

FAST, SHARP & DEADLY

A CHAPUIS ROLS STRAIGHT PULL ACTION & ZEISS V6
ARE A DEADLY COMBO

By Mark Hoffman

The concept of a straight pull centrefire action has always intrigued me. Maybe it's the engineering in their design or simply the cycling speed they offer over a standard bolt action. Most likely, it's both. This infatuation inevitably led to the realization that I needed to test this action and the opportunity arose when Stoeger Canada suggested I take a look at the French-manufactured Chapuis ROLS.

An ideal resolution for two reasons: Foremost, the ROLS offers a straight pull action, but, secondly, it's a takedown centrefire with interchangeable barrels. A feature that also sparked my interest, as it offers hunters the option of having, at the ready, both a light calibre and a big bore barrel. The perfect answer for a safari or, for that matter, any hunt where a variety of game is in the offing.

THE CHAPUIS ROLS

Chapuis Armes is known for its high-

end double rifles and shotguns, so I was somewhat surprised to learn it also manufactures straight pull-action rifles. Eight models to be exact, including a number with wood stocks. I opted for the Soft Touch, a more practical field model. It is so fundamentally different from a standard bolt action that the best place to begin is with its action.

The real genius of the ROLS is its action. It offers the speed of a straight pull with the safety of the Chapuis locking system, an ingenious design utilizing a

bolt head that locks directly into the barrel that, with its lug surface engagement of 260 square millimetres, can withstand 123,000psi pressure. That about doubles the psi pressure of most standard centrefire cartridges, such as the 30-06 with its maximum pressure of 60,000psi. The actual step-by-step function of the action is more complex than I have the editorial space to cover, but, in a nutshell, the slide handle, with its ball knob, slides the action closed with a click to vertical, which locks the bolt and allows the cartridge



Chapuis ROLS Soft Touch rifle.

to be fired. Once fired, you pull straight back on the handle to extract the fired case and you can repeat the process at any speed you can muster.

Next is cocking and decocking the ROLS. This rifle follows a very different approach to safety. First up, there is no standard type of safety. With a live round in the chamber, the rifle can only be fired if you cock it by pushing forward on the cocking lever with your thumb, located where you would normally find the tang, until it locks in place. To decock, you simply depress the button above the cocking lever. With a live round in the chamber, the bolt cannot be opened unless the rifle is cocked. This prevents any accidental opening of the bolt during carry. But you can open the bolt if you push the cocking lever forward one-fifth-of-an-inch and hold it there while opening it. Nor will the rifle accidentally discharge in this locked vertical bolt handle position, as a passive safety device prevents the firing pin from striking the cartridge primer. This is one safe system when compared to a standard two-position safety that can accidentally be moved into the fire position during carry.

The magazine is also a bit of a departure from the norm. Chapuis' goal was to provide an inline feeding system that would avoid feed issues during a fast cycle. Its high capacity (four plus one in standard calibres, three plus one in magnum calibres) ensures cartridges are lined up with the chamber and the magazine is designed to lower into the receiver on the forward stroke of the bolt to ensure there are no hang-ups. It can also be removed to reload, but this is a bit of a finicky process, so I preferred to top load, which was very easy with the amount of access provided.

Last is the ROLS's interchangeable barrel system. At the chamber, each barrel is held in a sleeve that includes a recoil lug machined to less than 1/100 of

a millimetre and locks on the steel bedding in the stock. This allows you to easily swap out barrels with a T-40 Torx key for a precise first shot from barrel to barrel. The only other alteration necessary is if you change from a standard cartridge barrel to a magnum, such as the .375 H&H, the bolt head needs to be swapped. A short five-minute or so process, but a necessary task.

RIFLE SPECIFICATIONS

- Calibre:** .308 Winchester
- Total length:** 40 15/16 inches
- Barrel length:** 23 5/8 inches
- Weight:** 6.6 pounds
- Length of pull:** 14 9/16 inches
- Drop at comb:** 1.46 inches
- Drop at heel:** 1.50 inches
- Rate of twist:** 1/12 inches
- Magazine capacity:** Four plus one

ZEISS CONQUEST V6 1.1-6X24MM #60 ILLUMINATED RETICLE

When debating the best potential optical match for the ROLS and its fast action, several features came to mind. Not only was I looking for a premium-grade scope with quality optics, but also one with a low-end magnification of 1 or 2x, a wide field of view, large eye box, bright illuminated reticle and plenty of eye relief, all designed to provide quick target acquisition for moving targets in heavier cover. In other words, a fast-action scope for a fast-action rifle. On the flip side, the

scope also needed to offer total dependability and an upper magnification range for longer shots in more open terrain.

The Zeiss Conquest V6 1.1-6x24 proved to be just the ticket. It offers Optical Performance SCHOTT glass, enhanced T* six-layer lens multi-coating fluoride lenses that provide outstanding image quality, clarity and 92 per cent light transmission. The LotuTech hydrophobic coatings repel dirt, debris and water. It offers a true 6x zoom ratio that at 1.1-6x provides expansive versatility across a wide range of in-field applications, from dense whitetail woods to open fields. The 30-millimetre single-piece tube is machined from aircraft-grade aluminum for rugged performance and is nitrogen purged to provide waterproofing up to 400mbar (submerged four metres for two hours). Additionally, it has a very generous and forgiving eyepiece that provides a quick-on-point reticle, full target images and the #60 illuminated reticle is adjustable to handle daylight to last light shots with ease. And, last, it is backed by a Zeiss limited lifetime warranty and a five-year no-fault policy.

SCOPE SPECIFICATIONS

- Magnification:** 1.1-6.5x
- Tube size:** 30 millimetres
- Weight:** 17.8 ounces
- Length:** 11.4 inches
- Eye relief:** 3.54 inches
- Field of view (feet at 100 yards):**
Low: 114, high: 20

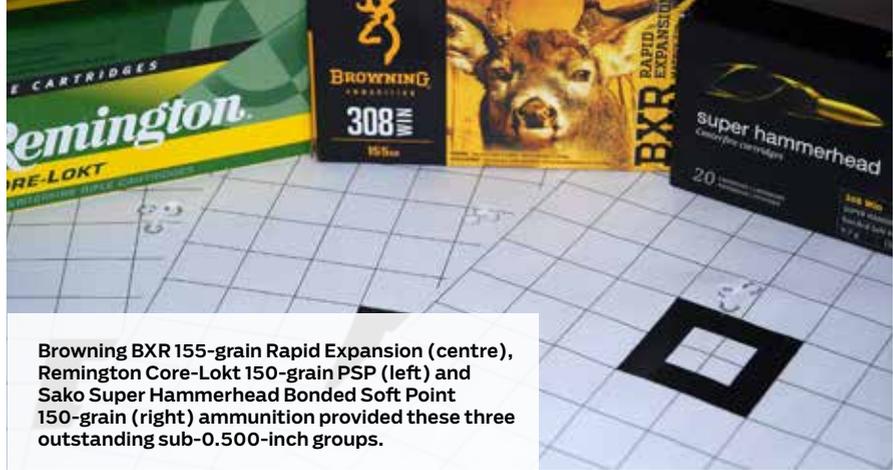


Zeiss Conquest V6 1.1-6x 24mm scope.

TEST RESULTS

The Chapuis utilizes its own mounting system, designed for a quick attach and detach of the scope and ideal for an interchangeable barrel, take-down type rifle. With the Zeiss 1.1-6x scope in place, I weighed the package at seven pounds, nine ounces, a very user-friendly weight, particularly as this combo balanced so well. I then checked the trigger pull weight and, while there was a tiny amount of creep, the pull weights were constant between two pounds, 6.1 ounces and two pounds, 9.8 ounces. A couple of other positive notables were the speed and smoothness of the action, the fastest I have ever laid my hand on. I also liked the soft touch finish on the stock, as it provided a sure grip and positive feel when handling the rifle. It felt as if it had a rubberized finish.

The Zeiss scope was bright, sharp as a tack and very user friendly. On the range, it offered excellent eye relief and, despite the lack of higher magnification, I had no difficulty with pinpoint target holds. Lens quality was undoubtedly a contributing factor, a must for these weary old eyes. This is a premium scope that, with its quick target acquisition and magnification range, offers an ideal driven or deep-woods hunt match for the Chapuis'



Browning BXR 155-grain Rapid Expansion (centre), Remington Core-Lokt 150-grain PSP (left) and Sako Super Hammerhead Bonded Soft Point 150-grain (right) ammunition provided these three outstanding sub-0.500-inch groups.

cycling speed and on-target balance. I would add to that any hunt where these factors are a requisite.

Operation, assembly and disassembly of this rifle is not as straight forward as a standard bolt action and, in particular, removal of the bolt. So, before heading off to the range I would suggest carefully reviewing the accompanying ROLS instruction manual and refer to it for details.

In so far as ammunition, I stuck to 15 varieties of factory ammunition from 150 to 180-grain loads.

LAST SHOT

I was unsure of what kind of accuracy to expect, but the ROLS surprised me. It shot better than I expected. The 15 groups of factory ammunition averaged just under an inch at 0.987, with the best

of the lot, Browning BXR 155-grain Rapid Expansion, grouping into 0.335 inches. For deer-sized game, I would look no further than this load, but I would also give the nod to Sako Super Hammerhead Bonded Soft Point 150-grain and Remington Core-Lokt 150-grain PSP that shot into 0.592 and 0.595 inches, respectively. For a bit larger game, Federal Premium 165-grain Trophy Bonded Tip would fill this niche.

While this rifle runs a bit on the pricey side, if I were looking for a safari or driven-hunt rifle or a rifle that is easy to transport anywhere on this globe, I would be hard pressed to not seriously consider the Chapuis ROLS. Not only did it shoot well, but its cycle speed is outstanding and as a take down with interchangeable barrels, what more could you ask for? ✕

FACTORY AMMUNITION

Brand	Bullet	Advertised Velocity (fps)	Group Size (in)
Sako Super Hammerhead	150-grain Bonded Soft Point	2,805	0.592
Sako Super Hammerhead	180-grain Bonded Soft Point	2,493	1.350
Hornady Custom	150-grain SST	2,820	0.963
Hornady American Whitetail	165-grain InterLock	2,700	1.485
Hornady American Whitetail	150-grain InterLock	2,820	0.782
Hornady Precision Hunter	178-grain ELD-X	2,600	1.333
Hornady Full Boar	165-grain GMX	2,610	1.295
Federal Premium	165-grain Trophy Bonded Tip	2,700	0.632
Fusion	150-grain	2,820	1.695
Winchester Razor Boar XT	150 grains	2,810	0.756
Winchester Power Point	150 grains	2,820	0.830
Browning	155-grain BXR Rapid Expansion	2,820	0.335
Browning	168-grain BXC Controlled Expansion	2820	1.082
Barnes VOR-TX	150-grain Tipped TSX-BT	2,900	1.081
Remington Core-Lokt	150-grain Core-Lokt PSP	2,820	0.595