

The Super Smooth Strasser RS 14 Evolution in 6.5 PRC

by JEFF CRAMLIT on JULY 12, 2021

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Straight pull design is evident with the first glance at the bolt.

Strasser rifles are made in Austria, a country known for high-quality firearms, and the RS14 Evolution certainly fits that bill. I'm not sure what the company meant by the "RS" designation but after evaluating the Evolution I think it should stand for "Really Smooth," "Remarkably Slick," or something along those lines.

Ok, I did find out what the RS14 Evolution designation means. The "RS" is for Repeating System, "14" is for 2014 the year of its development and the Evolution Strasser's have the Picatinny rail for scope mounting.

The bottom line is that the RS14 is a really slick, amazingly well-manufactured rifle from every perspective and angle you look at. It is an expensive rifle, so you expect more from it and it delivers; and leaves you wondering why more of these features haven't hit mainstream manufacturing.

The bolt on the Evolution operates faster and smoother than any rifle I've ever handled. The bolt pulls straight to the rear to operate and requires less effort than the trigger of some firearms I've tested. With my trigger gauge, it measured around 7 pounds to unlock the bolt and then it moved as if on ball bearings for the rest of the travel.

Breaking it Down

The good news is the slick features of the Evolution go far beyond the fast, smooth action. So, let's take a look at it piece by piece. The fact is breaking down the Evolution is simple due to the exquisite design.

Pulling the bolt to the rear reveals the bolt release hidden under the bolt on the top left. Depress the bolt release and the flawlessly machined bolt can be fully withdrawn from the hard-anodized aluminum receiver.



Pressing the bolt release down allows easy removal of the silky-smooth bolt.

Once the bolt is removed the trigger release catch is exposed under the bolt operating channel. Pulling the catch rearward releases the trigger group, and it drops out the bottom of the receiver.

The fit on the trigger group is so precise I wasn't aware it was a drop out design while inspecting the assembled rifle. There is no wiggle or play in the fit at all, in fact, I was surprised it dropped out freely without any resistance or binding.



The trigger release latch is located at the end of the pointer and operated with the bolt removed.

The trigger group is a stand-alone work of art all in itself. There isn't a rough edge or machine mark to be found anywhere. The rear plunger and spring assembly can be positioned in one of three detent positions to adjust trigger pull weight. However, all three positions resulted in excellent, light trigger weights ranging from 2 lbs. 6 ounces to 3 lbs.

But, to make things even better for those long precise shots, the RS14 also has a set trigger feature. When the action is cocked, pressing the trigger forward sets it and then it breaks at a feather-light 6.5 – 7 ounces. You may not need a sub-pound long-range match trigger very often, but it's there if you ever do need it.



The amazing finish and workmanship are apparent on the drop-out trigger assembly.

The only stamped metal in this trigger assembly is the spring clip holding a short Allen wrench located at the front of the trigger group. This Allen wrench is used to tighten or loosen the screw that holds the forearm in place. The tools needed to disassemble the Evolution are carried securely tucked away out of sight in the rifle.

Using the Allen wrench and loosening the screw retainer in the forearm allows the forearm to slide forward away from the receiver.



The Allen wrench secures the free floated forearm to the receiver.

A quick look at the inside of the forearm reveals why it is removed by sliding forward. The forearm has metal rods that extend back into the receiver to hold it in place and allow the wooden forearm to be rigid and for a free-floated barrel.

Again, the fitting is so exact that until the Evolution was disassembled the fact that the barrel is free-floated wasn't even noticed. Everything about this rifle is meticulous and it's full of delightful surprises.

The rod that is used to operate the barrel clamp is also stored within the forearm. It's tucked in a recess and secured out of the way for when it's needed to break down the rifle or change barrels for a caliber conversion.



Barrel clamp lever rod is stored in a forearm recess

The RS14 Evolution I tested came in the long-range performing 6.5 PRC caliber. The 24-inch magnum sporter weight barrel proved to be the perfect balance for accuracy and handling. Installing the rod from the forearm in the lever mechanism of the barrel clamp and rotating 90 degrees down loosens the barrel clamp and allows the barrel to be removed.

The barrel extension fits back into the receiver and comes to a solid stop due to a pronounced shoulder. In addition to the shoulder fitting against the barrel clamp, there is an alignment pin on the receiver that fits in a hole in the extension to ensure consistent installation.

A small Allen wrench and an extension rod to provide the required leverage to move the clamp a quarter turn is all the tools needed to completely disassemble the RS14 Evolution, and they tuck neatly back inside the rifle. Rifle disassembly takes less than 2 minutes.



The barrel clamping mechanism is solid and simple to operate.

The receiver has an integral Picatinny rail for universal scope mounting. The straight pull bolt fills the rear portion of the upper receiver area when closed. This forces the scope rail location and scope mounting to be a bit further forward than most rifles.

However, this did not prove to be an issue in mounting the [Leupold HD5 3.6-18x](#) used for testing. The HD5 is also chocked full of features and perhaps the best scope Leupold has ever produced. It was the perfect topping for the long-range capability of the 6.5 PRC.

The magazine release buttons are located forward and on both sides of the receiver. The magazine fits flush and holds 3 rounds of the magnum bolt face 6.5 PRC ammunition. The magazines are not polymer like many are these days; these are metal and feel solid and substantial.



All rifle components are finished to extremely smooth surfaces.

The safety and release buttons that allows cycling the action without firing are located on the rear of the bolt. The oversized bolt handle makes for quick positive operation of the straight-pull bolt.

The stock has a nicely curved grip with a generous palm swell facilitating a straighter pull of the amazing trigger. The beautiful walnut wood fits to perfection and has a satin finish.

Specifications

Length	44 inches	Action	Straight-pull
Weight	8.2 lbs	Trigger	2.5lbs
Caliber	6.5 PRC tested	Barrel	24" (threaded)
MSRP	\$4400	Capacity	2+1

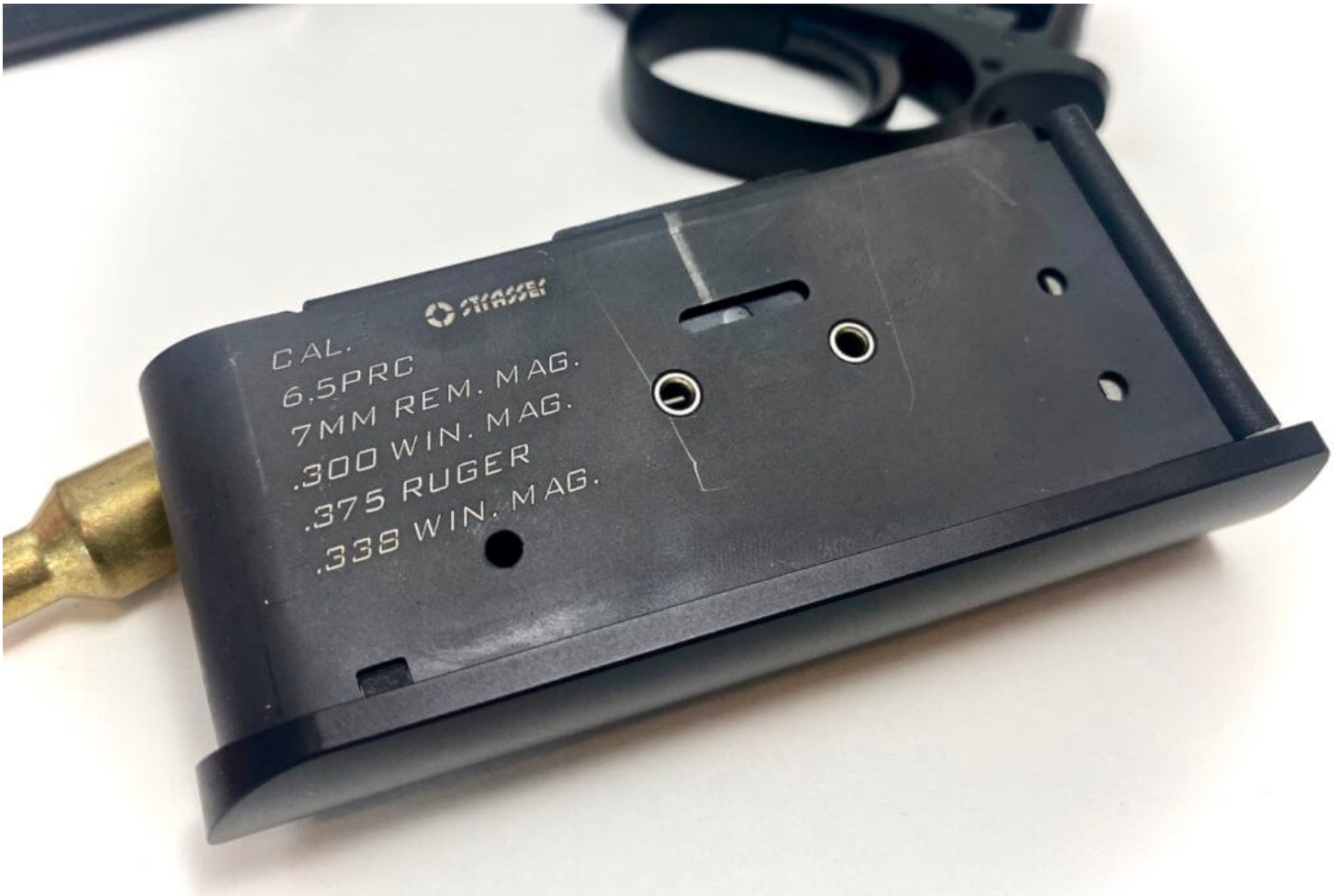


The overall length of the disassembled rifle is determined by barrel length.

The disassembled rifle would fit in a relatively short case and make for easy transport. To continue on filling the wish list of most shooters the Evolution is designed for quick caliber changes by swapping barrels, bolt faces, and magazines.

Strasser USA has quite an impressive list of barrels available in calibers preferred by American hunters. They have definitely geared the RS14 Evolution toward the US market. Changing the barrel, bolt face and magazine can set the rifle up for an entirely new set of game animals.

Available options include .223, 22-250, 243, 6.5 CM, 270 Win, 7-08 Rem, 308 Win, 30-06, as well as the magnum bolt face calibers listed on the side of the tested magazine. Replacement barrels in standard calibers cost about \$820, while magnum caliber barrels run about \$1000.



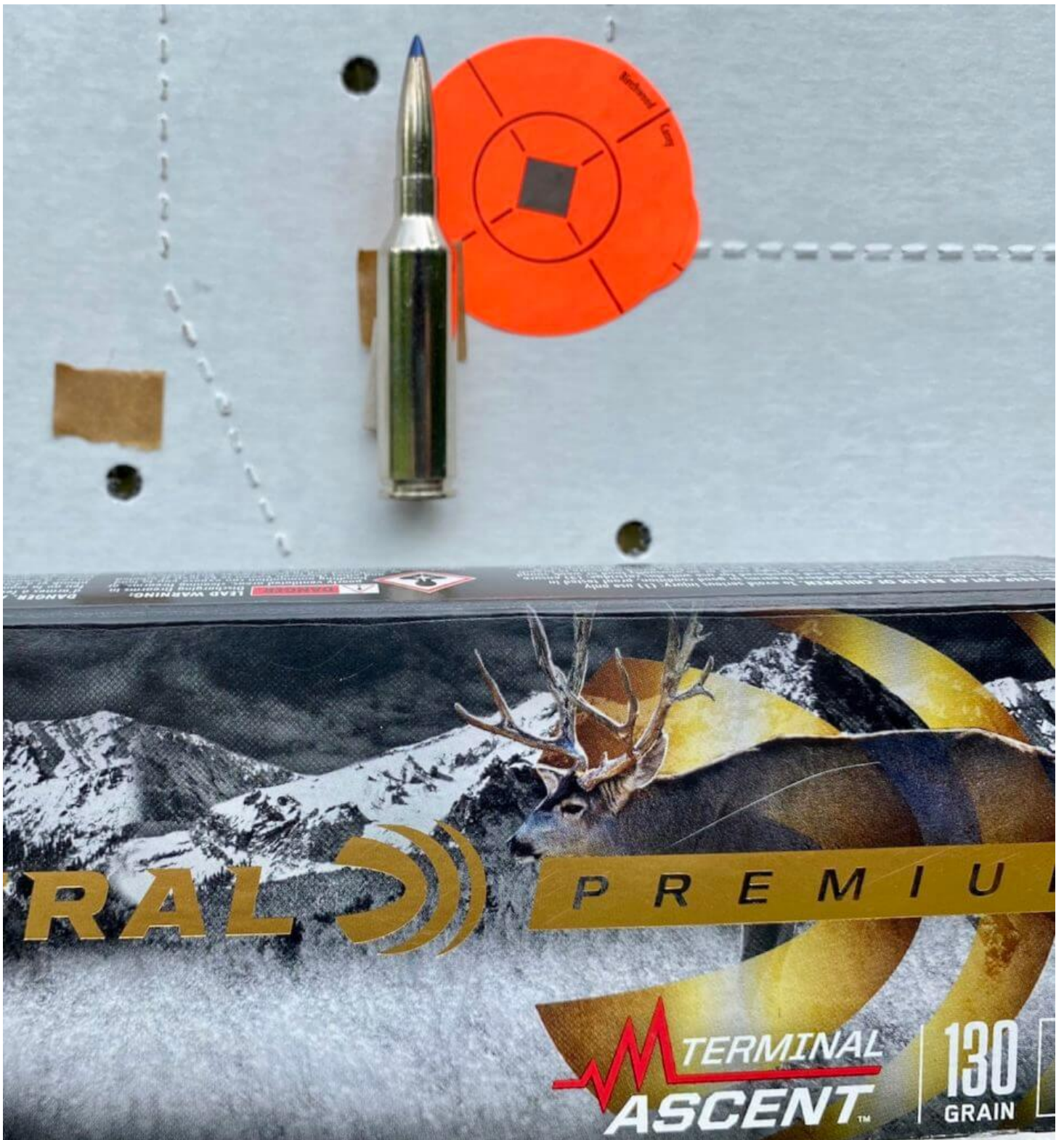
Design for the US market is clear based on the American cartridges listed on magazines.

Range Time

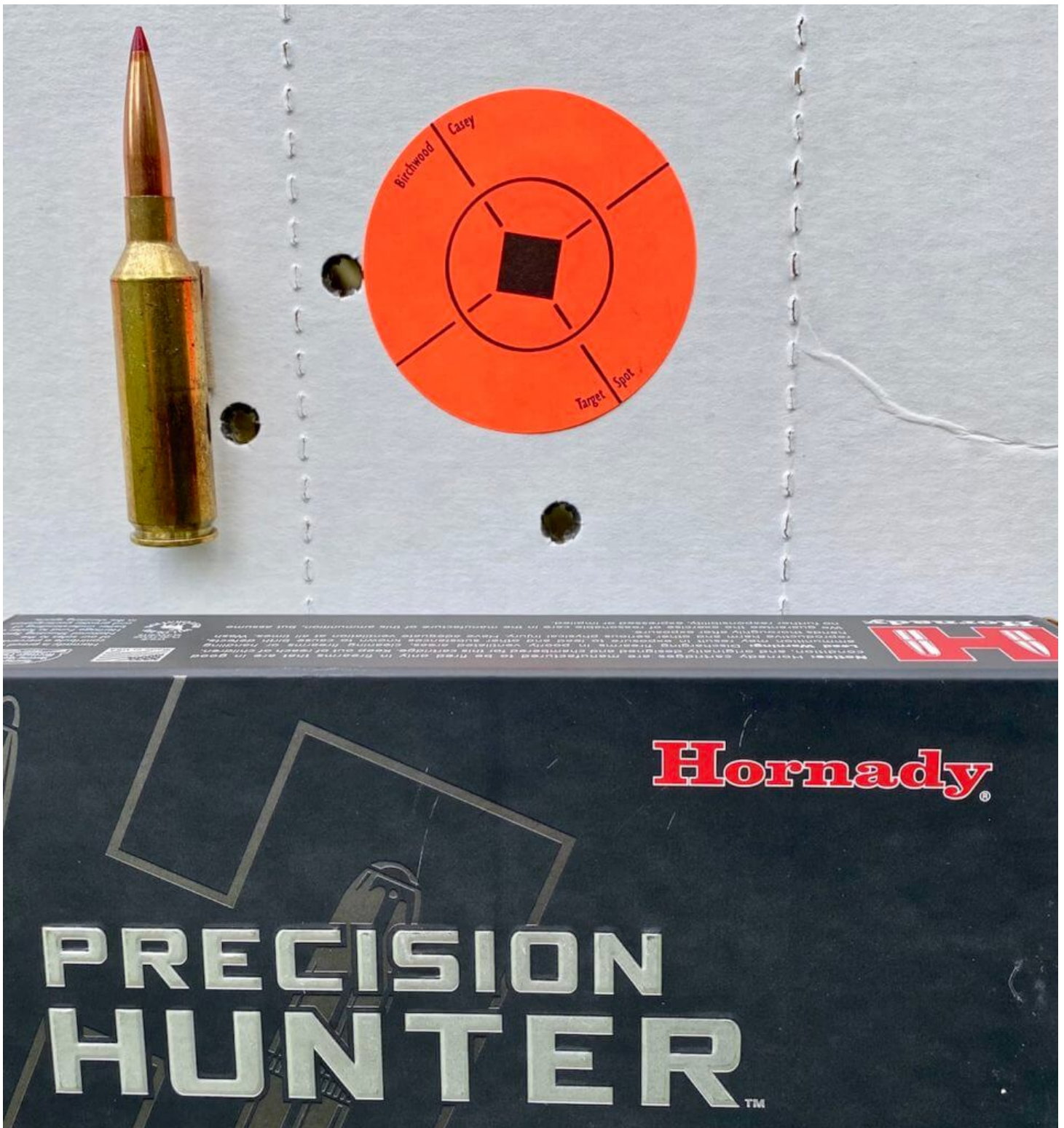
The Evolution was a pleasure to shoot with the Leupold HD5 to guide the rounds on target. The free-floated barrel delivered sub-moa accuracy at 100 yards with both Federal and Hornady ammunition.

The crisp sub-3-pound trigger was excellent for shooting groups at 100 yards, but the 7 oz. set trigger made the 300-yard shots effortless. The Hornady and Federal loads both delivered excellent hunting accuracy out to 300 yards.

The Evolution did seem to prefer the heavier [Hornady](#) bullets once the distance was stretched out, but both loads would do the job in the field. The Evolution shot very well with the hunting ammunition tested and would probably do even better with some match ammo.



300 yard group.



300-yard groups were around minute-of-angle or less depending on the type of ammunition.

The “slick” action was fast and reliable during all the testing. Strasser USA and the folks in Austria have built an amazing rifle geared toward the hunters here in America. As you may have guessed I really enjoyed testing the Evolution.

The RS14 Evolution left little to be desired with its flawless machine work, amazing trigger, quick-change barrel design, neatly hidden tools, perfect fittings, and excellent performance. Obviously, not every hunter needs all these features or may be able to afford the Strasser RS14 Evolution, but it is a “Really Slick” awesome shooting hunting rifle for those that decide it’s what they want.

For more information go to [Strasser USA](http://StrasserUSA.com).



Smooth lines and balance of the Evolution make it look as good as it functions.

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About the author: Jeff Cramblit is a world-class competitive shooter having won medals at both the 2012 IPSC World Shotgun Championship in Hungary and more recently the 2017 IPSC World Rifle Championship in Russia. He is passionate about shooting sports and the outdoors. He has followed that passion for over 30 years, hunting and competing in practical pistol, 3gun, precision rifle and sporting clays matches. Jeff is intimately familiar with the shooting industry – competitor, instructor, RO, range master, match director. Among his training credits include NRA Instructor, AR-15 armorer, FBI Rifle Instructor, and Officer Low Light Survival Instructor. As a sponsored shooter, Jeff has represented notable industry names such as: Benelli, 5.11 Tactical, Bushnell, Blackhawk, DoubleStar, and Hornady. He has been featured on several of Outdoor Channel's Shooting Gallery episodes and on a Downrange TV series. Jeff's current endeavors cover a broad spectrum and he can be found anywhere from local matches helping and encouraging new shooters as they develop their own love of the sport, to the dove field with his friends, a charity sporting clays shoot, backpack hunting public land in Montana, or the winners podium of a major championship.