



GUN TEST

THE RAILWAY MAN

If you're ready for some BB blowback action, then Mike Morton suggests you check out the CO₂-powered Milbro M92 Rail

The Beretta 92 semi-automatic pistol was designed in 1972 and subjected to a series of upgrades, being used by numerous military and police units around the world, as well as civilian shooters. The updated 92FS variant was adopted by the US armed forces in 1985, being designated the M9 in US service.

Milbro's M92 rendition of the 92FS/M9 is a good facsimile of the original, with features like the magazine release, slide catch, slide release, safety catch and hammer looking and behaving much the same as on the power-burning variety. While most 92FS models are finished in Brunton – a more corrosion-resistant finish than traditional bluing – Milbro's all-metal example wears a very attractive graphite coating with brown wood-effect grips.

The stick magazine, as is usual on blowbacks of this type, is used to hold both the power supply and the ammo. The 12g CO₂ capsule is seated using a screw-in cap that cradles the bottom of the bulb.

You'll need to use the included 6mm hex key to do this. The threads engage positively, and it screws in easily. You don't need to apply too much torque – just enough to pierce the capsule and form a gas-tight seal. If you overdo it, you run the risk of damaging the seal.

BBs are loaded into the mag by holding down the follower. This part is meant to be pulled down and slotted into a gate, keeping it in place under spring tension while you load up. However, in practice I found this a bit too fiddly and ended up just holding the follower open with my fingernail while loading the magazine. Place a BB in the circular cut-out in the top of the mag, then apply finger pressure until it pops through the hole and drops into the stack. The mag is capable of taking up to 19 rounds, but I always prefer to under-load and mostly stuck to 15 BBs.

This handgun weighs 985g unloaded, 40g heavier than the 9mm FS, and feels very solid in the hand. The grips fill the hand too, but although my hands are tiny, the M92 Rail was no problem to hold

KEY SPECS

GUN SUPPLIED BY: Sportsmarketing (www.sportsmk.co.uk)
MANUFACTURER: Milbro
MODEL: M92 Rail
PRICE: £139.95
CALIBRE: .177 (4.5mm)
AMMO TYPE: BBs
ACTION: Blowback
MAGAZINE: Single-stack stick
CAPACITY: 19 rounds
SIGHTS: Fixed front and rear
SAFETY: Manual
WEIGHT: 985g
TOTAL LENGTH: 21.5cm
POWERPLANT: 12g CO₂ capsule

and shoot steady. It's worth noting that, just as with rifles and particularly springers, handguns don't shoot well if they're being gripped too tightly. A gentle hold is sufficient, especially if you're holding the gun with both hands. A right-handed shooter gripping too hard will often pull shots to the left, and vice versa for lefties.

The original FS/M9 is operated by an initial double-action trigger pull subsequently followed by single-action operation due to the blowback action, and this BB gun behaves exactly the same way. The Milbro manual quite rightly advises you to be aware of the pinch point created by the hammer and slide on its rearward travel, but as long as you adopt a standard one- or two-handed pistol hold, keeping your flesh well clear of the moving parts, you'll be fine.

Is the M92 Rail fun to shoot? Yes! When fired slowly, letting the gas inside the capsule properly expand after each shot, the gun was capable of some very accurate results. I was shooting at a modest six metres for optimum accuracy, although the M92 is capable of shooting further. Both the front and rear notch-and-post

sights are fixed, and I found my shots falling slightly low of my initial point of aim. But once I knew exactly where to point the M92 it was game on. While it's fun to shoot groups with a handgun like this, blowbacks are even better when shot at their 'natural' rate – and that means rapid-fire!

When you've fired your last round the slide remains open, indicating that you're out. You can also visually check the top of the magazine for the presence of a BB with the mag still loaded in the gun. These are brilliant safety features that also mean you won't be wasting any gas. Remove the mag, replace when refilled, click the slide forward and carry on firing. If you want to stop firing with a partially loaded magazine, simply remove the mag and decock the gun by

squeezing the trigger while guiding the hammer forward. Milbro advises against dry-firing to avoid damaging the components.

I managed to get around 45 shots from each CO2 capsule. If you buy a gun like this it's a good idea to find its limit and don't try to go beyond it, otherwise there may not be enough gas to cycle the action and blow back the slide. Having said that, it's easy to see – or rather hear – when you're getting low on gas, as the gun makes a distinctly different sound.



This 10-shot group taken at six metres shows the kind of accuracy the M92 is capable of when taking slow, deliberate shots

Milbro's gun is called the M92 Rail, a reference to the single-slot Picatinny rail that sits below the barrel. I didn't have a suitable laser to hand for my testing, but it would be fun to fit one and use the beam as an aiming rather than rangefinding device when shooting this gun at handgun distances.

After every 2,000 shots, Milbro advises you to field-strip the gun for cleaning and lubrication. With the magazine removed and the pistol not cocked, press in the slide release catch from the right and swivel it clockwise on the left. This enables you to completely remove the slide, providing plenty of access. Look after your M92, grab plenty of CO2 and a big tub full of BBs and you'll be on a roll with the Rail. ●

“BLOWBACKS ARE BETTER WHEN SHOT AT THEIR 'NATURAL' RATE – RAPID-FIRE!”

A supplied hex key is used to seat and pierce the 12g CO2 canister that's housed inside the stick magazine



The follower is tiny and needs to be pulled and held down with a fingernail while you feed in up to 19 BBs from the top of the magazine



The M92 Rail lives up to its name by having a Picatinny rail under the barrel; the mag seats inside the well with a satisfying click



If you're unsure whether your magazine's been loaded you can either remove the mag or rack the slide and check for ammo



When you depress the release catch, get ready to catch the mag as it drops out of the magazine well

THE AIRGUN SHOOTER VERDICT

LOOK & FEEL	ERGONOMICS	BUILD QUALITY	SIGHTS	GASSING UP	LOADING	TRIGGER	HANDLING	ACCURACY	VALUE
8	9	8	7	9	7	7	9	8	8

OVERALL SCORE

80

“The all-metal Milbro M92 Rail is a solid and well-built blowback, combining reliability and safety with fast-fire fun”