

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 manipulation is that the operator can pull the bolt out of the action and into his face at painful velocity. Lauck removes the Remington bolt stop and replaces it with one of his own design.

Lauck's MR-700's bolt stop is a machine screw located at the left rear of the receiver. To withdraw the bolt stop, lightly pull the bolt rearward until it gently engages the bolt stop. Keep very light rearward pressure on the bolt while unscrewing the bolt stop counter-clockwise with your fingers until the bolt can be slid out of the receiver. Do not unscrew the bolt stop completely out of the receiver to avoid loss.

The M700 is also prone to magazine problems. Thankfully, Remington eliminated detachable box magazines due to negative feedback from the law-enforcement community. This discussion is limited to the standard fixed internal magazine. Bolt over base and nose diving are the principal feeding problems. Lauck's MR-700 conversion eliminates these gremlins by eliminating the magazine. Is this throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater? Not hardly. Lauck sleeves the action when the magazine is removed, thereby increasing action rigidity and rifle accuracy.

Like Lauck's flagship line of precision rifles, the MR-30 PG series, the upgraded Remington MR-700 is fitted with D&L's proprietary aluminum rail stock. This stock features an adjustable cheekpiece and length of pull, full free-floating of the barrel, a rear monopod, and a much larger and more rigid stock-to-action interface than is provided by factory stocks. The Remington receiver is held by eight quarter-inch machine screws tying a massive top alignment block into the precision bedding surface in the stock. Accessory bars on both sides of the stock accept cartridge carriers.

This stock also fits a prone shooter to perfection. The stock's rear monopod can be deployed on the grip frame or the buttstock frame. End-users like this monopod. Lauck also adds a 20 MOA slant scope base to facilitate shooting at long range. The stock also features 2.5-inch MIL-STD-1913 rails on either side of the forestock that can be used for mounting tactical lights or a laser. The complete system used in this study (i.e., with optics) has an overall length of 39.5 inches and a weight of 20.2 pounds.

The MR-700 does look a bit odd with the optional roll cage and a 12.25-inch carry handle that sits 3.5 inches above the high point of the scope. Yet handsome is as handsome does. Besides the obvious protection it provides for the rifle's optics, the rifle balances really well on the handle. I found it addictively handy. Moreover, the roll cage makes a dandy support frame for a sniper veil. It is worth noting that, regardless of caliber, I tend to shoot my personal best with this stock.

Shooting Impressions

Both the MR-700 Remington conversion and the top-of-the line MR-30 PG are designed to be used in a load-one, shoot-one manner. With the bolt back, simply toss a cartridge into the feeding tray and close the bolt. There is never a failure to feed. Additional rounds are stored close at hand in single or twin 6-round cartridge carriers on the forestock. That's fast for lefties. An additional 10-round carrier can be attached to the butt stock, which is particularly fast for right-handers.

Reloading by hand from cartridge carriers is surprisingly fast and efficient. With practice, one can develop a comforting rapid-fire cadence while placing accurate hits on target. That is a skill everyone should cultivate, even in law-enforcement, where such techniques may be used very rarely.