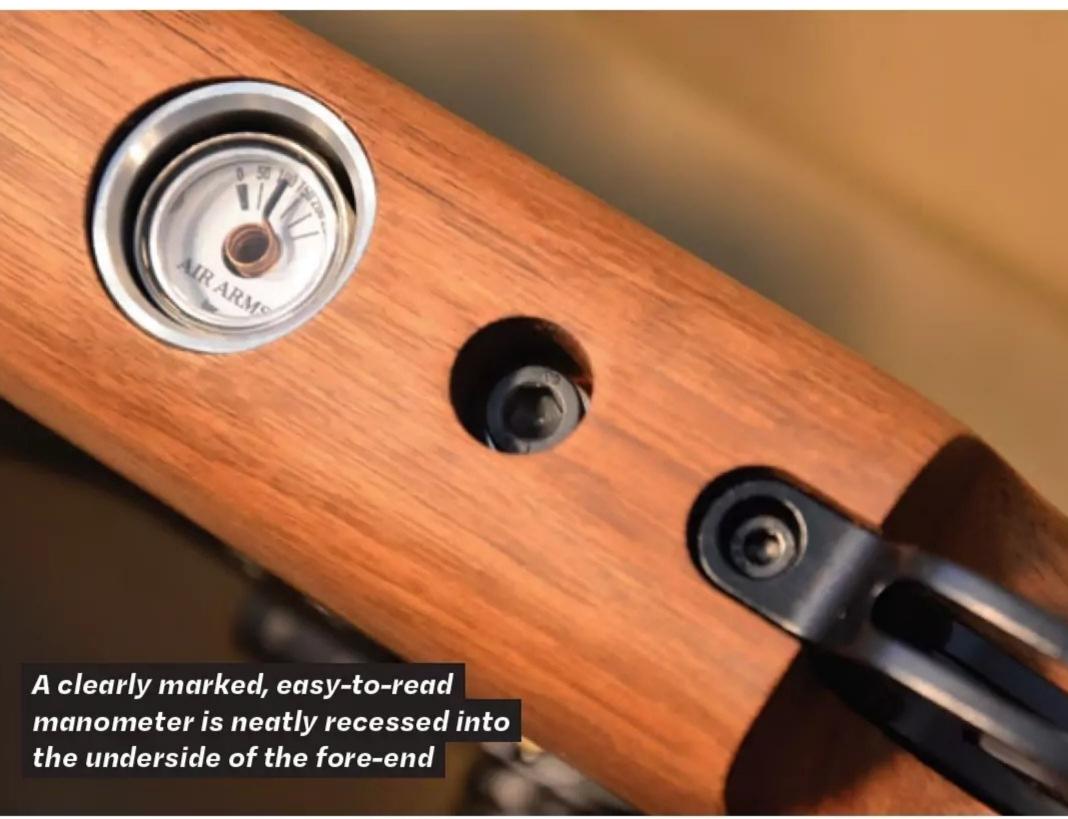
Old friend

Familiarity is a recurring theme with the Core, given that it is effectively a derivative. The best features of the S410 and S510 combined form the sales brief, and as someone who needs two hands to count my S400 variants previously owned, it's fair to say I'm a fan. My special Nick Jenkinson-prepared S400 is the best air rifle I









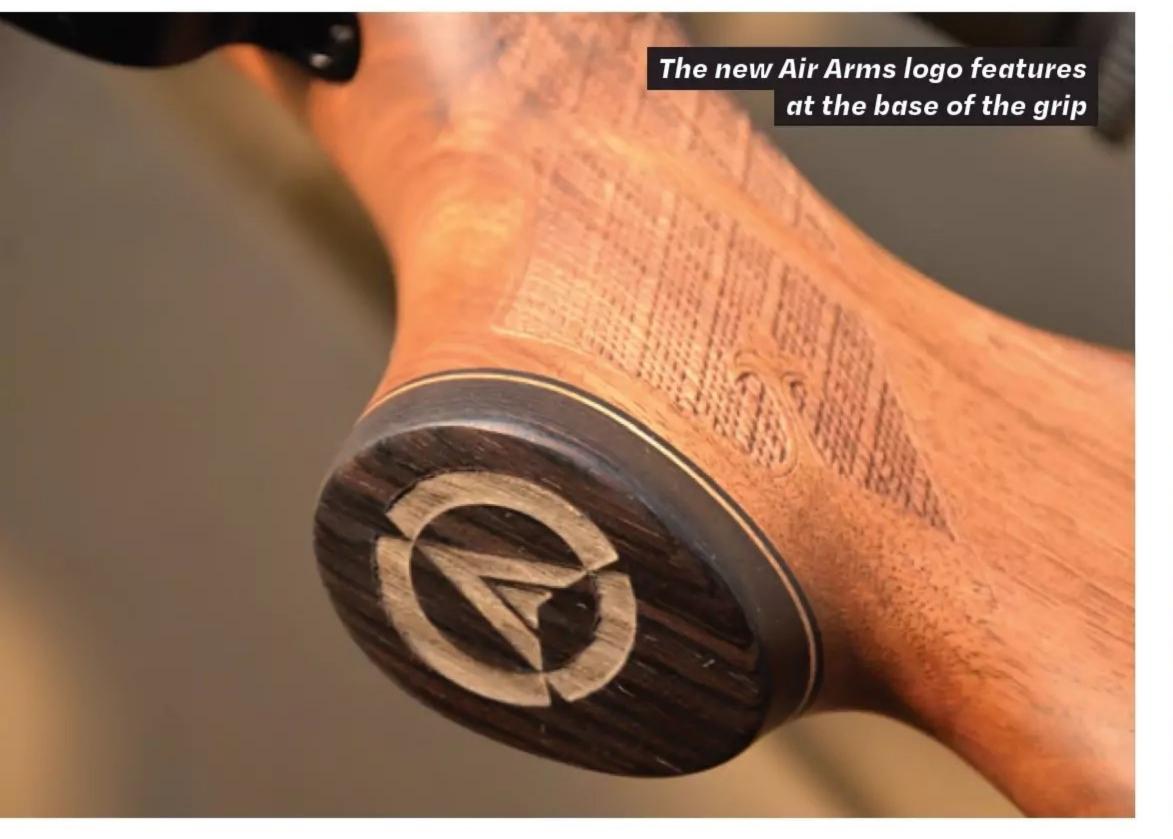
have ever owned, winning me a hatful of silverware, despite being designed as a hunting rifle! As for the standard S400/S410, the design team just got the ergonomics right from the off.

This Core sports the same walnut sporter stock, and whilst the design is arguably a bit long in the tooth, the detailing and execution are faultless. A pronounced high cheekpiece, a comfortable, right-hand dedicated grip, and the graceful rosewood-capped foreend all combine beautifully, bringing comfort and control where it's needed.

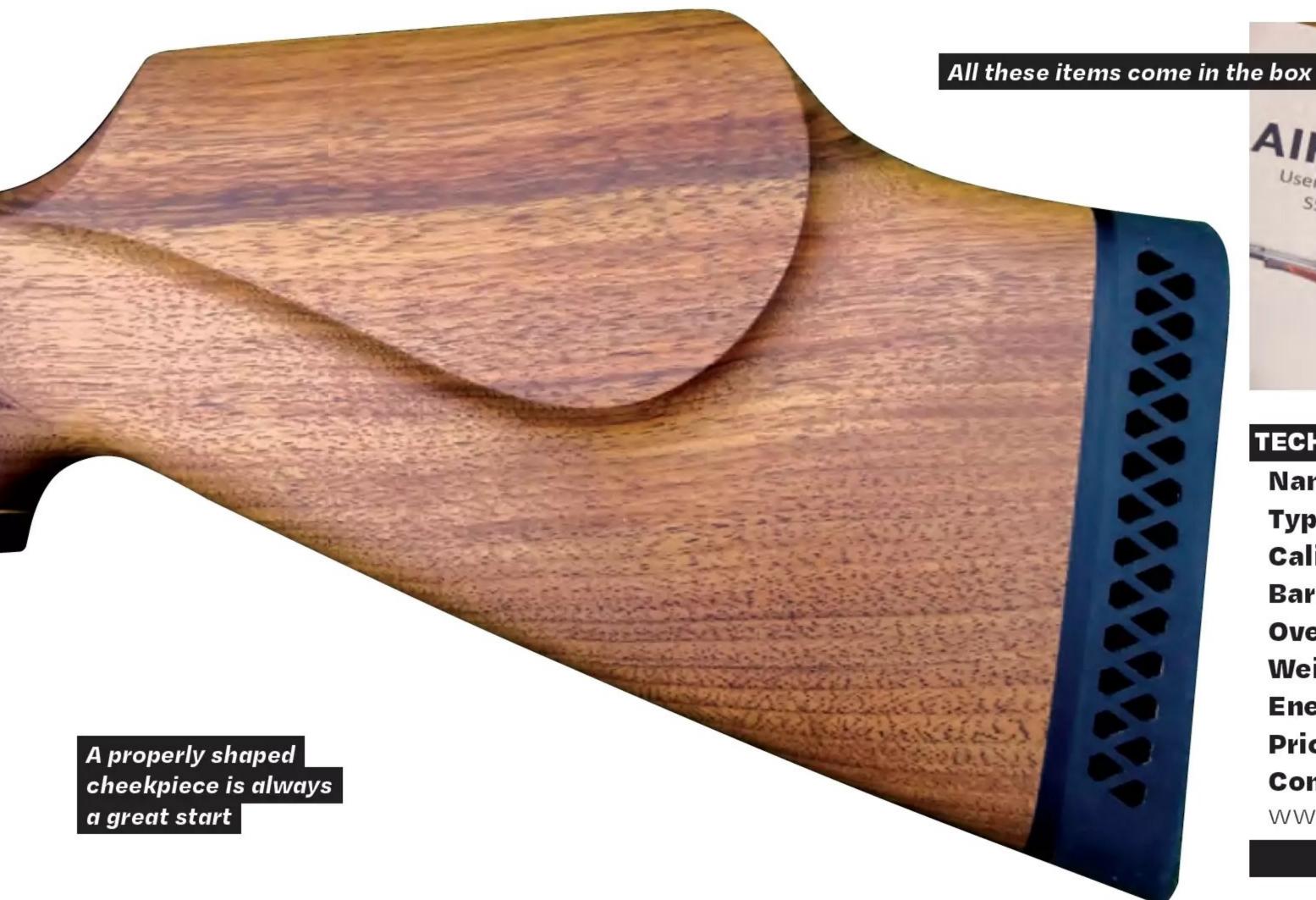
Competent two-stage

The usual two-stage trigger is utilised, which is an upmarket unit and a genuine (rather than pseudo) two-stage mechanism, i.e. the sear engagement begins to move on the first stage. Not so welcome is the push-button safety, which is built into the blade itself! No one is denying it's neat, but it's just









not ideal to be touching the trigger when trying to apply the safety. At least it's manual, so just ignore it.

Effortless

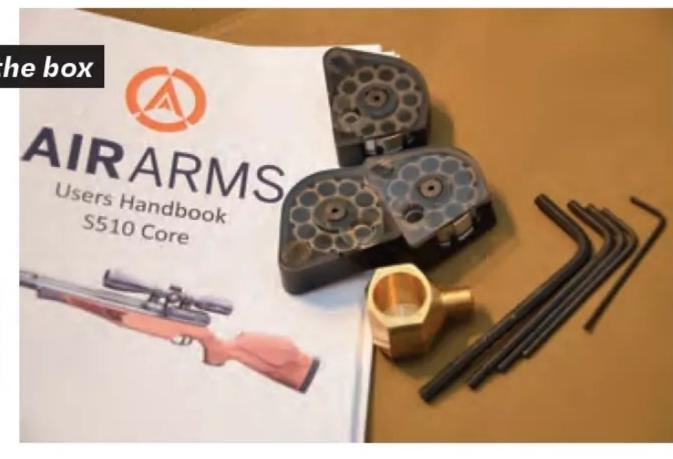
Pulling back the side-lever is smooth, easy, and reassuringly precise. The magazine snaps in from the left side, and the lever is returned. Being able to cycle the next shot so easily while in the aim is great for hunting, and during testing, everything proved faultless.

I did have a shock, thinking I had my first malfunctioning Air Arms rifle on test at one point, as the lever wouldn't return, only to discover that someone at the factory, in their haste to get me the test gun, had sent a .177 magazine by mistake. However, fitting a .22 magazine soon restored order.

Results

Air Arms' pedigree in outdoor competition means they have nothing to prove in terms of accuracy, and with a quality Lothar Walther barrel installed, I was pretty confident going into the test. Air Arms Diabolo Field pellets in .22 were used, and being made by JSB, these have just the right amount of antimony in the mix, making them softer than some, which is particularly noticeable when pushing them flush in the breech of a springer. Here, they chambered in the magazine with ease, and with a few shots to zero, I settled down for some serious grouping.

Over 30 yards, my test rifle tore enlarged holes that could hold a pellet, which is to be expected with this grade of gun, but extremely satisfying, nonetheless. Moving back to 40 yards, and with little preparation, I could still regularly post 5p clusters with ease, using ammo straight from the tin. Excellent results, but as usual with Air Arms, it's perhaps the manner of how we arrive at the results, and the refinement overall, that really impresses.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Air Arms S510R Core

Type: PCP

Calibre: .22 on test, .177 available

Barrel Length: 15.5"

Overall Length: 40"

Weight: 6.4lbs

Energy: 11.5ft/lbs

Price: £1159 as shown

Contact: Air Arms
www.air-arms.co.uk

For the power/consistency test, I chose to clock the first 100 shots over the chronograph, and the results were impressive. A total spread of just 8fps over 100 shots is as consistent as any airgun out there, quite frankly, and proof that the factory-fitted regulator was ticking over nicely! Indeed, this has to be one of the most consistent readouts I've had through my test bench.

Verdict

Air Arms brand, and their enthusiastic following worldwide is well-deserved. This S510R Core is all about increasing choice for the customer, and if the specification appeals, then it certainly delivers on the design brief for a simplified, lightweight hunting rifle, stripping unnecessary weight, adding regulated power, and capping it off with a state-of-the-art moderator.

Yes, it's all very familiar, but the function, handling, build quality, and performance are top-class. GM







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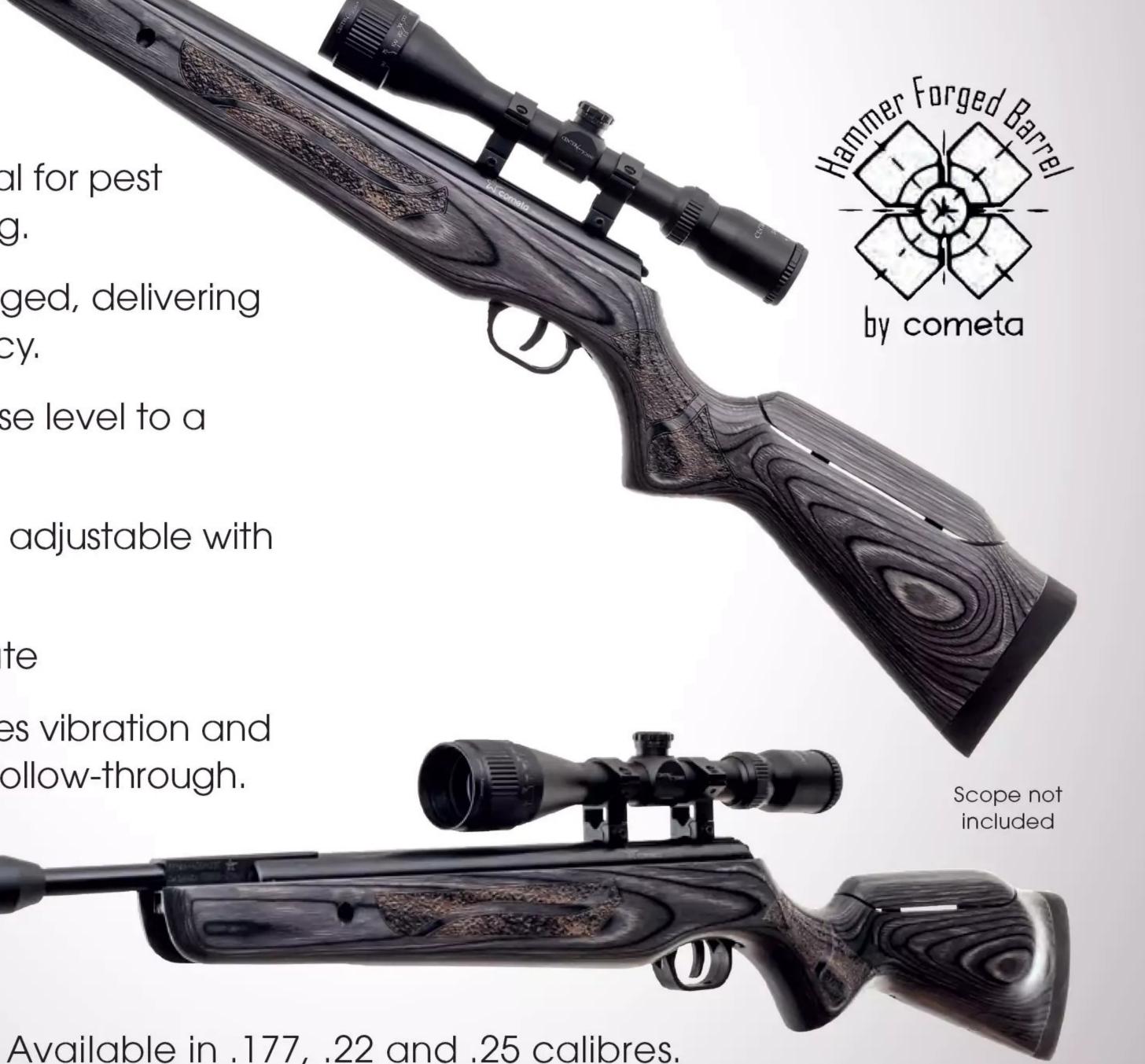


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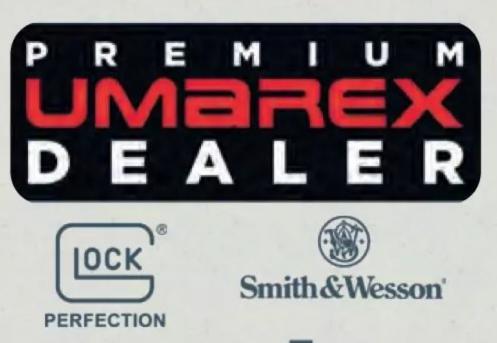


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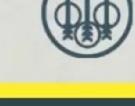
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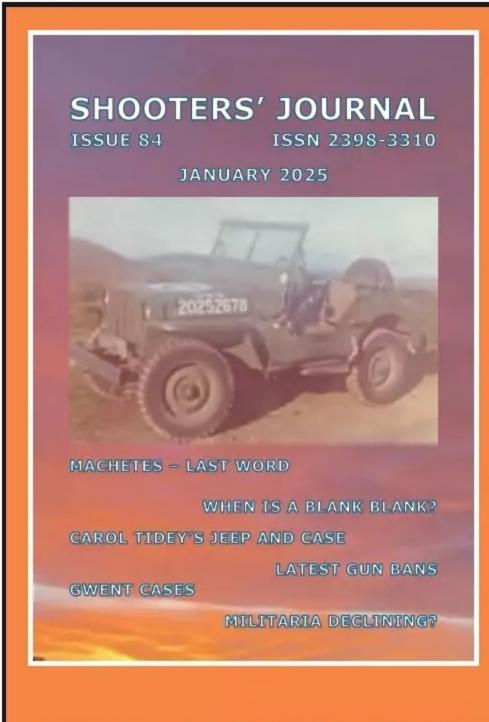
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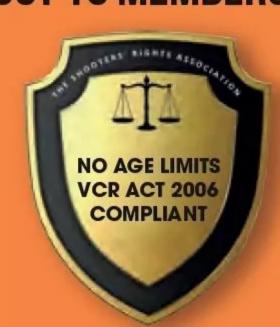








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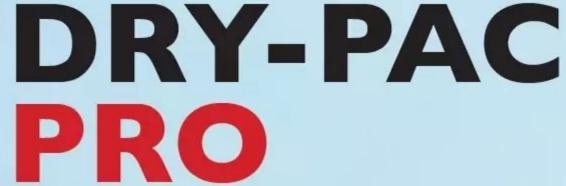
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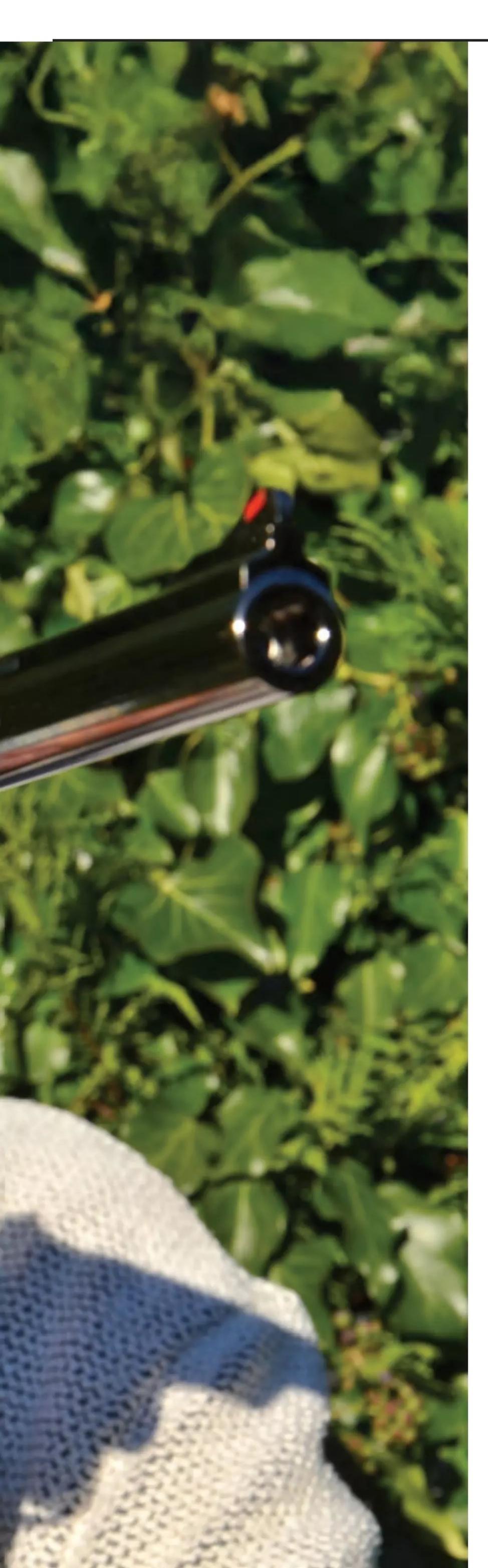
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Mark Camoccio takes a close look at Umarex's stunning replica of the legendary Smith & Wesson Model 29

Look familiar? Of course, it does, and I defy anyone to hold up this monster of a revolver and not feel compelled to utter "Do I feel lucky?' Well, do ya, punk?". Clint Eastwood gained cult status as Dirty Harry in those hugely successful movies, but it's fair to say his Smith & Wesson Model 29, chambered in .44 Magnum, was an equal star in the lineup.

Convincing

The original firearm design apparently dates from around 1956, and on test here is a superb airgun replica from those masters of the art at Umarex. Unsurprisingly, it goes under the same name, Smith & Wesson Model 29, and whilst I should point out that this model is also available with a 6.5" barrel, there's no doubt that the full 8 3/8" barrel, as per my test model here, adds extra menace and visual impact, living up to the 'hand cannon' moniker perfectly.

The full-metal construction and high-gloss bluing throughout create a strong first impression of a high-quality product—wellmade and beautifully finished.

Specification

The Model 29 comes in .177 calibre only, and I'm pleased to say it's designed to shoot pellets only. The trigger is both single and double action, which is always welcome, and there's also an adjustable rear sight.

Inside the box, there are six dummy bullets for the revolver system, along with instructions, and whilst the guidelines are fairly basic, anyone familiar with this style of CO2 pistol will be instantly at home. As you'd expect, the dummy bullets act as a carrier for the pellets, and power comes from a conventional 12g CO2 capsule.

Powering up

OK, so let's deal with the CO2 first. Again, the design follows convention, as the capsule is stowed inside the grip. Look to the underside, and a small indent is visible. Simply slide a fingernail under the edge to remove the left side of the plastic grip, revealing a large integral Allen key that can be used to loosen the tension bolt at the base. Next, insert a new 12g capsule into the chamber, then use the Allen key to re-tension the bolt, which, in turn, pierces the capsule to gas the system. Having the grip as leverage means it's all very efficient, so don't over-tighten, as the Allen key makes everything very civilised. You may hear a small hiss at this stage as the capsule is pierced. Snap the grip panel back into position, hooking the top bit in first. You are now ready to go.

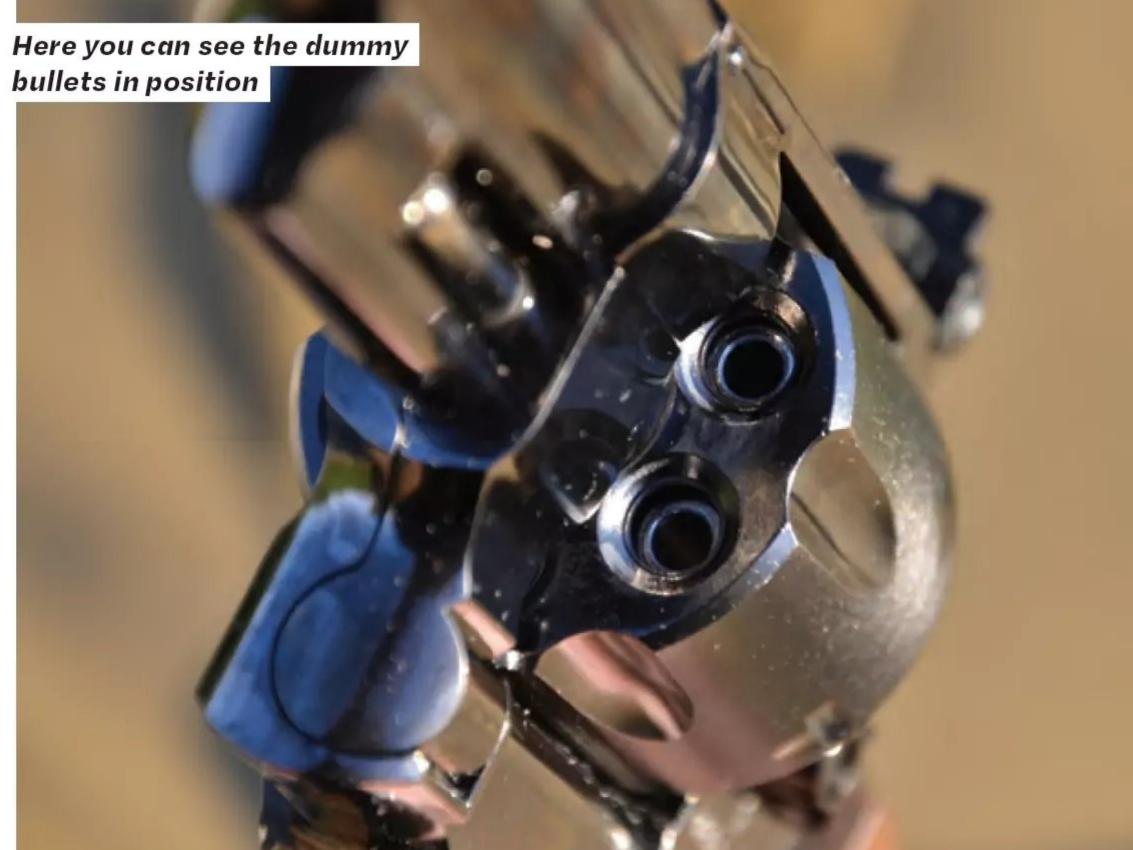
Six shot

Next, we need to load pellets into the dummy bullets. Press the locking catch (which doubles as a safety) to the left of the hammer









to allow the cylinder to swing out. Pellets can either be loaded with the six bullets already in the cylinder, or the bullets can be removed first (they drop out quite easily) using the spring-loaded ejector rod. Each bullet is fitted with a small synthetic O-ring at the lip, and a pellet needs to be inserted and pushed flush into each one. Chamber the bullets, and the cylinder can be closed back up. I found that closing the mechanism just required the cylinder to be rotated anti-clockwise as the action was closed, to keep things smooth. The bullets are a fairly loose fit, so it pays to ensure the pistol is aimed downwards when the chamber is opened, to avoid dropping them into the dirt. Right, we appear to be ready!

Handling and shot count

With this Smith & Wesson in the aim, the authentic weight of 2.7lbs suddenly makes itself felt, and it all adds to the experience. The open sights feature a red dot at the front and a notch at the rear. The rear sight is fully adjustable for windage and elevation, but



I LIKED THE BROAD BLADE, AND ON TEST, WHILST NOT SUPER LIGHT, THE PULL WEIGHT WAS PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE, AND THE RESULTS WERE SATISFYING"

MARK CAMOCCIO

a small screwdriver is required for adjustment.
Windage was fine, but the elevation screw became a
little loose on my test gun when I adjusted for height.
No major problem, but a minor irritation, nonetheless.

For those unfamiliar with CO2 as a power source, velocity reduces considerably towards the end of the 12g CO2 capsule, but using RWS Superdome pellets on test, I recorded 96 shots from one capsule, which is still pretty impressive. This figure will vary









depending on the pellets used and the ambient temperature, which can affect CO2.

As for the exact figures, whilst these aren't so important with this style of pistol, for the record, velocity peaked at around 300fps, equating to a maximum 1.7ft/lbs.

Performance

Where the trigger is concerned, as mentioned, it can be pre-set by pulling back the hammer for the slightly lighter single action or just pulled right through for double. I liked the broad blade, and on test, whilst not super light, the pull weight was perfectly acceptable, and the results were satisfying. Again, it goes without saying that the emphasis isn't on pinpoint accuracy when using CO2. Yet, pre-setting the hammer and squeezing through, I managed to empty all six shots within a sub-2" cluster over 10 yards with little effort. With that kind of usable accuracy on tap, some serious end-on tin-can bashing awaits. Indeed, there are all

manner of fun shooting activities to be enjoyed, and I defy anyone to handle this model and not get slightly carried away.

At the end of the day, this Model 29 is a cracking bit of kit—satisfying to use and very well made. **GM**

Thanks to Range & Country Shooting Supplies in Sleaford, Lincs., for the kind loan of this pistol.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Umarex Smith & Wesson Model 29

Type: CO2-powered Calibre: 4.5mm (.177) Barrel Length: 8.4" Overall Length: 13.8"

Weight: 2.7lbs

Energy: Max 1.7ft/lbs (approx.)

Price: £225 (guide)

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final timed exam. This portion
ensures readiness for the
practical stage by embedding
theoretical knowledge.





EXPERT INSTRUCTION

The APC is led by Craig Hartley, a shooting instructor with over 20 years of experience. Currently the gunroom manager at Barbury Shooting School and formerly a senior instructor at the Ian Coley Shooting School, Craig brings a wealth of practical and instructional expertise to the APC. His background ensures that the course content is both technically sound and relevant to the challenges faced by modern airgun users.

PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

Once the candidate has completed the theory section of the course, it is time for their practical assessment. The hands-on component is conducted locally by an "approved verifier," namely a professional instructor. Tasks that need to be performed during the practical assessment include:

- Demonstrating safe handling and operation
- The use of appropriate shooting techniques
- Achieving consistent precision in shot placement

Approved verifiers are available right across the UK, making the practical assessment accessible regardless of location. Successful candidates are then awarded the LANTRAcertified Airgun Proficiency Course Certificate.

PROGRESSION AND APPLICATION

Graduates of the APC are equipped not only with a recognised credential but also with a skill set applicable in a variety of settings. From ethical pest control to promoting safe practices within the shooting community, the course enables participants to use their airguns effectively and responsibly.

Peter Jones, the founder of the Shooting & Hunting Academy, told Gun Mart: "We set up the course in the summer of 2024 because we recognise the importance of airguns to the wider shooting community — whether people have gone on to game shooting or deerstalking, airguns are where many started their journey.

"The continuing threat of government regulation of shooting sports was also a key driver in us setting up this course. The academy is absolutely against the mandatory regulation of airguns, and by developing a nationally available course, it makes that less likely. We

vermin – Explores ecological

Examines legal responsibilities,

MODULE 3: Equipment – Covers

airgun mechanics, accessories,

and practical reasons for

MODULE 2: Legislation –

including UK-wide laws

and regional variations.

and airgun maintenance.

MODULE 4: Safe handling

ensuring safe storage and

of airguns – Focuses on

minimising risks and

transport of airguns.

vermin management.



are aware of airgun regulations in Scotland and of those who want to see similar regulations in England and Wales. Self-regulation, showing the Government that accredited courses are available, is very much the key to that.

"We want as many people as possible to get involved with the qualification, and many airgun shooters have already done so. We're currently looking for airgun ranges and 'approved verifiers' to help us to deliver the practical element of the APC, and we want to use this as an opportunity to reach out to professional instructors within the Gun Mart readership.

"A final, crucial point is that the APC is the UK's first and currently only third-party accredited LANTRA course. The Shooting & Hunting Academy went to great lengths to secure this, and it gives the qualification real weight, instilling confidence in candidates."

The Shooting & Hunting
Academy works with a number
of funding providers and training
funds to provide academy
candidates with a range of
funding options designed to make
wildlife management training
more affordable. There will be
funding available for the APC in
early 2025. At the time of writing,
the APC is priced at £125. GM

For more information about the Airgun Proficiency Course and others offered by the Shooting & Hunting Academy, visit shootingandhuntingacademy.co.uk.

ABOUT THE SHOOTING & HUNTING ACADEMY

The Shooting & Hunting Academy is a UK platform offering online training for shooting enthusiasts and professionals. Partnering with awarding bodies like LANTRA ensures high-quality courses in firearms safety, legal compliance, marksmanship, and ethical hunting. Led by expert instructors, the academy blends theory and practice to provide comprehensive training. Focusing on accessibility and professionalism, it equips learners with certifications to enhance credibility with landowners, employers, and regulators, while promoting safe, responsible shooting practices.





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Mark Camoccio tests the performance, clarity, and durability of the Konus Glory 2-16x50 in real-world conditions

Konus is an Italian scope brand that has gained a reputation for offering value-for-money optics.

As usual, Far Eastern production helps trim costs, but everything I have encountered to date has impressed me on several levels. On test here is one of their more upmarket scopes from the 'Glory' range, the Konus Glory 2-16x50, and first impressions are highly favourable.

Presentation

Sometimes things are difficult to define, but anyone who has experienced quality optics will, I'm sure, appreciate this model. For a start, the single-piece tube construction is aesthetically pleasing, as well as preferable from a technical point of view, and so is the silky matte-black finish. Everything looks and feels precisely

Inside the box, alongside the scope, there are elasticated lens

machined, and the bold profile

certainly makes a statement.

caps, a sunshade, a lens cloth, a throw lever, and instructions, and everything comes with a limited twoyear guarantee for peace of mind.

Specification

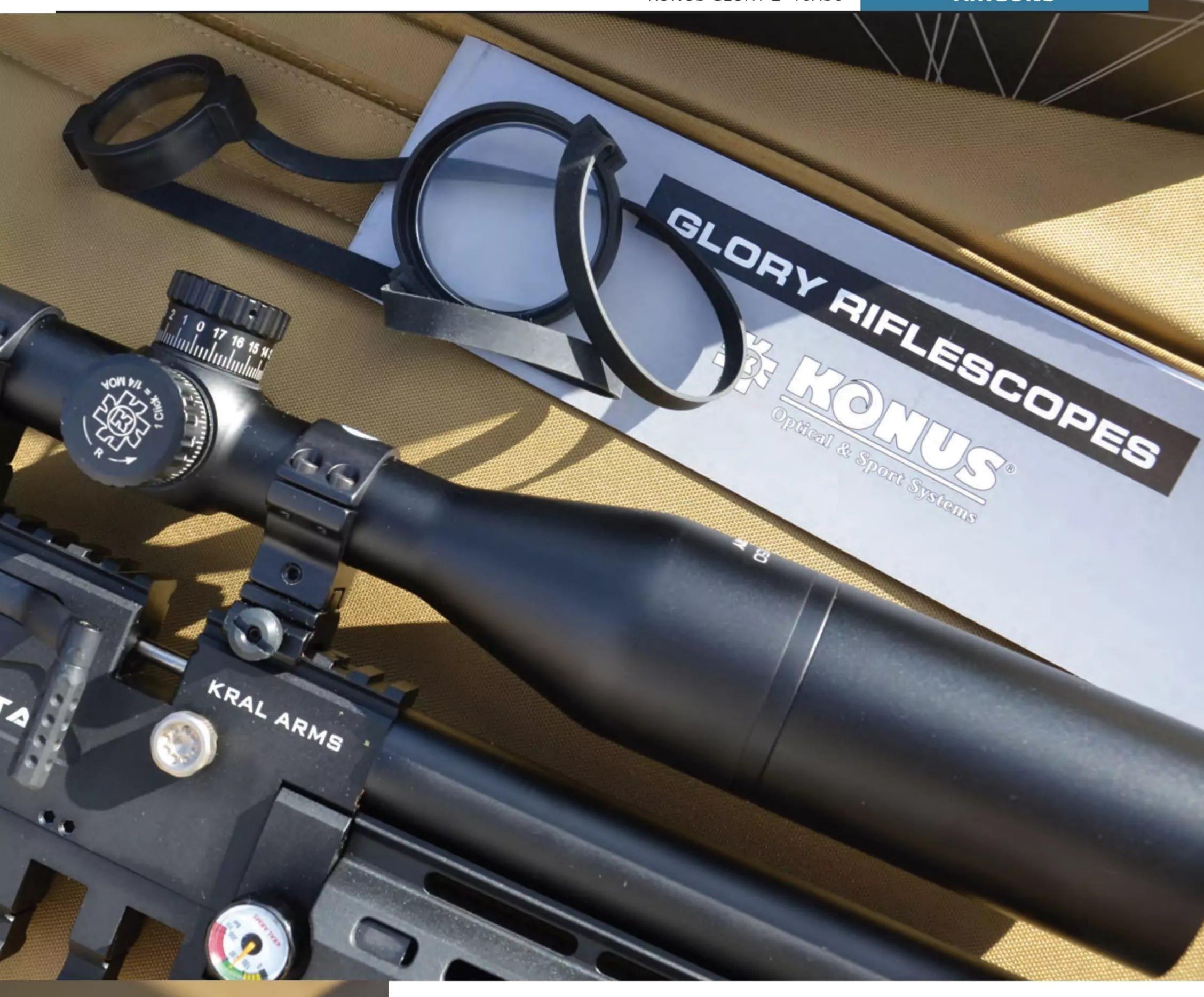
but precise

Best described as tactical, the chunky turrets come with the now familiar push/pull locking system.

The eye relief stays constant despite the magnification setting, and there's a new erector system designed to be more robust and to withstand significant recoil. There's a side-adjustable The German No.4 parallax (the reticle is simple wheel is an optional extra), fully multi-coated lenses for high light transmission, and a super-wide field of view. A

power throw lever is supplied in the box, and this neat attachment screws straight into the magnification collar. In my experience, its ability to instantly indicate the magnification setting by feel alone can be a real advantage in the field, especially when light is





The push/pull target turrets are clearly marked and have ½ MOA clicks



fading and we need every advantage. As for the German No.4 reticle, this also offers illumination. A comprehensive package, then.

Set-up

Most scopes seem to be moving to the larger 30mm body tube, and this Konus takes this route. The parallax is adjusted via the inner dial on the left-side turret, and movement is reassuringly smooth, yet with resistance built in. The dial is marked 10 yards, then 15, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 75, 100, 150, 200, 300, 600, 1,000, and infinity. The close distances cater to airguns, whilst the outer figures cater to rimfire and centrefire-orientated shooting disciplines, so the Glory is nothing if not versatile.

The pre-zeroing task of checking and setting the rear dioptre proved

easy, and with rubber protection and a firm twist, this quick focus won't easily move off the setting it is put on. With the reticle now bold and crisp in the picture, it's job done. At this point, you can opt to add the 4" sunshade. I've rarely bothered, to be honest, but I know many shooters who always have one in tow. The sunshade here just screws into position, so it's an easy fit.

Zeroing proved quick and efficient, courtesy of the clearly marked ¼ MOA turrets, and a quick check that the turrets could return precisely to a previous setting proved the integrity of the mechanism. The click movement is pleasingly positive and audible, and once set, you push down the turrets, and the movement is locked.

The maximum magnification here is 16x, which is very handy for hunting, and when dialled to









the max, the clarity is superb, with edge-to-edge crispness and no aberration. Likewise, being able to wind down to just 2x magnification is great when a target presents itself on the doorstep.

My next task was to wind the magnification down to 9x to experiment with shooting an HFT course, and it's perfectly possible. With the parallax set to 25 yards, clarity through the ranges holds well, so the Glory passes the 8 to 45 yard rule, which is the target

requirement in HFT that must be navigated without scope adjustment.

German No.4

Now, obviously, in today's market, the clamour for Mil-Dots and an abundance of stadia means the reticle fitted here could be termed basic. The German No.4 reticle is indeed a simple design, but that's sort of the point here, and as someone who has spent much of his life obsessed with vintage Zeiss hardware, I'm very familiar with this more uncluttered

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Konus Glory 2-16x50
Reticle: German No.4
Weight: 27307

Weight: 27.3oz Eye Relief: 3.75" Click Values: 1/4 MOA

Field of View: 56.9ft - 7ft @100 yards

Body Tube: 30mm **Minimum Focus:** 10 yards

Length: 13.5"

Number of Rotations: Windage: 6.5/

Elevation: 6.75 **Price:** £535

Contact: Range Right - www.range-right.co.uk

approach. The design sees a floating central dot and four equidistant thin lines around it. Three thick outer lines feature on the left, right and below, and that means tracking the fine central detail is made easier in bad light and dark settings. In really bad light, there's always the option to switch on the illuminated central dot via the rheostat mounted on the tip of the left turret. The discstyle battery, incidentally, is housed in the left cap in the usual way. The dot can be illuminated in either red or blue, and there are five levels of brightness in each.

When it comes to aim points, proportion is key, and bracketing HFT kill zones is possible. A 15mm kill zone viewed at 25 yards fits within the bottom edge of the dot and the top point of the post, for example, whilst with a 35 yard zero, the bottom post will be close for a 45 yard aim point. The reticle is usable, and the precision and uncluttered image are refreshing. For those used to more of a 'heads-up' display with effectively a reference grid, this reticle may not be suitable.

Verdict

This Glory model is a fair bit more expensive than previous Konus hardware I've tested, and of course, much of the premium is justified by the internal specification. As mentioned, the clarity observed during testing was outstanding, and to be honest, the functionality was equally impressive, leaving little to fault. OK, the elasticated lens covers were a bit over-tight, but hey, I'm really nitpicking. GM



FX continues to evolve, with its latest kit firmly placing it in the premium bracket. Several wins in Extreme Benchrest competition in the States brought the Swedish brand into the spotlight, but its build quality and refined design continue to captivate demanding customers.

Confused? You will be

One thing that sets FX apart is

the incredible range of models and variations available. On test here is the FX Dynamic Compact Takedown Black VP 300mm, and yes, that is quite a mouthful. Two points to make at this stage. Firstly, this takedown specification of the Dynamic is specifically aimed at the UK market.

The second point is that the Dynamic is supposedly a hunting version of the Panthera, and whilst both

models are listed

as having been originally designed specifically to shoot slugs, primarily at FAC power, my test reveals that the 12ft/lbs Dynamic is a blistering performer with conventional pellets, but more on that in a moment.

Living in a box

OK, let's nail the basics first.

This is, as the name suggests,
a takedown rifle, which means
it dismantles fairly quickly
into its constituent parts
and stows away neatly in a supercompact, padded hard case that
measures just 22" x 17.75".

Of course, this means we can arrive at a shooting permission or venue with a low profile, in an inconspicuous fashion, and, like it or not, there are times when this is necessary. Where a long, obvious gun case may well attract the wrong type of attention, this almost square case profile goes well and truly under the radar.

Snap open the clasps on the case (annoyingly tight on test),

and you can see the two main assemblies held securely in their padded recesses. Thoughtful design means the main action gets a generous recess in the padding, allowing for a sizable optic to stay attached for storage. I fitted a large MTC Mamba, and this proved no trouble, with space to spare.

Assembly is as easy as it looks, as you just screw the thread of the bottle section into the female thread at the rear of the action. Twist it a few times until the seal is complete. You'll hear a small hiss as the valve opens on connection, but it's designed to link or be removed at any time.

Features

Twin manometers are mounted at an angle on the left side, and whilst it's great to have info at your fingertips, I did find their positioning and prominence a slight irritation, given that's where my left hand wanted to go half the time! Thinking about it, the gauges



come into their own with the FAC versions, where high power is eating the air supply somewhat quicker, but their positioning still grates.

The bottom gauge shows the residual main bottle pressure, whilst the top one displays the AMP regulator pressure, set to about 65bar on my test gun. It's stating the obvious, but expect the gauges to show a pressure drop when the action is dismantled.

The basic configuration features the 400cc bottle at the rear, which doubles as the cheekpiece, complete with an adjustable moulded clamp-on assembly and a butt pad. Forward of the bottle, everything is lifted from the FX Panthera. The drop-down contoured grip is AR-style, whilst the chassis-style aluminium fore-end sports a large Swiss Arca Rail mounting system, along with M-LOK slots, and further wrap-around mountings up and over. Everything looks and feels well-machined, with an air of real quality throughout.

Foster care

The maximum recommended fill pressure is a whopping 250bar with this model, and whilst that will easily return 200–250 shots, I would always advocate a lower working pressure of 200bar max, so components experience less stress over their lifespan.

A Foster filling adaptor is supplied, and given that this is a semi-standard fitting on charging kit, my bottle cable snapped straight on with no changeover needed. The inlet valve is just under the gauges and gets a neat push-fit dust cover, which is another nice touch.

Capacity

FX supplies the Dynamic Compact Takedown with its latest magazine design, which holds an impressive 22 shots in the tested .177 calibre and 18 in .22. FX, ever the innovator, has devised its own design of magazine, and this is unusual in that you first twist the plastic ridge around 180 degrees, from bottom to top, before the clear cover can be removed.

A word of caution here, as I had the small nut from the underside drop off into my hand! I think that if you keep turning the clasp clockwise (rather than anti-clockwise), you should be fine. I learned the hard way.

Now, twist the internal drum anticlockwise against spring pressure, and drop the first pellet head-first into the top exposed hole. This holds the drum, and the magazine can now be filled. Close the clear lid, and turn the clasp 180 degrees back down to lock.

Final prep

Scope mounting is via the inclined Picatinny rail, which helps to maximise the adjustment range of your chosen optic.

FX fits fairly refined triggers to its airguns, and this Dynamic gets



a two-stage match unit, with bags of adjustment. The match shoe is visible, allowing the position of the blade to be raised, lowered, and set at any angle around its support rod. The reach can be altered by tweaking the relevant screw and sliding the carrier along the support rail. First-stage length and second-stage release are also fully adjustable. I made no adjustments for the record, despite being notoriously fussy, as the release was ultra-crisp and light.

Next, we need to adjust the rear stock elements to get our sight picture/support just right. The length of pull can be adjusted by slackening the lower two Allen screws on the right side of the moulding, just below the bottle. The butt assembly will then slide rearwards as required, after which the screws are to be tightened once all is set. In addition, the rubber pad itself can be raised or lowered by just over an inch either

way, all done with the finger wheel. The result, after a couple of careful sessions, will be a relaxed, effortless, fully supported sight picture, and this really aids precise shot placement.

The final piece of my preparation concerns whether or not to fit a silencer. The neat, knurled ring up front can be spun off, and the ½" UNF thread utilised if required. For hunting, it really is a no-brainer, as while the Dynamic isn't super noisy, it certainly has a fairly bold report. Fit a silencer, and the muzzle blast is dramatically reduced.

Action

I alluded to FX being innovators earlier, and this Dynamic model sports an array of features that grab the attention. FX is known for manufacturing its own barrels via the Smooth Twist method, and this Dynamic utilises the Smooth Twist STX barrel liner system. The barrel

measures 11.75" (300mm) and runs inside the chunky shroud up front.

The shroud is actually pressurised and acts as the plenum chamber. It's an interesting concept, as the pressure around the barrel adds an extra degree of rigidity.

OK, enough detail! Let's get to it. I've got this far and haven't even mentioned the superb biathlon-style side-lever. Ergonomically spot on, this tasty component can actually be switched to the left side of the action if necessary.

Slide the magazine in from the right side, and close the lever.

Power adjuster

The Dynamic Compact Takedown is designed with a power adjuster feature, common on FX models. For sub-12ft/lbs models, such as my test rifle, the Micro adjuster roller assembly is left off at the factory stage, leaving a small void on the left side.













What we do get, however, is the Macro power adjuster—a knurled wheel on the left side of the action, just above the grip. It's clearly marked, with settings 1 to 13, and has really positive click movement.

At the highest power setting (13), the Dynamic produced an average of 770fps | 11.1ft/lbs, whilst dialling down to number 1, the velocity/energy dropped to 466fps | 4ft/lbs, using 8.44gr Sovereigns.

With all the settings in between, it's clear this model is incredibly versatile. Dial it down for low-powered, close-range plinking or practice sessions, and the shot count will correspondingly go through the roof.

It's just handy to know the option exists at the turn of a dial. For the record, the regulator is also adjustable, although this is more relevant with the FAC version.

Consistency

Back on full power, and from a reduced fill pressure of 200bar, I used five magazines for 110 shots over the chronograph. With a total spread of 19fps, it was clear the FX AMP regulator was ticking over nicely.

Residual pressure was 135bar after that, so I reckon the shot count from a 250bar fill should surpass those earlier, fairly conservative estimates.

Class act

Enlarged, single holes at 30 yards and groups barely a ¼" c-t-c over 40 yards were proof that this Dynamic Compact Takedown is one seriously accurate machine. Granted, the rear stock is very utilitarian, but if that and the militaristic profile appeal, then this FX is simply a superb ultra-compact hunting machine that's perfect for low-profile forays. GM

Thanks to Range & Country Shooting Supplies in Sleaford, Lincs., for the kind loan of this rifle.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: FX Dynamic Compact Takedown Black VP 300MM

Type: PCP

Calibre: .177 on test, .22 available Barrel Length: 11.75" (300mm) Overall Length: 32" to 34" with butt extended

Weight: 6.8lbs

Energy: 11.1ft/lbs on max setting

Price: £1,410 (guide)

Contact: Sportsman Gun Centre - www.sportsmanguncentre.co.uk

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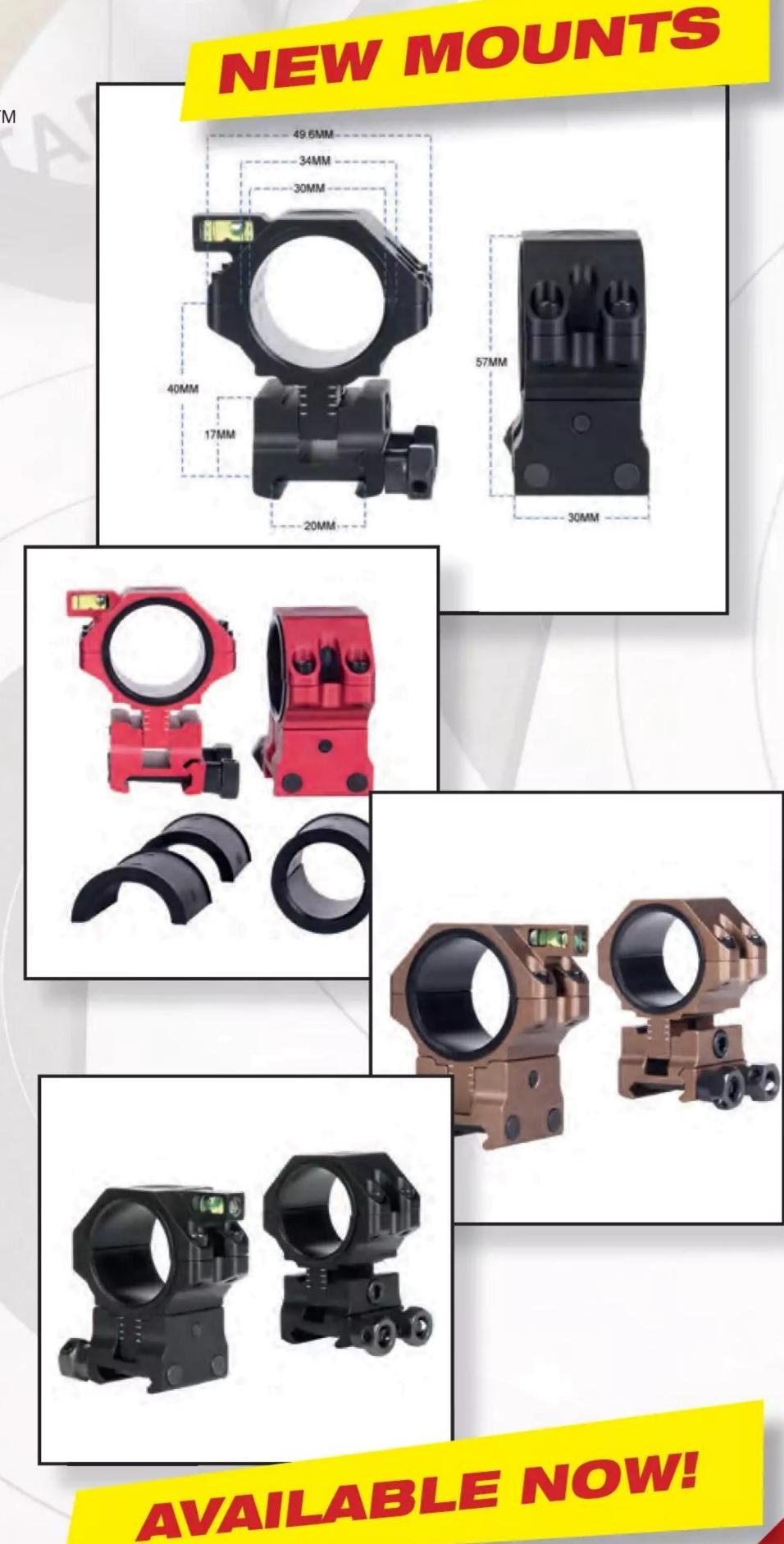
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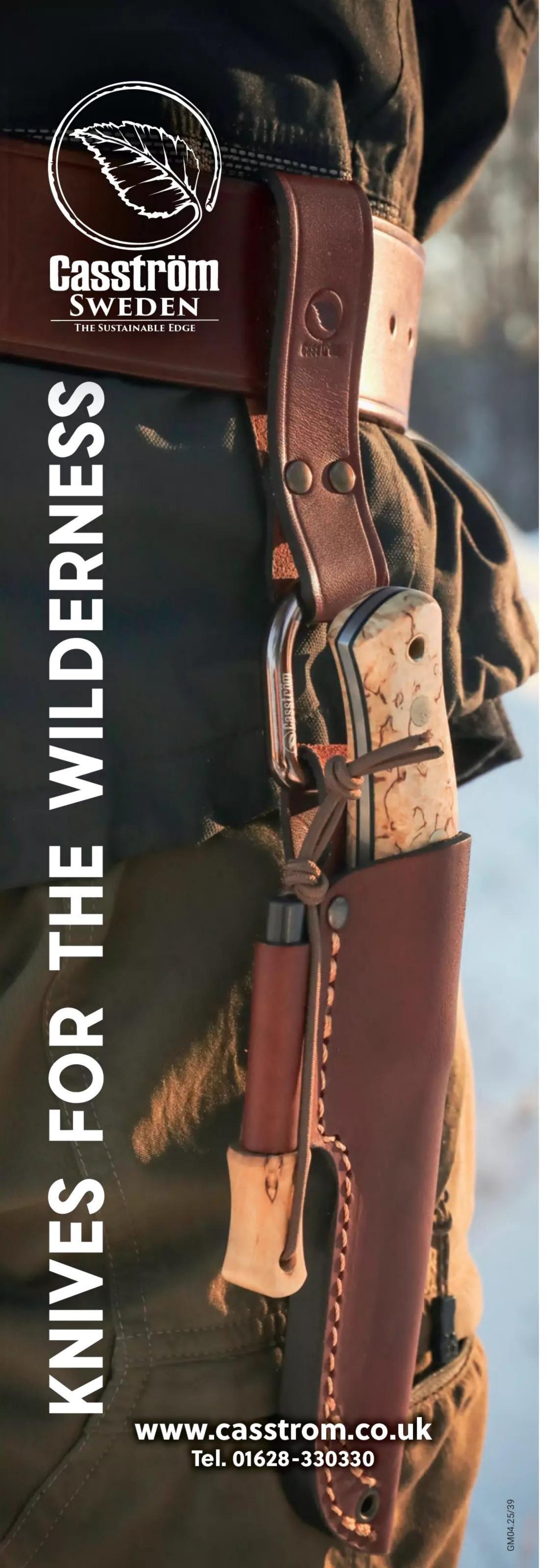
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Mark Underwood offers advice on all the latest knives and tools

Lansky Portable Knife Sharpening Tools

Is something that is best done at home, in the workshop, but occasionally, some work out in the field is necessary to keep your edge performing at its best.

Lansky manufactures several knife-care systems, but they also offer some great portable sharpening tools that you can carry with you.



The Blademedic knife sharpener is a very compact tool, weighing just 92g, and it offers four different options for maintaining blades. A tungsten carbide drawthrough sharpener allows you to restore a blade with just three or four strokes, and the body of the sharpener enables you to keep a safe hold of it while doing so. Also utilising a draw-through action, two ceramic rods allow you to



polish and finish the edge with a few more strokes.

A ceramic stone on the top edge of the sharpener's body is designed to get inside even the smallest blade serrations, and a foldout, tapered diamond rod can also be used to put an edge on any blade type.

Some pull-through sharpeners can be a bit brutal, and if not used correctly, they can strip away too much metal from a quality blade. This tungsten carbide sharpener showed no signs of excessive metal removal, but it should still be used with care and may not be suitable for very expensive knives. The ceramic rods are a far better tool for your higher-quality blades.

Double-Sided Diamond Paddle

Available with different combinations of grit coarseness, the moulded rubber handles of this tool fold around the sharpening surfaces to protect them when not in use. Once opened, the handles give a good, firm

hold and allow you to apply the blade to the surface of the diamond sharpeners at the correct angle. The coarse grit side is ideal for general sharpening, and the fine grit side lets you get a nice, clean finish on the blade. At just 5" long when folded and weighing only 97g, this is an easy-to-carry tool, and the sharpening surfaces are very effective.

Leather Strop Hone

Designed to fit Lansky's excellent Controlled-Angle System, this small, leather-faced hone is intended for use on already very sharp blades, to finish the edge and remove any tiny burrs. The result is an extremely sharp and fine blade that will cut very cleanly. If you do not have one of Lansky's sharpening systems, you can still use this strop to finish your blade.

The hone comes with full instructions, and you can also introduce a stropping paste to further enhance the results. Weighing 25g and measuring under 5" long, this is also a very portable and compact tool, making it easy to carry in your pack.

Lansky's Double-Sided

Diamond Paddle,

Blademedic, and

Leather Strop

Hone (front)

Conclusion

These are all well-made, effective sharpeners, and their small, lightweight design makes them an excellent choice for maintaining a blade in the field. If you are dressing game or camping, they enable you to keep your knife sharp without adding too much weight or bulk. GM

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Lansky Blademedic, Double-Sided Diamond Paddle, and Leather Strop Hone Price: £16.95, £29.95 and £16.95, respectively

Contact: Blades - www.blades.co.uk





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GUNMART.NET / MAY 2025

FIREARMS MAUSER 25 MAX Chris Parkin gets his hands on the brand-new Mauser 25 Max and is delighted with how it performs



The Mauser 25 seeks to benefit from the brand's legendary reputation alongside a new action design that offers rapid reloads. The rifle is currently available in .308, but a broader selection of calibres will appear soon, all using the same action length and 128mm of total bolt travel.

The .308 on test features a free-floating, 20" (510mm) cold hammer-forged barrel with a 17mm diameter muzzle and a plasma oxide coating to ensure corrosion protection. The muzzle shows a neat crown and a thread cap concealing a 15x1 thread for a moderator.

A different action concept

The barrel swells to 24mm where it enters the cylindrical 34mm diameter extension, which screws onto the rectangular action chassis that's hidden within the stock. The rear of this extension forms the locking abutments into which the bolt head enters, and here's where it's really interesting. The bolt has a push-feed face with a single extractor claw and twin-sprung ejector pins, but a pair of locking lugs open vertically (one up, one down) into the abutments. Mauser advertises that these lugs offer 66mm² of surface contact (250 degrees of the bolt circumference) between the bolt and breech, which is 10% more than the legendary Mauser 98.

The bolt has steel rails overlapping the edges of the steel receiver to give an effortless linear slide for the mechanism, and there is a hammer recessed within the base of this receiver to activate the striker within the bolt carrier. This is cocked as the carrier reciprocates back and forth over it.

Safety details

There is a two-position safety catch recessed into the action tang. Move it forward for fire and rearward for safe (with the bolt locked). There's a small button within it to unlock the bolt for safe unloading, but it isn't a de-cocker. The single-stage trigger features an 8mm-wide, smooth blade with medium curvature. It broke crisply at 800g and is adjustable from 700 to 1,700g.

The bolt handle extends down 58mm to the right of the action and features a 22mm ball tip that sits just ahead and above the trigger blade, ensuring fast access and superb ergonomics. The handle rotates a few degrees to unlock the action, yet is unbelievably light and instantly encourages the bolt to draw back for a fast reload. The base of your thumb is



automatically in the correct position to nudge the bolt handle forward again, stripping a round from the magazine to chamber it. I will try to say this as few times as possible, but it's unbelievably smooth at any operating speed.

Going slowly is quieter, yet minimal physical effort is needed to open or close the bolt, which makes it hard to resist the lightning-fast reload.

Strip down

There is a small bolt release catch recessed into the stock on the right side, and pressing this down allows the bolt to slide fully rearwards and lift off its rails. You do need to lower or remove the adjustable cheekpiece to do this, though.

Twin T30 Torx screws span the magazine well to hold the flat-bottomed receiver in the stock inlet, which is neat, with small brass pillars to prevent compression. The trigger guard and magazine well are polymer, which I really don't have a problem with, and there is an assertive square lug to transfer recoil forces from the action to the stock.

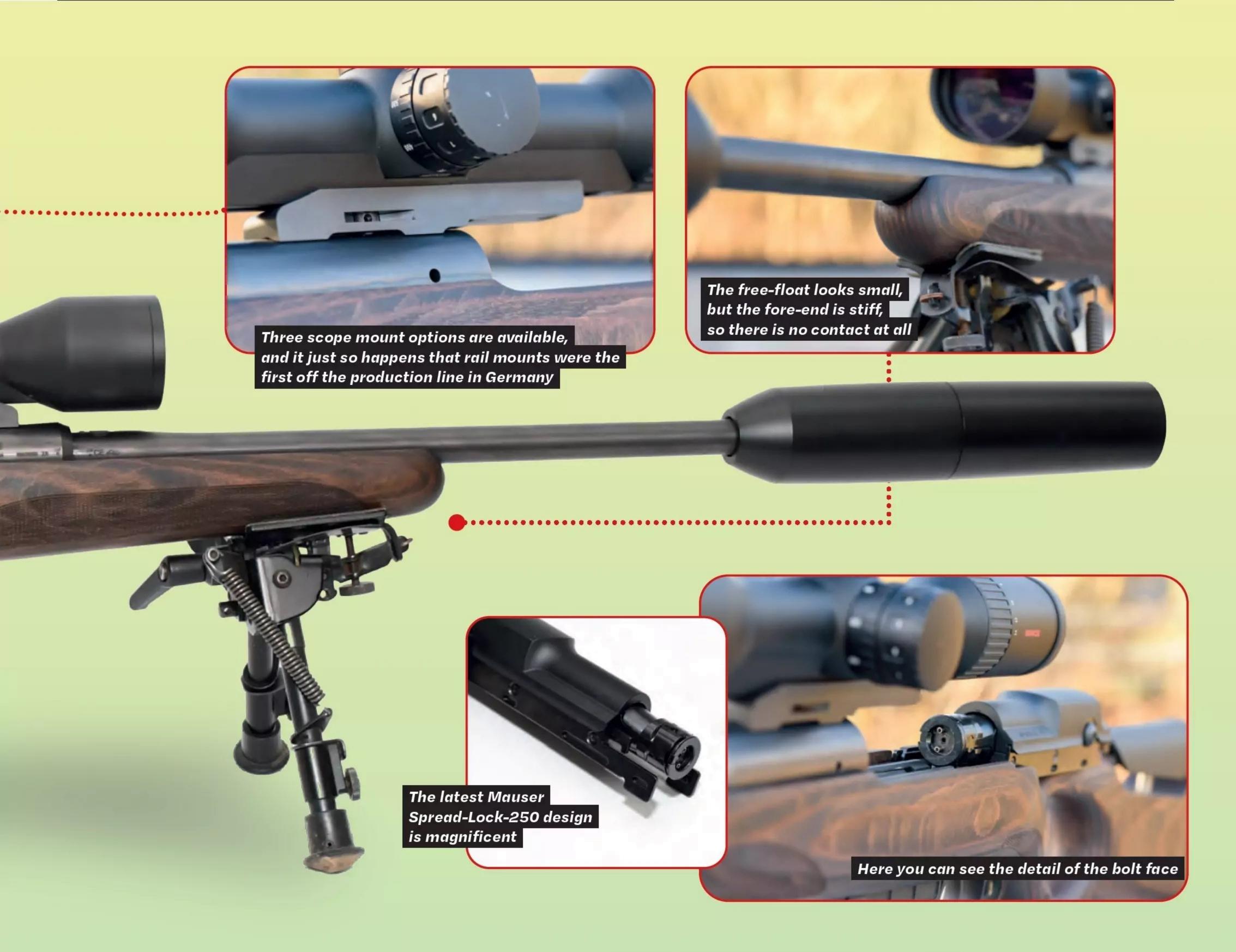
A three-round polymer magazine is supplied, although five-round versions are also available. It is a single-stack unit, so it needs to be removed from the gun to load it. In use, it feeds smoothly without any snags or meplat damage to ballistic-tipped projectiles. A backup round dropped on top of the magazine

follower will chamber directly, and because the rifle has an open-top action, you enjoy ample chamber access, both physically and visually.

Mounting options

The scope mount, be that a rail mount, Picatinny rail or Blaser-style saddle mount, is screwed onto the barrel. My early review gun was supplied with a rail mount, which is the most common choice for premium optics in Europe, but in the long term, I'd opt for a Picatinny mount for its greater versatility.

The rail mount is the least likely to be used in the UK, but in case you do use it, the underside T20 Torx screws are accessible through the magazine



AMMO TABLE

AMMUNITION	WEIGHT (GRAINS)	FACTORY VELOCITY (FPS)	FACTORY ENERGY (FT/ LBS)	ACHIEVED VELOCITY (FPS)	ACHIEVED ENERGY (FT/LBS)	100M GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
HORNADY SST	150	3000	2998	2839	2685	0.5
HORNADY SST	165	2840	2955	2649	2572	0.3
HORNADY ELD-M	168	2800	2925	2590	2503	0.7
HORNADY CX	165	2610	2496	2539	2362	0.8
HORNADY ECX	165	2271	1890	2491	2274	0.8

well, and the third tensioner is via a dial, accessible with a slim Allen key inserted through the lateral slot.

Beech laminate

The Max stock is a beech-laminate thumbhole design with excellent fore-end rigidity, ensuring reliable zero retention from a bipod or other accessory. You will find sling studs front and rear, and the furniture features lateral chequering, too. The finish is non-reflective and contrasts with the black rifle mechanics and black

polymer adjustable cheekpiece, which is held securely by two Allen screws.

The length of pull is 359mm/14.1", with extension spacers available to customise it from 349-399mm/13.7"-15.7". The rifle weighs 3.6kg (7.9lbs), but the Pure and Extreme versions are lighter at 3.2kg. It's not a superlightweight rifle, but it's built to shoot, and, wow, it was accurate and addictive.

Straight to the range

The rifle arrived assembled with a Sauer titanium moderator. I adjusted the eye

relief with the Minox scope and ran a cleaning/inspection routine on the bore that rang no alarm bells. It was boresighted accurately, and I was shooting cloverleaf groups from the start.

Velocities were perfectly acceptable from a 20" barrel, and the gun was comfortable to shoot with good cheekpiece/scope alignment, a generous length of pull, and a crisp, predictable trigger. It was almost hard to be calm with the gun, as the reload procedure from the action is so light and fast that you really do need to



Image: David Land Fieldsports

slow yourself down. It's stunningly smooth with effortless ergonomics. This includes the bolt shroud remaining low and slim, so it doesn't bump your nose/face even with a 128mm stroke.

The barrel demonstrated excellent thermal stability and performed flawlessly with copper and lead-core ammunition ranging from 150 to 168gr on my 100m range. The following day, I shot out to 270m. The rifle performed superbly, with group sizes only affected by my impatience to reload and fire again before the gong had stopped swinging.

It's critical to mention that the mechanism doesn't convert linear to rotational forces, so there is correspondingly less mechanical loss from friction. This lack of required effort, combined with the shooter's linear physical input, means the gun's point of aim is disturbed less, allowing follow-up shots to be notably faster and more accurate.

Spot your impacts

I had the rifle reloaded and ready to fire again, with the reticle back on the aim point to spot my impacts on steel at 270m, which, for a .308 sporting rifle, is impressive.

It's almost a bit weird to have to do so little to have the gun ready to

fire again so quickly, there's such a minuscule disturbance to its position.

It was addictive, almost an epiphany. None of the speedy mechanics seemed to negatively impact functional accuracy or create ergonomic downsides, and this is a hunting rifle, not a target gun. It's just so refreshing.

A step ahead

Describing a rifle as a straight-pull is a bit of a mixed blessing, as some might focus solely on the speed at which it will operate or the magazine capacity for use in countries where semi-automatic rifles are not allowed. There is so much more to a sporting rifle in my mind, and the accessibility of getting the most from the action is a key factor.

The Mauser 25 has, to my mind, only one slight design compromise, and that is that the single-column magazine cannot be loaded while in the rifle. But otherwise, this rifle has massively impressed me and lived up to all that the brand has promised. In my opinion, it is now the focal point at which other makers must set their sights. When it comes to manually operated rifles, I have shot pretty much everything in the UK market, and this sets a new benchmark. It may not have the barrel interchangeability or

deluxe options of a Blaser (my former benchmark), but I can shoot it faster.

Hats off to Mauser because this rifle is going to see more use, and I really want to get the Picatinny option to assess scope mounting in more detail. I'd love to try one of the larger calibres to further assess its recoil character, but the bolt travel is already satisfactory for the longest .300 Win Mag option.

Mauser has significantly moved the goalposts because the speed is there without the detrimental mechanical/ ergonomic compromise that many other straight-pulls struggle with, and you can even have a true left-hander for no additional cost. GM

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Mauser 25 Max

Calibres: .308 on test, .243, 6.5CM, 6.5x55, 8x57, .30-06, 7mm RM, and .300 WM also available **Barrel Length:** 510mm/20"

Overall Length: 1000mm/39"

Weight: 3.6kg/7.9lbs

Length of Pull: 349-399mm/13.7"-

15.7" using spacers

Magazine Capacity: Three rounds (five-rounders also available)

Price: £1,831

Contact: Blaser Group - www.blaser-group.com/uk/







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Pixfra is the more affordable brand from Thomas Jacks, and although it inevitably plays second fiddle to its blue-chip Pulsar stablemate, it continues to improve. One of the things I like most about the Pixfra range is how rational and easy it is to understand.

Everything on offer

Let's consider monoculars. There are three series: the ultra-compact Mile 2, the palm-sized Arc, and the new full-sized Sirius, meaning you can pick whichever form factor best suits your needs. Across these series, you can choose between entry-level (256x192), mid-range (384x288), or top-end (640x512) sensors. Between mid-range and top-end sensors, the former will give you around 50% more magnification, whereas the latter will increase your field of view by around 65%, and the price difference is around 20%. Next, decide which lens size suits you best. Each series offers several lens options, ranging from 10mm to 25mm in the Mile 2 series, 19mm to 50mm

in the Arc series, and 25mm to 50mm in the new Sirius series. Increasing the lens size reduces the field of view but increases image detail and thus the unit's "detection distance". Finally, the price increments from one model to the next within each series also make good sense, so you can easily find a match between your needs and your budget.

Better still, whichever sensor and lens you opt for, the remaining feature set for each series is constant, so you can count on getting the same display, functions, storage, connectivity, and accessories, whichever model you choose. Thus, all models in the Sirius series feature a pin-sharp 1920x1080, 0.49" OLED display; all those in the Arc series are equipped with a smaller but still very capable 1440x1080, 0.41" equivalent; and the minimalist Mile 2 series gets an 800x600, 0.32" OLED across the board. Likewise, all models offer recording with audio, but storage size is 16GB, 32GB, and 64GB for the Mile 2, Arc, and Sirius series, respectively.

The Arc

Thomas Jacks kindly sent examples from the latest Sirius and Arc LRF series for this review. We'll begin with the Arc.

LRF versions of the Arc series are new for 2025. As an upgrade, they are attractively priced, especially if you opt for the LRF A435 model, which costs just £30 more than the standard A435 (though, for some reason, the LRF A419 is £50 more, and the LRF A635, £80 more, than their standard equivalents). Even for £80 extra, however, that's excellent value for an integrated rangefinder with a range of 1,000m. Also very much to like is how neatly Pixfra has incorporated it into the Arc's compact magnesium-alloy housing, tucking it under the objective lens in a way that is both aesthetically pleasing and ergonomically unobtrusive. A quick press on the farthest of the three control buttons on top of the unit activates an aiming reticle (in Pixfra's signature lime green), and a second press displays the resulting range in a small box in the upper



right of the screen. The rangefinder can be configured within the menu to give values in yards/meters and to single-shot or continuous mode.

Other features of the Arc are as per the rest of the series: the housing is nicely shaped to fit in your hand, with extra grip coming from an inset rubber panel, while the textured rubber armouring around the objective lens and rear dioptre ring provides positive front-and-rear focus control. Keeping hold of the unit is further facilitated by a Palmcorder-style hand strap and an optional neck strap. Finally, a rubber, rotatable eyecup, equipped with a flange that eliminates back-reflection and light leakage, aligns your eye comfortably with the display.

Power comes from a single, rechargeable 18650 (3,200mAh) battery that installs easily in a neat compartment under the eyepiece. Both the Arc and the Sirius are supplied with two of these batteries and a smart dual-station charger with a digital display. Each battery provides

a nominal 7.5 hours of run-time to the Arc, and 6 hours to the Sirius, whose larger sensor and display draw more power, so having a spare charged cell in your pocket gives you a massive operating window. Both units also have a USB-C port that allows on-board charging and data transfer, though the latter is mostly done using the onboard Wi-Fi in conjunction with Pixfra's smartphone app, available in Android and iOS versions. A neat feature of the app is that it permits live viewing of the thermal image for up to four people simultaneously, a scenario in which the Arc and Sirius' built-in tripod sockets also come in handy.

Moving on to the Arc's controls, these are mounted in a single row on top of the unit and are easily identified by touch and manipulated by either hand. The power button is distinguished by its lime-green colour, and a low ridge separates it from the remaining three buttons, comprising a square central Menu button flanked by round Laser and Zoom buttons.

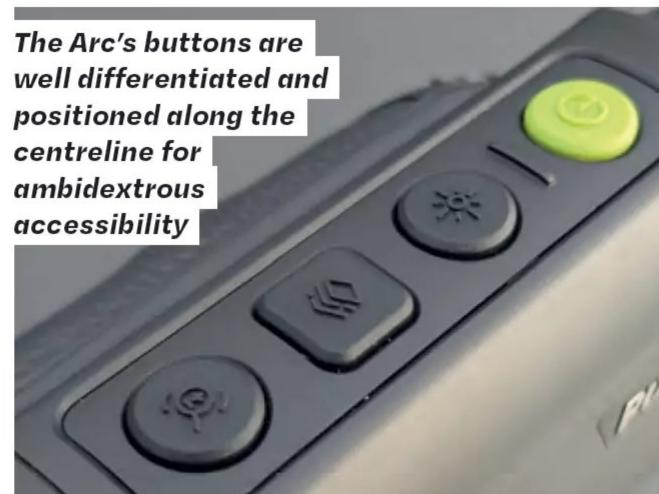
Imaging is via a long press on the Laser button (video) or a simultaneous press on the Laser and Menu buttons (stills). The Zoom button scrolls through 1x/2x/4x/8x (short press) or calibrates (NUCs) the sensor (long press), while on the Menu button, a short press scrolls through the six colour palettes (white-hot, alarm, blackhot, green-hot, iron-red, and sepia), and a long press accesses the menu, where any manual tuning of the image is carried out. You can fiddle with these settings, but Pixfra's image processing is AI-controlled. Pixfra claims it "learns from every image captured on the Sirius, ensuring every image looks great, regardless of conditions", and I can confirm that it works very well.

The Sirius

The control layout is different on the Sirius, for two reasons: firstly, there's no LRF, and secondly, its power button is neatly integrated into the Pixfra logo on the left-hand side of the housing, leaving just three buttons along the







top to navigate: image capture (long press for video / short press for stills), Menu (long press for menu access / short press for palette scrolling), and Zoom (long press for NUC / short press for zoom scrolling). There's less tactile differentiation in the buttons this time, but the sheer simplicity of the layout more than compensates.

The Sirius is obviously a bigger unit than the Arc (194.3x54x65.4mm vs. 168x50mm, and 421g vs. 360g), but it is still comfortable and secure in the hand. In place of a palm strap, you get both a wrist strap and a neck lanyard, as well as a very practical soft carry case. The Arc also comes with a case, but its hard-bodied construction makes

it better suited to storage than to field use. Also good is the lens cover, which is metal, reversible and permanently attached – all of which I like.

The Sirius carries its 18650 battery in a compartment set into the left-hand side. On release, the cover detaches entirely from the housing, retained only by a broad tether that also pulls the battery clear of the contacts. This is a genuinely fingernail-friendly solution! The Sirius is stylish, too, with carbonfibre panels and lime-green accents. In short, nothing about it says "budget". I remember the very first Pixfra models having a rather flimsy feel, but the current crop has real visual and tactile presence. My only gripe would be

that the buttons are sometimes too sensitive, causing the unit to come out of standby or to switch palettes as they make contact with their surroundings.

Out and about

The loan period on both units was generous enough for me to get out with them for several stalking sorties, a couple of foxing sessions, and one go at the rats. Imaging was obviously better with the Sirius, due to its larger screen and wider field of view (which I always prefer over magnification in a spotter), but both made easy work of detecting and situating animals in the landscape, and I experienced no difficulty identifying what I was observing with











either unit. As mentioned, the menu gives you a good deal of control over the image parameters, but the more I used both units, the happier I was to leave that to the onboard AI.

Interestingly, and despite my preference for the image from the Sirius S635, over the course of my testing, I started to gravitate towards taking the Arc LRF A419 by virtue of its laser rangefinder. The Sirius does have a stadiametric rangefinder function, which is better than nothing, but it is slow and coarse compared to the swift precision of the Arc's laser. Previously, I've scoffed at LRF-equipped spotters, regarding their extra functionality as unworthy

of the additional bulk and cost, but the Arc LRF's slender lines and accessible pricing have definitely changed my mind on that score.

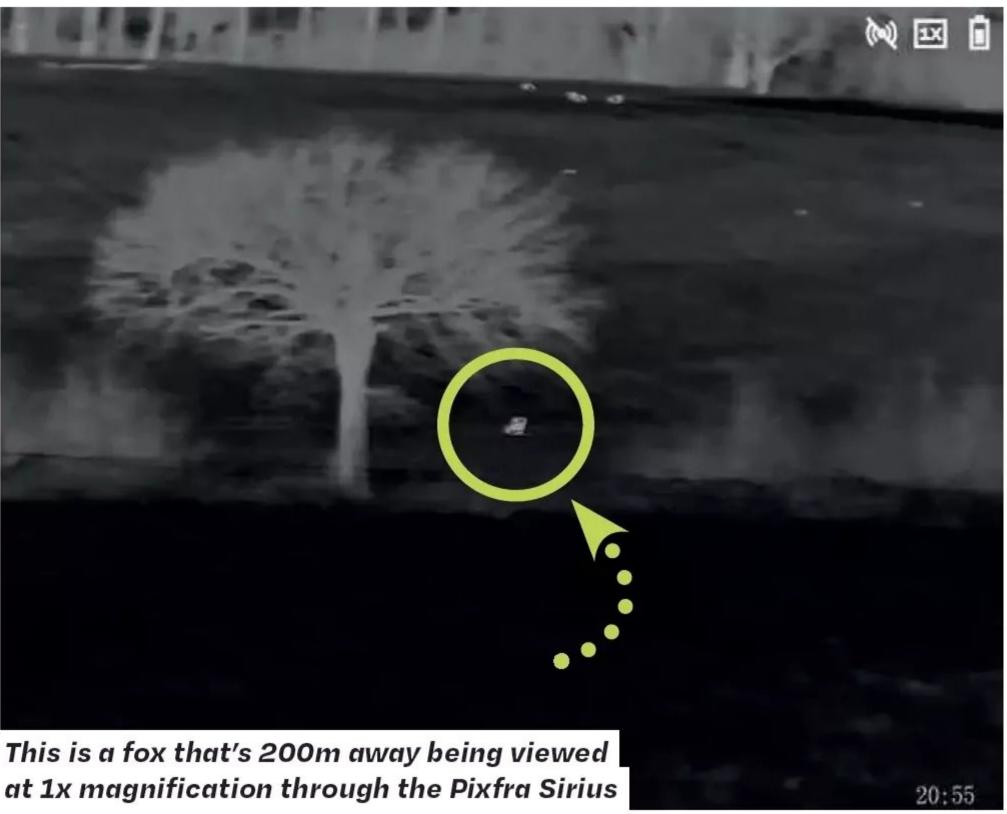
Both the Arc LRF and Sirius series are excellent value for money, with the former priced between £1,049.95 and £1,589.95, and the latter between £1,449.95 and £2,519.95. The topof-the-range Sirius is extra-special, too, as it features a dual-focal-length (25mm/50mm) lens that delivers two levels of optical magnification on demand, but that, as they say, is a story (or review) for another day! GM

Contact:

Thomas Jacks - www.thomasjacks.co.uk









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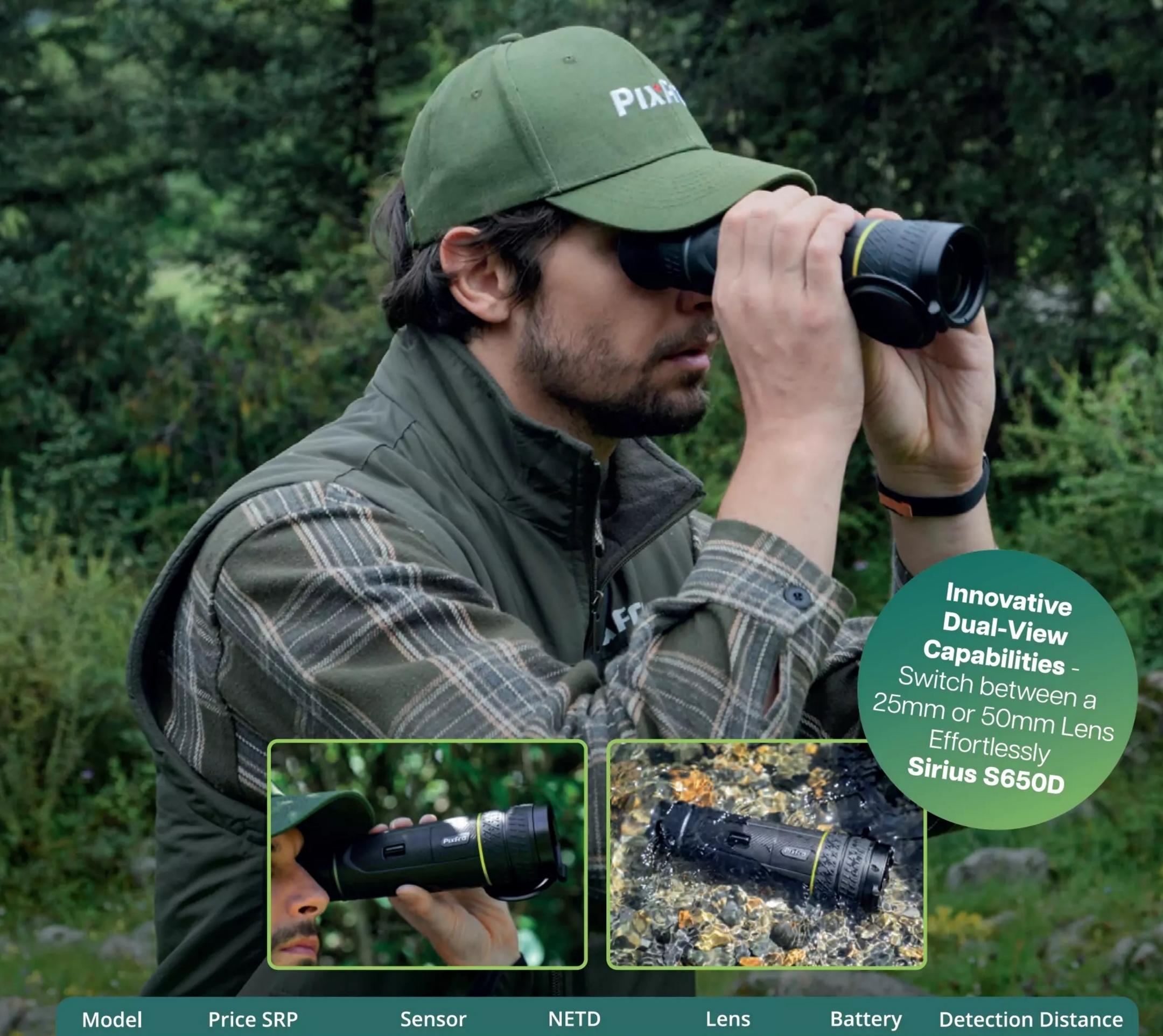






SIRIUS SERIES

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Model	Price SRP	Sensor	NETD	Lens	Battery	Detection Distance
S435	£1,449.95 Inc. VAT	384×288, 12µm	≤18mK	35mm F1.0	≥7.5h	1800m
S635	£1,729.95 Inc. VAT	640×512, 12µm	≤18mK	35mm F1.0	≥7.5h	1800m
S650	£1,979.95 Inc. VAT	640×512, 12µm	≤18mK	50mm F0.9	≥6h	2600m 🕝
S650D	£2,519.95 Inc. VAT	640×512, 12µm	≤18mK	25-50mm F0.9-F1.1	≥6h	2600m

Silence is GULDEN

Choosing the perfect rifle moderator can be challenging, so **Bruce Potts** reviews his top picks to help you decide

Selecting a sound moderator for your stalking rifle can be a very personal decision. Many shooters are bemused by the huge number of options available. Calibre certainly does play a part, as does the barrel length and diameter.

Here is a selection that I think covers all the bases for the eager stalker. You would think noise reduction would be at the top of the list of desirable qualities, but if a suppressor weighs a ton, it's not practical, so decibel reduction, weight, longevity, ease of cleaning, and good looks are all relevant.

Ultimately, however, you should select the option that best suits the calibre, rifle weight, barrel length, and how frequently you use the rifle.

ASE UTRA JET-Z COMPACT AND ATEC PRS-2

Price: From £426 and £399, respectively **Contact:** Jackson Rifles – www.jacksonrifles.com

Dinclude a couple here. The Jet-Z Compact remains one of the best all-round sound moderators you can purchase for a stalking rifle. It offers excellent noise reduction in a short, compact design. The muzzle-mounted moderator is offered in .25 to .30 calibres, including magnum. It weighs 493g and adds 155mm to the length of a rifle. With a diameter of 40mm, it is also slim enough to be used with a low-mounted telescopic sight. A variety of metric and imperial threads are available, including M14x1, M15x1, M17x1, M18x1, ½"x20 UNF, and ½"x28 UNEF.

Alternatively, try the A-Tec PRS-2. When is a sound moderator not a sound

moderator? When it's a muzzle brake as well. This hybrid moderator/muzzle brake combines the advantages of a traditional moderator, using internal baffle stacks to reduce the noise signature, with those of a forward-venting muzzle brake, which reduces recoil. This means you have a combination of decibel reduction for more covert use alongside far less recoil or muzzle flip, allowing for a quick second shot or observation of the bullet strike.

The PRS-2 model weighs 465g and is 175mm long with a 44.4mm diameter. A longer PRS-3 is also available. Its stainless-steel construction enhances longevity, protecting it against flame erosion and corrosion from internal acids and deposits. The tough satinblack Cerakote finish, which resists contact abrasion and shrugs off any moisture from the good old British weather, makes it a real winner.



The Cerakoted A-Tec PRS-2 is a hybrid moderator/muzzle brake that





RCC M48

Price: £249

Contact: Highland Outdoors - www.highlandoutdoors.co.uk

I do prefer a muzzle can over a reflex mod, as I tend to use short-barrelled rifles. This is why the new RCC M48 sound moderator, made in Sweden, is ideal. It's a large, aluminium-bodied, muzzlemounted moderator with changeable muzzle thread and calibre inserts. It is modular in design, so you can extend or reduce the segments as you wish. The M48 weighs 375g and is 150mm long, with an outside diameter of 48mm. For threads, you can choose between ½"x20 UNF, ½"x28 UNEF, 5/8"x24 UNEF, M14x1, M15x1, M16x1, M17x1, and M18x1.

The individual baffles of the segmented design are removable and therefore replaceable, which is handy. In my .30 calibre model, I have four segments. The baffles enclose stainless-steel gauze to maximise noise reduction and slow the expansion of hot gases.

At the rear is the exchangeable stainless-steel threaded insert, which gives you the option to change this component if you need to use the moderator on another rifle with a different thread size.

This moderator is light, quiet, and does not upset the balance of even the lightest stalking rifle.

WILDCAT ELITE

Price: From £495

Contact: Wildcat Sound Moderators - www.wildcatmoderators.com

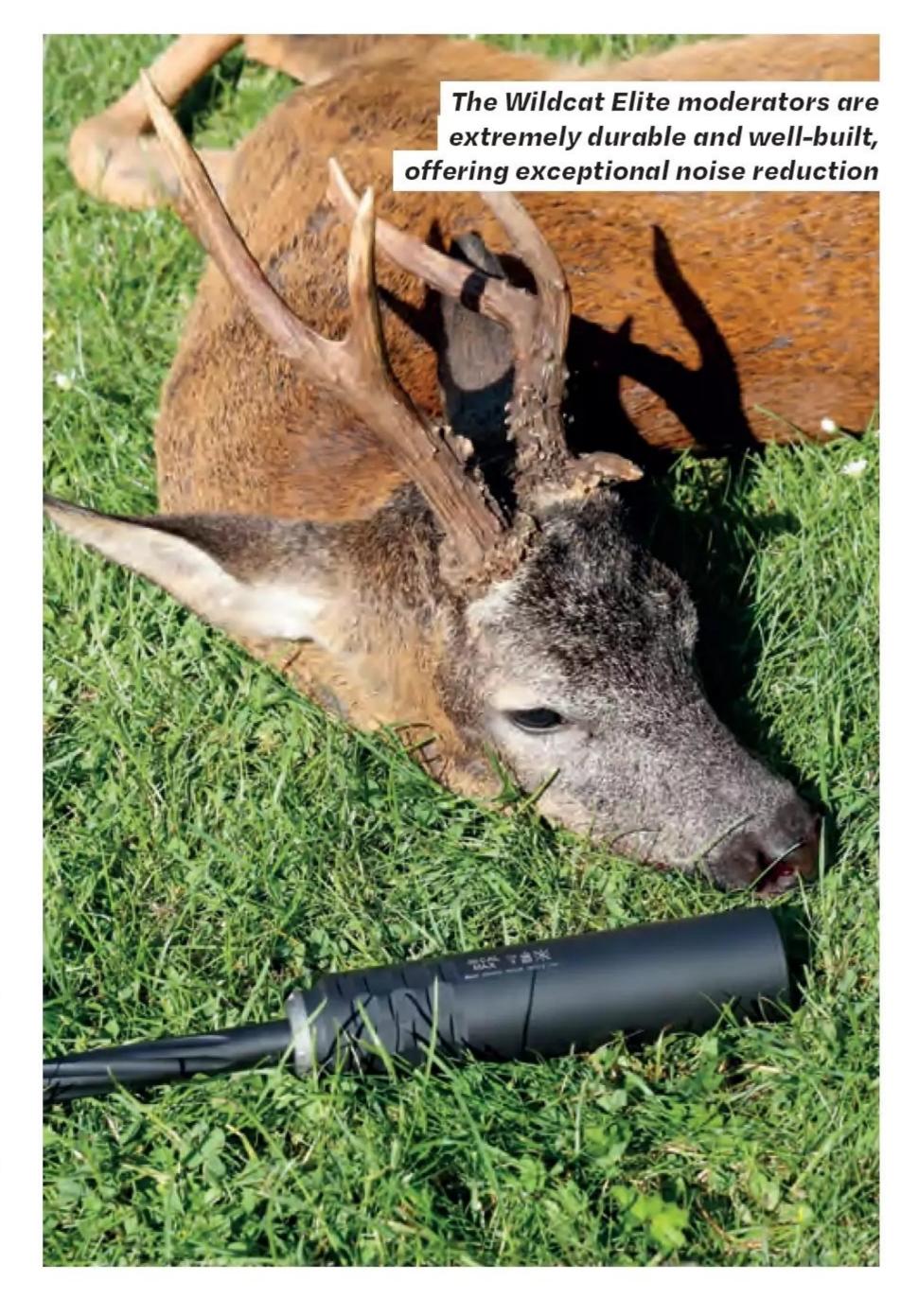
Wildcat sound moderators are made in the UK, and there is a diverse array available for any application, from rimfire to centrefire and magnum calibres as well. Its flagship Elite line offers everything a stalker could wish for in three muzzle-mounted models – the Elite Compact, Elite, and Elite TI. As the name suggests, the Compact is a smaller version of the standard Elite, while the TI version is made from titanium. Prices are £495, £635, and £865.

The Elite in .30 calibre is a very well-built, premium product designed to be the ultimate rifle moderator. It's extremely durable, rated for magnum use if necessary, and able to withstand a high shot count. The standard Elite is 44mm in diameter and 187mm long, but adds 172mm to the rifle since these are muzzle cans, which I prefer. It weighs 635g, while the titanium version weighs only 364g with the same dimensions.

The rear section has replaceable threaded inserts for different rifle muzzle threads, which cost £80 each. Options include 14x1, 15x1, 17x1, 18x1, 18x1.5, ½"x28, ½"x24, 11/16"x24, and ¾"x24.

The Elite employs a combination of 17-4 stainless steel and grade 5 6Al-4V titanium in its unique single-billet manufacturing process, which incorporates a front-mounted dual-core design. This achieves excellent durability and is highly effective at recoil reduction.

I also like the Compact Elite option, which I use on short-barrelled woodland deer rifles because it still provides excellent noise reduction and handling.



SCHULTZ & LARSEN ULTRADOME

Price: £210 Contact: Alan Rhone – www.alanrhone.com

The Ultradome provides a slim, lightweight moderator for stalking or foxing and weighs only 322g.

In its over-barrel reflex form, it measures 225mm long with a 38mm diameter, and it only adds 120mm to the length of the rifle. On a longer barrel, this setup provides better balance than a muzzle-mounted moderator. It is available in 6mm, 7mm, or 8mm calibres and M14x1, M15x1, ½"x 20 UNF, and UNEF threads.

The Ultradome forms part of the Hardcore range of moderators, which use stainless steel cone inserts within the core of the aluminium moderator. These resist the effects of fire erosion from hot, fast-burning gases, and this is a sensible answer



to a question that many people ask me about the longevity of aluminium sound moderators.

The Ultradome is made as a strippable unit with three parts: a rear over-barrel section, a mid-connector section, and the baffles. The baffles are 10mm thick, threaded sections that all

connect to form a linear baffle stack. There is a final large 19mm baffle that forms the end plug.

The number of baffles is governed by the calibre. I had a .223 version with a six-baffle stack, but it can be customised to suit your needs, making it a highly flexible and versatile sound moderator system.

STALON X108

Price: From £395

Contact: GMK - www.gmk.co.uk

> Sako and Tikka test rifles always come fitted with Stalon mods, and I have been impressed with their noise reduction and lightweight construction. The X108 model is a reflex/over-the-barrel design and therefore extends only 100mm past the muzzle. The minimal extra length makes the whole outfit far less cumbersome, especially when slung on the shoulder. The X149 is a longer version designed for larger calibres.

Offered in calibres from .204
Ruger up to .30-06, the Stalon design features calibre-specific baffles, maximising decibel reduction. You also get the ability to separate and exchange threads or baffle sizes to match your rifle's cartridge.
Threads include M14x1, M15x1, M17x1, M18x1, ½"-28 UNEF, ½"-20 UNF, 5/8"-18 UNF, and 5/8"-24 UNEF.

This aluminium moderator is 240mm long and 50mm wide. It only weighs 380g, with most



of that weight rearward of the muzzle and back over the barrel.

The front, primary thick baffle deflects most of the gases away from the bore axis and rearward through the vented forward baffles. This gives the gas time to flow through every

part of the moderator and diffuse its energy/noise by the time it exits.

Overall, the X108 provides excellent noise reduction, has minimal impact on the rifle's balance due to its lightweight design, and is well-priced.



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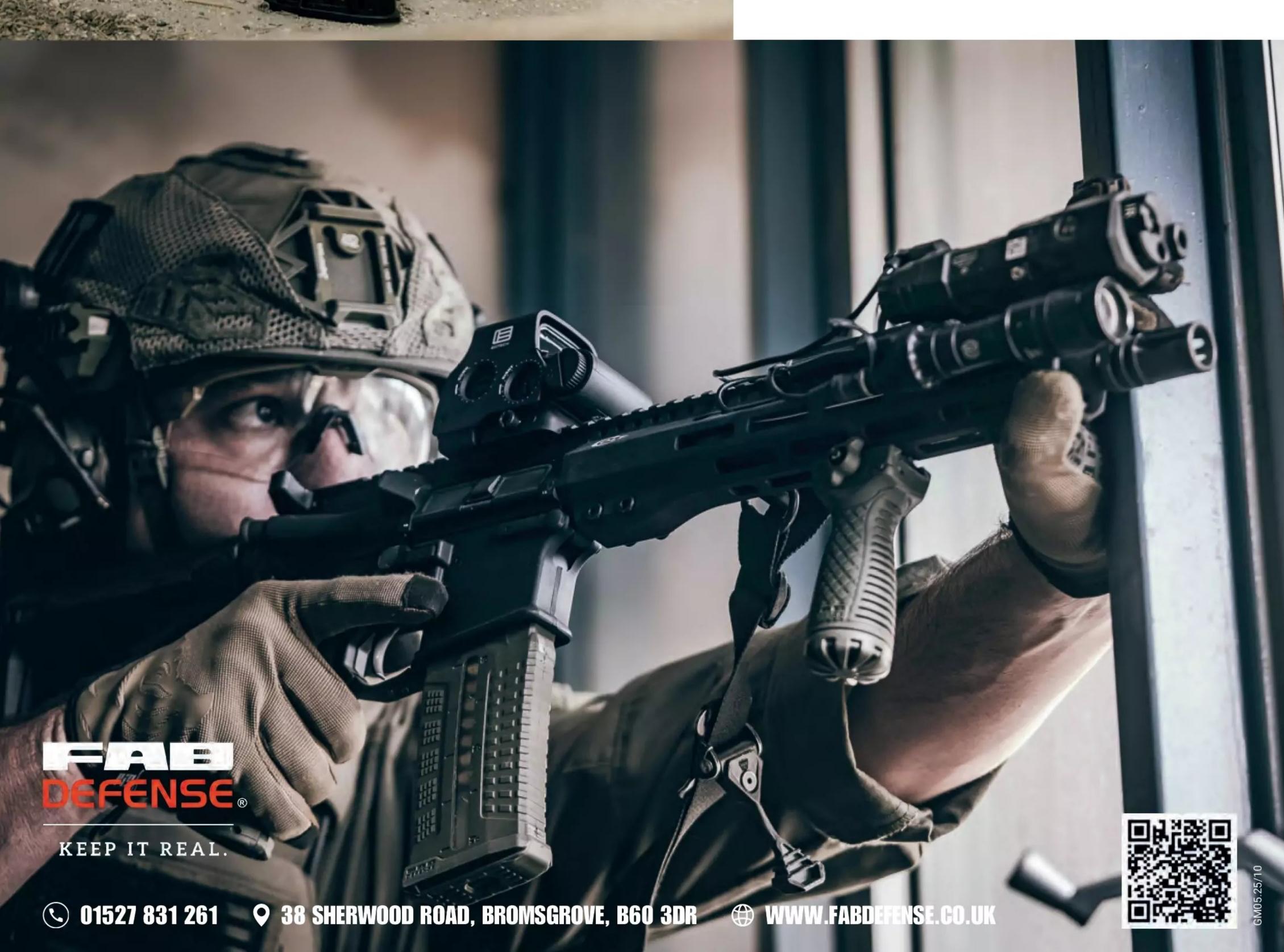






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RELOADING BASICS

Mark Underwood takes a look at the different options when seating bullets

Bullet seating is the final stage in reloading ammunition, and it is every bit as important as any of the steps before it. It dictates how concentric your ammunition is and the all-important cartridge overall length (COL), two factors that have a huge effect on its performance.

There are various bullet seating dies available, and while most do the job well enough, a specific type of die can sometimes better suit a particular bullet design and significantly enhance its performance.

Bullet seating stems

The seating stem is the part of the die that comes into contact with the nose of the bullet and pushes it into the case's mouth. The fit between the bullet and the stem is critical because a poor fit can damage the tip of the bullet and may also cause it to be seated in a non-concentric manner. A damaged bullet that is not concentric in the case is not going to perform at its best, and grouping and accuracy will be significantly impacted.

Modern projectiles, like Hornady's ELD-X (Extra Low Drag) bullets, have heat-shield tips made from a special polymer to improve performance, but the tip mustn't be damaged during the seating process. This is why Hornady





also manufactures specialised ELD-X seating stems designed to engage the bullet further back on the ogive, away from the tip, ensuring they can be seated without damage.

L.E. Wilson supplies its seating dies with a standard seating stem but also offers a more specialised optional stem for very low drag (VLD) bullets.

Not all bullets require such a specialised seating stem to seat correctly, but other die manufacturers also supply alternative seating stems, and it is well worth experimenting to ensure you have the best fit for your bullets.

Die adjustment

With COL being so critical, it is important to be able to adjust it easily and precisely and to be able to lock the die securely in place once it is set correctly, to stop it drifting out of position. All bullet seating dies are adjustable, and most have the facility

to lock the die at the desired COL, but if you have a die that does not lock once set, you should mark the die body and the seating stem adjuster and regularly check that the marks remain lined up. Alternatively, you can apply a piece of tape to the die body and the adjuster to stop it from moving.

Bullet seating dies with markings on the adjuster are much easier to use, as the scale allows precise changes to the COL. When marked in 0.001" increments, you can lengthen or shorten your rounds with great accuracy, and if you record the setting for each bullet you reload, it becomes very easy to switch between different cartridge lengths.

Types of die

Bullet seating dies generally all perform the task in the same way, sitting in the reloading press and pushing the bullet into the case when the ram is raised. Some bullet seating dies can

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



be adjusted so that they also apply a crimp to the neck of the case to increase its grip on the bullet, but with correctly resized rifle cases, this is not generally required. If you do need to apply a crimp, then this is best done with a specific die after the bullet has been seated.

Standard bullet seating dies tend to be basic and often lack micrometre adjustment, but they do still produce consistent COLs. Match-grade bullet seating dies usually include extra features, like the micrometre adjustment scale, and they produce more consistent ammunition.

Hornady's match-grade dies also have features like a floating in-line sleeve designed to optimise bullet alignment and reduce bullet runout. By aligning the case mouth with the bullet shank, these dies eliminate the risk of bullets entering the die at an angle and failing to seat correctly in the case mouth.

L. E. Wilson manufactures a stainless-steel bullet seater with micrometre adjustment that takes seating to another level. Unlike most other dies, L. E. Wilson's bullet seater is used in conjunction with an arbor press, a hand-operated tool designed to apply a crushing force to various tasks like riveting or installing bearings. The reloading-specific tools can be expensive, but a very simple homemade version using a reversible clamp works just as well and saves a lot of money.

These dies have two levels of adjustment. When setting the COL, the major adjustment seating cap is first screwed up and down to get the

approximate desired length, with one full turn giving 0.042" of adjustment. Minor adjustments of just 0.001" can then be made on the main body of the die using the very clear scale engraved on it. Once set, both adjustments are locked in place with grub screws.

A primed and charged case is placed onto a base plate that has a hole in the centre to prevent the primer from being subject to any contact or pressure, and a bullet is then placed loosely into the mouth of the case. The bullet seating die is then placed over the bullet/case, and the whole arrangement is placed under the arbor press (or clamp). As you apply pressure through the adjuster cap on the top of the die, the bullet is seated into the case.

Conclusion

Just like the other stages of reloading, there is a range of different gear available, each offering its own benefits and, of course, varying prices. The more precise, match grade and highly engineered bullet seating dies do help to produce more consistent ammunition, and those with clearly marked scales make adjusting the COL much quicker and easier, though they also tend to be more expensive.

I load .308 Winchester ammunition using a variety of equipment, ranging from the standard Lee Precision die to the L. E. Wilson stainless steel bullet seater and the Hornady match grade die. They all produce good ammunition, but with the more expensive ones, the precision and consistency of the ammunition are noticeably better. The best option is to go for the best that you can afford. **GM**

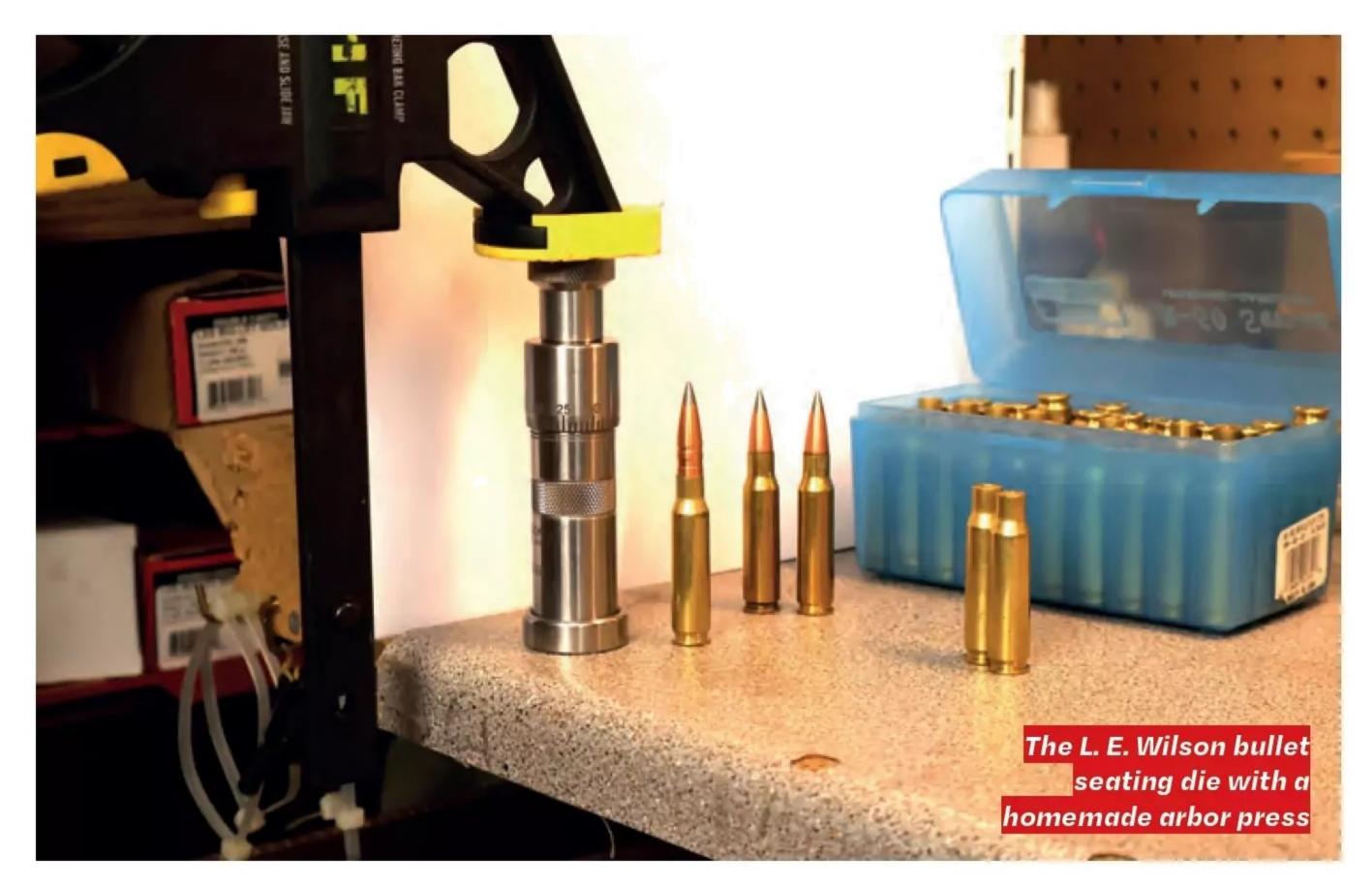
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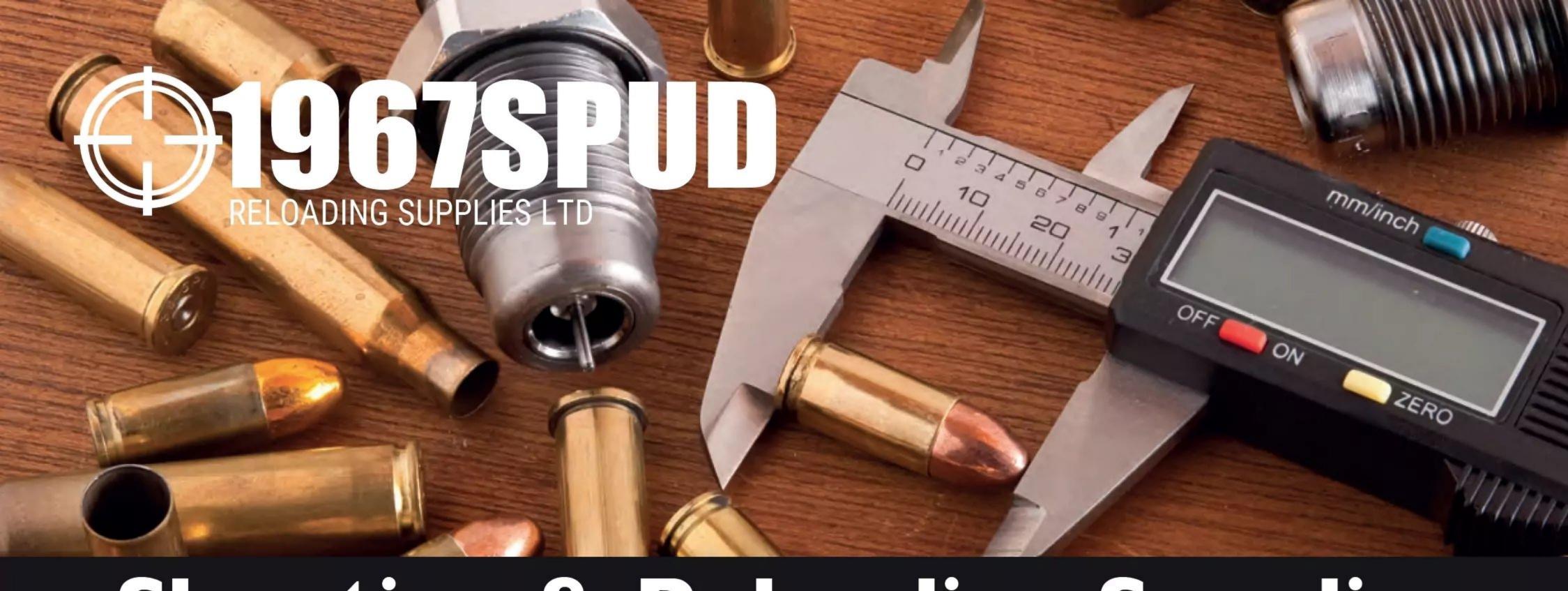
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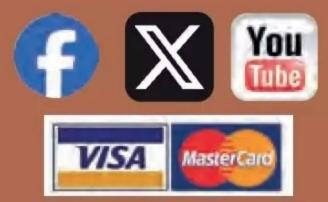


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With smooth cycling and unmistakable AK character, **Chris Parkin** puts the WBP AK-47 straight-pull to the test

The AK-47 is arguably the most famous rifle in the world, appearing everywhere, from TV news and novels to national flags. It uses the legendary 7.62x39mm round, and its distinctive shape is defined by the 30-round banana-shaped magazine. Millions remain in use worldwide in their original semi and fully-automatic military configurations. While often incredibly worn and not particularly accurate, they are still capable of getting rounds down range. Many of the UK-legal, single-shot, straight-pull AKs I have encountered were less dust-ridden and worn but had clearly been assembled from a variety of parts. Although functional, they were little more than curiosities.

The WBP straight-pull is newly manufactured in Poland within ISO-rated facilities, designed to be a smarter, well-built rifle that retains all the AK's characteristics but with fewer sharp edges, which would otherwise require years of use to wear smooth.

Jack of all trades

The 'Jack' model commences at the muzzle with an angled compensator to divert gas upwards/to the right to counter the natural muzzle rise of the rifle. This has a spring detent and can be removed to reveal a 14x1 left-hand thread for an optional sound moderator. You can see the angled gas tube rising away from the barrel. In automatic/military versions, this powers the reciprocating gas piston mechanism, but here it has been neutralised to comply with UK Section 1 regulations.

The barrel is 14.7mm in diameter, and there is a cleaning rod stored underneath, which you may or may not use. Both the barrel and gas tube are housed beneath the removable laminated fore-end, which extends to the adjustable rear sight, a simple matte black notch with calibration markings up to 800m. The tall foresight has wings to protect the central post, and a tool is supplied to adjust the windage.

AK features

The central receiver and action area of the AK display a remarkably fine finish, with a deep black lustre on all the stamped, folded, and riveted steel components. The inner forged rotating bolt and carrier are made of brightly finished, nickel-plated steel, ensuring smooth operation and durability as they feed ammunition into the hammer-forged, chrome-moly vanadium barrel.



The external cocking lever and firing/safe selector latch seem slightly larger than the norm, and I was especially pleased to feel that the folded edges were all smooth, which means that it is less likely that you will cut yourself.

The left side of the action has a proprietary rail in place for the scope mount, but otherwise, the features are familiar, with an extended magazine release lever hanging between the front of the trigger guard and the rear of the magazine.

The rifle came supplied with three polymer magazines: one 30-round and two 20-round units. They are transparent, so you can see the ammunition quantity within, and each load into two staggered columns from the top, making them very easy to use.

The hinged loading style means that the nose of the magazine is inserted into the underside of the magwell first, and the magazine is then drawn backwards and up to lock it securely into the gun. The large magazine release lever ensures effortless removal, and these magazines fit snugly in the rifle, without the loose rattle of steel military surplus versions that may have seen extensive use around the world.

Ergonomics

An injection-moulded, tan-coloured grip hangs below the receiver, but it doesn't really match the laminated woodwork. The fore-end features a sling loop at the front, and there is a rear sling loop under the butt. The polymer recoil plate protects the stock, which has a very short length of pull that measures just 12.75" (320mm). This is an ergonomic relic of the iron-sighted battle rifle.

What's it like to shoot?

Operating the rifle is easy, as its design enables use with minimal instruction. Simply load the magazine, insert it, pull back on the side handle, and release. Of course, this straight-pull version requires the bolt to be operated every time, and the right-side fire control lever is a two-position switch, moving up for safe and down for fire.

In use, the WBP AK was surprisingly smooth and light to operate, with notably good extraction and ejection, characteristics often lacking in lower-quality AKs, which were originally designed for faster bolt operation via the gas system.

The trigger is a single-stage unit that operates smoothly but lacks a distinctly crisp break. It is









consistent, breaking reliably at 1,500g (55oz), with what I would describe as a military-style 'surprise break' feel. An internal inspection revealed significantly superior components and machining compared to the average AK.

It is what it is

During testing, I used three types of ammunition, both with and without a moderator fitted. I also used the additional scope mount, which has a quick-release lever and maintains what could be described as 'zero' when removed and replaced. I added a 1-8x Primary Arms scope, which would have been ideal for the rifle if not for the incredibly short length of pull. Even pushed right to the front of the mount, eye relief was cramped, highlighting the need for an additional, thicker recoil pad to be fitted if you want to use a scope. I adjusted as best I could, but with my neck and head craned back to the limit, there was a clear ergonomic compromise when it came to shoulder pressure.

The 7.62x39mm cartridge does not generate much recoil, and the gun weighs 3.26kg, so shooting is not at all arduous. The rounds load easily, and once you get the

knack of inserting a magazine into the rifle, you really can burn through some ammo.

Stripping down the rifle for cleaning is not hard, and pressing the sprung button on the rear of the top cover allows it to unlatch and lift away. With the bolt assembly and recoil spring removed, you can then access the entire trigger mechanism and barrel for cleaning.

The hammer in the trigger group is guaranteed to give your firing pin and every primer a good whack, as it was designed to work with almost any 7.62x39mm ammo, which, depending on your source, could be decades old.

CSR

C&G supplied me with some Sellier & Bellot 124gr ammunition in 20-round boxes, along with a bulk bag of their own 'AK Food', which was steel-cased modern military surplus loaded with a 124gr bullet.

In fairness, if you want an AK, the WBP is a very good example of a dedicated single-shot version, but no AK will ever be a precision rifle capable of shooting small groups, for both mechanical and ergonomic reasons. Remember, this is a nearly 80-year-old design based on cost and simplicity,

so no matter how well-made it is, it will always feature the same rotating bolt design within the carrier to lock and unlock the chamber.

An equivalent AR is a relatively 'space-age' precision platform from an opposing economic and military background. That's good in a way, though, as it makes you want to enjoy the AK for what it is, a living, modern museum piece with near-100% reliable mechanics.

The trigger was noticeably better than many others, and I was impressed by the smooth bolt operation, despite the original semi/full-auto styling and design.

Conclusion

The bolt will lock open if you pull it level with the rear of the ejection port. There is no specific bolt release, so you just pull it back to the stop and let it go. Zeroing depends on how good you are with iron sights, and shooting this way is great fun on relatively large steel gongs. The scope provides greater aiming precision, but the rifle feels more natural when used as intended, with iron sights. If you do run a scope, you will need to increase the length of pull.

In the end, the best group I shot at 100 yards measured 3.5 MOA, and surprisingly, it was with C&G's AK Food, which developed 2,289fps.

The S&B was a little faster at 2,346fps, but the best I managed was a 4 MOA average.

I'm sure the rifle would have performed slightly better with a scope and a longer stock, ensuring proper eye relief, shoulder contact, and a clear, vignette-free field of view. But I had the most fun shooting it free-standing or kneeling with the iron sights, using improvised rest positions and ringing steel. If that's what you want an AK for, I think the WBP is actually a very fun gun.

Just get the length-of-pull extended if you want to use a scope, and don't expect miracles on paper. It may be best suited to a brand-specific competition and course of fire, where it can be appreciated for what it is rather than what it can never be. **GM**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: WBP AK-47 Jack Classic Straight-Pull Rifle

Calibre: 7.62×39

Barrel Length: 415mm/16.5" Overall Length: 870mm/34.25"

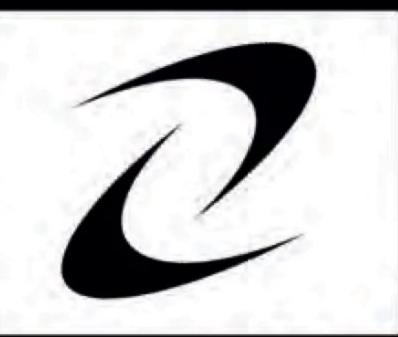
Weight: 3.26kg/7.2lbs

Length of Pull: 320mm/12.75" Magazine Capacity: 30 or 20

Price: £1,350

Contact: CG Firearms - www.cgfirearms.co.uk





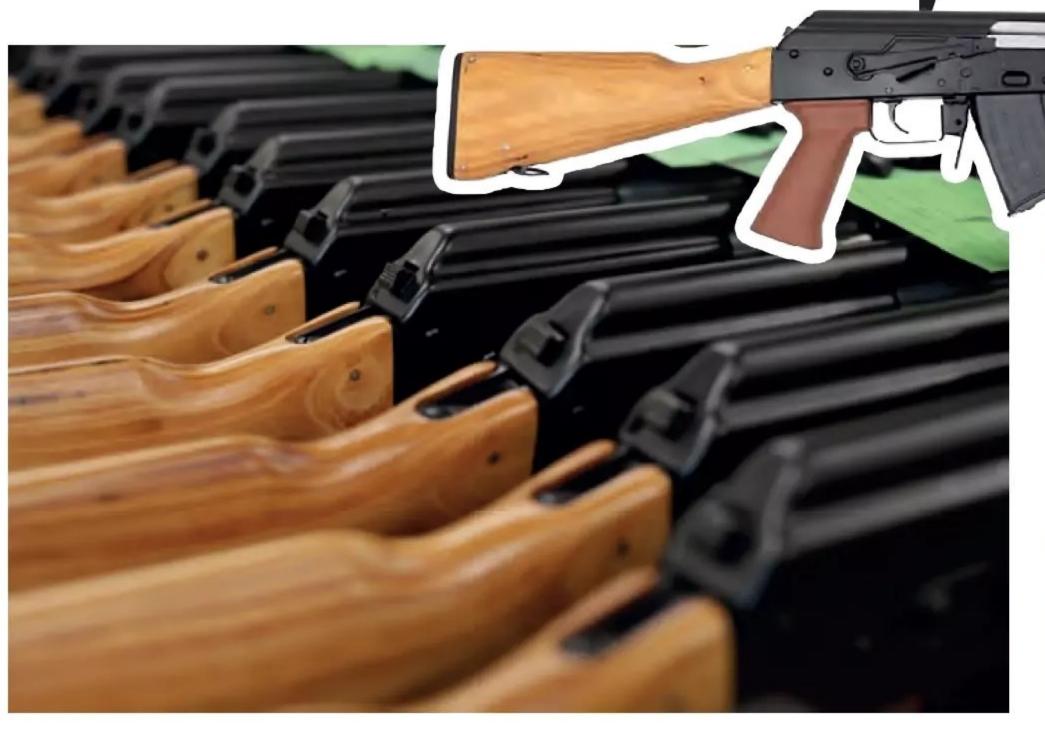
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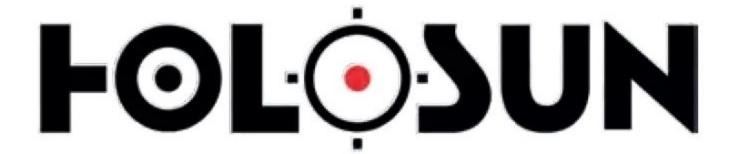


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How does Browning's new 825 Pro Sport Adjustable compare to its predecessors? **Bruce Potts** tests it out

The 725 Pro Sport is a nice competition shotgun, but not without its faults, as the 525 XS version seems to be a more popular option. So, Browning has totally rethought the Pro Range and Game lines with their new 825 series shotguns.

Brand-new

The Browning 825 Pro Sport Adjustable features a fresh new look alongside internal enhancements that make it a modernised and highly customisable clay gun. It also addresses some of the internal mechanism issues and the heavier weight of the 725 models introduced in 2012.

New features include a 6oz weight reduction for better handling, which is also enhanced by the fore-end and butt's weight-adjustable elements. The Pachmayr recoil pad includes interchangeable recoil plates (15mm and 25mm) for personalised comfort and reduced felt recoil, while the adjustable Pro Fit comb allows for a customisable fit to enhance cheek weld, ensuring more consistent shooting.

The 825's ten-year guaranteed forged steel receiver, built for durability, has a whole new modernised look with a wide, flat locking bolt. The

sweeping new action design includes a revised safety button, top lever, and stylish barrel wings that lose the more upright-looking action profile of old. Let's not forget the barrels, shoulders, and fences have been re-profiled for a sleeker, more modern look.

The chromed barrels are proofed for superior steel shot, and the legendary back-bored design enhances shot speed and reduces recoil. Additionally, the inclusion of Invector DS Pro chokes delivers superior ballistics and tighter patterns downrange.

Internally, an improved trigger mechanism for lighter loads and a new fore-end catch are just a few of the refinements over the 725. Let's take a closer look.

Barrels and chokes

The test gun came with 30" barrels, which I liked, but some may prefer the slightly less lively 32" tubes. The matte bluing is evenly applied, giving the gun a non-reflective yet premium finish that suits a competition shotgun perfectly.

Both the ribs are ventilated, and I like the tapered top rib, which narrows from 12mm at the action end to 8mm at the muzzles. Here, you can





THE 825 PATTERNS SUPERBLY, AND EVEN THE ENGRAVING IS NICE. BEST OF ALL, THE PRICE SEEMS VERY REASONABLE FOR A GUN OF THIS CLASS"

BRUCE POTTS



fit one of the included Day-Glo sights, each offering excellent visibility in all weather conditions.

The clay guns come with six extended DS Pro chokes, whereas the game guns have five flush-fit DS chokes, and these are now marked in thousandths of an inch reductions instead of the older 1/4, 1/2, etc., choke rating. It's probably a better system, as it means restrictions are measured against the original 12-bore bore size of 0.729. For example, a 0 choke is true cylinder and unchanged, whilst a 30-thou difference means 30-thousandths tighter.

The sides of the monobloc are jewelled, and you have hammer ejectors providing forceful, smooth, and consistently reliable case ejection, with the majority of the case being lifted for easy removal.

What an action

The action is strikingly different from the 725, as it has kept the best features of the smaller 525 but with internal mechanical improvements and a shallower action profile. The action looks right upto-date with its modernised, sleek lines, now with the altered wood-to-metal front section being more sloped. The lower profile reduces muzzle jump and thus helps with recoil management, too.

Inside, the lock-up is a full-width tapered locking bolt combined with a stout hinge pin to provide maximum strength and longevity, and it cleverly self-adjusts, keeping the action tight even after thousands of rounds.

The action fences have been redesigned, while the top lever has been on a diet, giving it a slimmer gait. It has plenty of bite, so lots of 'wear-it-in' value. The non-auto safety (ideal for a competition gun) has been reprofiled and still functions as the barrel selector, though I found it a little slippery.

Externally, the all-steel action has a nitrided grey finish, which certainly improves resistance against abrasions, increases the longevity of the action, and enhances protection against corrosion, with Browning offering a tenar warranty. The surface is hard to see because

year warranty. The surface is hard to see because there's so much laser-cut engraving! But that's a





The top half-sides of the action feature a sweeping crescent divide of plain grey nitride, complemented below with really nice, deep floral scrolls and leaves, set off with a matte backdrop. It looks a lot better in the flesh than in the pictures - trust me.

The fences are sleeker, with matte surfaces. The underside is profusely engraved, while the top lever and tang are all plain grey nitrided, which works very well as a whole.

The trigger

It's still a mechanical mechanism, but the Fire Lite 2 trigger offers an immediate follow-up shot as it does not rely on recoil to set the hammer. The trigger pull is so light and smooth, too, with minimal overtravel, and it is further enhanced by the addition of a modified and higher pivot-point disconnector, which greatly increases reset reliability, which is very handy for those of us who like lighter 21 or 24g loadings. To further enhance the trigger feel, three interchangeable blades are supplied, allowing you to fine-tune the position and comfort to suit your shooting style. This is an excellent feature.

Turkish walnut

The 825's redesigned and rather good-looking furniture provides a highly adaptable platform for mounting and shooting the new shotgun. It's made from high-grade Turkish walnut and features a very effective oiled finish that definitely works in the rain, as the gun was tested in drizzle, and then downpours! The laser-cut chequering on

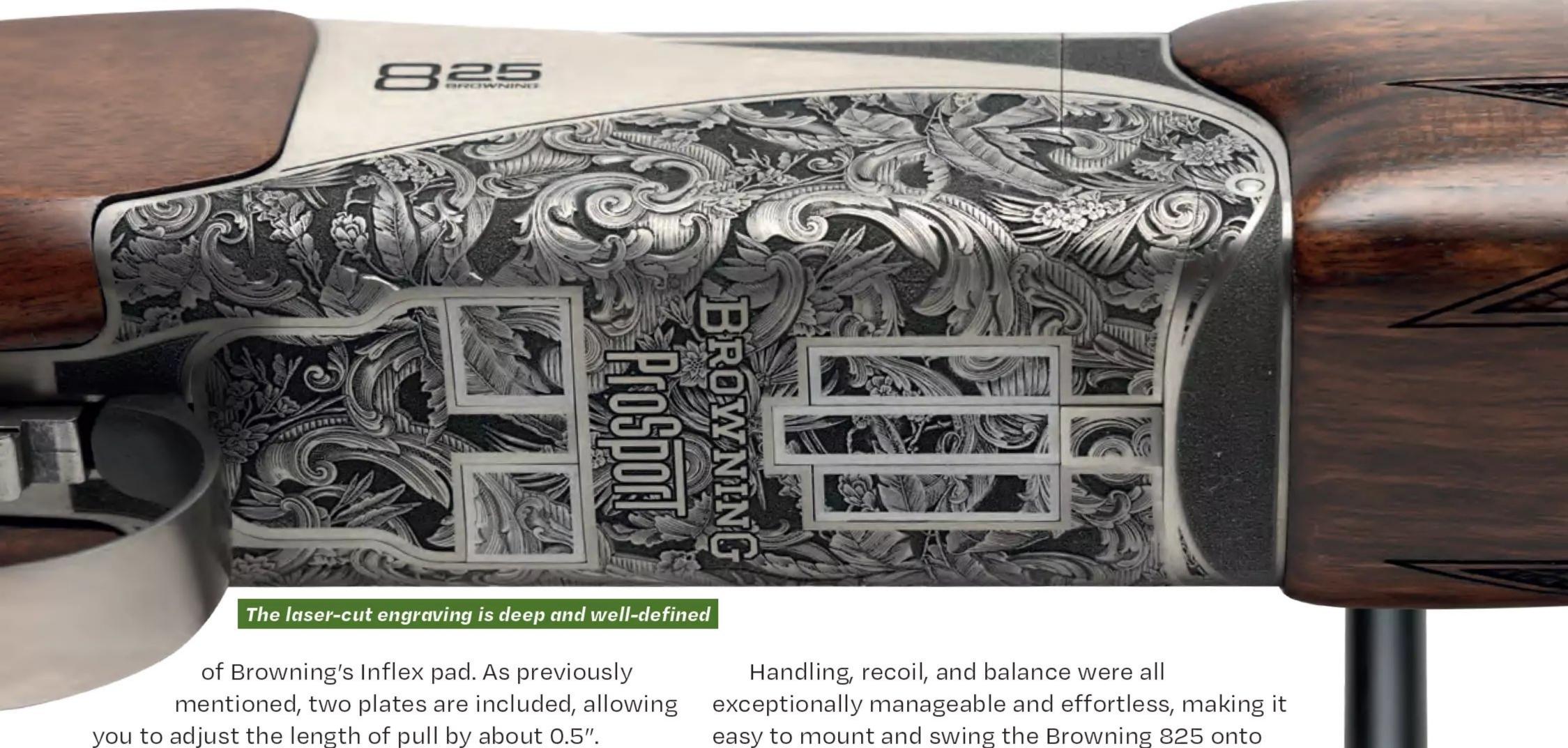
both sides of the fore-end and on the pistol grip is exceptionally well executed, providing an excellent grip and a clear improvement over the 725 model.

I like the beavertail, trap-style fore-end, which is deep and smoothly rounded underneath, providing a secure, comfortable grip and allowing for better finger placement along the full-length grooves. The new fore-end release catch is engraved and very easy to use, with a deep finger hole and a sturdy but smooth release.

The rear stock has a very pronounced pistol grip with a near-vertical stance that really works well. The right side features a small palm swell that worked well with my big hands, and the large cut-out really makes you feel like part of the 825, enhancing the overall feel and balance of the gun.

Further adjustment is available, allowing for a drop at comb of 38 to 23mm and a drop at heel of 58 to 43mm, all easily adjusted using the supplied key via a hole in the buttpad. Different height washers can be used to save the position of the adjustable comb.

The recoil pad has been upgraded to a Pachmayr Decelerator instead



In the field

We had the 10 and 25 thou chokes fitted, so 1/4 and 5/8 in real money, and the first cartridges to be tested were Eley's VIP Trap, known for their higher velocities and very consistent performance. I used the 28g load with No.7.5 shot size. The pattern board was hit by 281 pellets, with 181 appearing on the outer edge and 100 in the inner sectors. The result was a nice, tight pattern from the 25 thou choke.

Finally, the Pro Balance system allows

you to add or subtract weight from the butt

to further customise the balance of the 825.

You can even fit barrel weights if needed.

Next up was Eley's VIP Sporting, specifically designed for FITASC sporting layouts and clays. These 28g, No.7.5, fibre-wadded cartridges managed a total of 268 strikes, with 175 outer hits and 93 inner hits. However, this cartridge produced a slightly looser pattern than the Trap loading.

The final test was with Bioammo's Rex Steel cartridges, and with the ¼ choke, this load managed a total of 262 strikes, with 112 inners and 150 outers. Overall, a tighter pattern, as expected.

easy to mount and swing the Browning 825 onto the target.

Conclusion

This is not merely a revamped 725, it's an entirely different kettle of fish and, as such, marks a bold and refreshing step forward for Browning and its Pro Sport range.

The handling was sublime, with functionality and adjustments positioned exactly where you need them. The 825 patterns superbly, and even the engraving is nice. Best of all, the price seems very reasonable for a gun of this class. GM

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Browning 825 Pro Sport Adjustable

Calibre: 12-bore

Barrel Length: 30" (32" available)

Overall Length: 48.25"

Weight: 3.50kg

Length of Pull: 14.75 to 15.25"

Price: £4,699

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The silencer is currently supplied with a 12 gauge choke tube to fit one of the following choke systems:

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Optima HP (Beretta)
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A conventional lead slug with a plastic wad stabiliser behind it

BRUCE POTTS PUTS SELLIER & BELLOT'S PRACTICAL SLUG TO THE TEST WITH BOTH SMOOTH-BORE AND RIFLED BARRELS, REVEALING IMPRESSIVE RESULTS AT 50 YARDS

When I was a lad growing up, Sellier & Bellot (S&B) were the economical cartridges of choice, while the usual Eleys were considered premium at the farm shop we used to buy them from in Kent. That's no longer the case. As with their lead-free loads and rifle cartridges, S&B have continued to innovate and produce ammunition of the highest quality.

Founded in 1825, they are one of the world's oldest companies in the ammunition and defence industry, and consequently one of the largest industrial firms in the Czech Republic. Modern technologies employed at every stage of production ensure products of the highest quality, including the new Nontox match compound and some rather intriguing infrared tracer bullets. I wouldn't mind a few of those myself!

Of interest today, and my sort of shotgun ammo, is the Practical Slug. Priced at £25 to £30 per box of 25, depending on the retailer, they are offered in 28g or 32g loadings. Designed specifically for elite sport shooting competitions, they are also legal for IPSC events.

The details

Each 25-round blue and gold-lettered box is eyecatching and has all the relevant load details on it. We had the heavier 32g loading, which can be better in some semi-autos, especially inertia-type systems, although a lighter 28g loading is available, and both form part of the Special Slug Sport ammunition range.

The casing is 67.5mm in length and therefore feeds very well through semi-autos. The 12.5mm high brass head offers a prominent rim for good extractor

grasp and is stamped "Sellier & Bellot 12". The casing, like most slug loads, is transparent to help distinguish between a standard shot payload and a slug load, reducing the risk of confusion! Similarly, instead of a star-type crimping as a closure, you have a very neat rolled top that securely seats the slug over the powder for perfect ignition and pressure.

Sellier & Bellot ®

Sellier & Bellot (8)

Olympic Class Shooting

The Practical Slug is your typical wadattached type, meaning the front section of the projectile is made from lead and, inserted into the base, is the plastic wad. I weighed the leadonly section, and this was 29.2g, and the wad alone was 2.69g, for a total of 31.89g. So, a good, consistent and true weight of the projectile.

The plastic wad not only seals the propellant gases with its expanding lip edge, but its ventilated profile also cushions the initial surge of pressure from the powder, helping to prevent the deformation of the softer lead portion.

The projectile itself has a domed central section, and the sides of the slug show ten heavy ribs and corresponding deep valleys at a slightly angled rake. This is to alleviate pressure and fouling and does not really contribute to any stabilising (rifling effect), once it has left the bore. Slug loads make use of a variety of stabilisation methods, including some with felt fixed to the base, partial sabot designs, and different forms of plastic wads. All of these are intended to lengthen the slug and provide the crucial shuttlecockstyle stabilising effect, which proves highly effective with a large, stubby 12-bore projectile.









The powder charge weighs 26.5gr and is a typical green flake shotgun variety. S&B quote a respectable muzzle velocity of nearly 1,350fps. I also found their primers to be very consistent and clean-burning, as the barrels were noticeably cleaner than usual after use.

In the field

I wanted to test these in both a conventional smooth-bore shotgun barrel and a fully rifled barrel to compare the differences.

The smooth-bore option took the form of my Mossberg Duck Commander, featuring a 28" barrel and a Swarovski 6-24x50 target scope mounted on a Recknagel ERA 70 MOA adjustable base, which I use for longer-range slug shooting. The rifled option was my trusty Savage 210 boltaction, equipped with a Schmidt & Bender 1.5x scope and a 22" barrel. I could also fit the Swarovski to this gun if required.



Firstly, all the rounds, despite their blunt front-end configuration, fed fine. Even the Savage's bolt-action, which often snags if you dither with a progressive bolt movement, operated throughout the tests with no hang-ups, just a couple of slower bolt moves.

I had a velocity of 1,267fps from the Mossberg and 1,188fps from the Savage, which is pretty good for a 32g slug. S&B quote 1,345fps, but I have always found quoted slug figures a bit optimistic, and the lower fully rifled slug results are expected, as more deformation occurs to the slug.

I set up a target at 50 yards and, after the initial zero, fired a few three-shot groups, appreciating how manageable the recoil was from the big slug. The Mossberg shot really good, consistent groups with an average of 2" dead, often with two close together and one off. That's good accuracy from a smooth-bored 12-bore with a cylinder choke fitted. Next up was the rifled Savage, which is designed to shoot sabot ammo, really, meaning it sometimes struggles with a normal slug. True to form, it shot larger groups at 3 to 3.25" at 50 yards. The smooth-bored Mossberg it is then.

Conclusion

I think this ammo is very good if I'm honest. It carries S&B's pedigree and can be relied upon to deliver not only consistent velocities but, as we've seen, respectable groups at 50 yards as well. The price also seems reasonable. GM

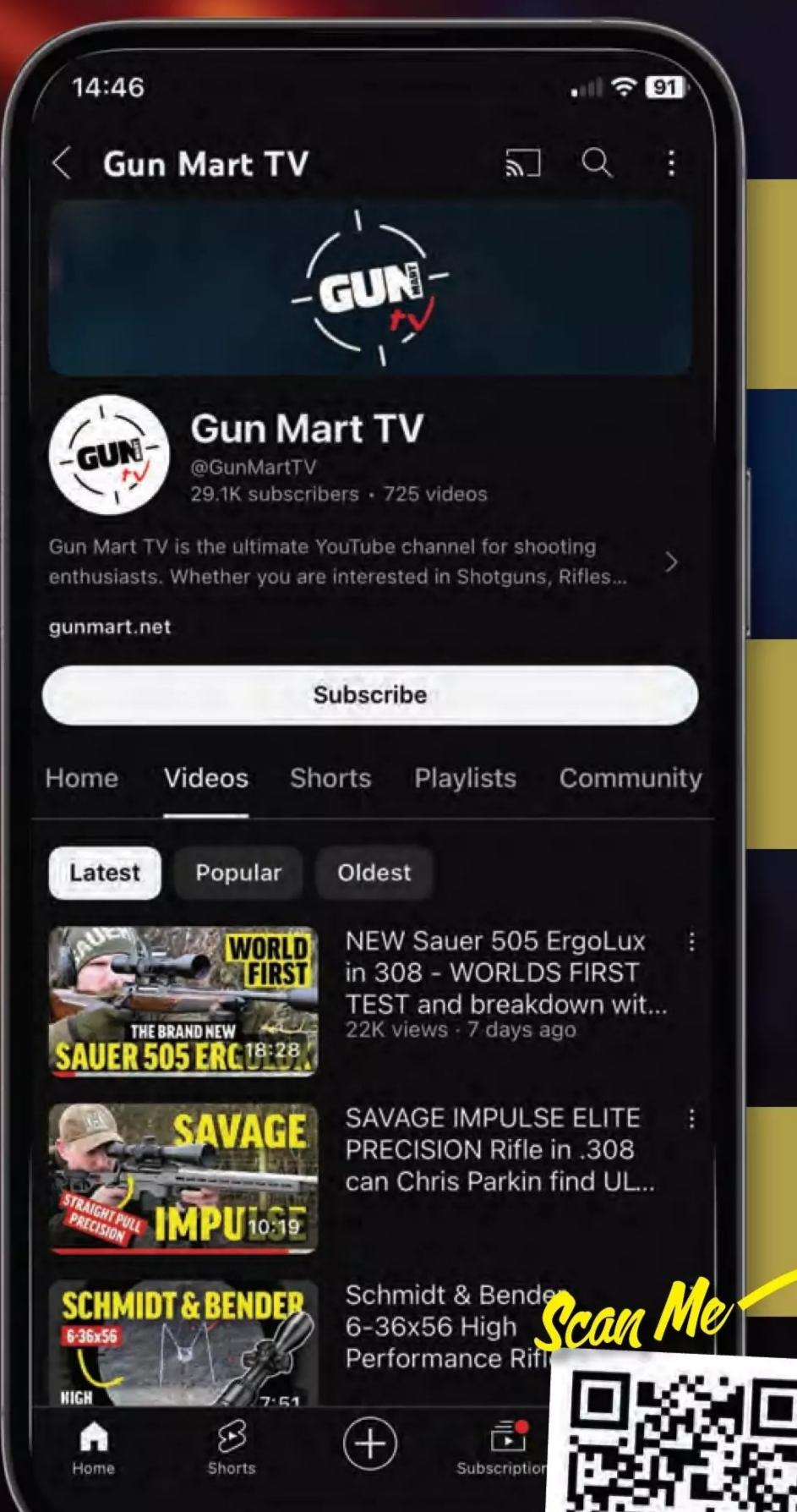
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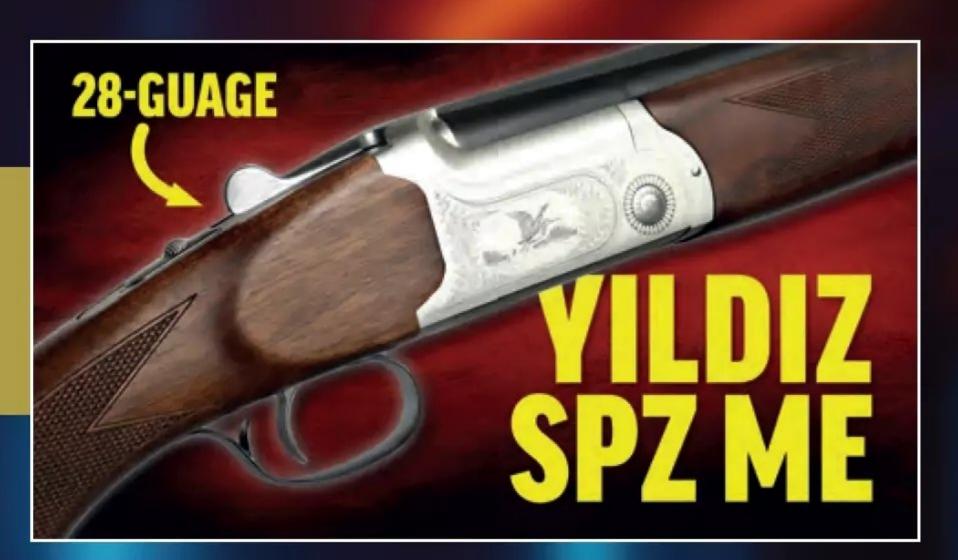
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Fortunately, many manufacturers continue to introduce various shotgun models to suit individual preferences. Let's face it, many shotguns on the market look very similar. However, some models have a more exciting, modern appearance and incorporate the latest technologies.

On test

Today, I'm looking at a shotgun that is fairly new to the market. I consider it a relatively budget-priced sporting

shotgun that has appealing aesthetics and impressive modern technologies, while setting itself apart from many other sporting shotguns. I introduce to you the Fabarm Elos N2 RS Sporting.

The original Fabarm Elos N2
Sporting has now been fine-tuned into the RS Sporting. It retains all the performance features of the standard N2 Sporting, making it a great shotgun for clay target shooting. This model is aimed at the serious competition shooter who wants an

over-and-under sporting shotgun that offers exceptional value for money.

The RS has a completely new stock dimension and fore-end design to enable the shooter to achieve a more comfortable mount and allow the gun to sit in the hands with ease. This has been achieved by making the RS stock slightly chunkier than the original N2 and giving it a pistol grip that is deeper and turns down at a steeper angle, with a thicker palm swell. The barrel weight has been increased and adjusted to



put more weight between the hands, improving handling and reducing recoil. Additionally, the wood set has been upgraded to oil-finished Turkish walnut, giving the gun a premium look without the premium price tag. With these changes, the RS now weighs in at 8lbs 4oz as opposed to just under 8lbs with the original N2, making it very similar to most other modern sporting shotguns.

The technical upgrades to this model all sound impressive, with several thoughtful enhancements to make the

gun better suited to clay shooting, but there was only one way to find out!

Set-up

After assembling the gun, I chose to fit the ¼ and ½ chokes from the set of four extended chokes supplied. I have heard great things about the Exis HP competition chokes that come with this model. They apparently achieve incredible patterns through the Tribore HP barrels, so I was looking forward to testing this for myself.

As I mounted the gun for the first time, I could see over the barrel, but it wasn't as high as I wanted, and I was looking slightly down the side of the barrel. However, this was not a problem, as all the RS models are fitted with an adjustable cheekpiece, so every shooter can achieve the exact fit they require. It was very easy to adjust, with two screws in the side of the cheekpiece to alter the height and two adjustable pillars under it to alter the cast. After five minutes of adjustment, I was happy with the picture I was seeing down the barrel, and I was ready for my first shots.

Time for some clays

I decided to shoot a sportrap layout that consisted of various targets to get a true feel for how the gun handled and performed. After finishing a couple of rounds, I was extremely happy with its performance and can confirm that the alterations that Fabarm has made to the RS model have improved the handling of the gun for the better.

The chunkier stock dimensions allowed the gun to sit comfortably in my shoulder pocket, and the thicker palm swell allowed my hand to hold the gun firmly and guide the stock into my shoulder with ease.

I really like the new style of fore-end. I wasn't overly fond of the Schnabel design on the original N2, but the thicker, rounded fore-end on the RS sits in my hand more comfortably, and I feel that I can move the gun more assertively.

The 10 to 8mm tapered rib guided my eye comfortably to the end of the gun, where I could pick up and maintain a clear focus on each target, and the 28g load I was using was highly manageable, with smooth recoil in the shoulder and minimal muzzle flip. The additional weight in the RS model's barrels has certainly contributed to this.

It's also worth noting that the 3" chambered Tribore HP barrels on this model are overpressure tested to 1,630bar and proofed for high-performance steel, making the gun future-proof if non-toxic loads have to be used.

Getting into the swing of things

The test gun was fitted with 32" barrels, and although not perfectly







balanced, with the weight slightly forward of the hinge pin, I did like it, as it gave me greater control when swinging the gun, as I am used to shooting a shotgun that is heavier than this one. The negative side is, you don't have the option of adding weight to the stock or barrel to achieve the balance you require. However, we have to keep in mind the price of this gun, as it can't have everything.

Appealing aesthetics indeed!

Out of all the types of targets I shot with the RS, I would have to say that it performed better on the closer, technical targets. I held the barrel at my hold points, acquired a clear focus on the targets and moved the gun quickly and assertively, achieving some very convincing breaks with the ¼ and ½ chokes. I felt

no need to change this combination, as a tighter choke wouldn't have broken the clays any better.

I will admit that I struggled with a left-to-right crosser that was at around 45 yards and travelling at speed. On the occasions I did hit the clay with either choke, it broke perfectly well, so I do not doubt that the choke and cartridge combination was perfect for the job. My issue with missing came down to the technique I was trying to use to break the target. I felt that the gun moved fast, which seemed surprising given its overall weight of 8lbs 4oz and its slightly forward balance. I had to move my hold point out further on the longer left-to-right target and shoot it with a maintained lead to achieve the gap

and line I needed to break the target.

Once I had figured out what I needed to do to smoke the clay, I was doing it consistently with a big grin on my face.

I would say that this Fabarm is designed for all sporting clay shooters, but it would definitely suit the person who wants a faster-moving gun. A clublevel shooter looking for an upgrade to their first gun, or a beginner looking at spending a decent amount on something they won't want to change in a hurry, may find it a good choice.

Given this budget, the obvious choice would be to consider a standard Beretta or Browning sporter and compare them with the Fabarm. They would all be good choices, but with different handling qualities to suit the individual. Comparing the aesthetics



and adjustability of these guns, the Fabarm Elos N2 RS has won it for me.

Beretta and Browning shotguns have stood the test of time regarding reliability, and you may be concerned that the RS won't. So, it is reassuring to know that all new Fabarm shotguns are now backed by a five-year manufacturer's mechanical warranty, which says a lot about how much this manufacturer believes in its products. There are many Fabarm dealers and demo events across the country, and they are worth a visit to see whether one would suit your shooting needs.

Conclusion

Fabarm states: "There is no other sporting clay gun that offers a better combination of handling, features,

and overall quality for anywhere near this price." For a new, modern sporting shotgun, I would have to agree. I am a classic example of following brands that have stood the test of time, but Fabarm has put a lot of development into its recent products and is now up there with some of the better-known manufacturers.

I believe the RS model to be a great improvement on the old N2 because its specification is better suited to the modern sporting shooter. It will appeal to club-level shooters who are looking for a fresh-looking, fast-moving shotgun with stock adjustability for the perfect fit. Left and right-handed stocks are available, so all shooters are catered for. I'm very impressed with

the gun and look forward to having another go with it again soon.

Many thanks to Matt Panter from Anglo Italian Arms and Coombe Farm Sporting for enabling me to review this gun. **GM**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Fabarm Elos N2 RS Sporting

Calibre: 12-bore Barrel Length: 32" (30"

also available)
Weight: 8lbs 4oz
Length of Pull: 14 5/8"
Options: Left-handed and right-handed available
Price: From £1,995

Contact: Anglo Italian Arms – www.caesargueriniuk.com

GUN Classifieds

AIRGUNS

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CROSMAN 2240 AIR PISTOL, barely used. 3years old, less than 500 shots, selling as no space to shoot. Comes with 40 CO2 cartridges, almost full pellet tin, stack of targets. Tel: 07507882827

FOR SALE UMAREX SWITH and wesson 586 6" .177 cal CO2 Revolver £125 location SG18. Tel: 07721020438

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O/U. With full case & accessories Tel:
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FIREARMS

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RUGER MINI 14 20 ROUND MAGAZINE (Used) Condition Good Price £26.00 including postage to mainland UK. Email: gamebored1@hotmail.com (West Sussex)

RIFLE RELOADING EQUIPMENT FOR Sale: Lee Hand Press Kit (£20), Lee Case Trimmer (£4), Lee Primer Pocket Cleaner (£4), Lee Case Deburrer/Chamfer Tool (£3), Lee Perfect Powder Measure (£23), Redding Model 5 Powder Trickler (£13), RCBS Loading Block (£5), Safety Glasses (Free), Moore & Wright Electronic Calipers (£60), Frankford Arsenal Case Tumbler (£47), Bag of Walnut Sawdust (£5), RCBS Fi Die Set .270 (£28), Lee Die Set .30-06 (£30), Redding Model 2 Powder Scale (£52). Contact: 01285 720342.

SIG ASP20 BREAK BARREL air rifle FAC for sale £200 only fired about 200 shots Tel:01612485508

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TIKKA T3X SUPER VARMINT 6.5 x 55 24" Barrel As new condition £600 Tel 07774325726

CZ 455 17HMR, SYNTHETIC Stock. Had about 60 shells through it. Moderator. 2 x 5 shot magazines Good condition. FAC. £300. I'm retiring, see my other items 07779271680

CZ 452 .22 RIMFIRE. Old but silky smooth and spot on the dot. synthetic stock well used condition, working perfectly 2 x 10 shot magazines. leather sling £200.00 FAC. I'm retiring from Pest Control, see my other items. 07779271680

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sako TRG-22-30CAL RIFLE. SAKO stainless steel barrel, muzzlebrake. 10 round magazine. QR fixed scope mount. Leupold vari-xiii. 6.5-20 x50mm European scope. Reticle fine crosshairs. This rifle is in very good condition. Price £1995.00 ONO plus any transfer costs. Tel: 07890558743

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AS NEW BUT USED .223 ruger mini 14 with sound moderator, .22 ruger rimfire wooden stock, Hatsan escort 7+8 shotgun, Rimington shotgun 3 shot, Call for more details Tel:07405 654978

2 BERETTA SHOTGUNS, 1 x 12-gauge, 1 x 20-gauge 1 Remington rifle 243 full equipped Gun safe, cartridges and much more. Job lot selling up.Tel: 07778122350

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.22 SEMI AUTO RUGER with Scope For Sale: £375 07974936380 4 High Moors HP22 5NY

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ANTIQUES

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BREN MK1 LIGHT MACHINE gun for sale with deactivation certificate POA Tel:07939318364

FAIRBAIRN SYKES COMMANDO
KNIFE 3rd pattern with sheath. William
Rogers Sheffield.Great condition Tel:
0749504130320

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Buyers must be 18 years or older and, if applicable, must have an FAC or SGC

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