

ASG M40A3

THE M40 HAS A LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS SERVICE IN THE HANDS OF THE MEN THAT MAKE UP THE US MARINE CORPS WITH IT'S ORIGINS IN SERVICE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR. THE PULL OF THE BOLT ACTION SNIPER RIFLE IS STRONG ALREADY BUT WHEN SOMETHING THAT'S THIS BEAUTIFUL COMES ALONG, IT'S NIGH ON IRRESISTIBLE! BELIEVE US WHEN WE SAY THE PLEASURE WAS ALL OURS IN PUTTING THIS REVIEW TOGETHER... LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE ASG M40A3, MANUFACTURED BY VFC.

Since the Vietnam War, there has been a weapon in the USMC armoury designated the M40. Not to be confused with the US Army's M24 (a long action Remington 700), the M40 is a Remington 700 Short Action that is traditionally bedded into a McMillan stock. In the case of the original M40A1, this stock was made from wood but later revision saw the M40 utilise a synthetic version to avoid warping in combat conditions.

Although the M40 lineage has now progressed to the A7 variant, what we have here is an example of the A3 although visual differences in terms of an airsoft replica are very slight between this and the A5. Things actually get a little hazy when it comes to categorising this replica as the rifle in it's "out of the box" state most resembles the A3 but with numerous accessories provided by ASG, it could be argued that it was almost an A5. We'll look into the parts in more detail after we have had a good look at the gun.

ASG'S M40A3

VFC have recently begun manufacturing 2 different variants of the M40. We've been lucky enough to get some hands-on time with both over recent months. One is gas-powered and the one we have reviewed here is spring-powered. We opted to review the spring variant as experience tells us that although it might have a heavier, harder to cycle bolt-action, the general consistency and practicality may well be considerably higher. One of the great allurements of the spring-powered rifle is the simplicity and the purity: no batteries, no gas, no fuss and no hassle. Just cock and fire every time. Interestingly, ASG appear to have picked up the licensing deal on the spring A3 variant only, so we can only assume that the gas A5 (complete with muzzle break and RIS unit as standard) is

not officially licensed, perhaps based on the fact it is made as a limited edition only. From here it's tough to tell exactly what's going on.

We are also aware that price is indeed a factor and at £313 at Redwolf Airsoft UK, the spring gun comes in at over £100 less than the gas one. Most of that cost could be attributed to the small extras you get included with the gas A5, including scope mounts and a RIS adaptor unit. These parts, as we have demonstrated here, are available separately though.

EXTERNALS

With that area of potential confusion out of the way, let's concentrate on the gun in hand and take in a few of the finer details. The stock is the first part of the gun that you take in. it's an OD

AS WELL AS THIS REVIEW OF THE ASG M40A3, MADE BY VFC, HERE, WE WILL BE GIVING THE GUN A LITTLE MORE PAGE SPACE IN NEXT MONTH'S "AMERICAN SNIPER" THEMED PHOTOSHOOT AND LOAD OUT GUIDE. WE'LL BE LOOKING AT NOT ONLY GETTING THE LOOK, BUT BUILDING A USEABLE LOAD OUT FOR SNIPING IN URBAN SITUATIONS

finished replica of the McMillan benchers style stocks used on the M40A3 and it is beautifully rendered. The colour finish is smooth and flat with minimal reflectivity. There are mould lines around the seam in the centre of the stock but after checking out the real deal, these are actually MORE pronounced on the genuine article!

The forward portion of the stock is characterised by its square profile giving the otherwise thin, sleek barrel a blockier, chunkier profile. The grip built in to the stock is chunky and very, very steep compared to what you might be used to on an assault rifle. These precision guns are not intended to be wielded in the same manner as your average M4.

Behind the grip, the butt of the stock is cut away into a thumb hook to allow for a stable

THE AMERICAN SNIPER
MANUFACTURED BY VFC

but compact firing position that allows proper trigger control (minimal, light pressure to prevent "snatching").

The stock, as per the real M40A3, features an adjustable height cheek piece to allow you to achieve an exactly tailored cheek weld. The piece is made from a rubber coated plastic and allows you to get in position on the gun without any slippage. The height and angle can be adjusted freely with the two thumb-knobs on the right hand side of the gun and depending on your preference, these can be switched from the left to the right hand side of the stock.

The length of pull of the stock is adjustable via stacked polymer spacers that can be added or removed to tune the weapon to your preference and to achieve optimal natural eye relief on the scope you are using. As standard 2x 1/4" and 2x 1/2" spaces are included. The rear of the stock is finished off with an over-moulded rubber pad featuring a grip texture and embossed with the McMillan logo, a neat little mark of authenticity. Around the grip area and on both sides of the fore-arm of the stock you'll find an aggressive "concrete" texture to provide grip in adverse conditions.

Aside from the stock, there's not a massive amount to deal with left. The actual barrel and receiver are not drastically different from the glut of Tokyo Marui VSR-type rifles out there. The finish here though is far more detailed with

a smooth, satin black on the metalwork. The parts don't appear to be machined but rather cast or extruded but they are definitely made from a harder, higher quality than you'd find on a Marui gun.

At 24" long, the barrel is hardly CQB friendly, in fact it lends some considerable weight to the gun adding to the level of realism. Along the barrel some highly realistic engravings can be found that match up to the data we could find about the technical details of the real M40A3 barrel's technical spec. The receiver keeps pace with similarly replicated forge markings and serial numbers, a metal RIS mount is firmly bolted above the breach opening allowing for plenty of space to mount a scope of your choice.

Beneath the receiver, the trigger unit of the gun is mounted on the underside of the stock. Made from metal, the looped trigger guard and lower plate are fixed to the receiver. There's a small catch that protrudes inside the trigger guard that allows you to drop the small plastic magazine free. Of all the parts on the M40A3, the cover that flaps open to give you access to the magazine feels perhaps the most vulnerable to breakage. This component is made from metal, intuition just tells us it's in a great place to get caught and damaged at some point. Overall though, the gun seems robust and durable and certainly has more about it than most spring powered sniper rifles, without being too over the top...



➔ INTERNALS

Internally the M40A3 uses a modified version of the VSR10 system that Marui designed. Some parts of the gun differ significantly but the trigger unit and sears seem to be an almost exact replication. This is generally the area that is most prone to wear in use since the sears must hold the piston back under the spring tension. What you get fires at around 430FPS though, significantly higher than TM guns, so the sears could be considered "pre-upgraded". The trigger is a simple 45 degree sear and we expect this could be upgraded to the 90 degree trigger upgrade that ASG made available around the time they bought out the ASW .338LM.

The Barrel appears to be consistent with the VSR design, so could easily be upgraded to any one of the tighter bore aftermarket ones that are already available. The hop rubber itself appears consistent with this format too, however the hop unit itself uses an entirely different design that allows adjustment via an externally accessible wheel on the underside of the stock. This design is nothing short of genius and allows you to make fine tuned adjustments between shots to really dial in your zero. You could do this with the VSR design but the M40 adjuster is far more positive and has clicked increments so allows for a more precise adjustment without even needing to look at the dial.

The cylinder itself is a black chrome material that not only looks great but also feels very smooth to work. Even though the gun is pushing out BBs at well over 400FPS, the action is remarkably light. Because of the position of the magazine, the nozzle of the cylinder has a groove in it to accommodate a loading fin that rakes the BB along a track in a similar method to the Tokyo Marui L96 and the aforementioned Ashbury ASW .338LM. The system isn't particularly forgiving of inferior ammunition and it's certainly not the mechanical arrangement to be operating using brute force, so if something does feel smooth and precise, definitely do not try and force it otherwise something will definitely give out. In testing we used some BB King .36 ammo and found it to be utterly awful in terms of feeding in this gun, however several other brands ran through with no issues at all.

➔ PERFORMANCE

As mentioned, the ASG M40A3 is running at around 430FPS on a .20g BB. At this level the action is light and easy to work. Realistically you could get a shot off every 2-3 seconds without too much trouble but ideally, you want to be hitting your quarry first time around. We've long believed the slower, more methodical loading process of a spring-powered, bolt-action gun results in a more accurate and consistent shot based on the steadier positioning of the BB within the hop chamber.

The M40A3 capitalises on this by packing inner barrel stabilisers as standard making shot-to-shot placement more consistent. At 77m, we tested the M40 with a variety of ammo. As mentioned the BB King .36g ammo we tested failed to feed. Marui Perfect Hit .28g ammo worked flawlessly and gave consistent hits on a NATO Figure 11 target (1114mm x 432mm) without the influence of wind but predictably, the premium choice that is Maruzen SGM .29g ammo gave the outright most consistent results. Bear in mind, that this is a stock, out of the box gun. This leads us to think that perhaps the best upgrade you can buy for this thing, Pound for Pound, is quality ammo.

We don't feel particularly compelled to upgrade the M40A3 to the common bolt action weapon limit of 500FPS but curiosity may well get the better of us before long because this shooter certainly seems to have the potential!

➔ ADDITIONAL EXTRAS

It's the little extras that really make a gun stand out from the crowd and with a few small enhancements on the M40A3, you can give it an A5 makeover and really push it up head and shoulders above the rest.



RAIL

One of the most eye-catching things about the new M40 is the rail system fitted forward of

the optics. This makes a great mounting point for a laser designator, flashlight or even clip-on NVG systems. The rail fits a special blanked cut-out in the stock and firmly clamps into place with no permanent modifications.



BIPOD

This is a purpose built bipod, designed especially for the McMillan M40A3 airsoft sniper rifle.

With this bipod you get a more stable shooting platform. The legs are adjustable and lock in position giving the option to adapt to any shooting position. The feet of the bipod have a grip pattern on the bottom for optimal traction. Mounting and adjustments are easy, ideal for fast changing conditions.



MOUNT RINGS

Set of 2 low-profile mounting rings for the McMillan M40A3 airsoft sniper rifle, CNC

machined mounting rings for scope or red dot. Features CNC Machined Aluminium construction, 30mm Inner diameter, 22.5mm centreline height and a 20mm RIS.



SCOPE

The Strike Systems 50mm objective scope fits the bill perfectly with proportions to match the rest of

the gun. The sight picture remains clear and bright throughout the 3.5-10x zoom range, allowing you to observe and fire upon your anything that falls within the illuminated Mil-Dot reticule.



SILENCER ADAPTOR

Adapt the standard muzzle cap of your M40A3 to take accept a 14mm C CW threaded muzzle

device or silencer with this simple threaded cap. Great for muffling the sound of your rifle and enhancing the aesthetics along the lines of the M40A5.

➔ ASG M40A3

VITAL STATS

- WEIGHT: 3,000g
- VELOCITY: 430fps
- HOP UP TYPE: Adjustable
- LENGTH: 380mm
- BARREL LENGTH: 470mm
- MAG CAPACITY: 20 rounds
- PRICE: £313 (accessories sold separately)

BOLT ACTION RIFLES AREN'T FOR EVERYONE AND PRESENT A MUCH BIGGER CHALLENGE THAN A FULL AUTO OR EVEN SEMI AUTO RIFLE. WHEN YOUR HARD WORK PAYS OFF THROUGH IT'LL BE ALL THE SWEETER WITH THIS M40 IN YOUR HANDS!

