

# Double trouble



**Tom Black tests the Krieghoff Classic Big Five on a driven boar hunt, and is instantly taken with this affordable double and its precision craftsmanship**

**T**he Krieghoff Classic Big Five double rifle combines the heritage of the traditional side-by-side with the sophistication of the most modern design and manufacturing technology. The rifle I had on test was a .470 NE but this model is also available in .375 H&H, .375 H&H Flanged Mag, .450/400 N.E. 3in, .500/.416 NE 3 1/4in and .500 NE. The Classic may also be ordered as a multi-barrel set, or the extra barrel of your choice can be fitted later as required. There is also the option of fitting a set of 20-gauge barrels, ideal for a spot of guinea fowl or sand grouse shooting when on safari. Please note that if you order rifle barrels in a calibre larger than the one for which your rifle was originally proofed, it must be sent to Germany for further reproofing in the larger calibre.

The rifle arrived in a very tidy and functional airline-approved customised case, providing essential protection for your valuable rifle during

travel. The security features include two lockable, double-hinged security clasps and a third combination lock with a sturdy carrying handle. This case is compartmental for breakdown use, and has adequate space for additional essentials such as cleaning kit and ammunition. However, it must not be forgotten that for air transit all ammunition must be transported in a separate approved security box.

I have always admired Krieghoff rifles and have been fortunate to use them on many dangerous game hunting occasions. They are also extremely popular with African professional hunters. These PHs hunt at the coal face on a daily basis and want a rifle that won't let them down – their life, and that of their clients, depends on it. Krieghoff combines traditional wisdom with more modern, innovative ideas to build safe, reliable rifles with a wide range of practical features ensuring smooth, quick, and accurate shooting. It would be fair to say that I

am a Krieghoff fan, but I was determined to give an objective view of this test rifle. I have to say, it did not disappoint.

Ideally I would have liked to test this .470 NE rifle out in the bushveld in pursuit of elephant, but our illustrious editor pressed it into my palm on a driven boar hunt in Germany. I raised my eyebrows at this calibre choice and suggested that 9.3x74 or .375 would be a more suitable choice of calibre for boar. He gruffly retorted: "You can't beat a bit of an edge, plus it shoots sweet at 50 yards," and strode away, leaving behind his photographer who promptly shifted his stool back to a safer distance behind me.

The first thing I noticed about this rifle was its robustness. It was a solid piece of engineering and woodwork, but that took nothing from its beauty. The wood had a deep grain that was finished well, and the chequering on the deep pistol grip and forend was easy on the hand yet functional. This rifle has a Bavarian butt with a lowish straight

## KYNOCH

### .470

NITRO-EXPRESS  
CARTRIDGES

BULLET 500 gr. Soft Nosed

Top ballistics: The .470 NE is  
one of six Big Five calibres



QUANTITY  
**5**

comb and a rounded cheekpiece. The length of pull was perfect for medium-to-long arms, and the rifle came perfectly to the shoulder. Its 'handability' was surprisingly quick, despite its weight (which is needed in this calibre), and I would go so far as to say it handled like the finest of English shotguns, which is a very big boast indeed.

In terms of embellishments, this rifle showed the action in the white with just a Krieghoff scroll design on either side and a buffalo engraving on the underside, plus some light scrolling (also known as 'small arabesques') on the trigger guard and forend release lever. Krieghoff also offers a number of higher grades and deep big game scenes engraved by Schlott.

In addition to the superb handling of the rifle, a most important feature is the manual cocking device. This is located on the top tang, to the rear of the opening lever in the position usually occupied by a conventional safety. It allows you to carry

the Classic Big Five fully loaded with the hammers uncocked – and therefore there is no chance of an accidental discharge. The large, sliding thumb catch actually cocks the mechanism when pushed forward. As such, opening and closing the barrels is for loading or unloading purposes only and completely separate from the cocking activity. The lever is a bit stiff to operate, but one soon gets used to this instant and brilliantly conceived yet simple mechanism.

All Krieghoff Classic Rifles are regulated at the factory in Germany with commercially available ammunition over open sights at 55 yards, holding a two-inch group or better. Our editor had told me it "shot sweet at 50 yards," but there was still a need for me to test fire the double before I could use it in anger. Suitable ranges are few and far between for this type of hardware, so a suitable tree stump was marked at 50 yards from my shooting stand and I popped a couple of rounds through the gun. In expectation of this, the *Sporting Rifle* photographer had made ready as if there were an incoming air strike.

The rifle did, in fact, "shoot sweet" from a freehand standing position. I achieved a one-inch group with the two shots, which pleased both me and the photographer immensely (he now realised that this wasn't a cannon after all). Yes, there was appreciable recoil, but it was felt as a push, not a kick. I wasn't sure if a Break-O recoil reducer (recommended in these heavy calibres) had been fitted in the butt, but the superb balance of this rifle, coupled with its



Good looks: The Classic Big Five is an attractive rifle, manufactured with obvious care and attention

weight and correct mounting, certainly made for comfortable shooting. Both triggers felt consistent and not too heavy; there was also ample room between the blades and the trigger guard (too tight a clearance is a common fault found in many other makes).

Unfortunately, I didn't have the opportunity to claim my own boar over two days of what was superb shooting for most of my companions. However, I did manage to put down a huge sow wounded by my neighbour as she crossed into my zone like a great grey derailed locomotive. Swinging through the 100-kilo wild pig, I touched off the front trigger and ended her existence. The 500-grain Kynoch soft-nosed bullet worked well and felled her instantly.

To sum up, you get a lot of rifle for your money. Anyone who wants a double rifle and cannot justify the expense of the English alternative should seriously consider a Krieghoff. ■



The Krieghoff performed well when paying the insurance on a shot boar

#### TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Calibres	.375 H&H, .375 H&H Flanged Mag, .450/400 NE 3in, .500/.416 NE 3 1/4in, .470 NE, .500 NE
Option	Double barrel 20-gauge shotgun
Rifle barrel lengths	23.5in as standard; shorter barrels (21.6in) available in a limited calibre section
Sights	Shallow V-shaped rear sight with a bead front sight for instinctive quick target acquisition
Action	All actions are steel with reinforced walls for extra strength. The signature Krieghoff manual cocking device with combi-cocking feature and double triggers are standard
Engraving	Standard engraving is 'small arabesque'; more elaborate engraving patterns available upon request
Price	£7,950
Ammunition	Kynoch .470 NE soft points
Rifle contact	Alan Rhone 01978 660001 <a href="http://www.alanrhone.com">www.alanrhone.com</a>
Ammunition contact	Kynamco 01638 711799 <a href="http://www.kynochammunition.co.uk">www.kynochammunition.co.uk</a>