



Tactically tricked out: The Advanced Technology Shotforce package gives NEF's humble Handi-Rifle a whole new personality.

Advanced Technology Handi-Rifle

For simplicity, economy and accuracy, it's very tough indeed to top the single-shot hinged-breech NEF Handi-Rifle. Unprepossessing as it is, there hasn't been much in the way of aftermarket components for it. Now, however, Advanced Technology offers a Shotforce stock and accessory package which, although obviously designed to give a sexy tactical look to the Handi-Rifle, has definite merit in terms of extending the utility of the piece.

What the Shotforce package includes is a synthetic CAR-15/M4-type collapsible stock with pistol grip and fore-end, a folding bipod and a 13½-inch blued-steel heatshield with elongated cooling slots. The shield also can be had with integral ghost-ring sights, which had been removed to accommodate a 3-9X Simmons scope anchored on a Picatinny rail with Weaver-type rings on the rifle I tested.

In addition, the stock featured a soft, slip-on buttpad. Obviously, at 8.4 pounds scoped, kick wasn't going to be a problem on the Handi-Rifle I had—a bull-barreled stainless number in .223. But the buttpad provides a non-slip surface

that the naked aftermarket stock doesn't (which, incidentally, also sported a nifty 20-round shell carrier).

With the stock in the collapsed position, overall length of the entire rig is 32 inches. With the stock



The Advanced Tech Featherweight Bipod—here folded up and out of the way—is adjustable for height.



The hinged-breech Handi-Rifle comes with a hammer spur extension (right) to permit cocking when the rifle is scoped. The whole package (above) is pleasingly compact.



The M4-type collapsible stock telescopes in to give the Handi-Rifle an overall length of 32 inches. The Tactical Buttpad provides a non-slip surface.



A Picatinny rail, Weaver-type rings and a Simmons 3-9X variable help make the most of the Handi-Rifle's potential.



The best 100-yard groups were obtained with Black Hills Remanufactured 40-grain Ballistic Tip (top) and Winchester 53-grain HP (bottom) ammo.

extended, the rifle measures 37 inches. From the tricked-out Handi-Rifle, I shot several three-shot 100-yard groups using 55-grain Hornady Moly-Coated Varmint Express, Black Hills Remanufactured 40-grain Nosler Ballistic Tip, Remington 50-grain V-Max Boattail and Winchester Super-X 53-grain HPs. Best results were with the Black Hills and Winchester stuff, which averaged three-quarters of an inch. What was interesting with these two was that I would usually get two shots almost touching, with the third shot opening things up to three-quarters of an inch. The Remington and Hornady stuff averaged around an inch and a half and just under two inches, respectively.

Measuring velocities with a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono showed that, from the Handi-Rifle's 22-inch barrel, I averaged 3,591 fps with the sizzling Black Hills 40 grainers, 3,220 with the Hornady 55-grain stuff, 3,252 with the Winchester 53 grainers and 3,293 with the Remington 50 grainers. Extreme spreads were 26, 40, 33 and 38 fps respectively.

Since I was unable to shoot the little single-shot fast enough to really appreciate the heatshield, I consider that element in the package, considering the deliberate-fire characteristics of a single shot, to be the most expendable—unless you want to yank the scope and mounts and go with the ghost-ring sights, which probably wouldn't be wise considering the varmint capabilities of the .223 cartridge, not to men-

tion the Handi-Rifle's accuracy potential.

The bipod worked well and can be adjusted and locked at any length between seven and 12 inches. It tracks smoothly laterally and would be good for fixed-position varminting, yet it deploys quickly if you're jumping from spot to spot.

Personally, I'm not a big fan of pistol-grip (or thumbhole) stocks on a rifle. But a lot of shooters, particularly those attached to M16/AR-15s, are. And there's no denying the easy "index pad" access to the trigger it provides on the Handi-Rifle.

Whether set up with the Advanced Technology Shotforce package or as is, the Stainless Handi-Rifle is a proven performer. But if you want to slick it up and make it a bit more compact to stow or transport, now there's an easy way to do it for an additional \$150 or so.

For information on Advanced Technology products, contact 102 Fieldview Dr., Dept. GA, Versailles, KY 40383; (859) 873-9877; atigunstocks.com.

—Payton Miller ■

SPECIFICATIONS

Maker:	New England Firearms Dept. GA, 100 Kenna Dr. North Haven, CT 06473 (203) 239-5621 marlinfirearms.com
Action:	Hinged-breech single-shot
Caliber:	.223 (as tested)
Barrel length:	22 inches
Overall length:	37 inches (stock extended)
Weight:	8.3 pounds scoped
Sights:	None (drilled and tapped for scope mounts)
Stock:	Advanced Technology M-4 type
Finish:	Stainless
Price:	\$354

Shooting Facilities provided by Angeles Shooting Ranges, Dept. GA, 12651 Little Tujunga Road, San Fernando, CA 91342; (800) 499-4486.