

BACKCOUNTRY HUNTER

UNTAMED ADVENTURE

FALL
2021

MOUNTAIN TOUGH

THE RIFLE THAT CHANGES THE
GAME **FOR** HIGH-COUNTRY HUNTING

HOWA
Carbon Stalker
pg. 42

TOP 5 WILDERNESS AREAS

DROP CAMP 101:
THE NITTY-GRITTY

JURASSIC PARK:
HUNTING BUCKS IN
THE BADLANDS

GEAR GUIDE

BACKCOUNTRY
BINO HARNESSES

BACKPACKING
ESSENTIALS

RUGGED & RELIABLE
COMPOUND BOWS

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

..... BRAD FITZPATRICK

THE **HOWA CARBON STALKER** TAKES THE CONCEPT OF A HIGH-COUNTRY HUNTING RIFLE TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL.

SHAVING JUST a few ounces off gun weight has a noticeable difference in steep country, and that's what makes the new Howa Carbon Stalker rifle so appealing for high-altitude hunting. At just 6.2 pounds, the Carbon Stalker 6.5 Creedmoor is about two pounds lighter than the average sporter. Two pounds may not seem like a lot, but when you're hunting areas where the altitude is high and oxygen levels are low, that weight savings could have a major impact on the success of your hunt.

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An accurate, lightweight rifle can mean the difference between a successful hunt and going home empty handed.





IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

To build their Carbon Stalker rifles with minimal mass, Howa utilizes a Stocky's carbon-fiber stock. Carbon fiber, which utilizes long chains of carbon atoms bonded together in crystal form, is used in the aerospace, defense, and auto racing industries because it offers high chemical and temperature resistance, and superb tensile strength. Carbon fiber also offers a very low weight to strength ratio, which is why it is so important in the construction of lightweight hunting rifles. Howa stocks are outfitted with the company's Accublock lug bed system which helps improve accuracy potential from these guns.

The Howa Carbon Stalker 6.5 Creedmoor's Kryptek Altitude carbon-fiber stock is mated to the company's Model 1500 action. The Model 1500 action has never received the credit it deserves in large part because the action uses metric threading, which deters most custom gun makers. However, now that the production of Remington 700 actions has been delayed, more custom rifle makers are tuning Howa actions with good results. The Howa 1500 is a push-feed, dual-lug action like the Model 700, but unlike the Remington the Howa action comes with a three-position rocker-type safety. This means that the shooter has the option to lock the action (rocker to the rear) or cycle the action (middle rocker position) with the safety engaged. The three-position safety is also a benefit when

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The Carbon Stalker's three-position safety offers superb reliability when hiking treacherous terrain. The middle position allows you to run the bolt while the safety is engaged.

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- The smaller frame and
- lightweight materials
- allow for a hunter to
- easily and comfortably
- carry this rifle through
- some of the toughest
- mountain landscapes.

hiking in heavy brush or cover. Two-position, non-locking safeties like the Remington make it possible for the bolt handle to catch on debris, and this can drag the bolt open. With the Howa's safety in the rearward position that's never an issue. Howa actions are drilled and tapped with Remington 700 pattern scope bases, which are affordable and widely available.

Each Carbon Stalker 6.5 Creedmoor rifle is equipped with a hinged floorplate and a 22-inch, 1:8 twist threaded #2 contour barrel. If you want to go even lighter there's a Carbon Stalker Mini-Action in .223 Remington, 6.5 Grendel, 7.62x39, and .350

legend that weighs in at just 4 pounds, 10 ounces, which takes light to the next level. The Mini Action guns come with a detachable box magazine.

From time to time, you'll hear comments decrying Howas and their "creepy" triggers. What some of these critics fail to understand is that Howa triggers are a two-stage design engineered to have light take-up before the trigger tightens. The design is known as HACT, or Howa Actuator Controlled Trigger. The system is safe and offers a lighter, cleaner break than competing models. It's also user-adjustable and can be reduced to below three pounds.



IN THE FIELD

The lightweight Carbon Stalker makes an ideal backcountry gun. The 6.5 Creedmoor version, of course, covers a wide range of options for big game and predators. It's no secret that the 6.5 Creedmoor is taking over the medium-game market, and a light, accurate 6.5 Creedmoor like the Carbon Stalker might be one of the best all-around mountain rifles available today. Chambered in Mini Action cartridges like the 6.5 Grendel, this is an ideal deer rifle out to 300 yards or so, and when chambered in .223, the Howa would make a great backcountry small game, predator, and defense rifle. But the .350 Legend version with its 16-inch barrel would be the most appealing to me for a strict backpacking gun.

With an overall length of less than three feet, the rifle could be nested in a pack and wouldn't hang up on branches, and





Boasting superb accuracy, the Howa Carbon Stalker is chambered in many different calibers to suit your hunt.

HOWA CARBON STALKER (KRYPTTEK ALTITUDE)

ACTION:

Bolt-action centerfire

CHAMBERINGS:

Mini Action: .223 Rem, 6.5 Grendel, 7.62x39, .350 Legend

Short Action: 6.5 Creedmoor (tested), 7mm-08 Rem., .308 Win

Long Action: 6.5 PRC, 300 Win.

MAGAZINE:

Hinged Floorplate (Short Action), Detachable external box magazine (Mini Action)

TRIGGER:

HACT, 2.5-3.8 lbs., adjustable

SIGHTS: None, drilled and tapped for Rem 700 2-piece bases

SAFETY:

3-position

STOCK: Carbon fiber

WEIGHT: Starting at 4 lbs., 10 oz.

BARREL LENGTH: 16.25"-22"

MSRP: \$1,119 (6.5 Creedmoor)

WEBSITE: legacysports.com



the .350 Legend has ample power to take deer out to a couple hundred yards. These compact rifles are also a great choice for anyone who hunts bears or mountain lions behind hounds.

Howa 1500 rifles have a reputation for stellar accuracy, and while the Carbon Stalker is backed by a sub-MOA accuracy guarantee, it's very likely that these rifles will produce better results than that with quality loads. The 1500 action is also robust and dependable which leads to outstanding reliability.

Anyone who has spent time hiking at high elevation knows how taxing steep terrain with limited oxygen can be. A rifle that cuts the weight without sacrificing accuracy or quality is worthy of consideration—and that certainly includes Howa's competitively priced Carbon Stalker. ■

LEGACY
SPORTS
INTERNATIONAL®