

TACTICAL SURPRISE

Bruce Potts tests a pellet firing replica of the M16 assault rifle from Milbro and really has a blast...

An authentic looking M16 copy that shoots air gun pellets, not BBs



Pop out safety from the Beeman springer beneath and the simple pistol grip

Black synthetic stock allows left or right-handed use and the panels can be unscrewed

Trigger is fair and the magazine is a dummy

Crikey, I wasn't expecting that when I opened the package dropped off today! Not my usual fare of hunting rifle but my teenage son's eyes really lit up!

The Milbro name is synonymous with airgun pellets and air gun paraphernalia but this spring powered clone of the infamous M16 assault rifle took me by surprise. Harking back to the days of the old Sussex Armoury Jackal Parabellum and Hi Powers that gave us teenagers a pseudo military air gun to play with, Milbro have now produced an accurate and very shootable M16 copy to thrill a new generation.

This is a full-sized replica of an M16, including synthetic stock and hand guard, complete with faux magazine and removable faux carry handle/rear sight to mount a scope. It is a break barrel design with a spring piston internals and is available in both .177 and .22 cal. This model is made by Beeman for Milbro and

combines a full-power air rifle with that military styling that is really in vogue these days. All in for £119.95, the Milbro SYN M16 offers a lot of fun for the money.

Barrelled action

This is a standard spring piston type action, with conventional break barrel operation taken from the Beeman range of air rifles. The difference is this mechanism is largely hidden underneath the stock, so that only the barrel protrudes. This has been modified in keeping with the M16 genre and has a raised fore sight and simulated muzzle brake.

At 21.5-inches long, the barrel does seem over lengthy, but it aids in easy cocking and balances the Milbro well. The external finish is a dull, almost phosphate black, very military looking.

The sights are a heavily shrouded split foresight with ventilated side, like the original and having a large red Day Glo bead element. There is also

a Picatinny rail underneath if you want to attach a laser or lamp. The rear sight is attached to the top of the forend via two screws and has a raised ramp design, so that elevation can be compensated for as well as windage. It has two Day Glo green beads that line up well with the red fore sight element. Sighting radius is short at only 11-inches.

There is also a large hand carry handle, again like the original and a very distinctive feature, which you look through to use the open sights, but this can be removed and a scope mounted via the twin 11mm dovetails underneath.

Stock

This is a full-sized synthetic stock, injection moulded in two halves and then glued together with one side of the action area, butt stock and forend grip/handguard removable to access the spring powered action and barrel linkage as necessary. It feels surprisingly sturdy and I say that

because some moulded stocks are flimsy, this M16 is pretty robust and should be able to handle a bit of rough treatment.

The rear butt section is typical M16 slab sided non-biased for hold, so pretty ambidextrous in use and has a matt black smooth finish. There is a nice ventilated recoil pad, which is hard in truth but no worries as it's only a .22 air gun.

The pistol grip forms part of the main action moulding and has moulded in chequered for grip and is slim, so will accommodate any sized hand. The forend is 12-inches long and has a tapering girth from 2.75-inches at the receiver end to 2.25-inches at the front end.

It has two rows of raised ribs for grip each side and it hides the barrelled action mechanism beneath it. Therefore, there is an open slot to the top where the barrel raises, so that a pellet can be inserted and beneath is the long slot for the cocking arm, so as not to foul.

Good value for money and shoots even better with the carry handle removed and ClearView scope fitted

"This is a full-sized replica of an M16, including synthetic stock and hand guard"



Cock the barrel and the barrel protrudes and allows a pellet to be loaded



The Milbro SYN M16 shot surprisingly well with a variety of pellets tested



Large Day Glo foresight and Picatinny rail for lamps etc. below

Action, trigger and safety

The action area is moulded plastic to replicate the M16 action with mag release, safety etc. but all static and non-functioning, as is the magazine that is permanently attached. This is fine, as you do not need any of these on a break barrel air gun but there is a small cross pin safety at the rear of the left action side that protrudes from the back of the action underneath. This automatically sets when the M16 is cocked and can be pushed left to right to disengage, it is not resettable.

The trigger is a two-stage unit with a ribbed cross section and thin plastic blade. There is a short first take up and then quite a creep to the second stage, but it broke quite cleanly at 3.85lbs.

Field test

I shot the Milbro SYN M16 over a chronograph to check the velocity and energy figures of a variety of pellets with the open sights and then again

with the scope provided, a Clearview 3-9x32AOEG. Which had a really nice range compensating reticle and illuminated in red/green also.

The cocking effort of the M16 was easy and it was best to put the butt into the waist and hold the handle with the right hand and then cock easily with the left hand.

You soon get used to the trigger and I tested for accuracy with and without the scope fitted.

Best accuracy went to both the Air Arms pellets at 0.75-inches at 25-yards, which I thought was pretty good and the velocities and energy figures were close also at 557fps/10.9ft/lbs for the Hunters and 554fps/10.9ft/lbs for the Fields respectively. The FTTs also shot 0.75-inch groups with the scope fitted and achieved 564fps/10.3ft/lbs. Either of these pellets would be my choice. After a bit of practice and use the spring noise settled down and the report is not that noisy due to a small

plenum type chamber in front of the muzzle and the lock time is nice and quick, contributing to the accuracy in the tests.

Conclusion

This is not your typical air rifle; it's not designed for hunting, let's be honest, but the accuracy and power levels were more than good enough for some excellent back yard plinking or re-enacting Apocalypse Now. Although the scope improved the accuracy I would personally leave the carry

handle on and use as intended for a fast action fun shooting session. At only £119.95 it has to be ranked as good value and excellent fun. **GM**



Traditional break barrel spring piston design is easy to cock for some extended back yard plinking

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Model:	Milbro SYN M16
Action:	Break Barrel
Power Delivery:	Spring Piston
Sights:	Open sights fitted as STD, removable handle to fit scope.
Stock:	Synthetic replica of M16
Length:	46.5-inches
Barrel:	21.5-inches
Trigger:	Two Stage
Safety:	Automatic, non-resettable
Calibre:	.177 or .22 (.22 on test)
Price:	£119.95
Distributors:	SMK www.sportsmk.co.uk