

MINI-GUN TRIPLE PLAY

Three deep-cover hideaways - now in hot new .17HMR and 17 Mach 2!

For the police officer to tuck into a shirt pocket behind the badge, the little North American Arms' revolver has been a perfect choice since around 1976. For the civilian, the .22 Short version will even fit in a watch pocket. Speaking of small timepieces, these elegant little stainless steel guns have always been made with watchlike precision.

In addition to the tiny and concealable versions, NAA in 1990 introduced the Mini-Master Target with a full-sized black rubber grip and a 4-inch heavy ribbed barrel. This was followed in 1991 by the Mini-Master Black Widow with a similar grip and a 2-inch heavy barrel. Both of these have adjustable Millett sights with an orange front bar and white-framed rear notch. While not as easy to conceal, they get into the camping and plinking category.



NAA Mini-Master, Black Widow, and Mini .17 convertible

Gun Details

Now, in 2005, NAA has chambered those neat little guns for the hypervelocity .17 rimfire cartridges, the .17HMR and 17 Mach 2. In case you came in late, the "HMR" stands for Hornady Magnum Rimfire, and it is a .22 Magnum necked down to a .17 caliber. The 17 Mach 2 is the .22LR, done the same. The ballistics are amazing; the tiny 17-grain bullet of the HMR has a muzzle velocity of 2550 feet per second (fps). When used in varmint rifles, the polymer-tipped Hornady VMax bullet has remarkable stability.

Just as the earlier .22 Magnum versions had optional convertability to .22LR, three of the new .17s have the same option



The regular NAA Mini is truly palm-sized. The 17 Mach1 with a 1.12 barrel.

between .17HMR and 17 Mach 2. The conversion is quite simple; you just put in the other cylinder. The .17HMR cylinder is marked on its front face with an "H" while the Mach 2 cylinder has a "2" in the same location. In the same way, the .22 versions are marked "M" and "LR." Of all the models, my own favorites are the .22 Shorts for concealment, and the Black Widow with the .22LR cylinder for plinking.

Range Time

Getting back to the new .17s, I recently took three of them out to the range. These were a Mini-Master Target convertible, a regular 1.62-inch barrel .17HMR convertible, and 1.12-inch barrel 17 Mach 2. I fired the two small guns only for functioning (they worked fine), and used the Mini-Master for the target work. Firing was at 25 yards from a casual rest, using standard targets.

With the 17 Mach 2 cylinder installed, the first group was nicely centered, one hit going through the zero in the "10" printed on the target. The measurement was just 1.62 inches. Those tiny .17 caliber holes in the paper look as if an airgun had been used. From the shooting point they were invisible, and one might think that the entire target-frame had been missed.

The .17HMR cylinder was put in, and it did almost as well, delivering a well centered 2-inch group with one in the 10-ring. That one, though, and the one in the 8-ring, showed evidence of canted entry. This would seem to be puzzling, as this new cartridge has a reputation for long-range stability and accuracy. I am going to speculate that perhaps a 4-inch barrel is not quite enough to stabilize this hyper-velocity bullet. I note, though, that even with the canting, the Mini-Master still shot a good 25-yard group. If you were using one of these for personal defense, a little tumbling might not be a bad thing.

The Mini-Master Target has a new and different latch for the cylinder base pin that works by pulling it downward and turning it crossways to slide it out. It is not difficult to master, but I much prefer their original push-button release. The adjustable rear sight worked perfectly with clicks as the vertical screw is turned. However, by the time I was on the target at 25 yards, there were very few threads left on that screw. A few more would be a good idea.

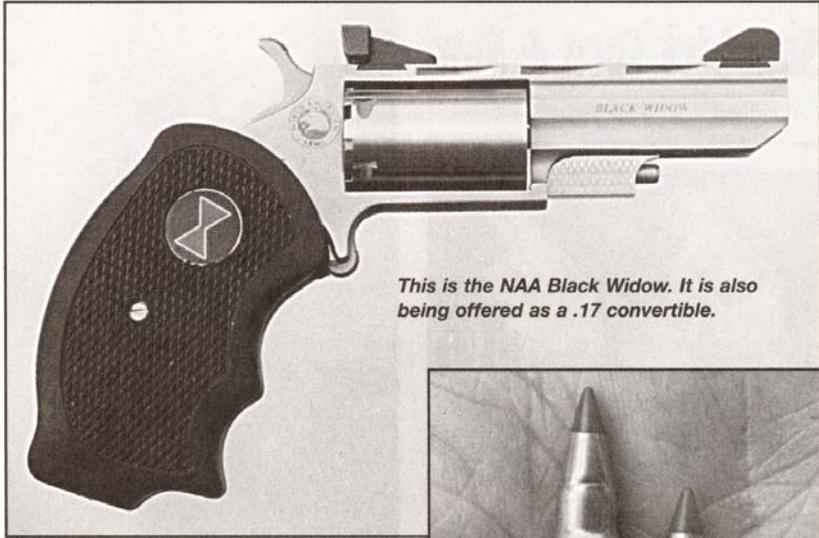
The little cartridges, especially the 17 Mach 2, are downright cute; they, and the guns performed well. My only problem now is actually funny-of all this gear that has accumulated for more than 50 years, I don't have a .17 caliber cleaning rod!



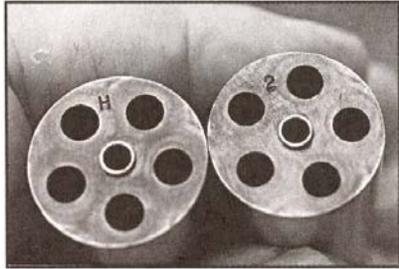
A 25-yard target with the 17 Mach 2. Note the four 10-ring hits.



At 25 yards with the 17 Mach 2, a good group, but on two of the shots there was some canting. Note the 10-ring hole and the lower right.



This is the NAA Black Widow. It is also being offered as a .17HMR convertible.



With the convertibles, the front faces of the cylinders are clearly marked: H for .17HMR, and "2" for the 17 Mach 2.



The long and the short of it. The .17HMR on the left, the 17 Mach 2 at right.

**Specifications:
Mini-Master Target**

Caliber: .17HMR, 17 Mach 2
Barrel: 4 inches
OA Length: 7.87 inches
Weight: 10.7 ounces
Grips: Rubber
Sights: Fixed/adjustable
Operation: SA
Finish: Stainless steel
Capacity: 5-shot

**Specifications:
Mini-Master Black Widow**

Caliber: .17HMR, 17 Mach 2
Barrel: 2 inches
OA Length: 5.87 inches
Weight: 8.8 ounces
Grips: Rubber
Sights: Fixed/adjustable
Operation: SA
Finish: Stainless steel
Capacity: 5-shot

**Specifications:
Mini Standard**

Caliber: .17HMR, 17 Mach 2
Barrel: 1.12/1.62 inches
OA Length: 3.62/6.12 inches
Weight: 4/6.6 ounces
Grips: Rubber
Sights: Fixed/adjustable
Operation: SA
Finish: Stainless steel
Capacity: 5-shot

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CONCEALED CARRY BASICS
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GUN TESTS NAA MINI-MASTER STANDARD .17HMR • KAHR T9 9mm
 S&W 351PD .22MAG • BERETTA M21A BOBCAT .25ACP
 GLOCK 26 9mm • WALTHER PPK/S .380ACP • MORE!

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