

SCANDINAVIAN VISIT

– GRS rifle stocks

Part 1



Stefan Fouché

I met Oscar Haugen four years ago at the HuntEx show where he was promoting and selling his rifle stocks at the Safari Outdoor booth. Now, after a year's planning, I found myself on the porch of his house in Hornindal, Norway. We were sipping some of Scotland's finest from crystal glasses, with real ice crystals fetched from the stream in his yard that flows from the mountain behind his house. We were overlooking the town with the most amazing backdrop of mountains and snow, a vista of 360 degrees around us. What a privilege to visit my friend there, at the top of the world, and to experience first-hand where the GRS rifle stock story was born.

In the factory the first picture I take is surely one of my most memorable of the entire trip. At 70 years old, Oscar's dad, Oddvin Haugen, still works in the factory, handcrafting the laminated stocks that took over the shooting world during the last decade. The factory started out as a furniture business owned and operated by the Haugen family in the eighties. With the furniture market taking a dip later on, Oscar and his brother Håvard decided to start building a rifle stock that would change the hunting and target shooting world forever. The first stock was shown to the public in March 2012, and since then these stocks have been sold in 45 countries worldwide. The idea was to manufacture a rifle stock that would enable the shooter's hand to pull the trigger in the most natural way possible, thereby ensuring better shooting. The adjustable cheekpiece and buttplate also contribute to the unique design of the GRS concept, helping shooters and hunters to obtain better results.



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But the thing that struck me most about the factory is the individual care that goes into each and every stock. Yes, the initial work is done by a machine, carving out the rough shape and doing the inletting for the different rifle actions, but from there on a few hours of work by hand go into each and every GRS rifle stock that leaves the factory. They do not mass-produce and build up stock; every customer's order is put together by a worker, and from there the order is processed and finished exactly according to the customer's requirements. The single word that sums up what goes on in this small factory in these beautiful mountains is 'craftsmanship'. Each laminated stock is individually formed, and anyone that has ever had the privilege to work with wood will understand the reward and personal satisfaction upon completing a project. That same pride is easily recognisable as you walk through the factory and meet the handful of workers creating these masterpieces.

It is when you see the attention to detail that the workers (and owners) apply to these stocks while holding it in your hands that you realise this is not a machine-produced item. Everything is in the right place and the finishing is just immaculate. No rough edges – every part of this stock is as

smooth as glass. To be honest, I think that is why consumers all over the world fall in love with these stocks once they have held them in their hands.

The GRS team also decided about a year ago that there was a place for a tougher, all-weather, robust stock, so at the beginning of 2016 they introduced the GRS Berserk. This composite stock is tough as hell and they just simply cannot keep up with the demand. It features the same adjustable buttplate and cheekpiece as the laminated stocks. For extra grip they have non-slip rubber patches around the pistol grip area as well as on the fore-end.

I was privileged to have made this trip with my dad, Flip, and to have experienced this with him was absolutely priceless. We both own a couple of these stocks and now, after seeing where they come from and the man hours that go into each individual item, we appreciate them a lot more! We even shoot better!

Very special thanks go to my good friend Oscar and his family for their hospitality in their beautiful country. Next month I will tell you more about the second part of our Scandinavian visit, where we met up with the guys from A-Tec silencers in Oslo, Norway.

