Benelli Cordoba

BENELLI CORDOBA

MANUFACTURER: Benelli Armi, S.p.A. Via della Stazione 50, 61029 Urbino, Italy
IMPORTER: Benelli USA (Dept. AR), 17603 Indian Head Highway, Accokeek, MD 20607; (301) 283-6981; www.benelliusa.com
GAUGE: 12, 3"
MECHANISM TYPE: recoil-operated semi-automatic shotgun
BARREL: 30", 28" (tested)
CHOKES: interchangeable Benelli Criochoke tubes; full, improved-modified, modified, improved-cylinder
MAGAZINE: four shells
TRIGGER PULL: single-stage, 6 lbs.
STOCK: adjustable matte-black synthetic; length of pull 14⅜", drop at comb 1⅜", drop at heel 2¼"
OVERALL LENGTH: 49⅜"
WEIGHT: 7 lbs., 3 ozs. (empty)
ACCESSORIES: five choke tubes and wrench, hard case, oil bottle, shim kit for changing cast and drop.
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $1,600

Named for the region in Argentina known for its spectacular bird hunting, the Benelli Cordoba is a clays/field hybrid. As a semi-automatic gun with a 3" chamber, it is appropriate for both the range and the field in pursuit of upland game and bagging the occasional duck. The black satin finish to external metal components, synthetic stock and fore-end and sling swivel studs built into the fore-end cap and stock clearly show the Cordoba is ready for harsh use afield, but Benelli has incorporated a number of competition and ergonomic refinements into this field gun as well.

The Cordoba's ergonomic qualities are centered around a group of recoil-mitigating enhancements that Benelli calls the ComforTech system. Using computer software and machines specially designed to measure recoil, Benelli engineers set out to substantially reduce felt recoil without adding weight to the gun.

They measured not only impact, but also how the shock wave traveled through the gunstock and where and how the energy was transferred to the shooter. The results revealed that mitigating recoil was a complex problem that required a number of changes to the stock's materials and construction.

The Cordoba's synthetic stock is embedded with a series of 12 rubber dampeners to absorb recoil energy. These chevron-shaped rubber inserts are closely spaced and increase in size as they run diagonally from the wrist to the heel. This line of dampeners is directly in line with the recoil's shock wave, and slow-motion video shows the rubber inserts progressively vibrating and soaking up energy when the gun is fired. In addition, between the inserts the stock is segmented into narrow ribs that flex outward, absorbing more recoil energy.

Technogel, as Benelli calls it, was used to create a super-soft recoil pad asymmetrically shaped to conform to the shape of the shoulder pocket and, thus, spread the recoil energy over the widest possible area. Since the recoil pad is asymmetrical, left- and right-hand models are available. The pad can be removed without tools and is available in two thicknesses. The thicker model provides a 14⅜" length of pull, but installing the thinner pad reduces length of pull to 14"

That left only one other area to address: the shooter's face. Benelli turned yet again to Technogel, and inserted the new material into the comb of the stock as well. Developed for patients confined to beds, Technogel is not only soft and resilient, but also slippery, so it will not abrade the shooter's cheek or jaw.

The Cordoba uses Benelli's Inertia Driven operating system. Upon firing, the free-floating, heavy bolt body compresses a stiff coil spring as the gun starts moving rearward; the compressed spring then drives the bolt body to the rear. A cam track in the bolt body guides a circular lug in the bolt head, rotating it out of engagement as the whole assembly slides rearward, extracting and ejecting the spent hull. Energy from the recoil spring and its corrosion-resistant guide housed in the stock push the bolt forward and back into battery. Benelli's inertia system reduces lock time for faster shot recovery. According to the manual, 3 dram, 1⅛-oz. loads are the minimum necessary for reliable operation.

Like Benelli's other shotguns, The Cordoba's barrels and chokes are cryogenically treated to create a smooth surface for shorter shot strings and more even shot patterns.

The Cordoba's controls include a safety button at the rear of the trigger guard and a cartridge drop lever at the front. The curved trigger blade has a smooth face. The unit of our test sample broke at 6½ lbs. pull after minimal take-up. We pattern tested the gun with Federal Premium No. 6 shot, a field load we considered appropriate for upland birds, since that appears to be the Cordoba's raison d'etre. There were no gaps or thin spots, and pattern quality and uniformity were among the best we've seen in any shotgun we've tested regardless of price.

Five chokes knurled for rapid changes, reveal the Cordoba's competition heritage. Other competition refinements include a fiber-optic front sight and metal mid-rib bead for more precise shot placement and lead calculation, and a stepped, ventilated sighting rib that brings the sighting plane closer to the shooter's eye.

Looking at the Cordoba, one sees that Benelli has surrendered to the American shotgunner's taste for the all-around semi-automatic shotgun. Equally at home in the field or on the range, the Cordoba has a combination of features necessary for both purposes but nothing that would limit its utility in either venue.

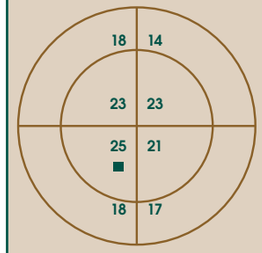
The Cordoba's black finish, synthetic stock and the sling swivel studs fixed to the fore-end cap and stock show it is ready for harsh use in the field.

Competition-style features include a fiber-optic front sight and metal mid-bead fitted to the stepped, raised rib, a ported barrel and knurled chokes. Additionally, the Cordoba is supplied with stock shims (right) that allow the user to adjust drop and cast.

To build a better recoil pad (l.), Benelli turned to the medical industry for a shock-absorbent gel that more uniformly spreads the recoil over a wider area. Airtouch checkering is molded into the Cordoba's slim wrist (r.) and fore-end for better control.

SHOOTING RESULTS

Average of 10 Patterns @ 40 yds.

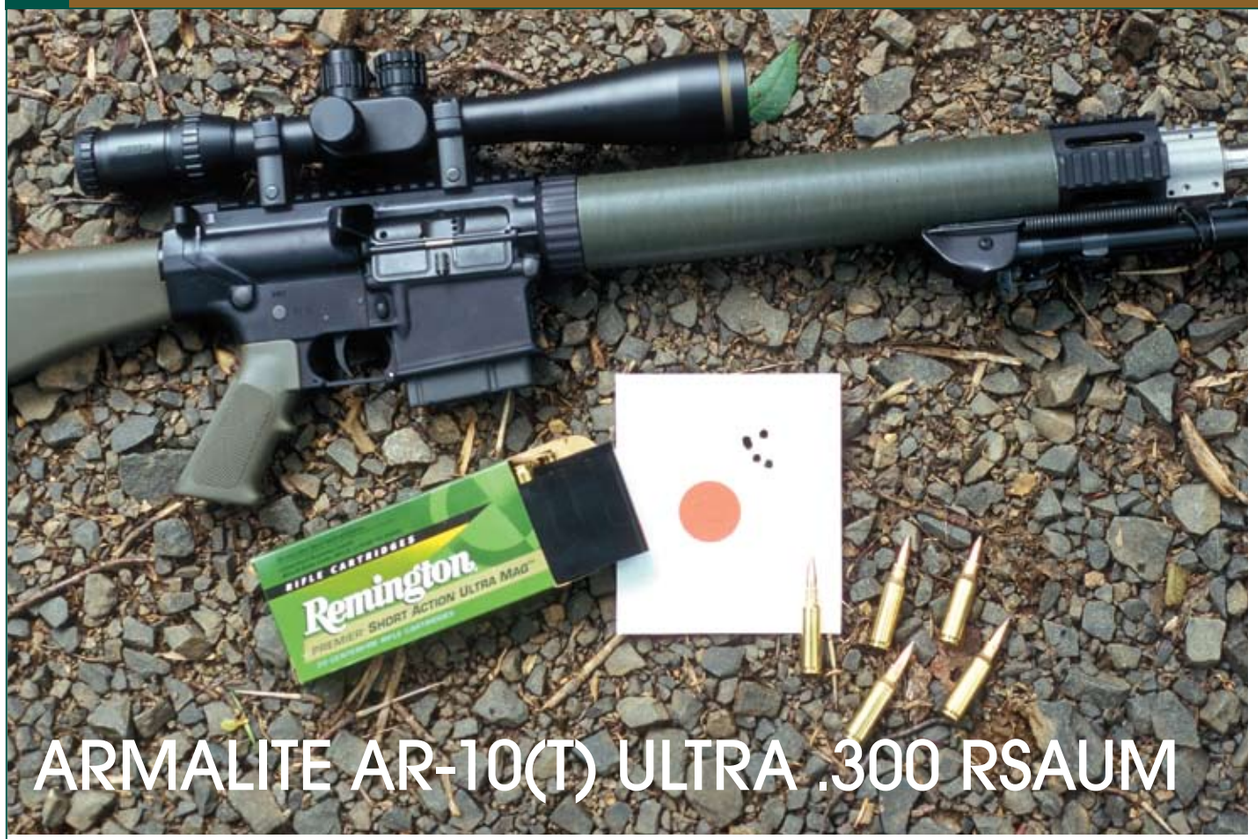


Improved Cylinder Tube

■ = Point of Hold
Federal No. 154-6
Premium Magnum
12 ga., 2¾", 1¼ oz.,
No. 6 Copper-Plated Lead
Average Pellet Count: 281.

Total Hits	159 (55%)
21" Inner Circle	92 (32%)
30" Outer Ring	57 (23%)

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."



ARMALITE AR-10(T) ULTRA .300 RSAUM

One measure of a great gun design is its adaptability to calibers and purposes not originally envisioned. Like Mauser's bolt-action rifle and Browning's M1911 pistol, Eugene Stoner's AR-15/M16 rifle stands out as a timeless design that in new forms and chamberings—from 9 mm sub-guns to long-range .308 precision rifles—has come to dominate a broad range of shooting activities. The gun once vilified as a "Mattel toy" has evolved into a durable arm, capable of firing some of the most powerful rounds available, as exemplified by the rifle under review here, ArmaLite's AR-10(T) Ultra in .300 Remington Short Action Ultra Mag. (RSAUM).

The AR-10(T) Ultra is the product of a collaboration between the Geneseo, Ill., firm and the United States Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU) to develop an AR-10 rifle suited to long-range work. While the .308 Win. has a nominal muzzle velocity of around 2620 f.p.s. with a 180-gr. bullet, the .300 RSAUM can push the same projectile to 3000 f.p.s., yielding about 200 f.p.s. more velocity, at 1,000 yds., with significantly less drop and wind deflection. The .300 RSAUM's flatter trajectory also allows the use of scopes with a smaller range of adjustment.

Based on the proven AR-10 platform, it is currently only available in .300 RSAUM with a free-floated, 24" heavy-profile, stainless-steel barrel; a flattop upper receiver with an integral Picatinny rail; aluminum-and-polymer tubular fore-end, with four short Picatinny rail segments for mounting lights, lasers or other accessories; and a detachable, five-round, steel box magazine. All carbon-steel parts are coated with a black-oxide finish, while the aluminum components are black anodized. The synthetic fore-end, pistol grip and buttstock are olive drab.

Internally, the AR-10(T) Ultra follows established AR15/AR-10 operating principles, so all controls are identical. However, there are changes from the standard AR-10. The bolt face has been opened up to handle the larger 0.532" nominal head diameter of the .300 RSAUM, the ejection port in the upper receiver has been enlarged, and the gas port in the barrel is located 3" farther forward than in the .308 Win. version. The lower receiver remains unchanged, because the existing magazine well is large enough to accommodate the fat RSAUM cartridge case.

The target crown of the rifle's 24" barrel is recessed, and the bore is button-rifled with a six-groove, 1:10" right-hand twist to stabilize even the heaviest .30-cal. bullets. The outer diameter of the stepped barrel measures 0.80" at the muzzle and 1.00" under the handguard.

We mounted a Springfield Armory 4-16x50 mm tactical scope on the AR-10(T) Ultra using Leupold Mk IV rings and tested the rifle for accuracy at 100 yds. off sandbags. Test ammunition included Remington loads with 150- and 165-gr. Core-Lokt and 180-gr. Nosler Partition bullets. Initially, there were some failures to fully eject brass with the 150-gr. Core-Lokt load. Quick disassembly revealed that the carrier and bolt were essentially bone-dry, and proper lubrication eliminated the problem. ArmaLite's two-stage match trigger broke at 5 lbs., which felt even lighter due to its smooth take-up, crisp break and minimal overtravel. Thanks to the weight of the gun and the recoil-absorbing properties of its semi-automatic action, recoil was moderate with the 150- and 165-gr. bullets. The 180-gr. load proved to be fairly stout, generating recoil that was brisk, but manageable.

ArmaLite guarantees 1 m.o.a., three-shot groups at 100 yds., and our test rifle approached or achieved this with five-shot groups of all the loads we tested. The gun showed a slight preference for the 150-gr. Core-Lokt load. Even better accuracy would likely be achieved with target-grade ammunition loaded with match bullets, such as Sierra's 168-, 175- or 180-gr. HPBTs.

The rifle proved to be slightly muzzle-heavy, which contributed to steadiness in off-hand and sitting shooting positions. Also a plus in such positions was the magazine, which only protrudes about 5/8" below the magazine well and did not interfere with the support hand position on the fore-end. With its 24" barrel, the rifle is not exactly handy, but it is comparable in length to a typical precision bolt-action rifle.

The AR-10(T) Ultra is a unique rifle that is produced on a limited semi-custom basis. With a list price of $2,340, it is not inexpensive. Even so, the accuracy, reliability and power of the AR-10(T) Ultra rifle will likely endear it to a diverse population of shooters—military and law enforcement precision riflemen, hunters, long-range target shooters and those who simply enjoy firing powerful semi-automatic rifles.

The AR-10(T) Ultra features a flattop upper receiver, free-floating tubular handguard and a 24" heavy stainless-steel match barrel. A Springfield Armory 4-16x50 mm Government Model scope is mounted with Leupold Mk IV rings.

SHOOTING RESULTS (100 YDS.)

.300 RSAUM Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft. lbs.)	Group Size In Inches Smallest	Largest	Average
Rem. No. PR300SM1 150-gr. Core-Lokt PSP	3132 15 Sd	3,268	0.71	1.03	0.83
Rem. No. PR300SM2 165-gr. Core-Lokt PSP	3020 32 Sd	3,343	0.76	1.22	0.97
Rem. No. PR300SM3 180-gr. Nosler Part.	2999 11 Sd	3,595	0.90	1.35	1.15
Average Extreme Spread:					0.98

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 24" barrel. Range temperature: 82° F. Humidity: 67%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 100 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: PSP (pointed soft-point), Rem. (Remington), Sd (standard deviation) Part. (Partition).

ARMALITE AR-10(T)

MANUFACTURER: ArmaLite, Inc. (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 299, Geneseo, IL 61254; (800) 336-0184; www.armalite.com
CALIBER: .300 Remington Short Action Ultra Mag
ACTION TYPE: gas-operated semi-automatic rifle
RECEIVER: forged aluminum upper and lower
BARREL: 24" stainless steel, heavy profile
RIFLING: six-groove, 1:10" right-hand twist
MAGAZINE: five-round steel box
SIGHTS: none supplied; Picatinny rail for scope mounting
TRIGGER PULL: two-stage, 5 lbs.
STOCK: synthetic; length of pull, 14½"; drop at heel, 5/8"; drop at comb, 5/8"
OVERALL LENGTH: 43⅜"
WEIGHT: 11 lbs., 9 ozs.
ACCESSORIES: two magazines, instruction manual
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $2,340

The AR-10(T) Ultra retains the standard A2-style buttstock (l.) with a buttplate having a trap door leading to an interior compartment. Four short Picatinny rail sections are located at the forward end of the free-floating handguard (below). The gas block also features a short Picatinny rail on its top surface.

As in the standard AR-10, action locking is achieved via a seven-lug rotating bolt that engages the barrel extension. The bolt face has been opened up to accept the 0.532" head diameter of the .300 RSAUM.

Charles Daly M-5

Firing tests showed the M-5 to have excellent ergonomics and manageable recoil.

This 2" group is typical of the accuracy achieved with a variety of loads.

The Charles Daly moniker, once the name of a 19th century hardware store owner and gun importer, is now owned by K.B.I., Inc., a Harrisburg, Pa., company that imports arms from around the world. Among these is the Charles Daly M-5, a polymer-frame M1911-style pistol made by BUL Transmark of Tel Aviv, Israel. Currently, several models of that gun are marketed by the company, two with 5" barrels and chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge: the fixed-sight M-5 Government, reviewed here, and the M-5 IPSC, which features adjustable sights, an ambidextrous safety and a stainless-steel slide. All are available with 14-round magazines. Forthcoming will be models in .40 S&W, as well as a Commander-length gun, and an Ultra-X compact with a 3½" barrel, shortened grip frame and a 10-round double-stack magazine.

Introduced around 1992, the M-5 was one of the first high-capacity polymer-frame .45 ACP handguns.

The M-5's polymer frame provides several advantages: reduced weight, increased recoil absorption and a slimmer grip profile. In regard to this last attribute, the M-5's molded-in checkered panels on its frontstrap and sides obviate the need for separate grip panels, making possible a narrower, smaller grip circumference than that of many steel-frame high-capacity (or even single-column) M1911 pistols. In actual measurement, the M-5's trigger reach was slightly shorter than that of a Colt Government Model with a beavertail grip safety and long trigger, and its grip circumference only about 0.35" greater.

Technically, the M-5 has a polymer-and-steel frame. Molded into the polymer grip is a steel upper insert that constitutes the frame rails and houses the hammer, sear and disconnector and their respective pins. This insert affords greater durability as well as increased precision in pin placement and alignment than would be possible with an all-polymer frame.

Beyond the polymer frame, the M-5's notable features included: a skeletonized lightweight trigger; beavertail grip safety with palm pad; extended strong-side thumb safety; front and rear slide serrations; checkered mainspring housing; lowered and fluted ejection port, and a full-length, one-piece guide rod with reverse spring plug. About 80 percent of the M-5's parts are interchangeable with the corresponding Government Model components. Its primary differences are in the magazine, trigger, magazine catch and mainspring housing. Also distinctive is the gun's 5" ramped bull barrel, whose 0.695" muzzle diameter engages the bore of the slide directly, eliminating the need for a barrel bushing.

Sighting is by way of a dovetail-mounted 0.125"-wide, 0.135"-high ramped post in the front, and a fixed low-snag rear unit with a 0.105"-wide notch and fine horizontal serrations on the sight face to reduce glare.

While disassembly and reassembly of the M-5 generally follow standard Government Model procedures, the primary difference is in the removal of the full-length guide rod and reverse spring plug.

We fired the Charles Daly M-5 at 25 yds. off sandbags using a Magtech 165-gr. JHP load, a Hornady Premium load with a 200-gr. XTP JHP, and Federal's 230-gr. Hydra-Shok JHP load. No malfunctions of any kind were observed. Accuracy results, shown in the accompanying table, are commendable. At 25 yds, groups averaged just over 2" with the ammunition tested.

The M-5 showed exceptional accuracy, with all loads averaging less than 3" (and no single group exceeding that dimension). Best was Federal's 230-gr. Hydra-Shok load, which averaged an extraordinary 1.67". We were additionally gratified that the gun's sights almost perfectly coincided with the bullet impact point. Also contributing to accuracy was the gun's 4-lb. trigger pull, which, though occasionally showing a little creep, felt lighter than its measured weight.

Recoil was quite manageable with all loads, even the hot MagTech load, which generated nearly 450 ft.-lbs of muzzle energy. This was attributed to the shock-absorbing properties of the polymer frame, the extra weight of the ramped bull barrel—which helped to slow rearward slide velocity while the slide and barrel are locked together—and the gun's excellent ergonomics that allowed a proper high, two-handed grip. The M-5 also perfectly fit into, and drew from, a number of popular carry and competition holsters.

Charles Daly backs the M-5 with a Limited Lifetime Warranty. Owners who want to modify their pistols, perhaps by installing an ambidextrous thumb safety, without voiding the warranty should contact Charles Daly's Custom Shop.

In sum, the Charles Daly M-5 represents an excellent value in a high-capacity,polymer-frame M1911-style pistol for IDPA or IPSC competition, or for self-defense.

The Charles Daly M-5, made by BUL Transmark of Israel, is a polymer-frame high-capacity M1911-style pistol designed for practical pistol competition or self-defense.

SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YDS.)

.45 ACP Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (fps.)	Energy (ft. lbs.)	Group Size In Inches Smallest	Largest	Average
Federal No.P45HS1 230-gr. Hydra Shok	837 Avg. 12 Sd	358	1.51	2.02	1.67
Hornady No. 9112 200-gr. XTP	855 Avg. 14 Sd	325	2.19	2.75	2.49
MagTech No. FD45A 165-gr. JHP	1104 Avg. 15 Sd	447	1.87	2.30	2.12
Average Extreme Spread					2.09

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 5" barrel. Range temperature: 72° F. Humidity: 57%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: JHP (jacketed hollow-point), XTP (Extreme Terminal Performance), Sd (standard deviation).

CHARLES DALY M-5

MANUFACTURER: BUL Transmark Ltd., Rival Street 10, Tel Aviv 67778 Israel; +972-3-6392911; www.bultransmark.com
IMPORTER: Charles Daly/ K.B.I. Inc. (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 6625, Harrisburg, PA 17112-0625; (866) 325-9486; www.charlesdaly.com
CALIBER: .45 ACP
ACTION TYPE: locked-breech, short-recoil-operated semi-automatic handgun
FRAME: polymer with steel insert
BARREL: 5"
RIFLING: six-groove, 1:16" LH twist
MAGAZINE: detachable steel box, 14-round capacity
SIGHTS: dovetail-mounted post front, fixed low-snag notch rear
TRIGGER PULL: two-stage, 4 lbs.
OVERALL LENGTH: 8½"
WIDTH: 1⅛"
HEIGHT: 5⅝"
WEIGHT: 35 ozs.
ACCESSORIES: plastic storage case, owner's manual
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $719

A wide magazine well accommodates the 14-round double-column magazine. Its mouth is flared for rapid reloading. The polymer frame has a steel insert with a cut to accept the gun's ramped bull barrel.

Knoxx Industries Sidewinder/ COPstock

The Knoxx sidewinder conversion kit is available with a 10-round drum magazine (r.) or a five-round box magazine (below). Both accept 2¾" or 3" shells.

The Knoxx Industries Sidewinder conversion kit turns any Mossberg shotgun into a detachable-box-magazine pump with quick reloading for three-gun competition or home defense. Additionally, the Knoxx top-folding COPstock provides a claimed 50 percent reduction in felt recoil.

The Knoxx Sidewinder conversion kit was designed with user-friendly installation in mind. The slide is aluminum, but other parts are constructed from steel and fiber-reinforced Zytel. We installed the kit on a Mossberg 590A1, which required an adapter to complete the conversion. This adapter is required for all 590s and those Mossbergs with nine-shot magazine tubes. Installation, while quite simple, required reaming the receiver with a supplied tool. Although Knoxx literature indicated that permanent modifications would not be required, using the supplied reaming tool required removing some material.

The Knoxx Sidewinder conversion kit is available with a 10-round drum magazine or a five-round box magazine. Both accept 2¾" and 3" shells. Changing the drop-free magazines is accomplished by pushing the magazine release just behind the magazine well. This allows the user to quickly reload or change from one type of ammunition to another quickly and effectively.

Also supplied was a grip that quickly screwed into one of four points on the fore-end. Use of the kit did not require this grip, but it definitely increased cycling speed.

On the range, shot recovery was aided by the Knoxx recoil-reducing system. Even with the stock folded, shooting buckshot and slugs proved to be easy. Squeezing the wire frame while rotating the stock over the top of the receiver stows it out of the way for storage or use in tight spaces. With the stock collapsed, our Mossberg measured just 29".

After installation, our Knoxx Industries Sidewinder conversion kit and COPstock folder performed flawlessly. We were pleasantly surprised to discover the COPstock did reduce felt recoil. During the course of our evaluation we removed the vertical fore-grip. Although useful, it wasn't missed after it was removed.

The Knoxx COPstock folder is currently available for the Mossberg 500, 590, Maverick 88 and 835, Remington 870, as well as Winchester 1300-series shotguns. By the end of the year, Knoxx will release a snap-on rubber buttpad that is claimed to reduce any remaining felt recoil by more than half.

The Knoxx Sidewinder conversion kit is currently available for Mossberg 500s, 590s, the Cruiser, the Persuader and Maverick 88s. Knoxx also recently released a conversion kit for Remington 870 series shotguns. Knoxx indicated that the conversion kit would require a permanent modification to the Remington 870. Also in the works is a 10-shot detachable box magazine. The Knoxx Sidewinder conversion and COPstock enhance the performance and ergonomics of any of these reasonably priced and widely available shotguns.

Contact: Knoxx Industries, LLC (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 2848, Paso Robles, CA, 93447; (877) GO-KNOXX; www.knoxx.com. Suggested retail pricing for the Sidewinder conversion kit with drum magazine is $249.95. The kit with box magazine is $199.95 and the COPstock folder is $109.95. Available options include the Mossberg 590-series adapter priced at $19.95; additional 10-round drums are $99.95 and additional five-round magazines are $49.95.

Alexander Arms .50 Beowulf Conversion

The .50 Beowulf conversion turned in 2" groups at 100 yds. At short range it delivers more energy than .223 Rem (above, l.) or .308 Win. (above, center). A 30-round M16 magazine holds just 10 .50 Beowulf rounds (l.).

The .50 Beowulf is the brainchild of Bill Alexander, a Briton whose AR-15-style rifles and upper conversions are manufactured at Radford Army Arsenal in leased facilities.

The lower chamber pressure of the .50 Beowulf results in a bolt velocity virtually identical to that of a rifle firing a .223 Rem. Recoil forces are only slightly higher. Cases are made by Starline and are essentially elongated .50 Action Express (.50 AE) cases with heads rebated to accommodate the smaller AR bolt. The case tapers from 0.539" at the head to 0.526" at the mouth. Rim diameter is 0.443". Overall case length is 1.655".

Alexander Arms offers loaded ammunition, including 300-gr. Speer Gold Dot, 325-gr. and 334-gr. hollow points and FMJs. It also has dies, components and reloading data for the .50 Beowulf.

At short-range, the heavy, .50-cal. bullet delivers greater energy than the .223 Rem. or .308 Win., but the .50 Beowulf is not a long-range round. By the time it has reached 300 yds., it has dropped more than 50". Its forte is close-range work at 200 yds. or less. The drop at 200 yds. is some 15", assuming a 100-yd. zero. At 100 yds. or less, the .50 Beowulf overshadows smaller calibers, although its ballistic performance comes at the price of reduced magazine capacity. It feeds from standard M16 magazines. Thirty-round AR magazines hold 10 .50 Beowulf cartridges, 20-round magazines hold seven and 10-round magazines hold only four.

All that is necessary to convert an AR-style rifle to .50 Beowulf is a .50 Beowulf upper receiver. Uppers are available from Cabela's or direct from Alexander Arms, which also manufactures complete .50 Beowulf rifles and carbines.

The .50 Beowulf carbine is made to military standard, with 7075T6 forged aluminum upper and lower receiver halves. The ejection port is enlarged to accommodate the fat .50 Beowulf cases, so it has no dust cover. The overall fit and finish on the examples received was excellent.

The .50 Beowulf comes without sights, so we installed an EoTech Holographic Weapon Sight (HWS). We found the .50 Beowulf upper receiver to be a perfect fit for lower receivers from ArmaLite, Bushmaster, Colt, DPMS and DSA. At the range, the .50 Beowulf delivered good accuracy during our function-firing at 50 yds. Recoil was about equivalent to a 20-ga. shotgun and was easily manageable. Accuracy was good; and while the .50 Beowulf is not a match rifle, it is not intended to be. It is a firearm for relatively short-range work and, as such, it excels. The .50 Beowulf functioned perfectly with 20- and 30-round polymer, steel and aluminum magazines. We fitted our test gun with the optional muzzle brake, and recoil was not an issue.

In sum, the .50 Beowulf offers owners of AR-type rifles and carbines the option to quickly change from .223 Rem. to a larger caliber rifle or carbine that can be created by simply adding an upper receiver to an existing lower. The .50 Beowulf should prove useful for hunting bear, wild boar, deer or other game.

Manufacturer: Alexander Arms, LLC (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 1, Radford Army Arsenal, Radford, VA 24143; (540) 639-8356; www.alexander-arms.com. Available From: Cabela's (Dept. AR), One Cabela Drive, Sidney, NE 69160; www.cabelas.com; (800) 237-4444. Alexander Arms .50 Beowulf Entry Kit (upper reciever and one magazine) $680.