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POWER



The X Factor – A revolution in 0.43 cal paintball Markers

Recently a new paintball marker was released to the general public named “XPower”. There was a lot of hype surrounding this marker and what can only be described as exceptional marketing. Now I am not one to go for marketing but work on actually using the weapon in the environments that it is supposed to operate in. Here in NZ I run the National tournaments for 0.43cal markers and also the Wellington region club that operates under the name of STAGS. For the past 4 years STAGS has been at the forefront of military simulation here in NZ and are always looking at better ways to improve our sport so when I was asked to review the XPower I was only too glad to put this weapon through its paces and to see whether this weapon stood up to the pressures we put on our current markers. Detailed throughout this review is my opinion of the XPower and how it compares to my current modified 4R RAM marker.

Period of Product Use:	3 months
Paintball Experience:	4 years
Similar Products Used:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) RAM 1R 2) RAM 2R 3) RAM 4R modified foregrip, stock and pistol grip 4) RAM 11S,12S (MP5) 5) RAM Pistols, Sig226, Glock Combat, P99
Weapon specs:	<p>Weight: 6.14 lbs Length: 32" Width: 3" Height: 11.5"</p> <p>CO2 and Nitrogen/Compressed Air adaptable</p>
Recommended Upgrades:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Extra magazines 2) This is an individual shooters decision. This weapon can be modified with all types of Fore grips, Sights etc
Strengths:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Accuracy 2) Consistency 3) Maintenance 4) Easy cleaning 5) Range
Weaknesses:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lack of Manual or Instructions
Review:	<p>The weapon arrived after 5 days and by this time I had spent a lot of time looking around the net for any information that I could find relating to the XPower and to be honest I could only find what is written above. So I was looking forward to see what this weapon was really like as there was a lack of detail anywhere on it.</p> <p>Once I opened the box the first thing I looked for was a manual. Nothing. Ok I'm a clever guy I can work this out. I grabbed the weapon and the first thing I noticed was how light it is compared to our current marker (to be fair I have a modified 4r with CASV rail, G27 pistol grip and a heavier stock running on a remote line). But it felt more like a real M4. The pistol grip is an exact of the real weapon and feels more like the real thing. I looked over the weapon and it is completely anodized and parts such as the safety catch and carry handle are a soft gun metal grey in colour giving the weapon a much classier and realistic look. The weapon was supplied with a 60gm bottle but due to the fact I intend to fire 30 mags straight from the box I decided to attach my remote line and 12oz bottle.</p> <p>To give the weapon its first test I decided to use the weapons iron sights. Magazine loaded I then cocked the action and you could feel the launch rod securely lock in to place. This gave a reassuring feel that the weapon was fully ready for action. You will also need to "cock" the weapon after every magazine change and this gives the XPower a more true to life feel over the current M4 markers.</p>

Every round was dead straight with no variation either left or right. The trigger action was a lot longer than I am use to but was smoother and gave a more realistic trigger feel. For those players that like a higher rate of fire (i.e. pull the trigger rapidly to give an almost automatic feel) will find this slightly frustrating but I noticed that the first round I fired went exactly where I was aiming so the target was down, no need to waste more rounds on it. I found double taps equally responsive (as this is my normal shooting style) and more realistic compared to current markers. Overall I find the trigger system far superior than the current marker. (Further details below in the core diagrams). There will be an automatic selector coming out for this in the future but here in NZ that is not an issue as we are only allowed Semi Auto by law.

The hop up which can be found in front of the carry handle (you will need to remove the carry handle in order to adjust) I worked out the rotation and started shooting at 5 meter intervals and making the adjustments as I went to keep the rounds on target. At 75 meters (225 feet) I was getting 8 inch groupings of the rounds but noticed the round was now traveling the distance in a bell curve pattern with a rise of approx 1.5 meters prior to dropping back down on to the target. Also with the increase in distance comes and increase in the time the round takes to arrive on target. This is ok on a stationary target but would require a very skilled and lucky marksman to time the round to hit a moving target. Not so much of a problem as it has twice the range of the current marker (when the hop up is tuned) and will prevent players from just standing in the open directing their team without fear of being hit. This weapon will change that.

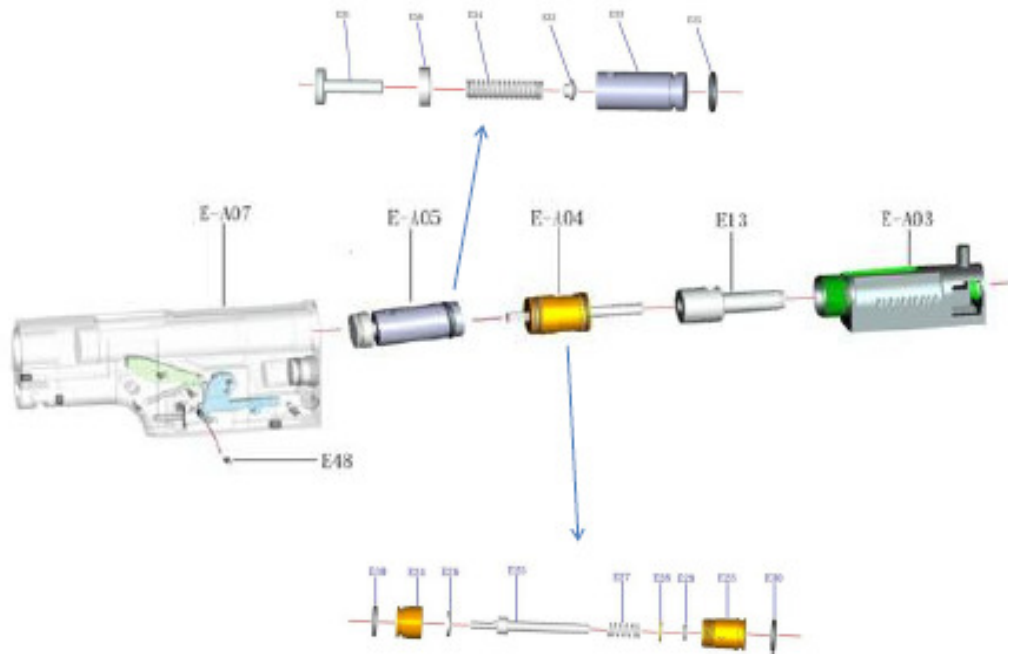
Maintenance

Having been in this sport for a long time and 1 of only 4 persons in NZ to have completed the APS Basic Maintenance course I am well trained in the maintenance of our current RAM markers. So I was well prepared to sit down and attack the XPower. Although there was no manual I had confidence that I would soon work this out.

I laid out all of my tools, pressure gauges and miscellaneous items I use while repairing the current RAM markers. As I was soon to discover I did not require these. The only tools needed were

1. 1 x small Phillips head screw driver
2. 1 x Long handle Allen key (supplied with the weapon to remove the pistol grip)
3. 1 x punch pin

This is a very simplified weapon that a competent user will be able to field strip in less than 2 minutes. Compared to our current markers the XPower was an absolute dream to work on.



The XPower-M4 core also features a new low and steady pressure design that allows the unit to operate under all weather and temperature conditions - so you can train in rain, hail, snow or in the scorching desert heat. The XPower-M4 trigger guard folds back to give room for shooting gloves. This feature is ideal for winter operations. The XPower-M4 provides a complete training solution for any agency, in any training environment.

Conclusion:

Overall this is a great improvement on the current marker. As the weapon improves with a few slight changes such as adding a discreet dial to adjust the hop up on the move then this weapon will enhance our sport. I am still to test this weapon with the new Powder rounds which I believe will enhance the accuracy further. For my mind I am switching to the XPower as my primary weapon of choice.

Rating:

9 out of 10