

Savage BV Mark II

- a new owner's perspective

by Wayne Curnow



Luke Curnow shows how the Savage BV Mark II rifle shoulders easily. The laminate stock is quite attractive too.

After joining the SSAA and using the club rifles at my local range, it was time to acquire my own .22LR rimfire for target shooting. I wanted a rifle specifically for the Field Rifle event, but with a bit of Silhouette and 3-Positional thrown in too. But which rifle would best suit my ability and my budget? The new rimfire rifles reviewed in the current shooting magazines seemed well out of my price range. Local advice at the club suggested a CZ 453 would be a good

rifle as a starting point for me and I was very close to following this advice. Then, while looking on the internet, I started to see a few write-ups for the Savage range of rimfire rifles. The more reviews I found and read on the Savage rimfires, the more the BV Mark II looked to be the rifle for me. I placed an order for one and the wait for the permit and new rifle began.

I collected my new rifle just before Christmas. My first impression was very favourable, particularly with the appearance of the stock. The finish and appearance was much better than I expected for the price of the rifle. The laminated timber stocks supplied to Savage by Boyds are quite striking and the BV stock is in the Monte Carlo style. The chequering at the pistol grip and the forearm is pleasing and functional, without being top-of-the-range. It does not have a raised cheekpiece.

An impressive-looking thumbhole stock model (the BTVS) is also available, but the

specifications told me the additional weight of this model was going to flirt with the 4kg limit for Field Rifle by the time it was scoped, so this helped me to decide on the BV and the Monte Carlo stock.

The second noticeable feature of the rifle is the varmint barrel. It is 21" (533mm) long, and 0.8" (20.3mm) in diameter at the muzzle. The BV is blued, although stainless steel is available in other models. The blueing was consistent and appealing. It has a semi-recessed target crown and is free-floated forward of the step-down in the barrel. Two socket head screws mount the barrel to the stock.

The rifle is fitted with a feature Savage call the AccuTrigger. This is basically a trigger-mounted safety, consisting of a blade running through the centre of the triggerplate. To get the index finger flat against the trigger, it is first necessary to depress this blade. This action removes an 'interrupter' from the trigger mechanism. Until the interrupter is out of the way, the sear cannot operate, so the trigger cannot release. The design philosophy behind this



Luke Curnow shooting the Savage BV Mark II during a 3-Positional event.

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is to safely allow lighter trigger releases to be used.

The trigger is adjustable and a small adjustment tool is included with the rifle. The adjustment is easily done, after removal of the stock. The minimum adjustment setting may still be a little heavy for many target shooters. The trigger may be further lightened beyond the factory minimum setting and if this is desired, it should be a quick and easy job for an experienced gunsmith. As received, I found the trigger to be very consistent and quite crisp. I also found it very easy to get used to the AccuTrigger.

A very minor letdown was the

appearance of the triggerguard. It is made of plastic and obviously so when you look at it closely, as the moulding line was still running prominently down the centre. It was only a small disappointment and the moulding line did clean up easily.

The rifle is not supplied with sights, so I purchased a Nikko Nighteater 6x24x50mm scope with mil-dot reticle and fitted it to the rifle. The rifle does come with scope rails fitted, so the mounting of the scope was quite straightforward. Sling mounts were already fitted to the rifle, so attaching a sling was no great problem either. I say no great problem, as I did need to remove the rear stud and put a small nylon washer

under it to give clearance for the sling swivel connection.

Once on the range, the action was initially a bit snug, but it started to free up after about 200 rounds. I had purchased a bulk box of cheap ammunition to bed the rifle in and the initial accuracy with this ammo was rather ordinary, even though cleaning was often and regular. I then tried CCI Standard, another 'budget' ammunition. Bench-resting the rifle with this ammunition at 50m would consistently and easily put five shots inside 20mm. The conditions were ideal for checking the rifle's accuracy, with only the faintest breath of wind and mild conditions.



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The forearm of the stock is 40mm wide just behind the front sling mount and it was fine on the bench rest bag. There had been about 300 rounds through the rifle by this time and after another clean and another change in ammo, 0.5" groups of five shots were now possible with Eley Club ammo.

Offhand with a sling, the rifle feels

nicely balanced. The centre of gravity of the rifle (with scope and sling) is aligned with the front edge of the magazine, about 130mm in front of the trigger. This causes the rifle to feel slightly muzzle heavy. My fears of the thumbhole stock version being too heavy for Field Rifle competition appear well founded, as the weight

of my rifle with scope comes in just less than 3.8kg. The total length of the rifle is 1010mm. The centreline of the scope, as I have it mounted, is 68mm above the comb. Remember that there is no raised cheek-piece and while this may not suit everyone, it is fine for me.

The length of pull is around 355mm and I found the rifle shoulders easily. The buttplate is thin, hard and plastic, but with the weight of this rifle, recoil was never an issue. It is a bit slippery, but not so slippery that I'm going to bother with it. Some users might prefer to fit an aftermarket buttpad.

The only disappointment at the range occurred after the box of Eley was finished. The five-shot magazine was reloaded with more CCI. The fifth round promptly flipped upright in the magazine and it would not lie back down. I found the fault was with the magazine. The problem was quickly and simply remedied by the gentle application of a pair of long-nose pliers to the tabs at the top of the magazine. Slightly bending the tabs inwards reduced the gap between them and the rounds can no longer sit up between them. I don't know if this fault is typical or was a unique occasion, but the adjustment was easy and successful. More than 400 rounds later, there has not been a repeat of this problem. All rounds



With the action open, the extractors can be seen above the red magazine follower.

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The blade safety of the AccuTrigger is clearly shown.

tried since have fed smoothly and every round has been ejected cleanly. Single round loading is reasonably straightforward. The follower in the magazine is made of red plastic, so it is easy to spot when the magazine is empty.

Research and advice have told me that different rifles prefer different ammunition, so I've had a go with a few different varieties. In my subsequent trips to the range, I have tried RWS Target, Remington Target and Winchester T22, but none of these rounds performed any better than the CCI. So it looks as if the CCI will be my 'meat and potatoes' ammunition for this rifle, with the Eley Club for special occasions. This will do well enough to keep me happy, at least for the time being.

I really enjoy shooting the Savage. I have had it for several months now and still find it to be an attractive rifle with a good, solid feel. While my abilities at the range are not spectacular, my scores have noticeably improved and I am confident about the accuracy of the rifle. I am sure it is capable of shooting better scores than I am.

The rifle fitted into my budget, with the rifle, scope, mounts and a sling all totalling to an outlay of just less than \$1000. I would happily suggest that anyone looking at getting into target shooting should at least have a look at the Savage BV Mark II as a decent rifle to start with at a reasonable price. I'm certainly happy that I chose to purchase one.

Savage rifles are distributed in Australia by Nioa. ●



The bolt is removed to show the twin extractors.