



Going, Going, Gone

Mark Stone gets his hands on what some Trap and Trench shooters would sell their souls for – the Perazzi MX8 Protrap



With Express 8's in the bottom, 6 1/2's in the top, the MX8 got as good as it was going to get



Although superbly crafted, for the author the Monte Carlo comb was 1/2" to high

The Formula 1 of shotguns, there probably isn't a 'going away' discipline these shotguns haven't dominated, Daniele Perazzi's original 1957 creation having created its own iconic status, all Perazzis are considered to display levels of balance the envy of all others. Similarly, grades of engraving and walnut are only surpassed by choice of barrel length and configurations.

CASE STUDY

Delivered in a fitted Negrini case most things the new owner might need are included. Once removed the MX8 more or less floats together, although care must be taken to correctly locate the cocking lever before slowly rotating the Trap style forend into position.

The action itself is a perfect example of less is more. Apart from the rosettes that pick out the hinges and pivot point of the top-lever, all that embellishes the semi-matte receiver is the 'Perazzi MX8' script to the lower left side, plus the word Protrap along the base. Barrel wise, the black tubes are in the Perazzi tradition of metric measuring 81cm although optional 86cm and 89cm versions are available. Vented three quarters along the mid-rib, the 6-11mm tapering top-rib is what sets this Perazzi apart. Certainly not one of the company's more overt examples, the MX8 still boasts a heavily ramped pattern that sits 10mm above the surface of the top barrel.

Fixed at full choke in the top, although this can be altered dependant on requirements, the multi-choke description only applies to the bottom barrel. Supplied with a set of four flush-fitting tubes - ¼, a wide and tight ½ or ¾'s can be inserted. This also reasserts the fact that a wider restriction is often more effective on first barrel kills.

One of the most important features on any shotgun is the stock. Get it wrong and you'll never be able to shoot correctly. A Monte Carlo as standard, the tester displayed a 15 1/8" length of pull along with 1 3/8" and 1 17/32" drop at comb and heel with a lower fall of 1 9/32" at the rear of the raised comb. Finished with a fine lacquer that shows the grain of the walnut off to its best, no criticism of fit or finish can be levelled, the Protrap personifying Perazzi's uncompromising quality.

PEGGED BACK

The reason I've mentioned the stock sizing is that this MX8 didn't fit me. However, whilst its pointless saying the Protrap was the best trap gun I've ever shot, the comb was at least ½" too high, provided I modified my method of attack, decent scores were still more than possible. Four squads of Coniston's DTL combined with the wider ½ choke plus Express Supreme 8's in the bottom barrel, 6's in the top, scores progressively improved.

By taking the bird immediately it appeared the kills were more than impressive, although second barrel success remained limited. Matters picked up again when I shouldered the Protrap higher than usual - this physical shift allowing me to look along not down the rib. What never failed to astound was the speed the mechanism shift. I defy anyone to find a shotgun that can transfer and discharge its second round faster than this MX8. Until you've used a Perazzi you'll never quite appreciate how these shotguns feel or work but once you have, any trap shooter will be hard pushed to look anywhere else.

TRIGGER HAPPY

Normally the only mention of the trigger itself is weight and adjustability. However with the MX8 the whole trigger mechanism is down to personal choice. Breaking at a precise 3lbs 6oz, besides being fully detachable, you can

opt for 'V' or coil springs, pull - pull, release - pull or release - release.

Theory is V's are more sensitive, while coils are more reliable. That said, if you do have a breakage, spares can be inserted in about five minutes. Perfectionists however will buy a spare trigger set meaning a unit change in about fifteen seconds. Extravagant maybe, but if a broken spring denies you your first gold medal you'll curse it for the rest of your life no matter how remote the chances of a breakage.

WELL WOULD I?

If I was in the position of considering a full-blown no compromise Trap gun the MX8 Protrap would be in the top three. The one thing I would insist on though would be to try the gun with a stock more or less of my dimensions. Anyone who buys an MX8 on the spur of the moment without ensuring the gun fits could be seriously disappointed without it being anything to do with the gun itself.

Work on the theory that unless the standard measurements happen to suit, the asking price of £5,255 is a starting point. Get yourself measured by a qualified professional, none of this balancing pound coins on ribs routine or crook of arm lark. Likewise decide which trigger group you want, since it can make a significant difference.

If you're good enough to move up to the Perazzi MX8 then, just like the top disciplines it was designed for, ensure the process of acquiring a Protrap is as calculated as the shooting itself. Get it right and you'll own a 12 - bore that becomes part of you, get it wrong and you're the one to blame. ■

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Model:	Perazzi MX8 Protrap
Type:	O/U
Bore:	12
Choke:	Fixed full top barrel, four multi-choke supplied for bottom barrel
Trigger:	Specified by buyer
Price:	£5,999 (As tested)
Contact:	RUAG Ammotec UK Ltd, tel. 01579 362319 www.ruag.co.uk



Perazzi MX8 Protrap



The shooter can select from 1/4 to 3/4 choke but only in the bottom barrel - the top is a fixed 'full' choke



Like many Perazzi's the MX8 Protrap comes with detachable trigger sets that meld flawlessly into the well sculpted pistol grip