

DOPE BAG

The *American Rifleman* has used the phrase "Dope Bag" at least since 1921, when Col. Townsend Whelen first titled his column with it. Even then, it had been in use for years, referring to a sack used by target shooters to hold ammunition and accessories on the firing line. "Sight dope" also was a traditional marksman's term for sight adjustment information, while judging wind speed and direction was called "doping the wind."

CAUTION: Technical data and information contained herein are intended to provide information based on the limited experience of individuals under specific conditions and circumstances. They do not detail the comprehensive training procedures, techniques and safety precautions absolutely necessary to properly carry on similar activity. Read the notice and disclaimer on the contents page. Always consult comprehensive reference manuals and bulletins for details of proper training requirements, procedures, techniques and safety precautions before attempting any similar activity.

ASAI ONE PRO 45 PISTOL



The Swiss-Made One Pro 45 pistol combines short-recoil operation with all-steel construction. By simply switching barrels, the One Pro 45 may fire either .45 ACP or .400 Cor-Bon.

unlocking are controlled by cam surfaces machined into the lower part of the barrel acting on the slide stop pin. The hole for the barrel in the front of the slide is drilled at a downward angle which assures a tight lock-up to the barrel even after many rounds. There is no barrel bushing and a full-length, steel guide rod is used along with a multi-strand, braided recoil spring. A slot cut into the right face of the breech incorporates a robust extractor, and this slot holds the rim of the cartridge as it is released by the magazine.

A white-dot sight system is standard. The front blade has one white dot while there are white dots on either side of the rear notch. The rear is drift-adjustable for windage. Both sights are mounted in large, wide dovetails cut into the top of the slide. There is a wide but shallow rib on top of the slide.

Small checkered areas are cast into the front strap and backstrap, like on the Sphinx guns, to assist gripping. They worked well without chafing. The smooth trigger is mounted inside a

An impeccable set of credentials backs the new One Pro 45 pistol.

Designed by Martin Tuma for Advanced Small Arms Industries (ASAI) in Solothurn, Switzerland, it is manufactured by Oerlikon in Zurich, Switzerland and imported by Magnum Research of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Tuma was responsible for the Swiss-made Sphinx AT 88 and AT 2000 CZ-75-based pistols, and that lineage is apparent in many respects. In the One Pro 45, we have legendary Swiss precision and attention to detail fused to yankee sales and marketing prowess.

Aimed initially at meeting the demanding requirements of Special Operations Command units, the One Pro 45 pistol will no doubt find favor with civilian fans of "big-bore" double-action semi-automatic pistols. The One Pro 45 combines proven short-recoil operation, all-steel construction and large caliber with a modern single-action/double action trigger, a frame-mounted decocking lever and a patented, automatic firing pin safety. Accuracy and service life are enhanced by the full-length rails—interior on the frame and exterior on the slide—and the slide and frame of chromium-nickel-molybdenum steel. A double-action-only trigger is optional, as is a lightweight model with an alloy frame.

The barrel rises to lock against the rear of the ejection port and unlocks by dropping downward. There is no pivoting barrel link. Locking and



The slide is of all-steel construction and the pistol has full-length rails on both slide and frame to enhance service life and accuracy.

ACCURACY RESULTS

.45 ACP Cartridge	Vel. @ 15'	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Federal GM45B 185-gr. FMJ SWC	765 Avg. 11 Sd	1.59	2.29	1.94
Winchester X45ASHP2 185-gr. SHP	905 Avg. 18 Sd	2.08	2.91	2.56
Hornady 9112 200-gr. JHP XTP	845 Avg. 9 Sd	1.52	2.78	2.06
Average Extreme Spread				2.18
.400 Cor-Bon Cartridge				
Cor-Bon 135-gr. JHP	1385 Avg. 18 Sd	1.84	4.24	2.84
Cor-Bon 150-gr. JHP	1315 Avg. 21 Sd	1.71	3.31	2.52
Cor-Bon 165-gr. JHP	1280 Avg. 10 Sd	1.71	4.02	2.79
Average Extreme Spread				2.71
Five consecutive five-shot groups from 25 yds., fired from sandbags. Abbreviations: JHP (jacketed hollow point), FMJ (full metal jacket), SWC (semi-wadcutter), SHP (Silvertip hollow point), XTP (extreme terminal performance)				

ONE PRO 45

MANUFACTURER: Advanced Small Arms Industries AG/Ltd., Wengihof P.O. Box 260, CH-4503 Solothurn, Switzerland

IMPORTER: Magnum Research, Inc. (Dept. AR), 7110 University Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55432

MECHANISM TYPE: double-action, short recoil-operated, semi-automatic pistol

CALIBER: .45 ACP, .400 Cor-Bon

BARREL LENGTH: 3", 4 1/2"

RIFLING: six-groove, RH twist

WEIGHT: 42 ozs.

WIDTH: 1.22"

HEIGHT: 5 1/4"

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: 10

TRIGGER: single-action, 2 1/4 lb. pull; double-action 6 lb. pull

SIGHTS: blade front with white dot, notch rear drift adjustable for windage with two white dots

STOCKS: marbled black polymer

ACCESSORIES: extra magazine, seven-piece cleaning kit, fitted plastic case, other barrels optional at extra cost

PRICE: \$649, extra barrels \$209 plain and \$249 compensated

guard that is generous enough for a gloved finger and is not recurved or checkered.

The magazine release button is on the frame to the rear of the trigger guard, and pressing it inward instantly dropped even an empty magazine clear. The foot of the magazine well is beveled for easier reloading.

ASAI claims that the One Pro 45 will find favor among shooters with small hands. Despite the double-column magazine, we found the girth of the grip frame remained comfortable for the small handed. Shooting comfort is enhanced by a slight recurve at the bottom of the grip frame and recurved magazine floorplate extensions. Stocks are two-piece molded, black polymer with a lightly marbled outer surface.

The pistol has a decocking feature, and pressing the the decocking lever downward lowers the hammer while preventing contact with the firing pin. A large, intermediate sear notch engages the hammer, keeping it well off the firing pin while an automatic



One of the One Pro's handy features is the seven double-wide ribs with molded dimples and eight angled grooves that provide an effective grip surface on the slide.

firing pin safety prevents movement of the firing pin unless the trigger is pulled.

The One Pro 45 was fired for accuracy, with the results found in the accompanying table, and function fired with Cor-Bon, Federal, Hornady and Winchester ammunition. There were no failures of any kind.

Out of the box, the One Pro 45 offered one of the best trigger pulls in memory for a factory pistol. Single-action pulls were light and crisp with very little slack or creep. Double-action pulls were of moderate weight with linear loading and a predictable, crisp let-off. No doubt accuracy was enhanced by the excellent qualities of the trigger.

As befits a serious, self-defense pistol, the finish of the One Pro 45 is all business. Steel parts are finished with a low-polish



The accessory barrel kits contain a threaded barrel, longer guide rod and some include a ported muzzle unit. Calibers offered are .45 ACP and .400 Cor-Bon. All can quickly be mounted without using tools.

blue that imparts a semi-matte, nonreflecting finish. Unlike other guns, there are no in-the-white polished parts on the One Pro 45. Even the barrel, trigger, and hammer are blued.

Picking up the One Pro 45 leaves a comfortable impression. Yes, the gun is heavy, but the stocks feel good, the gun balances well and the levers are within easy reach. All levers are available mounted on the right side of the frame for left-handed shooters at no additional cost. Operation proved similar to other modern, double-action pistols and disassembly was particularly easy and required no tools.

Shooting the One Pro 45 proved an enjoyable experience. This pistol is comfortable to shoot with notably low perceived recoil even with +P loads because of its heavy weight, heavy slide and comfortable grip. By using a heavy slide, the rating of the recoil spring can be reduced, making it easier to operate the slide when charging or clearing the gun. Some shooters felt the One



The One Pro 45 pistol field strips quickly and easily along CZ-75 principles. The parts are blue steel with a semi-matte finish.

Pro 45 was modestly top heavy. As a suggestion, they recommended undercutting the rear of the trigger guard about 2 mm where it joins the frame to lower the pistol in the hand slightly.

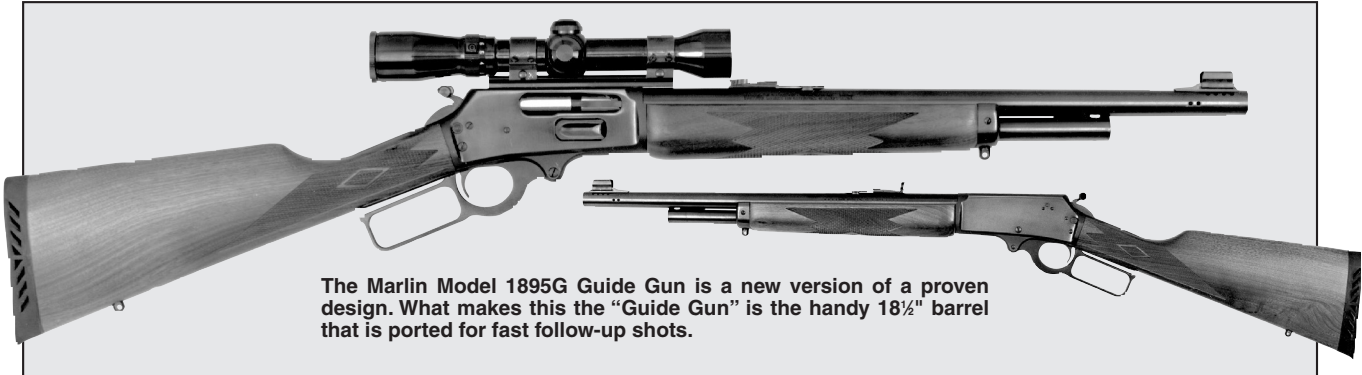
As with any new gun, a few minor details need attention. For example, there remain many sharp edges on the nose of the slide, front sight blade and magazine release button, and both grip panels had a sharp upper rear edge that needs reduction. Also notable was some outward puckering of the grip panels below the retaining screw. Also, how about checkering the outer surface of the magazine release button? Magnum Research is aware of these minor details and is working to have them corrected.

In addition to the basic pistol, Magnum Research will market accessory barrel kits in both .45 ACP and .400 Cor-Bon. These kits all feature longer barrels and new guide rods with some containing ported muzzle devices. All may be mounted or dismounted quickly and easily without tools. An accessory barrel was tested in .400 Cor-Bon caliber, and the unit was installed in minutes.

Perceived recoil was mild even with heavy .400 Cor-Bon loads thanks to the ported muzzle device, gun weight and grip design. Accessory muzzle units with longer barrels add about 2 ozs. to total gun weight although this has been minimized by using aluminum to construct the muzzle devices. The problem is they add weight precisely where it is not wanted—high and to the front. Some will prefer this, but, while the muzzle devices work well, they are bulky.

An excellent measure of any test gun is the number of shooters who ask the price then respond by wanting to know where they can get one. This is a tried-and-true measure of perceived value. Everyone who tested the One Pro 45 wanted one—immediately. With a suggested retail price of just \$649, it is easy to see the real value in ASAI's One Pro 45.

MARLIN M1895G "GUIDE GUN"



The Marlin Model 1895G Guide Gun is a new version of a proven design. What makes this the "Guide Gun" is the handy 18½" barrel that is ported for fast follow-up shots.

MARLIN'S Model 1895G "Guide Gun" is a new version of a proven design. Originally introduced in 1895, the Marlin Model 1895 was one of the many large-bore, lever-action, repeating rifles phased out by 1915 in favor of small-bore, bolt-action repeaters for smokeless cartridges.

Early in the 1970s, Marlin introduced the New Model 1895 in the original's most popular caliber, .45-70 Gov't (Oct. 1972, p. 40). The first of these guns had straight stocks; square finger levers; curved, hard-rubber recoil pads; and half magazines. The receiver was drilled and tapped for a receiver sight or scope mount and sandblasted to prevent glare. The eight-groove 22" barrel gave the gun an overall length of 40½" and total weight of 7 lbs. In 1980, a new model, the 1895S with a pistol grip, was added. As was still popular at the time, white line spacers accented both the black pistol grip cap and hard rubber buttplate. The square lever was

abandoned in favor of a round type, the front sight was given a hood and quick-detachable sling swivels added. In 1984, all Marlin center-fire, lever-action rifles received a crossbolt, hammer-block safety and the Model 1895S became the 1895SS.

What makes the Model 1895G "Guide Gun" is the handy, ported 18½" barrel. Four pairs of holes arranged on either side of the front sight vent gas upwards. The upward gas movement reduces muzzle jump and perceived recoil. A pair of holes on each side of the barrel below the front sight vent to the side, further reducing felt recoil. Fast recovery makes follow-up shots easy. Marlin wisely uses six-groove, 1:20" twist, Ballard-type, cut rifling in this gun rather than its well-known MicroGroove. Many shooters use cast or swaged lead bullets in the .45-70 Gov't cartridge and history has shown that Marlin's MicroGroove rifling causes accuracy problems with these bullets.

The sample we received for testing has a very plain, straight-grain, American walnut stock. The wrist and fore-end have cut checkering with 18 lines per inch. An unchecked, centrally located diamond pattern familiar to many Marlin guns accents the pattern. A generous, ventilated rubber recoil pad is standard equipment. The stock toe has Marlin's "Bull's eye" inletted just forward of the sling swivel stud. A blued-steel cap

with integral sling swivel stud compliments the fore-end. A tubular, steel, three-quarter-length, four-shot-capacity magazine is below the barrel.

Fans of the New Model 1895 and Model 336 will recognize the receiver that has a round bolt and side ejection. The Model 1895G reverts to the square finger lever of the first New Model 1895s and has a smooth blued trigger. Like most modern, exposed-



A generous, ventilated rubber recoil pad softens the blow from even heavy loads, and, when teamed with barrel porting, helps make the Guide Gun fun to shoot.

hammer, lever-action rifles, the M1895G has a hammer-blocking, cross-bolt safety button with red annular ring to indicate the "fire" position.

Sights consist of a brass bead on post front with removable hood and a folding, semi-buckhorn rear. A drift punch is needed to make windage corrections to the rear sight and elevation can be adjusted with the stepped ramp. Marlin drills and taps the 1895G's receiver for scope mounting and includes an ambidextrous hammer extension for easier cocking while scoped.

We equipped the Marlin Model 1895G Guide Gun with a Redfield 3-9X Five Star scope in Weaver rings on a Weaver No. 63B one-piece base. Accuracy testing was at 100 yds. from sandbags with the results shown

MARLIN M1895G

MANUFACTURER: Marlin Firearms Co. (Dept. AR), 100 Kenna Drive, P.O. Box 248, North Haven, CT 06473-0905

MECHANISM TYPE: lever-action rifle

CALIBER: .45-70 Gov't

OVERALL LENGTH: 37"

BARREL LENGTH: 18½"

WEIGHT: 7 lbs.

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: four

RIFLING: Ballard-type, six-groove, 1:20" RH twist

TRIGGER: single stage, ¾ lbs. pull

SIGHTS: semi-buckhorn rear, drift adjustable for windage, stepped elevator adjustable for elevation; hooded gold bead on post front

STOCK: American walnut: length of pull, 13½"; drop at heel, 2½"; drop at comb, 1½"

ACCESSORIES: ambidextrous hammer extension, quick-detach sling swivel studs

PRICE: \$562



Cartridges are loaded into the Guide Gun's tubular, three-quarter-length magazine via a loading gate on the receiver's right side.

ACCURACY RESULTS

.45-70 Govt. Cartridge	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Rem. R4570L 300-gr. JHP	1657 Avg. 59 Sd	1.67	2.48	2.05
Rem. R4570G 405-gr. JSP	1176 Avg. 67 Sd	2.50	2.83	2.64
Win. X4570H 300-gr. JHP	1702 Avg. 42 Sd	2.27	2.91	2.59
Average Extreme Spread				2.42

Five consecutive five-shot groups from 100 yds., fired from sandbags. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), JHP (jacketed hollow-point), JSP (jacketed soft-point), Rem. (Remington), Win. (Winchester)

lever jammed in the middle position, and disassembly of the action to remove the lever was required to free the cartridge. Operating the lever of the M1895G Guide Gun fully and smoothly prevents such jams.

Accuracy of the Model 1895G is better than we expected from a .45-70 Gov't lever-action carbine. Trigger pull is crisp and moderate which befits a gun like this. Recoil, while quite noticeable, is rather mild considering the weight of



Four pairs of holes arranged on either side of the front sight vent gas upward upon firing. Pairs of holes on the sides of the gun's barrel below the front sight vent off still more gas to further reduce the gun's recoil.

in the accompanying table. Function firing was with Federal, Remington and Winchester ammunition. The only failure we experienced was when we gave the Marlin Model 1895G a vigorous short stroke. This caused the fired cartridge case to eject normally, but seized the next cartridge against the top of the lifter while half way out of the magazine. The operating

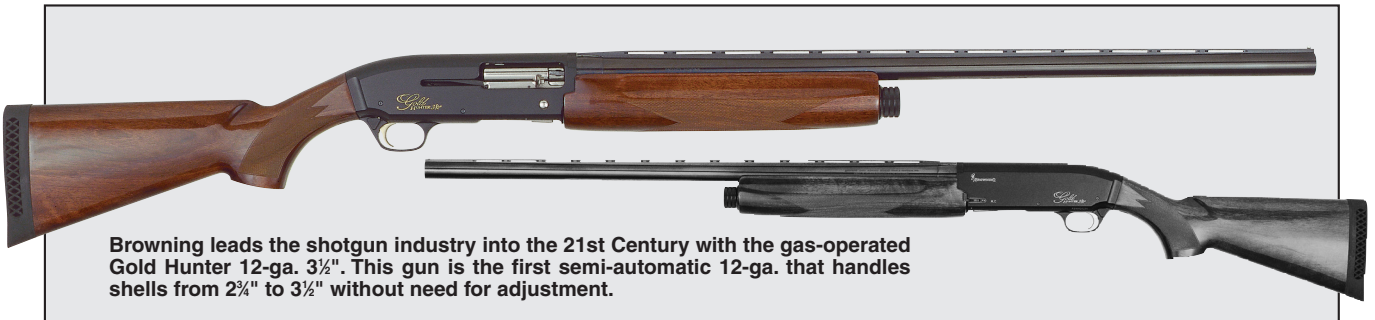
of the gun and the caliber. The gun also has good balance and is easy to carry.

While this gun seems directed at a niche market, it actually has broad appeal. Clearly, professional guides will prefer a gun like this in thick cover when following up clients' big or dangerous game. Bush pilots can carry one in the cockpit in case they end up spending the night with potentially

unfriendly animals. Other potential users include pipeline workers, foresters, lumberjacks and even those who keep a rifle in their fishing boat.

The Marlin Model 1895G Guide Gun isn't just for these niche markets. For those of us who like to hunt big game in thick cover, such a compact repeater chambered for the grand old .45-70 Gov't would be ideal. **NRP**

BROWNING GOLD 3 1/2"



Browning leads the shotgun industry into the 21st Century with the gas-operated Gold Hunter 12-ga. 3 1/2". This gun is the first semi-automatic 12-ga. that handles shells from 2 3/4" to 3 1/2" without need for adjustment.

IN 1903, Browning introduced the first successful semi-automatic shotgun, the recoil-operated Auto-5. More than 3 million Auto-5s were produced until Browning discontinued it earlier this year. As we enter the next century, Browning again leads the way with the gas-operated Browning Gold Hunter 3 1/2" 12-ga.—the first semi-automatic 12-ga. that handles shells from 2 3/4" to 3 1/2"



A self-regulating, short-stroke gas piston is used in the Gold 3 1/2". Excess gas not required to operate the action is vented through 16 holes around the tandem piston.

without adjustment. It is assembled in Portugal from parts made in Belgium.

Because of the heavier shot charge, most 12-ga. 3 1/2" shotguns see use on waterfowl with steel shot. Turkey hunters also take advantage of the heavier shot charges, and manufacturers accommodate them with 3 1/2" lead shot shells. But Browning's Gold Hunter 12-ga. 3 1/2" is not just for die-hard waterfowl or turkey hunters. Browning designed this shotgun as a versatile and practical gun for hunting everything from dove to Tundra swan, or even deer with slugs or buckshot. Browning even suggests "... it won't be long before this gun shows up on sporting clays ranges."

While designing a 12-ga. 3 1/2" semi-auto may seem a simple matter of enlarging the ejection port, beefing up the recoil spring and lengthening the chamber to accommodate a 1/2" longer shell, that is only

BROWNING GOLD 3 1/2"

MANUFACTURER: Fabrique Nationale Herstal SA, Parc Industriel des Hauts Sarts, 3e Ave., 4040 Herstal, Belgium

IMPORTER: Browning Arms Co. (Dept. AR), One Browning Place, Morgan, UT 84050

MECHANISM TYPE: short-stroke, gas-operated, semi-automatic shotgun

GAUGE: 12, 3 1/2"

OVERALL LENGTH: 49"

BARREL LENGTH: 26", 28" (tested), 30"

WEIGHT: 7 lbs., 14 ozs.

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: four 2 3/4" shells,

three 3" or 3 1/2" shells

TRIGGER: single stage, 5 lbs. pull

STOCK: Walnut: length of pull, 14 1/4";

drop at heel, 2"; drop at comb, 1 3/4"

ACCESSORIES: full, modified and improved cylinder Invector Plus choke tubes, tube wrench, magazine plug

PRICE: \$899.95

DOPE BAG

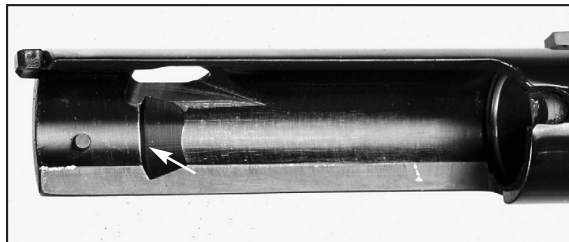
the beginning. Shells of different lengths produce different gas volumes, and the gas system must accommodate the variety.

Like the rest of the Browning Gold line, the 3½" has a self-regulating, short-stroke gas system. Gas bleeds through two ports in the barrel into the gas cylinder where the pressure forces the gas piston and operating rod rearward about 1/2". The operating rod transfers this rearward momentum to the bolt that moves fully back, extracting the empty shell, ejecting it and recocking the hammer. As the bolt assembly moves forward under spring pressure, it picks up a new shell and chambers it.

To handle the varieties of gas volume from different length shells, Browning uses a piston within a piston that functions much like a pressure-relief valve. Any gas volume greater than the amount necessary to cycle the action forces a valve open, which vents excess gas through holes around the piston's circumference. The gas then exits the gun through relieved areas between the barrel and front half of the fore-end. This system is similar to that of the earlier Gold Hunter, though the number of vent holes in the piston is increased from eight to 16. There are no rubber O-rings associated with this gas system.

Reliable ejection presents another challenge for the Gold Hunter 3½". While a semi-automatic can be made that reliably ejects 3½" shells, an ejector that far back from the chamber can leave a 2¾" shell unsupported causing the gun to jam. Browning solves this problem with a tandem ejector system consisting of a forward trapezoidal ejector notch in the barrel extension, combined with a cylindrical stud rear ejector.

When a 2¾" shell is fired, the extractor pushes it against the ejector-side of the barrel extension. The shell slides down into the trapezoidal notch throwing the shell clear of the action. Longer shells, while still pushed to the side by the extractor, remain supported by the chamber. The longer shell doesn't slide down into the ejector notch but continues back until it hits the cylindrical ejector. While this is how the system works in theory, Browning designers state that



Two ejectors are used on the Gold 3½". The front trapezoidal notch (arrow) is for 2¾" and 3" shells, while the cylindrical stud is for 3½" shells. In actual shooting, most, regardless of length, eject from the stud.

regardless of shell length, most shells eject from the rear cylindrical stud. The exceptions are light target and promotional loads that are more likely to eject from the notch.

The receiver of the Gold 3½" is built up from the 3" 12-ga. Gold, rather than built down from the 3½" 10-ga. receiver. The result is a trim gun rather than a bulky "club" that would be too heavy to carry afield for very long. Early test receivers reportedly developed stress fractures, but a new buffer to arrest the rearward movement of the bolt solves this problem.

The sample we received for testing has a reddish-brown walnut stock with high gloss finish. Its cut checkering is a bordered point pattern of 22 lines-per-inch on the wrist and 20 lines-per-inch on the fore-end. There are a few flat points and overruns, but the checkering is generally well-executed. A 1" thick, ventilated, rubber recoil pad completes the buttstock. The aluminum receiver has a matte-black finish and wood to metal fit is excellent.

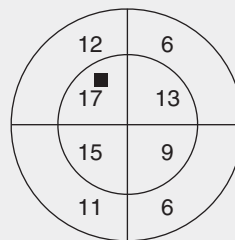
Magazine capacity of the Gold Hunter 3½" is four 2¾" shells, or three 3" or 3½" shells. Browning ships a plug with the gun that reduces magazine capacity to comply with federal waterfowl regulations.

Shooters will find the magazine cut-off and speed-loading features of the Auto-5 on the Gold 3½" helpful. The cut-off is a small lever on the left of the receiver that allows shooters to isolate the shells in the magazine. This lets a shooter remove the shell from the chamber and replace it with another. This feature is most useful when duck and goose seasons overlap and you have to quickly exchange a duck load for a goose load. Speed loading is a useful feature that automatically loads the first round from the magazine into the chamber. The bolt must be open for this to work, but it eliminates the need to press the bolt release button when you load.

The safety is a large, triangular cross-bolt behind the trigger. It is reversible, and has a red annular ring to indicate the "fire" position. Not only does this safety block the rearward movement of the

BROWNING GOLD 3½"

AVERAGE OF 10 PATTERNS AT 40 YDS.



Modified Choke

■ = Point of Hold
Remington 3½"
Nitro Steel Mag-1½"-BB
Pellet count—107

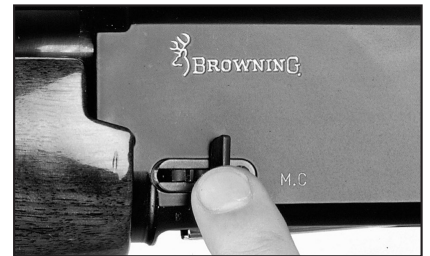
Total Hits	89 (83%)
21.2" Inner Circle	54 (50%)
30" Outer Ring	35 (33%)

trigger, but it also has an extension that secures the hammer.

The Browning Gold Hunter 3½" was pattern tested at 40 yds. with the Modified Invector Plus choke tube and Remington 3½" Nitro Steel, 1½-oz., Magdrams equivalent (DE), zinc-galvanized, steel BBs. The results are shown in the accompanying table.

Function firing was with a variety of foreign and domestic 2¾" to 3½" target and field loads with shot charges ranging from 1 oz. to 1½ oz. and powder charges from 2¾ dram equivalent to Magnum.

The Browning Gold Hunter 3½" digested every shell we fed it—with only one difficulty—the 2¾ dram equivalent 1-oz. target loads. A "loose" hold on the part of the shooter usually resulted in a cycling failure. We can compare this type of failure to limp-wristing a semi-automatic pistol. Thus the 2¾ dram equivalent, 1-oz. loads appear to be the lower



The magazine cut-off allows shooters to isolate the shotshells in the magazine. This lets a shooter remove the shell from the chamber and replace it with another one.

threshold of the Browning Gold Hunter 3½" shotgun's functioning limits.

Recoil, while admittedly stout with the 3½" shells, is not unmanageable thanks to the rather straight stock that focuses recoil into the shoulder instead of into the cheek. With light loads, we were able to direct our shots while firing the gun as fast as we could pull the trigger.

This gun swings steadily, but is a little on the slow side because of its mass. It balances well though, and comes up evenly. Serious hunters who are casual clay target shooters would do well with the Browning Gold Hunter 3½" if they want only one gun. Serious target shooters should look elsewhere. One thing is certain, though, Browning has set the stage for 21st Century semi-automatic shotguns for all to follow.

HARRIS TALON SWITCH-BARREL



The Harris Talon Sporter rifle with the company's switch-barrel feature affords shooters a multi-caliber option in a more compact package for storage or transport.

SWITCH-BARREL rifles have long been popular in Europe, where they afford versatility to shooters living in countries that limit the number of guns a shooter may own. Such guns also have a following here in America. Varmint shooters and benchresters have long used custom rifles with "low torque" barrels that can be changed without the use of heavy-duty barrel vises or action wrenches. The inspiration for Harris Gunworks' interchangeable-barrel system was a request from a German federal agency for a rifle that could be broken down into short components so that countersniper teams could move about more discreetly. The company's design solved that problem neatly, and has been evaluated by various law enforcement and governmental agencies here and abroad. It was also apparent that such a rifle would also have enormous appeal to sportsmen.

Harris Gunworks offers the switch-bar-

rel option on all its rifle models. We received a Harris switch-barrel rifle based on the firm's Talon action. The Talon was introduced in 1993 in an effort to provide a custom action with the features shooters desired most on a dangerous-game rifle.

The receiver bears a strong resemblance



The Talon features a large, non-rotating claw extractor for controlled feed, a Model 70-style, three-position safety and a Remington 700-style recoil lug.

to the Remington 700 pattern, but without that model's flattened receiver bridge; a Remington-style recoil lug is clamped between the barrel and receiver. The 1.355"-diameter receiver can be had in 416 stainless or 4340 chrome-molybdenum steel. The action employs a two-lug bolt made with a large, nonrotating Mauser-type claw extractor giving controlled feeding and extraction, a brazed-on bolt handle with a slight rearward dogleg, a steel bolt shroud and a three-position safety reminiscent of that of the Model 70. Swung all the way to the rear, the safety locks both bolt and striker; in the middle, the striker is still captured, but the bolt may be cycled; and in the forwardmost position, the rifle may be fired.

A spring-loaded bolt stop lever is located in the left wall of the receiver. Ejection is by way of a pivoting steel finger mounted in the left lug raceway. When the bolt is retracted, a slot cut in the bolt head below the left locking lug allows the ejector to engage the cartridge head. Ejection strength is thus controlled by the enthusiasm with which the shooter works the bolt.

The standard Harris trigger mechanism is a close copy of that of the current Remington design, and in fact the two are interchangeable. The standard Harris trigger can be had in weights down to about 2½

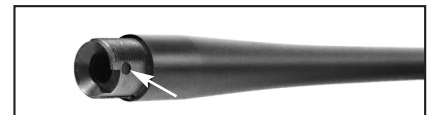
lbs., ordered from the factory; there is no provision for user adjustment of pull weight—lighter target-type units may be had.

Two hex-head set screws in the receiver ring are the only outward hints of the interchangeable barrel system originated in 1995. Barrel removal is accomplished quite

simply. With the rifle unloaded and the bolt retracted, the two set screws are loosened (they need not be completely removed), the barrel is rotated counter-clockwise one-quarter turn, disengaging the interrupted threads of barrel and receiver, and the barrel is pulled forward. Complete removal of the barrel may be prevented if the set screws are not sufficiently loosened. A new

barrel is installed by inserting its threaded shank fully into the receiver ring and turning one-quarter turn clockwise to engage the threads, until the witness marks on barrel and receiver are aligned. Only hand pressure is normally required to turn the barrel on and tighten it. The hex-head screws in the receiver ring are then re-tightened, and the rifle is ready to be fired.

Experimentation showed that it was possible to engage the threads and align the witness marks with the barrel not fully inserted; however, we judged that the probability of a shooter actually firing the rifle in this condition was extremely small. With the barrel only partially inserted and the witness marks aligned, a gap would easily be observed between the barrel shoulder and receiver face, the barrel would be wobbly in the receiver, and the hex screws in the receiver could not enter their recesses in the



Apparent in this view of the chamber end of the Talon's .300 Win. Mag. barrel are the coned breech, extractor cut, interrupted threads and locking screw recess (arrow).

HARRIS TALON

MANUFACTURER: Harris Gunworks
(Dept. AR), 3840 N. 28th Ave.,
Phoenix, AZ 85017

MECHANISM TYPE: Bolt-action center-fire rifle

CALIBERS: Any standard and most wild-cat cartridges, from .22-250 Win. to .416 Rem. Mag.; .300 Win. Mag. (tested), .375 H&H Mag. (tested).

OVERALL LENGTH: 44½"

BARREL LENGTH: 24"

WEIGHT: 7¾ lbs.

MAGAZINE CAPACITY: four (three in mag. cals.)

RIFLING: eight-groove, RH twist

TRIGGER: single-stage, 3 lbs. pull

STOCK: Gray synthetic (or walnut); length of pull, 13½"; drop at comb, 1¼"; drop at heel; 1½"

SIGHTS: none supplied; receiver drilled and tapped for scope bases

ACCESSORIES: scope bases and 1" steel rings, quick detachable sling swivels

PRICE: \$3,696 as tested; \$2,900 (Talon rifle base price); \$300 (interrupted thread option); \$496 (extra barrel).

barrel shank, and would thus protrude. It would be virtually impossible for a shooter to inadvertently install the barrel incorrectly and fire a shot.

Harris Gunworks also offers an alternative switch-barrel system that utilizes low-torque barrels instead of an interrupted-thread method; the latter method is preferable for changing barrels in the field, however. The company can convert any quality bolt-action rifle to either system. The interrupted-thread pattern is formed from a fully-threaded receiver and barrel using EDM machining to remove the appropriate portions of the threads.

Our Talon Sporter arrived with 24" sporter-weight .300 Win. Mag. and .375 H&H barrels. Its gray, textured stock was the standard fiberglass/epoxy sporter model with a pronounced pistol grip, molded-in checkering at the fore-end and wrist, a raised cheekpiece, and a slight decline from comb to heel; there was no visible cast-off. The butt terminated in a 1"-thick, solid-rubber recoil pad, and Uncle Mike's quick-detachable sling swivels were attached at the fore-end and toe. Different stock profiles, and wood stocks in various grades and types of walnut are also available.

Bedding on our Talon Sporter was by way of integral aluminum pillars and epoxy bedding compound. As on all Harris rifles, the barrel was free-floated. Different rifling patterns are used for various Harris Gunworks barrels, all of which are made in-house and can be had in virtually any standard and most wildcat chamberings.

Both the receiver and barrel on our test gun were of stainless steel, given a matte, dark-gray finish by a chrome disulfide process. Other metal finish options offered by Harris include hot bluing and parkerizing on chrome-moly components, and, on any steel, gray, silver or black Teflon.



While the standard Harris Talon floorplate is steel, our sample rifle featured the optional flush-fitting Remington three-round box magazine with an alloy floorplate.

Harris offers various feeding options as well. The standard Talon action comes with a steel triggerguard and hinged floorplate. Our test rifle, however, was fitted with the optional Remington alloy floorplate and detachable staggered-column, flush-fitting box magazine. Simultaneously depressing spring-loaded catches on both sides of the magazine base disengages tabs from recesses in the bottom metal, releasing the magazine. The receiver was drilled and tapped for scope mounting, and Harris supplies the appropriate bases.

The Harris Talon was fired for accuracy, with the results shown in the accompanying table, and function-fired in both calibers with Federal, Hornady, PMC, Remington and Winchester ammunition. There were no misfires, but we did experience a few malfunctions of other types, described below. Recoil in our 7½-lbs. Talon Sporter was noticeable with both cartridges, though by no means intolerable.

Fitted with a Redfield 6-18X scope, the rifle had little trouble in achieving sub-m.o.a. groups with certain .300 Win. Mag. and .375 H&H loads. Accurate shooting was aided by the rifle's trigger, which broke at 2½ lbs. with a crispness we've seen on few rifles in recent memory. We also tested whether the barrel attachment system would hold zero. After test-firing, each barrel was removed, reinstalled and fired again. Minimal (much less than 1") vertical or horizontal change in group location was noted with either barrel when it was removed and reattached.

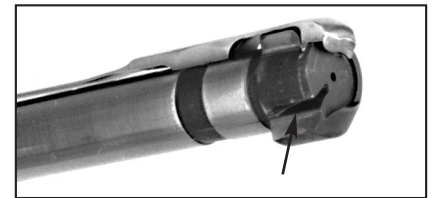
We did have a few complaints about the Talon. The most significant was the inconsistent action of the rifle's pivoting ejector, which failed to kick the brass case out of the receiver several times. The case would then have to be picked out with the fingers. It appeared that the ejector sometimes

failed to rise through its slot on the bolt head and engage the case.

The rear-swept bolt knob sharply rapped the knuckle of the trigger finger when firing from the bench. This proved not to be a problem when firing offhand.

There was also some stiffness in both bolt lift and turndown, and a definite hitch was noted during chambering of the Federal and PMC .300 Win. Mag. ammunition. Speer Nitrex tended to feed fairly smoothly. Bolt travel was otherwise smooth and bind-free. We also noted difficulty in moving the safety piece to the rearward "safe" position, and could not feel the detent for the middle safety position.

On the plus side, the Talon Sporter is an accurate, attractive arm featuring a barrel attachment system that allows the retention of zero even when barrels are removed and



The Talon's bolt head features a broad extractor claw, generous lugs with angled faces to match the coned breech, and a slot (arrow) for the action's mechanical ejector.

reinstalled. The Talon Sporter switch-barrel is more than just a novelty. One Talon equipped with .300 Win. Mag., .375 H&H and .458 Win. Mag. barrels could be used to take any African game, from dik-dik to elephant—a task normally requiring three different rifles. Varmint hunters, too, will welcome the switch barrel feature; it affords both quick caliber changes as well as the capability to replace a hot barrel.

Additionally, the rifle's takedown feature may also benefit sportsmen traveling by airplane, as its disassembled size allows it to be transported in normal-sized luggage, making it less of a target for thieves than guns shipped in gun cases.

Although a bit pricy at more than \$3,500, the Talon Sporter switch-barrel will be of great interest to those who value easy barrel interchangeability and the precision and features of the Talon action.

NRD



Two hex-head set screws in the receiver ring are the only outward hints of the Harris' interchangeable barrel system. Removal of the barrel is accomplished quite simply.

ACCURACY RESULTS

.300 Win. Mag. Cartridge	Vel. @15' (f.p.s.)	Smallest (ins.)	Largest (ins.)	Average (ins.)
Fed. No. P300WT3 180-gr. TB BC	3022 Avg. 34 Sd	0.77	1.07	0.91
PMC No. ELD300XA 150-gr. X-Bullet	3058 Avg. 45 Sd	0.89	1.32	1.14
Speer No. 24509 180-gr. GS	3057 Avg. 25 Sd	1.11	1.54	1.38
Average Extreme Spread				1.14
.375 H&H Mag.				
Hdy. No. 8508 270-gr. SP Interlock	2799 Avg. 34 Sd	1.21	1.96	1.57
Win. No. X375H2 300-gr. ST	2407 Avg. 24 Sd	0.81	1.17	0.98
Average Extreme Spread				1.27
Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), Fed. (Federal), GS (Grand Slam), Hdy. (Hornady), SP (soft point), ST (Silvertip), TB BC (Trophy Bonded Bear Claw), Win. (Winchester)				