

Remington 11-87
Shell Manufacturers

Dear Technoid:

Read a couple of your comments concerning the Remington 11-87. I have one and don't have any complaints - yet. What are some of the common problems you've seen with this gun?

Also, I am an avid waterfowler and was hunting with a buddy last week. I was using Remington Nitro Steels 3" mags #4s. My buddy commented that he couldn't hit the broad side of a barn using any Remington shells and that they are generally inferior to Federals or Winchesters. He is a damn good shot and I'm wondering whether you've heard any truth to his claim. According to a friend of his who used to work for Winchester, Remington shells are notorious for skimping on powder and other quality issues. What do you think? (I hope there's some truth to my buddy's claim - - it'll help explain why I missed to passing woodies!) Thanks!

Jeff

Dear Jeff:

Most of the problems that I have seen with the 11-87 have come from clay target shooters who put more rounds through the guns than hunters do- though not as heavy loads. Ring and action bar breakage have been truly excessive with these guns. There have also been shell lifter and magazine third shell interrupter problems.

I have owned six 1100s over the years and learned to live with modest parts breakage. The 11-87 is almost exactly the same gun, but they must have had a run of poorly hardened parts because the guys around here are screaming.

The last time I took an 1100 duck hunting, we crawled through the muck for a long time to jump some black ducks on a pond. When we hopped up to shoot, I fired my first shot and the trigger (the actual curved trigger blade) fell out and dropped in the slime at my feet. I guess that a part can break at any time, but that was the last time I ever took an 1100 into the field.

Every other year I go down to Colombia to shoot dove. This is high volume shooting (2000 rounds per day is not unheard of! Repeat- 2000 rounds per day- not a misprint) and you either shoot an automatic or quit at lunch time. It used to be all 1100s, but now it is all Beretta autos. They simply do not break as much.

I don't mean to knock the 11-87. It really isn't a bad gun and any manufacturer can get a run of bad parts. There certainly isn't anything grossly wrong with the design. If it works for you, great. However, if I were dragging it into a duck blind at zero dark thirty in the AM after poling a skiff over bitter, choppy water in the pitch dark, I would sure carry a bunch of spare parts or a second gun.

I would recommend that you carry the following spares:

trigger group
link
action bar
set of rings
complete bolt
rubber O ring
charging handle (they get lost)
forend nut (also fall into water in duck blinds)
gas vent clip
barrel hanger

Over the years in my 1100s I have broken each and every part listed, some of them many times. Until the new owners of Remington straighten out their quality problems, I would definitely have some spare parts with me. It is cheap insurance. Every sane clay target shooter who prefers the Remington autos carries spare parts. It just goes with the territory.

As to shells: The major manufacturers all make shells of different qualities and grades. When they want to, they can make very good stuff indeed. The typical promotional loads (1 1/4 dram, 1 oz, dove and quail loads) usually are built as cheaply as possible. The high end hunting and target loads are very good. Personally, I have always preferred Federal across the board, but I am afraid to say that the Remington shell didn't make you miss those woodies.

Best regards,

Bruce Buck
Shotgun Report's Technoid