



The forend chequering is crisp and precise

# Flawless Victory

Stuart Wilson reviews a Danish rifle with 150 years of history behind it. It's the Schultz & Larsen Victory in 6.5x55

I have admired Schultz & Larsen rifles for many years now, sold a few and handled them in various shops, but I had never fired one, neither stalking nor on target. The overall finish is always very good, aesthetically they tick my box, so when I needed a review rifle supplied quickly, it was the ideal opportunity to have a quick conversation with David Thompson from Driven Sporting, the gun shop at Park Lodge, about collecting a Schultz & Larsen Victory in 6.5x55 Swedish. It came ready scoped, zeroed, complete with moderator and slip and the preferred ammunition. I planned to put a couple of rounds on to paper to check the zero, then sneak a few sessions in search of any buck that dared show himself on my ground.

My first job was to do the usual research. Scanning through the most recent brochure to get myself up to speed, with the rifle propped beside my desk, I could also get my own measurements rather than take anything for granted. After a good read

through and several shoulderings I was soon getting more familiar and confident. This model is the Victory with Grade 2 upgraded woodwork, in 6.5x55 Swedish, and the ammunition is RWS, the scope topping the rifle is a good old Schmidt & Bender 8x56 1" tubed German with the

bombproof A7 reticle, with the muzzle sporting one of Schultz & Larsen's own moderators.

## FIRST IMPRESSION

Viewing the rifle for the first time, you can not mistake the quality of the woodwork.

It's a splendid piece of Grade 2 walnut, with a semi pistol grip, crisp chequering fore and aft, rosewood forend tip and the same on the bottom of the pistol grip. The dimensions are good: 14in (355mm) length of pull, a pleasing right-hand palm swell, which is chequered both sides, with the wrist of the stock settling the hand nicely allowing the trigger finger to ease the safety catch on/off when needed. The forend, also chequered, is elegant while remaining deep enough to keep my fingers off the barrel, with the final standard touch of sling swivels front and rear.

This is certainly one rifle that I would not attach a bipod to. I am a fully fledged heathen, but even I can appreciate that the classic lines would be compromised. The wood is nicely figured, with an oil finish that has the satin sheen to it that only comes from use in the field. Yes, this is a pretty rifle but it is put to good use in all conditions, from hind culling in Scotland to roe stalking in Yorkshire. Nonetheless it gets looked after.

The butt stock features a straight combed cheekpiece, which positions your eye naturally for scoped shooting, with high mounts for the 8x56 making it just a smidgen high for my liking. I may be splitting hairs here as I only really noticed this as I mounted the rifle as I write, not in any field situation. The butt pad is a good quality ventilated Wegu pad. This brown pad can be substituted with one of brick-red colour with some of the higher grades of wood. The overall finish of the stock is fantastic – I dread to think of the dedicated, skilled hours it takes to achieve this finish.

## BARREL AND ACTION

The barrel and action of the Schultz & Larsen are machined in house, with all finishing work to final polishing and any coating/bluing done in house to their exacting standards. We have Hans Schultz, the founder, to thank for the level of craftsmanship, accuracy and strength that we still find in Schultz & Larsen rifles today. This philosophy reaches further into the heart of the design of the rifle which we will see as I highlight some of the safety features. The barrels are all cut rifled from straight, stress-relieved chrome moly steel, and great care is then taken as the blanks are bored and cut rifled before being internally polished – I would love to see this process as it involves unique tin castings, for each and every barrel, then used to lap and polish the bore with polishing compound. The goal is uniformity of all dimensions and the final polished finish. The muzzle

thread is 14x1mm and is threaded for the UK market specifically, you can have the barrel unthreaded, and other options like fluting, either straight or spiralled. The switch barrel design of the Schultz & Larsen Victory also means calibre changes can be performed pretty quickly, with magnum calibres needing the larger faced bolt installing to match any magnum barrel. Pop the stock off and loosen the bottom bolts that keep the barrel located and the barrel can be drawn out. As the bolt's three lugs lock into the barrel it is sometimes a handy feature being able to drop the barrel out for cleaning of the lug abutments. The rifle is no heavier due to the switch barrel design, and you can quite happily use the rifle with one barrel; it is, however, nice to have the option of switching a barrel out, regardless of the reason.

The action, like the barrel, is machined from chrome moly steel, with the top of the Victory machined to accept the Slide & Lock mounts, which allow the scope to be moved backwards then forwards for summer stalking in thinner clothing or winter stalking in thicker jackets. True to Schultz & Larsen style, the actions are also drilled and tapped to accept other bases such as weaver rails. Cycling the bolt shows the accuracy of all the machined surfaces that have then been lovingly polished, leaving a slick bolt action. The bolt handle is swept back slightly, and has a small weight-saving hole bored into its end. The one-piece three-lug design has a neat extractor that runs in a small slot machined into one of the bolt lugs with the



The 'slide & lock' mounts have summer and winter settings, to allow for thicker clothing needing a shorter eye relief





The slightly swept back bolt cycles smoothly, giving ample clearance for fast reloads

## “ This is a pretty rifle but it is put to good use in all conditions, from hind culling in Scotland to roe stalking in Yorkshire ”

plunger firing cases out of the ejection port smartly. There is the usual slot machined down the side of the bolt the runs over the same bolt release lever, keeping the bolt running straight and true. With the bolt closed in the action, three holes can be seen on the bolt lining up into the ejection port, their function is to safely port gases away from the shooter even in the unlikely event of a case rupture or primer blow out.

Continuing with the safety theme, the three-position safety catch does the usual \* forward for fire, rear for safe, with the middle position being safe but with the bolt unlocked, in the fully rear safe position the rifle is safe, the bolt locked and the firing pin is also blocked, making for very safe rifle – this is not a substitute for muzzle awareness!

### MAGAZINE AND TRIGGER

The bottom metal is like everything else on the Schultz & Larsen – if it looks like metal and should be metal then it is, and it's beautifully machined, polished and blued. Two action screws are countersunk into the bottom metal, the magazine release button is also nicely recessed near the front action screw, and to the rear of the magazine opening is a small sprung detente. This pops the single stack magazine out. The magazine is, as you should now expect, solidly built and finished to the Schultz & Larsen standard – single stack which feeds perfectly and loads easily, and would take one in the chamber and three loaded into the magazine.

Moving on to the trigger, the standard unit is a single-stage affair, but this review rifle has a very fine two stage upgrade. I

am a big fan of two-stage triggers, even in hunting rifles. It is crisp and breaks like glass. I am not overly fussy on triggers – I just really appreciate a top quality unit.

### THE MODERATOR

Love them or hate them, moderators can make a big difference. A well made moderator installed and maintained correctly will reduce noise, recoil, and sometimes muzzle flip. With practice you are more likely to see the strike with a moderated shot. Personal preference and certain other criteria sometimes lead shooters to avoid moderators. They are another link in the chain, something else to look after or potentially go wrong, and perhaps the main gripe is the added weight, overall and how it affects the handling and carrying of a rifle. I am biased towards

moderators, and would normally go for a tried and tested one piece design. Recently, and even more so after using Schultz & Larsen's MC38 Ultradome, I would happily explore using a light alloy modular moderator. Strip, clean, change threads – all positives to add to an efficient moderator. The Swede has never been a savage calibre, but adding a moderator smoothed the Schultz & Larsen remarkably. Add that to the fact that contractors are cutting and harvesting the silage fields around the hunting box I am sat writing this review in, and I don't think an opportune moderated shot would cause any great alarm.

### CONCLUSION

I have thoroughly enjoyed my brief encounter with the Schultz & Larsen Victory. It is definitely an 'Ooh, what's that?' rifle when you show people, it handles well, and has no compromise machining and finishing. The standard model retails at around £2,000 – for a switch barrel that represents excellent value when you consider the level of craftsmanship. ■

### SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Length:</b>	1075mm (1195mm with mod)
<b>Barrel:</b>	545mm
<b>Length of pull:</b>	355mm
<b>Weight:</b>	4150g scoped without mod
<b>Moderator:</b>	MC38 Ultradome 225mm
<b>Mod weight:</b>	325g
<b>Contact:</b>	Alan Rhone 01978 660001 greatdanerifles.com



The magazine is a simple straight stack, feeds faultlessly, and pops in and out of the rifle easily