

Rifle Comparison

TWO "NEW" SHOOTING IRONS

The development of these two new cartridges from Weatherby and Remington hasn't spurred parallel introduction of new gun products; rather, these rounds have deepened the companies' existing product lines.

Weatherby is currently chambering the .30-378 in its popular Accumark rifle. Weatherby says the Accumark is its best-selling rifle, and the most popular caliber being chambered for it is the .30-378. It is so popular that demand is far ahead of production. The .30-378 Accumark is Weatherby's entry in the long-range hunting market. The Accumark we tested featured a 26-inch fluted barrel with a detachable muzzle brake. When we shot the gun, we learned the brake effectively controls the fierce recoil of the .30-378—but it was very loud. However, the brake easily screwed off and was replaced with a thread-protecting cap so that the gun can be used for hunting without the noise blast. Another curiosity on the gun was the magazine, which holds only two cartridges as opposed to the three rounds that most magnums handle. The advertised weight was 8.5 pounds, clean and empty. Carrying a massive Leupold 6.5-20X50 MM Euro scope with a 30-mm tube, it weighed just over 10 pounds. The trigger broke nicely at 3.75 pounds straight from the factory.

While we have not compiled an accuracy average for the gun, primarily because much of our load development has been oriented to velocity and has been done under weather conditions not favorable to accuracy shooting, we had many sub-inch groups and more than a few that were under a half-inch. Based on the limited testing we've conducted, there is little doubt that the rifle is accurate.

Initially, Remington will chamber the



Above left: The Weatherby Accumark .30-378 rifle we tested (left) had a 26-inch fluted barrel with a detachable muzzle brake. We also tested the Remington BDL SS DM-B with a 25.5-inch barrel. The Remington is a better walking-around gun, in our view. Above right: Both brakes issued ear-splitting muzzle blasts, a problem in the field. However, the Weatherby's brake (left) can be replaced with a plastic thread cover so the hunter can use the quieted Accumark in the field.

7mm STW in two rifles, the Model 700 Sendero Stainless Fluted and in the Model 700 BDL SS DM-B. The Sendero is varmint-style rifle with a heavy, 26-inch fluted barrel. It is a heavy and extremely accurate rifle designed for long-range shooting, and it is comparable to the Weatherby Accumark in design. Our Remington test rifle was the BDL SS DM-B, which is Rem-speak for a stainless-steel synthetic-stocked rifle with a detachable box magazine and a muzzle brake. This gun has a 25.5-inch barrel and weighs 7.5 pounds bare. When the hunting includes walking, the BDL is a better choice than the Sendero. It comes with a detachable box magazine and a muzzle brake. The box magazine we like, the brake we do not. But let's qualify that statement.

We shoot a lot

and have developed a greater tolerance to recoil than most shooters. This brake is very effective and the gun is pleasant to shoot, but like any brake it is very noisy. This isn't a problem at the range where we wear hearing protection, but such protection is less practical when hunting. Like most other long-time shooters, our hearing loss is getting worse each year, and we prefer to take the recoil to save hearing. However, we recognize that not everybody thinks the same way.

The gun weighed exactly the promised 7.5 pounds without a scope and is just a bit over 8.5 pounds when mounted with a Leupold 4.5-14 Vari-X III scope. The trigger was a bit stiff at 5.5 pounds, but the beauty of the 700 is that any competent gunsmith can adjust the trigger. We took ours down to 2.75 pounds.



Left: The Remington shot 2.01-inch average three-shot 100-yard groups. As good as that is, it is deceiving. The first two groups both measured under 1 inch. The first was the best at 0.85 inch. As bore fouling increased, each successive group was larger than the one before. The ninth group measured 2.9 inches. Bore fouling affecting accuracy is not an uncommon problem, particularly in a stainless-barreled rifle that has not yet been broken in. With a clean bore, we would expect the Remington to shoot around MOA.