

FNH-USA FS2000 Standard

“**THE FN FS2000,**” says editor Ben Battles, “is probably the coolest .223/5.56 bullet launcher I’ve ever pulled the trigger on.” Ben knows his way around today’s tactical rifles, and when you get your hands on the FS2000, you’ll understand why he’s so high on it.

Introduced early in the 21st Century, but only now making inroads in the American semiauto rifle market, the FS2000 is unique. A bullpup (the basic action is located behind the rifle’s trigger), it’s the first of its kind that’s ambidextrous. On most such guns—like the superb Steyr AUG and its nifty new American clone from Microtech, the MSAR—if it’s set up for right-side ejection, your face is in the line of fire of the hot brass ‘n gas when fired from a conventional left shoulder position. The FS2000 solves this problem handily by directing empty cases down a chute to an exit port at the tip of the fore-end, not far behind the muzzle. It’s something of a spillway: brass can build up in there, then drop out several at a time. The brass is not mangled, and dribbles out at your feet for handy retrieval.

The FN-H (**F**abriquer **N**ationale, **H**erstal) design includes an

attribute from its famous ancestor, the FAL rifle: a quick-adjusting dial to increase gas pressure if needed due to a filthy rifle or weak ammo. This will increase battering to internal parts and shooter alike, but it’s an important fallback to have in place “just in case.” The magazine needs to be manually removed, but it’s quick enough if you hit the release button with the knuckle of your index finger as you grab the mag. There is no bolt hold-open device when you run dry. The FS2000 needs a new manual of arms, in that the safety is a rotary dial on the floor of the trigger guard, manipulated by the trigger finger. With the right hand doing the work, it’s forward for “Safe” and back for “Fire;” and vice versa for a southpaw. Bolt actuation is similar to that of the HK91 and MP5.

For pure shooting, the FS2000 is a *joy!* With an empty weight of 8 lbs. 4 oz., and an overall length of only 29 inches, the center of balance is so far back that there’s almost no “muzzle wobble” from the standing position. Try it dry-fire in the gun shop and see for yourself.

The same balance factor allows easy one-handed use in an



emergency for a wounded operator or K9 handler. At 25 yards (“urban rifle” distance) one-inch groups from a standing position were easy, in spite of a heavy trigger pull. The integral 1.6X scope shot center for windage out of the box, but 2.5 inches low at 25 yards and 4.0 inches low at 100. The sight is adjustable with a special tool. With the aiming dot on the top edge of the 8-inch center circle of the target, I was able to put three Winchester 55-grain ball rounds into a startling 0.70 inch from the 100-yard bench, the best of the test, and 0.45 inch from 25 yards. Typical groups were more like two inches—adequate for this gun’s intended purpose— but still, it showed extraordinary accuracy potential. If this rifle were mine, I’d pull the removable scope and slap a good variable power glass on the underlying Picatinny rail, then talk to a gunsmith about getting a match trigger job. This could be an *exquisite* offhand rifle.

Our test FS2000 ran perfectly with Federal Premium 55-grain .223 and with Winchester FMJ, but choked repeatedly on a third brand. All failures were cartridge-ruining feedway stoppages. We never did diagnose the cause. With the right ammo, though, this gun’s handiness, portability, versatility and attributes for offhand shooting make it well worth its \$2,500 suggested retail price. See the FS2000 Standard at your dealer, or contact **FNH USA**, Dept. OT; Tel: (703) 288-1292; Fax: (703) 288-1730; E-mail: info@fnhusa.com Web: www.fnhusa.com—*Massad Ayoob*



Left: The best 100-yard group measured an unexpected 0.70 inches with Winchester USA ball ammunition.



Right: Opening the spring-loaded port door at the rear of the optics base gains access to the chamber area.