

you notice that that top locking lug which is fully visible in the port is not only tapered towards the nose of the bolt, but its sides are also tapered giving them a pyramidal appearance. Withdrawing the bolt yet further you can't help but notice how quiet, smooth and effortless it moves and the almost total lack of axial "slop," even when the bolt is against its stop. Part of that smooth, quiet operation is attributable to a magazine follower that does not contact the bolt as it the case with most other bolt actions.

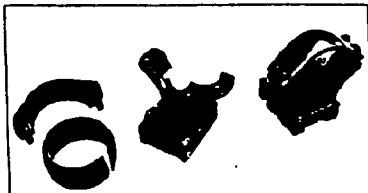
Yet more observations one notes on cursory inspection is that there's no bolt stop/release in the usual position at the left side of the bridge; it's on the *right* side just in front of the handle. Very unusual. That noted, I pressed the release and withdrew the bolt from the receiver.

Looking at the bolt face one sees that Sako has abandoned the fixed, Mauser-type ejector and gone to the plunger style. It's ironic that with U.S. Repeating Arms/Winchester and Ruger both going to a fixed ejector with their Super Grade/Featherweight Classic and Model 77 Mark II, respectively, the company that's had it for the last 30 years has gone to the plunger. Go figure!

What has been retained from the A-series is the extractor; it appears to

be identical, meaning it's the same strong, reliable unit that many custom gunsmiths see fit to use in converting Remington 700s.

Suspecting that the bolt, now removed, might work like the "old" Sako, I held the body firmly with one hand and rotated the shroud clockwise. After about a 30-degree rotation the shroud popped rearward free of its keyway.



New Sako gimbal-type rings are ingenious in that they automatically compensate for minor misalignment of the rings as well as protect the scope finish.

You know, there are some manufacturers who make a point of how easy it is to disassemble their bolts, but in truth none is faster or easier than the Sako, old or new. Literally, the bolt can be stripped in three seconds and reassembled in another three.

The lock time has been improved,

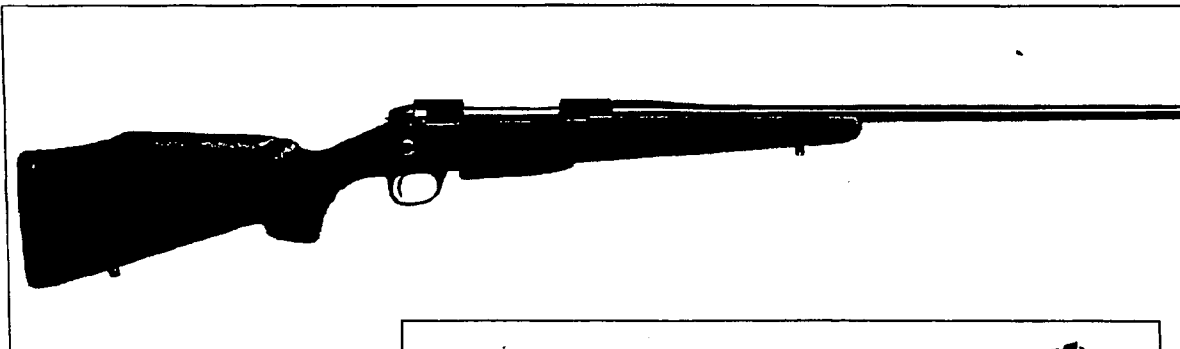
as evidenced by a shorter firing pin fall that measures only .250". The A-series has a pin fall of about .340". Also contributing to a faster lock time is a lighter striker assembly.

Mating the barreled action to the stock are three machine screws in the usual position—fore and aft of the guard bow, and one up on the forward tenon in front of the magazine.

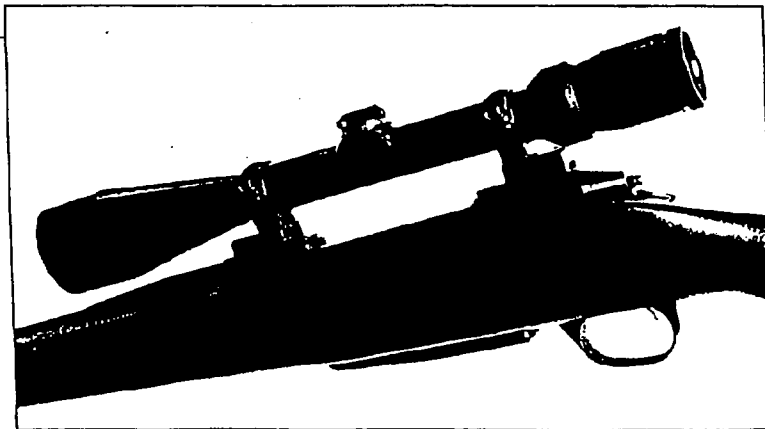
The release button for said magazine is at the front of the box; depressing it with the tip of the forefinger drops it into your hand. Turning out the three guard screws to free the barreled action from the stock reveals yet more surprises.

The receiver is cylindrical—like a Remington 700, but the flats milled into the sides give a different impression. Instead of the recoil lug being part of the receiver projecting downward to engage an abutment shoulder as is customary, the 995 has a steel lug imbedded into the stock that juts upward to engage a slot milled into the floor of the receiver ring.

The trigger housing is an impressive piece of work; it's a solid chunk of steel milled out to accommodate the trigger, sear and safety mechanism. The pull is adjustable for tension to a minimum of three pounds. In fact, the trigger broke precisely at three pounds for each of the ten times



Except for the protruding magazine the 995 is a very clean design. Out of the box, our 7mm Rem. Magnum test gun weighed 7 lbs., 13 ounces. Below, factory loads tested ranged from 139 to 160 grains.



Ring span on the M995 receiver is 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", which is long enough to handle .375 H&H-length cartridges. That's too long for many scopes. Extension rings are forthcoming.

SAKO 995 12/92



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SAKO MODEL 995

I put a scale to it. Not only was it extremely consistent, it had no discernible creep.

It's one of the best triggers I've come across on a production rifle. The two-position side safety blocks trigger movement when engaged and also locks the action.

Going to the bottom metal, I tugged at the guard bow. It wouldn't budge. A closer

look revealed that, what on cursory examination looked like a bead-blasted Mauser-type trigger guard unit was actually an integral part of the stock itself, right down to the guard bow! By recessing the surface of the TG/magazine frame a few thousandths below the level of the stock and routing a very thin, shallow line around the periphery to simulate a seam line, those clever Finns have pulled off the illusion of there being a separate bottom metal unit.

More important than the illusion, however, is the fact that the designers have reduced by half any potential

bedding problems. Because the tolerances in injection-molded stocks can be held to precise dimensions, the inletted surfaces for the barreled action could almost pass for being individually glass bedded.

That, coupled with having eliminated entirely any possible bedding problems between a bottom metal and the separate inletted surfaces needed to accommodate it, greatly simplify the 995's bedding dynamics as well as ensuring about as high a level of consistency from rifle to rifle as can be accomplished on a

production scale.

You can tell how precise the bedding is when you reassemble this rifle. Once the guard screws start to snug up,

you can't get another one-eighth turn out of them before they're tight, indicating nothing's bending, nothing's binding, nothing's compressing. The barrel, by the way, is fully floated.

To go along with this new Sako is an equally new scope mount system that is fully as innovative as the rifle itself. Think I'm overstating the case? Consider: inside each ring is a nylon-like collar which has a split in it allowing it to spread and snap around the body of the scope. Now that in itself, even though it's unique, isn't that ingenious. I mean, all that inner collar would accomplish is to eliminate marring of the scope.

No sir, what makes these rings so innovative is that the inner ring can yaw relative to the scope's optical axis. By rounding the outer surface of the inner nylon sleeve and dishing out the matching inside surface of the steel rings, the sleeves can rotate as if on gimbals to relieve any bending and torque forces caused by misaligned rings.

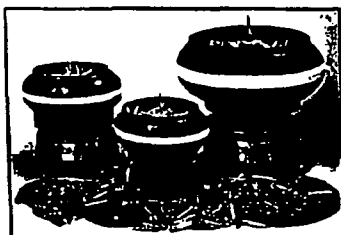
Truth is that it's a rare and purely coincidental occurrence when the front and rear ring on any rifle are perfectly aligned and the scope free of stress. It's an ingenious system and fully compatible with the A-series guns.

At this point all that remained was to mount a scope using those neat new rings, and do some shooting. For the glass I chose one of Bushnell's new Trophy series in a 2.5-10X45. This particular scope is quite handsome, what with its deeply fluted but otherwise smooth power ring the front of which is contoured to match a tapered collar that blends into the scope body. Reticle focus is of the European style, i.e., a half-turn of the ocular rim in either direction runs the whole range of adjustment. The rim of the ocular is cushioned in case one unconsciously sneaks up on the

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system as innovative as
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