

pull of 12.6 inches, and a drop at the comb of 0.6 inch. Overall, the gun measured 35.5 inches in length and weighed (unloaded) 6.75 pounds. On the barrel was a quarter-rib mount machined to accept Ruger rings and an included Weaver-style rail. The safety is a three-position wing type located at the rear of the bolt.

The Frontier Rifle's bolt has a two-lug lockup, a claw extractor, controlled round feeding from the magazine, and a fixed-blade ejector. The forearm on the stock has also been shortened. The barreled action, pistol grip cap, sling swivel studs, and hinged magazine floorplate are blued steel. The bolt, extractor, and trigger are stainless steel. The buttplate is a black synthetic rubber. Mounted on the barrel just forward of the action is a quarter rib, which is machined to accept Ruger's scope rings. It is also drilled and tapped to accept a Picatinny-rail scope base.

The ability to forward-mount a scope with intermediate eye relief is what separates the Ruger from its competitors. Some of the purported advantages are, in our opinion, a load of hokey. Does moving the scope forward allow greater peripheral vision? We don't think so. The off-eye supplies most, or all, of the peripheral vision whether the scope is back or forward. With the scope out front, Ruger says leaving both eyes open makes tracking a moving target much easier than trying to do so through a conventional high-powered scope. To what end? Focus on the target still has to funnel through the scope, and in our testing it was easier to lose a target in the scope when focus changed from the right to the left eye and back again.

To its credit, the system does allow easier access to the action for loading, and more clearance between the shooter's eyebrow and the scope in heavily recoiling rifles.

The trigger pull on our gun measured a crisp but heavy 6-pound average, with break weights ranging between 5.75 and 6.4 pounds. The balance point on the rifle (without scope) is about a half inch from the

ACCURACY AND CHRONOGRAPH DATA			
Federal Premium 85-gr. Sierra BTHPs No. P243D	Remington M700 SPS Youth	Browning A-Bolt II	Ruger Frontier
Average Velocity	3240 fps	3261 fps	3014 fps
Standard Deviation	16 fps	18 fps	96 fps
Muzzle Energy	1981 ft.-lbs.	2007 ft.-lbs.	1715 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group Size	0.41 in.	0.50 in.	0.45 in.
Largest Group Size	0.63 in.	0.61 in.	0.74 in.
Average Group Size	0.52 in.	0.54 in.	0.58 in.
Winchester Supreme 95-gr. Ballistic Silvertips No. SBST243A	Remington M700 SPS Youth	Browning A-Bolt II	Ruger Frontier
Average Velocity	2817 fps	2876 fps	2731 fps
Standard Deviation	15 fps	15 fps	24 fps
Muzzle Energy	1674 ft.-lbs.	1745 ft.-lbs.	1573 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group Size	0.54 in.	0.34 in.	0.41 in.
Largest Group Size	0.81 in.	0.56 in.	0.71 in.
Average Group Size	0.68 in.	0.43 in.	0.56 in.
Remington Express 100-gr. PSPs. No. R243W3	Remington M700 SPS Youth	Browning A-Bolt II	Ruger Frontier
Average Velocity	2825 fps	2894 fps	2716 fps
Standard Deviation	14 fps	25 fps	9 fps
Muzzle Energy	1772 ft.-lbs.	1860 ft.-lbs.	1638 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group Size	0.71 in.	0.28 in.	0.28 in.
Largest Group Size	1.01 in.	0.74 in.	0.49 in.
Average Group Size	0.87 in.	0.57 in.	0.35 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired three shot groups from a rest at 100 yards. To capture velocity data, we used a PACT 2 chronograph with the first screen 10 feet from the muzzle.

front of the action. The short length of pull allows the shooter to bring the gun up quickly, but when the shooter works the bolt, the more-forward head position comes awfully close to the safety.

As we noted, we thought the short barrel might put the Frontier at either a velocity or accuracy disadvantage. In terms of accuracy, our worries were unfounded. All three guns averaged great groups with the Federal 85-grain bullets (Remington, 0.52 inch; Browning, 0.54 inch; Ruger 0.58 inch), and Ruger shot similar groups with the Winchester 95-grain rounds (0.56 inch), and even better groups with the Remington Core-Lokts, a best-of-test 0.35 inch.

On the velocity side, the Frontier

did turn in the lowest fps readings: 3014 fps with the Federal ammo (more than 200 fps lower than the other guns); 2731 fps with the Winchester (up to 150 fps slower than the Browning); and 180 fps slower (2716 fps) than the Browning with the 100-grain Remingtons. In the field, however, with a 250-yard point-blank zero, those numbers might ask for another inch of elevation change for the Ruger at 300 yards.

In operation, case feeding and extraction was slick and easy. Fit and finish on the gun were excellent.

**Browning A-Bolt
Micro Hunter No. 035020211,
243 Win., \$684**

The major visual differences be-