.338 Lapua Magnum
A “New” Cartridge Comes of Age

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Bruce Webb, VP Marketing
A New Caliber: Which Came First, The Weapon or the Ammo?
The Challenge: Portable Sniping Power
There is a big gap between the common calibers

7.62mmx51 (.308 Win)

- 12lb weapon
  + Optics
  + Ammo (M118LR)
- 900m Range
- 175gr projectile

.50 cal (12.7mmx99)

- 30lb weapon
  + Optics
  + Ammo (Mk211)
- 1500m Range
- 650gr projectile + MP
US Military Addressed Gap In 1982

Requirement (machine gun, semi-auto & sniper)
- Pre-"SOCOM" units defined need
- Launch 250gr projectile at 3000 fps
- Range 1500m (like .50cal)

NSWC Crane Manager

Research Armament Company lead (gun)
- Brass Extrusion Labs Limited (cartridge case)
- Hornady (projectile)
Armament Research Corporation’s “Haskins Rifle” was the Star

- Jerry Haskins’ (AR) gun was well received
  - Simplified Action was working in .300 Win Mag and .50 BMG

- “.416-.338” napkin design based on .416 Rigby
  - Ed Dillon designed preliminary mods for .338/.416
  - Boots Obermeyer (barrels) refined interfaces
  - Jim Bell solved cartridge issues & made ‘conversion’ tooling

- Lapua was chosen as a production partner
  - Agreement made at the 1984 SHOT Show
  - Based on the .416/338 being the “Next Big Thing”
Late 1984, System Problems Surfaced

- Recurring “Headspace” problems
  - Caused by oversize bullet w/Haskins bolt design [Dillon]

- US Military continued with Haskins
  - .300 Win Mag
  - .50 cal
  - but dropped the 416/338

- Lapua, who had signed on for “production” was left at the dance without a date
Lapua Adopted the Program “Alone”
Promises of Production Quantities Faded

Lapua made further refinements (1984-1985)
- Increased web thickness (possible “from scratch”)
- Increased taper (still thinking about machine guns)

Heym (Germany) made .338 ‘semi-custom’ guns (1985)
- Heym’s ’98 style actions solved AR’s problems
- Competitive long-range shooters choose .338 Lapua Mag

Late 1980’s Accuracy International developed a .338 Weapon
- Malcolm Cooper (AI) represented Lapua in Britain
- Developed the Arctic Warfare weapon in 7.62mm and .300 Win Mag
- Migrated the AW to .338 Lapua Magnum become the first production

SAKO had provided test barrels to Lapua, followed
- Fields the TRG-41 in .338 Lapua magnum
.416 Rigby Becomes .338 Lapua Mag

Comments:
- Accommodates large, heavy projectile (300-400 grain) for “Dangerous Game”

Mouth = .416”
Length = 2.90”
Volume = 122gr H₂O

Comments:
- Increased taper for improved extraction
- Increased web for higher pressure up to 60,915 psi (420 MPa)

Mouth = .338”
Length = 2.72”
Volume = 114gr H₂O
Interesting Things at SOCOM in 2007
.338 Lapua Mag Timeline

1982 .416-.338 Concept (250gr x 3000 fps)
1983 USN/Research Armaments (Haskins)/BELL (Bell)/Hornaday
1984 SHOT Show Agreement (ARC/Lapua)
1985 Heym (Germany)/Mauser/Lapua
1986 416/338 Begins Winning Competitions
1988 Accuracy International “Production”
1989 CIP Registration

1990 - 2004 Long Range Competitors and European Snipers choose .338 Lapua Magnum
2004 - 2007 Renewed US Sniper Use/Interest
2007 SAAMI Introduction
2007 US Military Qualification Planned?
The Result: A Refined Example

- 8lb weapon
  + Optics
  + Ammo
- 1500m Range
- 250gr projectile
.338 Lapua Magnum Growing “Family”

Weapons:
- Accuracy Int’l AWSM/AWP (UK)
- SAKO TRG -42 (Finland)
- Timberwolf PGW (Canada)
- Remington M24A3
- SIG Blaser LRS2 (Switzerland)
- Many Others

Ammunition:
- Lapua
- Norma
- RUAG
- Black Hills

Countries:
- Australia
- Belgium
- Britain*
- Canada
- Finland*
- Germany
- Ireland
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Singapore
- Switzerland
- United States
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