

Special Weapons 2005

Title: Gun Test:
D&L's CUSTOM MR-700 .308

Blurb: Upgrading the Remington M700 at a budget price!
Blurb: By Al Paulson

Since its introduction more than 40 years ago, Remington's Model 700, especially the Model 700 Police variants, have become the most commonly deployed precision rifle among law enforcement sharpshooters in the United States. US Army snipers employ a specialized variant of the M700 called the M24 Sniper Weapon System. Moreover, American sportsmen have boosted the number of M700 users into the millions. Such enormous popularity across such a diverse array of end-users happens for some very good reasons. The M700 is robust, accurate right out of the box, user-friendly thanks to its good stock and trigger, and a darned good buy for the money. The Remington also has a good reputation for reliability.

With so many rifles in the field, we now have accumulated a knowledge base documenting a number of eccentricities and problems that could affect mission success. Dave Lauck of D&L Sports, and the Small Arms Training Academy, offers an affordable upgrade to the Remington rifle that eliminates virtually all of the potential problems, while making the Remington accurate enough to deliver 1/4-MOA at a 100 yards. Called the MR-700 system, a department can submit existing guns in their inventory for retrofitting to MR-700 specs, or purchase systems directly from D&L.

The average sportsman is unlikely to encounter any problem with Remington's Model 700 series in a lifetime. The police sharpshooter, however, puts a lot more rounds downrange. One LE sharpshooter I know, for example, spends more money out of his own pocket for practice ammo than his department invests for training all of their SWAT team members combined. As usage goes up, so does the likelihood of encountering a low-probability event that could have disastrous consequences on the success of a deployment.

The Model PSS rifle used in this study came from the factory with a trigger advertised as adjustable from two to eight pounds, but ours was heavier. It also experienced failures to eject. The ejector problem occurs when a strongly sprung ejector rotates across the case head and shaves a sliver of brass from the case. Brass particulates then bind the ejector in its tunnel. This problem can be mitigated by routine disassembly and cleaning. Regrettably, this is not a user-friendly exercise, but it is essential when using a plunger-type ejector. I always carry a screwdriver to pry a spent case off the bolt should this malfunction occur. The only sure cure for this problem is to use fixed ejector like the one on D&L's MR-30 PG series (Marksman's Rifle 30 Caliber Professional Grade), which is based upon a D&L receiver specifically designed for the armed professional.

Upgrade Details

Dave Lauck solves the above problems by replacing the Remington trigger with Timney's tactical trigger, which I've found to be reliable under the most adverse environmental conditions. The trigger breaks cleanly with absolutely no creep or overtravel. I've used Timney's tactical trigger on a number of platforms to successfully engage targets from stone-throwing distance out to 1.8 kilometers. The Timney tactical is the best M700-compatible trigger certified for LE use in my experience.

The bolt of the Remington M700 can experience problems with the bolt stop sticking down when fouled with dirt or rust. What can happen during brisk bolt