



# NEW ZEALAND GUNS & Hunting

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**NEW SAVAGE "AXIS" -**  
**A RIFLE FOR ITS TIMES...**

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**WEST COAST TWELVE-POINTER -**

**SWAROVSKI'S NEW Z6 SCOPE**  
**TAKE A KID HUNTING - PART. II...**

NEW ZEALAND'S NATIONAL FIREARMS MAGAZINE







# THE CZ 527 7.62X39 CARBINE

Nik Maxwell tests out the "compact" CZ 527 on local Te Puke fallow...

*The CZ's light weight and short overall length make it an excellent bush hunting rifle.*

**A**S A TEENAGER, ONE OF THE FIRST CENTREFIRE RIFLES I HUNTED WITH WAS A NORINCO 7.62X39 SKS, IT WAS QUITE AN IMPRESSIVE PIECE OF MACHINERY AT THE TIME BUT, WHILE I USED IT TO TAKE SEVERAL GOATS, I NEVER SHOT A DEER WITH IT.

I remember the 7.62x39 cartridge being a solid performer on goats particularly with soft nose hunting loads. The little semi-auto rifle was later customised to include a scope, and some work was also done on the stock, however around this time Dad purchased for me a Husqvarna

8mm Mauser (from Graeme Champion of the Colonial Ammunition Company in Hawera) and the SKS was eventually sold.

The 8mm (now rebarrelled in 7x57mm) has been my number one deer rifle for over twenty years. It has taken numerous red, sika and fallow. Up until recently I have never really considered the rifle's weight to be an issue. Sure there were and are many modern light hunting rifle and scope combinations on the market now, but I was always happy to haul around the old 8mm, that was until I took the CZ 527 for a walk into one of my favourite hunting spots in the densely bushed hills up behind Te Puke.

## THE CZ 527 CARBINE

When Tony from Kilwell turned up with the CZ, the size of the rifle stood out immediately. Weighing in at 2.8kgs (6.17lbs) minus a scope, and with an overall length of 950mm, this is one compact rifle! At first glance it is your typical light repeater with a Mauser-type bolt action. It is well balanced, although I did find that the steel five-round detachable magazine protruded right where my hand was while I was carrying the rifle horizontally at my side. This is not so much of an issue though, as the CZ's lightness and size still allow for a decent hold in a number of positions, even with your fingers over the







*TOP: The two-position safety catch is located at the right rear of the receiver.*

*MIDDLE: The bolt features a Mauser style extractor.*

*ABOVE: The set trigger can be adjusted via this small screw inside the trigger guard.*

magazine if you want to carry it that way. In fact, holding the rifle by the grip and letting it hang vertically, the muzzle was still a good 10" from the ground!

The CZ features a fully adjustable single set-trigger which I thought was a nice touch, and which I used with success later on. To set it, just cock the action and push the trigger blade forward until it clicks. This particular trigger broke crisply at approx. 5lbs. The steel magazine holds its five rounds stacked vertically, and is released by a small finger latch (better described as a clip) on the right side of the mag well. When you're field stripping the rifle keep an eye on this catch though, because it can fall free as the receiver separates from the stock, we lost our one!

The magazine's floorplate is easily removed for cleaning out accumulated debris, and the rifle's calibre is stamped on the follower. The 527 comes with a hammer forged barrel upon which sit the factory mounted front and rear iron sights. A 16mm dovetail on the receiver allows for the easy attachment of a scope. The carbine's stock is a classic European style in Turkish walnut featuring Bavarian pattern checkering on the grip and fore-end. The stock is also equipped with a solid rubber buttpad and sling swivels.

#### **ON THE RANGE**

The CZ wasn't supplied with any ammunition, but we had some Highland AX 7.62x39 123 grain round nose soft-point

on hand. I have used Highland ammunition before on game and have had good success with it. We also had a box of PMC, but Tony had mentioned that some of this ammo, and Winchester as well, can occasionally misfire in the 527, which, I came to learn, was due to the fact the CZ 527 carbine is manufactured to Soviet chamber specifications.

This from Alastair Taylor's article from NZG&H Issue #104: "The CZ 527 Carbine is manufactured in a former Soviet Block country to original Soviet chamber specifications, which appear to be fractionally







A compact rifle handles best with a compact scope – Nik fitted a Burris 4x mini-scope on the CZ and found that it did the job well.

TOP: Highland ammunition is European manufactured with the right specs for the CZ (see text).

#### SPEC SHEET – CZ MODEL 527 CARBINE

CALIBRES:	.223, 7.62x39
OVERALL LENGTH:	37-3/8" (950mm)
WEIGHT:	7lb-2oz (3.2kg) with scope & rings
MAGAZINE:	Detachable steel box, five-round capacity
STOCK:	Walnut, checkered
BARREL:	18-1/2" (470mm approx)
TRIGGER:	adjustable set trigger, factory set at 5lbs
SIGHTS:	rear, windage adjustable – front, replaceable blade
SAFETY:	Two-position, locks bolt handle down
RRP:	\$1,350

larger than those used in the USA. The result is that PMC and Winchester ammo have a marginally shorter head space and not every round will fire – only about two out of three."

Wanting to test this for myself, I placed a PMC round into the mag, worked the action and settled into taking my first shot at the target, "click", a misfire. I did fire a few PMC rounds through the 527 but only to satisfy my curiosity. Ironically, these PMC 7.62x39 soft points were the same hunting rounds I had used on the goats in my early days with the SKS, and experienced no issues with them in that rifle.

The Highland ammo performed fine. With a new rifle/scope setup I normally sight in at 25 yards and work out from that. As a practical North Island bush hunter, I don't go for long shots. A nice little one hole group at 25, and I moved out to 50 yards where I achieved a well-centered 1.5" group, job done. More time on the range and perhaps some homeloading would certainly produce much tighter groups and in fact Alastair Taylor recorded sub-MOA groups in his testfire of a similar rifle. However, hunting the Te Puke scrub most of my shots on fallow have been well within 50 yards,

ABOVE: Groups like these at 50 yards are more than adequate for the type of bush hunting Nik had in mind.

so I felt confident in taking the 527 for a walk the following week.

#### OUT IN THE BUSH

Reaching the bush edge at around 5am, I had around two hours of travel on foot until I reached my main stalking area. The mission today was to setup the trail camera and take a look around for some buck sign. Just over an hour into the walk and with the sun breaking through the bush, I noticed a dark brown fallow yearling about 60 yards away standing amongst the pongas and looking in my direction. Up came the CZ as I set the "hair" trigger. The shot hit just in behind the shoulder, and the yearling took off and dropped less than five metres away. As the dust settled a doe which had been standing out of sight behind the yearling took off into the cover. The projectile had hit back a little further than I would have liked,







*The CZ's strong, steel five-round magazine is easily stripped for cleaning.*



*With energy levels in the same league as the .30-30 Winchester, the 7.62x39 cartridge is more than powerful enough for deer hunting at moderate ranges.*

but the animal was down for the count by the time I reached it. After cleaning it up, I hung it in a tree to pick up on my way home that evening.

After setting up the trail cam and scouting around for most of the day, I started heading back to pick up the young deer. Not far from where I'd taken the shot that morning, I noticed a mature doe standing about 30 yards away in the shadows of some pongas – the sun was just touching

its muzzle and I could see its breath in the sunlight – it looked awesome! The doe was quite relaxed and allowed me enough time to settle the crosshairs on its neck, "bang" I thought to myself, but I didn't pull the trigger. I had meat for the table already and it was the beginning of the fallow rut, so left her to breed. I skinned and boned the little yearling and headed for the car, another great day chasing the Te Puke fallow.

#### CONCLUSION

The CZ 527 is a quality rifle, featuring solid, proven workmanship and robust materials. Its size makes it ideal for younger people or those of a smaller stature. To me it just seems to be the type you always want on your rack ready for use, especially in 7.62 calibre if you're planning to hunt in rough country where the bush is thick and the shots are close. ■

**Nik Maxwell**



# CZECH THIS OUT



## CZ 527 CARBINE

Light, short, well-balanced, easy to operate, and accurate, the CZ527 CARBINE is ideal for New Zealand bush hunting and for snap shooting, this handy rifle features open sights and walnut stock and set trigger and weighs less than 6 pounds!




AVAILABLE IN .223 & 7.62x39



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