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The idea for the following article came from email questions I have received and messages that I have read on C&R related message boards.

The question that is continuously asked is -

**Which SKS is the better Carbine/Rifle?**

Some folks say the **Russian SKS**, some the **Yugo SKS**, some the **Chinese SKS**, some say other SKS.....I have my own opinions like everyone else. I decided to take the SKS that I own and put them to the test at the range to see what I could figure out based upon performance and accuracy.



I have three different **countries of origin**, manufactured SKS Carbine/Rifles (*I say Rifle, because I really do not consider the Yugo 59/66 to be a Carbine*). I own a couple of the **Yugo 59/66 SKS**, a **Chinese SKS**, and a **Romanian SKS**. I figured this was a good sampling of what is available and also this is all I have so it would have to suffice.

I like each SKS Carbine/Rifle I own for different reasons. The **Chinese SKS** is light and handy; the **Yugo 59/66** is stout and sturdy, while the respectful and stately **Romanian SKS** is the grandpa of the group with milled parts. When I found grandpa, he had no bluing left anywhere and his wood was in pretty bad shape. His saving grace was that his bore was in excellent condition - so after some detailed attention and loving care, I had him looking like the way he used to look like when he was first carried by some unknown soldier.

### Test Outline

The test would be comprised of me and another shooter taking each SKS and shooting at distances of **25**, **50**, and **100** yards. Each shooting

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session, **both shooters** would have **15 minutes** to fire **10 rounds** from **one of the three SKS**. During each cease fire we would safely go out and inspect the targets. We would record and document the scores of each shooting session and photograph the targets to display on Surplusrifle.com. We estimated the total test would take three hours to complete.

We would use the standard **SR-1, Official 100 Yard Military Type Target**. The SR-1 has 6 rings, starting with 5 at the outermost circle and counting into the 10 and X rings. The 9, 10, and X rings are black. The 10 and the X rings are both worth 10 points.

Each shooter could score a possible 100 points, each rifle, per shooting session.

*What could be better than to spend a Saturday shooting at the range?*

I had my own guesses as to which SKS would out perform the others. As with any experiment you make some assumptions and then set out to prove or disprove them. This is what we did. I enlisted my friend Tony and we set out to the range with a box of good Russian ammo and three different SKS.

### Predictions and Assumptions

Each test SKS was in equal condition and Tony and I are similar shooters in skill, although Tony sometimes out shoots me.

I believed the experiment would play out this way: The **Yugo 59/66 SKS** would come in first place over-all in accuracy, followed by the **Romanian SKS**, and then the **Chinese SKS** would come in last.

My basis for the assumption was, the Yugo is over-all heavier with a heavier and longer barrel with better sights. Follow-up shots with the Yugo would be more accurate. The Romanian is a higher quality made SKS than the Chinese SKS. I felt milled parts and a threaded barrel would prevail over stamped parts and a pinned barrel. Also, I had prior experience separately with each SKS that seemed to confirm my theories.

### .....at the Range



When we arrived at the range it was pouring down rain and cold as shown in **figure 1** (*although it is difficult to convey temperature in a photo, trust me it was miserable*). We were under a roof while shooting, so we decided to proceed with the test. Soon the rain stopped and.....the wind started. As shown in **figure 2**, the chain on the target stapler is being blown pretty hard, while **figure 3** shows debris being blown off of the shooting benches. When I get an idea, I am pretty determined to see it through. Since the wind was coming from directly behind, we decided to continue the test as it would not affect accuracy all that much. We would shoot the test until it started raining again. If it started raining now it would be **horizontal rain** (*rain combined with very high wind*). If this did happen, no overhead protection would keep the deluge off of the test SKS and us.

**Note:** I thought to myself that this was a more realistic test, after all the SKS were made for battle and designed to work under less than favorable conditions. Normally battles are not postponed until it is sunny and calm.

### Random Observations While at the Range

- 1) Two people, only shooting 10 rounds each, every 15 minutes makes for a longer day than you would imagine;
- 2) The **Chinese SKS** had much more noticeable recoil than the other SKS, probably due to its lighter weight;
- 3) The **Romanian SKS** was considerably louder when fired than the other two test SKS;
- 4) It is really difficult to wear a ball cap or any hat in winds gusting to 50 mph;
- 5) Continued exposure to high winds....sucks.



I started out shooting the **Yugo 59/66** at 25 yards and scored a **97** as shown in **table 3** below.

**Figure 4** shows me shooting the **Yugo 59/66 SKS** during the 50 yard session.

**Note:** When shooting at 100 yards, the wind was so strong we could not stop the sighting scope from vibrating. This made it almost impossible to see the actual bullet holes on the target, especially if in the black. Every time I fired a round and Tony could not see any indication of a hit in the white areas of the target, we would make the assumption that it was **somewhere in the black**.....(and we were correct).

### Test Conclusions



What developed for me, as show below in **table 1**, is that over-all I shot the **Chinese SKS** better than the other Carbiners. For both shooters the **Chinese SKS** scored consistently high at each distance. At 100 yards the **Romanian SKS** turned in the best score for me. Some of my targets at 100 yards looked like I was spraying the target with .30 caliber buckshot.

Averaging each SKS score between both shooters (*as shown below in table 8*), the **Chinese SKS** comes in first with a **90**, followed by the **Yugo 59/66 SKS**, in second place, with an **88**, and the **Romanian SKS** comes in with an **87**.

If you just add the scores of both shooters for each SKS, you get similar results (*as shown below in table 7*). The **Chinese SKS** comes in first with **543/600**. The **Yugo 59/66 SKS** comes in second with **533/600**. The **Romanian SKS** falls into third with a score of **523/600**.

What I conclude is that the **Chinese SKS** shot better, during the test, than the other carbines, but not by much. I am really surprised by the results because this is not what I predicted would happen. I realize this was not a

scientific test and the resulting performance may be isolated to the SKS we shot during the test. I am not saying you should all go out and purchase the **Chinese SKS** because it is a better SKS than the others. Actually, I sort of still stand by my original assumptions and may conduct the test again, while expanding the quantity of SKS tested and shooters involved (and during better weather). I still believe the Yugo is the better of the three. If you look at my score on the Yugo, it is uncharacteristically low as compared to my other sessions While Tony shot his best on the Yugo. My Yugo low score may have just been a fluke due to weather or other reasons. Even if the Yugo had come in first place, the Chinese would have come in second.

Really, all I think I have done is added more spice to the soup and may have not answered anything. You be the judge.

One thing is for sure, I am going to keep an eye on my **Chinese SKS** - maybe it is a better SKS than I first thought?

jlm ;)

[Click here to view photos of all test targets!](#)

Table 1							
Rifle:	Chinese SKS Carbine			Shooter:	Jamie		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards			1		4	5	98
50 yards	1			3	6		87
100 yards	1	1	2	4	1	1	85
						Total:	270

Table 2							
Rifle:	Romanian SKS Carbine			Shooter:	Jamie		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards				6	4		94
50 yards	1	2	2	5			81
100 yards			2	5	3		91
						Total:	266

Table 3							
Rifle:	Yugo SKS Carbine/Rifle			Shooter:	Jamie		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards			1	1	5	3	97
50 yards		2	3	3	1	1	85
100 yards	2	2	4	1	1		77

							Total:	259
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Table 4							
Rifle:	Chinese SKS Carbine			Shooter:	Tony		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards			1	2	4	3	97
50 yards		2	2	5	1		85
100 yards			3	3	4		91
						Total:	273

Table 5							
Rifle:	Romanian SKS Carbine			Shooter:	Tony		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards				3	4	3	97
50 yards				7	2	1	93
100 yards		6	2	1			67
						Total:	257

Table 6							
Rifle:	Yugo SKS Carbine/Rifle			Shooter:	Tony		
Distance	6 ring	7 ring	8 ring	9 ring	10 ring	"X" ring	Total
25 yards					4	6	100
50 yards				5	4	1	95
100 yards	1	2	5	1		1	79
						Total:	274

Table 7				
Rifle	Jamie	Tony	Total Scores	Place
Chinese SKS Carbine	270	273	543	FIRST
Romanian SKS Carbine	266	257	523	THIRD
Yugo SKS Carbine/Rifle	259	274	533	SECOND

Table 8				
Rifle	Jamie	Tony	Avg Scores	Place
Chinese SKS Carbine	90	91	90	FIRST
Romanian SKS Carbine	89	85	87	THIRD
Yugo SKS Carbine/Rifle	86	91	88	SECOND