

# A PORTABLE & PACKABLE POWERHOUSE!

## BIG HORN ARMORY MODEL 89 TAKE DOWN

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The Big Horn Armory model 89 is an attractive accurate shooter capable of taking the largest game known to roam the earth.

You've got to hand it to Greg Buchel of **Big Horn Armory**! In 2008, Buchel had a desire to build a lever gun strong enough for the 500 S&W Magnum cartridge. Released in 2003, the .500 S&W is the most powerful handgun cartridge loaded by several manufacturers. Buchel, a huge John Moses Browning fan, wanted his lever gun to have the same characteristics as Browning's proven designs.

Only there was a slight problem. Buchel knew the sleek, slim Winchester Model 92 was too small for the powerful .500 S&W cartridge. Also, Buchel wanted his rifle action smaller and lighter than the Winchester 1886, another proven Browning design. So Buchel did what any enterprising man would do and designed his own action.

By splitting the difference of the two previously mentioned lever guns, Buchel named his design the Model 89, which is numerically halfway between Winchester's Model 1892 and 1886. Size-wise, the model 89 falls between Browning's designs. By using 17-4PH stainless steel, a steel 3X stronger than originally used by Winchester, it worked.

The model 89 mid-sized action allowed adjustments to be made, moving pivot pins for the carrier, release points for cartridge guides, and other critical internal parts for a correct geometry allowing the huge cartridge to cycle the 500 S&W Magnum cartridge. Buchel and his engineers were successful.





The Take-Down feature allows compact packing during travel, hunting, camping or knocking around anywhere outdoors.

## Lookers & Shooters

Today, Big Horn Armory rifles are known for their beautiful exhibition-grade walnut stocks and stainless-steel structure, having a tough, attractive salt-bathed nitride finish. The wood is attractively checkered with an ornately designed pattern on the wrist and forearm.

The rifles come with **Skinner Sight** Peep sights installed on the bolts of the rifles, maximizing sight radius with the white beaded front sight. Later, models such as the Spike Driver and Black Thunder were released.



The sleek, compact Skinner Sights peep is mounted on the model 89 bolt, providing maximum sight radius. Hammer is expertly serrated for positive purchase during cocking and lowering the hammer.

## Take-Down Model

Buchel is always looking for new ways to improve and offer new versions of his lever guns for his loyal customer base and came out with a Take Down version of the famed Model 89. As a devout student of John Moses Browning, it should be no surprise that Buchel reintroduced Browning's proven method for take-down rifles.



A Big Horn Armory logo and proof stamp on tang are on all rifles.



Here's the mortise in open position, ready to be taken down by sliding the halves apart.





Close-Up of the splines and retracting mortise secure take-down possible.





Turning the knurled magazine tube activates the mortise joint.



Mortise joint tightly in place, ready for action.



## Ingenious Solution

In 1905, John Moses Browning received patent #781765 for his only purpose-built take-down long gun. It was the strongest take-down design built at that time. Browning's design was simply brilliant! It involves using multiple rows of precisely measured and machined splines running the length of the receiver and barreled action. Once in place, the two halves are locked in place, resisting movement in all directions, as if welded together. Multiple proof loads fired in prototypes caused no change in headspace or any other dimension.



The strength of the model 89 comes from the falling block type action with two huge lugs holding everything in place.



Close-up of the white bead front sight and knurled magazine tube knob that activates the mortise.

## ‘How to’ Take-Down

Taking the rifle down is fun and simple. After checking the rifle is unloaded, work the lever to the upmost open position. Now start turning the knurled knob on the end of the magazine tube clockwise to separate the action from the barrel assembly. When the mortise clears the slot, simply slide the halves apart. Putting it back together is just as simple.

The take-down feature allows compact packing during travel, hunting, camping or knocking around outdoors. Whether flying by bush plane, Jeep, or boat, the compact-sized take-down saves space and makes packing a carbine even easier. Airline employees won't know what's in your lockable hard case by its compact size.



Like all Big Horn Armory rifles, the model 89 Take-Down version is very attractive!





Garmin Chronograph displaying a five shot string of 500 S&W ammunition.





The .500 S&W is an imposing looking cartridge perfect for a portable and packable lever gun.

## Shooting

The staff from BHA not only sent me a test gun, but two boxes of ammo as well. The loads consisted of healthy charges of H110, which drove the Hornady 350 grain XTP bullets 1,943 FPS from the 18- inch barreled model 89 Take Down. The ammunition cycled smoothly, and accuracy consistently ran around 1.5 inches at 50 yards for 5 shots.

Shooting was casual and fun, just as lever guns are supposed to be shot. I rested the action on a sandbag perched on a 6" x 6" length of wood. The Skinner Sights peep combined with the white bead front sight made a wonderful sight picture on the 6-inch Shoot-N-C targets. When working the lever, just remember to cycle it with authority so rounds eject and the next round cycles smoothly from the magazine.

The wood on my test sample is well-figured walnut, and the 18-inch barrel makes for a handy carry-sized length. The carbine shoulders quick and is a pleasure to shoot. I honestly believe the BHA model 89 is the most appropriate platform for the potent 500 S&W cartridge.

This cartridge picks up several hundred "free" FPS coming from the longer barrel of the model 89 and can kill the largest animals known to roam the earth. There are several documented cases of hunters killing African Cape Buffalo, Alaskan brown bear, American Bison, and more with this potent combination. While packing a wallop, it is easily controlled in the Big Horn Armory Model 89.

For more information, visit [BigHornArmory.com](http://BigHornArmory.com).