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NEW ZEALAND ROD & RIFLE

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Kilwell Cobra ammunition is basically re-branded Winchester Super X with a high velocity 37gn hollow point round that performs very well on small game.

Mossberg International 702 Plinkster .22

The first thing I noticed is that this is obviously a re-born up MagTech as we know them in New Zealand. I have sold an awful lot of MagTech's over the last few years and I am nothing but impressed at the value for money these little rifles are. They are extremely reliable and apart from the occasional magazine that doesn't feed I cannot recall a lot of problems with these rifles.

I don't sell things I don't believe in so you can always find a MagTech rifle on the shelf in our shop. They are a great value package and come with a moderator, a gun bag, a scope and two magazines. The fact that they are made in Brazil obviously enables a quality product to be produced at a very reasonable price.

I am basing my comments on a lot of my experience with the MagTech branded rifles but the Mossberg is basically the same rifle and comes with a sexy camo stock and other options. It is a shame this one was not threaded for a moderator because in my experience the MagTech is maybe the most reliable lower priced semi-auto .22 at cycling subsonic ammunition.

After examining the 702 it is easy to see why this little rifle is such a success story. The guts of it are pure simplicity. If you look at many of the most successful and reliable firearms in the world you will notice that simplicity is what they have in common. Benelli shot guns and Remington 700 rifles are two outstanding examples of brilliance in design. Both being extremely simple which in itself adds to their reliability. The Mossberg 702 is a budget package but extremely well designed and priced and can't help but be a commercial success story

The Action

The Mossberg 702 has a blow back action as do most semi-auto .22 rimfires. It is not too dissimilar to the famous Ruger 10-22 in design however it is scaled down in size. The extractor and the ejector are the same system as the Ruger. The extractor is a long flat extractor recessed into the side of the bolt and the ejector acts as a bolt guide and is fixed to the trigger group. As the bolt head comes back it protrudes through the bolt face and kicks the spent case out. The bolt mechanism is about as simple and it could possibly be. There is a recoil spring attached to the back of the bolt that is attached to a guide rod on the action body. This returns the bolt back into the closed position and pushes another round back into the chamber. It all looks too simple to work but it does and very well at that.

There is a plastic block in the back of the action behind the bolt. This acts as a bumper stopper. The only problem I have ever really had with a MagTech was when one of these came apart. Maybe that was a one off and it is very simple to fix. There is a little bit of a trick stripping the action right down. The bolt needs to be pulled

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slightly to the rear before the bolt head will drop down out of the action. You don't really need to be a techo to strip it and reassemble it however it is a little fiddly getting it back together.

The magazine release is an easy to operate lever in front of the trigger guard that worked easily and reliably. The magazine fed and functioned well and I assume was a ten shot however being new only held nine for me. With some use it should hold ten.

The safety was shotgun style, forward of the trigger guard and clearly indicates the fire position.

The Bedding

The action body is a tight fit in the stock and the front and rear of the action go down into a tight recess in the stock that acts as the bedding. There is no need for a recoil lug on a .22 and this system obviously works well because the rifle shot extremely well.



The trigger group on the 702.

The Trigger

This is an integral part of the trigger group that encompasses the magazine well and bolt release etc. It is pinned into the action body and I was impressed as to how well machined this all was. Even the pins that held it in the action slid out smoothly.

The trigger itself was two stage with the second stage heavy and lots of horrible creep. This is common to most semi-auto rifles unless you spend a significant amount of money. I am sure it could be improved, however I recommend that a competent gunsmith be appointed to the job as semi-autos can become very dangerous if the trigger adjustment is messed up.



The bolt assembly.

The Barrel

I would have thought it would be hammer forged as this is the least expensive way to make a barrel. The finish inside was a bit on the rough side however this often has no relationship to accuracy and certainly did not in the case of this rifle. Generally hammer forged barrels have a great appearance and finish on the inside so maybe this is button rifled.

The barrel is 18" or 450mm in length which is common in semi-auto .22 rimfires.

It is pinned into the receiver with a roll pin which is also a common method with rimfires. The barrel was also fitted with a reasonable set of iron sights.

The Stock

Well finished synthetic with moulded in checkering and an attractive camo pattern plus a little Schnabel fore-end making it relatively attractive. The stock is fine and apart from the length

of pull would be ideal for children to handle. There is nothing cheap about this stock which is often the case with lower priced firearms. It has a separate pistol grip cap screwed on and a removable recoil pad which is more than what would be expected from a lower priced rifle.

The Scope

The 4x32 Shirstone isn't exactly top end however it is nice and compact with a good field of view and reasonable optics. It was more than adequate for the job. In fact despite the budget appearance externally, this scope was surprisingly good optically. I never got to put the scope through its adjustments as it was already sighted in perfectly as I have noticed with all of my Testfire rifles from Kilwell.

Shooting the Mossberg 702

I put a target up at 50 meters and shot the rifle off a benchrest. Kilwell supplied me with a packet of their Cobra ammunition which is basically re-branded Winchester Super X. It is a high velocity 37GN hollow point round that performs very well.

The first shot I fired went 40mm low then a fantastic group developed 10mm above my point of aim at 50 meters. The rifle was very well sighted in thanks to someone. The four shot group that came after that was 14mm which with the 4x scope impressed me. I reloaded the magazine with 9 rounds which was what it comfortably took then fired a relatively fast group; this little gun spits out the bullets as fast as you can pull the trigger. With the bad trigger and the speed I fired the group it didn't match the previous group however that would be more my error than the rifles I think. The group was still bloody impressive and even with the low shot measured 29mm overall.

If this rifle was mine I would have to tinker with the trigger however at a pinch I could live with it.

Options

There are four models available and some of these have other options such as threaded barrels. They are also available with or without the scope and ring package. There is a



The action body with the Shirstone scope up top.

standard black synthetic option and a stainless option with a 21" barrel which could be more desirable for a lot of people. There is the camo stock version I tested and a carbon fiber look alike stock version also. Have a look at www.kilwell.co.nz for more details.

Conclusion

The rifle functioned 100% reliably and I would not hesitate to recommend it as a package, it is a sweet little shooter.

As I mentioned I have sold the MagTech packages for some time now and I have never felt that I have compromised my policy to only sell quality products.

I would expect to see the package offering a threaded barrel in the future and maybe a moderator on all the models.

Mossberg Plinkster 702 .22 S/A

- Black synthetic stock, blued barrel
- Black synthetic stock, threaded blued barrel
- Black synthetic stock, chrome barrel
- Camo synthetic stock, blued barrel (as tested)
- Carbon fibre look synthetic stock, blued barrel.



Specifications	
Manufacturer:	CBC, Brazil
Importer:	Kilwell Sports
Model:	Autoloading Rifle – Model 702
Operation:	Semi-Automatic
Caliber:	.22 Long Rifle
Barrel Length:	18 inches
Overall Length:	37 inches
Stock:	Camo synthetic
Length of Pull:	14 1/4 inches
Weight (Empty):	4 pounds
Safety:	Push button
Sights:	Fully adjustable folding semi-buckhorn rear; hooded bead front; grooved dovetail on receiver for small-bore scopes.
Magazine capacity:	10 rounds
Finish:	Blued



Left: 5 shots at 50 meters – first shot low from clean barrel.
Right: 10 shots rapid at 50 meters.