

BROWNING

MAXUS

A REVIEW BY TOM CERETTO

CARBON FIBER

AT THIS YEAR'S SHOT SHOW IN LAS VEGAS, BROWNING INTRODUCED THE NEW MAXUS SHOTGUN IN THREE FIELD MODELS – HUNTER, DUCK BLIND AND STALKER.

I was a bit disappointed when told there would be a long wait for a sporting clays model – but the carbon fiber Maxus sporting clays model is now here and a walnut stocked model will probably be released just prior to or at the next SHOT Show.

When I unpacked the gun I was a bit surprised to see that Browning had used the full carbon fiber treatment used on the field shotguns on the sporting clays model too. But after shooting the Maxus with both mild and stout loads, I realized it was a smart move on Browning's part because with the standard 3 inch chamber it would also be an excellent field gun too. At slightly under seven pounds with a 28 inch barrel (and slightly over seven pounds with a 30 inch barrel) it would be quite at home chasing ringnecks or in a duck blind.

The full carbon treatment of the field guns is relaxed a bit on the sporting models with a silver gray finish on the flat part of the receiver sides. There's a Browning logo on the right side with Maxus

Sporting in bold black letters. The left side has the exact same treatment.

The blued trigger guard has the Browning logo in gold engraved on the bottom. Quite simple and understated, but none-the-less quite attractive and well done – especially for shooters that want to take advantage of the Maxus dual role capability as a sporting and hunting shotgun. When the wooden stocked model comes out, I'm sure Browning will get quite decorative with various engraving patterns and higher grade wood in more than one grade and price range.

The receiver is machined out of lightweight aluminum alloy, the same alloy that Browning has used for years and has proven quite durable on countless of their automatic shotguns. The Maxus uses the same split bolt that is shared with older Browning shotguns, but the similarities to older Browning models ends there

because the new Maxus is equipped with Browning's Power Drive Gas System.

New Gas Piston

The Power Drive Gas System has a completely new gas piston that is exclusive to Maxus models. The new system features larger gas ports that dump gases faster with heavy loads, but not as fast with lighter loads. This allows for a wide range of load choices from light $7/8$ ounce loads to the heaviest target and field loads. The Power Drive Gas System also has a new patented enclosed seal design that keeps residue out of the action for cleaner operation. One of the reasons it can cycle light loads is the 20% longer stroke travel of the new system. I fed it everything from light $7/8$ ounce wimp loads to heavy $1\frac{1}{8}$ ounce loads without problems. I didn't shoot any field loads through it, but have no doubt the Maxus will handle them well. The difference in the new system and the older system is evident in the illustration opposite.



Something New

The Maxus is equipped with a new trigger system Browning has dubbed the Lightning Trigger. They claim it has the fastest lock time of any autoloading shotgun manufactured and offers a smooth crisp feel with minimal travel. It's an improvement over the model it supercedes. Trigger pull measured

having to cycle and chamber every shell with the bolt handle.

The Maxus is equipped with Invector-Pro bored barrels of .742 inch and Invector-Plus choke tubes that are now ubiquitous to all Browning shotguns in 12 and 20 gauge. Four chokes came with the Maxus – skeet, improved

2 inch drop at heel. Only a 1/4 inch difference – and it felt quite good when I first shouldered it. The more I shot the Maxus, the more I liked the straight comb.

The new Powder Drive Gas System is aided in reducing recoil

pairs was accomplished with ease.

I was sorry to see the Gold Sporting discontinued, but now that I have lived with the Maxus for a while, I will admit it is an

slightly over 5 pounds, about average for an automatic shotgun, but was not onerous to use. There is room for improvement there.

One of the features I was glad to see Browning carried over from the now discontinued Gold Sporting is their Speed Load Plus system. This patented feeding system sends the first shell loaded into the magazine directly into the chamber. This is a nice feature when shooting in a flurry competition or in the field when a need arises for quick reloading.

The Speed Unload feature on the Maxus makes emptying the magazine fast and easy without

cylinder, modified and improved modified. The conical parallel chokes measured 2 3/8 inches in length. Part of the Browning Vector Pro System is the Vector Pro forcing cone. It tapers from .801 inch at the front of the chamber to a bore diameter of .742 and is 2.5 inches long.

The carbon fiber treatment on the barrels and top of the receiver cuts glare to zero. The vented rib also sports the carbon fiber treatment and measured slightly over 8mm at the breach to slightly over 6mm at the muzzle and is topped by a fiber optic front sight and white mid bead. All in all, nicely executed.

I liked the carbon fiber stock and fore end. The stock is straight with a 1 3/4 inch drop at comb and a

by the Inflex Technology recoil pad, which Browning boasts is the softest pad on any autoloader. They claim it has been engineered with directional deflection to pull the comb down and away from the face of the shooter for even greater comfort and faster follow-up shooting.

The grip has a bit tighter radius than most sporting clays guns but was very comfortable to use.

The fore-end is tapered slightly from back to front and is also comfortable. My left index finger fell naturally into the fore-end groove and pointed right at the muzzle just the way I like it. The texture molded into the grip and fore-end offers excellent grip. Unique to the composite Maxus is the new Speed Lock fore-end.

Pressing the release button and lifting the Speed Lock lever makes removing the fore-end a breeze. When locked in place there was no fore-end play for and aft or side to side – it was solid.

Shooting the Maxus was a pleasure. It balanced well with just a little bit of front weight bias. I happen to like it that way and believe most competitive shooters do too. Transitioning from target to target on true and report

improvement over the shotgun it replaced. If you don't care for composite stocks, wait a bit and the walnut stocked model will soon be available. But if you have a chance to shoot the composite model, do so. I think you'll like it.

At \$1,399.00 suggested retail the Maxus is fairly priced for a new and innovative shotgun design. I am sure the street price will probably be even lower. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

MANUFACTURER:	BROWNING ARMS COMPANY, VIANA, PORTUGAL
IMPORTER:	BROWNING ARMS COMPANY, MORGAN, UTAH 84050
TYPE:	GAS OPERATED SEMI AUTOMATIC
ACTION:	ALUMINUM ALLOY RECEIVER WITH POWER DRIVE GAS SYSTEM
TRIGGER:	BROWNING LIGHTNING SYSTEM
TRIGGER PULL:	5 POUNDS
OAL:	49 1/4" AS TESTED
WEIGHT:	7 LBS AS TESTED
STOCK & FORE-END:	COMPOSITE
LOP:	14 1/4"
DROP AT COMB:	1 3/4"
DROP AT HEEL:	2"
BARREL:	28" AS TESTED 30" AVAILABLE
TRIB:	VENTED TAPERED 8mm/6mm
BARREL FINISH:	CARBON FIBER
FORCING CONE:	VECTOR PLUS 2.5 INCHES
FRONT BEAD:	FIBER OPTIC
MID BEAD:	WHITE
BORE:	0.742" CHOKES, FOUR INVECTOR-PLUS INCLUDED
SKEET:	0.736"
IMPROVED CYLINDER:	0.731"
MODIFIED:	0.722"
IMPROVED MODIFIED:	0.717"



TOP: GAS VALVE IN THE GOLD AND SILVER SPORTING. BOTTOM: NEW MAXUS VALVE.