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Alexander Arms' New "Overwatch" .50 Beowulf

by Jeff Quinn

photography by Jeff Quinn & Boge Quinn

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It has been almost a year since I reviewed the original **Alexander Arms** .50 caliber "Entry Gun" here on Gunblast.com, and by all indications, the gun has been a rousing success. I have received correspondence from as far away as Afghanistan and Iraq from US soldiers that are using this weapon for serious social purposes, as well as from shooters who just enjoy plinking with the Beowulf. The heart of the Beowulf rifle is the cartridge, and it is a big heart indeed! The Beowulf rifle is based on the AR-15 system, and factory ammunition specs list a fifty caliber 325 grain bullet at 1950 feet per second and a 400 grain bullet at 1800 feet per second. This is like a hot loaded .45-70 or .450 Marlin cartridge but with a bigger bullet, in a handy AR-15 carbine! After several months of producing the Entry Gun, Alexander Arms is now offering the .50 Beowulf in a longer barreled model that they call the "Overwatch", and that is the subject of this article.

The new Overwatch model has the same basic features as the excellent Entry Gun, with a few changes. The Overwatch wears a twenty-four inch stainless match-grade barrel that measures .988 inch diameter from the gas block forward, and finishes off with a good-looking and effective muzzle brake. The brake has thirty holes spaced around its circumference to redirect propellant gases,

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effectively reducing felt recoil. The barrel is also free-floated inside a synthetic hand guard to deliver better practical accuracy. The Overwatch wears a standard A2 buttstock, and has all of the features that we have come to expect on a quality AR, such as case deflector and forward assist, plus a handy extension on the charging handle for use with a scope sight. The standard magazine holds seven of the fat cartridges, but a standard thirty-round AR-15 magazine will hold twelve of the .50 Beowulfs, with only a slight modification of the feed lips needed to function properly with the big cartridges. As with the Entry Gun, the Overwatch shares many components with a standard AR-15, and Alexander Arms also sells complete upper assemblies (at surprisingly affordable prices) to fit your existing rifle, if desired.

Shooting the new Overwatch rifle was indeed a rewarding experience. The Overwatch weighs in at a bit over ten pounds with scope and bipod added. The weight, along with the effective muzzle brake makes the gun a pleasure to shoot from the bench. The longer barrel also moves the muzzle blast a bit further forward of the shooter, and no discomfort was felt wearing good-quality hearing protection such as [Dillon's electronic ear muffs](#). Another added benefit of the extra barrel length, is that the velocity increases about 150 feet per second, as compared with the shorter barrel of the Entry Gun.

Mounting a **Swarovski** 6 to 18 power scope atop the rifle, I settled down at the bench for accuracy testing. Using Alexander Arms factory 325 grain hollow point ammunition, I was able to fire three-shot groups measuring one-half of an inch at 100 yards. This is excellent accuracy, beating most factory bolt action varmint rifles, but shooting a heavy half-inch slug with the power to kill anything that walks, swims, or crawls! Based on the reports that I have received from soldiers overseas, the Beowulf also delivers excellent penetration of hard targets.

As well as the Beowulf Overwatch performed from the [Target Shooting, Inc. rifle rest](#), the really fun part of our shooting experience involved some long-range plinking using a **Harris** bipod. We fired the rifle at life-size steel targets of black bear, antelope, and mule deer at ranges of from 400 to 600 yards. After a few shots, the 400 yard targets became easy hits,



As we have previously worked with Alexander Arms' .50 Beowulf, we knew what to expect from this awesome gun/cartridge combination, but the "Overwatch" was even more fun than the original "Entry Gun"!



and even the mule deer at 600 yards resulted on a satisfying clang a few seconds after pulling the trigger, if I held over properly. After shooting over a hundred rounds from the bench, the effect on my shoulder was insignificant. A sustained string of twelve gauge target loads hurts worse.

Again, as I did with the original .50 Beowulf last year, I passed the Overwatch around at the range. Everyone who handled the gun was favorably impressed. Everyone who shot the gun was grinning like an idiot, and muttering phrases like "I gotta get me one of these!"

For more information on the original Entry gun, [read my article in the Archive section of Gunblast](#). For a look at the entire line of excellent firearms, ammunition, and accessories from Alexander Arms, check them out online at: www.alexanderarms.com.

For an AR-15 with enough power to hunt anything on the planet, or a precise target-grade weapon for law enforcement that really packs a decisive punch, look into the .50 Beowulf Overwatch. Also, if you just want a powerful, long-range fun gun.....this is your baby!

Jeff Quinn



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The Author and the Webmaster were very impressed with the Alexander Arms Overwatch. Both Jeff and Boge found the gun and cartridge to be very accurate out to 600 yards, whether from a Harris bipod or our [Target Shooting, Inc. gun rest](#), and recoil was surprisingly manageable even after long shooting sessions. This gun is just plain fun to shoot!



The .50 Beowulf cartridge combines real power and accuracy in a package suitable for the AR-15 platform. For additional magazines, standard AR-15 magazines work fine with easy-to-accomplish modification to the feed lips.



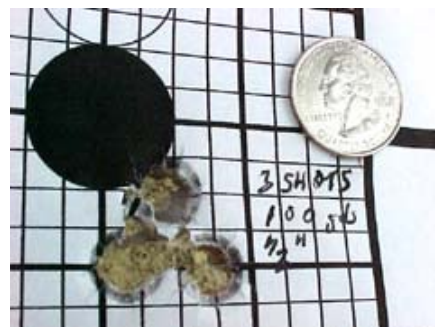
The Overwatch rifle features an effective and attractive muzzle brake.



As an aid to accuracy, the Overwatch features a 24" free-floating stainless match barrel.



The flat-top receiver rail is perfect for mounting a quality scope sight such as the Swarovski 6x-18x variable, allowing the accuracy of the .50 Beowulf to be fully realized.



Speaking of accuracy, the .50 Beowulf / Overwatch combination has it in spades! Very few big bore rifles can match the accuracy of the Alexander Arms product, with 1/2" three-shot groups at 100 yards representing the norm when we did our part.



The practical accuracy of the .50 Beowulf was also shown by its performance on antelope and bear steel silhouette targets at 400 yards, and mule deer steel silhouette targets at 600 yards. After a brief wait, the "clang" of bullet on steel could be heard with satisfying regularity.



Since his initial review of Alexander Arms' "Entry Gun", Jeff has been a big fan of the .50 Beowulf. Whether for hunting, plinking, law enforcement...don't worry about trying to think up an excuse, just get one!



BECOME A MEMBER AND YOU COULD WIN!



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