

**Tactical Duostock**

Designed primarily for users wearing thick jackets, body armor, load-bearing vests or equipment, the Tactical Duostock is contoured to ride high on the shoulder, ensuring quick sight-picture acquisition. A shooter can keep his head up and get a good cheek weld without having to bend at all, or the stock can be dropped to allow a more conventional firing position. The curved shape also makes transition from the low-ready to the firing position much smoother. Contact Duostock Designs: (866) 386-7865; www.duostock.com



**Sierra Infinity Mobile Version**

Having an advanced ballistics program on your home computer is great, until you're at the range and gusts are sweeping your printouts away like Dorothy and Toto. The Sierra Infinity Mobile Version 1 program is now available for handheld computers. It provides a selected subset of the functions in Sierra's renowned Infinity 6 Ballistics Software, allows you to create a custom gun database and has the ability to handle any bullet for which one or more ballistic coefficients are defined. You can enter and modify wind, vertical angle and range on a single screen, and it provides an instantaneous shooting solution for holdover and windage correction.

Contact Sierra Bullets: (800) 223-8799; www.sierrabullets.com

**Blackhawk Long Gun Pack Mat**

For law enforcement and military personnel who get paid to lay down on the job with a rifle, Blackhawk's Long Gun Pack Mat is a definite no-brainer. It functions not only as a shooter's mat, but a rifle case, drag bag and backpack as well. Interior and exterior pockets contain #9 YKK zippers and silent pulls to help maintain stealth. Closed-cell foam insulation provides an extra degree of comfort and the HawkTex surface enhances purchase—making your shooting platform capable of precision accuracy regardless of weather conditions. The mat will fit rifles up to 50 inches in length. Contact Blackhawk: (800) 694-5263; www.blackhawk.com



**Magpul MOE AR-15 Handguard**

Why ally yourself with alloy when you can beat the cost, heat and weight with polymer. Magpul's MOE AR-15 Handguard is designed for ARs with carbine-length gas systems and A2-style front sight towers. They are manufactured from reinforced, heat-resistant polymer to provide maximum durability without the burden of excess weight or the added expense of a Picatinny-railed aluminum forearm. Despite its light weight and sparse appearance, the handguard has a lot to offer regarding modular flexibility—thanks to slots at the two-, six-, and 10-o'clock positions that are perfect for mounting optional Picatinny rail sections. Contact Magpul: (877) 462-4785; www.magpul.com



**Avid Design Gun Tool**

Having the right tool for the job makes everything easier, and the Avid Design Gun tool contains a variety to choose from in a single, easy-to-use unit. Built for in-the-field rifle and shotgun maintenance, this compact, ergonomic multi-tool contains 18 of the most commonly used long-gun tools. Implements include a universal choke wrench, pin punch for removing trigger groups, various Allen and Torx wrenches compatible with most scope bases and rings, a magnetic bit driver and a windage/elevation scope adjuster. Contact Avid Design: (800) 401-4670; www.theguntool.com

**Springfield vs. Mauser**

For about the tenth time, I watched the movie "Saving Private Ryan." I know the U.S. Army marksman in the movie was using a Springfield rifle, but I was wondering how it stacked up against the German Mauser rifle of the same period.

Ron Flynn  
Everett, MA



Although not readily visible to shooters, the Springfield's cone-shaped breech requires the rifle's bolt face (far left) to have a slight taper, unlike that of the Mauser bolt.

Both rifles employ a Mauser-style extractor. Most authorities agree, however, that the locking system of the Mauser (right) is stronger than that of the Springfield.

Although most experts feel a bolt that locks on closing is far superior for the varied environments encountered in combat, both the Mauser and Springfield bolts cocked on opening.

It would take a good-size book to detail all the similarities and differences between these two bolt-action rifles, but strictly from a design perspective, the Mauser Model 98 has the overall edge. However, the M1903 Springfield (and its variations) was certainly no dog. Both were quite effective in a combat role, and thousands were later adapted to excellent sporter rifles.

To my reckoning, there has never been a perfect firearm design. And even though I give a slight nod to the Mauser, there is little doubt the Springfield's .30-06 Springfield chambering proved to be more popular and versatile than the Mauser's 9.3mm.

After the Spanish American War, the U.S. military was looking to upgrade its standard-issue rifle, the Krag-Jorgensen Model 1892-99 chambered in .30-40 Krag. We attempted to incorporate some of the Krag's features with the excellent design of

the Mauser 98—a subject covered well in the "The Classics" in January's Shooting Illustrated—and the Springfield M1903 was the result.

The Springfield performed quite well in World War I, World War II and Korea. It underwent countless design modifications, but the primary models are the M1903, M1903A1, M1903A2 and the M1903A4. There was also a Mark I that was a standard M1903 set up with a Pedersen Device to allow the rifle to fire .30-caliber pistol ammunition in a semi-automatic mode.

The designers of the M1903 were attempting to build a bolt-action rifle using the Mauser Model 98 as a template and incorporating as many of the Mauser's designs as they could. One of the biggest differences between the Springfield and the Mauser is the Springfield's cone breech. This is a system where the rear of the barrel is

deeply funneled and the bolt head is shaped to a similar angle. Mauser proponents argue the Mauser breech is stronger as it has less cartridge-head protrusion, as well as Mauser's "inner collar" concept, providing better gas escape blockage and a stronger receiver-ring reinforcement. These arguments are valid, but pre-'64 Winchester Model 70s utilize the Springfield breech system, and to my knowledge it hasn't proven defective or dangerous. Also, the Springfield breech ramp system lacks any corners or obstructions, so it provides cartridge feeding that is second to none in my opinion.

I believe the Mauser has the better locking-lug system. The Springfield system borrowed from the Krag, and while it is quite reliable, the Mauser gets the nod in its strength and gas-venting system. The Springfield incorporates the Mauser-type extractor, the strongest and most reliable system ever manufactured in my opinion.

The biggest weaknesses in the Springfield are the spongy and weak firing pin system, a rather slow lock time—which may or may not influence accuracy depending upon the shooter's experience with the rifle—the original bolt handle design and the direct-pull trigger. None of these design flaws are fatal, and if the action is to be used to build a custom sporter modification, replacement of certain components are of little or no consequence.

Both the Mauser and the Springfield are of "cock-on-closing" design. I have been in roundtable discussions with veterans and gunsmiths who would argue that "cock-on-closing," like the British Enfields, is a better choice down in the mud, the blood and the beer.

Admittedly, I have automatically gone to the Mauser 98 when building a custom rifle. But, I have also built a number using M1903s and I have never gone afield embarrassed or worried about functionality.

To answer your question, I don't think you can go wrong with either.

**Have a Technical Question?**  
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