

# The Schultz & Larsen Hunter Traveller

by senior correspondent John Dunn



The Schultz & Larsen Hunter Traveller set up for testing with the 3-25x50 IOR scope.

The last time I looked at a Danish-made Schultz & Larsen rifle was back in 2011 so when Jim Koumbarakos, from the distributor Gone Hunting, asked me if I was interested in reviewing a current production rifle, I was certainly happy to accept. In due course he delivered a Hunter Traveller rifle for review.

The Schultz & Larsen Hunter Traveller rifle arrived in a black plastic case designed to make carrying the rifle easier and less conspicuous when travelling. Inside the case the stock and receiver, the barrel, bolt and magazine all nestle in deep beds of black foam. Opening the case for the first time is a real treat and with a name like Schultz & Larsen stamped on the receiver, you know you are looking at a quality product.

## The rifle

Out of the box, the Hunter Traveller has a nicely understated elegance about it that appeals to a simple soul like me. It looks the part without all the cosmetic frippery that some other makes rely on and in my book, that's a good place to start.

It arrives in a taken down state so the new owner has to read the user manual from the outset to ensure the rifle is assembled

properly... and that's a good place to start too. As you read the manual, you begin to understand that this isn't just another bolt-action hunting rifle. It's not unique by any means but it's certainly different in the way it is built and how it functions.

## The stock

The stock on the review rifle was fashioned from a nice piece of Turkish walnut, fairly straight grained with a smooth, oiled finish. Both the forearm and pistol grip have neatly cut panels of chequering, the pistol grip also having a nicely proportioned palm swell on the right-hand side to assist control.

QD sling swivels are standard. The buttstock is straight combed and fitted with a ventilated rubber recoil pad. The forearm tapers down from a fairly deep belly to a rounded fore-end with a broad U-shaped cross-section that fitted my hand nicely.

Internally, the mortices for the receiver and triggerguard/magazine well were cleanly cut and finished with no evidence of burrs or splinters, as was the barrel channel. At the front of the receiver mortice two brass rings were inletted into the right side of the stock to provide access to the barrel retaining screws without needing to remove the receiver from the stock.

## The receiver

The receiver is unique in design and method of manufacture. The receiver is CNC machined from a single billet of steel. The CNC machine is 'aligned' to ensure the receiver will hold the bolt and the barrel in perfect alignment. Schultz & Larsen claims this contributes to consistent Point of Impact after switching the barrel.

The ring is bored to accept the barrel shank in a tight slip fit. The bottom of the ring and lug are split off centre with the left (thinner) side drilled and tapped to accept the barrel retaining screws. The bottom of the thicker side accepts the front action screw as well as housing a short stud that protrudes into the receiver ring to locate the barrel via a slot in the shank when it is pushed home.

From the rear, the cross-section of the receiver presents itself as almost octagonal with the top, sides and bottom machined flat to reduce weight without sacrificing any strength.

The top of the receiver is machined to accept proprietary bases for scope mounting as well as being drilled and tapped for a Picatinny rail or Weaver-type bases.

The bottom flat carries the trigger group at the rear of the receiver. The trigger



The assembled rifle.

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is adjustable for weight of pull and sear engagement via a pair of screws on the front face. The owner's manual recommends that trigger adjustments should only be made by a gunsmith.

The receiver is pillar bedded. It sits on pads of epoxy bedding compound in the stock mortise and is secured in the stock by a pair of screws that engage just forward of the trigger and into the receiver ring respectively. The heads of the screws are supported by the triggerguard/magazine well assembly inlet into the belly of the stock.

The Victory and Tactical models use a similar switch-barrel design; however, larger and stiffer receivers are utilised for the Victory and Tactical models to manage the heft of the safari calibre (up to 20mm diameter) barrels of the Victory and (up to 27mm diameter) long-range barrels of the Tactical. This allows the rifle to be used with 27 calibres including seven magnums. For the magnum calibres, a separate bolt with a magnum face is required.

### The safety catch

The three-position safety catch is located at the rear of the receiver on the right-hand side. Pulled back, it locks both the bolt and trigger. In the middle position, it blocks the firing pin while allowing the bolt to be cycled for unloading. In the forward position, a red dot is visible on the stock and the rifle is ready to fire.

### The magazine

The magazine is all steel, holding three rounds in a single column. It is held in place by a spring-loaded latch that is activated by a press button in front of the magazine. The magazine is blocked to accommodate four different cartridge lengths: standard, long, magnum and short magnum.

### The bolt

The body of the push-feed bolt is one-piece with a straight handle and a rounded knob with a flat end. The bolt head has three locking lugs the same diameter as the body,



The recessed face bolt head locks directly into the breech of the barrel. The three lugs give the bolt handle a lift of 60 degrees. The S stamped on one locking lug indicates the bolt is suitable for standard calibres. The slot in the bottom left locking lug is used to locate the barrel in the receiver.

giving the bolt handle a lift of 60 degrees. One lug houses a claw extractor, another is stamped with the letter 'S' indicating the bolt face was set up for standard calibres.

The bolt face is recessed with a plunger-type ejector. The bolt-to-receiver fit is quite close with a lug on the back of the bolt stop/release lever working in a longitudinal slot in the bolt body to guide it into position.

When the bolt is turned down, the lugs lock directly into the back end of the barrel. At the same time, the root of the bolt handle locks into a slot in the right side of the receiver to provide supplementary lock-up.

When the bolt is cocked, a bright steel cocking indicator is visible under the bolt shroud. There are three vent holes in the body of the bolt to direct hot gases away from the shooter's face in the event of a pierced or ruptured primer. Except for the shroud, the bolt has a bright steel finish.

### The barrel

The barrel supplied with the review rifle was 56cm (26") long of standard weight without sights. The muzzle had chamfered crowns, screwed with a 14x1 thread for a



The split receiver ring. The dual screws on the side are tightened to secure the barrel in place. The front action screw goes into the recoil lug, which is integral with the reinforcing boss under the receiver ring.

muzzle brake or noise suppressor and fitted with a knurled cap in order to protect the thread.

The breech end had a stepped shank that was a neat slip into the receiver ring, with lubrication grooves, a pair of vent holes and a small slot machined at six o'clock to locate the barrel in the receiver.

Schultz & Larsen barrels are made from chrome molybdenum steel. Each barrel is bored from a straight piece of steel then cut-rifled to produce grooves and lands that are perfectly concentric to the bore.



The component parts of the Hunter Traveller.

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Cut-rifling is the oldest method for rifling barrels. Schultz & Larsen uses state-of-the-art machinery to ensure absolute precision. The method is slow - each pass removes approximately .0001" or one ten-thousandth of an inch of metal. That makes it expensive compared to hammer-forged or button-rifled barrels but the payoff comes in terms of a superior internal finish that produces not only better accuracy but reduced levels of fouling, especially from copper jackets.

That said, running in a new barrel is critical to making the most of the advantages that cut-rifling offers - a process that normally requires 20 to 30 rounds.

The barrel, receiver, triggerguard assembly and magazine all have a nice blue/black finish. Long-range barrels with diameters greater than 20mm (such as the 27mm diameter long-range barrels) for the Tactical model will not fit in the barrel channels of the Hunter and Victory rifles.

### Assembling the rifle

When assembling the rifle or changing the barrel, there is a set sequence of procedures that have to be followed to ensure everything goes together properly as designed. It begins with wiping the barrel shank clean of any oil, then inserting it into the receiver until the slot in the bottom engages the locating lug in the six o'clock position at the back of the receiver ring.

The bolt is then inserted into the receiver and turned down to engage the barrel and set up the correct headspace.

### Changing barrels

A run-in .22-250 barrel was also supplied with the review rifle so after testing with the .308 barrel was finished, I switched barrels to see what was required to make the most of the take-down capacity. Like assembling the rifle, changing barrels was simple - requiring only that the receiver screws be loosened to remove the incumbent barrel, replacing it with a different one then tightening the screws back up again following the recommended procedures. As expected, the sight settings were way out of whack with those for the .308 so the necessary scope adjustments were made to ensure the rifle shot to point of aim at 25m, then at 100m.

Five different factory loads were test fired at the longer distance and again there were no surprises. The levels of accuracy varied considerably ranging from very ordinary to pretty good with the Sako 55-grain Gamehead SP loads producing the best groups of 15 to 16mm. Results like that are the norm with most centrefire rifles. If



A view of the receiver showing the three-position safety catch on the right-hand side.

The barrel retaining screws are then cinched up - back one first, then the front, the process repeated a second time to ensure they are firm but not over-tightened. The recommended torque for the screws is 6 to 8N/m.

nothing else, they highlight the need to try different makes of ammunition and loads to determine what works best in individual rifles. That's what handloaders do all the time. Points of impact on the targets also varied considerably, which once again points out the need to check sight settings every time a load is changed.

Each additional sporter barrel for the Schultz & Larsen costs \$988. It does enhance the versatility of the rifle and it would almost certainly work out cheaper than buying another rifle in a different calibre (with another scope and mounts) to meet your hunting needs. Although the Hunter rifle tested achieved sub-MOA three-shot groups with a variety of factory ammunition tested for both calibres Schultz & Larsen do not offer a sub-MOA factory guarantee. Whereas Gone Hunting has stated it would not be content with any Schultz & Larsen rifle which cannot produce sub-MOA grouping with at least one brand of factory ammunition."

A primary consideration for any take-down rifle is that everything goes back into the right place whenever the components are pulled apart then reassembled. Mechanically, that's relatively easy to achieve, provided manufacturing tolerances between mating parts (ie, the barrel shank and receiver), are held to minimum levels and the recommended assembly procedures are adhered to.

If the telescopic sight is properly mounted on the receiver, then there is no reason why the rifle should not shoot to the same point of aim when the barrel is taken out and replaced. It only becomes an issue when you swap to a barrel of a different calibre. That can be resolved in two ways.

The most obvious solution is to have a different scope for each barrel set up in QD mounts so the sights can be swapped along with the barrel - practical but expensive.

Alternatively, you fit a scope with plenty of built-in adjustments. Sight the first barrel in and set the adjustment dials at zero. Then sight the second barrel in, making sure you keep a record of what the final settings are. That's the approach Gone Hunting adopted for the review rifle.

### Range testing

When the Hunter Traveller arrived, it was fitted with a 3-25x50 IOR Bucaresti scope mounted on a Picatinny rail. As an

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alternative, a 1.5-8x26 scope of the same make was also supplied, set up in QD mounts. Made in Romania, both the scopes and mounts will be the subjects of another review.

Without doubt a 3-25x scope is way too much for a hunting rifle like the Hunter Traveller. It's a long-range scope designed to perform in an entirely different shooting field. That said, the optics were brilliant and for testing accuracy I doubt that I could have asked for anything better. With the power cranked up to 25x, I had no problems picking out the central dot in a standard SSAA rimfire target at 100m, the dot reticule neatly covering the 10-ring.

Both the barrels had been shot when the rifle arrived, which saved me some running in time and ammunition. I sighted the .308 barrel in first using the Geco 170-grain Target FNSP. I also shot Tikka 150-grain Bonded SP loads, Federal Premium with 150-grain Speer HP projectiles and Winchester Large Game Special loads firing 180-grain Woodleigh Protected Soft Points, all of which were supplied. To those I added some ADI Australian Outback ammo loaded with 165-grain Sierra SBT Game King projectiles - a load I have always found to be consistently accurate in .308.

Group sizes varied, as did the points of impact but overall the rifle shot very well with all the factory ammunition tested and I have no doubt there are handloaders out there whose loads would better the results as listed in the accompanying table.

To see how taking the rifle down affected accuracy, I did just that with the Geco and Australian Outback ammunition - firing three shots, removing/replacing the

### Accuracy testing at 100m

Ammunition	Bullet	Best Group
Geco	170-gr FNSP	23mm
Federal Premium	150-gr Speer HP	25mm
Winchester Large Game Special	180-gr Woodleigh PSP	24mm
ADI Australian Outback	165-gr Sierra SBT Game King	10mm
Tikka	150-gr Bonded SP	26mm

barrel then firing another three shots and measuring the resultant group sizes. The Geco load put six shots into 29mm, the Australian Outback 22mm. There isn't a game animal anywhere on the planet that would notice the difference... and this is a hunting rifle!

#### Summary

I must admit I am a sucker for rifles with nice walnut and blued steel so in the good looks department, the Schultz & Larsen Hunter Traveller scores full marks. The rifle hefted and handled well, though it was a bit top heavy with the big 3-25x50 IOR scope mounted. The rifle was easy to take down and put back together and functioned faultlessly over the course of three different range sessions.

If I owned the rifle, I would have the trigger weight reduced to around 1.4kg. At the factory setting, the trigger functions beautifully and breaks like a glass rod but I personally prefer a somewhat lighter weight of pull. Others will no doubt be perfectly happy with it as it stands.

Overall, I regard the Schultz & Larsen Hunter Traveller as an extremely classy rifle. It looks good and it shoots well. Its

take-down and switch-barrel capacities make it considerably more interesting than most conventional bolt-action rifles and that will appeal to many.

Compared to numerous other rifles currently in the marketplace, it's not a cheap firearm. That said, it comes with a tradition of quality that goes back to the late 19th century. Provenance like that always comes at a price and these firearms can be bought for \$2495 upwards. I think it's good value for money. I reckon there will be quite a few other people out there who will agree with me on that.

Schultz & Larsen rifles are distributed in Australia by Gone Hunting. For more information, phone 1300 338 300 or visit [schultz-larsen.com.au](http://schultz-larsen.com.au) ●

### Specifications

**Manufacturer:** Schultz & Larsen, Denmark

**Model:** Hunter Traveller

**Action:** Push-feed bolt-action, take down. Extra bolt \$488

**Barrel:** Chrome moly, cut-rifled, standard weight, muzzle threaded 14x1, 56cm. Interchangeable barrel \$988 standard, \$1152 magnum

**Calibres:** Standard .22-250, .243, 6mm BR, 6XC, .25-06, 6.5x47, 6.5x55, 6.5-284, .270, 7x57, 7x64, .308 (tested), .30-06, 8x57, 9.3x62; Magnum 7mm Rem Mag, .300 Win Mag, .300WSM, .270WSM, .338 Win Mag, .358 Norma

**Sights:** None fitted. Receiver machined for proprietary S&L mounts, drilled and tapped for Weaver base or Picatinny rail

**Trigger:** Single-stage adjustable

**Magazine:** Steel, three shots in single column. Five-shot magazines available

**Overall Length:** 107cm

**Weight:** 3.5kg

**Stock:** Oil-finished walnut (review rifle).

**Distributor:** Gone Hunting

**RRP:** \$2495 standard calibres, \$2695 magnum calibres

