

Fabarm Elos N2 RS Sporting

GREG CARPINIELLO

I own three Fabarm shotguns, and I'd like to own the one reviewed here: the Elos N2 RS Sporting in 12 gauge with 32" barrels. Fabarm began manufacturing pistols and side-by-side shotguns in 1900 in Brescia, Italy. In the 1950s the company started making over/unders and barrels for other companies. Fabarm became highly innovative and regarded for its "deep drilling" barrel technology, Tribore barrels and Hyperbolic chokes. The firm also established its own proof house. (While the Italian proof house mandates 1020 BAR for 2¾" guns and 1320 BAR for 3" guns, all Fabarm barrels are proofed at an industry-exclusive 1630 BAR.) Despite these accomplishments, for a long time the company's success in the US was marginal, as its guns were sold through other manufacturers, most notably Heckler & Koch. In the 2000s Fabarm began a relationship with Caesar Guerini USA, and in 2012 Fabarm USA was established. When in 2015 Caesar Guerini acquired Fabarm, the company's shotguns found a permanent home in the US.

Around 2018 I met Giorgio Guerini, one of the principals at Caesar Guerini, at an industry event, and he mentioned that he had told the Fabarm team (and I'm paraphrasing): "OK. You make a good gun; now let's make a great gun." During the next five years I noticed an evolution in the company's products. There was greater attention to detail, improved fit

and finish, better triggers and nicer wood. Now the evolution is complete, and Giorgio's sentiments are manifest in the Elos N2 RS Sporting. This shotgun is fantastic.

The N2 RS Sporting's precursor is the N2 Sporting. The N2 Sporting is a fine gun, but I have always felt that it was a field gun masquerading as a target gun. It is easily sold as a hybrid for that "75-percent clays and 25-percent hunting" shooter. It is a target gun, but a hunter could tolerate its weight in the field for a day. Evidently I was not alone in this opinion, as Caesar Guerini USA President Wes Lang and Giorgio Guerini went back to the drawing board with the gun. They added weight to the barrels and changed the weight and shape of the stock and forend. As a result, the N2 RS weighs 8 pounds 4 ounces—9 ounces more than the N2 Sporting that I had on-hand for comparison. The other subtle improvements are remarkable.

The N2 RS, which is priced at \$3,575, looks cool out of the box. The receiver has a flawless matte-blue finish. Eschewing orange accents connoting "sportiness," Fabarm uses blue accents on the hinge pins, in the lettering and in an Escheresque logo on the bottom of the action. "ELOS N2 RS Sporting" adorns both sides of the action. The logo is replicated with a laser-engraved pattern along the top of the receiver and on the exterior of the





triggerplate. The action face, walls and bottom of the receiver are blued, and there were no stray machining marks on our test gun. Lock-up is provided by a broad underbolt that engages a bite in the monoblock. Replaceable trunnions hinge on cutouts in the monoblock. Nothing new here, but why fix what works?

The N2 RS's triggerplate action is extraordinary. The coil-spring firing-pin units, sears, hammers, inertia block, safety mechanism, disconnect and ejector rods were flawless. There is nothing cheap about the gun, and no shortcuts have been taken. The adjustable inertia trigger allows for 15mm of travel

and broke at 3 pounds for both barrels with negligible take-up and creep. The manual safety with integral barrel selector was smooth and definitive.

The N2 RS comes in 12 gauge with 30" or 32" Tribore chrome molybdenum steel barrels. A Tribore barrel is basically a long funnel to the final choke constriction. More specifically, each N2 barrel has a 3" chamber and a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " forcing cone that opens to about a 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ "-long .738" over-bored section. The barrel then transitions to an 8" conical section that tapers to .725" prior to the 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " extended Exis HP Competition choke. Ostensibly the "three bores" are: the over-bored section

SNAPSHOT

Make & Model: Fabarm Elos N2 RS Sporting

Gauge: 12

Action: Triggerplate over/under

Chambering: 3"

Finish: Matte blue

Barrel Length: 32"

Weight: 8 pounds 3 ounces

Chokes: 4 Exis HP Competition Chokes

Stock: 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2 $\frac{5}{16}$ ", 4° pitch, $\frac{1}{4}$ " cast-off at toe and $\frac{1}{8}$ " at heel, adjustable comb

Accessories: Factory case, chokes, choke wrench, stock- and trigger-adjustment tools, owner's manual, five-year warranty

Price as tested: \$3,575



after the forcing cone, the long taper and the long choke. Traditional chokes have a conical section with an abrupt transition to the parallel final constriction. Fabarm chokes maintain a long radial transition to the final constriction. The company maintains that the Tribore design provides less friction, less shot deformation and increased speed, resulting in greater shot penetration.

The barrels have a uniform matte-blue finish. The muzzles on our gun were capped perfectly with no gaps. The vented top rib tapers from 10mm to 8mm and has a white Bradley-style front bead and a silver mid-bead. The vented mid-rib extends back 18" from the muzzle and transitions to a solid rib for 10". The extended solid rib is a change



No shortcuts were taken in creating the N2 RS Sporting, which has a triggerplate action and an adjustable inertia trigger.

from the original N2 and accounts for some of the additional weight. The rib jointures were flawless, and I was diligent in my search for anomalies. The barrels joined perfectly to the monoblock. The polished monoblock had tick-tight tolerances and crisp edges and is a testament to precision engineering. The well-timed ejectors tossed hulls over the shoulder

but not to another county.

The N2 RS comes with four extended chokes in a plastic case with a wrench. Fabarm chokes are no afterthought of inferior steel or poorly finished. They are made of the same steel as the barrels and nickel/chrome plated, so they "behave" the same way as the barrels and offer better pattern performance. The chokes

are labeled "2/IC," "5/M," "7/IM," and "9/F" on the shafts and knurled extensions. There are wrench cut-outs as well. All threaded smoothly and seated plumb to the muzzle. They also stayed put after several hundred rounds. I like that! The chokes measure: Improved Cylinder, 008"; Modified, .020"; Improved Modified, .028"; and Full, .035". The IC is slightly more open than the nominal .010", and the IM is a touch tighter than the nominal .025".

The wood on our N2 RS was an attractive piece of dark walnut with horizontal figure. The low-luster oil finish filled the grain and had been applied uniformly. The crisp laser checkering was pleasant in the hand, and there were no overruns, asymmetrical areas or uneven borders. The svelte Schnabel forend of the N2 has been replaced with a fuller, round forend with a mere suggestion of a lip. The modified Deeley release was smooth and secured the forend. The superbly inlet one-piece iron has an opening-tension-adjustment mechanism. Underneath, the forend receives a coat of finish even in the farthest recesses. This attention to the little things is admirable.

There are marked improvements to the original N2 stock. The N2 RS stock is beefier without being ponderous. Length of pull was 14¾" to a 22mm-thick rubber pad (12mm and 27mm pads are available), and it can be adjusted to 15½" without gunsmithing. The remaining dimensions were: 1½" drop at comb, 2⅝" drop at heel, ¼" cast-off at the toe, ⅛" cast-off at the heel and 4° of pitch. A small badge on the right side of the stock calls out the "Micro-metric 3D" adjustable comb. This is an intuitive four-axis adjustable comb. Wrenches are included, and the manual provides concise instructions. The hardware is stout and not prone to breakage. Once adjusted, the comb stays put. I like the contrast of the comb's black "Dura-finish" coating; however, it is a polarizing subject with the nattering class on the Internet. The pistol-grip radius is longer and more gradual than on the N2, and the wrist and palm swell have been

increased. The result is a comfortable target stock that provides consistent and confident hand placement and grip. The wood-to-metal fit was splendid. The stock head had received a coat of finish, as had the butt underneath the pad. The underside of the adjustable comb and the stock beneath were all finished as well. Again: Attention to detail in places where no one typically looks helps make a good shotgun great.

I grabbed some Winchester Super-target 2¾", 1,145-fps, 1⅛-oz No. 8s and BIOAMMO 2¾", 1,280-fps, 1-oz 7½s and made a visit to the patterning board. Barrel convergence was perfect, and the gun patterned 60/40 with both the IC and M chokes. A party of interested peers joined me at the 5 Stand to have a go at some targets. As mentioned, fully assembled, the N2 RS weighs 8 pounds 4 ounces. The N2 RS balances just at the knuckle, but I am going to take a little liberty with an astronomy term and describe the barycenter, or center of mass, for this gun. And it is ideal. The added weight sits distinctly on the forehand and at the grip, resulting in a smooth-handling, nimble, pointable shotgun. Others who shot the gun said the balance was "perfect." I concur. Shooting gun-down, I found the N2 RS easy to mount and exceptionally smooth-swinging. Normally the 5 Stand drives me nuts but, thanks to the N2 RS's gliding nature, I was able to bust swift long crossers. In fact, I was successful at all the presentations. The N2 RS helped me be a better shooter. The N2 RS was also remarkably soft-shooting, even with the heavier loads. My mentor, Gunsmith John Skinner, commented: "There is little discernable recoil." With all the folks shooting the N2 RS, the accolades were unanimous.

It is hard to find fault with this dedicated target gun, and I made a concerted effort to do so. Fabarm did something special here. Wes Lang and Giorgio Guerini created a benchmark gun at a price point that others will struggle to beat. 🦋

For more information, visit fabarmusa.com.

SHOOTING SPORTSMAN

**6 ISSUES A YEAR
FOR JUST \$33!**

**Subscribe or renew today
and receive the latest in
gear guides, gun reviews,
hunting destinations,
dog training and more!**



shootingsportsman.com/subscription
800-666-4955

SHOOTING SPORTSMAN

BIRDS • GUNS • DOGS • PEOPLE • PLACES

SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER 2023

