

Tikka T1X LR

Up to all Expectations

When we heard about the new Tikka .22 rimfire early last year, GUNS Australia put its hand up for a test sample that was originally expected in April 2018. Two expired NSW Permits to Acquire later, the anxiously awaited sample finally arrived.



ABOVE: The Tikka T1X is a long awaited addition to Tikka's lineup - typical modern rimfire in size shape and materials

LEFT: The Hunting Package includes a Burris Droptine 3-9x40 scope, bipod, TA40 Nextortch, spare magazine and other useful items.suits general usage

What's in a brand name, plenty it seems if the brand name is Tikka. Few new rifles have generated as much interest among the club and target shooting community as the Tikka T1X MTR (Multi-Task Rimfire) in the LR calibre.

Many of these shooters have been around long enough to remember the durable and accurate centrefire rifles Tikka produced before being bought out by bigger Finnish brother Sako in 1983. Most shooters interested in rifle performance are aware of the remarkable accuracy that the post buyout Tikka centrefire models are producing, particularly when considering their price bracket. (Sako wisely kept the Tikka brand's distinct identity and it continued to build on its fine reputation and fan base among Australian shooters.)

When news came that Tikka is building a rimfire rifle, shooters demonstrated their confidence in the brand by putting down deposits on an unseen and unproven rifle just because it is a Tikka.

Tikka promotes the T1X LR "as the most versatile rimfire rifle on the market".

To ensure genuine versatility, Tikka offer reasonably priced optional pistol grip and fore end modules designed to add target rifle characteristics to the general purpose standard stock when required. This ten shot bolt action repeater has an overall length of 96cm and weighs 2.6kg without scope and about 3.25kg with scope and sling.

Tikka guarantees the T1X to achieve one minute of angle (MoA) accuracy which in practical terms translates to 14.5mm groups at 50m. If the performance of the T1X can match its impressive advertising claims and accuracy guarantee then this unassuming synthetic stocked carbon steel rifle will be what a lot of shooters are looking for in a rimfire rifle.

Compact size, hunting weight and handling with target grade accuracy for \$1000. Interested shooters would include precision small game hunters, pest exterminators, hunters keen to improve shooting skills, target shooters of off-hand disciplines such as SSAA Field Rifle/Metallic Silhouette/3P.

The review rifle was made available to GUNS Australia courtesy of Beretta Aus-

tralia, importer and distributor of Tikka rifles. The website <https://www.berettaaustralia.com.au/> details the T1X calibre, model and accessories range.

Tikka use a massive receiver for the T1X rimfire. It is essentially a modified form of the T3X centrefire receiver. The top half is trimmed down to a part hexagon shape whose top flat is drilled and tapped for scope mounts as well having a standard 11mm rimfire dovetail machined. The bottom half has thicker wall and has ample rigidity for this low stressed action.

The full length dovetail helps correct eye relief and minimum scope overhang mounting. The centrefire style receiver mounted toggle bolt stop is retained - a much better design and easier to operate than the trigger based bolt stop found on most rimfire actions.

The bolt is made of stainless steel, the non-rotating front and the rotating locking collar appear to be very precise investment castings. Bolt locking is very strong thanks to a substantial locking lug (an integral part of the 37mm long cast steel rotating collar) which locks into a notch of the thick bot-



tom section of the receiver wall. A polished aluminium bolt handle is screw attached to the locking lug but takes no part in the locking process, only serving to operate the bolt. A short 50° arc of the handle cocks the action and unlocks the bolt without raising the bolt handle above the horizontal leaving plenty of clearance between the operating hand and the lowest mounted scope.

At the front of the bolt a single hinged extractor pulls out the cases which slide along a captive spring-steel guide in the opposite side of the receiver until the case strikes the fixed ejector. A little different but extraction, ejection and repeat loading all work very well.

Should a pierced or split case occur during firing, the right hand gas vent directs escaping gas away from the shooter and reduces gas entering the magazine or rear of the action. A polymer shroud blocks the rear of the bolt to prevent gas leak toward the shooter.

At the bottom of this shroud a small cocking indicator protrudes when the action is cocked – not the most positive of indicators, not easily felt with the thumb and protrusion is only seen conclusively when looking from above or the side but not from a shooting position. (If the diminutive indicator is a concern the safety lever can help, if it is on safe or can be pulled into the safe position the action is cocked if it cannot engage the safe position the action is not cocked.)

The T1X trigger is the same effective single stage unit as the one fitted to the T3X, it is creep free and required a 1.4kg pull for release as it arrived.

To express 'kg force' in newtons the kg value needs to be multiplied by 9.8 or by 10 for an approximate conversion. These triggers are user adjustable for a release force between 10 and 20N. The option of a Set Trigger, if desired is available at a cost of \$250.

A sturdy 10 round detachable box magazine is standard on the rifle. Its body, base and follower are polymer mouldings ensuring low friction, light weight and quiet operation. Disassembly is not recommended and should not be required as the operation looks simple and foolproof. Staggered column design helps to keep the length relatively short. While the magazine protrudes from the stock, it does not interfere with balanced one handed carry of the rifle.

The barrel in any rifle is an important component as it has significant influence on accuracy and handling. In the case of a multi-task rifle which requires target level accuracy and hunting weight for handling and extended carrying, getting the barrel's accuracy vs handling balance right can make or break the multi-task effectiveness of the rifle.

In general terms, increasing barrel weight improves accuracy but becomes detrimental beyond an optimum point for portability and handling. However a rifle's accuracy is



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
The Tikka is just as useful in the field. Bipod from package helps Jack to make the most of T1X's accuracy.

TWO action bolts secure the action to the stock. Disassembly to major components is simple. Trigger and bedding footprint is taken from the well proven T3X centrefire

THE large locking lug is an integral part of the locking-ring casting at the rear of the bolt body. The alloy bolt handle is attached to this steel component.

THE T1X stock is very similar to the centrefire T3X with a spacer to compensate for the reduced chamber diameter

affected by more than just barrel weight so the name of the game for the manufacturer is to concentrate on weight neutral accuracy affecting features to achieve the required accuracy with less reliance on barrel weight.

This is where Tikka have done their homework; a light stock so more weight can go into the barrel, good bedding, crisp trigger, tight chamber and cold hammer forging all help accuracy without adding weight. (Extra weight can be easily added to the webbed fore end should a shooter feel the need for target use.)

The carbon steel T1X barrel is 510mm long and 18.4mm diameter for the front 385mm then tapers up to 22.7mm toward the chamber end, Tikka describes it as a 'semi-heavy profile'. The barrel is free floated ahead of the rimfire barrel-channel spacer and fastened at the shank where it is fitted to the receiver.

The type of fit is not disclosed but there are three grub screws along the bottom of the shank to ensure the barrel stays put. A shallow dished (target) crown protects the muzzle ahead of the 1/2"x20 UNF accessories thread with its screw-on polymer cap. The bore has cold hammer forged six groove rifling with a 1:42cm (16.5") twist. Externally the barrel has a low sheen blue/black finish to fit in with the similarly coloured receiver and stock.

The lightweight modular polymer stock of the T1X is essentially a T3X Lite stock with a new bottom plate/trigger guard module to accept the T1X magazine and a hard polymer butt plate. Tikka's accessory target style pistol grip and wider fore end modules also fit the T1X stock. Inside the barrel channel a spacer compensates for the thinner rimfire barrel and keeps clearances neat but the bedding 'footprint' is the same which means the T1X should fit a wide selection of aftermarket stocks available for T3X barrelled actions. This stock has been tried and proven on rifles up to centrefire magnum calibres so there are no doubts over strength or reliability.

Stock proportions fitted most people well. It has a modern straight comb, tapered fore end, two QD bases and a 340mm (extendable) trigger pull length. Metal to stock clearance is neat and uniform, the butt stock is foam filled to avoid the hollow sound and the gripping panels offer very good traction thanks to the aggressive asymmetrical grip pattern.

Even before firing a shot the T1X was creating positive impressions; a surprisingly secure grip for an uncoated polymer stock, bolt operation was reassuringly smooth closing and opening with muted sounds, and the tight chamber was noticed from loading the



FROM TOP:
The barrel is free floated ahead of the rimfire barrel-channel spacer and fastened at the shank with three hex bolts where it is fitted to the receiver.

SAFETY is conveniently placed and quiet, locks bolt operation when applied



High velocity hunting ammo groups at 50m, (patches used for aiming marks)

first bullet thanks to the single-loading policy at the local range. Stock fit felt comfortable in all shooting positions but longer limbed shooters may opt for the stock extension spacers. The magazine takes ten rounds comfortably, it is easy to load and repeat action was totally reliable and easily achieved at the shoulder with slow or fast bolt operation.

To check the accuracy of a review rifle, any ammunition sent along with it is tried first. If it is felt that the rifle is not achieving near potential accuracy, other available ammunition is introduced. Shooting was done at 50m outdoors in less than favourable wind conditions using bipod front and sandbag rear and also sandbag rest at both ends (no significant difference noted). There was no attempt to centre groups on the point of aim and in this

case Tikka's guarantee of one MoA (14.5mm at 50m) is of particular interest.

Of the high velocity (HV) hunting ammunition supplied, Federal Champion 510 and CCI Mini-Mag both shot well achieving a five shot group of 14.3mm and three shots in an 8.9mm group respectively. The 36gn Mini-Mag seemed more affected by the wind and refused to put five shots into a reasonable sized group so the heavier and significantly faster CCI Velocitor was introduced.

This 40gr hollow point (HP) speedster at 1435fps responded with a 12.8mm five shot group. Many rimfire hunters prefer to use subsonic ammunition and this category was represented by the popular Winchester Subsonic which grouped five shots into 13.5mm despite dropping two shots low.

To make up for the dropped shots and because we all enjoy shooting tiny groups on a breezy day SK Subsonic HP was introduced for an 11mm five shot group. To fully check the Multi-Task credentials of the T1X some form of target ammunition had to be introduced.

SK Rifle Match, a reliable, mid-priced and popular load which promptly shot a three shot 'clover leaf' of 5.3mm followed by five shots into an elongated 8.8mm hole. The fabulous level of accuracy demonstrated by the T1X using the above broad range of ammunition is way above Tikka's accuracy guarantee and easily rates the rifle as the most accurate encountered.

Tikka's T1X is by far the most versatile rimfire that this writer has come across over the years. It arrives as a comfortable weight good handling hunting or general purpose rifle. It can be easily converted to handle well in offhand target competition, has a crisp adjustable trigger and accuracy to be competitive against factory built offhand target rifles. The T1X is robustly built, based on a centrefire receiver and stock with a smooth strong action and gives the impression of a rifle built to last. It will be popular with Australia's accuracy minded shooters and hunters including the author who has requested to purchase the rifle if possible to improve his scores in the SSAA Field Rifle competition.

For more information check the Beretta Australia website <https://www.berettaaustralia.com.au/> details the T1X calibre, model and accessories range.

Beretta offers an optional Bunny Buster Package at an attractive price (about \$650) with the purchase of a T1X rifle. This quality package has the basic accessories for the small game hunter including scope, mounts, an effective hunting-light kit, bipod, sling, gun bag, a spare magazine and a cold weather bolt knob.

The major component is a Burris Drop-tine 3-9x40mm rimfire scope (parallax set at 50y) with a one inch tube and Ballistic Plex reticle. The power range is well-chosen for general LR rimfire hunting and the three point Ballistic Plex is useful when compensating for LR trajectory. The image was very clear and the turrets tracked true. Burris has been a trusted quality brand for a long time and their "Forever Warranty – no receipts needed", adds to buyer confidence.

The Nextorch in the TA40 kit comes fitted with two CR123A Li disposable batteries in addition to the ultra-high capacity 18650 Li-ion rechargeable battery and a USB charging cable for 'in torch charging' with reverse polarity protection and charging indicator light. A stock mounted switch for convenient remote control and the necessary mounting hardware included, complete this comprehensive kit. The 1000 lumen beam has a centre spot with good peripheral light to cover the hunting range of the .22LR. Both, scope and torch were impressive when tested in the field at night.

SPECS

TIKKA T1X LR

Manufacturer – Sako

Brand – Tikka

Model – T1X MTR

Calibre – .22 LR

Action – Bolt repeater

Length – 1020mm

Weight – 2.6kg

Barrel – 510mm, threaded

Magazine – 10 round detachable

Trigger – Single stage, adjustable 10-20N

Stock – Synthetic

Price – RRP \$1009, Lock-n-Load at Wyong has them at \$930



FROM TOP: Subsonic hunting ammo groups were also impressive

Mid-priced target ammo shot one-hole groups