



Sporting guns are
meant for hunting.

Yildiz

does the job on English outing

Mark van den Boogaart

In the big wide world of firearms and ammo there's no snobbery like shotgun snobbery - brand loyalty rules and there's a gun to suit every bank account and ego. Now I don't have a problem with expensive firearms, I own one or two myself, but also try hard to be objective, to consider things on their merit and make my own judgments.

A case in point is when I was given the chance to field review the Yildiz Pro Black shotgun on a trip to England, the evaluation part of a superb four-week holiday which included deer hunting, wing shooting and checking out new gear. I'd be spending a day wing shooting across various situations including working with dogs, driven shoots and some speculative walk-up shooting over cropped fields.

Just like attitudes towards shotguns, in England there's most certainly a class structure around shooting though happily this was a farm shoot - something akin to a weekend cricket match - yes there are some rules and traditions to follow but it's

far more relaxed. The gun I'd be using was a Yildiz Pro Black, a sporting over-and-under in 12-gauge, though there are other calibres available. The Turkish-built Pro Black is Yildiz's answer to the more fancied Italian shotguns.

The review gun was a leftie with a subtle cant in the stock and what I'd regard as an ambidextrous pistol grip. Overall the stock design and layout, combined with the adjustable comb, meant getting my eye in was pretty easy and I've no doubt with a little more time and adjustment the gun could be nicely tuned to the individual user.

Examining the stock in more detail there's lots of bang for your buck and the Yildiz Pro Black is available in five grades of timber, the review gun being Grade 4, a high-quality piece of wood at what I'd consider the high end of the scale. Balancing it was a well-matched fore-end which really brought it all together and enhanced the overall appeal. Initial impressions were the attention to detail on this gun is spot-on with clean, deep chequering

while timber-to-metal finish is first-rate. The recoil pad is good though something I'd consider changing as, while it wasn't sticky, it felt a little factory 'spongy' for my liking.

As the day's shoot was taking place in a lot of muddy fields I wasn't able to pull the action apart, but what I was able to see from removing the fore-end and barrels was a high level of eminence and attention to detail. The machining was clean, crisp and the fit at a component level was of good quality. In considering the layout I did like the length and throw of the top lever and thought its positioning complemented the trigger, safety and barrel selectors, the trigger itself being positive and I never felt any lag or delay. In truth, the trigger promoted quicker shooting. Finally, ejection was well timed and positive, creating the feel of a solid hunting gun.

The barrels of the test gun were 30" and came with a multi-choke option and 6mm vented rib, the sighting bead a fluorescent red plastic rod held in a steel cradle. Barrel length options mean shooters can have



A fine choice for hunting on the move.



Close-up of the Yildiz Pro Black action.



Open action shows some of the clean lines of the manufacturing process.

what they want straight out of the box or perhaps buy extra barrels to mix and match to suit individual needs. Personally, I'd have preferred 28s as I do like a more compact gun.

The reality is I'm far more of a hunter than a range shooter so any firearm review has to include some field time. With the Yildiz it was different as it was all field shooting and what that meant was after an initial familiarisation with the gun and listening to the shoot captain on the rules of the day, it was time to fill both pockets with suitable bird loads and be ready to put some birds on the ground.

As a hunting option it was a comfortable gun to carry over the length of a short English winter's day and was well suited to someone who likes to stay on the move and, when pheasants started flying and things turned serious, the Yildiz came to the shoulder cleanly and pointed well. It also swung well but as I was politely informed after my first attempt on a hen pheasant, I had to swing more if I wanted to

actually hit something! Suitably chastised I spent the day practising with the gun and after a couple of hours felt confident with everything, while the muted black action combined with the darker walnut finish certainly enhanced the overall aesthetic. During the day the gun helped me score my first partridge, actually only half a partridge as, after tailing one, my shooting partner Iain dropped it with a follow-up shot. Coincidentally, he was also using a Yildiz.

All in all I thoroughly enjoyed using and hunting with the Pro Black and, in considering this shotgun, it seems Yildiz have managed to produce something which breaks the current mould of a typical Turkish shotgun and delivered a highly competitive option for the mid-range market in Australia. With that in mind, if you want to measure something by how it functions, how it looks and you want value for money, give the Yildiz Pro Sport some of your time. ●

Specifications

Name: Yildiz Pro Black Grade 4 left-hand adjustable
Type: Over-and-under
Calibre: 12-gauge
Barrel: 30"/762mm
Chamber: 3"/76.2mm
Multi choke: 5
Length: 47.5"/1206.5mm
Weight: 7.5lb/ 3.4kg
Trigger: Single selective
Finish: Muted black
Stock: Grade 4 walnut
RRP: \$4895 but shop around