

Collecting and Shooting the Military Surplus Rifle



surplusrifle

BOYDS' GUNSTOCK INDU

Tennessee Gun

OUR SPONSORS

Please make certain to visit our new Showcase of Sponsors! [More!](#)



Article by [R.Ted Jeo](#)

[Adobe PDF Downloadable Version of Article](#)

With the sunset of the AWB, I figured that I had better get my butt in gear and put together that Clone-4 that I'd wanted to do. I had already acquired a M4 carbine flat top upper a few years ago for my pre ban AR lower, but to shoot it, I had to swap out the full size upper with the M4 upper. Not hard by any sense, but not convenient at all.

So I picked up a lower receiver kit from Sarco. Turns out that the receiver is made by Stag Arms. The entire kit (which includes all lower internals) cost \$139. A damn fine deal. I had the odd part left over from my original AR build back in the 80's, so I was able to put the entire new lower together in a matter an hour (it would have been shorter if I hadn't SHOT the one detent pin across the room....)

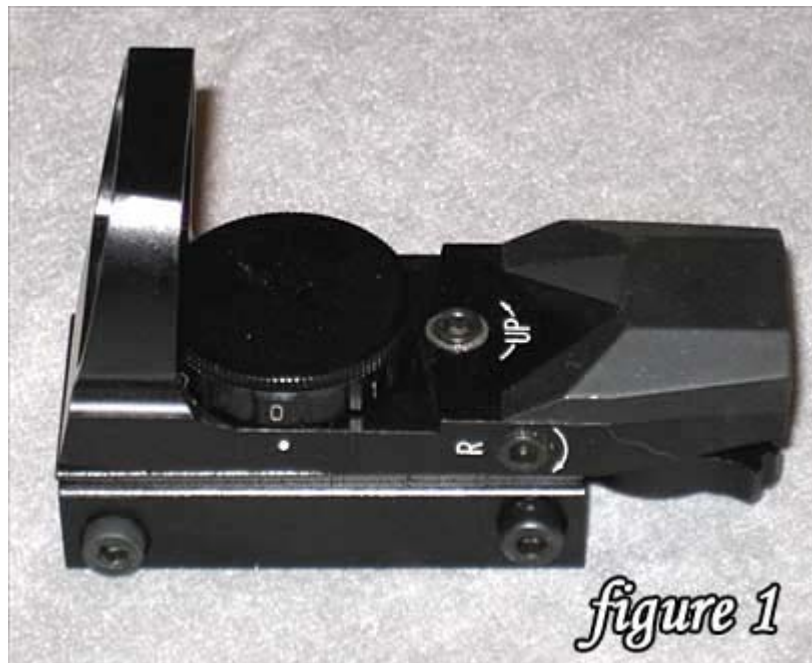
Now for the sights. In my travels, I had picked up a DPMS flat top A2 rear sight. What I really wanted (to look COOL) was some sort of electronic red dot sight. I tried a red dot "tube" type, but it was cumbersome and needed to be mounted on a riser which did not make it in line with the iron sights (co witness so to speak). I did some searching and came up with really nice electronic sights from a variety of makers, but all were heads and shoulders ABOVE what I wanted to spend. There are the Colts, C mores, Trijions, Eotechs, Elcans and Leupolds. All very nice and very expensive sights.

So I waited...until I noticed a flyer from Grafs and Sons that had the new BSA PMDS multi dot electronic sight for sale. Now I've been using BSA scopes on most of my rifles for years. Even use one of their big 8-32x 1/8"mil dot scopes for my indoor .22 league with

great results. So I got a hold of one of the new units.

My first choice was to mount it (and it will stay with) my Clone 4 rifle. But, being that we in the mil surp world have PLENTY of other types of short carbines laying around, I thought it would be a great idea to try it out on some others. The two others I picked were the very common M44 Russian Mosin Nagant and the SKS semi auto.

The sight comes complete with an allen wrench used for mounting and sight adjustment. A 3V di-lithium crystal battery is also included. It goes into the battery compartment which is under the on/off/selector knob on the top side of the sight. Mounting the sight is very easy. It has an integrated rail for standard 5/8" dovetail bases. It fit on the Picatinny rail flat top of my DPMS receiver with no issues. It has unlimited eye relief, so you do not have to worry how far out it is from your eyes, instructions say to keep it at least 3" out. There is no optical power built into the sight, you just look right into the heads up display type glass and you will see the red dot. There are two basic controls on the sight. The first is on the top and serves as the on/off/brightness control. The second is on the back with a lever that controls the size of the dot. There is an elevation and a windage allen screw on the sight, each with 1 MOA click adjustments (1 click = 1" at 100 yards or 1/2" at 50 yards).



The BSA PMDS sight has very basic controls. The brightness of the dot (and on/off) is controlled by the large dial on the top. Windage and elevation is adjusted with allen screws. Length is 82mm and weight is 115grams.



At the bottom of the photo is what looks like a throw lever. It is used to adjust the size of the dot.

To zero the sight on the Clone-4, it was a matter of first sighting in the A2 iron sights. Once I had that done, I simply adjusted the BSA sight until the red dot was on top of the front post. Subsequent shooting had me adjust it so that it was slightly below the very tip of the front post. Then it was blast away time. I noticed that it was easier to sight and shoot with the rear small aperture setting and the red dot when firing off of the bench. When shooting unsupported offhand, it was easier to sight and shoot using the larger rear aperture setting and keeping both eyes open. After shooting for such a long time with a traditional "one eye closed" scope, it took a few shots to get totally used to it. But it was easy to sight and shoot let me tell you! I was able to place all the shots easily and rapidly into the black at 50 yards. Just so that you understand though, these types of sights are not designed for extreme accuracy but rather fast quick "kill" shots.



The BSA PMDS sight co witnesses nicely with the M4-clone flat top upper. The upper barrel/receiver and the rear A2 sights are DPMS. The lower is Stag Arms.



You can see the red dot and how it aligns with the front post. These types of electronic red dot sights allow for quick both eyes open shooting.

After zipping through 100 rounds of 5.56mm ammo (hey, with a 30 rd mag it doesn't take very long), I set up the BSA sight on the M44 Russian Mosin Nagant.

With the M44 I wanted to test a couple of things. First, it was the mounting of the sight using a "cheap" aluminum type rail that is a no gunsmith type replacement for the rear sight. I had tried this same mount on my 91/30 with miserable results because it kept working itself loose. This time, I used a couple of drops of Loctite on each screw. I also had to file some of base along the front of the mount to make it fit on the M44. Easily done as the mount is aluminum. I mounted the BSA sight onto the rails. In order to get

the first shots on the paper, I needed to bore sight it, again, easily accomplished by removing the bolt and placing the rifle in a steady rest and comparing the view through the sight vs. the view through the barrel.



The scout type mount for the Mosin series of rifles is cheap. It's soft aluminum, which is good, because you'll have to shape it with a file to fit on certain rifles. Here is the BSA sight mounted on a Russian M44.

I wanted to see how the sight would hold up to full powered 7.62x54R ammo in terms of recoil and muzzle blast. I did not have any problems. Once I got it sighted in off the bench, I went to offhand and just popped them into the black just as fast as I could shoot. For whatever reason, it seemed easier to shoot the carbine with this sight. Trigger control seems to be easier when all you are concentrating on is a red dot vs. looking at a front post, rear notch and a target. I liked the shooting, but I wasn't done just yet with the M44.



The M44 Russian carbine can be a real bear to shoot with full powered 7.62x54R ammo, but with the light recoil ammo there was no pain.

I had stopped in for a visit to the Military Gun Supply store in Ft. Worth. (<http://militarygunsupply.com/shop/features.asp>) on a recent trip to TX. They have lots of fun mil surp weapons that you can browse through. Not only that, they pretty much have all the different lots and types of mil surp ammo that is currently available, like the 8x56R, 7.5 Swiss, and 7.5 French to name a few. I picked up a couple of boxes of some "light recoil " 43gr 7.62x54R ammo. It is suppose to have about the recoil of a .233 and the velocity of the speed of light (well..okay, they say it's 3200 fps which is nothing to sneeze at). Plus, it is designed to cycle semi auto weapons in that caliber and have the accuracy to reach out to 200 yards. I figured now would be a good time to try out the ammo. All I can say is that they are wrong about the recoil being like .223....it's MUCH lighter in a heavy rifle like the M44! But it DOES have a nice muzzle blast! I only bought two boxes to try out so I didn't have enough to test at 100 yards nor try out the Chrony on it, but the results I got shooting at 50 yards makes it quite comparable to what regular 7.62x54R ammo did.



Ammo on the right is the full powered 7.62x54R Albanian surplus ammo. The ammo on the left is the light recoil 43 grain bullet, supposedly with a velocity of 3200 fps.

The final rifle I wanted to test the sight on was the SKS. Here I used the Scout Scopes SKS mount that replaces the rear sight. Again, as in the case of the M44, I bore sighted the scope to the rifle. In this case, I had to remove the bolt and bolt housing in order to see down the bore, but it wasn't that big a deal. The problem I ran into had nothing to do with the sight, it was my fault having not taken the time to tighten the 4 screws on the mount that keep the mount tight up against the rifle. Once I did that, the shooting proceeded as in the other two cases. Just aim the dot and pull the trigger. My SKS trigger leaves a lot to be desired, I found it harder to shoot this rifle compared to the other two. Again, that has nothing to do with the sight.



Here is an SKS with the BSA optics mounted on the rifle using the Scout Scopes SKS mount. (see <http://www.surplusrifle.com/reviews2005/sksscoutscopemnt/index.asp>)

In all cases, the sight performed well and had no functional issues. It stayed on nice and tight to the various mounts and the electronics didn't fritz out or dim on firing. The ONE issue that I have with the sight is that the dot was a bit on the dim side for firing on a very bright day and I had troubles finding it against the black background of the target. I could see the dot fine against the light colored part of the target. I am sure that on a "dim" day, the dot would be much more visible. I would suspect that this same issue is common to most red dot type sights.

Again, this sight is a basic electronic sight. BSA also offers a version of the same sight that has 4 reticle patterns to choose from. That model is called the PMRS and runs the same cost as the PMDS sight that I used. At a cost of about \$50 for dealer pricing from Midway or Grafs, it's a fun little sight to plink with and looks really cool on whatever rifle you mount it on.



The DPMS upper, Stag lower and combination iron/electronic sights makes for one wicked little shooting package!

[Adobe PDF Downloadable Version of Article](#)

Article by [R.Ted Jeo](#)