

DOPE BAG

Dope Bag is compiled by Staff and Contributing Editors: David Andrews, Hugh C. Birnbaum, Bruce N. Canfield, Russ Carpenter, O. Reid Coffield, William C. Davis, Jr., Pete Dickey, Charles Fagg, Robert W. Hunnicutt, Mark A. Keefe, IV, Ron Keysor, Angus Laidlaw, Scott E. Mayer, Charles E. Petty, Robert B. Pomeranz, O.D., Charles R. Suydam and A.W.F. Taylerson.

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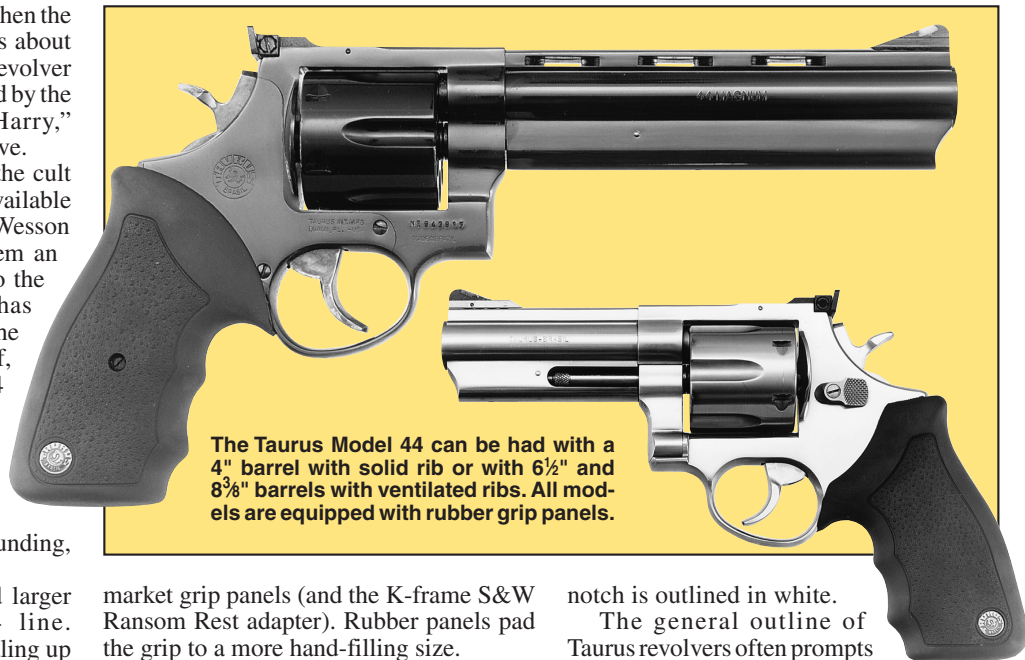
TAURUS MODEL 44 REVOLVER

THERE was a time, 20 years ago, when the Smith & Wesson Model 29 was about the only .44 Mag. double-action revolver and, thanks to the publicity generated by the Clint Eastwood classic "Dirty Harry," Model 29s were scarce and expensive.

Now, although autoloaders are the cult guns, double-action .44 Mags. are available from Colt, Llama, Ruger, Smith & Wesson and Wesson Firearms. It might seem an inauspicious time to add another to the list, but Brazilian maker Taurus has become successful by challenging the established brands on their own turf, and plans to carve a slice of the .44 market for itself.

Taurus has for several years offered .44 Spl. revolvers, but these are five-shot versions made on .357 Mag. frames, and hardly could be expected to stand up to .44 Mag. pounding, even if their owners could.

So it has introduced a new and larger frame for its new Model 44 line. Interestingly, rather than simply scaling up the .357 frame, Taurus has retained the grip-frame dimensions, allowing the use of after-



The Taurus Model 44 can be had with a 4" barrel with solid rib or with 6½" and 8¾" barrels with ventilated ribs. All models are equipped with rubber grip panels.

market grip panels (and the K-frame S&W Ransom Rest adapter). Rubber panels pad the grip to a more hand-filling size.

The rest of the frame, however, is much larger. It is .30" higher in front of the cylinder and the barrel is thicker than the .357 Model 669's by a similar figure.

We examined two of the three versions in the Model 44 line: a 4"-barreled stainless and a 6½"-barreled blued gun. Barrels 8¾" long also are available. Both had Taurus' new built-in compensator system that is immediately recognizable by the eight upward-pointing holes that flank the front sight. They exhaust gas from an expansion chamber about 1" deep.

While the 4" revolver has a solid rib that reminded us of the Ruger GP100, the 6½" gun had a Colt Python-type ventilated rib that will be an obvious mounting point for scopes.

The sighting system uses a Patridge front blade with an orange insert. This is pinned to a heavy ramp, so replacement with alternative styles should be fairly easy. The rear sight is click-adjustable for setting windage and elevation, and its

notch is outlined in white.

The general outline of Taurus revolvers often prompts the claim that they are no more than copies of the Smith & Wesson design, but the internal lockwork of the guns is now much different.

The hammer spring is coiled rather than



The rear sight is click-adjustable for windage and elevation and its square notch is outlined in white. A wide target-type hammer is fitted.

TAURUS MODEL 44

MANUFACTURER: Forjas Taurus, S.A.,
511 Av. do Forte, Porto Alegre, Brazil
IMPORTER: Taurus Int'l Firearms, Dept.
AR, 16175 N.W. 49th Ave., Miami, FL
33014

MECHANISM TYPE: double-action revolver

CALIBER: .44 Mag. (also .44 Spl.)

OVERALL LENGTH: 9½"

BARREL LENGTH: 4", (tested) 6½", 8¾"

WEIGHT: 44 ozs.

WIDTH: 1¾"

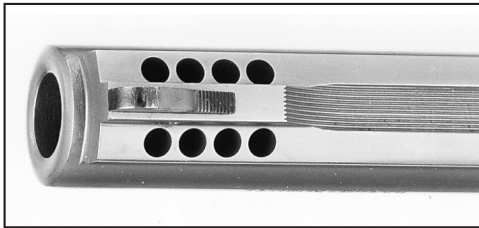
HEIGHT: 6"

CYLINDER CAPACITY: 6

TRIGGER: single-action pull, 4 lbs.; double-action, 15 lbs.

SIGHTS: Patridge with white-outline click-adjustable rear, serrated ramp front with orange plastic insert

PRICE: \$500



Felt recoil is reduced by a built-in compensator whose eight holes are ranged in pairs on either side of the Model 44's front sight.



flat, and the rebound slide is replaced by a coiled trigger return spring and strut.

Taurus revolvers also use a transfer bar ignition system with a frame-mounted firing pin in place of the S&W hammer block safety. The Model 44 is equipped with a wide, smooth combat trigger and target-style hammer.

Both Model 44s were fired for accuracy from the Ransom Rest and function-fired with a variety of ammunition types. The only malfunction we suffered was unlatching of the 4" gun's cylinder when firing from the Ransom Rest. The problem didn't occur when firing from the hand.

We were interested to see how well the compensator system worked, and it seemed very effective in the 6½" gun, which proved to be one of the most comfortable .44s we've fired. The 4" gun was a bit more of a handful, not sur-

ACCURACY RESULTS


.44 Mag. Cartridge	4" BARREL			
	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
CCI No. 3972 200-gr. JHP	1353 Avg. 31 Sd	1.87	3.46	2.76
Federal No. 44C 220-gr. MCP	1241 Avg. 27 Sd	2.29	3.72	3.05
PMC No. 44B 180-gr. JHP	1351 Avg. 45 Sd	2.51	5.48	4.10
PMC No. C44SFA 240-gr. JHP	1055 Avg. 25 Sd	1.58	3.53	2.42
Samson No. 44-48B 240-gr. JHP	1187 Avg. 17 Sd	2.45	3.78	3.40
Average Extreme Spread				3.14
Five consecutive 5-shot groups at 25 yds. fired from Ransom rest. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), JHP (jacketed hollow-point), MCP (metal case profile), SWC (semi-wadcutter)				

ACCURACY RESULTS

.44 Mag. Cartridge	6½" BARREL			
	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Rem. R44MG5 180-gr. SJHP	1638 Avg. 21 Sd	1.57	2.47	2.27
Samson 1025-87 240-gr. JSP	1321 Avg. 20 Sd	1.41	3.19	2.36
Win. X44MSTHP2 210-gr. STHP	1238 Avg. 31 Sd	1.26	3.72	2.15
Average Extreme Spread				2.26
Five consecutive 5-shot groups at 25 yds. fired from Ransom Rest. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), SJHP (semi-jacketed hollow-point), JSP (jacketed soft-point), STHP (Silvertip hollow-point), Rem. (Remington), Win. (Winchester)				

prising given its lighter weight and the reduced leverage the shorter barrel provides the compensator.

Flash and muzzle blast were not obtrusive at all with the 6½" gun. Flash was quite bright with the 4" gun, and blast was noticeable, though not as bad as the bark of some compensated .38 Super pistols we've tried.

Taurus has considerably upgraded the fit and finish of its pistols in recent years, to the point that they readily can bear comparison with American brands. When this is combined with aggressive pricing, it's easy to predict success for the new Model 44. 

BENELLI MP 95E PISTOL

THOUGH well received here, Benelli's MP 90S pistol (July 1993, p. 61), configured for UIT (*Union Internationale de Tir*) or standard pistol competition, was, and still is, priced out of reach for the average shooter. Most shooters don't require a six-way adjustable trigger and a stippled, UIT-style stock with an adjustable heel shelf.

European American Armory is now offering a less expensive version, the MP 95E, that keeps many of the earlier gun's desirable traits, like the central ejection port and low line of sight, but does away with the bells and whistles considered necessary for international competition.

The method of operation remains unchanged from the MP 90's and the frame, bolt, barrel, barrel weight and sights are unchanged save for the finish

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The MP95E pistol is a version of the MP90S, modified to please U.S. shooters with a simpler trigger and built-in scope mounts.

continued from p. 53

and the top rib. Two finishes are offered in both .22 LR and .32 S&W (available this summer) calibers, matte blue and chrome. Benelli's name and logo have also been prominently added and outlined in red on the frame below the front sight. The top of the frame is grooved along its length and slide rails have been added to accommodate Weaver-style rings.

The receiver has no grip frame in the traditional sense; only the stock bolt protrudes from the bottom of the frame. The bolt has two guide lugs, with vertical grasping

BENELLI MP 95E

MANUFACTURER: Benelli Armi, S.p.A., Via della Stazione, 50, 61029 Urbino, Italy

IMPORTER: European American Armory Corp., Dept. AR, P.O. Box 1299, Sharpes, FL 32959.

MECHANISM TYPE: blowback-operated semi-automatic pistol

CALIBER: .22 Long Rifle (tested), .32 S&W Long

OVERALL LENGTH: 11⁷/₁₆"

BARREL LENGTH: 4¹/₄"

WEIGHT: 2 lbs. 2 oz.

HEIGHT: 5"

WIDTH: 1¹/₁₆"

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: 10 (5 available)

TRIGGER: single-stage; 2 lb. 2 oz. pull

RIFLING: 8 groove, 1:18" RH twist

SIGHTS: elevation and windage adjustable notch rear, blade front

ACCESSORIES: carrying case

PRICE: \$ 549.95 (blue), \$624.95 (chrome)

grooves, that project into recesses on the frame. The right lug has a hold-open button activated by pressing inward while the bolt is open. Retract the slide and the spring-loaded button moves out of engagement, allowing the bolt to close. The extractor is on the right side of the bolt face, while a lip extending up from the left side of the magazine serves as the ejector.

Located at the left front of the trigger assembly is the magazine release button. Pressing it drops the magazine from its well in front of the trigger guard. There is no provision to reverse it for southpaws. Five- and 10-round magazines are available, though the 10-rounder is standard equipment.

A simplified but comfortable European walnut stock with an ambidextrous thumb shelf replaces the adjustable model. The bottom is flat and bears a Benelli logo. The two-piece stock of our sample had 24-line-per-inch checkering in a bordered point pattern with no overruns.

The trigger unit supplied is unadjustable,



The pistol's design helps to minimize muzzle jump for fast repeat shots. Its disassembly begins (below) with the removal forward and up of the locking head. Then the bolt assembly can be lifted upward off the frame.

though the fully adjustable unit is available from EAA and would be simple to install. The MP 95E's single-stage trigger broke at 2 lbs., 2 ozs., with a slight amount of over-travel, but was still one of finest out-of-the-box units we have received in some time.

Another definite improvement is the ambidextrous hammer-blocking safety. Instead of merely satisfying the BATF import requirement, the new unit is functional and easy to use. Pulling the lever just ahead of the trigger to the rear puts the flat of the safety's shaft in the path of a projection on the back of the hammer, preventing movement. When in the "off" position, a red dot is visible through the viewing slot on both sides of the safety. When engaged, the safety lever is drawn rearward into the trigger guard and blocks trigger access.

The rear sight is click-adjustable for windage and elevation, with a removable ramp-mounted blade front sight. The sight radius is 8.56".

Disassembly follows that of the MP 90S. Depress the magazine release, remove the



plete assembly down and forward. Turn out the stock screw and lift out the screw and its washer, allowing the stock to be pulled down and off. No further disassembly is required for routine maintenance and cleaning. Reassembly is in reverse order.

The MP 95E was fired for accuracy, with the results shown in the accompanying table, and function-fired with CCI, Eley and RWS ammunition. There were no failures of any kind. The MP 95E stacked up quite well to its UIT-intended cousin tested here in 1993. Its average extreme spread with similar ammunition measured 1.42" vs. the MP 90's 1.41".

The Benelli MP 95E, then, is an interesting and accurate adaptation of its high-end pistol with practical added features and a price low enough to interest plinkers as well as serious competitors.

ACCURACY RESULTS

.22 Long Rifle Cartridge	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
CCI Pistol Match	952 Avg. 13 Sd	1.34	2.22	1.79
Eley LR Pistol	932 Avg. 17 Sd	0.74	1.64	1.14
RWS Pistol Match #213244.2	909 Avg. 14 Sd	0.99	1.50	1.31
Average Extreme Spread				1.42
Five consecutive 5-shot groups at 25 yds. fired from sand-bags. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation)				

magazine and retract the slide to check that the chamber is unloaded. With the action closed, grasp the locking head, pull it forward and lift it straight up and out. Remove the bolt by retracting it until the guide lugs are out of the rails on the frame and lift them up and draw the bolt assembly to the front.

To remove the trigger assembly, drive out the front retaining pin and pull the com-



MOUNTAIN EAGLE RIFLE



The Magnum Research Mountain Eagle is a premium-priced rifle that combines a Sako action with a Bell & Carlson stock and Krieger barrel. Sako's integral scope mounts are deleted in favor of conventional bases.

MAGNUM Research, Inc., is one of the nation's up-and-coming importers. The firm got its start with the Israel Military Industries Desert Eagle pistol, and since has added the IMI-assembled Baby Eagle autoloaders, the Mountain Eagle pistol produced by Ram-Line, the Lone Eagle single-shot and most recently, the CZ line of rifles and pistols.

owner, and even more so to those who have owned Browning, Colt or H&R bolt-actions of the 1960s that used Sako actions. That's because the Mountain Eagle uses a round-topped receiver that deletes Sako's tapered dovetail scope mounting system.

This will appeal both to buyers who don't care for Sako's mounting system and to dealers who now will have a much wider range of mount possibilities, since the Mountain Eagle uses the Model 700 screw spacing.

The Sako action needs little introduction. Its particulars can be summed up by saying it is based on 98 Mauser principles, though with a hook extractor in place of the Mauser claw. What looks like a claw extractor is a guide rib that helps prevent binding of the bolt as it is cycled. The ejector is an extension of the bolt stop that

passes through a slot in the left bolt lug.

The two-position safety is at the right rear of the action and blocks both sear and trigger when moved rearward. It also extends a plunger upward through the action floor to prevent bolt rotation.

The trigger is adjustable in a range of 2-7 lbs. by turning a screw at the front of the trigger unit. Turning it counterclockwise reduces pull weight.

The stock is made by Bell & Carlson to a design by gunsmith Jim Tertin of a pebble-grained gray fiberglass. Checkering is molded in at 16 lines per inch. The buttstock is configured for scope use, and slopes down from heel to comb. This is appropriate, since it cannot be had with iron sights.

Bedding is by a pillar at the rear action

MAGNUM RESEARCH

MANUFACTURER: Magnum Research Inc., Dept. AR, 7110 University Dr., Minneapolis, MN 55432

MECHANISM TYPE: bolt-action rifle

CALIBER: .300 Win. Mag. (tested), 7 mm Rem. Mag., .338 Win. Mag., .270 Win., .280 Rem., .30-'06

OVERALL LENGTH: 43½"

BARREL LENGTH: 24"

WEIGHT: 8 lbs., 2 ozs.

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: 4 (5 in standard calibers)

RIFLING: six-groove, 1:10" RH twist

TRIGGER: single-stage, 3½ lbs. pull

STOCK: fiberglass: length of pull, 13¾"; drop at heel, 7/8"; drop at comb, 1¼"

PRICE: \$1,650

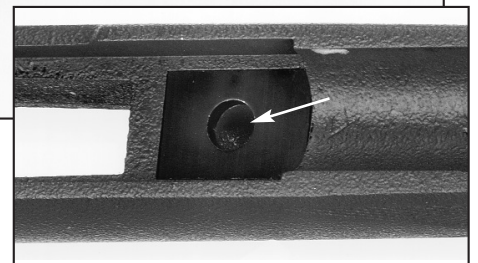
About the only misstep the firm has made was an attempt at importing Bernardelli shotguns, but that apparently hasn't put MRI off pricy long guns, since it has now introduced a Mountain Eagle rifle.

The new gun is part of the growing breed of semi-custom rifles that combine parts from several sources at a price that's well above familiar guns, but below the cost of a special-ordered custom rifle. In this case, a Sako action is combined with a Krieger barrel and Bell & Carlson stock.

The action will be familiar to any Sako



In lieu of recoil lug integral with the receiver or trapped between receiver and barrel, the Mountain Eagle uses an aluminum platform glued into the stock (arrow) that contacts the flat receiver bottom around the stock bolt, much like the Tikka M658 rifle.





The stock design did an excellent job of taming .300 Win. Mag. recoil, and we found the Mountain Eagle comfortable to shoot, whether from offhand or from a bench rest.

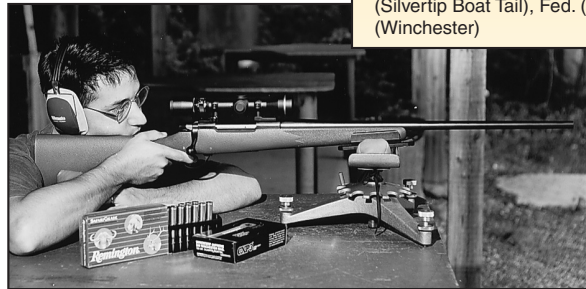
screw and an aluminum platform at the front that contacts the flat bottom surface of the receiver. This follows the design of the Tikka M658 rifle (November 1989, p. 60), a rifle made by the same parent company.

The barrel is cut-rifled and hand-lapped by Krieger, a well-known target rifle barrel maker, and a break-in procedure of cleaning after every few of the

first 40 shots is recommended.

The Mountain Eagle was fired for accuracy, with results shown in the accompanying table, and function-fired with Federal, Remington and Winchester ammunition. We experienced no failures of any kind.

We found that the stock design did an excellent job of taming the recoil of the .300 Win. Mag. cartridge, and the



Mountain Eagle was comfortable to shoot, whether offhand or from the bench.

Good accuracy results required very deliberate shooting, as groups tended to

ACCURACY RESULTS

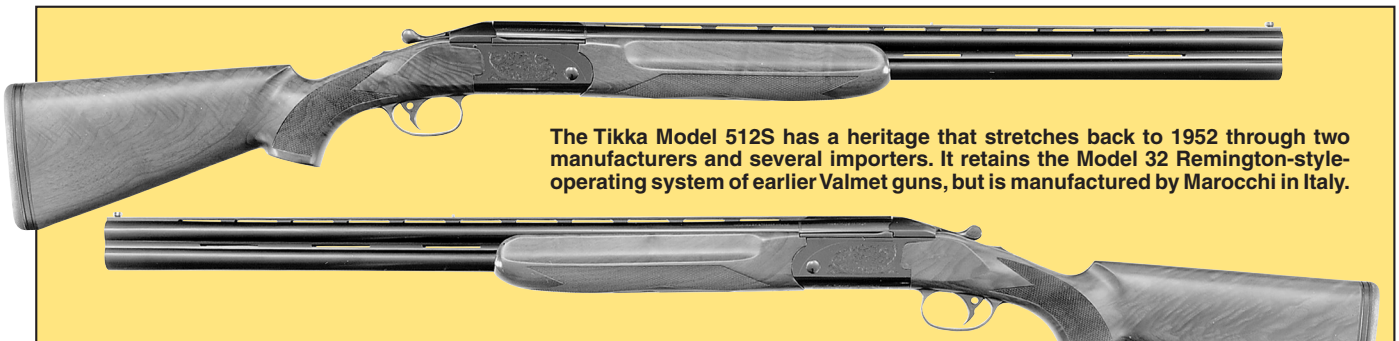
.300 Win. Mag. Cartridge	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Fed. No. P300WTI 200-gr. Trophy Bonded 20 Sd	2870 Avg. 20 Sd	1.32	2.10	1.73
Rem. No. R300WA 200-gr. Swift A-Frame 22 Sd	2866 Avg. 22 Sd	1.35	2.45	2.01
Win. S300WM190 190-gr. STBT 21 Sd	2856 Avg. 21 Sd	1.12	1.85	1.45
Average Extreme Spread				1.73
Five Consecutive 5-Shot Groups at 100 Yds. Fired From Sandbags. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), STBT (Silvertip Boat Tail), Fed. (Federal), Rem. (Remington), Win. (Winchester)				

string horizontally when the barrel became hot. It was common to drive three shots in one hole, then see the group opened by the fourth and fifth bullets.

The Mountain Eagle offers another choice for the hunter who wants something a bit more exclusive than the mass-produced rifles, but doesn't care to spend the thousands required for a true custom gun.

NRPA

TIKKA MODEL 512S SHOTGUN



The Tikka Model 512S has a heritage that stretches back to 1952 through two manufacturers and several importers. It retains the Model 32 Remington-style-operating system of earlier Valmet guns, but is manufactured by Marocchi in Italy.

THE Valmet line of shotguns and combinations was first introduced to American shooters in 1952 by the Washington, D.C.-based importer Firearms International Corp. In 1969, Savage Arms took over distribution and sold the field-grade Valmet shotguns as the Savage Model 330 (Oct. 1969, p. 87) until 1979, when Valmet USA, of Elmsford, New York, assumed marketing of the gun as the Model 412 (see Sept. 1980, p. 56).

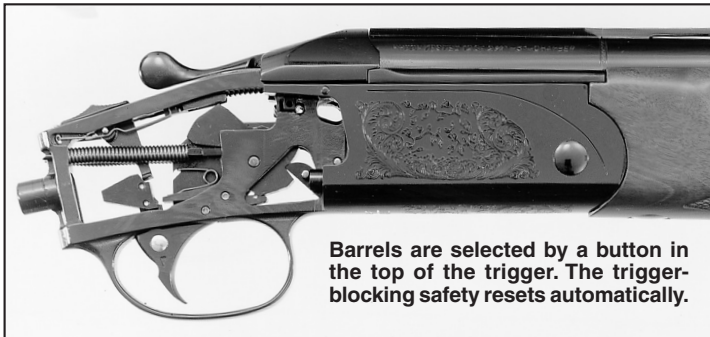
While the 412 line of shotguns and combinations experienced some degree of

success, it was apparently too costly to manufacture in Finland, so production was transferred to the Italian firm Marocchi di Stefano.

During the late 1980s, the Finnish arms makers Sako, Tikkakoski and Valmet were combined, with respective thinning of overlapping product lines. During this transition, the 412 next appeared with the Tikka name as the Model 412S (July 1991, p. 52) imported by Stoeger Industries of South Hackensack, New Jersey.

Now joining the Tikka line is the Model 512S, mechanically identical to the 412S, but having some noteworthy cosmetic improvements.

The lock design remains similar to that of the Remington Model 32, having a sliding top latch that engages a shelf on either side of the monobloc. This system provides a rather sleek profile. The receiver is finished in a deep blue accented with a combination scroll and floral design rather



Barrels are selected by a button in the top of the trigger. The trigger-blocking safety resets automatically.

than the matte satin nickel and simple, no-frill decoration of the 412S.

The blued single selective trigger incorporates a selector button at the top, and arrows on each side of the trigger blade indicate which barrel has been selected to fire first.

Two cocking indicator pins are immediately behind the automatic trigger-blocking safety. There are no provisions for easily converting the safety to manual operation.

Cocking is by a single rod passing down the bottom center of the action body. The ejector pins extend from the bottom edges of the standing breech. On firing, they set the ejector trips that hold the ejectors back. When the barrels are lowered and the trips contact studs inside the action body, the ejectors are released to throw spent cases from the chambers.

Ejectors are readily converted to extractors by removing the thin U-shaped metal strip securing the ejector mechanism. Then depress each ejector in turn while gently prying up on its forward end.

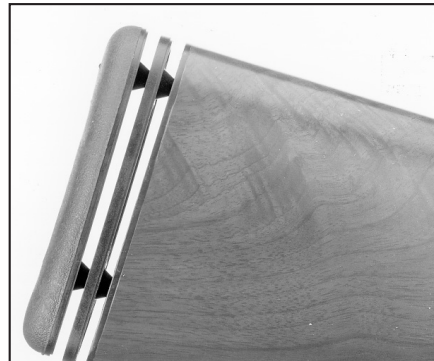
While maintaining control, lift the

ejectors out of the shotgun's monobloc, allowing the removal of the ejector springs and plungers, then return the ejectors and reinstall the U-shaped metal strip.

The 24" barrels are chambered for 3" shells, and have ventilated top and side ribs. Large fluorescent pink plastic front and center beads are affixed. Five interchangeable choke tubes and a spanner are

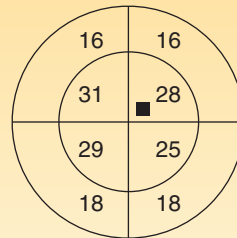


The ejectors are easily removed by pulling off the U-shaped metal strip that surrounds the monobloc. Removing the springs and plungers allows extraction-only operation.

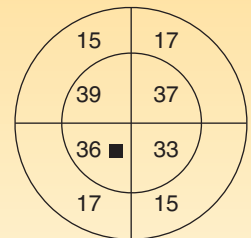


The Valmet buttplate system allows easy adjustment of pull length or pitch by installation of straight or wedge-shaped spacers.

TIKKA MODEL 512S SHOTGUN



Barrel



Barrel

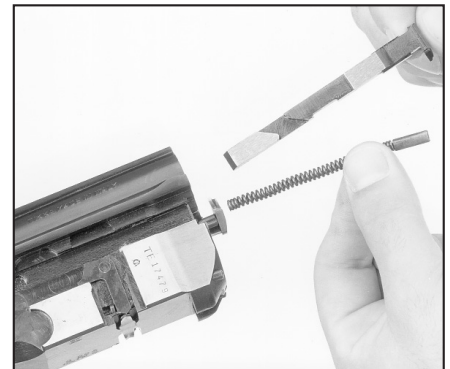
■ = Point of Hold
Federal Classic Hi-Brass 3³/₄-1¹/₄-6
Pellet count—287
Average of 10 patterns at 40 yds.

Total Hits	181 (63%)	Total Hits	209 (73%)
21.2" Inner Circle	113 (39%)	21.2" Inner Circle	145 (50%)
30" Outer Ring	68 (24%)	30" Outer Ring	64 (23%)

included. A variety of rifle and rifle/shotgun combination barrels are available, adding to the versatility of this practical field gun.

Our sample gun was stocked in well-figured chocolate brown European walnut, with borderless cut checkering at 18 lines per inch.

The Valmet-style buttplate remains, being adjustable for pitch and length of pull by using straight or wedge-shaped spacers available from the importer. One 5 mm spacer is supplied. The rounded



brown rubber pad allows snag-free mounting as the gun is brought into action.

The Model 512S was pattern-tested, with the results shown in the accompanying table, and function fired with a variety of target and field loads at hand thrown clay pigeons. There were no malfunctions of any kind.

Despite its light weight, the Tikka 512S swung onto target smoothly and handled recoil surprisingly well. It should prove to be a suitable choice as a moderately priced field gun.



TIKKA MODEL 512S

MANUFACTURER: Armi Marocchi S.p.A.,
Via Galilei 6, I-25068 Zanano di Sarezzo,
Italy

IMPORTER: Stoeger Industries, Dept. AR,
55 Ruta Ct., S. Hackensack, NJ 07606

MECHANISM TYPE: over-under shotgun
CALIBER OR GAUGE: 12-ga., 3" (tested);
12-ga./222 Rem.; 12-ga./308 Win.; .308
Win.; .30-'06; 9.3x74R

OVERALL LENGTH: 44¹/₂"

BARREL LENGTH: 27¹/₂"

WEIGHT: 7 lbs., 9 ozs.

TRIGGER: single selective mechanical, 5¹/₂
lbs. pull bottom barrel, 5¹/₂ lbs. top

STOCK: European walnut: length of pull,
14" adjustable; drop at heel, 2³/₈"; drop at
comb, 1³/₄"

ACCESSORIES: five choke tubes, spanner,
butt spacer

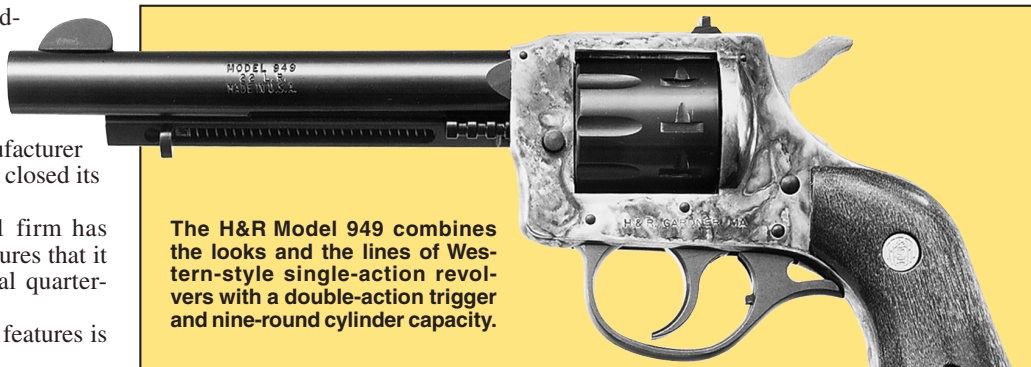
PRICE: \$1,225

H&R MODEL 949 REVOLVER

AFTER Harrington & Richardson announced its Model 949 Forty-Niner in 1960 at \$41, it proved popular with many plinkers and lasted in the line of the veteran Massachusetts manufacturer until 1985 when the “old” H&R closed its doors.

Now the “new” H&R 1871 firm has revived the 949 with all the features that it had accrued through its original quarter-century of manufacture.

The most important of these features is



The H&R Model 949 combines the looks and the lines of Western-style single-action revolvers with a double-action trigger and nine-round cylinder capacity.

H&R MODEL 949

MANUFACTURER: H&R 1871, Dept. AR,

60 Industrial Rowe, Gardner, MA 01440

MECHANISM TYPE: double-action revolver

CALIBER: .22 Long Rifle

OVERALL LENGTH: 10½"

BARREL LENGTH: 5½"

WEIGHT: 33 ozs.

WIDTH: 1¾"

HEIGHT: 4¾"

CYLINDER CAPACITY: 9

TRIGGER: single-action pull, 9 lbs.; double-action, 16 lbs.

SIGHTS: Patridge with drift-adjustable rear

PRICE: \$175

probably the transfer-bar mechanism that replaced the rebounding hammer system in the 1980s.

In addition, there are some new features such as the full profiled grip section of the frame, the webbed trigger guard, H&R medallions in the wooden grip plates and the color-casehardened frame treatment.

Lost somewhere in the transition (with no complaints on our part) were the wide hammer spur and grooved trigger.

In the 1960s, the demand for the 949 came from those who wanted an affordable .22 plinking revolver that resembled the Colt Single Action Army, then the star of much of what television had to offer in those days.

The 949 looked enough like this veteran to suit that undemanding market and worked enough like it (with its solid frame and rod ejection) to fill the bill. Many, in fact, opined that the H&R product was “better” than the SAA because of its inexpensive .22 chambering, its cylinder capacity of nine vs. six rounds and, above all, its double-action mechanism.

The domination by Westerns of television is no longer felt today but, apparently, the demand for a “Western” revolver continues. The Model 949 was successfully introduced at the 1994 SHOT Show in Dallas, Texas, where it was said, to all intents and purposes, production for the year had already been spoken for.

Our Model 949 sample was fired for accuracy, with results shown in the accompanying table, and function-fired with Federal, PMC, Remington and RWS

ammunition. There were no failures of any kind.

We started our firing from the Ransom Rest, and immediately were impressed with accuracy that was excellent, not just for a revolver in the price range, but in comparison with all pistols we receive.

While one wouldn't want to take on a hunter's pistol silhouette course with it, the 949 clearly is capable of performing most informal target shooting or small-game hunting duties.

The relatively heavy single-action and



Despite the double-action trigger, the Model 949 otherwise functions like a single-action, with the expected base pin and rod ejector.



ACCURACY RESULTS

.22 Long Rifle Cartridge	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Fed. Hi-Power No. 812	995 Avg. 26 Sd	1.10	1.68	1.47
PMC Zapper	832 Avg. 36 Sd	0.93	1.89	1.35
RWS High Velocity	994 Avg. 40 Sd	1.23	1.61	1.41
Average Extreme Spread				1.51
Five consecutive 5-shot groups at 25 yds. fired from sandbags. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), Fed. (Federal)				

double-action trigger pulls made it a chore to convert all that precision to “practical” accuracy, but we were able to keep most shots in the nine-ring of the 25-yd. timed and rapid-fire target. With a bit lighter trigger pull, even better results might be expected.

The H&R 949, then, is an interesting alternative to the firm's Model 999 (July 1993, p. 52) for those who prefer a traditional Western-styled solid Single Action Army-type frame to the 999's top-break action.