

# AT QUEST'S END

## ANGSTADT ARMS' UDP-9 RIFLE



### COULD THE SEARCH FOR THE BEST GLOCK-COMPATIBLE CARBINE BE OVER?

Text and photos by **Garrett Lucas**

**T**HROUGHOUT HISTORY, MANKIND HAS BEEN INSTILLED WITH THE DESIRE TO SEARCH, EXPLORE AND TRAVEL BEYOND THE HORIZON, EVEN INTO THE VOID OF SPACE. There are some members of our species who dedicate their lives to the completion of a particular quest, whether it's an attempt to find King Solomon's Mines, Coronado's search for Cibola or even Seracini's quest to find da Vinci's lost painting, *The Battle of Anghiari*. Some people are forever haunted by the mysteries they cannot resolve; I was one of them until very recently.

My quest for the past 20-odd years has been a modest one, and I was not alone during this trial of faith and perseverance. No, the quest wasn't for the meaning of life, although the end result could help in preserving life. My decades-long search has been for the ultimate Glock-compatible carbine, and I have recently uncovered some evidence that it might actually exist.

Yes, there are conversion kits to turn a Glock pistol into something like a carbine, which I refer to as "Franken-Glocks," and there

have been a few attempts by third-party manufacturers to make a dedicated carbine, as well. Some have been decent attempts but aren't quite what I would consider to be on a professional, heavy-action type level, and some have proprietary parts that could lead to a shortage if a repair or modification needs to be made.

Others have converted AR platform rifles, which are kind of hit-and-miss and have Glock's little, 33-round stick magazine hanging out of a wide magazine well intended for a significantly longer round, as though there is no appreciation for aesthetics. Without being too disparaging, they just didn't meet my standards for what I wanted in a carbine that utilizes Glock magazines—until I saw Angstadt Arms' new UDP-9 Rifle.

**"... EVERY ASPECT OF THE FIT AND FINISH OF THE UDP-9 RIFLE IS DONE MASTERFULLY."**

**ANGSTADT ARMS**

Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, Angstadt Arms is a relatively new company that, so far, has focused on creating firearms that use 9mm Glock magazines and receivers that can be configured for use with 9mm, .40 S&W and 357 Sig magazines. In fact, the products have already been tested with all three calibers, although the 9mm is the only one available thus far.

While the company is fairly new, the man behind the company, Rich Angstadt, is certainly not unfamiliar with firearms and the manufacturing process. The Angstadt family is well-known in the Northeast for its heritage as firearms manufacturers during the 18th and 19th centuries, with a focus on Kentucky (or Pennsylvania) Long Rifles.

The new Angstadt Arms currently offers short-barreled rifles (for those with the right paperwork), pistols and rifles in 9mm. The company uses a variety of third-party products (such as Odin Works and Magpul), which allows the installation of fixed stocks, no stocks, folding stocks, rails and so forth. This means a variety of accessories can be attached to the UDP models to meet each individual's needs.

The Angstadt Arms UDP-9 Rifle is a compact and lightweight 9mm carbine. It accepts Glock pistol magazines. It is built on the AR platform for ease of familiarity and because of the wide range of available aftermarket parts.

**THE UDP-9 RIFLE**

What I was interested in was the 16-inch barrel carbine. In fact, I appreciate the velocity bump I get from the longer barrel, and there's more real estate for accessories. The rifle I received had a Flat Dark Earth finish on the receiver and rail, with black Magpul furniture, which made for a nice contrast and a very attractive rifle. It's a very sexy piece, and every aspect of the fit and finish of the UDP-9 Rifle is done masterfully. It's as clean as you could possibly hope for and, to my eye, it was more than I expected for such a rifle.

Like its short-barreled brethren and the pistol models, the UDP-9 Rifle is built on the AR platform, so all controls are familiar to those with experience with that system. The charging handle, fire selector and magazine release all reside where you would expect them to be. Unlike most 9mm AR conversions I've seen, the magazine well has been tailored to more snugly fit Glock double-stack magazines and to make a more visually appealing package.

**A FEW DETAILS**

The UDP-9 is a closed-bolt, blowback-operated system, and it incorporates standard AR fire control components; thus, they are interchangeable with all other mil-spec components. The receiver is built from 7075-T6 aluminum to ensure both strength and a lighter weight.



One primary component of the UDP-9 Rifle is the Keymod handguard engineered by Odin Works.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**UDP-9 RIFLE**

- Receiver type:** 7075-T6
- Finish:** FDE Cerakote
- Length:** 32 inches
- Weight:** 5 pounds
- Barrel length:** 16 inches
- Barrel type:** Chrome moly
- Twist rate:** 1:10 inches
- Components:** Magpul MOE Stock and K2 Grip
- Handguard:** Odin Works 12-inch Keymod
- Action:** Semi-automatic
- MSRP:** \$1,499 (without sights and foregrip)

The overall length of the UDP-9 Rifle is 32 inches with a 16-inch chrome-moly barrel and a 12-inch Keymod free-float handguard manufactured by Odin Works. This handguard includes a full-length Picatinny rail in the 12 o'clock position, with Keymod mounting points on the 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions.

Additionally, the rifle is dressed out with a Magpul MOE stock and an MOE-K2 pistol grip, both of which add to the ergonomics and comfort of the rifle. The model that was sent to me also included Magpul's injection-molded MBUS front and rear sights, along with a Magpul Angled Foregrip. (These last two items are not included in the standard package.)

Some nice touches that add to the functional beauty of the UDP-9 Rifle include an integrated, oversized trigger guard for those shooting with gloves, a flared magazine well for quicker magazine insertion and last-round magazine bolt hold open with an empty magazine. All these attributes lend themselves to quicker handling and getting the shooter rapidly back into action.

The trigger pull of the UDP-9 wasn't match grade but definitely balanced well for its intended use. There is barely any pre-travel, and the trigger broke nicely at 5.25 pounds. Other than for target practice, the adrenaline is going to be pumping if you have to use this rifle, and having a couple of extra pounds of pull weight is definitely needed to help prevent a premature or accidental discharge in the heat of the moment. Of course, my adrenaline was pumping at the range anyway as I shot the UDP-9 Rifle!



The UDP-9 Rifle has an integrated, oversized trigger guard for use by gloved hands. It also includes the Magpul MOE K2 pistol grip as an extra touch.



The UDP-9 model I received had Magpul's injection-molded MBUS "iron" sights installed. This is an additional option beyond the standard package, as is the installed Magpul Angled Foregrip seen in the picture.



Rather than leave the standard-size .223 magazine well, Angstadt Arms redesigned that area to snugly fit the double-stack Glock magazine to improve aesthetics. However, the magazine well is flared for easier loading.



### SPECIFICATIONS

## STREAMLIGHT TLR-2 G

**Length:** 3.39 inches  
**Width:** 1.47 inches  
**Height:** 1.83 inches  
**Weight:** 4.72 ounces  
**Light output:** 300 Lumens  
**Laser type:** 510-530nm  
**Switch:** Ambidextrous momentary/steady  
**Power:** CR123 (2)  
**LED type:** C4 technology  
**LED lifetime:** 50,000 hours  
**Warranty:** Limited lifetime  
**MSRP:** \$561

Dressed out with the latest accessories, such as the Micro-Max B-Dot and the Streamlight TLR-2 G, the UDP-9 Rifle is set up for use in different environments—whether it's inside or out and during any time of the day.

### STREAMLIGHT TLR-2 G

As good as it was, I decided, in my excitement, that I wanted to dress it up just a bit more for the review and to really see what this thing could do out in the field. So, I reached out to Streamlight, which offered its TLR-2 G combination green laser and weapon light to use for this review. New in the box, the TLR-2 G is designed to be a pistol accessory. To convert it for use with a rifle (at least easier use), you have to switch out the battery door, which includes a socket for the plug to an accessory pressure pad. These two items were included in the package, as well.

The TLR-2 G combines a 300-lumen LED flashlight with a 510-30nm direct drive green laser. At the rear of the unit is a three-position switch that allows for laser only, light only and a combination of both light and laser operation. It operates on two CR123 batteries and provides 2.5 hours of run time with both the light and the laser turned on. It will operate for 17 hours with only the laser activated. On top of all that, the unit comes with a lifetime warranty. That's as good as it gets!

A nice addition for use with the UDP-9 Rifle is the TLR-2 G combination laser/weapon light that was provided for use during this review. The unit houses a 300-lumen LED flashlight and an extremely visible green laser. The laser and light can be used independently of each other or at the same time with a flip of a three-position switch.



### INSTALLING SOME GLASS

Of course, I'm going to want to run a red-dot sight on a little beast such as the UDP-9 Rifle. That's what 12 o'clock rails are for! For this rifle, I chose to use a Hi-Lux Micro-Max B-Dot optic for this review. The standard offering comes with a low, Picatinny-style mount, but because I was working with an AR platform, I ordered Hi-Lux's AR riser to elevate the Micro-Max to eye level.

The Micro-Max B-Dot runs on one commonly found 2032 battery, and Hi-Lux rates the battery life at 55,000 hours on a "medium" brightness setting. That's 6.2 years! There are 12 brightness levels, and the unit has a default setting of eight hours before it shuts off because of inactivity. That can be reprogrammed from one to 12 hours based on the user's preference.

Again, it's another item with a lifetime warranty. Cost aside, the Hi-Lux really brings quality and versatility to a sight of this type and size.

### ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Up until now, it's been all about getting cleaned up and putting on our best outfits. Now, it's time to actually get to the dance! The first trip to the range was a revelation as we put the UDP-9 Rifle through its paces and observed things such as accuracy and behavior of the firearm.

The first step was to sight in the Hi-Lux Micro-Max red-dot sight. I had just gotten the AR riser a couple of days before and had everything set up and mounted on the UDP-9. I set the target at 25 yards and went back to the bench to take my first shot.

It was Federal day at the range for me: I had purchased a case of Federal Premium's American Eagle 124-grain FMJs, because I wanted to prove the reliability of the UDP-9 rifle. I also brought along a couple of MTM boxes full of 124-grain Hydra-Shok JHPs and some of Federal's hottest 9mm rounds—the 115-grain JHP +P+ (9PBLE). With that on hand, it was time to get things rolling and dial in the Micro-Max.

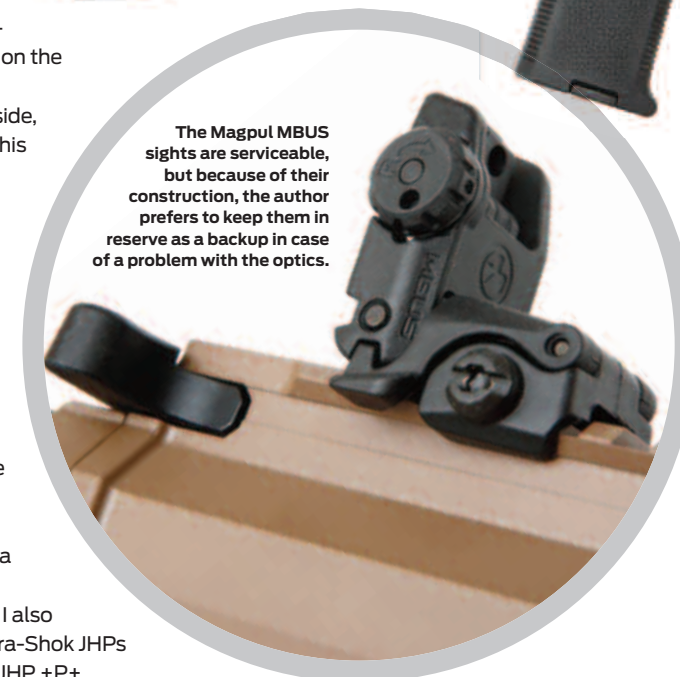
It turns out I didn't have to do a thing. I couldn't believe it. With all the variables, such as the Micro-Max's position, the AR riser's height, bullet weight and environmental factors, the first shot went dead center in the bull's-eye, and it was with the American Eagle 124-grain JHP. Surely, providence was with me.

Yes, I know; it was only 25 yards, and I was shooting a rifle, but the Micro-Max had no magnification; and I don't know if you've checked lately, but 1 inch is hard to see at 25 yards—much less at 50 yards. I had considered using a scope to test its accuracy at 50 yards and 100 yards, but I just didn't see the point. I was going to run a red-dot on it, so I decided I ought to test the rifle with the Micro-Max and see how well I could place the shots as-is.

During the first range session, it quickly became apparent that the UDP-9 liked the standard-pressure, 124-grain rounds better than the hot 115-grain +P+ rounds. The latter was no slouch but displayed the four-and-one syndrome much more than the heavier, standard pressure rounds. The 124-grain American Eagle turned in good groups at

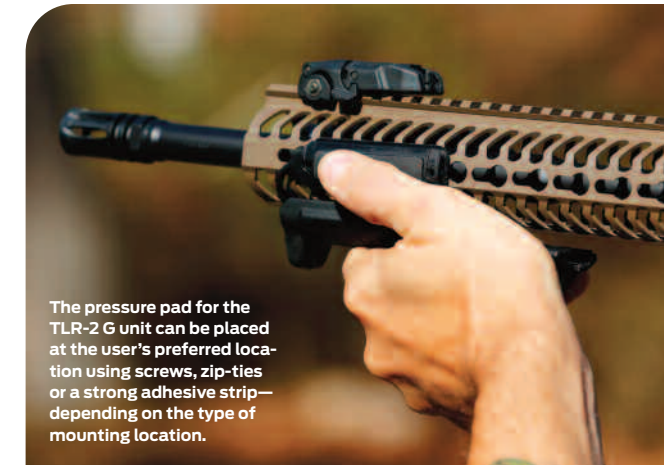


As part of the standard package, a Magpul MOE stock is included rather than a standard AR stock.



The Magpul MBUS sights are serviceable, but because of their construction, the author prefers to keep them in reserve as a backup in case of a problem with the optics.

**"... A VARIETY OF ACCESSORIES CAN BE ATTACHED TO THE UDP MODELS TO MEET EACH INDIVIDUAL'S NEEDS."**



The pressure pad for the TLR-2 G unit can be placed at the user's preferred location using screws, zip-ties or a strong adhesive strip—depending on the type of mounting location.

25 yards, with the best group coming in at a 1.3-inch spread. However, the premium 124-grain Hydra-Shoks took the blue ribbon with a .5-inch group at 25 yards from a bench rest with no magnification.

Personally, I thought that was an excellent showing, considering the caliber and shooting conditions. I then took the target out to 50 yards and tried again with the Micro-Max and the various loads. Honestly, I couldn't even see the white circle in the center at that distance. I was just trying to keep the shots in the center of the red zone around the circle. It turns out that the 124-grain Hydra-Shoks did their job again, with a group a hair over 2.5 inches while shooting off hand.

I don't fault the rifle or the ammunition for that group; that was all me. It's tough to hit what you can't see, but it was still a good enough group to take down something like a rabbit in a survival scenario and certainly good enough for defensive shooting. If one prefers, a decent scope with 4-6x magnification could be mounted, and those groups would tighten up quite a bit, but you give up that open field of view for more combat-oriented shooting.

The biggest success was the absolute reliability I enjoyed from the rifle with all three round types. With a total of 350 rounds fired during the first session, there was not one jam or failure to feed. It was just pure bliss.

A couple of the guys shooting near me tried it out, as well, and they giggled like schoolgirls while taking their turns. They were every bit as impressed as I was, and both started talking about the kinds of scenarios in which the UDP-9 rifle would excel. They were still talking through their ideas as I went back to shooting.

**WHY?**

Some of you might be asking why I'm interested in a 9mm Glock carbine and why I think it would be a viable weapon on certain occasions.

First, I've been buying a boatload of those 33-round magazines for the past two decades, and I need to use them in something more practical than my two G19 pistols. (I'm not starring in a John Woo movie here.)

(right) The Hi-Lux Optics Micro-Max B-Dot has a 2-MOA dot with 1/2 MOA adjustments, a battery life of 55,000 hours at "medium" brightness and comes with a lifetime warranty.

(below) The Hi-Lux Micro-Max B-Dot is a perfect companion to the UDP-9 rifle for precision shooting once the add-on AR riser is mounted. The Micro-Max on the AR riser allows for a lower 1/3 co-witness with the included Magpul MBUS sights.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**HI-LUX MICRO-MAX B-DOT**

- Power:** 1X
- Eye relief:** Unlimited
- Dot size:** 2 MOA
- Adjustments:** 1/2 MOA increments
- Ratings:** Waterproof, fogproof
- Battery life:** 55,000 hours (medium brightness)
- Shut-off:** 8-hour default (user programmable)
- Warranty:** Limited lifetime



(left) In preparation for extended range time with the UDP-9 and to wring it out for reliability, the author ordered a case of Federal Premium's 124-grain American Eagle ammunition. In previous sessions, this particular ammunition has proven to be a good all-around choice for both testing and training.



(above) The best five-shot group during all sessions was .50 inch from the bench at 25 yards. This group was shot with the Micro-Max B-Dot optic while using Federal 124-grain Hydra-Shoks. Note that two rounds went through the same hole at the top left corner of the group.



(above) Rather than use an actual scope to test the accuracy of the rifle at longer distances, the author chose to use the red-dot sight at longer ranges. This helped gauge the real-world effectiveness and accuracy of the rifle when the operator is running a red-dot optic. This group was shot offhand at 50 yards.



The UDP-9 was a hit at the shooting range. A couple of fellow shooters tried out the rifle and were extremely impressed by the rifle's design and performance.

**“LIKE ITS SHORT-BARRELED BROTHERS AND THE PISTOL MODELS, THE UDP-9 RIFLE IS BUILT ON THE AR PLATFORM, SO ALL CONTROLS ARE FAMILIAR TO THOSE WITH EXPERIENCE WITH THAT SYSTEM.”**



(above) The UDP-9 Rifle is an excellent choice to engage targets at closer distances with a lighter and more maneuverable longarm and still offers the advantage of accepting spare magazines from a user's Glock pistol.



(above) The use of Magpul's collapsible MOE stock allows the length of pull to be adjusted for individual users, which is a benefit when more than one family member can use the rifle.

(right) Part of the UDP-9's appeal is its minimal recoil, making it more usable by all members of the family. Also, if more than one person in the household carries a Glock pistol, that means more spare ammunition for the rifle is available.



Logistically speaking, there's no doubting the benefit of having a firearm with a longer sight radius and a more stabilized platform that will accept magazines from your normal carry pistol. For the average person who isn't decked out in tactical gear (chest rigs, ammo carriers and leg carriers, for example) to hump around different magazines for a "battle" rifle, this is a huge advantage.

The UDP-9 will accept even the short 10-round magazines intended for the G26. So, if you have a pistol (such as the G19 or G17) with a magazine, a magazine carrier with two magazines and the UDP-9 with a magazine, you've got four magazines right off the bat that can be fired through either weapon. If you get into a situation where either one or both weapons need to be used, it only gets better if your immediate family or friends are with you and also carry Glock pistols and spare magazines.

I also believe there is a great benefit for both training and usability by children or those unfamiliar with firearms of this type. Most of us gun enthusiasts started out with a .22 of some sort, because the recoil was much lighter, and we could practice on the fundamentals before moving up to heavier calibers.

Well, the same could be done with the UDP-9 Rifle. The recoil from 9mm rounds fired by this rifle is negligible, so the training can still take place. Additionally, on a rifle like this, it will give the trainee a better familiarity of modern firearms such as the AR platform rather than a lever-action or tube-fed semi-automatic. Remember, we're thinking in terms of survival here.

At the same time, the 9mm is more potent for defense than .22 LR, and the UDP-9 Rifle only weighs 5 pounds. This system is ideal for children,

adolescents or people with certain disabilities who can't use or take the recoil of a heavier weapon. My stepfather had his shoulder replaced with a titanium "model," and he couldn't even handle the recoil of a .223 round. Certainly, we don't want our loved ones (especially our children) to be in a situation where they have to fight, but if something really goes sideways, I'd want them to be able to use a more-potent round than .22 LR.

#### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

I went back to the range two more times to make sure I'd challenged the UDP-9 Rifle enough to be satisfied with its performance. The second time I went, I brought a ziptop bag of random hollow-point rounds I'd collected over the last decade or so. I had almost every major brand represented in those old rounds. I had everything from 90-grain up to 147-grain rounds.

I had standard pressure loads and more +P+ loads, and there were a few rounds that had an extra-wide cup and were known not to feed too well. It didn't matter. There were about 150 random rounds in that bag, and the UDP-9 blew through them all without so much as a polite burp.

After that, it was back to the American Eagles again, and I spent some time playing with the Streamlight's green laser. Even in broad daylight, I had no issue seeing it at the 50-yard mark, although it wouldn't be the quickest way to acquire a target at that distance. At 25 yards, it stood out like a beacon, and it was quite easy to draw a picture on the target with the 33-round magazine. Another 400 rounds spent.

The third and last day at the range was the one that closed the deal, as far as I was concerned. I did a few drills shooting from cover and from the ground, and I held the rifle in every possible position. I never experienced a single malfunction. It wasn't long before I looked over, saw an empty case of ammo and realized my time was done.

My quest was over, and I had in my hands—with regard to my search for the best Glock-compatible carbine—the equivalent of the Holy Grail. It was both exhilarating and saddening at the same time ... where do I go from here?

As you are, no doubt, aware, the Angstadt Arms UDP-9 Rifle met and exceeded all my expectations, and the experience was even better with the excellent performance of both the Streamlight TLR-2 G and the Hi-Lux Micro-Max B-Dot sight.

Now, it is time to find a new mission, ask new questions and tend to other goals while reveling in the knowledge that, sometimes, dreams do, indeed, come true. **ASG**

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