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Reader's comments

Ward,

I just received the June edition of a South African hunting magazine I subscribe to. One of the regular advertisers had a page long add stating that the Mauser Oberndorf factory was closing it's doors for good. The ad also said that firearms with the Mauser name weren't going to be manufactured by anyone else. This was mentioned in conjunction with the fact that this importer had snagged the last batch of various firearms.

I haven't been able to substantiate or disprove the information. Maybe you can do better than I can on this matter. I haven't been able to access Mauser's web page for several months.

PS I guess I should have pawned one of my kids and picked up one of the magnum actions that Cape Outfitters was importing for \$1100.</HTML>

Eric (Mauser416@aol.com)

(Anyone have any hard info on this? -Ward)

(From last month)

Ward,

I've come across and idea for the monthly. I've considered applying for a Curio and Relics License. I don't know where to start or what the requirements are. Is there any amount of recordkeeping necessary once licensed? I'm sure one of our fellow Mauserist's has a C&R. Their incite and helpful hints would make a great article.

(This month)

Here is what you need:

<http://www.shelfspace.com/~c-r-ffl/>

This is the home page of the C&R listserver - run by and for C&R licensees. It has instructions for applying, and what can and cannot be done with a C&R license. In the event you would like to subscribe to the list, here is how:

C&R FFL LIST

E-mail: subscribe c-r-ffl to majordomo@shelfspace.com to be ADDED

E-mail: unsubscribe c-r-ffl to majordomo@shelfspace.com to be REMOVED

Hope this helps!

Best regards,

Kyrie (Kyrieellis@aol.com) >

From my private collection. I am offering these for the first time!

(1) Argentine Mauser M-1909 rifle (Ball's Book page 14), 7.65x53mm. Matching numbers. Rod and bayonet adaptor present. Bright bore. Wood and metal VG (minor storage dings only). \$199. (Bayonet and scabbard available for \$59, with the sale of the rifle.)

(2) Mosin-Nagant M-91/30 w/rod and sling. Wood and metal very clean, may have been un-issued since WWII rebuild. Bright bore. \$149.

(3) Belgian Mauser M-1889/36 Short Rifle (Ball's Book page 20), 7.65x53mm. Has rod and stacking swivel. Wood and metal vg, w/bright bore. This is a rare Mauser, bearing NO import marks, \$399.

(4) Swedish Mauser M-96, dated 1915, w/matching numbers and #1 marked bore. NO import marks. Does have a clear Finnish property mark. \$189.

(5) Italian Carcano M-1941 (Crown/FAT/41 marked). Has original rod and sling. NO import marks. Matching numbers. \$159

(6) Soviet Tokarev semi-auto rifle w/rod and sling. Dated 1941 and bearing Finnish property mark. Has scope rail. NO import mark. \$399

(7) Mosin-Nagant M-1891. Tikka (Finnish, now a hard to find variant) rebuild 1941. Finn stock, swivels, front sight. Has rod. Stock has sharp cartouche on right side of butt. Stock is in vg condition, save for a few storage dings and a 1/8" deep scrape near the swivel on the right butt. Balance of wood and metal very nice, w/bright bore. \$149.

Need FFL or C&RFFL copy to ship. Can provide additional info on any piece.

Have many more mil-surp pieces to sell.

Steve Ashe (stevena@clark.net)

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<http://www.clark.net/~karina/rcsbio.htm>

M1893 Spanish Mauser - Chambered in .22 Rimfire

By: Kyrie Ellis (Kyrieellis@aol.com)

OK, folks, brace yourselves...

I have a neat, and puzzling, new rifle ;-)

It is a Model 1983 Mauser. Bolt face square at bottom, guide rib in left receiver rail, straight walnut stock, ladder rear sight marked 4 to 20, serial number "S 171". The full serial is repeated on receiver, barrel, and stock. Small parts numbered "171". Most common inspection marks are a circled "L" and what is either a circled "P" or a circled bomb with a short fuse <smile>.

It has been converted to .22 rimfire.

The barrel has been sleeved to .22 caliber. Only a careful examination of the muzzle reveals the sleeve; original muzzle contour is preserved. When I examined the breech end of the barrel I could not detect a sleeve.

The top rear of the receiver ring has been milled out forward. This cut extends from approximate 11 o'clock to approximately 2 o'clock. When the bolt is in and locked down approximately the rear 0.40 inch of the top locking lug is clearly visible in this cut. There is a very faint outline of the forward most part of a crest on the top of the receiver, but most of the crest was removed with the receiver ring. This faint outline is consistent in shape with those on the Model 1892 and 1893 Spanish Mausers shown on page 217 of Ball's "Mauser Military Rifles of the World."

The bolt conversion is complex. The inside of the bolt body has been drilled out to within 0.04 inch of the bolt face. The firing pin hole has been enlarged to 0.6 inch (presumably to hold the case head of a .22 rimfire cartridge). At the very edge of this enlargement, another hole 0.13 inch in diameter has been drilled for the rimfire firing pin; this new firing pin hole is at 6 o'clock on the bolt face (bottom of bolt face, above square bottom of bolt face). Looking down into the bolt body from the rear I can see a slotted screw. Apparently the inside front of the bolt body has been threaded, and the rimfire firing pin unit screwed into forward most part of the bolt body. Pressure on this with a cleaning rod reveals the rimfire firing pin in the bolt face - I can feel a firing pin return spring. This rimfire firing pin unit is 3.84 inches deep in the bolt body.

Bolt body has spots of dark discoloration. I suspect this may be rust pitting, but it may be caked cosmoline. I need to take the time to sit down with solvent and a bronze brush before I'll know for sure one way or the other.

The (I think) original firing pin has been shortened to a new length of 5.265 inches, and a round cap of 0.468 inch diameter and a rim thickness of 0.089 thickness has been attached to the front of the firing pin. This "cap" is convex toward the front. I believe this is the original firing pin rather than a special purpose firing pin as it has the same inspection marks noted above. The firing pin has, in short, been converted to a hammer for the .22 rimfire firing pin unit. Interestingly enough, this is a system similar to that used on the Star Model 110 self-loading .22 rifle (see the GPC catalog).

The extractor claw has been lengthened to reach, and extract, the .22 rimfire case.

The original magazine box, floor plate, spring, and follower are still present. The rear of the magazine follower has been ground (and highly polished) to allow the bolt to over ride it.

This is, at least to me, a fascinating rifle. All parts that are numbered (which does not include the barrel bands and butt plate) are numbered "171". This serial number is located slightly forward of dead center on the side rail; the stock serial number is directly below, and lined up with, the receiver serial number. Stock has some very minor dings, and a couple of marks that may be cartouches but are too small to make out. Bluing is 99%+. All of the metal covered by the wood was coated in the oldest cosmoline I've ever seen. It might have been possible to cut it with a sharp knife, but the knife would not have been sharp for long <smile>. I ended up soaking the action in solvent for a couple of hours and then spending three hours using 0000 steel wool soaked in more solvent to break up the cosmoline enough I could flush it away.

We know (at least I think we know <wry smile>) that the rifle has been refinished at some point in time. The removal of the chamber crest would have left bare metal and it is nicely blued now. Whenever and by whomever the refinish was done, it is a rust blue. And a very professionally done rust blue - color is uniform and deep, deep blue.

For safety's sake I'm going to make the assumption this conversion pre-dates high velocity .22 rimfire ammunition and fire it only with standard velocity ammunition. The twenty-nine inch barrel will hurt muzzle velocity badly, but the long sighting radius should make this one easy to shoot accurately at long range. I care less about how fast the bullet arrives than I do about being able to choose exactly where it arrives

<smile>, so I do not view low velocity as being necessarily bad. I'm going to have to find a place I can shoot it at distance out to about 400 meters - with 2000 meter sights I should find some setting that will be close to "on" at least that far out :-)

Addendum...

I took along the Spanish Model 1893, converted to .22 rimfire to the range yesterday. I thought I'd really wring this one out and took a number of different types of .22 Long Rifle standard velocity ammunition, only to learn it is chambered for the .22 Short! Hadn't thought to bring any standard velocity Shorts along, so had to buy what was available at the range. Which was Winchester .22 CB Short.

I have to tell you firing .22 CB caps out of a long barreled rifle in a Mauser action with its long lock time is quite an experience. It's a little like firing a flint lock; there is a pause between the time the trigger breaks and the bullet leaves the barrel. I swear it was about a tenth of a second from the time the striker fell until the "pumpf" of the bullet leaving the muzzle. We're talking having to pay serious attention to follow through here :-)

In any event, here are the group sizes are center to center.

- Firearm: Spanish M1893, converted to .22 Short
- position : improvised benchrested
- target : NRA 75 foot Small Bore Rifle Target
- distance : 25 yards (measured, formal range)
- ammo : Winchester 22CB Short
- sights : Issue, military
- group size 1: 0.95 inch (five round group)
- group size 2: 0.93 inch (five round group)
- group size 3: 1.09 inch (five round group)

Next time I'll remember to take along some RWS .22 Short standard velocity ammunition. I think, with ammunition that leaves the barrel on the same day it is fired, I can do a little better than one inch groups at 25 yards :-)

A Mauser 'Scout' - New Zealand Style.

By: David Mack (davidmac@paradise.net.nz)

When Steyr finally brought their "Scout" rifle to market last year after it's long gestation period many traditionalists were taken aback. Looking more like a refugee from the armoury aboard the Starship Enterprise than the blued steel and fine walnut creations of one of Austria's oldest gunmakers the new all purpose Scout was something of a shock to the senses.

Jeff Cooper, the American gun writer who proposed and tirelessly lobbied for the concept of the ideal general purpose rifle, has been fulsome in his praise for the Steyr rifle which he says is probably the best out of the box rifle in the world today.

This however is not another story about the production 'Steyr Scout' rather it is the tale of how an old (1935 vintage) and rather beaten up VZ 33 carbine bought at auction for \$60 was built into something resembling Jeff Coopers prototype Scout and eventually became a fine rifle that shoots minute of angle groups and is an absolute joy to hunt with for it's accuracy, balance and handiness.

Since Coopers first prototype, a Remington model 600 fitted with a Leupold pistol scope, which he hunted with in South America in the late sixties, the definition of the Scout rifle has been refined by at least two conferences and the input of several of Coopers rifleman friends. For those not familiar with the concept the rifle has to be a maximum of one metre in length, weigh not more than 3.5 Kgs including it's long eye relief, low power scope which is mounted forward of the action. Calibre is to be .308 Win. Stock to be

synthetic with a maximum length of pull of 13.5 inches, fitted with three flush mounted sling swivels, a bipod and butt mounted cartridge container for an additional five rounds. The rifle should also be equipped with iron sights as back up in case of scope failure.

Having been a shotgun shooter before coming to New Zealand I could see the advantages of a low power scope far enough forward to be able to use both eyes to acquire and aim at the target. About the time I was becoming seriously interested in the idea and taking note of the various custom makers in the States who were beginning to offer rifles to a greater or lesser degree similar to Coopers pattern Peter Maxwell published an article in New Zealand guns about his conversion of a Sako Battue carbine into a Scout. That article convinced me to give the idea a go myself.

Not having a rifle suitable to convert or much money to buy one the project didn't get off to a flying start. Then a piece of luck gave it a kick in the pants when I successfully bid \$60 for a VZ 33 carbine at the Wellington Branch Antique Arms auction. The barrel of my new rifle was a bit rough but the small ring Mauser action was just what I needed. The Scout spec. calls for the calibre to be .308 Winchester but as this was to be "my" Scout I did not consider that to be essential and the matter of calibre was effectively decided for me when a few days later I was able to buy a brand new Swedish Bofors barrel ready threaded for the small ring Mauser action and chambered for calibre 6.5x55mm for a bargain basement price. The Swedish cartridge happens to be one of my favourites, superbly accurate and more than powerful enough for anything in New Zealand and I had already got reloading gear for it and a fair bit of experience loading the cartridge. I also had in mind that if the rifle was successful, with light loads, it would be ideal as a first big game rifle for my young son in three or four years time.

The question of the scope sight came next. Peter Maxwell used the Burris Scout scope on his rifle as did a number of other custom Scout builders that I had by this time read about. The scope is good apparently but it was the mount which attaches to the barrel forward of the action which put me off. The Burris mount looks like something left over after Isambard Kingdom Brunel had finished building one of his railway bridges and I really wanted something more elegant. While talking it over with Alan Carr, the Paraparaumu gunsmith, who was to do most of the custom work on the rifle for me Alan suggested that he could profile the barrel and make a set of custom mounts so that I could use the good looking and strong Talley rings of which Alan just happened to have a set! A new Leupold Scout scope - the same as is now standard on the Steyr - was ordered from the States and we were in business.

The parts were handed over to Alan Carr and he replaced the bolt handle, reshaped the trigger guard and tidied up the bottom metal, fitted a Timney trigger, assembled, polished and blued the whole and gave me back the completed barrelled action ready to fit back into the military stock which I had cleaned up ready for test firing.

Using 129 grain Hornady projectiles over 46 grains of AR 2213, a load that shoots well in my 24 inch barrel '96 Swedish Mauser it took only six shots to sight the rifle in at 100 yards. Velocity was a little down the Scout having a barrel length of only 20 inches but at 2550 fps I reckoned it was quite adequate. Recoil was light and accuracy excellent. That first morning I shot a three shot group, which Alan now has on his workshop wall, which measures three eighths of an inch. That group was one of those happy flukes and a more realistic average is between .75 and 1.25 inches for a three shot group.

An opportunity to hunt with the Scout for the first time was after goats in the Wairarapa. The rifle is very comfortable to carry at the trail there being no scope in the way when the rifle is grasped at it's balance point round the magazine. My first shot was a billy at about 75 yards who was dead before he even heard the bang. As the rest of his mob fled uphill I got one classic snap shot at a young billy as he paused momentarily on a rock clear of thick gorse cover. I threw the rifle to my shoulder like a shotgun, with both eyes open, exactly as Jeff Cooper has claimed it can be done, and the young goat came down like a sack of potatoes.

Well, having proved to my satisfaction that the concept and the rifle worked, there remained one stage to complete. The rifle still did not look very handsome in it's cut down, sanded military stock. The Scout rifle is meant to have a synthetic stock and though I need no convincing of the merits of synthetic stocks,

especially for New Zealand conditions, I remain very much a wood and blued steel fan. I did consider, briefly, a McMillan Fibregain synthetic, but in the end ordered a semi inletted, semi fancy American black walnut "Classic Mauser" stock from Fajen. Once again I got Alan Carr to complete the inletting and fit a steel grip cap and a slim "Old English" Pachmayer recoil pad while I supplied the elbow work of sanding and oil finishing the stock before the icing on the cake, the 22 lines per inch checkering, was applied.

They say life is too short to hunt with an ugly rifle. My Scout rifle, whilst in a number of ways failing to conform to Jeff Cooper's rigid specification, is a rifle I am very happy to hunt with or shoot at the range so for me it can class as general purpose. Okay it has cost, all up, rather more than a brand new Sako but it's still cheap by the standard of American custom built rifles. Above all it is to me a beautiful gun that I am proud of, that has given me pleasure at each stage of it's building and shooting and it is a fine and personal artefact which one day I will give to my son who will, I hope, also derive much pleasure from it's use.

Publisher's Comments

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

My thanks, this month, to Kyrie for the fascinating story about a Mauser conversion I doubt many of us have heard of before, and to David Mack for the story of the New Zealand Scout! I must also add my apologies to David for losing his name and e-mail, so his story was delayed a month. We all screw up now and again, and that one was one of mine...

What with slaving away evenings and weekends on *Misplaced Compassion*, I haven't been to the range in a couple months – so my finished M94 Swede conversion remains unfired, since it's rework. I'm working on loading for elk season, though, so I should be on a range soon! Like many of us hard core gun cranks, I start to get withdrawal symptoms if I go without pulling a trigger for too long – and .22's are nice, but it's just not the same.

Rumor has it that the Oberndorf Mauser-Werke is gone the way of the dodo. If anyone can confirm this, we'd all like to have the straight scoop – upon reflection, their latest effort at a sporting rifle, the straight-pull Model 96, received a lukewarm reception. Could it be that Mauser peaked when old Paul drew up the Model 98, and it's been academic since that point? Looking at the hot custom rifle designs of today, one might think so.

To our very good fortune, there are plenty of surplus and commercial Mauser actions available to keep us all in projects and collectibles for years to come.

With summer hot on us, I'm certain there are lots of new acquisitions, new shooting stories, and new gunsmithing tips out there, so write 'em up and send 'em in! September is coming fast, and hopefully I'll get that issue out before the 10th of the month!

Until next month, then;

Good shooting!

Ward