

I just found this web page, I'm behind the times, but just wanted to pass it along for the monthly report if others had not seen it..

<http://www.mauser-werke.de/>

Jack (jbelew@hiwaay.net)

The Monster M98 Brno Saga

By: John Brown (baysidec@aol.com)

(Ed. - This article is posted on John's website at <http://www.baysidec.com/jb/firearms/rifles/> and is occasionally updated. It is reprinted here with his permission.)

Having been reared in Alabama in those days when our constitution was considered by legislators to be more than a piece of antiquated paper, I perceive guns, hunting, self-defense, marksmanship, and second amendment rights to be important parts of my culture.

I have always been a "practical" shooter who sporadically concentrates on those marksmanship skills required for whitetail deer hunting, quail hunting, and for self-defense. I have never been a bench-rest shooter; however earlier this year I asked an old friend and highly competent gunsmith to help me create a rifle for bench shooting. Since I wanted to use a particular WWI M98 Brno action which I already owned, we decided to re-barrel the action with one of Rick's surplus military .30 caliber machine gun barrels and to chamber the barreled action in .308 (because the .308 is generally recognized as the most accurate round in the .30 caliber family).

My friend, Rick Rankin, is the owner of the Lock and Gunsmith in Pensacola, Florida, at (850) 434-2656 and of course he performed all the major metal tasks which included rebarreling, chambering, bolt alterations, drilling and tapping and the eventual blueing. Rick has been building custom rifles for at least 25 years and places his name next to the barrel's caliber markings. He has played the major role in helping me to create at least a half-dozen rifles. Regarding anticipated overall accuracy, neither of us knew what the specifications were for the surplus military barrel, therefore, although the barrel was brand new, the entire venture was a gamble from the beginning. I decided to use the original Mauser stock until the rifle's accuracy could be determined.

The stock decision presented a couple of anticipated dimensional problems because the barrel is 1.25 inches in outside diameter, 24 inches long, and weighs close to nine pounds! (Paul Mauser obviously did not intend for his M98 stock design to accommodate such a monster barrel.) After removing much excess wood from the stock and adding a recoil pad, I managed an adequate barrel-channel cut in the first eight inches of the forearm forward of the recoil lug; there is a sliver of wood remaining on either side of the barrel. The most tedious remaining task was to inlet the stock's trigger area to accommodate a Timney trigger housing. After all of this work, I decided to use a couple of coats of Birchwood Casey's Walnut Stain and TruOil on the temporary stock.

Cost and immediate availability led me to purchase high-style rings for the Weaver bases in order to accommodate a Simmons 6.5X-20X scope with a 44mm objective lens. Mounting the scope was a piece of cake; there is roughly .25 inch clearance between the bottom of the scope's objective lens and the top of the barrel. However, the overall rifle performance has prompted me to purchase a nice thumbhole style walnut stock containing some fancy figure. The stock was ordered from Great American Gunstock Company, Yuba City, California, (916) 671-4570, Henry Pohl, proprietor. Henry Pohl is an extremely knowledgeable stockmaker who worked for many years with Bishop before Bishop was purchased by Fajen. Henry had the distinct pleasure of knowing Len Brownell and includes a very nice biographical sketch and tribute to Len Brownell in the Great American Gunstock catalog.

My stock was delivered in the first week of October. As advertised, the semi-finished stock was quite rough in shape and finish, but had plenty of foreend beef to accommodate the monster barrel. Although the stock had been machine inletted, final inletting proved to be extremely time-consuming and tedious for a weekender using only small files, rasps, chisels, a Dremel tool, and a manual barrel channel cutter. As purchased, the stock inletting did not provide relief for the military-style magazine floorplate catch, and the inletting for the forward portion of the trigger guard piece was a bit too short. For those wishing to economize on stock purchases, but with limited time for stock work, I would recommend the 90% finished stocks rather than the semi-finished category.

Anyway, after many tedious hours, depth of inletting was adjusted and a very nice wood-to-metal fit was achieved. After final fitting, the recoil lug and barrel channel were glass-bedded using Brownell products, and a Pachmeyer recoil pad was installed; final exterior shaping was then accomplished. During the shaping process, a large belt sander helped with the forearm and the straight portions of the stock, but small sanding drums were time savers on the irregular surfaces and pistol grip area.

After final shaping, hand sanding, and drilling for sling swivel studs, the stock was finished with Birchwood Casey products. I've added a Harris BR (bench rest model) bipod and it appears that the bipod will greatly improve consistency of stability from the bench (if dry-firing from the backyard picnic table is any indication.) The Harris bipod attaches to the front sling swivel stud only, but it is incredibly stable.

In any case I am currently very satisfied with the "finished" rifle. Overall the appearance is quite pleasing and the potential function has been proved. I have shown the rifle to a few people and have received a standing offer for purchase should I decide to sell. I will try to visit the range before Christmas with time and resources for another accuracy shoot. Stay tuned...

Another Great Pawn Shop Find

By: Bob Arthur (boba100@aol.com)

Imagine my surprise to run into (and buy) this little carbine at a pawn shop, and per the ticket it had been there for two months. The guys in the shop didn't know what they had as it was listed as a "Gustafs" and part of the serial number was listed as the caliber. Anyway, after looking it over carefully, I let'em sell it to me. All the numbers match, but since it had been "sporterized", the bands and nose cap are gone. Whoever did the woodwork (stock number matches also), did an extremely fine job of lightening the stock, cutting it back to the step and of course, the top grip is gone. They inlaid a darker wood into the area of the brass disc and sling "cut through" and its a good fit--appears to g all the way through the stock. Having been fooled once on a counterfeit 94, I looked at this one very carefully, and unless I've been fooled again, its authentic, short sight base and 1600 meter sight, gripping grooves about 6' long and correct looking bent bolt handle. I'm looking for a correct stock, nose cap and bands now. The trigger guard has been narrowed for that "sporterized" look, I suppose, and that's the only metal that was worked on so I might try to find one of those, which causes a mismatched s/n.

This is a 1914 Gustafs, 55,000 series, serial number, and unless Al Castle or someone tells me different, I'm going to believe it's an 1894. Nice little carbine and I made a nice little deal and it's a keeper any way you go about it.

Thought you might be interested in this latest find.

Publisher's Comments

By: Ward M. Clark (wclark1046@aol.com)

To start with, let me apologize for this issue being a few days late. Packing to move has screwed up my routine pretty good, but we move on the 14th and things should be sorted out before next issue is due.

The long-awaited and hoped-for Clark rifle range will have to wait a while longer, though. My search for a rural property within commuting range of the Denver metro area proved fruitless... all the properties as far east as Byers (about 40 miles east of town) are zoned for development, which of course means no shooting range. We settled for a bigger house here in Aurora, with a big workshop area. A few more years and I'll look for a piece of property in the mountains, and then the range will be a going concern.

Moving a considerable arsenal is always a daunting prospect, especially in these days of Political Correctness. You never know how new neighbors will react. Packing up a workshop and a large number of quality firearms is a not inconsiderable task, after all. A good thing for gun collectors, Mauser fans included, to consider reviewing is their homeowner's insurance.

Most insurance companies, it seems, will only cover firearms (for theft) up to \$1,000 on a standard policy. That's two guns, maybe three. If you have a large number of firearms, it's worth your while to look into a "rider" to cover your collection at a higher amount. If there are any insurance types out there, maybe you could enlighten us all a bit more as to specifics of insuring gun collections.

My thanks to Bob Arthur for his relation of the M94 Swede Pawn Shop find, and to John Brown for permission to reprint the Monster Rifle saga. The Monthly has been a little lean lately, so let's keep those shooting stories and tips coming... We've had two great years, here, with the Monthly, and I'm looking forward to keeping this going for quite a while – but I need help from all of you good readers in sharing your stories, questions, and knowledge with the rest of us. Keep 'em coming!

Until next month - Good Shooting!

Ward