



FN'S SCAR RIFLE OFFERS HEAVY PUNCH, LIGHT RECOIL

Designed for SOCOM, the military's new assault rifle will soon be in the hands of SWAT.

★ DAVID GRIFFITH

The day before this year's SHOT Show in Las Vegas, I was given a real treat. I got to spend a day in the Nevada desert shooting almost every weapon in the FN Herstal line.

FN makes everything from 9mm semi-auto pistols to M2 .50 BMG machine guns. So it's little wonder that the company claims that 70 percent of small arms currently used by the U.S. military bear the FN (Fabrique National of Belgium) brand. The latest and by far most intriguing weapon in the FNH USA line is the Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR). And for me, shooting this gun was a revelation. I fell in love with the thing.

Available in two versions—5.56mm and 7.62mm—the SCAR was developed to meet specific SOCOM requirements, but it would make an excellent SWAT rifle. The SCAR is a short-stroke, gas piston rifle. It's magazine fed and air cooled, and it offers select fire.

What I noticed immediately about the SCAR was that it was light, easy to manipulate, and it felt great in my hands. The ergonomics are outstanding. Key to the feel of the weapon is its folding buttstock, which can be adjusted for six positions, a half inch apart. The SCAR also features an adjustable cheek rest that can be set to match a variety of optics and make solid cheek welds.

The SCAR was built for flexibility. Each model can be fitted with three different barrels to achieve different mission goals. For example, the SCAR Light with

the folded buttstock and the 10-inch barrel feels like a subgun and is designed for compact close-quarter environments and in-vehicle use. For longer range operations, the SCAR Light can be fitted with a 14-inch or an 18-inch barrel. The SCAR Heavy also features interchangeable barrels of 13 inches, 16 inches, and 20 inches. Barrel replacement is simple and fast on both weapons, and FN says that as long as

the previous barrel was zeroed, the new barrel will be one MOA accurate.

One of the best things about the SCAR is that it is so easy to shoot accurately, even on full auto. The weapon has very little recoil even in the 7.62 configuration. On full auto, it's easy to keep the SCAR on target because it doesn't rise as radically as many other assault rifles.

FN has established the cyclic rate of the SCAR at 600 to 650 rounds per minute, much less than the 800 rounds per minute of many combat rifles.

That means that it's easier to control, and it doesn't consume ammunition as quickly on full auto.

Features on the SCAR also make it extremely useful for SWAT operations. The weapon has Picatinny rails for mounting optics and accessories. It also has excellent flip-up sights with windage and elevation adjustment for those times when Murphy strikes your optics. One of the little creature comfort touches on the SCAR is an ambidextrous selector switch system.

Some 20,000 SCARs are being made for the U.S. military, and they should be shipping in May and June.

I expect to see the SCAR—especially the SCAR Light—in the hands of police SWAT teams in the very near future. It's an excellent entry team weapon that can be used as both a carbine and a subgun. It can also be fitted with a 40mm grenade launcher for deploying less-lethal and chemical rounds.

The select fire SCARs are now available to law enforcement. Semi-auto models are expected to be available by the end of the year. ☉



FN Herstal SCAR Light (CQC)

- TYPE:** Select-fire carbine
- ACTION:** Short stroke, gas piston
- CALIBER:** 5.56x45mm NATO
- MAG CAPACITY:** 20 or 30 rounds
- BARREL LENGTH:** 10 inches
- WEIGHT:** 6 pounds, 11 ounces
- SIGHTS:** Flip-up sights adjustable for windage and elevation
- FEATURES:** Picatinny rails, ambidextrous selector, adjustable buttstock, adjustable cheek rest, interchangeable barrels

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