

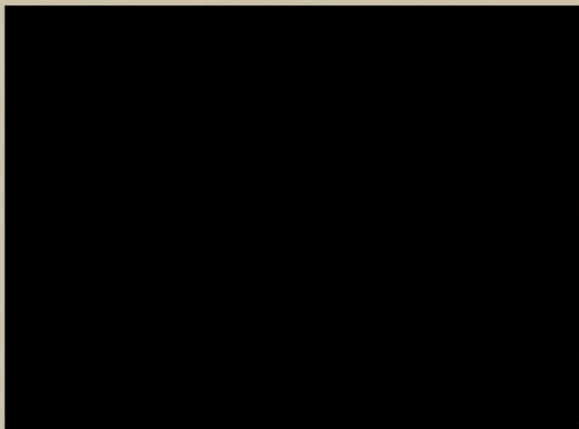
## SHOTGUNS

### Stoeger Outback

An imported over/under 12 gauge defines the utility gun "do it all" concept.

By [Payton Miller](#) | Posted: 2007-07 | Categories: [Reviews](#) , [Shotguns](#) , [Shotguns](#)





The age-old question "If you only had to have one gun, what would it be?" has served as the theme of countless magazine articles. Granted, whether predicated on an urban or wilderness setting, most of these stories have had a strong survivalist slant. It's interesting that the shotgun doesn't usually make the short list, but despite the relative bulkiness of the ammunition, I think a simple 12-gauge shotgun still deserves consideration as the answer to the dilemma.

Stoeger's Condor Outback seems like a good solution. This utilitarian Brazilian import is a hammerless boxlock over/ under featuring 20-inch barrels and open rifle sights. It's got extractors only and comes with two choke tubes modified and improved cylinder. There is no barrel selector; the bottom tube goes first. The single trigger is of the inertia variety.

## SPECIFICATIONS Stoeger Outback

<b>MAKER:</b>	<b>Stoeger Industries</b>
<b>TYPE:</b>	<b>Boxlock Over/ Under</b>
<b>CALIBER:</b>	<b>20, 12 (3-inch)</b>
<b>OVERALL LENGTH:</b>	<b>36 inches</b>
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	<b>6.5 to 7.0 pounds</b>
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	<b>Fixed rifle-type</b>
<b>STOCK:</b>	<b>Brown or black walnut</b>
<b>FINISH:</b>	<b>Blued or nickel</b>
<b>PRICE:</b>	<b>\$350, \$410 (nickel)</b>

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much on line windage-wise and almost touching. I'd set up the top barrel with the improved cylinder choke tube and the bottom one with the modified and found that the improved-cylinder shot a hair tighter with both the Truball and the Buckhammer.

The point-of-impact difference between the two barrels was about five inches. Since the slugs from the top barrel were right at point of aim, I figured I'd found the best slug barrel option, although for close-range emergencies, loading slugs both up and down would still be a viable choice.

The fixed rifle-type sights consist of a deep, wide U-notch rear and a substantial blade front that would be amenable to filing should you want to tailor either barrel to a particular slug load. Me, I'd rather shoot 'em all through both barrels and stick with the one that hits closest to the top of the front sight. No, it's not an optimum slug gun, but mine proved good enough for big game out to maybe 40 or 50 yards.

Next, I fired up a clay target thrower and tried my hand at the aerial stuff with the Winchester No. 6 loads. Once I got used to ignoring that tall front-sight blade and the rather whippy 20-inch barrels, I began to smoke things.

No, it's not an optimum clay-target gun, although it's plenty good enough to down birds. The length of pull is a hair over 141<sup>7</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches--a trifle long for the short-armed to snap shoot wearing a heavy jacket but certainly no impediment to ground-slucing small game.

I then ground my way through about 50 rounds just to function-fire the Outback. I tried about a dozen or so holding the gun at my side to see how much resistance was needed to set the inertia trigger. Not much, it turned out; the trigger set every time--even when I limp-wristed the 12 gauge as much as I dared.

One thing I didn't like was the fore-end release latch, a serrated half-wheel set in a recess. You push it forward to yank off the fore-end. A couple of times during rigorous function firing my hand moved right over the latch and inadvertently pushed the wheel, causing the fore-end to pull slightly away from the bottom barrel. If you stay away from it, as I eventually did, you won't have a problem.

With Hornady Low-Recoil 00 buck, results were best with the lower barrel/ modified combination; results averaged five of nine pellets in an eight-inch bull at 25 yards, which is stretching things some for buckshot loads. The weather had begun to turn sour and rain curtailed my buck patterning at closer yardages, but I've got a sneaking suspicion that some experimentation with different buckshot sizes might be interesting.

I think that, on the whole, the Outback is an optimum "everything" gun. It can do big game, defense, small-game foraging and wingshooting.

I'm a bit leery of using the terms "survivalist" or "survival gun," but the Outback appears to be a first-rate candidate for such a niche. It's sturdy, simple and compact. And with a suggested retail of \$350, it's inexpensive as well.

Taken down into its three components--stock/receiver, fore-end and barrel assembly--it's compact enough to fit into a backpack. It does come in 20 gauge but makes more sense in 12 (moreso considering the slug-friendly sights and 3-inch chambers).

The Outback comes in two configurations blued with walnut furniture or nickel plated with black-coated walnut. I opted for the blue/brown number. Both feature a generous recoil pad, which is pretty much mandatory on a short, lightweight 12-gauge over/under.

Obviously, as with any smoothbore, the versatility of the Outback is due to the variety of loads you can put through it buckshot, birdshot and slugs in both 23<sup>7</sup>/<sub>4</sub>- and 3-inch configuration. I shot it with all three (2 3/4-inch only; for me the 3-inch option is best utilized if it's the only stuff you're able to get your hands on). The Outback performed pretty well with everything. I shot it with Winchester Supreme No. 6, Hornady Low Recoil 00 buck, Federal Truball rifled slugs and Remington Buckmaster rifled slugs.

First off, I tried the gun at 25 yards from a sandbagged rest with slugs and fired four rounds (bottom barrel, top barrel, repeat). I was pleased to see that both rounds from each barrel were pretty