

Reviewed: Fabarm Elos N2 RS

We took Fabarm's newest over-and-under to the skeet field and the 5-stand to see how it performed.

BY PHIL BOURJAILY

The new Fabarm Elos N2 RS is a gun designed for those who believe that smooth and steady beats nimble and lively. If you're on Team Smooth and Steady, as I am, you'll find a lot to like in the Elos N2 RS. It's a well-made, well-fit and finished gun at an attractive price. If its name sounds familiar, it's because there was already an Elos N2. The RS is the beefed-up version.

Founded in 1900 in Italy's Val Trompia, Fabarm has been popular in Europe but was little-known among American shooters until 2011, when Caesar Guerini bought an equity stake in the company. Now, Fabarm guns are readily available here and are serviced at Caesar Guerini's Cambridge, Maryland, facility. The Fabarm line is priced below the Guerini lineup, and the guns have a more European look that sets them apart from Guerini's classic styling.

So, among the first things you notice about both the N2 and the N2 RS are the decorative choices: enamel accents on the frame (red and white for the N2, light blue and white for the N2



RS) and a contemporary-looking top lever. You'll also see a black adjustable comb, identified by a small triangular stock insert reading "Micro Metric 3-D."

The upgraded walnut stock, while not highly figured, is natural, without the artificial grain you see on some other Italian guns. Instead, the wood has a very traditional, classy oil finish, complemented by a standard checkering pattern. Both the frame and the barrels are matte-blued. Overall, despite preferring classic looks, I like the N2's appearance.

The action is a variation of the standard "Brescia" or "Rizzini" O/U, both terms referring to a gun with barrels that pivot on trunnions and have the underbite lockup common to a number of over-and-unders made in Val Trompia. It's a proven system, and the trunnions are easily replaceable by a gunsmith. In the case of the Elos N2, the user can tighten the forend iron to a snugger fit as the gun ages.

Fabarm makes its own deep-drilled barrels and gives them its unique "Tribore" dimensions inside. Tribore guns have an over-

bored middle section that tapers to bore diameter a few inches behind the choke. The Tribore is said to improve patterns, and it has been shown to generate very small boosts in velocity. Unlike most gunmakers, Fabarm makes its choke tubes in-house. The N2 series uses the unusual Exis HP choke, which substitutes a curved taper in place of the more common conical/parallel tubes.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ELOS N2 AND THE ELOS N2 RS

As I mentioned, Fabarm al-



excited to take the N2 RS to the range.

SHOOTING IT

I warmed up with a couple of rounds of skeet at my club, and the smoothness of the N2 RS made breaking clays easy. It was very fast to the target for me, and from a low-gun start I could crush both my nemesis target,

ready had a sporter, the Elos N2. It's a 7½ pound gun, on the light side for a sporting gun, and a good choice for someone who wants a lively gun or a hunting/target crossover. Some of us prefer a heavier sporter that moves smoothly, steadily, and with more discipline. With the Elos N2 RS, Fabarm offers a gun that weighs about ¾ of a pound more than the N2. There's a solid mid-rib between the barrels underneath the forend to add weight between the hands. The N2 RS gains more ounces with a thicker stock blade and comb. At the other end of the gun, the Elos N2 RS has a semi-schnabel forend which not only weighs more than does the Elos N2's schnabel, but also does away with the lip at the end. My test gun weighed in at 8 pounds, 5 ounces with 32-inch barrels. Accustomed as I am to shooting a heavy, older Citori Ultra Sporter with 32-inch barrels, this gun felt right to me. I was



high 2, as well as low 6 with (for me) lightning speed. Crossing targets at 3, 4 and 5 were no problem either, nor was the double I shot at 4 for fun. Recoil with 1,180



fps, 1-ounce loads was mild, and 1,200 fps, 1 1/8-ounce loads weren't at all bad. I attribute the low recoil to the gun's weight, and to its very soft Microcell pad, and maybe a little bit to the Tribore barrels.

My club sets a testy 5-stand. The first bird climbed out of the bushes at 40 yards, crossed and tailed off downrange. It was out there, and not easy to see. Yet, when I pulled the trigger, the clay turned from "not easy to see" into "completely gone." My first reaction was to look down at the gun in my hands in surprise, because it sure wasn't me doing that shooting. Yet that target was no fluke. The dynamics of the gun suited me perfectly. When I looked in the right place, which was, let's say, much of the time, the Elos N2 RS did the rest.

Mechanically, the gun functioned fine. Those who notice and appreciate trigger pulls will find these very clean and light. They broke around ¾ pounds, according to my digital gauge. In addition, the trigger blade

adjusts for length. Likewise, the adjustable comb hardware is easy to use and adjust for drop and cast. The gun comes with four choke tubes — SK, IC, M, IM — a hard case, and Allen wrenches for the stock, forend and trigger adjustment.

BOTTOM LINE

Whether you prefer a lively gun or a more disciplined over-and-under, Fabarm now has you covered with the Elos N2 lineup. The N2 RS suited me perfectly out of the box. I receive and return test guns all the time, and this one I wanted to keep. It's a well-made gun, brimming with Guerini/Fabarm quality. It's a good value, too, listing for \$3,575 with a fully adjustable comb. There are special-order left-handed versions available, too, for an upcharge. And, while "Fabarm Elos N2 RS" is a name totally lacking in poetry, the gun itself comes as close to being poetry in motion as any target gun can in my hands. **CTN**

FABARM ELOS N2 RS SPECS

GAUGE: 3-inch 12-gauge

BARRELS: 30- and 32-inch Tribore HP

ACTION: Break-action, inertia reset

TRIGGER: Single selective, adjusts for length

STOCK AND FOREARM: Oil-finished walnut

LOP: 14.75 inches

WEIGHT: 8 pounds, 7 ounces (tested)

with 32-inch barrels

PRICE: \$3,575