

Shotguns

Fabarm L4S

By Jarrod Spilger

The modern waterfowl-ing shotgun market is comprised of synthetic and camouflage. Just look at our Gear Guide Shotgun roundup in this issue; every firearm featured boasts synthetic stocks and camouflage finishes.

Admittedly, I like durable synthetic and/or camo just as much as the next waterfowler, but whatever happened to wood and bluing? Let's face it, a nicely grained wood furnished shotgun has those traditional good looks that black synthetic or camo can never match.

Fabarm's L4S is just such a scattergun. Sitting in my gun rack, it even grabbed my wife's attention. "That's a pretty gun" were her exact words. Pretty indeed, but also functional.

The 3-inch 12 gauge L4S comes in three grades: Initial Hunter, Grey Hunter and Deluxe Hunter. The Initial Hunter has a nonreflective, black anodized finish on the barrel and alloy receiver, and a matt, satin oil finish on the Turkish wal-



nut stock and forearm. The Grey Hunter has a silver-colored receiver with engraved game scenes. The Deluxe Hunter has a silver receiver, but the game scenes are more detailed with gold inlays, and the wood is upgraded.

My test gun was the subdued Initial Hunter, which would be most suitable for ducks, although the other two models would look great concealed in a blind and certainly grab the attention (and envy) of fellow hunters.

Sporting models are also available in all three grades, as well as a Compact Sporting model in the Initial grade. Fabarm also offers an L4S Sporting model in the Syren line of women's shotguns. The L4S Initial Hunter, Compact and Syren are all available as left-hand models, too.

Despite being the base model, my test gun's wood grain and finish were excellent. The fit of the wood to the receiver was only slightly proud, and the checkering was perfect in my opinion—not too sharp but not too smooth—providing just the right amount of comfortable grasp whether shooting with bare hands or gloves. Sling swivel stud attachment points were integrated into both the stock and magazine cap. A set of sling swivels can be purchased directly from Fabarm for just \$26 and fit both the L4S and XLR5 Waterfowler.

The L4S has a more slender forearm and reduced magazine capacity than the XLR5, which reduces weight by about a half pound depending on barrel length. My test gun weighed just less than 7 pounds, making it a great choice for hunters who like to hike into WPAs, shoot a few ducks, and then walk the surrounding uplands for pheasants.

The L4S has a unique forearm design in which the magazine cap is integrated into the forearm, allowing it to be removed without disassembling the entire shotgun. A separate red end cap actually holds the barrel in place. This allows the action to be easily accessed for cursory lubrication between shoots. It also prevents the forearm wood from



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Shotguns



Fabarm L4S Initial Hunter



Fabarm L4S Grey Hunter



Fabarm L4S Deluxe Hunter

being subjected to the stress of holding the barrel in place. There's less chance of the forearm cracking and less chance of the magazine cap loosening during firing, an annoying reality on many repeaters.


The bolt handle is of adequate size, although the safety button is slightly undersized by today's standards. The bolt release button is on the left side of the receiver, opposite the bolt, not directly underneath it. This differs from most semiautos but is wise because there's no chance of the bolt handle slamming into your thumb when you release it. There's also a bolt holdback button on the receiver's left side just ahead of the trigger guard. You simply push it out to lock the bolt back. Otherwise, the bolt can be pulled back to empty the chamber or swap loads without releasing a round from the magazine. Shims and optional recoil pads allow customization of fit.

L4S Hunter models are offered with either a 26- or 28-inch Tribore HP tapered barrel, which is unique to Fabarm shotguns. The bore gradually tapers in three progressively smaller stages towards the muzzle, resulting in reduced recoil, less pellet deformation, and better overall patterns. A choke wrench and three extra-long yet flush-fitting Inner HP chokes are included: close (IC), medium (modified), and long (full), all safe for use with steel shot. Extended Exis HP

chokes are also available as accessories for the Hunter models and come standard on the Sporting models.

The L4S is powered by Fabarm's simple and reliable Pulse Piston gas system, which will handle virtually all 2 ¾- and 3-inch 12 gauge loads. Testing was restricted to clay targets. I ran 100 rounds through the L4S on the local skeet field: a box each of Herter's 1-ounce No. 9s at 1,290 fps, Fiocchi 1-ounce 8s at 1,170 fps, Federal 1 ½-ounce 7.5s at 1,145 fps, and Remington 1 ½-ounce 7.5s at 1,200 fps. Everything cycled and ejected perfectly. Best of all, I shot the L4S really well.

There was no thumb pinch while loading, and recoil was negligible. Even after 100 rounds, I still felt fresh. Heavier loads were another story. I also fired a couple of heavy 3-inch steel loads: Winchester 1 ¼-ounce BBBs at 1,400 fps, and Federal Speed Shok 1 ½-ounce BBs at 1,550 fps. The first wasn't too bad, but the latter was downright painful. High-velocity loads and the lightweight L4S are not friends, which is why Fabarm offers an optional Kinetik recoil reducer not installed on the gun I tested.

The L4S is a great choice for those who hunt both ducks and upland in the fall, followed by clays in the summer. Hunters wanting one gun that will do it all, and look really good doing it, should consider the versatile and beautiful L4S. 

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