

THE XLR5 SYREN

A Specialized Semi-Auto for Lady Clay Target Buffs



This story, as well as the gun(s), is sort of historic. Who ever heard of a new corporation formed that is devoted solely to marketing shotguns to women? Don't you wish you were in the firearms business and had thought of this idea? It's a marketing coup! Up until now many "youth"-styled shotguns have either (1) simply been a traditional version of a shotgun(s) in the company line that is offered with a shorter stock or (2) a short-stocked gun maybe emblazoned with some pink. These offshoots of the company shotgun line were marketed to lady shooters. However, there's no question that many lady shooters are competing heavily in the various clay target games. Further, even more women are becoming enthralled with wingshooting for the feathered stuff, so there is a market for specialized lady shotguns.

Thus Syren USA was created—a corporation run my women, catering to women and this company is already sponsoring competitors who shoot

the Syren. What makes the Syren line different for the feminine set? Let me count the ways.

First off there are cosmetic differences. The engraving is designed to appeal to ladies more than men. The Syren I've been testing is the XLR5 Syren, a 12 gauge semi-auto, gas operated, and if the XLR5 name looks familiar, yes it is a Fabarm. To check the engraving difference, accompanying photos show a close up of the Fabarm XLR5 receiver and the Syren XLR5 receiver; now you see some difference. They call the Syren receiver finish Titanium™ Silver. Unlike most semi-autos, the bolt closer button for the Syren is not on the right side of the receiver but the left. Everyone who shot the gun found this easy to get used to, and that closure button seems a bit oversize. Fabarm's Joe Cunniffe suggests sliding the left hand back from the fore-end until the fingers are on the opposite side of the receiver, the thumb on the closure button and

just squeeze. There is an oversize bolt opening lever on the right, it's black and sticks out almost an inch providing a solid grasping surface allowing plenty of leverage.

The Syren is slightly lighter. The three first versions of the original Fabarm XLR5 have been very successful; every gun manufactured for the year(s) has completely sold out. With the Syren XLR5 ladies are getting not only a popular clay target gun but also one that has gained an enviable reputation for reliability and solidarity. Barrel lengths of 28, 30 and 32-inches are in the manufacturer's mix. Chambers are 2-3/4-inches.

Recoil is dampened considerably; one way this is accomplished is through the TRIBORE HP™ inner barrel dimensions. With my Baker Barrel reader I measure the inner barrel at .737. That same dimension stays at .737 for half the barrel length but then there's no steep step down, just a very gradual reduction in diameter that goes all the way to just behind the screw choke threads. That very slow taper goes from .737 to .728 but it takes half the barrel length to do that. In addition to further reducing recoil with TRIBORE, there's also the gas operation. The gas valve appears to me to be particularly well designed.

I had skeeter Marie Palmer help me with this article by shooting the gun. She shot my 1 ounce reloads at 1140 feet per second, and the gun functioned flawlessly despite the light reloads. Further, this Syren is designed to even shoot 7/8 ounce 12 gauge loads all in an effort to insure light



Marie Palmer bangs away with the Syren semi-auto.



Above: The left side of the Syren receiver. Note the black bolt closer button is on the left.

Left: The pistol grip has a bit of added re-curve, better suited to women. The grip is slightly slimmer as well.

recoil. Marie liked the Syren a lot, though she wondered if a touch of pink might make it more appealing to her, though maybe pink lady shotguns is an aspect that Syren is trying to get away from. Palmer also wondered if more engraving on the receiver sides might be a good idea.

Jeff Crane was at the gun club an hour before Marie arrived. He was anxious to give the new Syren a try. After 25 shots he marveled to me at both the light recoil and how naturally and easily the Syren moved.

The next aspect of the XLR5 Syren that makes it ideal for the lady folk is the stock dimensions. Women tend to be smaller than men and with somewhat shorter arms. Thus the stock length of pull has been reduced to 13.75. Standard Fabarm semis meant more for men have a 14.75 LOP. The drop at comb is 1.5-inches, drop at heel 2.25, cast at heel .125, cast at toe .125, pitch is at 6 degrees, reach at 4-inches – measured from the center of where the trigger, which

is adjustable back and forth, is at its centered position. These dimensions are all different compared to the XLR5 Fabarm with 14.75-inch length of pull. Note also in the photo of the butt stock there's that step down at the back of the comb, usually called a Monte Carlo. The pistol grip has a special slightly more pronounced re-curve said to suit a woman's hand better. I would guess that the grip is also slightly trimmer in width. The fore-end is about 13-inches long, width at 1.86-inches.

The laser cut checkering is also a bit different in pattern on the Syren, plus there are three flowers laser cut in at the forward end of the pistol grip. The look of the walnut is spectacular. Dubbed Triwood™ the wood surface is enhanced through a proprietary process, a translucent film under a urethane coating. The result is walnut that looks like it cost about \$4000 for the blank if real. The fore-end is also of Triwood. The finish is beautiful in hand-rubbed oil and the pores are very well filled.

The recoil pad has the Fabarm name

SPECIFICATIONS

Gauge: 12 gauge only at this time
Action: Gas-operated semi-auto with TRIBORE™ barrel. See text for additional recoil reduction features associated with TRIBORE.

Barrel: 28, 30 and 32-inches—the 30-inch tested

Weight: 7 pounds 10 ounces

Chokes: 5 Exis HP™

Stock: 13.75 length of pull, 1.5 drop at comb, 2.25 drop at heel – Monte Carlo step down. See text for other special dimensions for ladies.

Suggested Retail: \$1950 with \$2095 for left-hand version

Manufacturer/Importer: Manufactured in Italy by Fabarm, imported by Syren USA. www.syrenusa.com or 410-901-1131

on the rear, ¾-inch thick with a very thin black spacer separating it from the stock. This pad is rounded top, bottom and sides to mitigate hang ups during the gun mount along with smoothness at the very top. There's stippling on much of the rear of the pad to help keep it in place for the second shot.

The rib is tapered with a metal mid bead and a white front bead. Five Exis HP™ screw chokes are supplied—long at 3 ¾-inches to insure long taper and parallel sections. As previously covered, near the exit end of the barrel (just before the screw choke area) the inner diameter is .728. The Skeet screw in went .721, the Improved Cylinder .715, the Modified .706, the Improved Modified .701 and the Full .691. The fore-end went 6.5 ounces, my 30-inch barrel 2 pounds 3.5 ounces and the gun 7 pounds 10 ounces. The gun comes in a Negrini hard case. Manufacturer suggested retail is \$1950. A left-hand version of the Syren semi is also available at \$2095.

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