

Reviewed by Peter Caroline

I first saw the Kel-Tec PMR-30 .22 WMR pistol at the 2010 SHOT Show. It looked like a dream come true. A great caliber, a 30-round capacity magazine, ultra bright fiber-optic sights, light-weight, and it felt just right in the hand. I signed up for a sample to test, and waited, and waited. I tried again at the 2011 SHOT show with the same results, or lack thereof. Apparently, the gun was made of pure Unobtainium.

Several days ago, I got a call from Doug Myres, my venerable leatherbender buddy from the S.D. Myres clan. He had somehow managed to get himself a PMR-30 after being on a waiting list for 358 days. The folks at the gun shop told him that there were another 50 people on the list after him.

I stopped by Doug's house, and he handed me a black plastic hard case with the PMR-30 inside. The pistol's grip assembly, slide and magazines are made of a glass-reinforced nylon with an inner receiver frame of aluminum. The pistol, with empty magazine, weighs about 15.4 ounces. There's an ambidextrous thumb safety just where it should be, and a picatinny accessory rail, which the manual cautions you about. Apparently, there are federal and local laws regarding attaching ANY type of extra grip to this rail. I hadn't even considered this until I saw it in the manual. Oh well.

After handling the pistol and making appropriately admiring comments, I sat down and read the instruction manual. I've written a number of firearms instruction manuals and I make a point of reading them. This one was exemplary. There were of course the usual obligatory legal warnings, but the instructions themselves were clear, complete and very helpful and specific. Best of all, there were four-color illustrations for every step of operation and maintenance.

Doug asked me if I'd like to take the gun for a test. It didn't take any arm-twisting to get me to agree. I already had a good assortment of Winchester, Federal and CCI .22 Mag ammo for my NAA Ranger mini-revolver, and I stopped by Wal-Mart and picked up another couple of boxes.

I arrived at the Tucson Rifle Club range in Three Points, AZ, along with half a dozen mem-

bers of my every-other-Thursday shooting group, aka the Gray Berets. I set up my old Outers Pistol Perch on a bench and loaded the magazine with 30 rounds. Kel-Tec supplies each PMR-30 with two magazines, by the way. I put a target out at 10 yards, just to see where it wanted to shoot. The rear sight, with two red fiber-optic rods, is fixed; the front sight, with a green fiber-optic rod, is dovetailed and drift-adjustable for windage. The gun was a delight to shoot. The sights were phenomenally bright and easy to line up. The trigger had a short pull, which measured less than four pounds. Just delightful. The five-

round group was a bit to the left, and spread out over four inches. Well, I figured, this will take some breaking in. Several magazine loads later, I was still getting groups in the 4" range. Okay, maybe I was having a bad day. I called over my friend, George McKinney, who regularly humiliates the rest of us with his tiny groups, and said, "Try this." George brought over his extensive collection of sandbags, set them up on the bench and squeezed off five rounds. And, not surprisingly, he did better than I did. Actually, a 3" group. A second try produced the same results.

I put another hundred rounds through the PMR-30...slow fire, rapid fire, the gun was a pleasure to shoot, and there was never a hiccup or failure to

feed or extract. It just couldn't group worth a damn. It may have been that individual pistol, or maybe not. Caca pasa.

When I gave Doug the full report on how the gun performed at the range, he didn't seem overly disappointed. I suppose, if you have 30+1 rounds of .22WMR at your disposal, plus another full magazine, you could put your average flash mob in a world of hurt. Using the recommended, U.S.-made ammo (the manual recommends 40-50 grain bullets), and loading the magazine according to the manual, you'll get ultra-reliable performance. The PMR-30 is a ball to shoot, and a lot of gun for the MSRP of \$415. Just don't expect any tiny groups.

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