Timney Calvin Elite Two Stage The little trigger that could (help me be a better shooter) - Sin City Precision

Introduction:

I was rather fortunate with the help of TRGRiQ and Chris from **Timney** to use the newest offering of triggers for my **Ruger** Precision Rifle. I was so impressed with the trigger, I just had to try out Timney's two-stage Calvin Elite in my **Remington** 700 competition rifle. I shot a couple local matches with my Timney 510, but after that RPR trigger I was hooked on their two stage variants. So like any red blooded American I pulled out my laptop and credit card and purchased the trigger in "secret shopper style." I ordered the curved trigger, 8oz first-stage and an additional 8oz for the second stage.

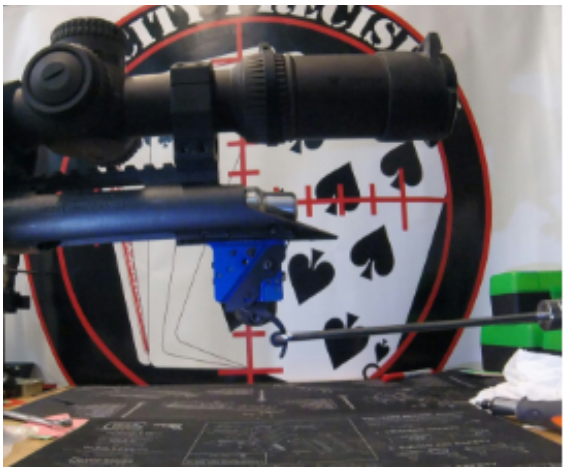
Out of the Box Measurements and Expectations:

The trigger arrived in typical Timney fashion with a good solid build. One item that has made me a touch nervous is the triggers resistance to “moon dust” found in the South West united states desert region. There is a small hole which looks to be designed for service or inspection. This is likely no big deal for most environments, and I have not seen Timney put out a finicky trigger that only works properly if you are in a lab grade clean room, but I have seen this silt get into all sort of places.

As usual, I am still like a spoiled kid on Christmas because as soon as this stuff shows up I want to rip the box open and start putting stuff together. With the joys of UPS tracking, I had the rifle disassembled before the new trigger even showed up, so it was as simple as unboxing the trigger, putting the trigger in place and driving the two pins. Installing these things are so easy even I can do it.

So before any dry firing, checking the feel of the trigger, out came the trigger pull gauge and let the measurements commence. Unfortunately this is where my major gripe about Timney comes into play and if they read this they might start swearing at me for being a brat and not understanding how a big time trigger company operates. Is my gripe a big deal? No. Is my gripe something that can be accounted for? Yes. Is my gripe even valid? Maybe. My gripe is what trigger pull weight is ordered compared to what they send out.

I ordered the curved trigger as I am an older school low speed high drag kind of guy. Now looking at the practical nature of a curved trigger, typically your finger goes to the furthest back portion of the curve of the trigger. That means your finger is about at the midpoint on the length of the trigger and about half of the “torque arm” which we call the trigger. Without going back to the classroom teaching fundamentals of physics, you will have a lighter trigger pull the closer to the end of the trigger you are. In short, the longer torque arm the less weight to make the trigger “break.”



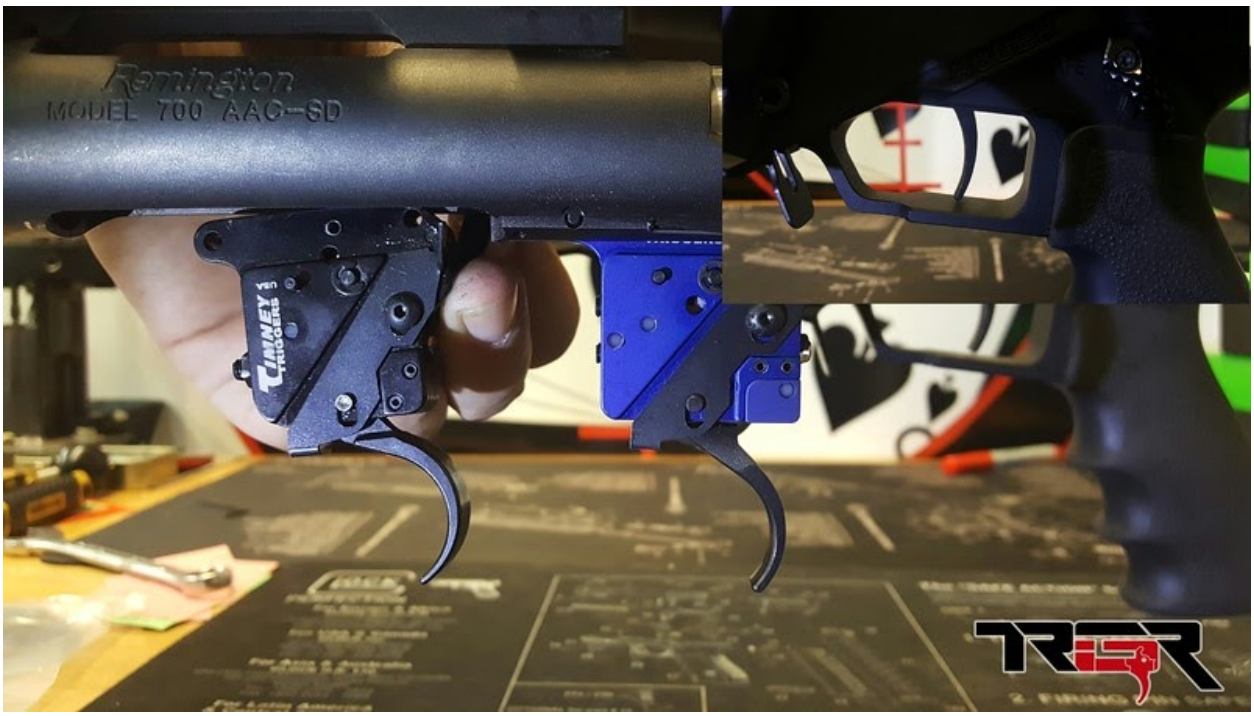
In all fairness to Timney, their settings lined up darn near perfect if you used the “end” of the trigger to measure pull weights, however I initially measured pull weights “where my finger should go” and the values did not match up which made me sad. I am sure it is much easier for them to be consistent by measuring at the end of the trigger, and it works for both the straight trigger and curved trigger. In addition, the design and advertised pull weights is likely based off of their point of measurement. The table below shows the measured values at the different points on the trigger and where I finally adjusted the break points.

Pull weights for trigger comparison												
	Calvin Elite Factory Curved			Calvin Elite Factory Trigger Edge			Calvin Elite Curved Adjusted			Calvin Elite Edge Adjusted		
	Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 1	Stage 2		Stage 1	Stage 2	
	(oz)	(lbs)	(oz)	(oz)	(lbs)	(oz)	(oz)	(lbs)	(oz)	(oz)	(lbs)	(oz)
	11.4	1	8.4	8.4	1	2.7	9.7	0	15.5	8.5	0	12.6
	11.7	1	6.6	8.2	1	1.8	9.9	0	15.3	8.2	0	12.6
	11.6	1	8.9	8.1	1	1.8	10.1	0	15.6	8.2	0	12.9
	11.6	1	6.9	8.4	1	1	9.8	0	15.4	8.1	0	12.4
	11.0	1	6.7	8.2	1	2.1	10.2	0	15.4	8.3	0	12.6
Average	11.46	1.00	7.50	8.26	1.00	1.88	9.94	0.00	15.44	8.26	0.00	12.62
SD	0.28		1.07	0.13		0.61	0.21		0.11	0.15		0.18
ES	0.7		2.3	0.3		1.7	0.5		0.3	0.4		0.5
Varaince From Factory Set	3.46		7.5	0.26		1.88						

Making Adjustments:

Now that I am done crying like a baby and stomping my feet about measured pull weights out of the box, Timney made it quite easy to adjust things so I can make it just how I like it and get on with my shooting. At the front of the trigger assembly there are two set screws and on the back of trigger assembly is a screw/ nut combo like on their flagship 510 units and another set screw. If you are compelled to adjust these items, I would recommend contacting Timney to properly adjust all the screws to maintain reliability. For those that like to void warranties and refuse to ask for help, the front lower set screw adjusts the second stage pull weight and I will let you figure out the rest as I highly recommend doing your homework before adjusting things beyond that.

I mentioned in an overall rating that the curved trigger of these new triggers are not as pronounced like the 510 and therefore I was not as happy. I will have to recant that statement now as I am really starting to like this subdued curved trigger. The Calvin Elite has a bit more curve compared to the RPR trigger but both are less pronounced than the standard wide shoe 510. My finger is finding a natural point of contact and muscle memory is making it so consistency is rock solid as far as pulling the trigger the same every time.



Shooter Observations:

Now that all this tech talk and turning screws has been described more than necessary, onto what the shooter might feel and experience. The first few times I pulled this trigger in the shop with dry firing in the fully assembled state I was rather disappointed. The disappointment is due to extremely high expectations with the RPR Timney trigger. I had it in my mind that the CE trigger would be some mystical magical trigger where I could just think about breaking a shot and it would do it for me via telepathy.

Calvin Elite vs RPR Timney second stage measurements done on the same session				
	Calvin Elite		Ruger Precision	
	(lbs)	(oz)	(lbs)	(oz)
	1	0.6	1	1.9
	1	2.4	1	2
	1	1.7	1	2.1
	1	1.5	1	1.8
	1	2.3	1	2.5
Average		1.70		2.06
SD		0.72		0.27
ES		1.8		0.7

This was an unrealistic expectation, and since my expectations were so high I am hyper critical on first impressions. The CE trigger has an ever so slight amount of creep (as evidenced in the dry fire video), and I could not remove the last little bit of over-travel. The trigger break is not as “crisp” as some other triggers out there but it has a good feel nonetheless. Some of these perceptions may not be a fair comparison as one thing this trigger does remarkably is repeatability. This CE trigger is extremely light in pull weight, and it is the same every shot. With that level of repeatability, the ever so slight over travel, the barely noticeable creep, and the break not being as crisp as expected the trigger is a great choice. I wound up putting my RPR and my CE Timney side by side to compare the two. The two units feel great, but at first impression the RPR Timney edged out the CE for “shooter feel.”

After shooting a couple local practical precision rifle matches with the CE trigger, it quickly began to feel like that old comfortable piece of clothing that feels “just right.” This trigger and I have come to an understanding and we are working well together. I still have to do my part keeping fundamentals solid, and properly timing shots, but when a shot is missed I know this Calvin Elite is doing exactly what it is asked to do and the problem is with me.

The next stop for this latest addition was off to Arizona for the Tactical Precision Rifle Challenge hosted by **AZ LRPRS**. In Arizona the conditions were stellar, so there were no sandstorms to gunk up the works. In addition, the Timney Trailer was on site during the entire match so just in case I messed up the job of installation and tuning I knew I could go to the trailer and they could fix what I broke. Knowing Timney supports the sport gives me a little extra security that if things go awry there is a good chance they can take care of me during the event on the spot.

Aside from my own shortcomings during the match, the trigger behaved flawlessly. Every shot broke the same, the trigger was smooth, the break was fairly clean, and it did exactly what I told it. Typically, one of my goals in a local match is to win a stage, but for these type of matches, if I can get in the top ten in a stage I will call that a victory. Thanks to this trigger, I was able to be listed in the top ten scorers for two stages of this match. This accomplishment may not seem like much to the guys that do this all the time, but for this guy who only attended two large matches in 2016 I am pleased with that outcome. Knowing that the Timney would break the same every time, and being able to predict when to let a shot go in a moderately unstable position the trigger allowed me to break the shots properly and do well on those stages. I owe a lot of my hits in less than ideal positions to a good reliable repeatable and light pull weight trigger.

Final Thoughts:

With every press I like this trigger more and more. There is a little bit of creep I can't seem to get out of it, but it is predictable and repeatable. Compared to the RPR Timney trigger, the Calvin Elite is not as "crisp" but it can hold it's own just fine. The trigger, having the ability to tune it to a very light pull weight and have it pull the same every time, is a huge plus for me. I know there are a few other triggers out there that are supposed to be more magical than a unicorn however they are typically twice the price of the Timney. For this shooter, the Timney Calvin Elite is darn near a perfect fit and only after a few hundred rounds already, it has turned into an item on the list of "essential items" for precision rifle shooting. Comparing the two (RPR vs CE), regarding consistency of trigger pull weight break, the final table shows that the two units can be set quite light and how consistently the two were breaking at the time of measurement.