

Tanya Faulds, one of the U.K.'s top women shooters with her Syren Tempio Sporting model.

By Nick Sisley

SYREN SHOTGUNS

The ranks of women shooters are on the rise. At the top of the sporting clays category are Desirae Edmonds, Janet McDougall, Diane Sorantino and many others. In Olympic shooting and other clay target work there's the inimitable Kim Rhode. In skeet shooting there's Becky McCumber, Lindsay Plesco, Louise Terry and rising very young stars like Victoria Stellato and Bettina Wohlforth. In the hunting realm the feminine set numbers are rising as fast – if not faster

than in clay target work.

So why no shotguns made especially for women?

That's what Wes Lang of Caesar Guerini USA thought. Evidently so did Giorgio and Antonio Guerini in Italy, the moving engineering and ingenuity forces behind Caesar Guerini and today's Fabarm shotguns. While



Caesar Guerini might not be a name with the longevity of say a Remington or a Winchester – in a little over a decade Caesar Guerini has taken shotgun-dom by storm.

Why? Maybe a little history would help to answer. Wes Lang's history goes back to



starting in wholesale gun sales, then as Sales Manager at Seminole Gunworks, a stint with Beretta, a publishing role with a major outdoor magazine chain, followed by Sig Arms when the company marketed shotguns. Giorgio and Antonio Guerini had a vision, and they approached Wes Lang with it: make exceptional over/unders for both clay target work and hunting. The company has stuck by its guns, in that they only make over/unders, and they are very good ones. In time they came out with many models – but all were based on the same super-strong lockup system.

There was no Caesar Guerini factory in those beginning years, so the guns were made in the Fabarm factory in Brescia, the Italian gunmaking Mecca. All engineering and manufacturing were

under the scrutinizing eyes of Giorgio and Antonio. Since production started in 2002, this company has sold every gun they have ever produced, obviously a sweet fact to their bottom line. A few years ago Fabarm brass decided it was time to retire. That's when Caesar Guerini bought the factory and the rights to produce Fabarm shotguns.

Some of Caesar Guerini's biggest home runs have been with the Summit Sporting model and the Impact series of high adjustable rib and high adjustable comb models – of which there are now several. With the purchase of Fabarm, a company that had been producing quite a number of semiautos and over/unders, Wes, Giorgio and Antonio were cautious about diving into the figurative deep end of “many” models.

So they took a slow approach. The Impact series was riding an unbelievable high among shotgun buyers so Guerini decided to bring out one semiauto—remember Caesar Guerini only makes over/unders and it's still that way—so why not give that semiauto the same “impact” as the Guerini Impact O/U? Thus, the Fabarm XLR5 was born—the first semiauto with the top-selling high adjustable rib and high adjustable comb. Today there are three models in the Fabarm XLR5 semiauto line up – all are the same save for differing rib and comb configurations. Like the Caesar Guerini over/unders, the Fabarm XLR5 wasn't just a home run, it was a grand slam.

So what to try next? Enter the Syren series. There's not just one model. There are several including over/unders and



The Tempio Sporting Model



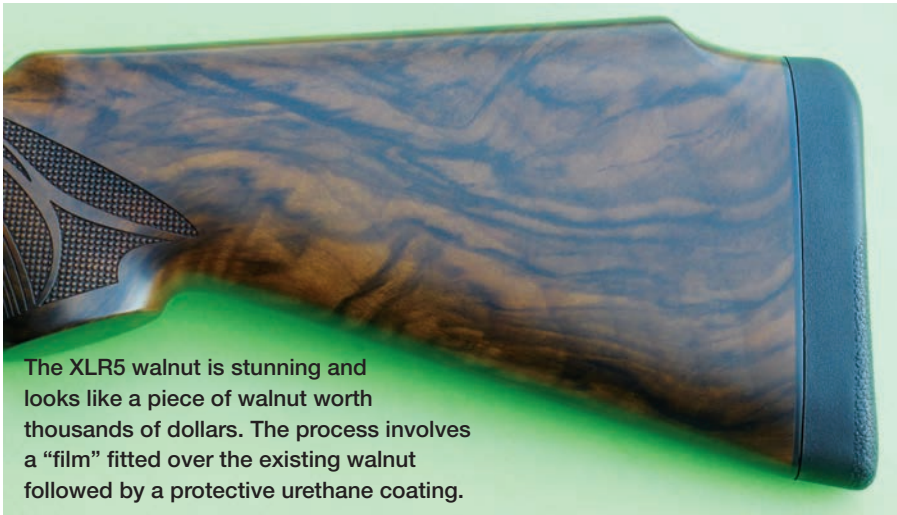
XLR5 semiauto Sporting Model



New for 2015, the Tempio Magnus



Marie Palmer puts the Syren XLR5 12 gauge to the clay bird test.



The XLR5 walnut is stunning and looks like a piece of walnut worth thousands of dollars. The process involves a “film” fitted over the existing walnut followed by a protective urethane coating.



The pistol grip on the Syren XLR5 has slightly more re-curve, said to better fit a woman's hand.



Note the very long Exis HP screw chokes. Five are provided with the Syren XLR5.

a semiauto, all aimed strictly at women shooters. There are Sporting models for virtually all the clay target games and Field models that are ideal for most any feather and furred stuff imaginable.

What makes the Syren series different are different cosmetics, i.e. more feminine looks and less so-called masculine, and different stock dimensions. There's no nuclear science involved in realizing that women are built different than men. First off, ladies are generally smaller; secondly, they're built differently in other obvious ways. A stock that fits a 6-foot, 2-inch tall muscular 200-pounder won't fit a 6-foot, 8-inch tall 300-pounder, or a demure, buxom lady of 5 feet, 6 inches at 110 pounds.

So let's begin by breaking down and inspecting the several Syren models and start with the Syren XLR5 semiauto. Admittedly, this one is aimed more at clay target breaking than quail or ringnecks, though it will do very well for either. Offered only in 12 gauge, the Syren XLR5 weighs in at 7 pounds, 10 ounces on my digital postal scale. The 28-inch barrel (also offered in 30 and 32 inches) hefted 2 pounds, 3.5 ounces. A previous Fabarm XLR5 barrel went 2 pounds, 7 ounces. So was the Syren XLR5 barrel trimmed a tad for a few ounces less weight? The Syren fore-end went 6.5 ounces.

The Syren XLR5 bore takes some explanation. Dubbed Tribore HP, the inner barrel dimensions are like no other. Instead of a traditional forcing cone right in front of the chamber—or a so-called extended (longer) forcing cone—there is no forcing cone. Here's what I measured with my Baker Barrel Reader. Right in front of the chamber area the inner dimension is .737 inch, which is lots of overboring. But that same .737-inch dimension stays the same for about half the length of the barrel. Then a very slow taper starts. It takes the remaining half of the forward part of the barrel to taper from .737" to .728" right before the threads for the screw-in choke tubes. That's only .009" taper in about 14-inches.

How does Tribore HP affect performance?

It's simple. With no forcing cone, no pellets are deformed, as they can be when the shot column is forced into a smaller space, like from the chamber (usually about .800" in 12 gauge) to the squeezing in the forcing cone. In days of yore, forcing cones were a necessity because of fiber and paper wads. Without a sharp forcing cone gases could leak



A close-up view of the Syren Elos receiver with its beautiful laser-cut engraving.

past the fiber or paper wad disrupting the shot column and negatively affecting patterns. With plastic wads there is a much better seal so gases can't get past the plastic wad – forcing cone or no forcing cone.

The gun's gas operation is big on recoil reduction. Actually, the recoil is spread over more milliseconds, thus the feel of recoil is much reduced. The XLR5 has a steel gas piston, which may also be instrumental in less felt recoil. I feel that this piston has to be very big in reliable function. These semis just plain work, without malfunction.

Check the close-up of a Syren XLR5 receiver. The finish is called Titanium Silver. Obviously it is corrosion resistant, but the finish is also attractive (though with no sheen) and it allows the laser-cut engraving to show very well. The engraving pattern is different when compared to the Fabarm XLR5 engraving, which is offered in a blued receiver – the Titanium Silver, only the for the Syren. The engraving change is meant to have feminine appeal.

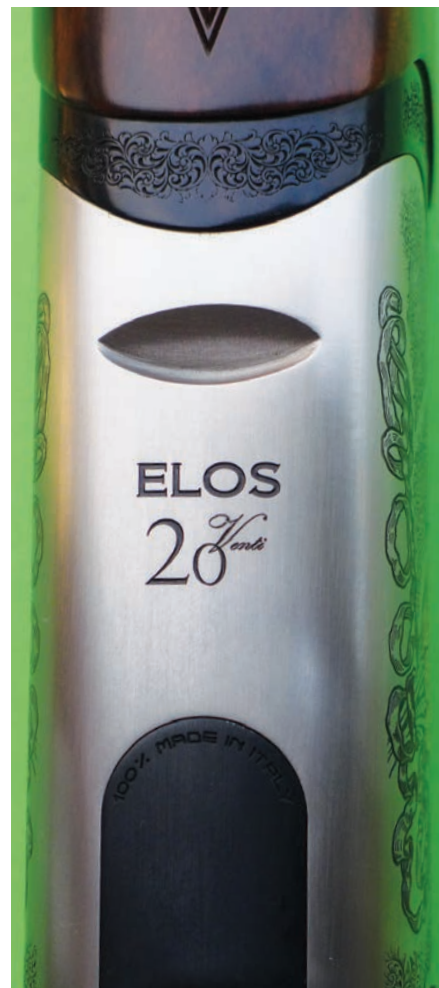
Then there's the wood. This is not a wood upgrade but is done through a process called Triwood. Walnut is used with plenty of straight-grain strength at the wrist and grip area. Next a "film" is placed over the walnut that gives the wood that \$4,000 walnut look. The "film" is urethane coated. Finally, there's the

handsome hand-rubbed oil finish.

The checkering on the Syren is also a bit different—more lady-like—on both the grip and the fore-end. Without "diamonds," each checkering peak is rounded. How do the stock dimensions differ? Obviously, length of pull is one aspect. Most Guerini and Fabarm stocks are 14.75 inches. The Syren XLR5 stock has 13.75 inches LOP. This is not the only difference. The drop at comb is 1.5 inches, drop at heel (note the Monte Carlo-like step down in the stock photo) is 2.25", cast at heel is .125", cast at toe .375", pitch 6 degrees, reach 4", all measured when the trigger (which is adjustable back and forth) is at its midposition. Further, the grip has slightly more re-curve than the masculine model—said to fit a woman's hand better.

The recoil pad is rounded all around to mitigate gun hang-ups during the mount. The vent rib is tapered—metal midbead—white front bead. The screw-in chokes are long at 3¾ inches. Five Exis FP tubes are supplied. The Skeet went .721", the Improved Cylinder .715", the Modified .706", the Improved Modified .701", the Full .691". Recall that the bore size at the start of the choke threads was .728". To finish the package, the XLR5 comes in a nice hard case with a fit interior.

Sticking with the Fabarm side, what about the Syren over/under? Offered in



Lindsey Lamagna loves how the Syren Elos 20 gauge points and shoots.



20 and 28 gauges, these are also ideal for the huntress. The base gun is the Fabarm Elos Venti. What makes it a Syren Elos Venti is the different cosmetics and the different stock dimensions. Also, there are roses cut in the stock by laser and these roses are on all of the Syren stocks, another nice touch.

I have a 20-gauge Syren Elos sitting on my lap as I type away on this keyboard. Check the accompanying close-up photo of the receiver for the detailed engraving with gold engraved flowers. The finish is again Titanium Silver, and this bright look does enhance the intricate laser-cut engraving.

This shotgun also features the Tribore HP barrel with .632" in front of the 20-gauge chamber area and running that same measurement for half the

barrel length. Then the taper is from .632" to .625" to just in front of the choke threads—more gentle treating of the pellets on the outside of the shot column for the trip down the bore. The recoil pad is thinner, just over ¼-inch, separated from the stock via a thin black spacer. The same Triwood stock that looks like a \$4,000 piece of Turkish and the same slight additional re-curve to the pistol grip as the XLR5.

The 10-inch fore-end weighs 8.5 ounces, the 28-inch barrels weighed 2 pounds, 13 ounces, the whole gun 6 pounds, 10.5 ounces. The vent rib is not tapered and there are side panels between the barrels with no vents. In addition to this gun there is also a Syren Elos Venti Light—with an aluminum alloy receiver, so lighter—reportedly at

5 pounds, 11 ounces. Stock dimensions are 13.875 inches length of pull, 1.375" drop at comb, 2.25" drop at heel (again note the Monte Carlo-like step down at the rear of the stock), .125" cast at heel, .375" cast at toe, 6 degrees of pitch, reach 3.5"—all small but subtle stock dimension changes to better fit most women shooters. All Syren over/unders have inertia-type triggers.

Now for the Syren Caesar Guerini over/unders—there are two divisions, Sporting and Field. Both divisions are based on the Tempio model of the Caesar Guerini over/under. So now I'm looking at a 12-gauge Syren Tempio Sporting model on my lap. When I ordered this consignment O/U, I didn't realize that there were 20 and 28 gauge Syren Tempio sporting models as well. With all three gauges, ladies can select from either 28- or 30-inch barrels. My test gun has the latter.

The barrels are overbored on my 12 gauge to .733". Traditionally 12 bores have run about .725", with some European bores sometimes even smaller. These bores are called DuoCon, which means a 5-inch tapered forcing cone. Old forcing cones were in the neighborhood of ¼-inch. In 20 and 28 gauge, the Syren Tempios have 4-inch DuoCon forcing cones.

The gun weighs 8 pounds, 1 ounce; the 30-inch barrels 3 pounds, 6.5 ounces; the 10-inch fore-end 11.3 ounces. Six screw-in chokes are provided. I measured the Cylinder at .734", the Skeet at .729", the two Improved Cylinders were both at .724", the Light Modified at .719", the Modified at .713". Obviously, other chokes are available as aftermarket options. These chokes are extended, just shy of ¾ total inches in length, so there's lots of room for long taper and parallel sections that treat pellets gently.

The barrels have vented side panels and the top vent rib tapers from 10mm to 6mm. The lockup system for all Guerini and Fabarm over/unders involves barrels pivoting on trunnions, a sliding bolt from the base of the receiver engages the lugs milled into the bottom of the monobloc upon closing, plus recoil lugs milled into the base of the monobloc that nestle into milled away areas in the base of the receiver.

The Syren Tempio receiver is engraved differently than the Guerini Tempio receiver. There's very intricate rose and scroll with engraved gold roses on both receiver sides and just as extensive engraving on the receiver bottom. The



Debra Coulter says the Syren Tempio Sporting 12 gauge is very much to her liking.



Natalie Lamagna puts the Syren Tempio Sporting to work on a skeet field.

engraving design is by Bottega Giovannelli and his signature is on the bottom tang. The receiver finish is Guerini's own Invisalloy. It looks like a coin-type finish but is very corrosion protective, and it is hand polished. The laser-cut engraving goes up around the fences to the top tang, the triggerguard and the opening lever. The receiver sides have that elegant sculpturing similar to a Perazzi.

The stock dimensions are again tailored for women with a 13.75-inch length of pull, drop at comb 1.375", drop at heel 2.5" (again note the Monte Carlo-like drop at the rear of the stock), cast at heel .125", cast at toe .375", pitch 8 degrees, breech to comb 7", reach 3.5", all measured from the trigger's midposition. The trigger can be moved back and forth so the lady can adjust for her perfect grip-to-trigger distance. Again, while the length of pull is significantly different compared to the standard Guerini Tempio model, the other differences in the stock dimensions are small and subtle.

The stock finish is hand-rubbed oil. There's also that same slight additional re-curve to the grip. There are roses in the stock cut by laser. The cut checkering is also done by laser and at 26 lines-per-inch, which is about as tiny as a huntress will ever see, and the checkering is virtually flawless. The recoil pad

is just shy of 1/3-inch thick, rounded all around with a thin black spacer. Chambers are 2¾ inches—no 3-inch magnums. The same length chambers go for the 20 and 28 gauges. The top rib tapers from 10mm to 6mm on the 12 gauge – nontapered ribs on the 20 and the 28. The small gauge guns will average 8-10 ounces lighter than the 12 gauge in the Sporter versions.

There are also Field versions of the Syren Tempio in 20 and 28 gauges, both with 28-inch barrels. Weights will run about 6½ pounds depending on the gauge. The same Invisalloy protection is on the receivers along with the same beautiful engraving patterns – scroll and engraved gold flowers. There's also the same hand-rubbed oil finish on the stock and 26 lines-per-inch impeccable checkering. Instead of a recoil pad there's a distinctive wood buttplate, a touch I very much like. Chambers are 3 inches in the 20, 2¾ inches in the 28. Ribs are 6mm nontapered. Bores are chrome lined and five screw-in chokes are included. The fore-ends have a different rounded look, say like a Browning Superposed Lightning. The selective trigger is gold plated and the package comes in a hard case, as do all of the Syren models.

Finally, there's the Syren Tempio Light. Most of the gun is the same as the standard Tempio, save for the

lighter aluminum alloy receiver. Weight will be reduced to the 5½-pound range; a bit of weight variation can be expected for gauge and wood density. The stock dimensions will be similar, though probably not exactly the same as the other field models in the Syren line.

An entirely new corporation has been created for the marketing of these women's guns: Syren USA. It's even headed up by a woman, and top shooter, Ann Mauro. Ann is already compiling top lady shooters and sponsoring them to shoot the various Syren models. She's on the ground floor of a new wave in shotgunning.

Suggested retail prices start at \$1,995 for the SLR5 semiauto, \$2,995 for the Elos Field Gun, \$3,995 for the Tempio Field and \$4,380 for Tempio Sporting models. Higher grades are available. Expect to see more lady shooters now that they can buy a gun that fits them well – and that cosmetically are sure to please our feminine set. On the web it's www.syrenusa.com.

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