

FEATURE **REMINGTON 887**

Up-Armored Pump

Remington's 887 Nitro Mag

Remington's new polymer-clad, pump-action Model 887 Nitro Mag is not a replacement for the Model 870, but its high-tech design may make it a more attractive choice for some shooters and hunters. This magnum shotgun offers cutting-edge design and weather resistance at a surprisingly affordable price.

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In a world where a cell phone bought last week is already obsolete, it's difficult to call something that has been around since 1951 "modern." Although dozens of variations have helped the Remington 870 age well, terms like "high tech" and "cutting edge" just don't apply. A "traditional" identity can pose a problem for a company seeking the attention of shooters who revel in the latest technology. For them, Remington needed a pump-action shotgun with new-millennium appeal. Something different than the 870. Something modern.

It may be an understatement to say that the company accomplished both goals with its new 12-ga., 3½" Model 887 Nitro Mag. One glance across the counter of the local gun shop and it's clear it is definitely not an 870. A closer look reveals construction and design characteristics advanced enough to put the 887 at the forefront of shotgun development. But lest one think Remington introduced the 887 solely to flaunt high-tech pizzazz, realize that this new pump comes with features many shooters will consider honest improvements over even the tried-and-true 870, and at a lower price to boot. The 887 is not a replacement for the 870, but for some field situations and budgets, it could be a better choice.

Donning Armor

More advanced than the 870, but less expensive? Thanks to the wonders of polymer, it is. The entire receiver and barrel of the 887 are covered in a shell of polymer—or more specifically, glass-filled nylon—material Remington calls ArmorLokt. The injection-molding process used to create these components results in a finished product that is quicker, easier and less expensive to manufacture.

Steel is still beneath the ArmorLokt overmold of both the receiver and the barrel. The receiver starts in Remington's Ilion, N.Y., factory as a stamped-and-welded steel frame, which includes a barrel support, dual action bar channels and threads for attaching the magazine tube. Its general shape resembles that of the finished receiver, save for a portion missing from the rear of the frame along its top. The frame is placed into a mold, which is then injected with the ArmorLokt polymer material. Perforations in the frame, along with the mold design, allow the ArmorLokt material to completely encase both the exterior and interior steel surfaces and form the finished component.

This is not the first time Remington employed polymer in receiver construction. The Nylon series of rimfires and the 522 Viper—introduced in 1959 and 1993, respectively—both had receivers made using synthetic material. The 887's receiver represents a new path for Remington: using steel along with polymer to withstand

the operating pressures and stresses produced by 3½" 12-ga. shotshells. In a way, the 887 is like the Benelli SuperNova, which has a polymer-covered steel receiver independent of the buttstock.

Manufacturers have come up with a host of treatments to protect a gun's metal surfaces, but overmolding the barrel with polymer is unique. Remington first cold hammer-forges the barrel blank from 4140 steel and, in a process similar to the 887's receiver construction, then fuses the ArmorLokt to the finished barrel's exterior via injection molding. The polymer envelops it in a 0.041"-thick shell, with the integral barrel rib and rectangular design impressions forming from polymer in the mold.

Remington offers two variations—black and Advantage Max-4 HD camo—of the 887 this year, both of which have 28" barrels. The 0.727"-bore barrel is threaded to accept Rem Chokes. A single modified Rem Choke comes with the black 887 Synthetic, and the camo 887 Waterfowl ships with an improved-cylinder tube. Shorter-barreled configurations of the 887 are planned for the future.

Besides giving the 887 a futuristic look, ArmorLokt provides a tough shield against corrosion, dings and scratches. Remington calls ArmorLokt impermeable and has test results to back it up. Company engineers subjected Model 887 barrels to salt-corrosion and submersion tests, cross-sectioning each test barrel after the trials to ensure the ArmorLokt had not leaked or separated from the steel. They also fired more than 10,000 rounds through a single barrel, again testing for separation. In all the tests, ArmorLokt withstood the abuse, making the 887 an ideal shotgun for less-than-ideal conditions—like lying in a muddy cornfield during a sleet storm or hunting honkers on the Chesapeake Bay.

More Than Skin Deep

There's more going on here than just a plastic coating. The 887 utilizes a dual-lug rotary bolt that locks into corresponding recesses in the barrel extension, as opposed to the single-lug locking block system of the 870.



The Model 887's receiver has a steel frame clad in injection-molded polymer (r.). The easy-to-reach action release is on the front of the trigger guard (l.).

REMINGTON 887



The bolt and firing pin are contained within a carrier that rides on dual action bars. When the user slides the 887's fore-end fully forward, the bolt's locking lugs mate with their respective recesses in the barrel extension. The bolt rotates against a pin that holds it in place in the carrier, compressing the spring located just behind it, and the camming action moves the locking lugs into position to effect lockup.

A captive hood attached to the breechbolt covers the rear of the action port when closed, preventing debris from entering the 887's interior. It slides forward along the breechbolt as it travels to the rear. A stout claw extractor located at the 9 o'clock position on the exterior of the breechbolt pulls shells and hulls from the 887's chamber. Contact with the spring-loaded, blade-type ejector mounted in a narrow channel along the left, interior receiver wall expels them from the action port.

Being a 3½" gun, the 887 requires a long stroke to clear the chamber of an empty hull and another to charge it with a fresh round from the magazine tube. For the shooter experienced in working a magnum pump gun, the necessary amount of travel will come as no surprise.

Perhaps the best characteristic of the 887 is the design and location of the slide release. Instead of a small metal tab located along the left side of the trigger guard, the 887's slide release is a large, triangular button conveniently nestled into the top half of the trigger guard's face. It is much easier to reach, especially with a gloved trigger finger numbed from the cold.

Dual action bars link the fore-end to the Model 887 Nitro Mag's bolt and carrier. The fore-end's rear is wide enough so that it slides back over the receiver's front when shucked rearward.



The slide release and trigger guard are integral to the 887's trigger plate assembly, which corrects another problem often associated with the 870. Molded from the same ArmorLokt polymer as the receiver and barrel, the trigger plate assembly houses the fire-control components, along with the carrier and both shell latches. Spend enough time with an 870 and the day will come when at least one of its shell latches will decide to un-stake itself from the receiver wall as the trigger plate is removed. Getting it back into place can be a maddening affair that will make the shooter wish for three hands. This is not an issue with the 887. Drifting out two cross pins frees the trigger plate assembly from the receiver with the shell latches intact, which makes for easy cleaning and a lower blood pressure. Disassembling the rest of the 887 requires no tools.

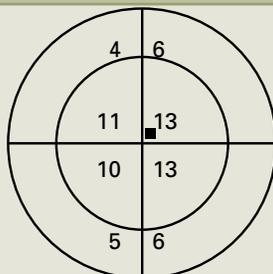
A Look That Feels Like New

Inevitably, shooters will compare the 887 to the 870 in terms of looks and handling. One must remember to compare apples to apples. In other words, it's unfair to look at the 870 Wingmaster and then call the 887 blocky. Based on its 3½" chamber and composite buttstock and fore-end, the 887 is more in line with the 870 Express Super Magnum Synthetic. Both the 887 and the 870 Express Super Magnum Synthetic come with 28" barrels, and both have an overall length of 48". Despite its thicker barrel and larger fore-end, the 887 weighs about 2 ozs. less than its 870 counterpart. The 887's balance point is just forward of the receiver, which is also very close to its predecessor's.

So, then, does the 887 feel like an 870? Not to me, but the way a shotgun feels is a greatly subjective

SHOOTING RESULTS

AVERAGE OF 10 PATTERNS
@ 40YDS.



MODIFIED
TUBE

■ = POINT OF HOLD

HEVI-SHOT GOOSE

12 GA., 3½", 1⅝ oz., No. 2 HEVI-SHOT
No. 8163846625

AVERAGE PELLET COUNT: 100

MEASURED VELOCITY @ 3FT.:

1380 F.P.S.

TOTAL HITS	68 (68%)
21" INNER CIRCLE	47 (47%)
30" OUTER RING	21 (21%)

judgment. The major difference I notice when shouldering the 887 is the width of its fore-end. The rear half of the fore-end swells and is a bit too hand-filling for my tastes. Extending completely to the receiver, the fore-end provides a lot of leeway for obtaining a grip, which is a positive. The design should benefit shooters with short wingspans or any hunter forced by the cramped confines of a duck blind to grip the fore-end farther back than normal.

Although I'm not a fan of the fore-end, the buttstock design is right-on. Its thin wrist, combined with the tight radius of the generous pistol grip, lends plenty of room for my long fingers to relax on the stock. A thin wrist helps a shotgun feel lively to me; it's as though the lack of material in my shooting hand keeps me more in touch with the gun.

Last fall I had plenty of opportunities to test the 887's handling characteristics while hunting geese in Alberta, Canada, with outfitter Sean Mann. We had Canadas,

The two-lug rotating bolt locks into a barrel extension. The carrier has a cover on its rear to keep debris out of the action.



snows and specklebellies, along with the occasional mallard, come to the decoys among cut pea and barley fields. The 887 did not discriminate, neatly folding several mixed bags of birds from a variety of angles and distances. It didn't take long to get used to the gun's different feel, and it swung on crossing birds with an ease that seemed almost contradictory to the girth of its barrel.

Although we received no rain during the hunt to test the 887's weatherproof qualities, the warm, dry conditions made for plenty of dust in the harvested fields. Thanks to the ArmorLokt barrel and receiver, all I had to do to clean the exterior of the 887 was wipe it down with a damp washcloth I swiped from the hotel.

Remington's goal when developing the 887 Nitro Mag was to create a next-generation pump that stood out from not only the 870, but from the rest of today's shotguns as well. There's no doubt the 887 has an up-to-date look, but in these times, the most modern attribute may be its price. Remington lists the base-model 887 Synthetic with a suggested retail price of \$399, which is below the 870 Express Super Magnum and many other shotguns in its class. That's a good price for any 3½" gun, but it's even better when considering the 887 is designed to hold up well into the future. 

REMINGTON MODEL 887

MANUFACTURER: REMINGTON ARMS CO.
(DEPT. AR), 870 REMINGTON DRIVE,
P.O. BOX 700, MADISON, NC 27025;
(800) 243-9700; WWW.REMINGTON.COM

GAUGE: 12, 3½", 3", 2¾"

ACTION TYPE: PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUN

RECEIVER: 4140 STEEL WITH ARMORLOKT
POLYMER OVERMOLD

BARREL: STEEL WITH ARMORLOKT
POLYMER OVERMOLD, 28"

CHOKES: ONE REM CHOKE TUBE: MODIFIED
(887 SYNTHETIC), IMPROVED-CYLINDER
(887 WATERFOWL)

SIGHTS: HiViz LITEPIPE FRONT BEAD,
POLYMER MID-BEAD

TRIGGER PULL: SINGLE-STAGE; 4 LBS., 12 OZS.

STOCK: POLYMER WITH REMINGTON SUPER-
CELL RECOIL PAD: LENGTH OF PULL, 14";
DROP AT HEEL, 2½"; DROP AT COMB, 1½"

OVERALL LENGTH: 48"

WEIGHT: 7 LBS., 6 OZS. (887 SYNTHETIC);
7 LBS., 8 OZS. (887 WATERFOWL)

ACCESSORIES: INSTRUCTION MANUAL;
TRIGGER LOCK; CHOKE-TUBE WRENCH;
ONE CHOKE TUBE; MAGAZINE PLUG;
AND INSTRUCTIONAL DVD

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$399 (887
SYNTHETIC); \$532 (887 WATERFOWL)