

Lithgow Arms' LA105 Woomera Here at last!

Daniel O'Dea



We had a bit of a wait but by the time you read this the Lithgow Arms LA105 Woomera should be well and truly on the shelves at your local gunshop - that's if supply and demand allows them to stay there for long! I'm one of the lucky few who've already experienced the Woomera, firstly on debut at the 2018 US SHOT Show then a media event at the Lithgow factory and range as reported in *Australian Shooter* (August 2018).

That aside, I too have been patiently

waiting to lay my hands on one for a more thorough appraisal and as such was pleasantly surprised to receive a call from Jim Harding, Marketing Manager for Australian distributor Outdoor Sporting Agencies, telling me he had one in 6.5 Creedmoor on the way.

As a writer I get a to un-box quite a few new guns but lifting the lid on the LA105 is a real 'Christmas morning' experience, well packed and full of goodies. The rifle comes in a calico draw-string sleeve emblazoned with Lithgow Arms' signature and logo.

Individual plastic bags hold a multitude of other items including the bolt, three kick pad spacers, three sets of screws for same, a set of large interchangeable grip panels for the KRG stock, an L2 and L3 Magpul MOE rail section for the KRG stock, three-port muzzle brake and documentation including a comprehensive owner's manual, warranty card and muzzle brake installation instructions. The official 'Australian made' kangaroo logo swing tag adds a nice touch.

Recapping the main features, the LA105 Woomera starts with Lithgow

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Arms' centrefire action first seen on the successful LA102. With its receiver precision-machined from a billet of high tensile steel mated with a forward locking cylindrical three-lug bolt and 60° lift, the action has proven to be fast to operate, tight in lockup and inherently accurate, providing the perfect base for a precision long-range rifle.

Added to this is a 24" (610mm) heavy 'Woomera' profiled barrel claimed to be "tuned for extreme long-range accuracy". It features an 11° target crown at the muzzle and is threaded 5/8"x24 UNEF for Lithgow Arms' inhouse-designed three horizontal ported muzzle brake to reduce felt recoil.

The trigger is a single stage, three-way adjustable set-up (for weight, sear engagement and draw length) factory-set for a 1.5kg (3.3lb) break. As far as a bang switch goes it has a broad, smooth trigger shoe providing ample rest for the pad of your finger when ready to fire, there's no discernible take-up, it breaks crisply and, most importantly, is consistently repeatable. I didn't play with the adjustment, though if I owned the rifle I might lighten it just a little. I left it as it came out of the box and was happy with feel and performance.

The three-position safety is a swing-level style located at the bolt shroud which also sports a cocking indicator providing both a visual and tactile guide to the rifle's condition. If I was hyper critical the safety was a little stiff to operate on the test gun, both positive and audible in movement between positions, then again some might argue these are plus points. I'd say it would likely lighten up some with use. With the pistol grip stock some may have to come off the grip to operate the lever unless you have larger hands. Again, based on the rifle's most likely intended purpose, neither would present any real concern.



Lithgow Arms' LA105 Woomera's left profile.



The KRG X-Ray Stock produced as OEM for the Woomera is well featured with lots of adjustment.



The inline relationship of bore axis with rifle stock required the kick pad and cheek rise to be removed for cleaning.

The fore-end is also fitted with a conventional sling stud for your sling or Harris-style bipod and I noted there's no rear sling stud, rather a QD cup, which leads me to think the front stud might be there more for a bipod with the various accessory anchor points meant for sling mounting options, again this is all customisable.

Still on the stock, there's an adjustable/removable rear bag rider which can also be swapped out for other KRG accessories. On further research I found a plethora of bolt-on KRG accessories for this stock including an ambidextrous QD sling mount that fits into the fore-end tip. Finishing off the buttstock is a generous soft rubber recoil mitigating pad which sits nicely in the

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shoulder with the rifle mounted.

Ergonomically I was impressed by the whole KRG system and of note is the high butt-to-bore line relationship. The top of the kick pad sits directly in line with the bore axis providing just about zero drop at the heel, meaning recoil comes straight back into the shoulder providing no point of pivot to drive muzzle lift.

Such clever design combined with the effective recoil pad and efficient muzzle brake makes for a soft-shooting outfit. The only downside I found was the need to remove the kick pad to use a bore-to-muzzle cleaning rod, likewise the cheek rise also needs removing to take the bolt out, but the benefits of the design far outweigh any perceived liability. Other small details like side thumb shelves complete the package into what is an excellent stock/chassis system.

Feeding ammo to the whole deal is an AI pattern, double stack 10-round magazine which seems to be the benchmark for many chassis-style rifles these days. The magazine is easy to load and feeds smoothly with ample length in the box for seating those ELD-style (Extreme Long Distance) projectiles.

The ambidextrous magazine release is just forward of the triggerguard which can be easily activated with an outstretched trigger finger and magazines drop free so you can stay on the gun for changes should speed during competition be required.

After reacquainting myself with the LA105 Woomera all that was needed was to mount some glass and hit the range. OSA had well and truly spoilt me in that department as along with the rifle they sent



After sighting the first five-shot group impressed using 147gr Hornady ELD projectiles and 40gr of ADI2209.



Lithgow's proprietary three horizontal port muzzle brake proved effective and comes as standard.



The LA105 has great functional relationships between trigger, bolt handle and magazine release.

a new Zeiss Victory V8 4.8-35x60 scope and set of ERA rings for fitment. The Zeiss was mounted on the LA105's factory standard 20MOA rail, readied for the bench and in a short time I was on paper at 100m and by the third round was centered in the bull, the next two landing in the same centre ring.

Feeling in the groove I moved to a fresh target to shoot a five-round group, the first three in an overlapping cluster easily 0.25MOA, the next two opened it up slightly but I still managed about 0.33 MOA measured centre-to-centre - that'll do me! Knowing from previous experience the LA105 has long legs and likes to stretch them, I'd loaded up some Hornady 147gr ELD-M projectiles behind 40gr neat of ADI 2209, sparked off with Fed 210 Match primers and that's what I was feeding the Woomera.

To end the session I used a 300mm x 300mm reactive metal swing target across

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the gully at 400m which was struck with little effort and great monotony once I dialed in. It had been my intention to stretch it out even further on a future outing but a queue of other interested parties was forming and I had to return the rifle to OSA. I couldn't be greedy as I'd previously proved the rifle's long-range credentials, popping balloons at more than 800m on Lithgow's factory range last year,

so reluctantly I packed it away.

With my third taste of Lithgow Arms' LA105 Woomera under my belt I can only say it continues to impress. In August last year the targeted release price was \$2800 which is right on the money now it's on the shelf, and a quick shop around finds it selling a little below that which to me represents great value. More at osaaustralia.com.au or lithgowarms.com ●

Fore-end of the KRG stock has slots on all three faces, compatible for MAGPUL, MLOK and other KRG accessories.



Specifications

Rifle: Lithgow Arms' LA105 Woomera
Action: Bolt-action
Trigger: Single stage, adjustable for weight, sear engagement and draw length
Trigger pull: Adjustable 0.75kg-1.9kg (factory set 1.5kg)
Calibres: 6.5 Creedmoor, .308 Winchester
Capacity: 10-round AI pattern detectable box magazine
Barrel: 24" (610mm) medium/heavy 'Woomera' profile
Twist rate: 1:8 in 6.5 Creedmoor (tested), 1:10 in .308 Winchester
Muzzle: Threaded 5/8"x24 UNEF with three-port muzzle brake as standard
Sights: Standard with 20 MOA rail for optics mounting
Stock: KRG X-Ray adjustable for cheek height and LOP
Distributor: Outdoor Sporting Agencies
Price: Around \$2800



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