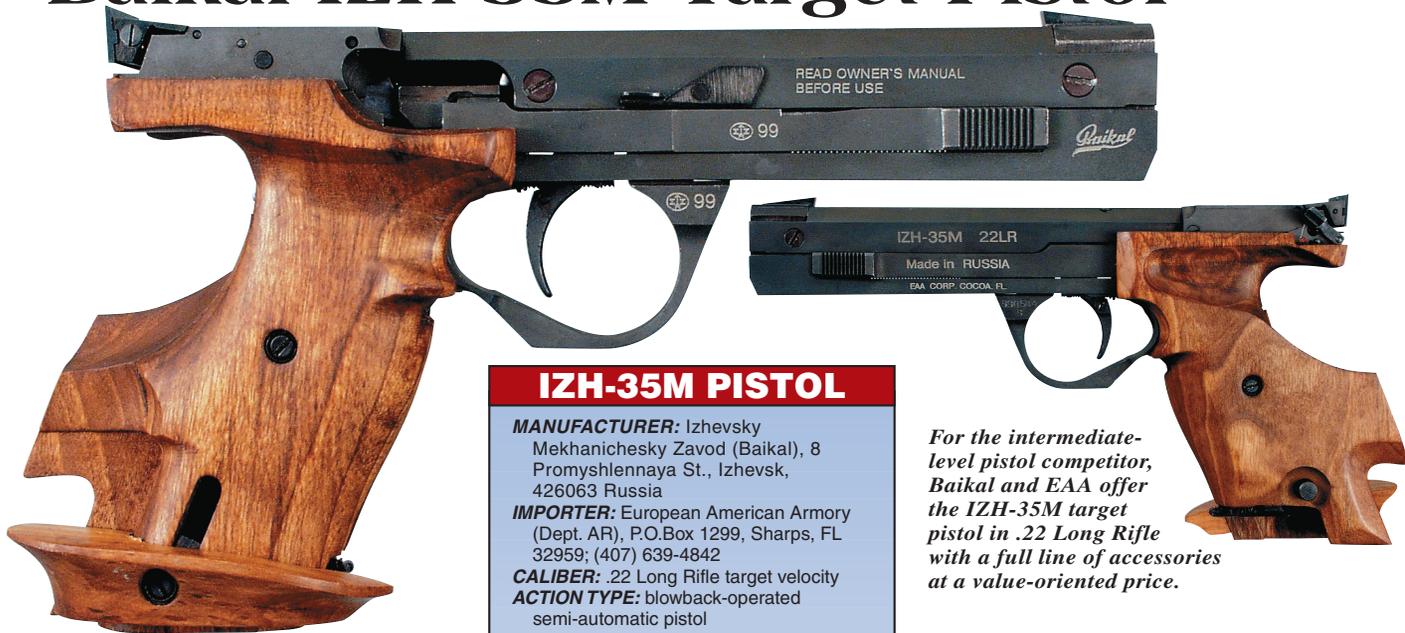


Baikal IZH-35M Target Pistol



IZH-35M PISTOL

MANUFACTURER: Izhevsky Mekhanichesky Zavod (Baikal), 8 Promyshlennaya St., Izhevsk, 426063 Russia
IMPORTER: European American Armory (Dept. AR), P.O.Box 1299, Sharps, FL 32959; (407) 639-4842
CALIBER: .22 Long Rifle target velocity
ACTION TYPE: blowback-operated semi-automatic pistol
CONSTRUCTION: forged carbon steel
FINISH: matte blue
OVERALL LENGTH: 10½"
BARREL: 6"
RIFLING: conventional, six-groove, RH twist
WIDTH: 2" with heel rest installed
HEIGHT: 5¼"
WEIGHT EMPTY: 42½ ozs.
MAGAZINE: detachable, steel, five shot capacity, single column
SIGHTS: post front, notch in blade rear screw-adjustable for windage and elevation, detachable optical sight bases standard
TRIGGER: single-stage, adjustable, ¾-lb. pull
STOCKS: two-piece, oil-finished walnut with adjustable heel rest
ACCESSORIES: optical scope mount base, extra magazine, brass cleaning rod, nylon cleaning brush, oil bottle, combination tool, drift punch, plastic carry case and spare parts set consisting of firing pin, main spring, recoil spring, extractor, extractor plunger, sear, sear spring, rear sight blade, front sight blade
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$519

For the intermediate-level pistol competitor, Baikal and EAA offer the IZH-35M target pistol in .22 Long Rifle with a full line of accessories at a value-oriented price.

For NRA bullseye pistol competition, .22 rimfire target pistols fall into two broad categories. The first is for entry-level shooters with guns priced below \$500. That group consists of standard pistols modified with heavy barrels, target grips and adjustable rear sights. The second category is for the experienced competitor with guns priced accordingly at \$800 to \$1,000 and up. Such specialized models are designed only for target competition. For up-and-coming mid-level competitors, the choices are few. Realizing this, the Russian firm of Baikal and its U.S. importer, European American Armory (EAA), have introduced the IZH-35M, a purpose-built, fully equipped .22 Long Rifle target pistol offered at entry-level prices.

Actually, the IZH-35M is a complete package. The buyer gets two magazines, a detachable base for mounting optical sights, a combination tool, a drift punch, brass cleaning rod, nylon cleaning brush, oil bottle and padded plastic carry case. Each pistol is also supplied with a spare parts kit containing those parts most subject to wear and breakage. Of course, EAA stocks additional spare parts, and each IZH-35M carries a one-year limited warranty to the original retail purchaser against defects in materials and workmanship.

Along with walnut target stocks, the IZH-35M pistol comes equipped with a trigger adjustable for position, take-up and over-travel. While the trigger itself is mounted under the barrel block, the fire control mechanism is mounted under the pistol's rear sight assembly.



That said, the IZH-35M pistol comes with adjustable walnut target stocks, a target-type rear sight fully adjustable for windage and elevation, an adjustable target trigger, 6" barrel and all-steel construction in matte blue or matte chrome finishes. At 42 ozs., the IZH-35M's weight is comparable to other contemporary target pistols. We received a blue IZH-35M for test and evaluation.

The IZH-35M has a straight blowback design with a fixed barrel fed from a detachable, single-column, five-round-capacity steel magazine in the grip frame. As a target pistol, the IZH-35M is set up for use with target velocity (1080 f.p.s.) .22 Long Rifle ammunition only. It is *not* intended for high-velocity or ultra-high-velocity ammunition, and using such ammunition will void the warranty. The pistol has a very low bore axis

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."

WARNING: 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.

SHOOTING RESULTS

.22 Long Rifle Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Recoil (ft.-lbs.)	Smallest (inches)	Largest (inches)	Average (inches)
RWS Match Pistol No. 2.13244.3 40-gr. LRN	917 Avg. 14 Sd	75	0.2	1.05	1.66	1.28
PMC Match Pistol No. 22MP 40-gr. LRN	960 Avg. 23 Sd	82	0.2	1.22	1.82	1.51
Eley Tenex 40-gr. LRN	968 Avg. 11 Sd	83	0.2	1.05	1.29	1.13
Average Extreme Spread						1.30
Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 6" barrel. Range temperature: 59° F. Humidity: 30%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: Sd (standard deviation), LRN (lead, round nose)						

to minimize recoil and accommodate fast recovery in timed or rapid-fire events. The oversized trigger guard has been designed for use with a gloved shooting hand.

The IZH-35M has three safety systems. First, there is a conventional, rotating, two-position safety lever on the left rear of the receiver that disconnects the trigger when applied. Second, there is a small grip safety in the upper right-hand side of the grip frame. Third, the upper surface of the hammer serves as a cocking indicator.

Built of machined carbon steel, the IZH-35M's frame has an integral mounting block into which the barrel is permanently silver-soldered. A separate block for the front sight blade and barrel shrouds is pinned to the muzzle. Although the single-stage trigger is mounted on the lower surface of the barrel mounting block, the actual fire control mechanism is located under the rear sight assembly. A unique feature is the location of the hammer inside the rear sight assembly where it is pivoted at the top so as to swing downward to strike the rear surface of the firing pin. That enables the hammer's top surface to serve as a cocking indicator when it is flush with the upper surface of the rear sight.

There is a slide hold-open lever on the right side of the upper barrel shroud and a magazine release button on the bottom left side of the frame. The slide is not held open after the last shot has been fired. The trigger may be moved back and forth approximately one-half inch along a rail by loosening one screw. That enables the shooter to easily obtain the most comfortable trigger position. In addition, two other small screws allow easy adjustment of trigger overtravel and take-up. The rear sight blade can be quickly replaced by removing one screw. Windage adjustments are accomplished by means of a screw on the right side of the sight assembly, and elevation adjustments are made with a screw on the upper surface of the sight.

In appearance, the IZH-35M remains conventional and conservative in similar manner to the S&W Model 41 and Hammerli 208S with a magazine in the grip frame and a squarish outer profile. Fit and finish of our IZH-35M test example was quite acceptable for a pistol in its price range. The matte blue finish was utilitarian with a minimum of polishing and remaining machine marks mostly in hidden areas. We noticed that, where it counts, the IZH-35M's level of workmanship reached above average levels. Notable examples right out of the box included the trigger pull (excel-

lent), bore (bright and smooth) and sights (clean and crisp).

All controls functioned perfectly and fell readily to hand. While the adjustable walnut target grips looked the part, we found their shape somewhat uncomfortable. That minor problem could have been corrected with a file and some sandpaper in minutes. Another problem we had with the grip involved the adjustable heel rest. From the box, we could not install the rest because the mounting screw was too short. We solved that one quickly with a bit of sanding on the inner surface.

Despite its blockish styling, the IZH-35M balances well and proved comfortable to shoot. With target and standard-velocity ammunition, recoil and muzzle blast proved nil, which contributed to shooter comfort. Before beginning the shooting phase of our tests, we fired 200 rounds of .22 LR standard-velocity ammunition through the IZH-35M for break-in purposes. From that, it became obvious that the IZH-35M is tuned for match-velocity ammunition (1080

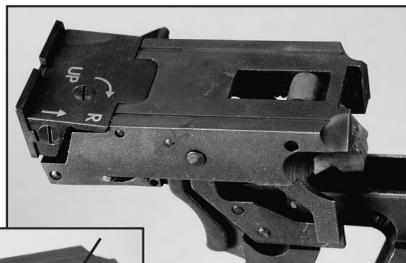


Designed from the ground up as a target pistol, the IZH-35M is blowback operated with a fixed barrel silver soldered into a barrel mounting block (arrow) which is an integral part of the frame. The front sight is mounted on a second block pinned to the muzzle.

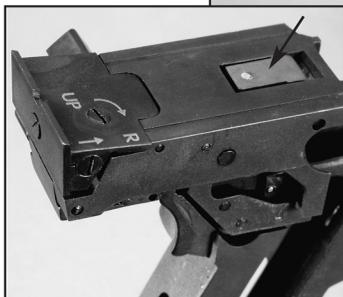
f.p.s.) rather than standard-velocity (1155 f.p.s.), ammunition with which we experienced a 5 percent malfunction rate that nearly always related to jams caused by a cartridge failing to feed properly. There were no malfunctions with match-velocity ammunition. As with many target pistols, the IZH-35M had its ammunition likes and dislikes. It liked Eley Tenex, RWS R50, RWS Pistol Match, PMC Pistol Match, and CCI Pistol Match ammunition. Other brands proved less compatible.

We particularly liked the optical sight mounting rail which proved easy to install, and scopes were mounted easily. We found the gun became very muzzle heavy (and heavy in general), however, with the rail and a scope installed. Other praiseworthy points were the crisp trigger and excellent sights. Problems? We did have a few. The left grip panel demonstrated an annoying tendency to loosen. We solved this problem by applying Loc-Tite to the retaining screw. We also noted that one magazine performed flawlessly while the other accounted for nearly all malfunctions. As most target shooters routinely purchase several extra magazines with each gun, they can simply select those that work best then relegate the others to training duties.

The IZH-35M surprised us and soundly demonstrated it would easily outshoot entry-level target pistols and hold its own with more expensive models.



An unusual feature of the IZH-35M target pistol is the hammer, which is hinged at the top to swing downward to strike the firing pin. That allows the top surface of the hammer (arrow) to serve as a cocking indicator.



Traditions Field II Over-Under Shotgun

Traditions has introduced a new line of high-quality, value priced over-under shotguns from Italian gunmaker Fausti Stefano. There are 24 different models from 10-ga., 3" to .410-bore 3". Reviewed here is the 28-ga. Field II model.

The Traditions name is well-known among blackpowder and Cowboy Action shooters for affordable, high-quality muzzleloading rifles, lever-action rifles and single-action revolvers. For 2000, Traditions Performance Firearms teamed with Italian gunmaker Fausti Stefano to offer a new line of high-quality, value priced over-under shotguns. The Fausti Stefano over-under shotguns offered by Traditions include 24 different variations from 10-ga., 3½" to .410-bore, 3" in a wide variety of models.

Field I models have extractors and fixed chokes. Field II models add selective automatic ejectors and three, interchangeable choke tubes for 12- or 20-ga. in improved cylinder, modified and full. The 28-ga. and .410-bore models have fixed chokes bored improved cylinder and modified. All Field models have 3" chambers except the 28-ga., which has 2¾" chambers.

In outside appearance, both Field models are identical with a bright-silver-finished, engraved receiver, trigger guard and fore-end release lever with medium polish blued barrels and a gold-plated trigger. Engraving coverage is extensive with considerable scroll work and game birds on the receiver floor and both fences. A Field III model with gold appointments (offered only in 12-ga.) satisfies those who prefer a higher level of adornment.

Fausti shotguns use a conventional box-lock action with Kersten top locking and top lever operation.

Both Kersten top locks are integral

to the monobloc and recline into appropriate vertical slots cut into the forged carbon steel standing breech when the gun is closed. A cross-bolt locks the barrels securely to the breech and the hook-shaped Kersten projections are designed to compensate for wear to maintain a tight lockup.

All Traditions/Fausti Field over-under shotguns have a single-selective trigger. Barrel firing order selection is made with a small lever mounted on the front of the trigger root and can be manipulated by the shooter's trigger finger. Both 12- and 20-ga.

guns feature an inertia blocking system to prevent doubling. The 28-ga. and .410-bore models have mechanical triggers as recoil in these smaller gauges is insufficient to operate an inertia block. Firing pins are rebounding and hammer-operated. There is a sliding manual safety on the rear tang that blocks the sear.

Selective automatic ejectors are cocked by two levers running forward on the inside floor of the receiver. Ejection proved positive with the fired small-gauge empty shells traveling a consistent 6 to 8 ft.

Barrels are back-bored with lengthened forcing cones and monobloc construction. A ventilated mid-rib and ventilated sighting rib with brass front and mid-rib sighting beads are standard. The blued steel sighting rib has a finely serrated upper surface to reduce glare.

Bores and chambers are not chrome-plated. Fixed choke guns and standard choke tubes are not recommended for steel shot. Special choke tubes compatible with steel are available at extra cost.

The stock is of walnut with a schnabel tip fore-end and fluted, pistol grip buttstock with a ventilated, brown rubber recoil pad cutaway at the top to reduce snags. There is no pistol grip cap. Both fore-end and buttstock have a semi-gloss finish with 18 line-per-inch, diamond pattern, cut checkering. We found stock finish uniform with crisp, comfortable checkering having only a few overruns at the edges. Wood-to-metal fit was average with some proud wood around the action, but we judged that entirely appropriate for an over-under shotgun in this price range.

Metal-to-metal fit and finish seemed very good for a shotgun in this price range. From the type and depth of the engraving, we surmise that the pattern is first etched on the metal's surface then chased by hand. No matter, as the workmanship is consistently good. We noted a few, very minor tool marks on the sides of the sighting rib, but none on the mid-rib or barrel surfaces. We did note



Fausti/Traditions over-under shotguns are conventional box locks with Kersten locking and top lever operation. The hook-shaped Kersten locks recline into vertical slots cut into the breech face where cross bolts assure a tight lockup.

FAUSTI FIELD II

MANUFACTURER: Fausti Stefano s.r.l., Via Martiri dell'Indipendenza 70, Marcheno Brescia, Italy I-25060

IMPORTER: Traditions Performance Firearms (Dept. AR), 1375 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, CT 06475; (860) 388-4656; www.traditionsmuzzle.com

GAUGE: 10, 3"; 12, 3"; 20, 3"; 28, 2¾" (tested); and .410, 3"

ACTION TYPE: over-under box lock with Kersten top locks

RECEIVER: forged carbon steel

FINISH: silver coin receiver, medium polish blue barrels and rib, gold-plated trigger

OVERALL LENGTH: 43½"

BARRELS: 24", 26" (tested), 28", 30" backbored with relieved forcing cones

WEIGHT: 6 lbs., 9 ozs.

TRIGGER: single, selective, mechanical, 6-lb. pull

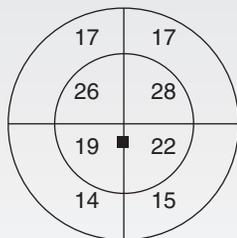
STOCK: semi-gloss-finished walnut; length of pull: 14"; drop at heel: 2¼"; drop at comb: 1¼"

ACCESSORIES: three choke tubes (IC, M, F), choke tube wrench

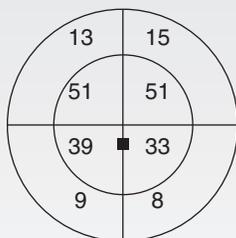
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$739

SHOOTING RESULTS

AVERAGE OF 10 PATTERNS AT 25 YDS.



Improved Cylinder Choke
Lower Barrel



Modified Choke
Upper Barrel

■=Point of Hold

Federal Premium High Brass 28-ga.,
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "—3/4 oz.—7 Copper Plated Lead

Average Pellet count—273

Measured Velocity @3-ft.—1237 f.p.s.

Remaining Energy Per Pellet @25 yds.: 2 ft.-lbs
Recoil: 13.1 ft.-lbs

Total Hits	158 (58%)	Total Hits	219 (80%)
21" Inner Circle	95 (35%)	21" Inner Circle	174 (64%)
30" Outer Ring	63 (23%)	30" Outer Ring	45 (17%)



Field I and II models feature a receiver engraved with scroll work and game birds on the bottom and on the trigger guard.

good reasons for selecting a small gauge over-under for upland hunting. Essentially, the small gauges allow the experienced hunter to trade his finely honed skills for smaller shot charges and lighter weight. For that reason, 28-ga. and .410-

With its light weight and comfortable stock, handling proved lightning fast, but not to the point of being whippy. Perceived recoil proved mild with all loads tested. Our test gun patterned dead on at 25 yards, which is appropriate for a field gun.

Suggested retail price of Field I shotguns is \$579 in 12- and 20-ga. and \$599 in the smaller gauges. Field II models carry a suggested retail price of \$729 and \$739, respectively while the 12-ga. Field III is the most expensive at \$949. At those prices, the Traditions/Fausti Field series shotguns offer many prospective purchasers of pump or semi-automatic shotguns the option of purchasing a quality over-under instead. 

a few minor tool marks in the bottom of the finger notch of the fore-end release lever.

Light weight and fast handling are two major attributes of small-gauge guns and are

bore over-under hunting shotguns are best left to experienced hunters.

We found the 28-ga. Field II balanced in a near-perfect position about mid-chamber.

ArmaLite AR-50 Rifle

Interest in shooting rifles chambered for .50 BMG (Browning Machine Gun) is growing and has fueled development of better-performing, less-expensive guns, ammunition, components and dies. There is even an NRA-affiliated shooting club, the FCSA (Fifty Caliber Shooters Ass'n) that publishes a quarterly magazine *Very High Power*. So what is behind the current fascination with shooting the big .50? Well, apart from a seemingly bottomless thirst for the largest and most powerful, there is the cartridge's unmatched long-range ballistic potential.

The laws of physics dictate that the larger the bullet diameter, the greater the potential ballistic coefficient (BC); and the greater the bullet's BC, the more resistant it is to factors such as wind deflection and bullet drop, which are extremely important in long-range shooting. That makes the .50 BMG ideally suited for precision target shooting at distances of 1000 yds. or more.

The biggest hurdle for those interested in shooting .50 BMG has been the cost of the rifles themselves. Enter ArmaLite's new AR-50 rifle. The company, which obviously sees a market for an economical .50 BMG-cal. rifle for the novice shooter, contends that its new AR-50 rifle is meant to be durable and long-lasting, but free of the bells and whistles that tend to drive up the

price of a gun. ArmaLite's goal in producing the AR-50 using such methods was to create a rifle that should offer enough performance to satisfy most shooters.

The heart of the rifle is its one-piece, forged steel bolt with three equally sized and spaced forward locking lugs that match the diameter of the bolt body. A plunger style ejector is part of the bolt face, which is recessed .185" to fully enclose the case head. The rifle makes use of an internal claw extractor similar to that used by Sako, except that the extractor is not part of a bolt lug. A raceway cut in the massive bolt body matches up with a button-head screw in the left side of the receiver that acts as both a bolt stop and bolt guide.

Welded to the bolt body is a long handle that angles downward, but rests well away from the stock to pre-

The new ArmaLite AR-50 is an entry-level, bolt-action, single-shot rifle chambered for the massive .50 BMG cartridge.



Shown here beside a .308 Win., the .50 BMG cartridge carries a comparatively large, heavy bullet that simplifies long-range marksmanship by reducing drop and wind deflection.

vent any contact with the shooter's hand during firing. The striker assembly easily unscrews from the rear of the bolt body for cleaning and maintenance. At the rear of the striker is a two-position safety. Pushing the safety lever up to the 1 o'clock position locks the striker so that it cannot move forward to fire a round. Another safety feature is the 1/4" port on the right side of the bolt body to release propellant gases in the unlikely event of a case head failure.

Both the bolt and octagonal receiver are machined from the same chrome-moly steel alloy. Safety is a paramount concern when shooting a cartridge as powerful as the .50 BMG. Accordingly, the top and bottom of the AR-50's hexagonal receiver are closed for strength and rigidity leaving only a port in the right-hand side for feeding and ejection. The design limits the AR-50 to single-shot operation.

On the underside of the action, two heavy machine screws draw the receiver down onto two V-shaped pillars in the aluminum stock, while a draw bolt at the rear pulls the action rearward. The arrangement is meant to enhance consistency in the way the action mates to the stock after disassembly and ensures the receiver does not shift in the stock under recoil.

The stock assembly consists of three major components; the fore-end, buttstock and AR-15A2-style pistol grip. The fore-end is an anodized, one-piece aluminum extrusion that leaves the barrel entirely free-floating. The 41-lb. heft and 5' length of the AR-50 rifle combined with the tremendous

SHOOTING RESULTS

.50 BMG Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Recoil (ft.-lbs.)	Smallest (inches)	Largest (inches)	Average (inches)
Hunting Shack Hornady A Max 750-gr. BT	2560 Avg. 13 Sd	11,607	65.5	1.04	1.84	1.34

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 31" barrel. Range temperature 68° F. Humidity 72%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 100 yds. fired from a sandbag. Abbreviations: BT (boattail), Sd (Standard deviation)

muzzle energy of the .50 BMG cartridge, make shooting from a bench or bipod rest an absolute must. Any attempt to shoot off-hand would be nothing more than a fool-hardy stunt.

The machined aluminum buttstock is attached to the fore-end by three large hex-head machine screws. The aluminum cheekpiece is coated with vinyl for shooter comfort. In addition, two hex-head screws allow 2" of vertical adjustment to accommodate shooter preference with scopes and rings of different heights. The right side of the cheek piece is open to allow for operation of the bolt and it cannot be reversed for left-handed shooters. In another nod to

muzzle brake proved its effectiveness. Perceived recoil was comparable to that from a 12-ga. shotgun.

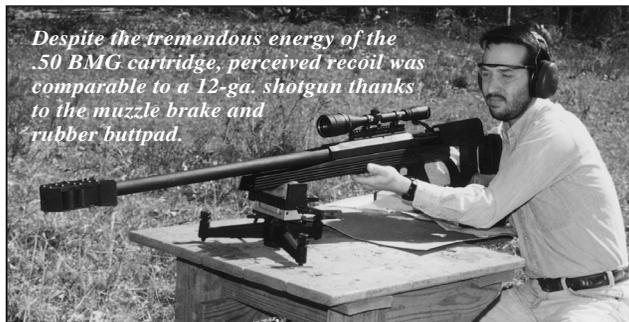
For accuracy testing, we fitted a 16X Burris Posi-Lock scope with adjustable parallax. Because .50 BMG ammo is not commonly available at sporting goods stores, we took ArmaLite's recommendation to try ammunition from The Hunting Shack (Dept. AR, P.O. Box 7465, Missoula, MT 59807). The cartridges featured new Winchester brass and moly-coated 750-gr. Hornady A-Max bullets. The AR-50 averaged respectable 1.34 m.o.a. groups at 100 yds., which is the standard distance for "Dope Bag" testing of center-

fire rifles. The rifle turned in its smallest groups at the end of the testing, indicating it might do better with a longer break-in period.

Although shooting the AR-50 and the powerful .50 BMG cartridge is a truly thrilling experience, it was also a reminder that shooting at long distances requires judicious selection of shooting accessories and ammunition along with lots of practice.

The AR-50 is, as of this writing, the most affordable commercially produced rifle chambered for .50 BMG. As such, it gives shooters interested in the challenge of long-range shooting with such a powerful cartridge an alternative to the more expensive custom-made rifles that currently dominate the market. In sum, the AR-50's low price and mild recoil break down many of the financial and performance hurdles for novice .50 BMG shooters.

Despite the tremendous energy of the .50 BMG cartridge, perceived recoil was comparable to a 12-ga. shotgun thanks to the muzzle brake and rubber buttpad.



ARMALITE AR-50

MANUFACTURER: ArmaLite (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 299, Geneseo, IL, 61254; (309) 944-6939; www.armalite.com

CALIBER: .50 BMG (Browning Machine Gun)

ACTION TYPE: single-shot bolt-action rifle

RECEIVER: forged carbon steel

FINISH: steel components are Parkerized and aluminum parts anodized to the same matte black finish.

OVERALL LENGTH: 59"

BARREL: 31" long, 1.3" diameter, round contour

RIFLING: eight-groove, 1:15" RH twist

WEIGHT: 41 lbs., 8 ozs.

MAGAZINE: none

TRIGGER: single-stage, 4-lb. pull

SIGHTS: no metallic sights, short range and long range Weaver-style scope bases are provided.

STOCK: integral aluminum: length of pull 13 3/4"; drop at heel 1 1/4"; drop at comb 1/4"

ACCESSORIES: short- and long-range scope bases.

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$2,512

shooter comfort, a 1" thick Decelerator soft rubber recoil pad is attached to the buttplate, which like the cheekpiece can be raised or lowered with two hex-head screws.

A bolt secures the pistol grip to the anodized aluminum trigger guard, which surrounds a grooved Remington Model 700-style, two-stage trigger.

The action is tapped for the attachment of one of two anodized aluminum bases included with the rifle. To prevent shifting under recoil forces and to improve the base's contact with the action, a T-shaped groove is cut in the action to correspond with lugs on the bottom of the bases.

The AR-50 uses a 30" heavy-contour barrel that is 1.7" in diameter where it threads into the action, but tapers quickly to 1.3" about 4" ahead of where it meets the action. Rifling is eight-groove with a 1:15" twist.

In an effort to reduce perceived recoil, a unique muzzle brake is threaded to the end of the barrel. ArmaLite tells us the octagonal design with three baffles mounted on the AR-50 provides optimum recoil reduction. During function testing of the AR-50, the

shooter comfort, a 1" thick Decelerator soft rubber recoil pad is attached to the buttplate, which like the cheekpiece can be raised or lowered with two hex-head screws.



The AR-50 uses a three-lug bolt design. The bolt face, with its Sako-style extractor and plunger ejector, is recessed for cartridge case head support.