While U.S. Repeating Arms Co., makers of Winchester rifles and shotguns, has closed its New Haven, Conn. plant, it has introduced new guns—such as the Super-X rifle and Win. 290 bolt-action—and its Select over-unders, Super-X shotguns and vintage 1885 and 1895 rifles are still going strong. The Herstal Group owns Fabrique Nationale, USRAC and Browning, and we’ve seen several versions of the 1895 under both the Browning and now the Winchester names. One of the most interesting is the Limited Series Take-Down Model 1895 chambered in .405 Win. that was made at the request of firearm distributor Davidson’s.

After leaving the Oval Office, U.S. President and NBA Life Member Theodore Roosevelt and his son Kermit made a trip to Africa in 1909. Among his rifles were four Winchester Model 1895s in .405 Win. Roosevelt ordered many of his lever-action Winchesters as take-downs, and Davidson’s recently reviewed the 1895 (January 2003, p. 42), the latest version of the 1895 produced by Miroku is a take-down version that breaks into a handy, two-piece package measuring a mere 25”—just as TR would have ordered.

The blued-steel receiver has the scalloped sides of the later 1895s. In the Model 1895’s lever engages a lock that extends from the bottom tang, and a rearward projecting lug holds the lever assembly closed until the fingers of the hand inside the lever press its articulated lower downward as part of the natural cycling of the lever. Unless fully closed and locked, the trigger is disconnected from the hammer. Taking down the 1895 is via a crosshatched tab on the fore-end’s bottom rear that is 1/8” wide by 3/8” long. Pressing it forward out of its recess on the receiver’s bottom front allows the barrel assembly to be rotated 90 degrees to the left and pulled forward off the receiver. The barrel has 15, 5/8”-wide interrupted threads on its top, and its recess on the receiver’s bottom rear that is 1/8” wide by 3/8” long. Pressing it forward out of its recess on the receiver’s bottom front allows the barrel assembly to be rotated 90 degrees to the left and pulled forward off the receiver. The barrel has 15, 5/8”-wide interrupted threads on its top and bottom for its last 13/16” that is a cut at 12 o’clock on the barrel’s rear shoulder for the bolt’s top-mounted extractor, and its bottom is ramped to smoothly feed the cartridges from the magazine. The ejector, by the way, is on the bottom of the recessed bolt face.

As with other rear sights, the 1895s the gun uses coil rather than leaf springs, and the geometry of the firing pin, hammer and trigger are modified from the original design to accommodate the rifle’s internal safety mechanism. A block prevents the rebonding hammer from traveling fully forward to strike the rear of the firing pin unless the trigger is pulled. Locking is by way of a vertically sliding bolt on the inside rear of the receiver. There is no half-cock, as a tang safety has been added. Pressing it rearward to the “on” position moves a block inside the receiver into the hammer’s path, preventing it from striking the firing pin.

Loading the four-round-capacity fixed box magazine starts with placing the cartridge upright between the feed lips against the follower, then pushing it down and rearward. The process is repeated with each round to ensure the top cartridge’s rim is ahead of those below it. Since the cartridges are arranged vertically in the box, pointed bullets may be safely used.

The straight-grip stock is of well-finished walnut, and there are bordered-point panels of checkering on either side of the wrist. There are also panels on the left, right and bottom of the schnabel fore-end. The butt is capped by a steel, shotgun-style buttplate. On the range, the rifle performed fairly well, considering the semi-buckhorn sights aren’t well-suited for precision shooting. With Hornady ammunition, groups averaged 3½” at 100 yds. Shooting conditions that day were less than optimal—a stiff breeze made trying to hold a still picture a real challenge—and the rifle’s 6½ lb single-stage trigger didn’t help much. One group had four shots into 1½”; a fifth shot opened it to 4½”. With the rear sight elevator in the lowest position, groups printed some 13” high. A taller front sight or lower elevator (available from Brownells) would rectify this issue.

Overall, our impression of the 1895 Take-Down was very favorable. The deep, rich bluing was smooth and even, demonstrating some of the best polish we’ve seen on a factory rifle in some time. Recoil, while brisk, wasn’t a problem. Simply put, this was one of the most enjoyable guns we’ve had at the range in some time. Add in the historical tie to Theodore Roosevelt, and you have a nostalgic, handy-to-transport, big-bore rifle ready for the game fields of Africa—or merely a trip to the nearest range. [Images of the rifle's specifications and features]
P
roduced as a duty gun for a
German police agency, the
Heckler & Koch P2000 is a
light, slim and fully ambidextrous
polymer-frame pistol. The only
catch is that its long and heavy
double-action-only trigger pull—a
system H&K calls the Law Enforce-
ment Modification or LEM—is not
conducive to practical accuracy.
In response to consumer desire
for a more precise trigger, H&K
introduced a double-action/single-
action P2000 variant at the 2005
SHOT Show. Sharing the same
nomenclature as the USP family of
pistols, the gun was called the
P2000 Variant 3. But unlike the rest
of the USP family, the V3 is a dedi-
cated double-action/single-action
pistol that cannot be retrofitted
with the LEM trigger system.
A quick look at the V3 reveals
that H&K dropped the familiar side-
mounted USP decocker/safety lever
in favor of a decoder mounted on
the left rear of the frame next to
the hammer. More a button than a
lever, this decoder precludes any levers
that could hang up on clothing
and increase the thickness of the
gun. More importantly, the gun still
remains totally ambidextrous. You
simply reach back with the weak
hand and depress the gun with a
press of the button. As unwieldy
and unusual as the decoder looks,
it’s simple to master.
The gun is built around a poly-
mer frame and weighs a scant
23 ozs. In lieu of the proprietary
H&K rail found on USP pistols, the
frame has a more sensible Picatinni rail for illumination acces-
sories. The rail is molded into panels on the P2000’s front and
backstraps, but it is not nearly as aggressive as the USP’s diamond-
point checking. A matte-black nitro-carburized finish H&K calls
Hostile Environment is applied to the slide and other metal parts.
Disassembly is simple. Just drop the magazine and align a
square notch on the left side of the frame to release the slide, barrel
and guide rod/recoil spring assembly come off, and the
left-hand slide-release lever comes out of the frame. The right-hand
lever stays attached to the frame. The pistol utilizes the Browning
linkless design found on so many semi-autos these days, with one
additional feature. A polymer, recoil-absorbing bushing rides up
down and the steel guide rod. This bushing is found in both the P2000
and USP compact pistols.
The barrel is 3½” long and features polygonal rifling. The
tactical 7.5” barrel can be had at no additional cost. The P2000
comes with four backstraps, two magazines, lockable carry
FTG-Hand-SB-F-11
H&K P2000 V3
MANUFACTURER: HECKLER & KOCH
GUSM, D-78722 OVERBERG,
NECKLASS, POSTACH 1329,
GERMANY; WWW.HECKLER-KOCH.DE
IMPORTER: HECKLER & KOCH, INC. (DEPT.
ARR, 21480 PACIFIC BLVD., STERLING, VA
20166; (703) 450-1900; WWW.USA.COM
CALIBER: 9x19 MM, .357 SIG, .40 S&W (TESTED)
ACTION TYPE: SHORT-RECOIL-OPERATED
SEMIAUTOMATIC PISTOL
FRAME: FIBERGLASS-REINFORCED
POLYMER
BARREL: 3½” CHROME-MOLY STEEL
RIFLING: SIX-GROOVE POLYGONAL 1:16
MAGAZINE: 12-ROUND, DETACHABLE BOX
(14-ROUND CAPACITY FOR 9X19 MM
AND .357 SIG)
SIGHTS: REAR NOTCH AND FRONT POST
ALIGN THREE WHITE DOTS, DRIFT-
ADJUSTABLE FOR VERTICAL
TRIGGER PULL: DOUBLE-ACTION (3.5-LEBS.
PULL), SINGLE-ACTION (4.0-LEBS. PULL)
OVERALL LENGTH: 7”
WIDTH: 1½”
HEIGHT: 5”
WEIGHT: 23 OZS.
ACCESSORIES: FOUR REPLACEABLE BACK-
STRAPS, TWO MAGAZINES, LOCKABLE CARRY
CASE, SLIP-ON GRIPS
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $887

H&K mounted the P2000 V3’s decoder on the left rear of its frame (arrow)
to minimize the number of controls mounted to the side of the gun
that could hang up on clothing or add unnecessary width.

The double-action/single-action P2000 V3, unlike other H&K pistols,
cannot be retrofitted with the double-action-only law-enforcement trigger.
The frame is dedicated to one firing mode or the other. The polymer
frame is fully adjustable for grip size through an ingenious system
of replaceable backstraps. A pin and dovetail hold the backstrap in place.

Where this pistol shines is on the
range. Our sample pistol was cham-
bered for .40 S&W, and function
fire yielded no jams. The pistol
is shipped to the range with a
heavy 180-gr. load plus a
manageable recoil of 165- and
185-gr. loads. Five, five-shot groups fired for accuracy at
25 yds. averaged 3.47” with Reming-
ton’s 165-gr. Golden Saber jacketed
hollow points. The pistol is quick to
the target and points well for those
who prefer the more aggressive
grip angles of modern designs.
The first shot heads downward
after a 10-lb trigger pull, and sub-
sequent rounds are released after a
sweet single-action pull of just 4 lbs.
It was a delight to cock the hammer
and hit falling plates at extended
distances instead of fighting through
a long double-action trigger pull.
So what’s the big deal about
the single-action option in a carry gun?
Many would argue that consistency
is the key, but a dire situation could
demand pinpoint accuracy. The
P2000 V3 has a desirable blend of
accuracy and controllability that
make it ideal for service, sport or
licensed carry.
Since Carl Zeiss handcrafted his first simple microscope in a small German workshop in 1847, the company that bears his name has grown into a world leader in the manufacture of optics for medical, industrial and sporting use. In the latter category, Zeiss riflescopes and binoculars enjoy a reputation as top-tier glass.

Recent years have seen the company employ computer-aided design and advanced materials to realize often mutually exclusive attributes: light weight and optical flawlessness. That accomplishment is soundly demonstrated in the Victory binocular line. Originally offered in 7x42 mm, 8x42 mm, 10x42 mm, 8x56 mm and 10x56 mm sizes, it now includes the smallest and lightest Victories yet: the 8x32 mm and 10x32 mm T* FLs.

We had the opportunity to field test the 8x32 mm Victory FLs during a whitetail deer cull on Texas’ sprawling King Ranch, where their under-20-oz. weight went nearly unnoticed while worn around the neck during several long, hot days of glassing and shooting.

The Victory FL benefits from a number of ergonomic and mechanical features. Inside, a polycarbonate chassis promotes precise optical alignment and low overall weight. Outside, trim rubber armoring protects the binocular and, with the addition of raised ridges on each barrel, enhances the user’s grip. Finer ridges around the central focusing knob facilitate fast, precise adjustments, advancing the full range—from 6½ ft. to infinity—in one-and-one-fifth revolutions. The knob rotates easily and smoothly, but it offers enough resistance to retain its setting. Finally, counterclockwise rotation of the eyecups extends them to one of three tactilely distinct settings.

Of course, at the top levels of price, attendant levels of optical quality are expected, and the FL does not disappoint. Compact Abbe-Koenig prisms, proprietary high-transmission coatings and extra-low-dispersion Schott fluoride glass—hence the FL designation—produce a crisp image.

Resolution, as judged on improved test targets, was excellent and proved a boon in making field evaluations of deer. Contrast, too, appeared excellent, rendering considerable detail in the shadows and allowing noticeable differentiation between various natural objects. No distortion or collimation imperfections were detected. In short, the FL exhibited outstanding optical performance.

The smallest and lightest binocular in Zeiss’ top-of-the-line Victory series is the 8x32 mm T* FL. Dioptr adjustment are set simply by raising the focusing knob, to reveal a +/- scale, and then rotating it to index with a triangular indicator on the bridge (r.). The eyecups (far r.) feature tactilely distinct settings.

While it does not gather as much light as other models in the Victory line, the Zeiss Victory 8x32 mm T* FL, nonetheless, offers a bit more capability in that area than the 10x32 mm model and is more than adequate for general use during normal hunting hours. It is pricey, but it offers optical performance equaling or exceeding anything in its category.

For our money, when the use demands the best compact, lightweight binocular available, the Victory 8x32 is an assuring choice.

**ZEISS VICTORY 8X32mm T* FL**

**Manufacturer:** Carl Zeiss Sports Optics, Grolestrasse 3-5, D-35576, Wetzlar, Germany

**Importer:** Carl Zeiss Optical, Inc. (Dept. AR), 13005 N. Kingston Ave., Chester, VA 23836; (800) 441-3005; www.zeiss.com

**Magnification:** 8x

**Objective Diameter:** 32 mm

**Twilight Factor:** 16

**Exit Pupil:** 4 mm

**Interpupillary Distance:** 52-74 mm

**Field of View:** 420 ft. @ 1,000 yds.

**Eye Relief:** 16 mm

**Close Focus:** 6½ ft.

**Dioptr Adjustment:** +/-4

**Dimensions:** 4¾" H, 3¾" W, 2¾"

**Weight:** 19¾ ozs.

**Accessories:** Nylon soft case, one-piece ocular/two-piece objective rubber lens caps, neckstrap and lens-cleaning cloth

**Suggested Retail Price:** $1,647