

Remington rifle, in itself a thing of beauty, but in this new 8mm chambering, you can get tons of military ammo, dirt cheap! What do I call cheap? How about a cloth bandolier of 70 rounds in stripper clips for under five bucks? Check with your local gun shop or maybe Shotgun News to see some of these great ammunition prices. Of course, these surplus rounds usually have corrosive primers, but as I always give my rifles a good cleaning after a range session, it's no big deal to me. I don't do much rifle cartridge reloading, so having access to a supply of economical cartridges is a big plus and if I want to hunt with the 8mm, 170-grain soft point commercial loads are also readily available. In 8mm your Remington Classic becomes an economical plinker and you can get in tons of practice before the next hunt.

The 8mm Mauser cartridge, also known as the 8x57mm or 7.92x57mm (S) came into its present configuration in 1905. Previously, the 8x57 case carried a bullet with a diameter of 0.318 of an inch, but in the aforementioned year, the cartridge was improved and the bullet diameter increased to 0.323 of an inch with the "S" or spitzer-type bullet shape. All of the Model 1898 Mauser bolt action rifles since that time have been chambered for the improved 8mm cartridge. This Mauser Model 98 rifle and 8mm cartridge served Germany in both world wars and copies of the M-98 in 8mm continued to be used by many countries worldwide for a number of years after WWII. One of my favorites is the Model 1948, which was manufactured in Yugoslavia. I have a like-new condition military configuration rifle of this type in 8mm Mauser, and as much as I enjoy shooting it, I couldn't wait to get to the range with the new Remington!

Gun Details

My test sample Remington 700 Classic arrived at my doorstep just days after the 2004 SHOT Show. It was everything I expected when I opened the carton. A nice looking walnut stock with a soft lustrous finish, and cut checkering on the forearm and pistol grip. The stock appeals to me due to its conservative elegance; no roll-over check piece, pistol grip or forend caps, and none of those appalling white spacers. The plain rubber recoil pad had a black spacer and sling swivels come standard. The tapered, medium weight barrel is 24 inches in length and free-floating for the most part. I could slide a piece of paper down the barrel and under the forearm and it moved freely until it came to the area where the swivel stud is located. The paper would also slide between wood and metal easily once you got beyond that point, on down to the receiver. This version of the Model 700 Classic has the long bolt-action receiver necessitated by the 2.24-inch case length of the 8x57 round. The receiver is drilled and tapped for scope mounts, and open sights aren't provided. The nostalgic part of me would like to see this rifle with a good receiver peep sight and a ramped, gold bead front sight. The portion of the bolt exposed in the ejection/loading port is left in the white and attractively jeweled. The blue bolt handle is checked on the inside and outside of the knob, and the bolt plug of the firing pin assembly protrudes for both a visual and tactile indication that a round is in the chamber. The Model 700 Classic has a hinged floor plate magazine, the catch of which is inside the triggerguard and a 4 + 1 cartridge capacity. A safety lever is located above and just to the rear of the bolt handle. Round in shape and grooved for handy thumb operation - fully forward is the "fire" position and fully to the rear is "safe". The single-stage grooved trigger is crisp with a pull weight of 3.5 pounds.

A close examination of the rear of the bolt disclosed an odd button on the left side, with a curious J-shaped slot in it. This is Remington's new Security System, operated by a key that looks like a small odd-shaped green screwdriver. The metal part of this key is also J-shaped and is inserted into the safety button slot. With the bolt open and to the rear, insert the key into the slot as far as it will go and turn it as far clockwise as you can. When you look at the bolt from the rear, note a white dot is visible on the button. This means the safety device is engaged and you will not be able to close the bolt. To disengage, keep the bolt handle open again and repeat the process only turn the key counter-clockwise, which will expose a red dot and allow you to close the bolt. Never try to force the bolt closed with the white dot showing!

Shooting Glass

I wanted a hunting-type scope for the Model 700 Classic and during the SHOT Show I visited the display booth of Optonics. These folks have a line of sporting lights; spot lights, lights for vehicle applications, and this year have added rifle scopes and binoculars to their extensive catalog. From the Horizon BuckRidge series I selected the BuckRidge 3-9x40mm Variable Power Wide Angle, with a weight of 13 ounces and 12.75 inches in length with aluminum alloy construction and black anodized finish. The optics are fully coated, and the scope is waterproof, fog proof and shock proof. My test scope has a Mil-Dot reticle for multiple aiming points and the Wide Angle feature of the scope gives a 10% greater field of view. The elevation and windage adjustment are quarter-inch click and the knobs are turned by hand. The left side of the scope is adorned with a gold BuckRidge emblem. The Horizon scope is backed by a lifetime warranty for the original owner, regardless of the cause of damage. Now that's a guarantee befitting a knock-around hunting scope. ATK was contacted regarding mounts and provided a set of Weaver Grand Slam bases (S35 48224) and Redfield rings (47242). Both are good quality, solid steel products, with a black matte/satin finish.