

GUN TESTS REPORT CARD

Bushmaster Stainless Varmint Special PCWVMS 24-9SS 223 Rem., \$1325 GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Bushmaster was the least accurate of the guns tested, but the second most expensive. Unfortunately, it was up against some tough hombres. Its one-year warranty, on par with Fulton, doesn't gain any brownie points either.

Fulton Armory FAR-15 Predator Varmint Precision No. 003020 223 Rem., \$1995 GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The coolest and costliest gun in our test provided the best overall accuracy. Each gun is built to order, so you can pick and choose the options you prefer to lower the price, but southpaws should request something other than the pistol grip normally provided. Its weight and accuracy will satisfy both the benchrest varmint and the stalking predator hunter. We'd like to see a warranty longer than "12 months or 12,000 rounds."

Rock River Arms Varmint A4 Model AR1520X 223 Rem. \$1085 GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Touches like the winter trigger guard and a knurled safety lever knob were made with the hunter in mind. Rock River promises 0.5 MOA, and if we removed the underperforming Remington ammo, this gun would have gotten close to that guarantee. As it was, it did turn in the best groups with Black Hills ammo at 0.57 inch. Its size and heft works for the bench shooter and for field use. A reasonable price, heavy-duty takedown case, and its limited lifetime warranty made it a Best Buy in our book.

Stag Arms Model SA6L LH Super Varminter 223 Rem., \$1095 GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

The right-hand SA6 is \$40 cheaper at an MSRP of \$1055, and we think right-handed shooters can assume the SA6 would perform like the tested SA6L did for lefties. In sum, the Stag Arms gun proved to be a treat to shoot. Its front-heavy weight made it difficult to shoot offhand, but it transformed on the bench to become our second-best shooter. It was the favorite gun of several testers, especially those used to bolt actions. On the negative side of the ledger: The Ergo grip was undersized for off-hand shooting, we thought, but Stag has already made the change to a more substantial Hogue grip. Besides the grip change, we'd like to see Stag adopt a vented forend to reduce the weight and offer a more substantial stock like the PRS to balance the gun better. Were those modifications in place, we might well have had a different winner.

*Written and photographed by Gene Taylor, using evaluations from
GUN TESTS team testers. GT*