

Turkish Delight

Over the last few years there has been an influx of well priced semi-auto sporting shotguns and to add to this we now have the Stoeger Model 2000. Pete Moore checks out another bargain

When it comes to the sporting firearms industry, Turkey is not the first country that springs to mind. However in recent years we have seen a small number of Turkish shotguns coming onto the UK market. Edgar Brothers Ltd brought in a brand called Hug San, with a pump that looked identical to the old Ithaca Model 37 and a semi not dissimilar to the early Beretta 300 series.

And whilst at the Tackle & Guns trade show recently I met up with Graeme Clarke from Sporting Services, who told me they were about to launch a new Turkish-made semi-auto. Made by a company called Vursan of Istanbul, they are marketed by Stoeger of the USA as the Model 2000 and true to his word, Graeme sent me down one to test. Before he selected a model he asked me what finish would I like to look at - wood, black synthetic or camo? Take a wild guess what I said...

Beretta Group Benelli's

Information indicated that the Model 2000 was made by a Beretta Group company and was essentially a 300 series semi with a Benelli-style inertia locking system. It seemed an odd blend to me, as these big Italian manufacturers are real rivals.



Receiver detail showing the bolt release catch and bolt in battery, the camo finish is well applied and matches nicely



The Stoeger Model 2000 Camo, made in Turkey by a Beretta Group Company, but it's 99.9% Benelli inspired - go figure...

The Model 2000 is available in five versions - Turquoise, Slugger, Deluxe, Camo and Synthetic. The slug gun is the only no-no, as it has a 22.5" barrel, so is Section 5 and in truth it's of little use to the UK market anyway. The guns, apart from finish, are identical and offer a choice of barrel lengths, though are all 12-gauge, 3" Magnum multi chokes. This is good as they can handle any sort of job or ammunition type. Sporting Services only import three models; the Synthetic (black), Realtree (Timber) and the Walnut (Turquoise).

The test gun was a 26", which is a length I personally prefer as it's ideal for the sort of use I put it to - rabbits, the occasional close range fox and pigeons. (28 and 30" are also available.) The multi choke options allow you to adjust for range a bit too. Though Versan is a Beretta Group Company the layout of the 2000 reminds me more of a Benelli. I showed it to my keeper mate who has a Super 90 Field and he thought it was a Benelli, that's how similar it is...

Energy Vs Inertia

The Benelli operating system is unique amongst modern semi-autos as it doesn't use a gas piston mechanism, opting instead for the simpler option of recoil energy V inertia.

The action uses a multi-lug rotating bolt head that sits in a carrier, which cams it in and out of mechanical engagement. A recoil/return spring wrapped around the magazine tube acts to keep it closed via a set of action rods. In this position the bolt is



Five chokes and a fitting key are provided with the gun, not bad for under £500 all in!

locked and the carrier in its forward position. When the gun fires the recoil forces generated push against the bolt head, which can't move as it's mechanically retained. However the energy generated causes the carrier to move backwards and in doing so rotate the bolt open due to the cam and follower system inside. There's naturally a dwell time to allow the bore pressure to drop, then with the inertia overcome the action opens, ejects, then returns to battery ready to fire again.

It's said that this system is probably the fastest of any semi-auto shotgun and also the most ammunition tolerant too. Benelli make a big thing out of it being able to handle any power of cartridge. Testing one of their M1 Practicals a year ago proved it didn't like truly light loads nor buckshot, though it munched through AAAs and any standard birdshot load with ease. But on reflection it might have been the fact that the 9 X .32" balls of the buck load would probably react very differently than a denser column of smaller shot in terms of recoil energy and effect...but I digress! Generally speaking the recoil/inertia system is simple, reliable and a lot less hassle than a gas/piston set up in a number of areas!

Nice Tool

I like semi-auto shotguns and though I reckon the pump is the most reliable repeater you can ever use, the semi is a far better choice for the sporting shooter who wants more than two shots at any one time, or like me prefers something with a single barrel that does all the work for you.

The Model 2000 is a typical modern semi in build. The receiver is a hi-strength aluminium alloy, with the en-bloc trigger/shell handling mechanism pinned to it. This makes disassembly and cleaning very easy. The controls consist of a combined bolt