

# MY TRUCK BUDDY

THE UINTAH PRECISION UP-10 IS POSSIBLY THE WORLD'S MOST VERSATILE PISTOL.

BY TOM BECKSTRAND | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR





Inside the UPR10 upper receiver, you'll notice the absence of a charging handle, gas tube or piston operating rod. The captured ball-detent provides tactile feedback when locking and unlocking the bolt.

**I FIRST SAW THIS PISTOL** in the Uintah Precision booth at the 2022 NSSF Shooting Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show. It was an odd-looking gun that immediately made me consider all the times a 13-inch-barreled 6.5 Creedmoor with a folding arm brace would come in handy. My two biggest concerns were the unknown muzzle velocity with factory ammunition and its accuracy. I'd shot the UP-15 in 6mm ARC before and knew I'd like the ergonomics, but a short-barreled 6.5 Creedmoor was uncharted territory for me. After spending a few days shooting this pistol, I think it's one of the most useful and fun firearms I've ever evaluated!

**KIND OF LIKE AN AR, BUT IT'S BOLT-OPERATED.**

Uintah Precision makes both traditional AR-pattern semi-

UINTAH PRECISION UP-10 PISTOL	
TYPE	Bolt action
CARTRIDGE	6.5 Creedmoor (tested)
CAPACITY	5 rds. or 10 rds.
BARREL	13 in., 1:7.5-in. twist
OVERALL LENGTH	23 in. (collapsed); 32 in. (extended)
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 10 oz.
ARM BRACE	SB Tactical SBA3
GRIP	Magpul K2+
FINISH	Hardcoat anodized, black
TRIGGER	4 lbs. (tested)
SIGHTS	None
MSRP	\$2,075
MANUFACTURER	Uintah Precision, 435-738-2422, uintahprecision.com

the typical bolt-carrier group, there is a manually operated bolt assembly unique to Uintah Precision. Part of the reason AR-pattern rifles and pistols are so popular is the ease with which they're put together and maintained. Uintah Precision's bolt stays true to that design philosophy and is cut from a

The lower receiver to that of a typical AR-10, but it lacks a buffer and buffer spring. Most aftermarket furniture and parts for AR-10s are compatible with the UP-10 lower.

automatic rifles and more unique bolt-action AR-pattern firearms. The difference is the upper-receiver group. This bolt-action pistol has a pretty normal AR-10 lower receiver, minus a buffer and buffer spring that are not needed. Instead, there is a LAW Tactical folding hinge (lawtactical.com) installed with an arm brace. The bottom half functions like most AR-10s and accepts the same furniture and parts.

The company's UPR10 upper receiver group is more specialized. It has no gas system or charging handle. In place of



The bolt is cut from bar stock 4140 chromoly steel. It's clear that Uintah Precision went for quality. It features anti-galling properties and a 60-degree bolt lift.

single chunk of 4140 chromoly steel.

One of my favorite materials for firearms is 4140 chromoly because it doesn't gall like stainless steel. It's as tough as steel gets. Galling is an important consideration in bolt and action material because once it starts, it takes a gunsmith and some machining to eliminate. Even before galling starts on a stainless part, there is a noticeably better "slickness" to 4140 chromoly that stainless steel and other materials can never achieve.

Everyone likes a slick-handling bolt-action and this UP-10 pistol is just that. The 4140 bolt rides in the hard-anodized



Due to the overall length of the bolt assembly, cycling the action feels abbreviated and quick. Unlike a gas-operated AR-pattern firearm with buffer assembly, this bolt only travels a few inches.

7075 aluminum upper receiver, and it's a joy to work the action. I didn't lube the bolt or grease the lugs and, with just the lightest coat of oil that it came with, I appreciated how easy it was to operate.

I applaud Uintah Precision's choice of bolt material but the way it manufactures the bolt is equally impressive. The bolt is made in a single piece of tooling, so each bolt is within .001-inch tolerance of any other bolt. When combined with the use of a barrel extension that sets headspace, any bolt from one UP-10 rifle can be swapped with any other UP-10/UPR10



The barrel on the UP-10 is made from 416R stainless and threaded for use with a muzzle device or suppressor. The quality of this crowned and free-float barrel contributed to its accuracy.



The single-stage trigger is Rise Armament's RA-535. It is a cassette-type trigger. The trigger fires after 3½ pounds of pressure. The lower is machined billet and the triggerguard is integral.

bolt and fired safely. These are precision “rifle” upper receivers and they hold all the same tolerances and offer the same performance of any other high-end precision rifle.

The bolt has three beefy lugs and a 60-degree bolt lift with some unique handling characteristics. There is no cocking cam on the back of the bolt body because lifting the bolt handle isn't what cocks the firing-pin assembly. Lifting the UP-10 bolt only serves to rotate the lugs away from the lug abutments so the bolt can be pulled rearward. The UP-10 has the lightest bolt lift of any bolt-action rifle made for this reason.

Whether this bolt was a two-lug or three-lug would make zero difference on bolt lift, but the three-lug choice was wise for two reasons.

The first reason is that it keeps the bolt handle away from the scope's ocular housing when cycling the action. There is so much space between the bolt handle and scope that I could cycle the bolt, palm down, while wearing gloves and still not touch the scope! When working a bolt-action quickly, it's nice to know that I'll never drag my hand down the side of my scope, no matter how frantic the bolt stroke.

The second advantage is that the three-lug bolt places one lug at the six-o'clock position when the action is open. This places huge bolt face engagement with rounds in the magazine, which is the prime reason why it feeds so smoothly from a double-stack SR-25-pattern Magpul PMag. By the end of my range sessions, I could see where brass from the case heads had rubbed off on the bolt face. There was a lot of contact, which is good because solid contact between the bolt face and



## PERFORMANCE

AMMO	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Custom 120-gr. AMAX	2,617	39	15	.44	.56
Federal GM Berger 130-gr. OTM	2,520	25	9.9	.47	.62
Hornady Match 140-gr. ELD-M	2,475	15	6.1	.62	.8

Notes: Accuracy is the average of five, five-shot groups at 100 yards. Velocity is the average of five shots across a LabRadar chronograph placed adjacent to the muzzle.

the cartridge is the first step in reliable feeding; the UP-10 has plenty of it.

## 13 INCHES OF GOODNESS

Putting a 13-inch barrel on a 6.5 Creedmoor was the biggest unknown heading into this evaluation. The 6.5

Creedmoor predominantly shoots bullets weighing between 120 and 140 grains with most published velocities coming from a 24-inch barrel. The potential problem would be if the muzzle velocity from such a short tube hovered around 2,200 to 2,300 feet per second (fps); that's not really fast enough for good terminal effects. Hunting applications would be limited. In that case, this would be a “dinging steel” gun only and, with the potential of such low velocity, just out to several hundred yards.

The good news is that factory ammunition has muzzle velocities much higher than I expected. Most bullet weights left the muzzle around 2,500 to 2,600 fps. Those velocities make this AR pistol an exciting proposition with a ton of potential applications. One load I tested was some old 120-

grain Hornady AMAX; the modern equivalent would be Hornady's 120-grain ELD-M. This load had a muzzle velocity of 2,612 fps.

I'm shooting at close to sea level and, with conditions adjusted to a standard atmosphere, 59 degrees, that 120-grain AMAX bullet stayed supersonic past 1,050 yards. The AMAX bullet is polymer-tipped and has a thin jacket with good terminal effects, assuming an impact velocity of 1,800 fps or greater. This 13-inch barrel has enough velocity to meet that threshold out to 475 yards, which makes this a great choice for deer-sized game out to that distance.

I also did some analysis on the 130-grain Berger OTM Hybrid loaded in Federal's Gold Medal Berger line. This bullet had a muzzle velocity of 2,520 fps and stayed supersonic to 1,150 yards under the same conditions. This is a match bullet that does see some use for hunting, but the biggest advantage is that it offers an excellent .56 G1 ballistic coefficient (BC) in a loaded overall length that better fits into the more restrictive AR-pattern magazines. As a comparison, a factory-loaded 140-grain ELD-M cartridge has an overall length of approximately 2.82 inches. Federal's factory-loaded 130-grain Berger OTM Hybrid measures 2.78 inches.

Accuracy for the tested loads was phenomenal, as detailed in the table. The biggest contributor to this pistol's accuracy was the barrel. It started life as a blank from Preferred Barrel Blanks (PBB, preferredbarrel blanks.com). Uintah Precision and PBB use only American-sourced 416R stainless because this is the most consistent steel on the market. PBB tests every Lot of steel for the specified metallurgy and purity before accepting it and turning it into a blank. Once rifled, it's stress-relieved and sent to Uintah Precision for chambering, contouring and finishing.

Two different loads posted five-shot groups at 100 yards in the .4-inch range. As I was later marveling about the accuracy from this pistol, I noticed the twist rate published on the website. Uintah Precision uses a 1-in-7½-inch twist rate in these short, 13-inch barrels. There are a bunch of rifle nerds at Uintah Preci-

**UP-10/UPR10 BARRELS**

BULLET WEIGHT	VELOCITY (FPS)	TWIST (TURN:IN.)	RPM
140 gr.	2,750	1:8	247,500
120 gr.	2,617	1:7.5	251,250
130 gr.	2,520	1:7.5	241,900
140 gr.	2,475	1:7.5	237,800

sion who pay attention to details.

Bullets are spin-stabilized and bullet manufacturers have recommended barrel twist rates that generate the best bullet revolutions per minute (RPM) for optimal accuracy and performance. As muzzle velocity decreases, so does the bullet's RPM. Uintah Precision knows this and compensated for the pistol's short barrel and slightly reduced muzzle velocity by speeding up the twist rate from the normal 1-in-8 to 1-in-7½ inches. It's part of the reason why this pistol shoots so accurately. Included is a comparative table of barrel twist rates, muzzle velocity and bullet RPM. I don't think bullet RPM would generate a noticeable loss in accuracy until it dipped below 200,000 and, even then, accuracy would likely only degrade at the transonic velocity, occurring (for this pistol) at just past 1,000 yards.

Never in my life have I seen a pistol offer more utility and fun in such a useable package. This is my new truck buddy. It's good for everything from deer hunting to blasting coyotes to dinging steel out to 1,000 yards. It begs to be suppressed (which is how I shot it most of the time), and it folds down to 23 inches in length. Getting it in and out of the truck is trouble-free. It's also legal in most places that hold an unrighteous grudge against AR-pattern rifles. Finally, it's a pistol, which has all the same legal protections of any other concealed-carry pistol. Having one loaded in the truck may not be viewed with the same legal scrutiny as having a loaded rifle in the truck, but proceed at your own risk.

What started with curiosity bloomed into a love affair. I was initially apprehensive about how a short-barreled 6.5 Creedmoor would perform, but now, I know and I'm a huge fan of both concept and gun. If a pistol that fills a spectrum of shooting needs sounds appealing, this is the one to seek out. 