

(Enclosure-2)

MODEL #721

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SALES REPRESENTATIVES WHO
CONDUCTED FIELD TESTS

VIRGIL RICHARD - December 1, 1947

1. Bolts on all rifles should be more highly polished even though it might involve a slightly higher list price. A glistening, shiny bolt has exceptional eye appeal and is invaluable from a sales standpoint. Bolt handle, bolt collar and bolt on all three rifles could certainly stand a nicer finish. Under no circumstances should we furnish a bolt with dull appearance of that on Gun #23668. Welding marks can be seen underneath bolt knobs and bolt handles at collars. Another item noticed on Gun #23668 was that scope tap screw on top of receiver collar do not make for good appearance as slots showed. Torcs had to be used with a screw driver.

2. If a small shallow circular groove could be cut in the middle and around the firing pin head and then filled in with red lacquer, it would provide an additional safety feature which is a decided talking point on our popular 22 caliber bolt action line. Even an indented red dot on top of the firing pin head would accomplish if groove is too costly.

H. R. PATTERSON - December 1, 1947

I am very much impressed with the appearance of the new gun with the exception of the trigger guard, especially when you observe the gun from a side view. If the guard could be rounded-off instead of being square, and the floor of the loading box counter-sunk into the stock, it would add to the general appearance of the rifle. The way the guard now looks it seems too much like a Stevens, Mossberg, or Marlin job. I know these are standard models and after we get into production on the better grade rifles this would be eliminated, but if we could improve the standard grades also, it would help the appearance of the rifle a great deal.

I am not an expert on bolt action rifles, but we did have a lot of test we could, and we had a lot of gunners, and a lot of gunners, and a lot of gunners, and they told Harold Purdie and me they liked the way it operated, and were particularly impressed with the trigger pull, as there was no creep or drag, which is common among bolt action rifles. With all this, the factory has done a splendid job on this model and I am sure when we make it in the popular calibers, we shall be able to sell a lot of them in this area.

L. W. JOHNSON - December 1, 1947

The guns have excellent appearance, trim, properly proportioned and very well balanced. Weight is ideal for a hunting rifle. Bolt head design is superior to anything that I have ever seen. Front sight ramp and method of attachment, excellent. Trigger pull on all three guns exceptionally smooth and crisp, in fact it is quite outstanding for a bolt action high-power rifle. Position of the safety is excellent.

The thumb surface of the safety could be a little larger, it is rather hard to operate with cold fingers or with gloves or mitts on.

A longer bolt handle would aid materially in operation of the bolt in a gun equipped with a hunting scope. The present handle is too close to a mounted scope for good operation. I also believe a slightly longer bolt handle would give better appearance to the gun.

A cut out on the receiver channel on the left side for the thumb in loading would aid materially when loading the magazine.

Would it be possible to put a quick release on the magazine floor plate without increasing cost too much? That feature would be quite important in this section of the country as a hunter is required to unload his gun before he can transport it in an automobile or other conveyance, and it is not uncommon for hunters to have to go through this unloading operation several times a day.

R. C. MILLER - December 2, 1947

The rear sight might look to the consumer as being made of light weight material for a rifle of this type, especially if compared with a Model 70. The stock extends a little high on left side along receiver where receiver is tapped for micrometer sight. Seems the stock could be lowered a fraction at this point saving the consumer of cutting into the stock if the installation of this type sight is made.

D. LEE BRAUN - December 2, 1947

#23336 - 40 rounds 150 gr. 30-06 cartridges - The bolt surface could be polished a bit better.

#23807 - 20 rounds 30-06-150 gr. cartridges - Bolt surface should be polished and finished better.

#23807 - 60 rounds 30-06-150 gr. cartridges - Top of bolt and front left rim on bolt should be polished and smoothed so the drag will be less on pulling the bolt to rear. If the bolt is pulled directly to rear there is no drag or lock but in firing the bolt action, experienced riflemen do not want to take the gun from the shoulder, and when gun is left on the shoulder, canting rifle to the right to reload, causes pressure to be pronounced in pulling bolt to the rear. In this act the difficulty was most apparent. Better polish and finishing of the bolt should eliminate this trouble which will be first criticism of shooters.

K. O. SCRIBNER - December 4, 1947

Rifles handle beautifully and with very little recoil considering weight. Shot several rounds thru each gun from the hip without discomfort.

H. H. KUHLMAN - December 5, 1947

I consider the operation of the first rifle to be as near perfect as is possible; operation of the others is equally good with the one exception. When closing the bolt considerable force is necessary to seat the cartridge, especially in rifle 23758. At the conclusion of test both rifles closed somewhat easier than at first, there was some difference in different shells, possibly due to variation of head. Apparently, the trouble lies in the length of the case, which cuts a small half moon groove in the shell head when closing the bolt, these marks do not appear on shells used in rifle 23701.

The rifle as a whole is entirely satisfactory, in my opinion it is a HUNTING rifle, especially for this territory. Have not a single suggestion for improvement, knowing that the rifle is going to the consumer at a popular price it will meet with instant approval. The weight of the rifle is just what I hope that the factory will endeavor to keep production line at. "Belly" shooters may want more weight but for hunters the light rifle is popular.

My only concern is to Ilion's ability to produce in sufficient volume during the coming year, the demand for hunting rifles is tremendous; especially those chambered for 30-06 and larger.

C. V. BRACHER - December 5, 1947

Here is something that can happen -

If one cartridge is left in the magazine and the bolt is moved forward about 1-3/4", partially inserting the cartridge in the chamber and the bolt is moved rearward to the bolt stop, the cartridge thus held by the magazine follower (follower) will kick up the rear end of the magazine platform so that it cannot be moved forward until the cartridge is removed.

Another condition that can be brought about in all three rifles with all three types of bullets is as follows:

When two cartridges are loaded into the magazine and the bullet end of the third cartridge is permitted to override the ramp if a fourth cartridge is forced into the magazine, the bolt will override the fourth cartridge.

Although these conditions may happen, they are not serious in our opinion because anyone can see the reason for the trouble and clear it up quickly with another cartridge.

Following are a few suggestions regarding appearance:

Brighten bolt and bolt handle where exposed.
Would like to see the trigger guard rounded a bit. (Similar to magazine cover).
Would like to see a better rear sight.
We need a Monte Carlo type stock or a stock with a cheek piece with sufficient height to accommodate telescope sights.

Capt. and I are both well pleased with the general performance and the operation of this rifle.

GUS PERET - December 7, 1947

They performed very fine, but you will notice my criticism of the rough unpolished bolts. The bolts on all of the other three Model 721 and Model 722 rifles I have had, the one I took with me to Alaska, the pilot model I tested, and 300 Savage Model 722, all had well finished polished bolts.

FINISH: Have already expressed my opinion of the open rear sight, so shall not mention that again. The finish on the bolts of the three rifles I have is very poor. They are rough, not polished, and show tool marks all over them. I appreciate the fact the rifles are to sell at a moderate price, but at that, the bolts should be polished enough to eliminate the tool marks.

C. C. MITCHELL - December 8, 1947

Beautiful short, crisp trigger pull. Nice balance, light, fast handling. Handles like a shotgun. Fairly smooth bolt action; can be improved with use. Safety feel rough in operation. Easy to load magazine. Positive bolt release easy to operate.

Fine trigger pull - equal to Match rifles.

Question: Will you furnish it checkered fore-end and grip with higher comb for scope and receiver sight installation?

Opinion of average hunter: Handles like a shotgun, sights align quickly.

Opinion of "crank rifle shooter": Comb too low, comb too thin, trigger pull excellent, don't like unpolished bolt-safe, works hard. When can we get one? Can we buy one without stock? These comments by varmint rifleman, amateur gunsmiths and hand loaders.

I fired approximately 200 rounds without noticing recoil at cheek or shoulder. Firing tests conducted at temperature 45° and 65° humidity.

MY OPINION:

A fine rifle. Should be furnished soon in higher grade with "Special" stock for scope and receiver sight. Deep counter sunk bolt face - good safety feature. Good sales features: beautiful trigger pull - streamlined - excellent performance, quick pointing. There has been a complaint about extractor sticking in some cases. OK with factory loads. Don't know what kind of loads cause extractor to slip out of head of case expands under excess pressure. May, however, cause extractor to slip out of head of case expands under excess pressure.

H. J. PURDIE - November 30, 1947

I do not know in what price range this arm will be, but if we plan on selling it at Model 70 price, would recess the floor plate, and checker stock, and perhaps a hinged floor plate would be desirable. Rifle has nice balance and weight.

WALTER J. HOWE -

So far all I can say is that it looks like a seller in the big sales market. Just one out-of-the-magazine note right now however. As you know the front guard screw on this rifle goes into a tapped hole that goes through the lower receiver and up into the recess where one of the locking lugs turns. If this screw is tightened up too much the end of the screw projects up into the recess and prevents the bolt from being closed all the way. If this screw is tightened when the bolt is in the gun and fully closed then the bolt cannot be opened with normal hand pressure.

C. G. BALDWIN - December 13, 1947

SAFETY - Safeties all worked very hard. They should have more of a decided click instead of the present sliding movement. Present safety can be moved part way and shooter is inclined to believe it is on, but it will not disengage the sear and firing pin and lock bolt handle.

COMB - I suggest present comb be raised 1/4 of an inch for iron peep sights and hunting scopes. Present comb is okay with combination of present sights; however, 90 per cent of factory-fitted sights will be changed by consumer.

BOLT - I notice where the bolt handle is brazed to bolt, that the brazing is rather crude. This is very prominent. The principle of brazing is okay, but more care should be taken to complete a more finished job.

SIGHTS - I suggest that the stock be cut away so that the 70 Lyman sights can be installed. On present stocks it is necessary to cut out the wood before same can be installed. This is a bit of a problem.

but adds to the sale of the gun. At present the gun is tapped for these sights, so why not finish the job? Plenty of wind gauge sights used by shooters.

Present open sights are very poor. However, they will not detract from the sale of the gun, for everyone has his own ideas of open sights. I suggest that the front sight be slotted so that a hood could be slipped over the top. This is a big feature with the Winchester M/70 and is used by many shooters.

BUTT-PLATE - Why not have a steel butt-plate? Bolt action rifle is not complete with substitute. Butt-plates are used by some shooters to dig in the ground.

MISCELLAN-

EOUS COMMENT - The one big suggestion and which I believe is the most important is to raise the comb of this rifle as mentioned in the beginning of this letter. Every retail dealer is selling scopes by the dozen and every shooter is scope conscious. W. L. Weaver and Lyman Company are producing them by the thousands; gunsmiths are busy installing them. I refer particularly to the low priced scopes. Our present comb is too low. Let's give the shooter something where he will not have to fill his stock with pads and plastic wood.

WLC/ngw
December 16, 1947