



ATTRACTIVE HARDWOOD STOCKS, AND RECEIVERS DOVETAILED FOR SCOPE MOUNTS ARE PART OF THE CZS' APPEAL.

CZ's latest rimfire semi-autos –

THE CZECHS INTRODUCE NEW .22LR & .22 MAGNUM RIFLES...

Reviewed by Peter Maxwell

HAVING ONCE OWNED A CZ MODEL 581 .22LR SEMI-AUTO (SIMILAR TO THE RIFLE DESCRIBED BY ALASTAIR TAYLOR IN ISSUE #98 JAN/FEB '07) I WAS INTRIGUED TO LEARN THAT THE FAMOUS CZECH ARMS MANUFACTURER HAD RE-ENTERED THE MARKET WITH A NEW MODEL. THE 581 WAS AN EXCEPTIONALLY WELL MADE AND ACCURATE LITTLE RIFLE THAT I'VE ALWAYS REGRETTED SELLING.

The new rifles, known collectively as the Model 512, come in two calibres, although both versions are almost identical in appearance. According to the spec sheet both measure 1000mm overall, but taking nothing for granted I measured them myself and found that the .22lr was exactly 990mm long and the Magnum a fraction shorter at 987mm, the differences in stock length being the determining factor. Both rifles have identical receivers 210mm long with ejection ports 45mm

long. Externally the only clue that they're different is the length of their magazines – the Magnum's, as you might anticipate, is noticeably longer.

For a moment or two I wondered how CZ had managed to scale up a .22lr semi-auto rifle into a Magnum without increasing its length or weight, but then I realised that it was the other way round – they designed the Magnum, and then reconfigured its internals to handle the milder powered .22lr ammunition. Cunning those Czechs!





THE RIFLES CAME EQUIPPED WITH 5-SHOT MAGAZINES, BUT 10-SHOT VERSIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE.

and therefore easily removable, offsetting to a certain degree the weight of adding a scope and rings.

Stock timber is a European hardwood with a plain but attractive grain and a lacquered satin finish. The butt plates are moulded synthetic, and sling swivel studs are supplied fore and aft.

All in all the two rifles have a solid, well-designed feel about them, although it was somewhat of a culture shock to a traditionalist like myself to find alloy and plastic where once CZ used nothing but steel. I mentioned this in passing to a shooting friend, who replied, "All modern rifles are made like that, get over it."

THE ACTION

The Model 512 barrels are fastened into the receivers with twin grub screws angled into the front of the receiver (one on each side), and the rifles have a blow-back action (like all .22 semi-auto rimfires) with a bolt that's controlled by a pair of recoil springs mounted side by side. For cleaning, the action can be disassembled by removing the timber fore-stock and then pushing out what CZ calls a release pin. Following that the barrel and receiver section can be pulled forward along the rails, the cocking lever removed, and the bolt lifted up and out. Remember to pull it slightly rearward first to overcome the pressure of the twin springs.

It all sounds easy enough, and with a bit of practice it is. After a lengthy shooting session removing the bolt and cleaning the accumulated grit from the bolt face, extractor and the receiver raceways is all that's required to keep the 512 functioning. If you've a mind to though, and you keep taking the whole gun apart until there's nothing left to undo, you'll end up with 77 different items on your benchtop! Yes, the rifles come with an instruction manual containing an exploded diagram.

ON THE RANGE

I took the two rifles up to the range with a bunch of ammunition; CCI Maxi-Mag hollow-points, Remington 33 grain V-Max, and Federal 30 grain Premium in .22 Magnum, and Kilwell Cobra, Winchester Power Point, Federal High-Velocity, Remington High-Velocity and Whisper subsonics in .22lr. Not by any means a complete line-up of the ammunition available on the market, but enough to establish the basic accuracy

WITH THE PIN REMOVED FROM THE FRONT OF THE RECEIVER, THE BARREL AND ACTION CAN BE PULLED FORWARDS TO REVEAL THE BOLT AND ITS TWIN SPRINGS, READY FOR STRIPPING AND CLEANING.

Both rifles incidentally are very close in weight too. With a Huntsman 4x32 scope installed the .22lr tips the scales at 3.25kg (just over 7lbs), while the Magnum is only fractionally heavier at 3.3kgs fitted with a Huntsman 3-9x scope.

FEATURES & MATERIALS

The 512 receivers are dovetailed for scope mounts and machined from alloy, typical now of many high quality sporting rifles and shotguns. Aluminium alloy was once regarded as simply a cheaper metal to work with than steel, and therefore rather suspect, but those days are long gone. Today you'll find high-grade

aluminium even in top dollar European firearms like Benelli and Blaser. The 512's trigger guards and mag wells are moulded polymer, as are the detachable box magazines, although the followers are steel. Both rifles were delivered with five-shot magazines, and ten-shot versions are now available. Cross-bolt safeties are located at the rear of the trigger guards.

The barrels of both rifles measure 525mm (20.65" approx) and have the same profile, tapering to 14mm at the muzzle. It's somewhat of an anachronism now, but fully adjustable iron sights are fitted; a ramp style at the rear and a shrouded post type at the muzzle. These are screwed to the barrels





THE .22LR SHOOTS SUBSONIC AMMUNITION RELIABLY, MAKING IT IDEAL FOR HUNTING NEAR BUILDINGS WHERE EXCESSIVE NOISE COULD BE A PROBLEM.



TOP: THE MODEL 512'S ARE ALMOST IDENTICAL, ONLY THE LENGTH OF THEIR MAGAZINES ALLOWS YOU TO TELL THEM APART.

ABOVE: GLENN TOOK THE .22LR ON A COUPLE OF POSSUM HUNTS AND FOUND IT EASY TO LOAD AND OPERATE IN THE DARK. HE WENT FOR HEADSHOTS AND PLUCKED THE FUR, WHICH IS WORTH \$105 PER KILO. HE SAYS, "YOU CAN PAY FOR YOUR HUNTING AND HAVE FUN SAVING THE TREES!"

levels of the rifles.

I began shooting the Magnum first, and as the target shows, once sighted in it produced nice even groups averaging just above the one inch mark (27mm) with the Federals, and just below the one inch mark (21mm) with both the Remingtons and Maxi-Mags, all at 50 yards.

Next I turned to the .22lr, and once again the 50 yard, five-shot groups were in the same bracket, hovering between .8" (20mm) and around 1.15" (28mm). This accuracy level is typical of the majority of today's .22 rimfire semi-autos, and suitable for hunting small game out to the practical limits of the cartridges – arguably around 100 metres for the .22lr and 150 metres or so for the Magnum, depending on how good a shot you are and how big the target is.

I found the triggers on both rifles pleasant to use with very little creep (although Glenn didn't entirely agree with me on that point – see below) – the Magnum's trigger released at 4lbs 6ozs, while the .22lr's was a little lighter at exactly 4lbs.

SUMMING UP

With a recommended retail price of just over \$1000 the CZ's are in the upper price bracket for standard factory rimfire rifles. But you're getting European quality from a company that in its various guises (Brno/CZ) is regarded as one of the leading firearm manufacturers in the world, particularly when it comes to semi (and full) automatic weapons. It's worth noting that the forefathers of the guys who made these new 512's were the ones who designed the WW2 BREN gun (Brno/Enfield), still considered to be the "Rolls Royce" of light machine guns.

We found the 512's to be well designed,

accurate and reliable. Hopefully, in a later issue we can report back on their long-term durability. ■

Peter Maxwell

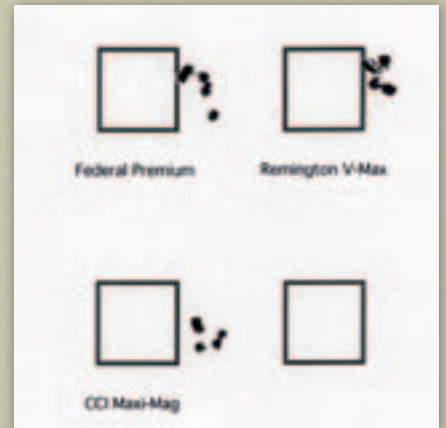
A FIELD WITH CZ512 – GLENN RANGIUIA REPORTS

A quick possum hunt with a new spotlight-equipped CZ 512 semi-auto .22lr was a task I took great pleasure in. The 512 is a nice handling rifle. The balance seemed right even with the barrel-mounted light. It came up to the shoulder and my cheek dropped on to the stock in the correct position for the scope sight. I fitted a sling to the quick-detach mounts for easier

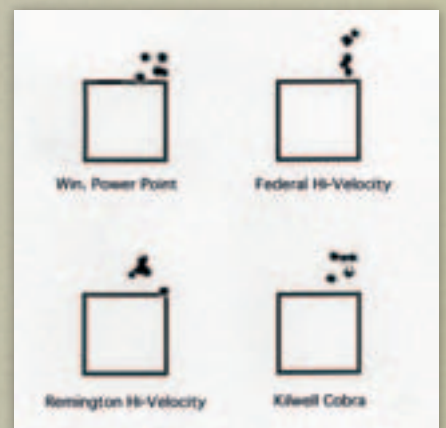




GLENN BOWLED THE HARE WITH A SINGLE SHOT AT 80 METRES PLUS, IN THE DARK – NO PROBLEM FOR THE ACCURATE CZ.



THE 512 MAGNUM PRODUCED THESE GROUPS AT 50 YARDS.



GROUPS SHOT WITH THE 512 .22LR AT 50 YARDS WITH HUNTING AMMUNITION.

SPECIFICATIONS – CZ MODEL 512	
CALIBRES:	.22lr and .22 Magnum
ACTIONS:	semi-automatic
WEIGHT:	3.25/3.3kgs (with scopes)
OVERALL LENGTH:	1000mm approx.
BARREL LENGTH:	525mm (20.65" approx)
MAGAZINES:	5 and 10-shot available
RRP:	\$1050 (both calibres)


carrying to and from the rear of the farm, and taped up the barrel to stop the spotlight mount from marking the surface.

The polymer five-shot magazine sits nearly flush with the action, and I noted that the base of the magazine is much like a pistol style with a fitted pad. The magazine release catch located in front of the magazine well is easy to find and use, and the magazines drop out to hand ready for reloading. The magazine I had was only a five-shot, but it was easy to load and I had no trouble with it in the dark, working just by feel.

The cross-bolt safety at the rear of the trigger guard assembly is also easy to find in the dark with the trigger finger. The trigger has a rather solid pull which I found a little off-putting until I'd fired a few shots and come to grips with it. I would prefer it to be a little lighter, but knowing the safety rules and litigation that apply around the world I suppose this is what we are going to get in the future.

I would also prefer the rifle without the iron sights, less to catch on when you're hunting. I don't know any hunters who use them today now that telescopic

sights are so available and cheap. With the iron sights removed the barrel could be threaded for a suppressor which would expand the choice of hunting to include more of the lifestyle block areas.

These comments aside, the CZ 512 is great addition to the .22 rimfire market; it's a handy, easy to use, well-balanced rifle with no faults that I could find. 

GR

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