

WOODSRUNNING

With The French MAS 36

by Paul “Many Rifles” Laster

Good surplus military rifle bargains are becoming rarer by the moment. Long gone are the days of picking up a cheap Enfield No. 4 at the local pawn shop for a song but make no mistake – there are still a lot of good options out there. There is just something about taking a surplus rifle with you out into the woods for a deer or hog hunt or a woodsloafing adventure. These rifles were made for rough outdoor action, and to shoot one is to take an active part in reliving our collective history. Though never the most common surplus military rifle on the market, the French MAS 36 is certainly still around, and good, shootable examples show up at local gun shops and gun shows from time to time.

The French MAS 36 came about in the years before WW2 as a replacement for the quite obsolete French Berthier rifle that was in common use during WW1. It was manufactured by Manufacture d’Armes de Saint-Étienne for the duration of its production and was originally adopted by the French army in 1936 (hence MAS 36). The MAS 36 was in general use with the French Army troops during the war, as well as in the post-WW2 conflict in what was then French Indochina. The French 7.5mm cartridge is something close to the more familiar .308 Winchester in size and power, and in fact, there was a later French rifle – the MAS 49/56 – that was offered up rechambered to .308 Winchester from the original French loading.



“Many Rifles” with MAS 36 in Camp

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