

BENELLI LUPO HPR

BLURRING THE LINES BETWEEN HUNTING
RIFLE AND PRECISION CHASSIS GUN



DAVE BAHDE



BEN BATTLES





THE BOLT-RIFLE WORLD HAS changed exponentially over the years. I paid around \$2500.00 for

my first precision rifle nearly 30 years ago. Built like a tank, it was for duty use as a police marksman, was a solid half-MOA gun, and took about six months to

get. Used during Precision Rifle One and Two at Thunder Ranch, Texas, it weighed a ton but performed flawlessly. This same rifle today has almost doubled in both cost and wait times.

During the same time period,

hunting rifles were almost always “factory options,” and anything that grouped under two inches at 100 yards was considered very good in the precision department. Fast forward to now, and precision and hunting rifles have merged. Even low-cost factory rifles will shoot under an inch

at 100 yards, and some rival the capabilities of my first precision rifle. Custom hunting rifles are as capable as the costliest precision rifles made today, just designed around the hunting market but carrying the same five-grand-plus price tags. As the long-range-hunting segment has grown, there has been a call for something that bears a stronger resemblance

to a precision rifle — a platform with a high level of downrange precision that uses a hunting-style stock that incorporates many of the advantages of high-dollar chassis systems. The new Benelli Lupo HPR is a prime example.

BENELLI LUPU HPR 300 WIN MAG

THE LUPU HPR CARRIES A FACTORY sub-MOA guarantee, which is pretty standard these days, and it

1—THE HPR’S ACTION RESTS IN A LIGHTWEIGHT ALUMINUM CHASSIS HOUSING A 2.2 TO 4.5-POUND ADJUSTABLE TRIGGER. THE BOLT HANDLE ATTACHED TO THE LARGE THREE-LUG BOLT HAS A UNIQUE “GULLWING” PROFILE, WHICH WORKS WELL IN CONJUNCTION WITH ITS SHORT 60-DEGREE THROW. A TANG SAFETY SELECTOR AND BRIGHT-RED COCKING INDICATOR CAN BE SEEN AT THE REAR. THE MAGAZINE CAPACITY OF ON TARGET’S 300 WIN MAG TEST RIFLE WAS FOUR ROUNDS, WITH SMALLER CALIBERS HAVING A FIVE-ROUND CAPACITY.

1—THE HPR’S FLUTED 26-INCH HEAVY-CONTOUR BARREL SETS IT APART FROM YOUR AVERAGE HUNTING RIFLE AND INCORPORATES ALL THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR ACCURATE LONG-RANGE SHOT PLACEMENT. ITS LARGE THREE-PORT COMPENSATOR, ALTHOUGH LOUD, WAS VERY EFFECTIVE AT TAMING FELT RECOIL AND MUZZLE RISE. M-LOK ACCESSORY CUTS CAN BE FOUND AT 3, 6, AND 9 O’CLOCK ON THE FOREND, AS WELL AS QD SLING SWIVEL ATTACHMENT POINTS ON EITHER SIDE.



BENELLI LUPU HPR 300 WIN MAG	
CALIBER:	300 WIN MAG, AS TESTED
ACTION TYPE:	BOLT ACTION
TRIGGER:	ADJUSTABLE
RATE OF TWIST:	1-11
BARREL:	26-INCH, HEAVY CONTOUR
FINISH:	MATTE BLACK BE.S.T.
STOCK:	SYNTHETIC, TAN/BLACK WEBB FINISH
MAG./CAPACITY:	DETACHABLE, FOUR ROUNDS
SIGHTS:	PICATINNY RAIL
OAL:	46.25 INCHES
WEIGHT:	10.40 POUNDS
MSRP:	\$2,949



BENELLI LUPO HPR

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1—To ACCOMMODATE EACH SHOOTER'S UNIQUE BIOMETRICS, THE LUPO HPR BUTTSTOCK FEATURES AN EIGHT-POSITION PUSH-BUTTON ADJUSTABLE COMB, AN INTERCHANGEABLE GRIP (TARGET OR HUNTING), A REMOVABLE BAG RIDER, AND DROP/CAST ADJUSTMENT SHIMS. AT THE VERY REAR, YOU'LL FIND BENELLI'S PROGRESSIVE COMFORT SYSTEM BUTTPAD ASSEMBLY, WHICH EFFECTIVELY REDUCES FELT-RECOIL, AS WELL AS QD SLING SWIVEL ATTACHMENT POINTS ON EITHER SIDE.

met that mark quite easily during my testing. Available in the usual 308 Win and 6.5 CM, you can also get it in cartridges with a little more reach, including 6.5 and 300 PRC, 338LM, and 300 Win Mag — the latter being what my test rifle was chambered in. The HPR's 26-inch (24-inch in some chamberings) heavy-contour fluted barrel is cryogenically treated and fitted with a sizeable three-port muzzle brake. The large three-lug bolt rides with a high level of precision within the aluminum action and features a short 60-degree throw, making it strong, smooth, and quick to manipulate. All met-

al parts are protected by Benelli's proprietary BE.S.T. coating. The trigger is adjustable from 2.2 to 4.5 pounds; this sample was crisp with no creep or overtravel, and I left it in the factory setting for testing. The magazine is proprietary, with the highest capacity being five rounds or four for the larger calibers. A one-piece 30 MOA Picatinny optic rail comes factory-installed.

The HPR's synthetic stock, finished in a great-looking tan with black webbing, is designed with shooter biometrics in mind, with adjustments for length of pull, cheek height, an interchangeable

pistol grip with hunting and target profiles, and a removable "bag rider" insert on the bottom edge of the buttstock. Hidden behind the buttpad, Benelli's advanced yet simple "Progressive Recoil Management" system takes the bite out of the big, stout cartridges. Forend includes M-LOK cuts on both sides and the bottom to accommodate rails for bipods or other accessories. QD sling swivel attachment points can be found on both sides of the forend and buttstock.

With a retail price of \$2949.00, the Lupu HPR sits just under the (\$3K) limit for the PRS Produc-

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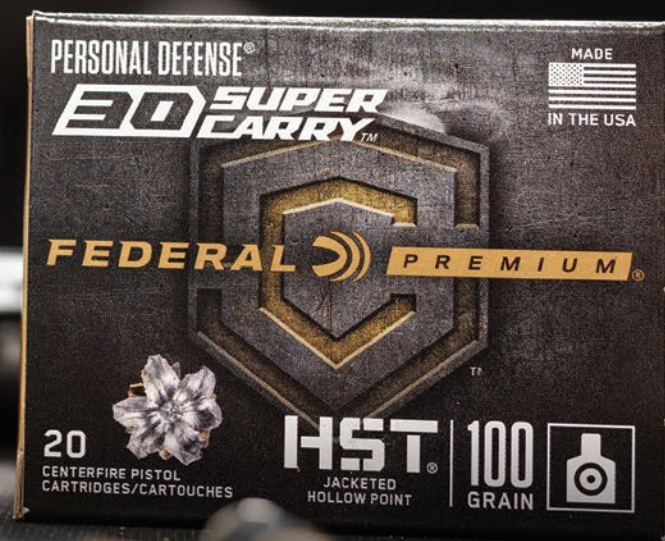
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9MM LUGER HST	124 GRAIN	364 FT-LBS	1150 FPS

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30 SUPER CARRY HST	100 GRAIN	15.5" PENETRATION	.530" EXPANSION
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BENELLI LUPO HPR

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1—STEINER'S H6Xi 5-30x50mm PROVED TO BE AN IDEAL MATCH TO THE HPR'S RANGE AND PRECISION CAPABILITIES. WITH ITS MHR (MODERN HUNTING RETICLE) RETICLE ALLOWING FOR CLEAR AND USEFUL HOLDS, ETHICAL LONG-RANGE SHOTS ON GAME ARE MADE THAT MUCH EASIER. WE MOUNTED THE OPTIC IN A SET OF STEINER RINGS ON THE RIFLE'S INCLUDED ONE-PIECE 30 MOA PICATINNY OPTIC RAIL.

tion Division, making it suitable for both competition and hunting. Magazine capacity does pose some limitations for competition, but the rifle itself would undoubtedly do well in the Production Division.

OPTIC

AS VERSATILE AS THE RIFLE WE MOUNTED it on, our test scope was a Steiner USA H6Xi 5-30x50mm with a one-piece 30mm tube, using the Steiner MHR reticle mounted in the first focal plane. This line of scopes is fitted with some of the best glass on the market in this price range (\$2,500). Eye relief is generous, and at 28 ounces, it's light by comparison to many. The Modern Hunting Reticle is versatile, allowing for clear and useful holds. Turrets are 1/4

MOA adjustments with 30 MOA of total adjustment. Check out the entire line at steiner-optics.com.

RANGE TESTING

ACCURACY WAS SOLID AND WELL under the .75 MOA guarantee with most loads. My best five-shot group was around a half inch using the Barnes 220 Grain OTM-BT Precision Match. The Federal Gold Medal Match 190 grain was not far behind; in fact, I was able to group everything close to half MOA at 100 yards using the match loads. Barnes 180 grain TTSX was also quite accurate, although closer to the 3/4 inch mark. Although loud, as expected, the muzzle brake made it pretty soft shooting, and the stock lends itself well to shooting off a bench

using a bag.

With a 26" barrel, this is not a particularly "handy rifle," but it is well-balanced and capable of working around obstacles. Add a suppressor, and things do get pretty long, however. In the wide-open territory this rifle was designed for, rested off a bipod or tripod, this is very much a moot point though. While I did not swap out grips, the adjustments for cheek weld and length of pull were easy to use, and I took full advantage. Whether working off a tree branch, other random obstacles, or a legitimate tripod, the HPR felt solidly planted. Benelli designed this stock to meet the tasks of hunter and competitor, and in that, succeeded quite well.

The HPR had no issues out

HELLCAT[®] PRO

COMP



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1—WHILE THE Lupo HPR IS A LARGER, HEAVIER RIFLE COMPARED TO A TRADITIONAL HUNTING RIFLE, IT WASN'T MEANT FOR SNAP SHOTS IN THICK BRUSH. INSTEAD, THE HPR IS MORE AT HOME IN WIDE-OPEN TERRITORY WITH ENABLERS SUCH AS BIPOD OR TRIPOD, BUT THIS ISN'T TO SAY THAT IT'S TOO CUMBERSOME TO MAKE THE HIKE OUT THERE.

to 800 yards on the 12-inch diameter steel, with the 220-grain Barnes really excelling beyond that. Once dialed in, I was able to get consistent hits on the 3'x3' steel at 1275 yards. Having the ability to crank the Steiner to 25-plus power really helps these old eyes see targets that are far away, and its turrets are easy to manipulate and operate with tactile clicks and visible numbers. All told, out of the box, the HPR is more than capable at longer ranges.

For longer-range shooters, the

300 Win Mag still commands a very strong following; if you are reaching out to 1500 yards or less, it remains very effective. Go out any further, and I much prefer the 6.5 PRC, but many swear by the 300 Win Mag for this as well. It also retains quite a few fans who hunt larger game and require heavier bullets.

FINAL THOUGHTS

BENELLI IS KNOWN FOR ITS high-quality offerings, and the Lupo HPR delivers just that. Given just a few limitations in

the PRS competition world, the Lupo HPR delivers on its versatility promise, allowing you to take this system on any hunt as well as dabble in the competition world. Although not inexpensive, you can pay nearly twice as much for a rifle that is not significantly more accurate. Chassis systems are the rage in the competition arena, but most hunters are just not interested in these very mission-specific platforms. Adjustability of the HPR for individual shooters is about as good as it gets from

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2—THE HPR'S BOLT CYCLED SMOOTHLY AND POSITIVELY WITH REPEATABLE AND CONSISTENT EJECTION. WHETHER DURING HUNTING SEASON OR PRECISION RIFLE MATCHES IN THE OFF-SEASON, THE Lupo HPR IS WELL-ROUNDED ENOUGH TO EXCEL AT MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES.

3—MEETING THE RIFLE'S FACTORY-GUARANTEED 3/4-INCH, FIVE-SHOT GROUP SIZE AT 100 YARDS PROVED A NON-ISSUE. THE BEST GROUP DURING TESTING, PICTURED HERE, MEASURED 0.50 ON THE DOT, PRINTED USING BARNES' 220 GRAIN PRECISION MATCH. ALL AMMO TESTED HAD AT LEAST ONE GROUP MEASURING IN UNDER THE HPR'S PRECISION GUARANTEE.

a factory non-chassis-system offering. Weighing in at just over 10 pounds, given the appropriate means of carry, it is plenty light for longer hikes, especially given the fact that it's a magnum caliber. Move to a 6.5CM or 308 and you lose a pound right off the bat, and the 6.5 PRC with

two inches less barrel weighs in at 9.6 pounds. There is a *ton* to like about the HPR system; it's comfortable and accurate, has a versatile stock, and is chambered in all the right cartridges. See the

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AMMUNITION	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
BARNES 220 GRAIN PRECISION MATCH	2700	.50 INCHES
FEDERAL 190 GRAIN MATCH	2850	.55 INCHES
BARNES 180 GRAIN TTSX	2900	.70 INCHES

BULLET WEIGHT MEASURED IN GRAINS, VELOCITY IN FEET PER SECOND AND WAS MEASURED USING A GARMIN. ACCURACY IN INCHES FOR THREE FIVE-ROUND GROUPS FIRED FROM 100 YARDS USING A PACK AS A REST FROM BEHIND A BENCH.

Lupo HPR at your nearest dealer, or for more information, contact **BENELLI**; Web: BENELLI.COM