

The Yugoslavian Mystery Mauser

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Brief History Lesson

I purchased one of Marstar's Exc Grade K98k "Mystery Mausers" in 2002. These rifles are completely void of any arsenal or manufacture stamps nor does the receiver display the Yugoslavian coat of arms. Thus the associated "Mystery Rifle" label assigned by Marstar. The reasons for why these model 98's received no stamp is inconclusive. It has been suggested that these Mausers were intended for export to other aligned countries (Such as to the M48Bo) to receive the new home Nation's receiver stamp/coat of arms. It has also been suggested that these rifles were due for Yugoslavian receiver stamps but due to the onset of the Siminov and Kalishnikov design battle rifles received only enough attention to assemble them and subsequent storage as reserve surplus.

All of these K98k Mausers were assigned to German or German Allies in occupied Yugoslavia. It should be noted that Yugoslavia was the only European Nation to liberate itself from German occupation without the direct military assistance of the Allies. The Allies dropped munitions, support materials and supplied limited training into occupied Yugoslavia during WW2 but did not send in military troops. Either these Mausers were captured by Yugoslavian Partisans, were assembled with captured munitions stocks or were provided as German war reparations after WW2.



It is assumed that these rifles were assembled using non-matching parts. Original serial numbers have been removed and re-stamped with all matching Yugoslavian numbers throughout the rifle. German Waffenamps are seen still in the sight assembly and difficult to reach nooks and crevasses in the metalwork. Yugoslavian rework rifles are considered much better than the Russian Captured rifles re-arsenal led after WW2. The Russians actually took grinding tools to these rifles where-as the

Yugoslavians made all attempts to mill their components. However the Yugoslavians had just less than One Million rifles captured where-as the Russians captured approximately half of the approximated 14 million Mausers produced. Needless to say the Yugoslavians could afford to spend a little more time and investment in re-arsenalling their German Capture K98 Mausers. It may seem a little high to have upwards of seven to eight million Russian Captured Mausers however one must remember that the Soviet Union conquered deep into Germany and took a considerable portion of Berlin itself. The actual number of Russian Re-Arsenalled Mausers is undetermined.

Yugoslavians assumed ownership of the German weapons, munitions and stockpiles that were captured within occupied Yugoslavia and later were awarded additional munitions and supplies as war reparations. It is largely accepted that Yugoslavian re-arsenalled Mausers are a better quality rifle in comparison to their Russian Capture re-arsenalled counterparts (despite Russian Captures retain original German stamps).

Marstar's Grading System

When one receives a rifle from Marstar you will note several things:

- If the rifle is loaded with cosmoline and will arrive in saran-wrap to protect the interior of the plastic hard-shell case it is sent in.
- You receive a full compliment of accessories with the rifle
- The hard-shell case is of good quality
- The Rifle comes with a hand-signed checklist of inspected components by Marstar staff
- The checklist appears to be the driving force behind their grading system so long as the rifle meets Marstar's attributed criteria
- A personal re-inspection of Marstar's checklist and the Mauser confirmed that they did indeed hand inspect this rifle before sending it to me

I am sure you will have noticed several features which are unique to the Yugoslavian rearsenal K98's. In particular are the stamped numbers on the Left side of the Butt stock and throughout all other metal components on the rifle. In addition you will notice that there are absolutely no markings on the top of the receiver. Thus is the labeling of the rifle my Marstar as the "Mystery Mauser". In essence you don't really know what you're getting.



After it's all said and done - does this pretty boom stick shoot?

Truth of the matter is that I am not fond of military Mauser sights. With true consideration the No4Mk1 and No4Mk1* peep sight system is far superior both for target acquisition, accuracy and precision.

Therefore if I was going to give you folks a true representation of what this Mauser is capable of I needed to find an alternative to these issue open sights yet I wanted to keep the rifle in relative originality (if that's possible for a scrubbed Yugo Mauser).

I purchased some ZRAK scope mounts from a chap that had them advertised on Guns Canada (remember that site?). Now these ZRAK scope mounts were of particular interest to me because I knew the Serbians and Bosnians alike used these mounts on their Sniper rifles during their (relatively recent) civil war. At the time I had decided to use them I only knew these mounts were used extensively on the Yugoslavian M48 derivatives. I was very pleased to find out shortly afterwards that the Serbians and Bosnians alike also used the re-arsenalled German capture K98's and thus had kept the rifle as original as I possibly could while attaching a scope.



Picture of an actual Yugo K98k Sniper with the correct ZRAK mounts and M76 Scope
Pictures of this newly manufactured reproduction Serbian Sniper Rifle





After Investing all the resources, money and time - WILL IT SHOOT?????



RANGE TESTS



The following results were achieved using [Hornady 150gr SP bullet](#), [Remington brass](#), [CCI-200 LR primer](#) and [48gr of IMR 4895 \(suggested OAL was 3.070"\)](#). Recommended OAL was disregarded as bullet-seating depth was matched to this rifles chamber specifications. This load was based off of Water's suggested load for this combination of components. The scope is a 4X32 Tasco I bought off of ebay for \$35.00 (including shipping). Research the load possibilities before defaulting to the one provided here. This combination will work differently from one Mauser to another, For example BRNO Mausers have a much wider land with shorter grooves in their military Mauser barrels. Never paint military Mausers with the same brush - they are all individuals built under different conditions and tolerances and therefore may want different load combinations. If at first you do not succeed try-try-again.



100 yards (3-rounds 5/16" group) I was IMPRESSED by these groups. I was expecting much less in the manner of performance.



100 yards (3-rounds)



Conclusion: I couldn't make this Mauser shoot worth a darn using open sights. This is my own problem and doesn't reflect at all on the quality of the rifle. I found that the front post was far too thick to get descent target acquisition and leveling the target appropriately at 100 yards was difficult for me. The best I could achieve at 100-yards was a 3.5" group.

By attaching the scope I have greatly increase accuracy and target acquisition. This thing can out-shoot me no-questions asked. I shot five 3-round groups all of which (say one) were under an inch in diameter. I have shown you the best and worst groups achieved (above).

Recommendation: I am very satisfied with this rifle and I would not hesitate to buy another from Marstar's EXC grade of Mausers again. I wanted this rifle because it was an oddity. I believe that it is a late war Mauser because the quality just isn't comparable to pre-WW2 Mauser standards. The bolt rides rough and the trigger is a stern 6.5-pound double stage pull. However a little attention with a honing stone will assist in that dept.

For the money you can't go wrong. Where can you find modern factory rifle that shoots as well as this

for the price and complete with accessories? I have found that even new factory rifles will require at least some tweaking to shoot less than one minute of angle. In addition to get this kind of performance out of a 60 year old Mauser is quite impressive.

You may be asking yourself: *"Perhaps I was lucky and got a Mauser from the folks at Marstar that was a notch above the average Yugo Mauser"*.

I doubt this is the case because I did not tell John at Marstar I was going to do this write-up until after I received the product. The product was rated as EXC "New" condition and for the price \$279.00 Cdn how could I go wrong? I also found talking to Marstar staff to be an easy experience. They seemed knowledgeable of their products and had answers to the rudimentary questions posed.

If you have the opportunity to buy a K98k Mauser in similar condition (whether it be from Marstar or otherwise) and you have some money available in the realm of \$300.00 Cdn then I recommend you give it a go and make the purchase. You'll have FUN which is what all of this is about right! In addition the 8mm Mauser (.323" bullet diameter) is an excellent hunting cartridge and will take any large game in North America (almost). They are a tough and reliable rifle. I will be taking this Yugo hunting with me as soon as the time and season are available.

I have no affiliation with Marstar. If this product had not met the standard achieved in this paper I would have reported it as seen and tested.

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