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Details Inside

# RIFLE

Shooting Firearms Journal

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Hunting  
Rifles

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Rimfires  
from  
Magnum  
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# MAGNUM

# HIGH-

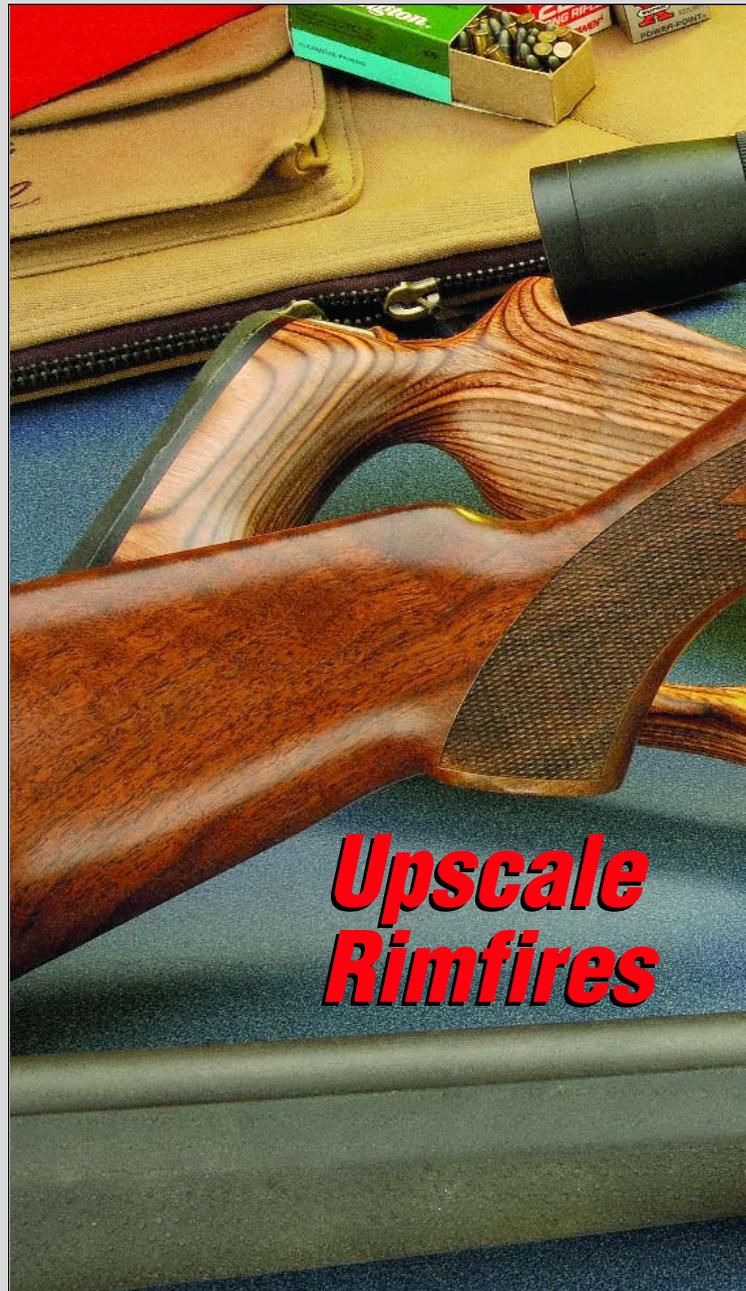
**Stan Trzoniec**

**N**ext to upland bird hunting, small game hunting ranks high on my list of favorite pastimes. As a youngster, I longed for that summer vacation when we packed up the Chevrolet and drove to my uncle's farm in upstate New York. There, along with my friend from the neighboring farm, woodchucks and other vermin fell under the sights of my trusty Winchester single shot.

Carefully stalking freshly cut alfalfa, we chased marmots over hill and dale. Jimmy and I had the run of 300+ acres with no one around to bother us. Living on crab apples and cookies, those lingering days came to an end far too quickly. I'm thankful for all those memories.

They were carefree days all right, but while I still hunt chucks with centerfire wildcat cartridges, I also make time for mini-forays with a good automatic rimfire rifle. With acreage shrinking constantly, the need to not only stalk close, but also shoot near seems paramount, especially in the urbanized sections of the country. Besides, the challenge often puts me back into the good old days, when I was a lot more patient.

Modern times are often accompanied by the need to try new venues of not only techniques but guns as well. I don't think I would log it under the catch phrase "fad" but rather under education, as changing equipment often leads down the path of more interesting, if not more enjoyable, experiences. Such is the case of my recent affair with autoloading .22 rimfire rifles. I say "recent" only because during my life autoloaders never seemed like they were the right equipment in the field. At the risk of being snobbish, if it was not a bolt action, it simply



# RESEARCH

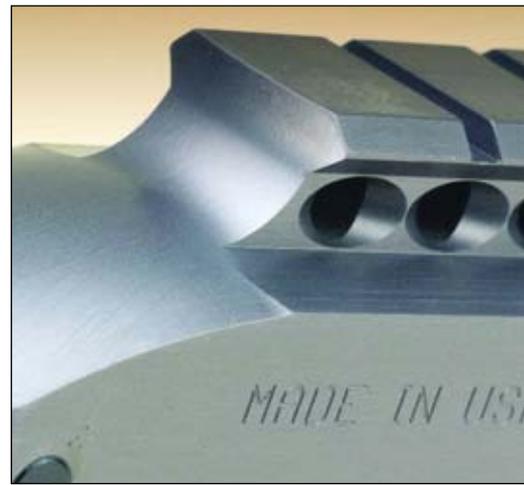
## -TECH RIFLES



*Magnum Research options based on the MLR-1722 include the walnut stocked Classic, the Barracuda and the Hogue "OverMolded" synthetic version.*



*The receiver is finished in French gray and offers an interesting contrast to the wood-stocked version of the MLR-1722 rifle.*



*The rear of the scope base blends in nicely with the receiver.*

did not make the grade. Most times I had looked down at repeating arms as not fully functional, dependent on ammunition of faultless quality or guns that insecure hunters depended on to compensate for their own lack of skill at one-shot opportunities.

One company that is headlong into semiautomatic rimfire rifles is Magnum Research. Recently it unveiled a line of rifles called "MagnumLite," which includes a variety of stock designs wrapped around a proprietary action that the company manufactures here in the U.S. Chambered for the likes of the .22 Long Rifle, .22 Winchester Magnum and the newer .17 Mach-2, they are certainly made for those who prefer less weight on the shoulder combined with good accuracy at moderate rimfire distances.

The action is patterned after the popular Ruger 10/22 action, and there is a reason for this. Aside from complete rifles made by Magnum Research, you can purchase additional parts that interchange with Ruger products,

allowing you to put together a custom gun that would include a new stock and barrel. For ease of use, Magnum Research uses the traditional rotary magazine; the ignition system is from Ruger. However, that is where the similarity ends.

To drop the action out of the stock, loosen the screw located forward of the magazine well, and the complete action – receiver, trigger group and barrel – drops into your hand. From here, you can take note of the simplicity of the assembly from the neatly finished receiver to the barrel attachment.

*The oversized bolt knob is standard on all rifles. The only difference is they can be hollowed out or solid, depending on which cartridge the gun is chambered for.*

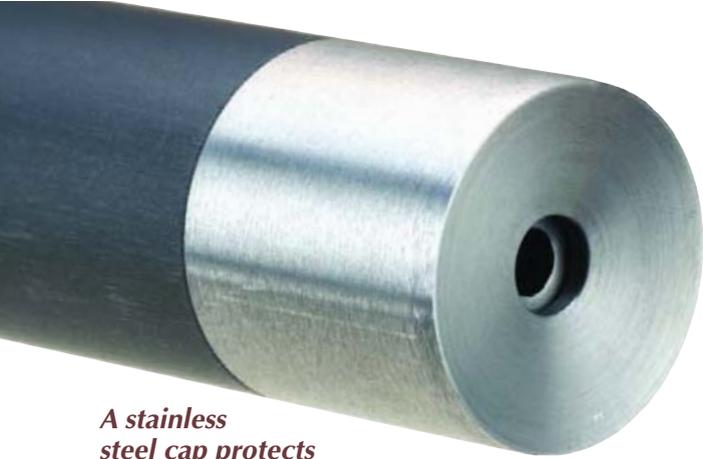


The French grayed MLR-1722 receiver is unique because of the scalloped Weaver-styled scope mount – standard fare on every Magnum Research rifle, not an add-on – machined directly from the same billet as the receiver. This integral base has seven multiple cuts and a forward extension over the end of the receiver of about one inch, which should pose no problems to mount most any reasonable scope, in any position without regard to oversized eye, objective lenses (up to

*With the action separated from the stock, the cutout for the magazine and the V-block that attaches the barrel to the receiver are visible.*



**MAGNUM  
RESEARCH**



*A stainless steel cap protects the muzzle of the barrel and seals the carbon fiber covering.*



*The match-grade trigger broke at 3½ pounds. The safety is forward of the trigger.*

50mm) or perhaps a bulky turret knob. Stylized in appearance, and to save weight, there are holes machined into the base of the mount to add a rakish appearance.

The receiver is polished smooth and without any marks of dishing of the details. An oversized bolt knob allows charging of the rifle in the field even with bulky hand gear. Interestingly enough, to compensate for the power of the .22 Long Rifle and the .17 Mach-2, on the former, the bolt handle is hollowed out and made from aluminum, while the latter is solid and machined from steel. Inside, you will find a specially designed Magnum Research bolt that has been modified and properly machined to allow the proper bolt speed when matched to any of the three cartridge choices. Ad-

ditionally, this bolt is precision machined from 4140 steel, though hardened and machined with a minimum headspace for smoother operation and accuracy. On the bolt face, a single extractor pulls the spent case from the breech, and a mechanical ejector pushes it out of the receiver.

***Magnum Research recently unveiled a line of rifles called MagnumLite.***

This action is blowback in operation, and cartridges are fed to the breech by a Ruger rotary 10-round magazine, allowing one round to be fired with each pull of the trigger. Included in the package is a disconnecter that

prevents the firing of more than one shot with a single pull on the trigger. On the samples, this match trigger averaged between 3¼ and 3½ pounds of pull with just a hint of slack before the sear broke.

Operational controls are traditional and feature the usual cross-button safety located to the front of the trigger on the uppermost part of the guard bow. Complete with a red warning ring, pushing it to the left disengages the safety making the rifle ready to shoot. Next to this is the bolt lock. With the bolt back, pushing in on the *lower* part of this lock secures the bolt in the rearmost position. To move the bolt forward, pull back on the bolt then press in on the *upper* part of this lever. Pushing on the lever at

*The distinctive checkering pattern wraps around the pistol grip.*



*The cheekpiece features a custom shadow line.*



# MAGNUM RESEARCH

midposition only adds to shooter frustration and was designed to keep the bolt from being released and self-loading the gun, as might be the case if the rifle is dropped on a hard surface.

To release the magazine, push the catch in on its forward end while pulling down on the front of the magazine by way of the relief cut. Some will offer that it's just as easy to let the magazine fall out, but in all the guns I've handled (including the Ruger 10/22), some assist is needed to "pry" the magazine from the receiver.

## ***The action is patterned after the popular Ruger 10/22 action.***

The barrel on the .22 LR version is 17 inches long and has a diameter of 0.915 inch from its V-block attachment point on the receiver to the tip of the stainless steel cap at the muzzle. While this may not be a big deal to some, the material this barrel is made from will stir dyed-in-the-

***The rollover cheekpiece, large pistol-grip base and hollowed out buttstock make for an interesting stock.***



***The Barracuda model features a radical stock design that is as much at home in the field as it is on the bench.***

wool rimfire shooters to heated debates.

The barrel is a combination of steel barrel wrapped with carbon fiber to reduce weight and to dissipate heat. According to Magnum Research, the lightweight barrel reduces fatigue in the field, which is going to be an asset for walking varmint shooters like myself. The point of impact remains constant as the graphic carbon gets rid of potential heat problems up to 43 percent faster than conventional all-steel barrels when tested in a 20-minute, 500-round trial period with absolutely no change in

zero. The barrels are made from a patented process that combines unidirectional graphite carbon fiber that finishes off ultra-straight and is actually six times stiffer than steel. This minimizes barrel harmonics, resulting in better accuracy in the field.

The barrel checks in at 13.03 ounces in the common rimfire chambering, which can be up to 75 percent lighter than a steel barrel of the same dimensions. Now, if you have a Ruger 10/22 and you want to add a new barrel chambered for the .17 Mach-2, you are looking at a weight of around 13.90 ounces (smaller

***To offer more clearance for shooting, as well as changing magazines, the forearm has a step forward of the magazine well.***





*The Hogue stock is utilitarian in appearance and is perfect for use as a pickup truck gun. Note the outward flare of the pistol grip and the stippled checkering.*



*The Hogue stock features a live rubber buttpad and sling swivels.*

bore, a little more weight) with a barrel twist of one in 16 inches. If you decide to purchase this barrel for your .22 Ruger, the package also includes a bolt kit that, according to Magnum Research,

## Specifications

**Rifle model:** Magnum Research  
MLR-1722

**Action:** semiautomatic, rimfire rifle

**Stock:** hand-select walnut, laminated or synthetic available

**Cartridges tested:** .17 Mach-2,  
.22 Long Rifle

**Cartridges available:** .17 Mach-2, .22  
Long Rifle, .22 WMR

**Barrel length:** 17 inches

**Overall length:** 35½ inches

**Sights:** none furnished, receiver is made  
for Weaver type scope ring/base  
combinations

**Weight:** 4½ pounds  
(wood stocked version)

**Finish:** satin finish on wood stocks

**Options:** some custom options/parts  
available from the in-house  
custom shop

**Price:** complete rifles, \$629 with Hogue  
Synthetic; \$729 with Barracuda  
stock; \$799 with Classic walnut  
stock

“provides the required increase in mass necessary for safe, reliable operation.”

These graphite barrels can be purchased through your dealer and with a simple installation can upgrade your rifle to a new standard of operation in the field. Installation is easy and once you remove the stock, just back out the two screws located on the V-block forward of the receiver. Remove this locking block, pull the old barrel out of the receiver and put the new barrel in its place. This is a press fit operation; there are no threads or requirements relative to torque to contend with. To complete this operation, place the barrel into the receiver until it stops, install the locking block, tighten the screws and you are in business.

Additionally, Magnum Research has made it easy to upgrade your present rifle with the addition of barrels (\$269), bolt kits (49.00), a match bolt (\$99) or a complete machined and finished receiver for your Ruger 10/22 for around \$249. You also have a choice of a wide array of precision Clark products, including trigger kits, tuned extractors, a bolt release

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and Relationships  
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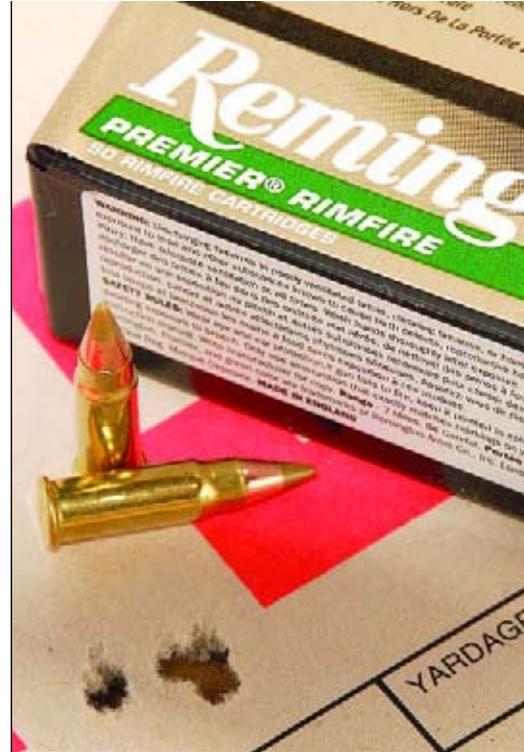
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# MAGNUM RESEARCH

or a complete custom upgrade, all available from Magnum Research on receipt of your gun at its custom shop.

Since all the metalwork is completed, maybe that Ruger stock is looking a bit haggled and you want a new stock on your “custom” rifle. Magnum Research can help here with a choice of wood or synthetic stock options. I have one rifle with a classic-styled walnut stock that has “custom” written all over it! The wood is very select, hand checked in a pleasing point pattern with special treatment given on the left side as it winds around the cheekpiece. This cheekpiece is nicely done with a custom shadow line. The stock is finished with a durable satin finish to bring out the color and figure. The only thing I would add would be a set of sling swivels for field carry. To purchase this stock, complete with a rubber buttpad and ready to install, will run around \$229.

Next up is a wild version called the “Barracuda” with a thumb-hole stock available in Forest



*Above, best group of the day with the Classic rifle and .22 Long Rifle was with Winchester Wildcat ammunition at just over .5 inch at 50 yards. Right, Remington's 17-grain AccuTip boat-tail printed close to .25 inch at 50 yards.*

Camo (green/brown), Nutmeg (brown) and Pepper (black/gray) laminate. While it looks like it would be awkward to hold and shoot, this stock is very comfortable on both counts. The thumb-hole is easily accessible under changing shooting conditions and is flared to serve as a thumb rest for the shooting hand. There is a substantial rollover cheekpiece for right-hand shooters,

which rises above the comb in somewhat of a California style.

The buttstock is cut out to save weight, and there is a rakish pistol-grip base, which positions the hand for shooting as well as acting as a memory spot on the stock for consistent placement of the hand. The forearm juts outward to the muzzle and is a great place for your hand to pull the rifle back and into your shoulder.

*Right, Trzoniec found the Classic .22 Long Rifle version of this semiautomatic pleasing to shoot with accuracy befitting a custom rifle.*

Test Results		
load	average velocity (fps)	average group (inches)
<b>Classic .22 Rifle</b>		
Federal standard velocity	1,110	.750
Remington standard velocity	1,095	1.000
Winchester Wildcat	1,106	.625
<b>Barracuda .17 Mach-2</b>		
Hornady V-MAX	2,007	.563
Remington AccuTip boat-tail	2,037	.313

**Notes:** Velocity recorded 10 feet from the muzzle with a Shooting Chrony chronograph. Accuracy tested off a benchrest, and the results are the average of five-shot groups at 50 yards.



Additionally, by having a wide profile (up to 2 inches in width) and combined with a drop design that affords an extra measure of clearance to the trigger, it can be an impromptu rest in the field. Although it does come with a rubber butt pad, it lacks the sling swivels some prefer in the field. Price on this stock is \$219.

Magnum Research also offers a classic synthetic stock by Hogue. This is one of the newer "Over-Molded" stocks and includes a stippled checkering pattern that covers the most important areas of the stock. This one does have sling swivel studs, a black, soft pad and can be yours for only \$85.

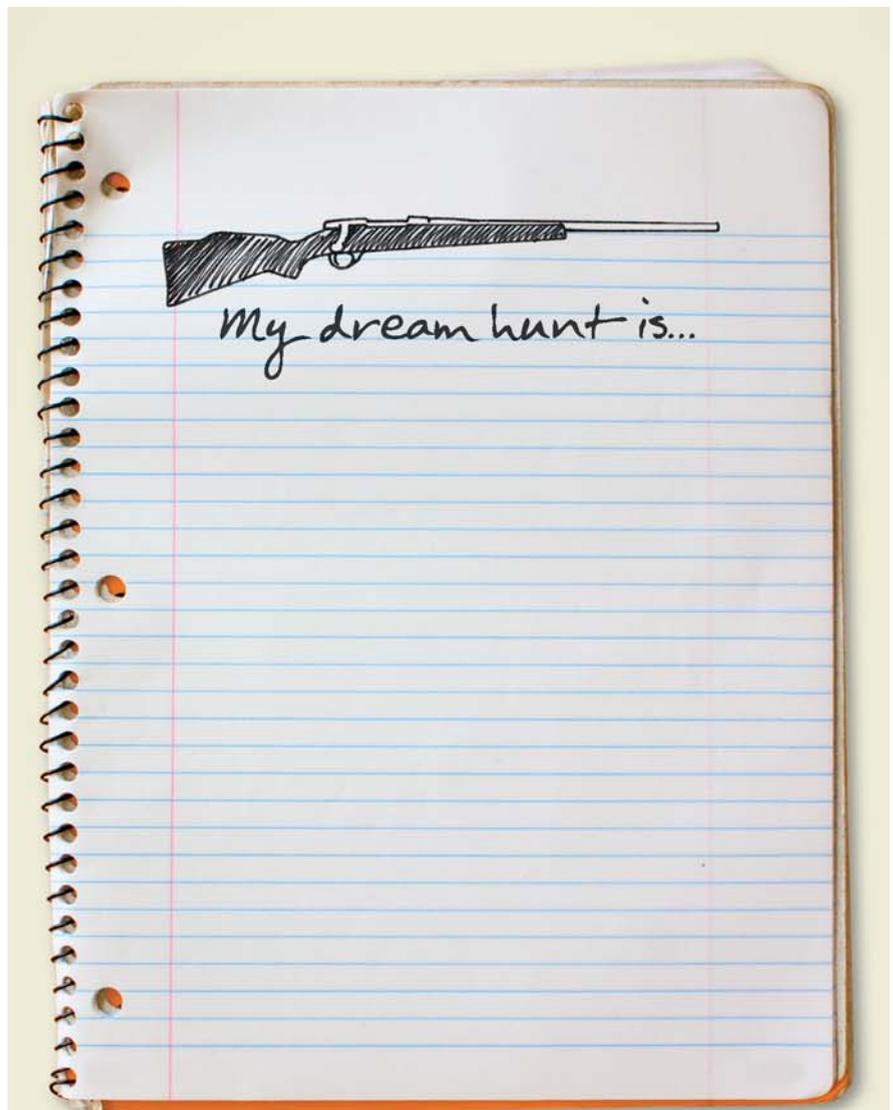
I took one rifle in .22 Long Rifle and one in the .17 Mach-2 to the range. On the Classic version of the MLR-1722, I mounted a Leupold 2.5-8x 36mm scope. On

**Graphite barrels can be purchased through your dealer.**

the Barracuda rifle, a Weaver 6x scope is perfect for casual shooting with any subcaliber gun.

While my supply of .17 Mach-2 ammunition is not as extensive as it should be, I did manage to run through samples from Hornady and Remington. The results were more than pleasing, and when it came to .22 Long Rifle, I gave the rifle a good run for its money during and after formal testing. Recoil was nonexistent, and the barrel never heated up during the range or "fun" sessions later on.

For walking small game hunters, these rifles are about as perfect as you can get. Except for the lack of sling swivels, on a scale of 10, they all rate a perfect 9+! For more information, contact Magnum Research, 7110 University Avenue NE, Minneapolis MN 55432; or on the web at: [www.magnumresearch.com](http://www.magnumresearch.com). 



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