

Five- and ten-round magazines are available from CZ, and they move easily in and out. Perhaps the release could be larger, however, in case the shooter was wearing gloves in cooler weather.

Marlin 880SQ

Our recommendation: The 880SQ, \$294 street price, is a composite-stock gun suitable for rough field work. It could also be used for a young shooter or as a plinker because it is small and accurate enough, but other problems on the gun should discourage you from buying it, we feel.

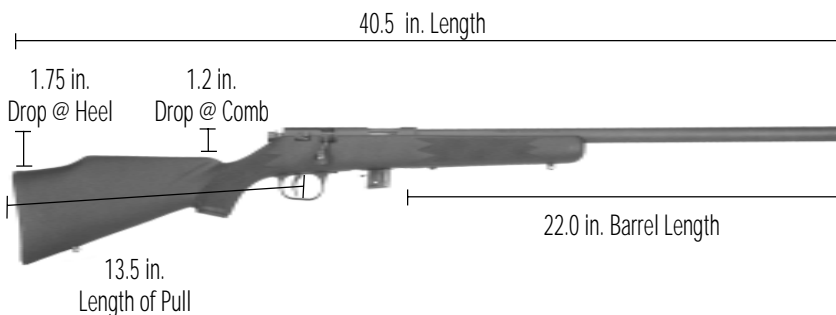
Despite a somewhat gritty trigger that even after break-in resisted up to 5 pounds of finger pressure, the Marlin 880SQ posted a group as small as 0.3 inch with the CCI cartridge, and a group average of 0.7 inches. Firing the Green Tag ammunition, the 880SQ was edged out only by the H&R M12. Shooting the Remington and Lapua ammunition, the Marlin was 0.1 inch behind the CZ in average group size. Unlike the other guns, when we were shooting the Marlin, we were disappointed to find that our point of impact was substantially different for each brand of ammunition despite a consistent point of aim.

Thus, in terms of baseline accuracy off the bench, the Marlin held up fairly well. But how was it in the shooter's hands? In our view, the light stock forces you to hold it tighter to the shoulder to make up for the muzzle heavy feel. The trigger action is heavy, and its narrow surface is serrated, neither of which is overly comfortable. Its overall balance made us very aware of the heavy bull barrel. For a little .22 rifle, it takes a lot of strength and dexterity to handle and shoot the Marlin, in our view.

The 880SQ suffered by comparison in other areas, we thought. The CZ could have used more material around the mag well for a better standing hold. Still, the CZ

MARLIN 880SQ

Price \$294

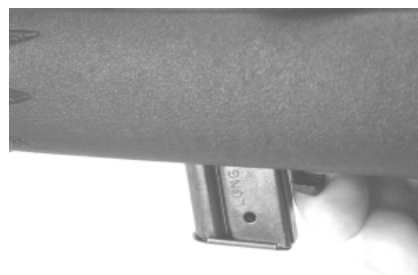


Our recommendation: In this test of low-cost heavy-barrel .22s, this was the only product that felt cheap. We'd pass on it in favor of the CZ as a sporter choice or the CMP gun as an accuracy choice.



SPECIFICATIONS

WARRANTY	Limited Lifetime
FINISH	Black
WEIGHT	6.3 lbs.
MAGAZINE CAPACITY	7
MAGAZINE TYPE	Single Column
FLOORPLATE	None
STOCK MATERIAL	Polymer
ACTION TYPE	Bolt
TRIGGER PULL	5.0 lbs.



The Marlin's magazines hold seven rounds—an odd number—and their floorplates look as though they can be removed for cleaning, but not without some struggle and possible damage. Releasing the mag requires pushing the lever behind the mag to the rear. We haven't found a way to remove the mag with one hand yet.

The Marlin's trigger action is heavy, and its narrow surface is serrated, neither of which is overly comfortable. The synthetic stock is slick at the grip as well, which doesn't help the shooter control the muzzle-heavy gun.



was well balanced. This paid off most notably from the prone position, and if the shooter was seated, the rifle seemed to fall right into

position. Thus, the CZ was the least tiring of the three to shoot. In contrast, the Marlin, with its synthetic stock, was muzzle heavy,