

Collecting and Shooting the Military Surplus Rifle



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kivaari's match/target SK



Article Written by: Jamie Mangrum

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I admit that for the longest time I really did not understand what anyone ever saw in the MAS 36 rifle. I realize now that my opinion was solely based upon the first one that I ever owned. It was a very ugly looking specimen. The metal appeared to be painted and was chipping off in most places. The overall quality really reminded my of an early 20th century toy rifle in quality and appearance. Also, the lack of having a safety and instead half cocking the bolt is not a endearing trait at all.

As a result the MAS 36 is one of the least expanded sections here on Surplusrifle.com. But please believe me this is



*figure 2*

something that will be remedied soon because I have had a change of heart. I now look at the little MAS 36 with a different eye. I made several trades this past summer and as a result ended up with quite a few French rifles. Luckily some were arsenal refurbished MAS 36 rifles that looked like they were unissued. These MAS 36 rifles have a really nice dark parkerized finish.



The wood is brand new and the bores are bright and shiny. Once I found a good supply of 7.5x54 MAS ammunition, which is not an easy thing to do, I was off to the range to shoot my new acquisitions. I have to say that I really like the sights on the MAS 36. In my opinion they are comparable to the Enfield No. 4 and the U.S. 03A3 in functionality and performance. With the size (width) of the front sight post, the sight picture as seen in **figure 3** is perfect for aging eyes.



The standard French Service rifle of WWII was the MAS Model (19)36 rifle in 7.5x54 caliber.

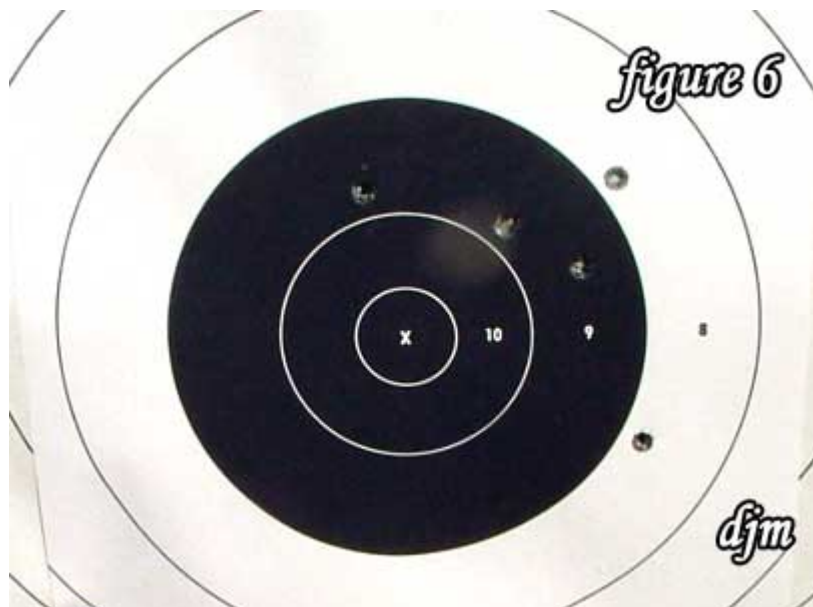
| Specifications for the MAS 36 Rifle |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Barrel Length:                      | 22.6 in     |
| Overall Length:                     | 40.15 in    |
| Weight:                             | 8 lbs 5 oz. |
| Action:                             | Bolt Action |

|                    |          |
|--------------------|----------|
| Caliber:           | 7.5x54mm |
| Magazine Capacity: | 5        |



Loading the MAS 36 with stripper clips is a breeze. After I shot off a few 5 round groups at 50 yards, this is when my opinion really started to change. If a rifle is consistently accurate like this then who cares what it looks like. The surplus ammo I was shooting was surprisingly accurate. With a slip-on but pad that was originally intended for the grenade launching version of this rifle the MAS 36/51 I found the recoil to be mild and shooting the rifle to be enjoyable. Time after time I was

able to produce targets like **figure 5**.



Getting a little cocky I decided to move my target out to 100 yards to see if the accuracy continued. Although the groups opened up a little (as shown in **figure 6**), I was able to still keep the majority of my shots consistently in the black.

#### Let me count the positive aspects of the MAS 36:

- It is light and easy to handle;
- The sights are excellent;
- The rifle is very accurate;
- Surplus ammo is fairly accurate;

- When in good condition it can be a handsome rifle.

**Let met count the negative aspects of the MAS 36:**

- The ammo is difficult to find and is mostly corrosive;
- The rifle lacks a safety and instead you pull the bolt handle upwards. The problem if you have a round in the chamber is when carrying the rifle it is easy to accidentally knock the bolt down. This is an unsafe feature or lack of a feature.

The MAS 36 is a great little rifle that can be found at local gun stores and shows for around \$200 or less for one in excellent condition. I am now a MAS 36 convert and have taken several great specimens off of the market.

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