

POWERFUL, TOO

THE GREAT BFR REVOLVER EXCELS WITH MODS BY MAGNUM RESEARCH'S PRECISION CENTER.

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To this day I am surprised by the number of gun enthusiasts who have not heard of BFR revolvers. Perhaps this is one of the best-kept secrets in revolver circles. Just for the record, BFR stands for Big Frame Revolver.

I've written about these fine wheelguns in the past and always returned them when finished with the assignment. I'm not really sure why as I have always been impressed with the firearm and accuracy experienced. So, I decided it was past time I have a BFR take up permanent residence in my arsenal of hunting handguns. After reviewing the list of options I finally decided on the time-proven .44 Mag. It's just hard to go wrong with the double-four.

While the selection of production guns is great, I chose a

Precision Center Built BFR from Magnum Research's custom shop. There is absolutely nothing wrong with their production guns mind you—I just wanted a touch of embellishment.

These revolvers are built like a tank. If you want to shoot a .45-70 or .450 Marlin, knock yourself out. They even come in .30-30 Winchester, .480 Ruger, .454 Casull, .444 Marlin, .475 Linebaugh, .460 S&W Mag, .500 S&W Mag, and a few others. The BFR is a serious hunting gun 100 percent made in the USA.

The revolver offers many features most welcomed by shooters and hunters alike. The transfer bar allows the gun only to fire after first cocking the hammer and then pulling the trigger, so it can be carried with all chambers loaded. When the hammer and trigger are fully forward, the transfer bar is lowered out of firing position with the hammer resting directly on the frame—not the firing pin. The revolver has only two hammer positions, cocked and uncocked. Opening the loading gate immobilizes the trigger, hammer and transfer bar.

Each and every gun is proof fired at the factory to insure proper function and integrity. Interchangeable cylinders are

Magnum Research BFR .44 Mag. with 7.5-inch barrel comes in a soft-brushed stainless steel. Mark's BFR comes from MRI's Precision Center Built and features the firm's scope base installed. Mark added 3 Weigand Magnum Weaver-style rings to hold a Bushnell Trophy 2-6X scope securely.



The BFR showed it was very accurate at 50 yards. The best group from Black Hills ammo was under 1/2 inch.

A variety of .44 Mag. ammo was tested.



a problem with Weigand rings or bases with the hardest kicking rounds. The Bushnell handgun scope is also well-known for withstanding punishing recoil. The clarity is superb and this scope is user friendly throughout the power range.

Precision Center options include octagon barrels, micarta grips, slimmed and rounded grips, fluted barrels, fluted cylinders, barrels longer than 10 inches, initials on frame, and other notable features. All BFR revolvers come in short or long cylinder configuration. Many other calibers are available from the Precision Center including .375 Winchester, .475 Linebaugh, .450 Bushmaster, and .300 Blackout to name a few. BFR revolvers are definitely magnum strength.

With an ammo crate full of quality factory ammo I set up the Oehler 35P and went to work. Due to the fact deer season

was approaching, I chose ammo I might use on a big Missouri whitetail. Rounds tested include Barnes Vor-TX 225-grain XPB, Hornady 240 XTP, Federal 240 JHP, Winchester hollow soft-point, Fusion 240 JHP, Black Hills 240 JHP, HPR 240 JHP, and Buffalo Bore's Deer Grenade 240-grain softcast-gas check. Any of these loads would be more than enough for a big Midwestern whitetail buck.

I started out at 25 yards for initial sight-in and quickly advanced to 50 yards for accuracy testing. One thing I noticed right from the start is the revolver handles recoil nicely. The grip is smooth and very comfortable when shooting factory ammo. The first round tested at 50 yards was Black Hills 240-grain JHP. Three shots were touching in less than a 1/2 inch. I was impressed to say the least. After shooting eight different



Mark practiced field shooting with the BFR from the Primos Gen 3 short tripod trigger stick.



The 7x Leather chest rig rides comfortable across the chest with easy access, and spare ammo handy.

factory loads I was convinced the BFR was a shooter. And I'm not the best revolver shot from a bench. Most loads tested were averaging under 1-1/2 inches. Even with factory loads, recoil was not abusive. The BFR was easy to shoot and I like the Bisley grip. With a little extra work on my part, this gun will be a serious hunting revolver.

Most of my handloads are in the form of Starline brass, CCI or Winchester primers, and bullets from Sierra, Hornady, Speer, and Nosler. For magnum or hunting loads I lean toward H110. Redding's T-7 turret system and dies make loading this straight-wall pistol cartridge a breeze. For practice rounds, depending on the type of bullet, Unique or 2400 usually gets the nod. There are many recipes with a wide assortment of bullets and powder available for the popular .44 Mag, and finding a good load will not take long.

If I had anything negative to mention it would probably be the hammer. BFR recently redesigned their hammer style. I was told this was done to accommodate shooting in cold weather when gloves are worn. I much prefer the Bisley style hammer and will probably have one installed somewhere down the road. This is a personal preference and really doesn't take anything away from this fine, accurate revolver.

When deer season arrives I'll be carrying the BFR in a 7x Leather chest holster system. This well-made leather rig rides across your chest. The holster secures the gun and comes with a strap to hold everything in place. A cartridge slide holds 6 extra rounds and there is even a pouch to house your ear plugs. I have grown fond of chest rigs and this 7x Leather offering is a dandy. In the past I have worn this holster for extended periods. It has carried large, scoped revolvers very comfortably. 7x Leather makes packing this BFR hunting revolver relatively

.44 MAGNUM FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

| LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE) | VELOCITY (FPS) | GROUP SIZE (INCHES) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Black Hills 240 JHP | 1,296 | .40 |
| Federal 240 JHP | 1,505 | 1.43 |
| HPR 240 JHP | 1,432 | 1.40 |
| Winchester 240 HSP | 1,519 | 1.20 |
| Hornady 240 XTP | 1,513 | 1.16 |
| VOR-TX 225 XPB | 1,386 | 2.10 |
| Fusion 240 JHP | 1,515 | 1.60 |
| Buffalo Bore 240 Soft Cast | 1,663 | 1.15 |

NOTES: Groups the product of three shots at 50 yards. Chronograph screens set at 10 feet from muzzle.

painless—and more importantly—safe.

If you are searching for a serious hunting revolver, the BFR is definitely a worthy candidate. This is one of those guns you can shoot as much as you want and hand down to your grandchildren to enjoy for years of shooting pleasure. I am real pleased with the accuracy shown and the gun is built to withstand a steady diet of magnum rounds if you desire. In my opinion, this is one of the best values for a well-built, single-action handgun today. My BFR will be heading to the woods soon and I have no doubt it will help me fill the freezer with venison.



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