

TEST REPORT

THE ELEGANT TITAN 3 SPORTER



The Titan 3 Sporter features refined Continental styling, and is nicely balanced to handle well.

AT A GLANCE

The Titan 3's Continental contours only serve to emphasize this handsome sporter's perfect balance and lively handling qualities

IT DOESN'T TAKE A thorough examination to recognize the Titan 3's Old World quality of craftsmanship and the extra attention that's been paid to detail. The close fit and finish of the stock combined with smoothly polished, deeply blued metalwork makes this rifle look very attractive. Like its big brother, the Titan 6, the Titan 3 is indeed something special.

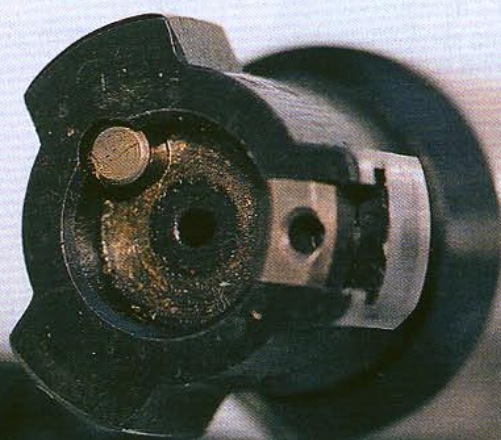
A product of what is probably the smallest rifle making factory in Europe, and possibly the world, Rossler Waffen GmbH is located in the little town of Kufstein in the Austrian Tirol. The excellence of these

rifles stems not only from their excellent design, but because each unit is individually assembled byhand.

Most European switch-barrel rifles are to my eye, rather ungainly, too heavy and unnecessarily complicated. The Titan 3 on the other hand, is relatively light, uncomplicated, slim and straightforward. Walter Rossler designed the Titan to be a practical hunting rifle. The major difference between the Titan 6 and the Titan 3 are that the former has 6 locking lugs against 3 lugs for the Titan 3. The former is chambered for popular American and the most widely used metric calibres ranging from the .243 Win, through the .30-06 and .300 Win Mag to the 7x64 and 9.3x62. Recently the .270 WSM and .300 WSM. have been added to the line-up. The Titan 3 is limited to .222, .223, 5.6x50 Magnum and .22-250.

Without sacrificing beauty, there is utility behind every traditional feature of the Titan 3's Italian walnut stock. Three different stock designs are available – Exclusive,

Titan 3 bolt has three massive locking lugs spaced equidistantly around the bolt head. Extractor is recessed into face of one lug and there's a plunger ejector.



Luxus and Standard, the latter being having simple classic lines with rollover cheekpiece, while the Exclusive is distinguished by having a double Bavarian cheekpiece.

The stock of the Titan 3 Luxus under review, features a Germanic hogsback comb with square-edge Bavarian-style cheekpiece and matte lacquered satin finish. The comb is high and straight, sloping upward toward the heel, making it ideally suited for scope use. Comb and cheekpiece enable the shooter to get good firm contact with the cheek for steady holding, while placing the eye dead-in-line with the eyepiece of a scope.

The pistol grip is tightly curved and slightly flared at the bottom which helps the right hand to control the rifle. The slim, trim forend is gracefully shaped and is thick enough to afford as firm grasp and aid in steadying the rifle from offhand. It has a schnabel tip of contrasting rosewood.

The Titan 3's well-proportioned stock has panels of sharp, even checkering in a point pattern. Many modern sporter stocks have a forend that is flat on the bottom. This is fine for a bench-rest/varmint rifle, since it keeps the piece from canting. But it serves no useful function on a sporter stock, since the human hand is far more comfortable grasping a rounded forend.

The stock has plenty of grain and figure and the pores of the wood have been properly filled and sealed before the finish was applied. The butt is capped with a solid black recoil pad, and an inlaid silver grip cap carries the word "Titan" engraved on it. When I visited the factory I advised Walter Rossler to replace the fixed sling swivels he was using with Q/D studs. Evidently, he heeded my advice because that's what my Titan 3 was equipped with.

The cylindrical receiver is CNC-machined out of a solid block of aircraft-grade aluminium alloy with the receiver ring and bridge the same height. The action is drilled and tapped for scope mounts. The only mount



bases I had on hand were a pair Weaver #46s, but Sauer 200 mounts will fit. Receiver length sans tang safety is 220mm and the Titan 3 has a deep black anodized finish which is a perfect match for the blued barrel.

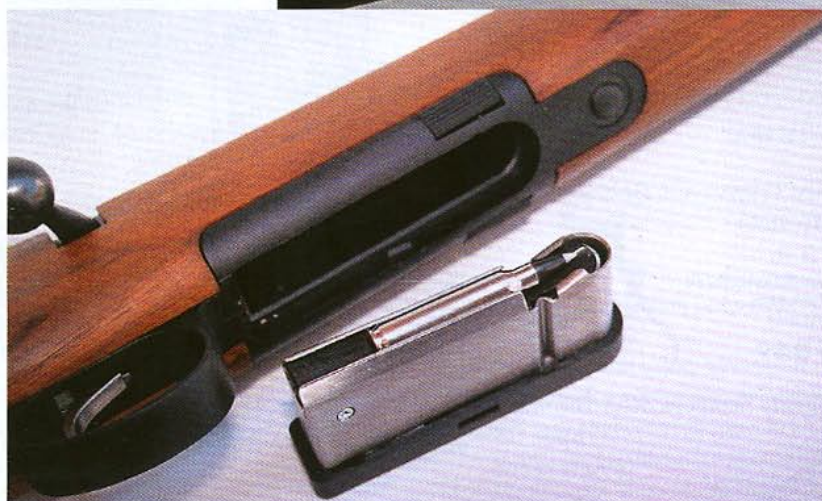
An ejection port some 86mm long and 17mm wide is too narrow to allow cartridges to be thumbled into the top of the magazine. Since the bolt locks into the rear of the barrel, the lightweight receiver is under no stress from firing. Internal surfaces of the receiver are nicely polished, consequently the bolt slides forth and back like a well-oiled piston; the Titan 3 has one of the smoothest working bolts I've ever encountered.

The massive bolt has a diameter of 20.15mm. It is machined out of a single piece of steel with three non-protruding head lugs spaced equidistantly around the bolt head, which lock into recesses in the rear end of the barrel. They are the same diameter as the bolt body which results in a low bolt lift of 60 degrees. This is

Rear of cocking piece acts as firing indicator and safety catch is handily located atop the tang.

Titan 3's bedding system uses a steel block bedded in fibreglas under the receiver ring, an alloy block under the rear tang and ferrules as spacers for the guard screws.

BELOW: single column magazine holds 3 rounds of .223 and fits flush with bottom of stock. Feed is silky smooth.



TITAN 3 ACCURACY RESULTS

Five consecutive 3-shot groups at 100 yards. Fired from benchrest

Cartridge (bullet)	Smallest (fps)	Largest (MoA)	Average (MoA)
Highland SX 55gn	.52	.70	.65
Win. Supreme 55 BT	.50	.65	.56
Rem. 50gn AccuTip	.40	.55	.50
Rem. Express 55gn	.55	.68	.60

Note: this is the most accurate sporter in .223 I've tested to date. No doubt the crisp, light trigger combined with the very short, fast, firing pin fall contributed to consistently fine accuracy. The bedding system with fully floating barrel is also a contributing factor.

extension of the rear tang is handy to the thumb. Slid fully to the rear, it blocks the trigger and locks the bolt handle down by interposing a tab through the receiver wall which enters a notch in the bolt body. In the mid position it releases the bolt enabling it to be cycled in order to remove a loaded round from the chamber. Pushing the safety button fully forward places the rifle in firing mode. When the rifle is cocked, the rear of the cocking piece protrudes from the rear of the bolt shroud, and a red dot indicator appears on its top.

The single-stage trigger is adjustable for weight of pull from 0.8 to 2 kg and leaves the factory set at 1.6kg. The sear is made from specially hardened high-tensile Bohler steel 1200 Newton MM2 which simply doesn't wear. The sear engages the cocking piece squarely and is actuated by a small coil spring.

The Titan 3 has the very fast locktime of 1.7 milliseconds – one of the fastest in the industry. For comparison, the Remington Model 700 short-action has a locktime of 2.6 milliseconds. The firing pin is 28.36mm long and is cocked using a double-tension guide. The trigger is crisp and totally inert – not the slightest trace of any creep or overtravel – there's none better.

The trigger guard and magazine housing is formed as one-piece frame and is synthetic reinforced with fibreglass to be impact resistant. It is retained by a pair of hex-head screws hidden under plastic plugs. The detachable box magazine is retained by a pair of lugs, one on either side of the trigger-guard/magazine frame. When two knurled catches are pressed inward, the magazine readily drops out into your hand. Being a single-column design, cartridges slide easily off the follower and fairly leap into the chamber.

The magazine box is made of alloy, the follower of anodized aluminium and has a fibreglass floorplate. The rounded outline of the floorplate blends in nicely with the overall geometric pattern of receiver and stock. In the test rifle the clip holds three .223 cartridges and fits flush with the belly of the stock. The magazine is long enough to accommodate cartridges of .270-.30-06 length, but is blocked off for the short .223 Rem.

SPECS

DESIGNATION:

Titan 3

MANUFACTURER:

Rossler Waffen KEG,
Kufstein, Austria

MECHANISM TYPE:

Turn-bolt action with three locking lugs and interchangeable barrels

MODELS:

Titan Standard, Luxus and All-Round Stainless Synthetic

CALIBRES:

.222 Rem., .223 Rem.,
(tested), 5.6x50 Magnum,
.22-250

OVERALL LENGTH:

1080mm

BARREL LENGTH:

56cm

WEIGHT:

2.9kg

MAGAZINE CAPACITY:

3 rounds

SIGHTS:

None, drilled and tapped for scope mount

STOCK:

Italian walnut, matte lacquered; Luxus model with hogsback comb with Bavarian cheekpiece, schnabel tip with rosewood tip

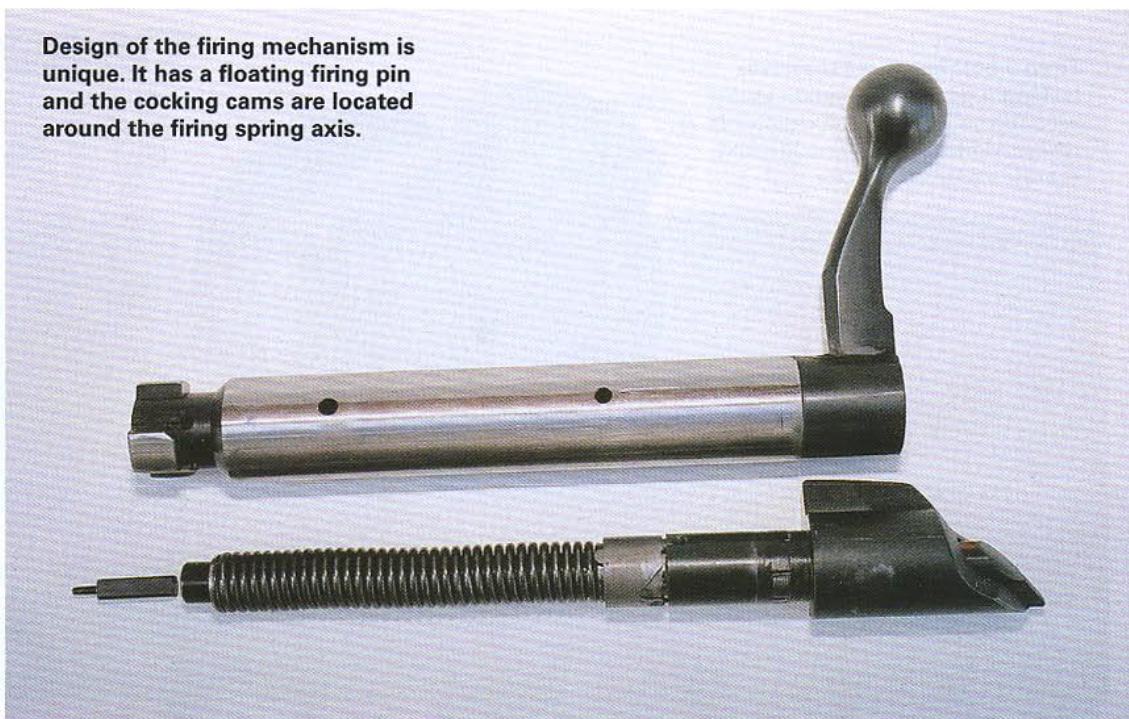
APPROX. RRP:

\$2,250.00; spare barrels
\$650.00

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Design of the firing mechanism is unique. It has a floating firing pin and the cocking cams are located around the firing spring axis.



enough to allow enough extra rotation to overlap the cam bevels and thus centre the contacting surfaces to achieve optimum bearing efficiency.

A short bolt lift is of little practical value, however, if you are forced to take the rifle down from your shoulder between each shot in order to apply enough force to lift the bolt handle. The penalty for having such a short lift is that extraction and chambering cams on the Titan 3 are on the small side. Most low-lift bolts are notoriously difficult to raise due to the steep angle of the cocking cams. Rossler licked this problem by balancing the cocking cam forces about the firing pin axis, which enables the powerful mainspring to be cocked without excessive bolt-lift effort.

If the cocking arrangement is unique then the ignition system is no less so. On dismantling the bolt I found a small precision "striker piece" with integral firing pin, only 20mm long and weighing around 2.8 grams, which literally floats in the bolt head.

Rather than being spring biased, like some single-shot rifles it is positioned close to the primer by pressure from the extractor. Before the bolt closes, the inward projecting tail of the extractor allows the striker piece to recess a few thousandths of an inch. When the bolt closes, pivotal displacement of the extractor caused by the head of the cartridge eases the striker tip forward to be just flush with the bolt face. So it is virtually making contact with the primer when struck by the spring-driven firing pin rod. This results in an instant and undiminished transmittal of impact, without any decoupling or cushioning effect which might weaken the ignition process.

Slicing off the front part of the firing pin and making it into a floating striker creates a self-aligning firing pin which avoids the internal binding possible with a close-

fitting one-piece unit. The firing pin rod which acts as a hammer, is grooved in several locations for C-washers, then milled out at the rear to form a pair of attachment lugs. The cocking piece is retained back against these lugs by a stacked assembly consisting of a spacer, cam ring and a mainspring C-washer.

The bolt handle is raked slightly to the rear and has a round, smooth knob. The root of the bolt handle turns down into a notch in the rear of the receiver sidewall when locked to serve as a safety lug.

Because of the full-diameter bolt, the receiver interior is a perfect cylinder into which the chamber section of the barrel is a neat fit. The bolt face is counterbored to a depth of 3mm which fully encloses the cartridge head. The rim is interrupted only by a single, narrow extractor slot in the face of the upper lefthand lug. The extractor, a small steel hook 3.5mm wide pinned inside the upper left locking lug, is tensioned by a tiny entrapped coil spring. A plunger-type ejector is recessed into the opposite side of the bolt face at 2 o'clock.

A longitudinal groove in the underside of the bolt body serves as a channel for the trigger sear and acts as a bolt guide. Pulling the trigger to the rear depresses the sear, allowing the bolt to be withdrawn from the receiver. Because it pivots in an oblong slot, the sear can yield slightly against its spring in stopping the bolt, thus minimizing stress on its pivot pin.

The bolt has the cocking piece shroud shaped to blend in with the rear contour of the receiver. Most unusually, it doesn't protrude below the bottom of the shroud housing, but lies flush with it, and the sear comes up through the bottom of the receiver to engage it. The forward face of the sear also acts as a bolt stop.

A sliding three-position safety catch mounted on an



"Titan" logo is inlaid into bottom of pistol grip. Stocking is in a good grade of Italian walnut.

In keeping with the current European trend, the Titan 3 is a modular design featuring interchangeable barrels. To switch barrels it is necessary to remove the stock. The large recoil lug under the receiver is split and clamped tightly around the smooth barrel shank with a pair of large hex-head screws which are loosened with a special wrench which accompanies each rifle. Once the clamp has relaxed its grip, the barrel can be withdrawn from the receiver ring. Another barrel can be slid home and indexed by means of a tiny notch in the outer rim of the shank, engaging a matching stud in the receiver ring, after which the screws are retensioned.

Titan bolt heads are an integral part of the bolt and cannot be changed. In the case of a Titan 3 chambered in .222, .223, or 5.6x50 Magnum it would be possible to change barrels and use the same bolt, but if one wanted to install a .22-250 barrel, the bolt face would either have to be opened up or a new bolt and magazine may be necessary. One thing puzzles me. The .22-250 uses the Titan 3 action while the .243 uses the Titan 6?

Rosler's bedding system is intriguing. The recoil lug fits into a fibreglass insert which is glued into the stock



mortise, while the rear tang rests atop a special alloy bedding block. The forend channel is relieved so that the barrel is fully-floating right back to the receiver ring. There's surely nothing to criticize about this system; it's virtually foolproof.

For testing the Titan 3 was fitted with a Leupold 8x40 with focusing objective in Weaver mounts. This medium-sized, light scope makes a very neat outfit for walkabout varminting and hunting feral animals. It certainly didn't upset the rifle's fine balance.

The rifle was sighted-in and then tested for functioning and accuracy with a variety of makes of ammunition. The results are shown in the table. The Titan 3 is an undeniably fine rifle which combines a number of good, innovative design features with honest Old World craftsmanship. It is probably a bit expensive for the average shooter, but will hold great appeal and instil pride of ownership for those who appreciate high quality. ■

Cylindrical receiver is contoured and ring and bridge have the same height. Trigger is modular and carries integral tang.

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