

GOOD TO GO!

Racknload checks out the new and very evolved 1301 Comp Pro action-style semi-auto shotgun...



The 1301 Comp Pro now incorporates a full-length 9/10-shot mag tube as standard

It seems like a long time since I have tested a tube magazine practical-type shotgun. It seems that this area of the smoothbore scene has gone a little box magazine crazy in recent times to be honest, but I'm certainly not complaining though! However, when a high-end manufacturer brings out a new gun, I get very excited! I first saw Beretta's 1301 Comp at IWA 2019, and they've done a pretty damn good job too!

Compared to the original 1301, the most noticeable addition is an extended magazine tube and barrel clamp. At last, Beretta, you have listened, as the 1301 did not come with an extended tube, which was a real pain, as once had you purchased one you were then having to buy parts to get it competition ready. Finally, Beretta have listened to shooters on

the practical circuit, as the Comp Pro doesn't need any customisation and is good to go straight out of the box.

Starting from the butt, it's fitted with the very effective Kick Off recoil system, which comprises of four components to reduce kick. First, is a soft rubber pad, not very exciting but it does do what it says on the tin! Second, and this is where it gets interesting, internally, just forward of the pad are twin recoil dampeners with return springs. They work like shock absorbers on a car. With their return springs, they reset in the blink of an eye too; adding to this is a third, larger one located inside the pistol grip where the stock bolt is. Beretta claims they alone reduce recoil by up to 40%!

Steady on

As if that wasn't enough, there is also what Beretta calls the B Steady system. At the back of the pistol grip there is a soft rubber

insert almost like a spacer. This allows the rear part of the butt to flex/bend in a downward direction, to help take the bump out of the recoil. So, there is a serious amount of engineering that has gone into this design, to improve control and shooter comfort, which happens in the blink of an eye, shot after shot.

The furniture is made from a hard composite polymer with over moulded rubberised panels located where grip is needed, such as the cheekpiece, pistol grip and the forend. Gone is the razor-sharp chequering that the old 1301 had that you could literally grate cheese off! The panels feel good though and are almost sticky to the touch on the pistol grip and forend. The latter I particularly find striking, as it incorporates the Beretta logo and looks very nice.

However, this finish sometimes causes problems when quad loading; as you push the first two shells in, the

second two that you are holding in your fingers can catch the forend's rubber grip and prevent a nice fluid movement. Whilst on the subject, it brings me to the loading port; interestingly, this area has not changed from the original, in that no more meat has been cut out of this area to further aid fast reloading. It's not a big issue for me, but I wonder if these guns get them opened up by serious competition shooters.

The main problem with the 1301, its bolt release, has been sorted, if accidentally pressed whilst shooting, the gun would double feed; disastrous! The Pro Comp's is now sleeker, also the shell lifter stays in its up position once the gun is cocked, which makes reloads faster and easier. The trigger unit and safety catch are the same as the 1301. The guard is polymer, with an



Beretta's upgraded 1302, the 1301 Comp Pro is a better design all round



The big head safety gives a lot more to work with, now the shell lifter can be set to give more access to the loading port



The B Steady system allows the rear of the butt to flex under recoil load



The Toni Systems extended mag tube and barrel clamp are now included as standard; about time too

oversized cross bolt safety incorporated, which is excellent, and the pull went to 4.5lbs!

Feeling blue!

The receiver is finished in adonised blue, which looks pretty damn sexy! The top is drilled and tapped for a scope rail, if you wish to fit an optic. The charging handle is the same oversized design that offers plenty of grip. Beretta still use their Blink system bolt, which is super-fast, just watch those fingers! Moving onto the forend, which is a little too grippy where it doesn't need to be – near the loading port. Apart from that it feels good in the hand and offers loads of traction.

The extended magazine tube as standard is from Toni System Components and you can effortlessly load it up as the internal spring and follower are slick. Stability is aided by a Toni barrel clamp fitted, that looks very cool too. The 24-inch barrel has a 10 x 8mm ventilated rib

and a small rear bead and a front fibre optic sight to make target acquisition on those steels fast and positive! The build shows tri-alloy, hammer-forged construction and a 3-inch chamber, meaning it can take nearly all shell lengths. A set of extended chokes are included, which is ideal on a practical shotgun, because you are able to change them or make sure that they are tight in between stages without any tools.

Running on

So, how did it run? Flawlessly, I would have to say! I put around 150-rounds through it, using everything from bird and buckshot and slug, however with the shot loads I did not go lower than 28-grams. I did several mag dumps with 10 + 1 cartridges loaded and I had no issues as far as functionality goes. Muzzle Rise was a little bit apparent; I would fit a muzzle brake to tame that slightly. The gun does feel

well-balanced though and weighs in at 7.1lbs. Accuracy was quite impressive as I reached out to about 80-yards to my 10-inch gong that I had set up on the range with slug and pretty much connected every time using Sellier and Bellot 1oz loads.

Although most, modern semi-auto shotguns seem far more tolerant of running dirty (uncleaned) for longer periods, this Beretta seemed no different; I'd always recommend a thorough cleaning regime. I'd guess that most competitive shooters will already have that down pat.

The action on the Comp Pro is a gas/piston type, so attention needs to be paid to the gas transfer ports in the barrel lug/ring and the inside of the piston and outside of the mag tube it slides on. Plus, debris builds up inside the receiver, so dropping the trigger mech housing will allow access there too.

Conclusion

Overall, the new Comp Pro is an excellent and well-conceived competition shotgun that needs nothing doing to it and is good to go straight out of the box! **GM**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name:	Beretta Comp Pro
Calibre:	12-bore
Barrel:	24-inches
Chamber:	3-inches
Length:	47-inches
Weight:	7.1lbs
Multi-choke	Y
RRP:	£1725
Contact:	GMK Ltd: gmk.co.uk