

TACTICAL TARGET RIFLE



MUNITION	VELOCITY	ENERGY	GROUP
ck Hills 50-grain V-Max	3129	1087	.75"
ck Hills 55-grain FMJ	3165	1223	1.37"
ck Hills 69-grain Match	2735	1146	.99"
ck Hills 73-grain Berger	2596	1092	.93"
nady 75-grain BTHP	2682	1198	.90"
chester 55-grain FMJ	3137	1202	1.16"

groups were fired at 100-yards, five shots to a group from a seated rest. Velocities were measured with a PACT chronograph and are in feet per second. Energies are listed in foot-pounds of energy.

nance. But Jarrett isn't the only world-class competitor that uses the Zitta-designed rifle. In fact, Zitta claims that Michael Voigt and Rob Leatham are also customers of his. Adds Zitta, "Robbie never even cleans his rifle – he just squirts oil on it from time to time."

Another big advantage of the DIGS™ gas system is that it eliminates the need for a receiver extension (more commonly called a buffer tube) thereby allowing the use of a side-folding stock. Note that I said side folding not collapsing! Para's Rapid Deployment Stock™ folds to the left side, allowing a right-handed shooter to keep a firing grip even while deploying the stock. With the stock folded, the Tactical Target Rifle measures a surprisingly compact 26.5 inches. The stock also has three inches of adjustability for length of pull. It is rock solid, comfortable and easy to adjust and fold. In close confines, like in a vehicle, the weapon can be fired with the stock folded.

I was more than pleased with the accuracy of the Tactical Target Rifle. Four of the six loads that I tested with the gun produced five-shot groups under an inch at 100 yards. I mounted a Trijicon 3-9 x 40 AccuPoint scope for the accuracy portion of the test. Para outfits the rifle with a chrome-lined 1:9" twist barrel. This twist rate seems to have become an industry standard due to its ability to stabilize bullet weights from 50-grains all the way up to 80-grains. Trigger pull on the Tactical Target Rifle was pure AR: single stage with creep and overtravel and broke at about seven pounds. No surprises here!

In fact, the lower of the gun is the same as just about any other AR-15 rifle. Sometime after the Tactical Target Rifle goes into production Para will offer complete uppers, featuring the DIGS™ system, which will drop onto any milspec AR lower without fitting or modification.

The hot topic these days in the AR world is gas-piston uppers. I asked Zitta how his DIGS™ compares to the various piston-drive guns. Zitta said, "They (piston guns) cost more to make and you still need to clean the piston. Piston-driven guns keep

more heat in the piston and the barrel – it doesn't allow for the bolt carrier to work as a heat sink. So, with the piston guns the barrel heats up more than a direct gas impingement system. I'm not trying to make digs against the piston system, but manufacturing costs, weight and barrel heat, are all factors that inspired me to go a different way."

As far as maintenance goes, the Tactical Target Rifle doesn't need a great deal of attention. The op rod, or extended gas key, is electroless nickel-plated for ease of cleaning and corrosion resistance and the gas tube is chromed for the same reason. Because of the gas pressure and the wiping action of the op rod sliding over the gas tube, the DIGS™ system is self-cleaning.

Para uses a free-floating aluminum handguard on the Tactical Target Rifle and only the forward portion has rails for adding accessories. This design makes it comfortable to shoot the rifle with or without a vertical foregrip. To access the action spring and DIGS™ system, there is a spring-loaded plunger near the front of the top rail that, when depressed, will allow the user to slide the top rail from the handguard.

To disassemble the rifle further for cleaning and routine maintenance, pull back slightly on the action spring and remove the spring clip from the Op Rod. Next, push out the rear disassembly pin from the lower receiver and allow the weapon to hinge at its front takedown pin. Grasp the charging handle and remove it and the bolt carrier, along with its Op Rod, from the receiver. The bolt disassembles in exactly the same manner as any AR-15 or M-16 piece.

I fired over 400 rounds during my brief evaluation and was impressed with just how clean the upper receiver and bolt carrier remained. Gas residue on the Op Rod and gas tube were easily wiped away with a rag and it looked as though it could go for thousands of rounds without a thorough cleaning.

Para's other exciting news at the 2008 SHOT Show was that they would be closing their Canadian manufacturing plant and moving all production to a North Carolina facility. It is here that the Tactical Target Rifle will be built. Overall, I was impressed with Para USA's first long-gun offering. It offers shooters a carbine that possesses all of the reliability and accuracy needed for tactical or sporting use with the advantage of the DIGS™ gas system and the side-folding Rapid Deployment Stock™. For more information on Para-USA's Tactical Target Rifle, check out their website at www.Para-USA.com.