



BENELLI SUPER SPORT LEGACY

For all of you out there that have wanted a Benelli sporting clays gun that is a little fancier than the composite carbon fiber stocked SuperSport II or the 'Plain Jane' walnut stocked Sport II, Benelli now has a shotgun for you – the Legacy Sport. First offered as a field gun, it's about as pretty as you can make an autoloader.

When Christie Gates told me that Benelli was going to do a sporting clays version of the Legacy, I knew I had to test one. I wanted to see if the balance, weight and recoil would be commensurate with the SuperSport that I have been shooting for some time. While not exactly the same – it is about as close as you can get.

COSMETIC DIFFERENCES

The biggest difference between the two models is, of course, cosmetic. The engraving on the stainless steel lower receiver is so well done I cannot tell whether it is laser engraved or done by hand. I suspect it is laser engraved, and if it is, it is without a doubt the best I have ever seen. The scroll engraving covers about

eighty per cent of the lower receiver. The deeply blued upper portion – the Benelli sporting clays guns have a two-piece receiver – is highly polished black. It sets off the bright, brushed stainless steel lower part of the receiver extremely well. It is not always easy to make an autoloader a handsome gun, but Benelli has pulled it off in spades. There are oval medallions on both sides of the receiver, the one on the right side is of a dove and the left side medallion sports a quail. Both are very well done and look like a dove and bobwhite instead of the non-descript avian you see on some shotguns. They add a nice touch to the overall appearance of the receiver. The engraving is different and, I believe, more attractive than on the field grade Legacy.

The Legacy shares the same Inertia Driven proprietary action as the Sport II and SuperSport II models and is just as easy to dismantle and clean as its siblings. As a lazy shooter, I truly appreciate an automatic that you can fire a few thousand rounds through before you have to absolutely tear it down and clean it. When I do get enough ambition to clean mine, it usually has a ton of crud and residue in it and I am always surprised it still functions.



This shotgun sports the same ported barrel as the Sport II and the SuperSport II in 28 inch and 30 inch versions. The bluing is superbly done and is a deep black. There is not a single ripple evident for the entire length of the barrel – Benelli takes deep pride in the quality of their barrels. The vented rib is tapered 10x8mm. Chokes provided are cylinder, improved cylinder, modified, improved modified and full. Constrictions are identical to the other Super Sport models equipped with Crio chokes. Benelli chokes are a bit tighter than the usual chokes on sporting clays shotguns and are very efficient. The improved cylinder choke on my personal Benelli is a bit tighter than the usual 0.010 at 0.013 and seems to hit targets way out there better than any improved cylinder choke on any shotgun I have ever patterned. The Legacy improved cylinder choke on my demo is exactly the same dimension as my personal gun and just as lethal.

STOCK AND FORE-END

Besides the well-engraved receiver, the biggest cosmetic difference between the SuperSport II and the Legacy is the wood stock and fore-end. The stock and fore-end are dimensionally the same as

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the Sport II and SuperSport II, but are of AA grade walnut instead of A grade walnut on the lower priced Sport II. While there is no marble cake, the grain contrast is very good on both the stock and fore-end and is quite handsome. Stock finish is very well filled satin epoxy. There is a small weight difference between the composite stock of the SuperSport II and the Legacy, but the Legacy is only heavier by a few ounces. The shape of the right-handed ergonomic recoil pad is the same, but it attaches to the stock in

a different manner and is easily removed. Stock adjustment is achieved with various shims provided with the gun. I adjusted my demo slightly higher than when it arrived in just a few minutes. It is easy to do, although sometimes it takes a couple of attempts. The fore-end does not share the same neo-modern shape as that on the composite stocked SuperSport II, but it fits the hand quite nicely. Checkering on both stock and fore-end is very sharp and offers a firm grip with and without gloves.

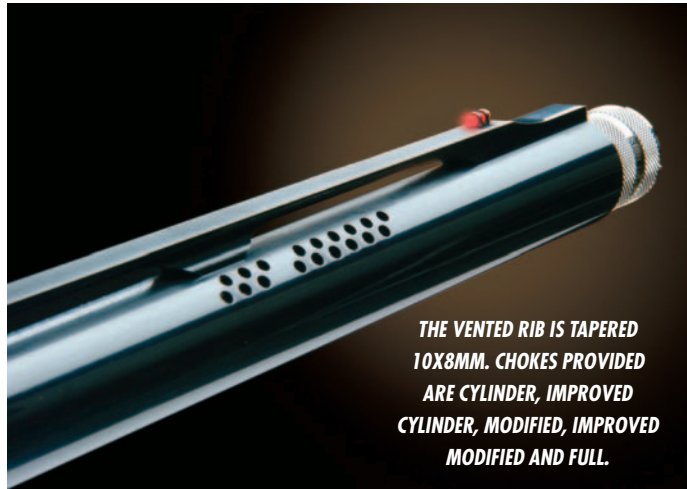
WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE LEGACY SPORTING CLAYS MODEL, BENELLI NOW OFFERS THREE SPORTING CLAYS SHOTGUNS AT DIFFERENT PRICE POINTS WITH THEIR PROPRIETARY INERTIA OPERATED ACTION.



Handling and transition from one target to the next seemed to be about the same as the composite stocked gun. Those of you that prefer a bit heavier target shotgun might like the Legacy a bit better than the composite stocked SuperSport II. Recoil with my light fast $7/8$ ounce loads was about the same, but with heavy $1\ 1/8$ ounce loads the SuperSport II did seem to have a bit less recoil, but not by much. Others that shot both guns seemed to feel the same way about the felt recoil.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

With the introduction of the Legacy Sporting Clays model, Benelli now offers three sporting clays shotguns at different price points with their proprietary Inertia Operated action — the



THE VENTED RIB IS TAPERED 10X8MM. CHOKES PROVIDED ARE CYLINDER, IMPROVED CYLINDER, MODIFIED, IMPROVED MODIFIED AND FULL.

Sport II at \$1,580.00, the composite stocked SuperSport II at \$1,800 and the Legacy Sport at \$2,200.

If you are looking for an economical shotgun go for the Sport II. If you are a klutz like me and tend to nick the stock on every wooden stocked gun you have ever

owned and also want the absolute minimum recoil and maintenance go for the SuperSport II. If you want a nicely engraved receiver with a nice hunk of Turkish walnut go for the Legacy Sport. Benelli has all the bases covered — I can't wait to see what's coming next. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

- MANUFACTURER:** BENELLI ARMI, URBINO, ITALY
- IMPORTER:** BENELLI, U.S.A.
- SUGGESTED PRICE:** \$2,200.00
- ACTION:** INERTIA DRIVEN AUTOMATIC

- WEIGHT:** 7.8 LBS.
- BARREL:** PORTED 28" AND 30" — 28" TESTED
- BORE:** .724"
- RIB:** VENTED 10 x 8MM TAPERED
- CENTER STEEL BEAD RED BAR FRONT**
- CHOKES:** CRIO TREATED 5 INCLUDED
- CYLINDER:** 0.000
- IC:** 0.013
- MOD:** 0.024
- IM:** 0.032
- FULL:** 0.40
- CHOKE LENGTH:** 3 1/2" CONICAL PARALLEL
- CHAMBER:** 3"
- SAFETY:** CROSS BOLT TRIGGER GUARD MOUNTED
- TRIGGER PULL:** 4.9 LBS.
- STOCK:** AA WALNUT SATIN FINISH
- LOP:** 14 3/8"
- DROP AT COMB:** 1 3/8"
- DROP AT HEEL:** 2 3/8"