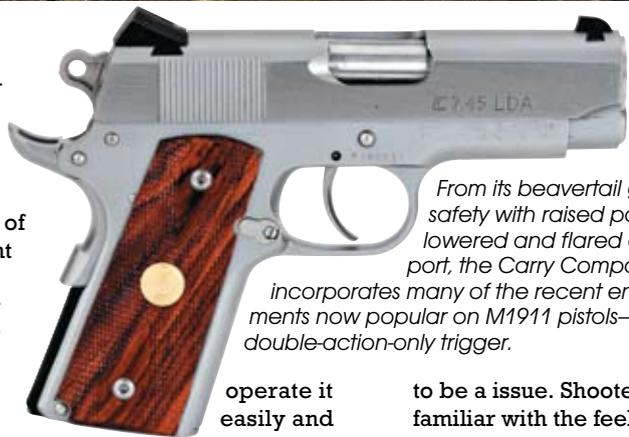




# Para-Ordnance Para Companion

**P**ara-Ordnance's compact, double-action-only C7.45 LDA Para Companion is part of the Canadian manufacturer's burgeoning line of pistols featuring its Light Double Action (LDA) trigger. It is tailored for concealed carry by law enforcement personnel and lawfully armed citizens. The Para Companion is more than merely a chopped-down version of the original LDA; it is a pistol into which the designers have put considerable thought in meeting the needs of those who carry discreetly. The Para Companion is about as small as is practical for a .45 ACP defensive gun, meaning you can still get your hand on it (including your pinky!),



From its beavertail grip safety with raised pad to its lowered and flared ejection port, the Carry Companion incorporates many of the recent enhancements now popular on M1911 pistols—plus a double-action-only trigger.

operate it easily and shoot it well, but it won't present a large profile or "print" under clothing when worn with a suitable holster of good quality. There are several advantages to a pistol with lines based on the the M1911. One is that there is a seemingly endless variety of quality leather already available. Also, ergonomics largely ceases

to be a issue. Shooters are familiar with the feel of the M1911, and most of them like it very much. The C7.45 LDA is fabricated from stainless steel, because Para-Ordnance is obliged to use steel as the LDA trigger system takes up much of the space that would otherwise be occupied by the right frame rail. As a result, the frame rail on that side is quite abbreviated and must be made of steel for ade-

## PARA C7.45 LDA

**MANUFACTURER:** Para-Ordnance Mfg. Inc. (Dept AR), 980 Tapscott Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M1X 1C3; (416) 297-7855; www.paraord.com  
**CALIBER:** .45 ACP  
**ACTION TYPE:** double-action-only, recoil-operated, semi-automatic pistol  
**FRAME:** stainless steel  
**BARREL:** 3½"  
**RIFLING:** six-groove; 1:16" LH twist  
**MAGAZINE:** seven-round, single-column, detachable  
**SIGHTS:** three-white-dot; post front, rear drift adjustable for windage  
**TRIGGER:** 6 lbs., 8 ozs.  
**OVERALL LENGTH:** 7¼"  
**WIDTH:** 1½"  
**HEIGHT:** 5¼"  
**WEIGHT:** 32 ozs.  
**ACCESSORIES:** cable gun lock, bushing wrench  
**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** \$939

quate strength. Another Para Companion enhancement is the low-profile, snag-resistant sight set-up. It presents the popular three-dot sight picture. The dots are white, but tritium is an option.

We liked the inclusion of the beavertail and extended slimline thumb safety. They make the gun more comfortable to shoot and easier to operate, respectively. In addition to the utilitarian features of the Para Companion, we liked the numerous touches that suggest quality, such as the use of Torx-head screws to hold the grip panels; the grip panels themselves, which are made of cocobolo and checkered in a double-diamond pattern; the

gold-tone Para-Ordnance escutcheons; and the low-glare soft matte surface texture. The C7.45 is a handsome pistol.

When it comes to shooting manners, the pistol handled well and, though small, didn't recoil excessively, thanks likely to the weight resulting from its steel construction. Accuracy was adequate for a carry gun and is shown in the accompanying table. Para-Ordnance guns are known for being tight when they come from the factory, and we did experience some failures to go into battery.

When we first handled the LDA trigger, it was a revelation compared to other double-action-only triggers we have tried. This one was suitably

.45 ACP Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Group Size In Inches		
			Smallest	Largest	Average
Black Hills 185-gr. JHP	927 Avg. 34 Sd	353	3.25	6.38	4.38
Hornady No. 9097 230-gr. FMJ	749 Avg. 51 Sd	286	2.62	4.13	3.25
Speer No. 23966 230-gr. GDHP	745 Avg. 45 Sd	284	2.38	3.88	3.00
Average Extreme Spread:			3.66		

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 3½" barrel. Range temperature: 81° F. Humidity: 50%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: FMJ (full-metal jacket), GDHP (Gold Dot hollow point), JHP (jacketed hollow point), Sd (standard deviation).

light in rapid fire, but was somewhat gritty in slow fire, though, admittedly, that's not its intended role. We were conflicted on the hammer spur. It's a needless affectation on a gun that can't be cocked, but would the gun look "right" without it? We concluded that as long as the rowel-type spur didn't snag anything, there was

no harm in it. We found the Para Companion to be a neat little package with a lot going for it: size, power, LDA trigger, handling, rust resistance, snag resistance and good looks. While it is not without some faults, it merits consideration from anyone interested in a big-bore, double-action-only carry gun.



The slim trigger of an LDA pivots rather than moving straight back like that of a typical 1911-style pistol. The feel is similar to that of a two-stage trigger and is easy to adjust for action shooting or self-defense training. The stainless steel magazines (l.) are well made, but sometimes refused to drop free when the magazine release was activated.

The rear sight is snag-resistant and presents the popular three-white-dot sight picture. Tritium night sights are an option on the Companion—one we recommend.

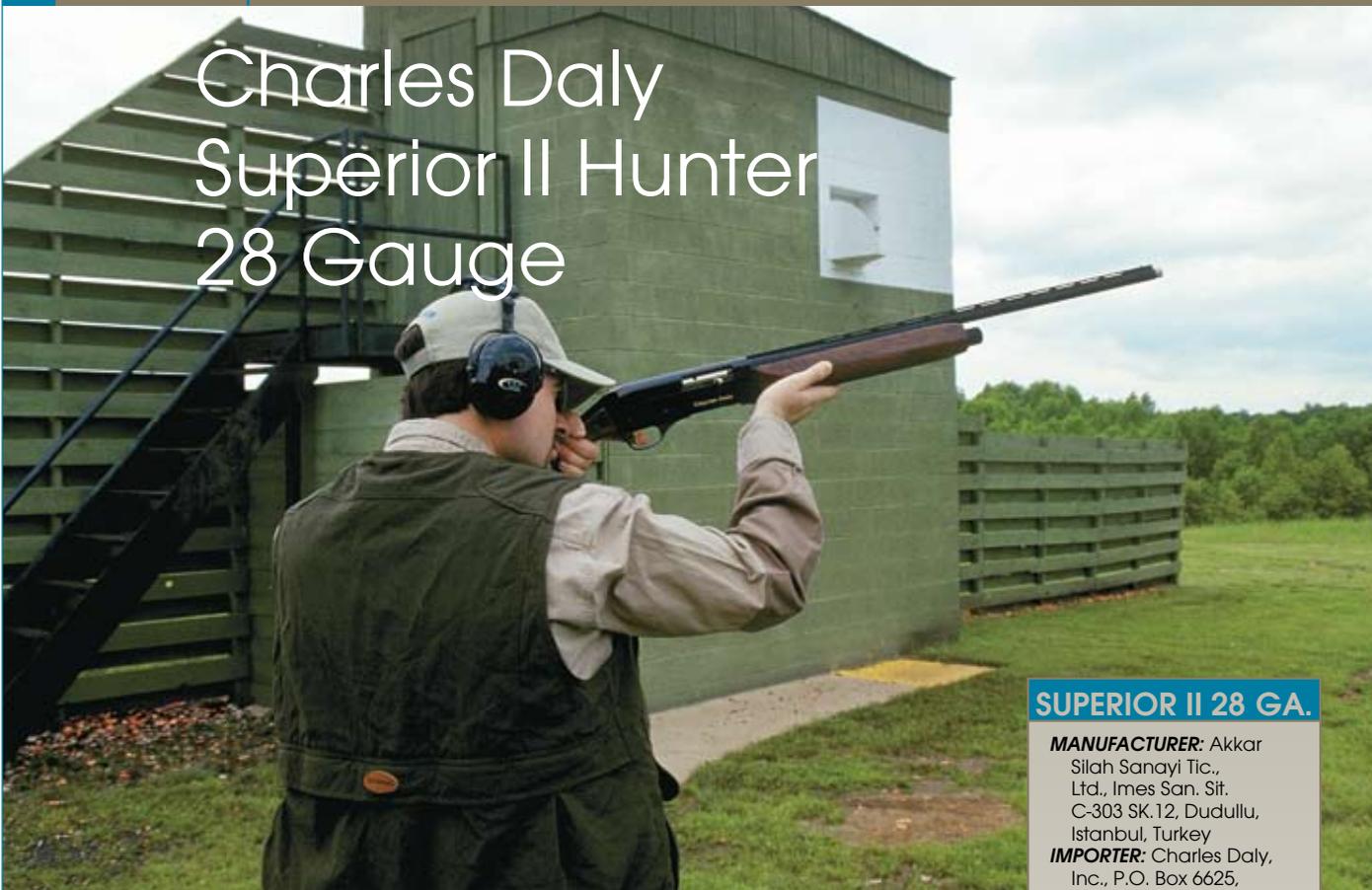
The 3½" bull barrel produced satisfactory accuracy. Para-Ordnance pistols are notoriously tight as they come from the factory and require a good deal of break-in.

The trigger bar of the LDA mechanism occupies space usually taken up by the right frame rail. LDA pistols are made of steel to assure strength in the abbreviated rail.

The American Rifleman has used the phrase "Dope Bag" at least since 1921, when Col. Townsend Whelen first titled his column with it. Even then, it had been in use for years, referring to a sack used by target shooters to hold ammunition and accessories on the firing line. "Sight dope" also was a traditional marksman's term for sight adjustment information, while judging wind speed and direction was called "doping the wind."

**WARNING:** Technical data and information contained herein are intended to provide information based on the limited experience of individuals under specific conditions and circumstances. They do not detail the comprehensive training procedures, techniques and safety precautions absolutely necessary to properly carry on similar activity. Read the notice and disclaimer on the contents page. Always consult comprehensive reference manuals and bulletins for details of proper training requirements, procedures, techniques and safety precautions before attempting any similar activity.

# Charles Daly Superior II Hunter 28 Gauge



## SUPERIOR II 28 GA.

**MANUFACTURER:** Akkar Silah Sanayi Tic., Ltd., Imes San. Sit. C-303 SK.12, Dudullu, Istanbul, Turkey

**IMPORTER:** Charles Daly, Inc., P.O. Box 6625, Harrisburg, PA 17112-0625; (717) 540-8518; www.charlesdaly.com

**GAUGE:** 12, 3½"; 12, 3"; 20, 3"; 28, 2¾" (tested)

**ACTION TYPE:** gas-operated semi-automatic shotgun

**RECEIVER:** black anodized aluminum alloy

**BARREL:** 26", 28" (tested), 30" blued chrome-moly steel with ventilated rib and brass front bead

**CHOKES:** interchangeable, screw-in, nickel-plated, choke tubes

**MAGAZINE:** four-round capacity (plug limits magazine to two rounds)

**TRIGGER:** gold-plated; single-stage, 6½ lbs. pull

**STOCK:** Turkish walnut; length of pull, 14½"; drop at heel, 2½"; drop at comb, 1¾"

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 46½"

**WEIGHT:** 6 lbs., 7 ozs.

**ACCESSORIES:** three interchangeable, screw-in choke tubes

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** \$595

The revived Charles Daly brand of traditionally styled, over-under and side-by-side shotguns has been joined by a line of gas-operated semi-automatics in 12, 20, and 28 gauge. Made in Turkey by Akkar, Ltd., to Charles Daly's specifications, the new guns combine deluxe features and quality workmanship at competitive prices. Two grades are offered—the Field Hunter and Superior II Hunter. The Field Hunter shotguns are fairly utilitarian, and the Superior II Hunters are more deluxe, featuring walnut stocks with high-gloss finishes and cut checkering, as well as gold-tone triggers. Because the 28-ga. Dalys are one of the few gas-operated 28s made anywhere, we selected a Superior II Hunter in that gauge for testing.

Our test gun came with

a 26" chrome-lined, carbon steel barrel and three screw-in choke tubes. Tube constriction is identified by the number of bands on the outer surface, so they are safely and easily identified from the side, eliminating the need to look down the muzzle. The full-length, 0.275" wide steel ventilated rib is finely cross hatched on its upper surface to prevent glare and there is a single 0.135" diameter, brass bead front sight.

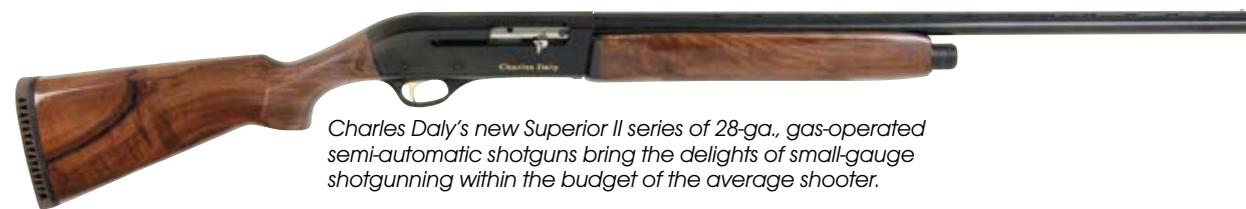
With its lustrous, black anodized finish, the aluminum alloy receiver contrasts tastefully with the gold-tone trigger and bolt release button. On the right side of the receiver, "Charles Daly" is roll-engraved in gold letters. The polished natural finish on the bolt, operating lever and shell lifter accent the blue finish on the barrel.

The semi-automatic Superior II Hunter's gas

system employs a cylindrical free-floating piston and synthetic spacer that slide on the aluminum magazine tube. Two holes in the barrel bleed propellant gas into a steel expansion chamber mounted beneath the barrel. Expanding gas pushes the spacer, aluminum alloy piston and collar with keyed, dual-opposed operating rods rearward against the pressure of the recoil spring. The recoil spring is concentric with the magazine tube and held captive by the collar and receiver.

Here it must be noted that the Daly uses a small, rubber O-ring to seal the front end of the gas system. This ring resides on the magazine tube where it can be easily lost, so be certain to capture it when disassembling the gun.

The bolt locks into a barrel extension recess with a single, pop-up

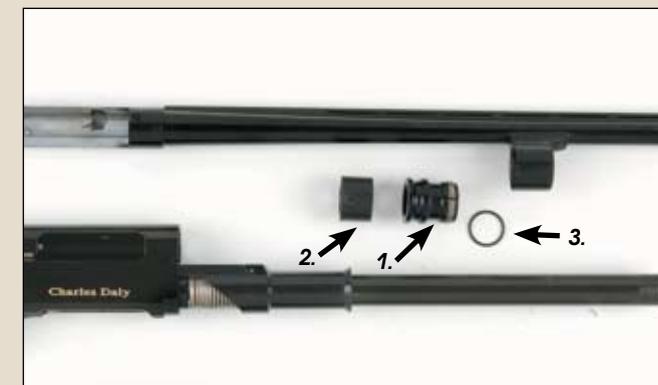


Charles Daly's new Superior II series of 28-ga., gas-operated semi-automatic shotguns bring the delights of small-gauge shotgunning within the budget of the average shooter.



Two holes in the bottom of the barrel bleed propellant gas into a steel expansion chamber (arrow 1.) mounted beneath the barrel.

Expanding gas pushes the piston, spacer and action rod assembly rearward against the recoil spring (arrow 2.). Unlike most 28-ga. autoloaders, the Daly comes with interchangeable choke tubes (1.).



Charles Daly's Superior II is unusual in that it is a gas-operated 28 gauge. The gun employs a non-adjustable, gas system (above) that acts on a free-floating, aluminum alloy piston (arrow 1.) and synthetic spacer (arrow 2.) that slide on the aluminum magazine tube. The gun uses a small rubber O-ring (arrow 3.) to seal the front of the gas system.

locking lug. The bolt rides a carrier positioned by the operating rods, and an angled surface on the trigger assembly pushes the locking lug upward into the locked position on the last half inch of the bolt's travel. There is a single, hook-type extractor on the right of the bolt face and a fixed pin ejector on the barrel extension.

On our test gun, the buttstock and fore-end are Turkish walnut with a high-gloss finish and 20 line-per-inch cut checkering. Both sides of the pistol grip and fore-end are checkered with a flat diamond pattern that offered plenty of grip without being abrasive. A ventilated, reddish-brown rubber recoil pad on our example was uniformly proud.

The fire control assembly is held in the receiver by two steel pins. For cleaning and routine maintenance, removal of this assembly requires only

drifting out the retaining pins and pulling the assembly through the bottom of the receiver. There is a crossbolt safety button in the rear of the trigger guard and a disconnect on the breech face that prevents firing unless the gun is locked.

Lightness, balance and fast handling are what 28-ga. shotguns are all about, and the Daly Superior II Hunter does not disappoint in any of these categories. At 6 lbs., 7 ozs., the Daly is light enough to carry all day with minimum fatigue. We found the balance point directly beneath the bolt release button where it promoted fast handling without being "whippy."

In testing the Daly 28 gauge, we fired field and target shotshells of different brands with no malfunctions of any type. Even when dirty, the Daly 28 gauge performed flawlessly. Feeding and functioning were excellent at both skeet and sport-

ing clays. Perceived recoil proved very mild making second shots in the field an easy pleasure.

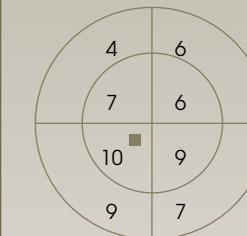
At the patterning board, we found the Daly placed the center of the shot charge slightly above point of aim at 40 yds. Prospective buyers should keep in mind that the 28 gauge is not a long-range shotgun—rather its forte is fast handling on targets at short to medium ranges. This became apparent on the skeet field where the gun ground birds to dust with little or no recoil. At longer sporting clays ranges, the little 28-ga. Daly simply could not match the consistent performance of larger-gauge shotguns, often leaving birds unscathed despite careful pointing.

The 28 gauge has long been categorized as an "expert's gauge"—and such guns have historically been expensive. Now, the Charles Daly Superior

II Hunter 28-ga. shotgun brings the delights of gas-operated small-gauge shotgunning within the budget of even the average shooter.

## SHOOTING RESULTS

AVERAGE OF 10 PATTERNS AT 40 YDS.



Improved Cylinder Tube  
 ■ = Point of Hold  
 Winchester Long Range Field Load No. X28  
 28-ga., 2¾", 3/4 oz., No. 6 Lead  
 Average Pellet count: 167  
 Measured Velocity @3-ft.: 1290 f.p.s.

Total Hits	58 (35%)
21" Inner Circle	32 (19%)
30" Outer Ring	26 (16%)

# Fulton Armory FAR-15 Guardian II



Having cut its teeth building guns for highpower competition, Fulton Armory broadens its horizons with the introduction of the FAR-15 Guardian II, a specialized carbine ideally suited for three-gun practical shooting matches. Chambered in .223 Rem., the Guardian II carbines are offered with a choice of 16½" or 20" barrels.

Construction of the rifle starts with the mating of forged aluminum upper and lower receivers joined at the front and rear by captured cross pins. Fulton inserts a synthetic spacer beneath the rear pin loop to eliminate play between the receiver halves.

The upper receiver is a flat-top style with a Picatinny rail compatible with Weaver-style bases for attaching optical sights

and accessories. Many A2-style improvements can be found on the Guardian II's upper, including a shell deflector behind the ejection port and a forward assist with circular thumb pad. Ergonomic touches unique to the Guardian II include an extended charging handle latch and a raised magazine catch that doubles as an ambidextrous magazine release button.

Just forward of the upper receiver is the Guardian II's aluminum handguard, which measures 6¾" from the slip ring to the gas block. It is free-floated to prevent sling tension from altering zero. Additional accessory mounting points are provided by four Picatinny rails at 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock that run the full length of the

handguard. Sling swivel sockets are milled out of the forwardmost block of each rail to increase sling mounting options. Fulton includes a quick-release, 360-degree sling swivel. Four oblong slots that run between each of the rails aid barrel cooling.

The Guardian II's steel gas block is similarly configured with Picatinny rails and sling swivel sockets across all four planes. Two Allen head cross screws secure the base for the back-up front sight to the rail on top of the gas block. Depressing a plunger on the right side of the front sight base rotates the unit downward and locks it to the rear, so the sight is protected and out of the way when not in use. The back-up rear sight assembly, which clamps to the flat-top



Best known for its highpower competition rifles, Fulton has branched out to reach three-gun competitors with its Guardian II.

upper in a similar fashion, also serves as a base for mounting an optional C-More sight, which was supplied with our test gun. The size of the rear sight's two rear apertures and the addition of a wind-age drum as well as the square contour of the front blade are consistent with improvements first introduced on A2-style rifles.

A 16½" long barrel with M4-style contours is capped off by a false military-style muzzle brake that is not permanently attached. Consequently, swapping out the gas block or float tube will not require removing the entire barrel. Longer 20" barrels are available as an option. A target crown protects the

origin of the barrel's 1:9" twist rifling. The chamber is finished to Fulton Armory's match dimensions, which it established by combining tighter match case body measurements with more generous military throat specifications in an effort to offer enhanced accuracy in a carbine that would still function reliably with economical surplus ammo.

The Guardian II carbine includes an Ergo tactical pistol grip with subtle finger grooves and a thumb shelf on its left-hand side. A stippled texture covers the grip's entire surface and there is some resiliency to the synthetic material. The grip is larger in circumference than standard AR-15-style pistol grips.

## FAR-15 GUARDIAN II

**MANUFACTURER:** Fulton Armory, 8725 Bollman Place No. 1, Savage, MD 20763; (301) 490-9485; www.fulton-armory.com

**CALIBER:** .223 Rem.

**ACTION TYPE:** gas-operated semi-automatic rifle

**RECEIVER:** forged aluminum upper and lower

**BARREL:** 16½" M4 profile with 12 degree target crown\*

**RIFLING:** six-groove; 1:9" RH twist

**MAGAZINE:** 10-round detachable box, accepts AR-15/M16 magazines

**SIGHTS:** front post adjustable for elevation, rear M16A2-style aperture adjustable for windage and elevation

**TRIGGER:** Jewell two-stage match; 5-lb., 4-oz. pull

**STOCK:** green synthetic; length of pull, 11" (minimum); drop at heel, 1/2"; drop at comb, 1/2"

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 32"

**WEIGHT:** 8 lbs., 3 ozs.

**ACCESSORIES:** 10-round detachable magazine

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** \$900

\*Other options available.

## SHOOTING RESULTS

.223 Rem. Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Group Size In Inches		
			Smallest	Largest	Average
Federal No. P223K 52-gr. BTHP Sierra MK	2984 Avg.	1,028 15 Sd	0.78	1.52	1.06
Black Hills 55-gr. JSP	3042 Avg.	1,131 30 Sd	0.85	1.63	1.22
Win. No. USA223R3 62-gr. FMJ	2823 Avg.	1,097 7 Sd	1.24	2.08	1.56
Average Extreme Spread:			1.28		

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 16½" barrel. Range temperature: 86° F. Humidity: 80%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 100 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: BTHP (boat-tail hollow point), MK (Matchking), JSP (jacketed soft point), FMJ (Full Metal Jacket), Sd (standard deviation).

Additionally, the back side of the grip extends upward to meet the wrist of the stock. This additional mass added to the back side helps fill the web of the palm between the thumb and forefinger and makes for more positive control and less slippage compared to A1- and A2-style grips. The gun's buttstock is easily adjustable for length of pull and cant.

Opening up the rifle reveals a number of internal improvements, including a D-Fender extractor for more positive extraction and ejection during rapid fire and a two-stage Jewell match trigger. The trigger of the gun supplied to us for testing broke at 5 lbs., 4 ozs. with take-up consistent with two-stage designs and little discernable over-travel.

For accuracy testing we selected a variety of match and defensive loads from Federal, Winchester and Black Hills. Loads with bullet weights ranging from 52 to 62 grs. were chosen, because prior experience has shown us that heavier bullets usually perform poorly in guns with 1:9" twists, like the Guardian II. To make sure we got a

good idea of the carbine's accuracy potential, we mounted a Leupold Vari-X III 3-9X scope to our test gun. Results shown in the accompanying table are comparable to most AR-15-style carbines we have tested in the past. We replaced the Leupold scope with the supplied, optional, iron sight/C-More combination for function firing with a variety of commercial and surplus ammo. The D-Fender extractor threw spent cases consistently farther than expected. There were no malfunctions of any kind.

The gun's adjustable stock and oversized pistol grip made for transitions between targets that were quick, yet reassuringly stable. We never had to poke around to find a target or rebuild our shooting stance between shots during rapid stages. The gun's ergonomics and accuracy were well-appreciated by those staffers who had a chance to fire it.

Fulton Armory's Guardian II has many features that should be attractive to practical carbine competitors who participate in three-gun matches.



The FAR-15 has a false military-style muzzle brake. The 16½" barrel features an 11 degree target-style crown.

The back-up rear sight, which clamps to the gun's flattop receiver, has both elevation and wind-age drums.

The front sight mounts to the Picatinny rails on the front of the FAR-15's handguard. The spring-loaded unit may be flipped down and out of the way when an optical sight is in use.