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SP101: RUGER'S NEWEST .357

GUN WORLD



JULY 1992
\$2.75

UK £1.75 DGS
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*Compact &
Rugged:*

**IBUS
M-17S
.223
BULL
PUP**

**BROWNING'S
MODEL 52
.22 RIFLE**



**Grennell:
S&W's M14-5
Lives Up To
Its Ancestry!**

**Big-Gun
Ballistics:
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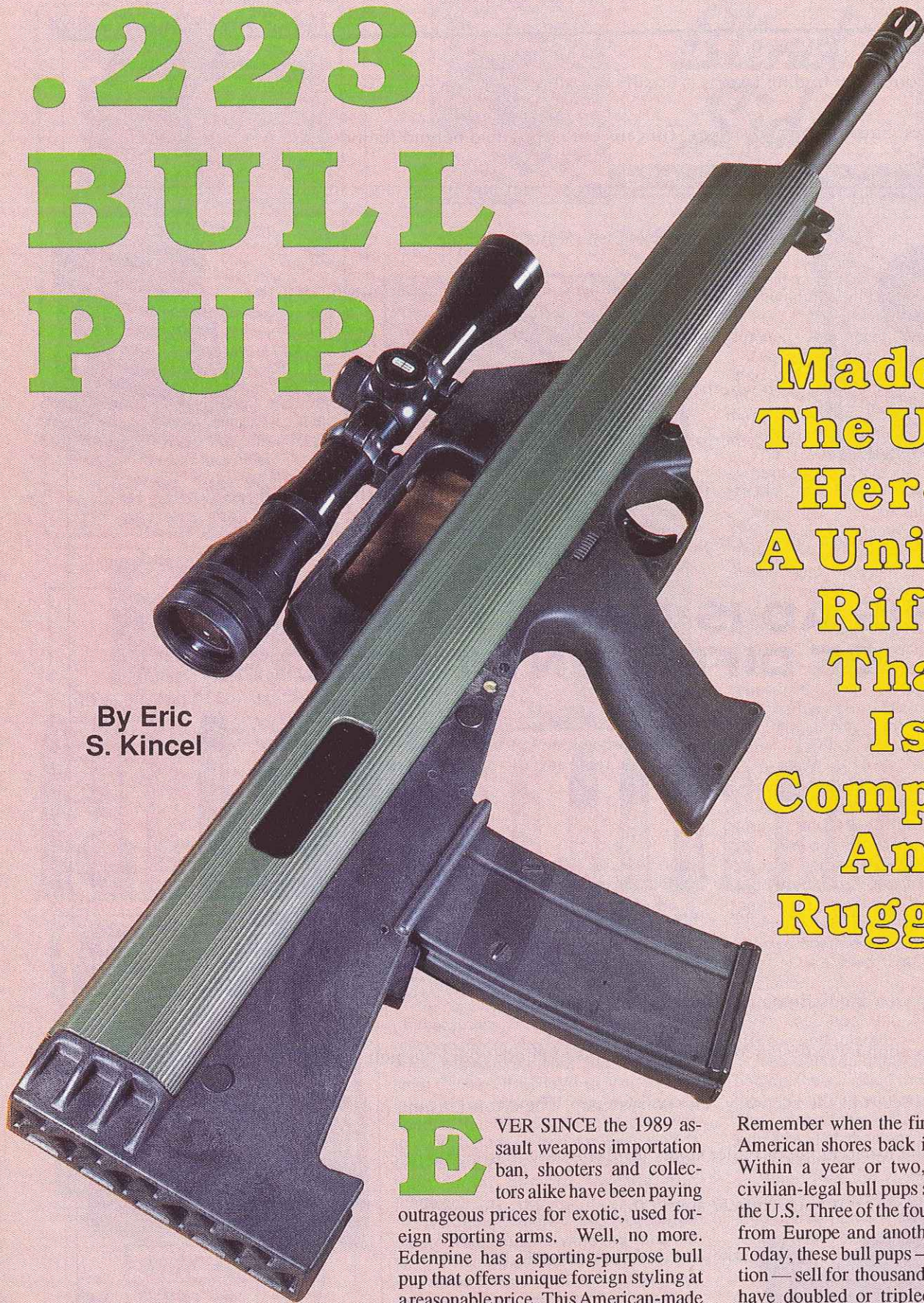
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.223 BULL PUP

By Eric
S. Kincel

**Made In
The USA,
Here's
A Unique
Rifle
That
Is
Compact
And
Rugged!**



EVER SINCE the 1989 assault weapons importation ban, shooters and collectors alike have been paying outrageous prices for exotic, used foreign sporting arms. Well, no more. Edenspine has a sporting-purpose bull pup that offers unique foreign styling at a reasonable price. This American-made sporter is called the IBUS M-17S.

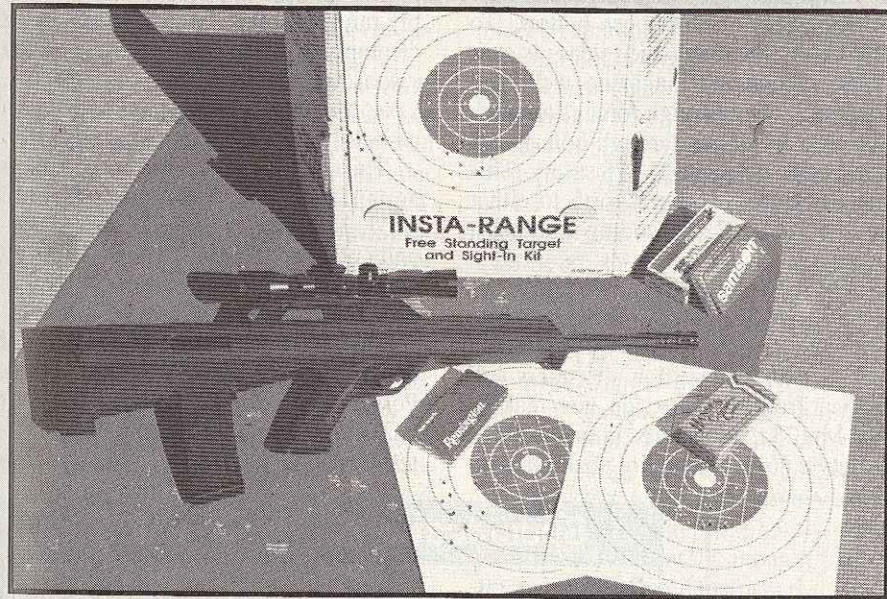
The M-17S came about after Edenspine (Dept GW, 320 D Turtle Creek Ct., San Jose, CA 95125) had researched today's bull pup market thoroughly.

Remember when the first bull pups hit American shores back in the mid-80s? Within a year or two, four types of civilian-legal bull pups sold throughout the U.S. Three of the four sporters came from Europe and another from China. Today, these bull pups — in used condition — sell for thousands of dollars. All have doubled or tripled their original retail price.

The Austrian Steyr Aug and the French FAMAS retailed originally around \$1000. Since the ban, either of these bull pups now has a starting price



The author found the M-17S quite comfortable to fire. With the weight massed at the butt, the M-17S has less muzzle weight, reducing shooting fatigue.



Equipped with the 4x32 Leatherwood Meopta scope, the M-17S achieved a decent group of 2 3/4 inches at 100 yards, fired from a benchrest position.

of \$2000. The third European bull pup, manufactured in Finland, was the Valmet M82. Originally this model sold for a few hundred dollars; now the asking price is \$1500 — and up! Selling in the low hundreds was the Chinese-made Norinco Type 86S bull pup. Only a few hundred specimens made it into the U.S. and have doubled from their original price. Monitoring the current prices and demands of these bull pups, Edenspine realized a market does exist in the U.S.

The IBUS (International Bull Pup

Utility Sporter) M-17S is for those who want a unique rifle, but at half the price of existing models. Even though the M-17S is offered to the civilian market, Edenspine hopes military and law enforcement agencies also will show interest. Suggested retail price for the M-17S is \$999.

Originally, the term, "bull pup," referred to a compact bolt-action rifle, which came to life in the mid-30s. The concept is unique because of the placement of the action — behind the pistol

grip and in front of the butt pad.

Semi-auto bull pups were developed first by the military for use by soldiers in close quarters. Measuring roughly half the length of conventional military service rifles, the bull pup could be carried in tanks, armored personnel carriers and aircraft, and used in close-quarters combat situations. Like the military, civilians found the bull pup easy to operate and handle, and were pleased with its unique styling.

When handling any bull pup system, the first thing that comes to mind is balance. Compared to a standard rifle, the bull pup is much easier to handle and fire after long periods of time. The barrel weight of most military rifles fatigues soldiers more quickly than does the bull pup system. This is best explained by weight distribution, most of it in the rear.

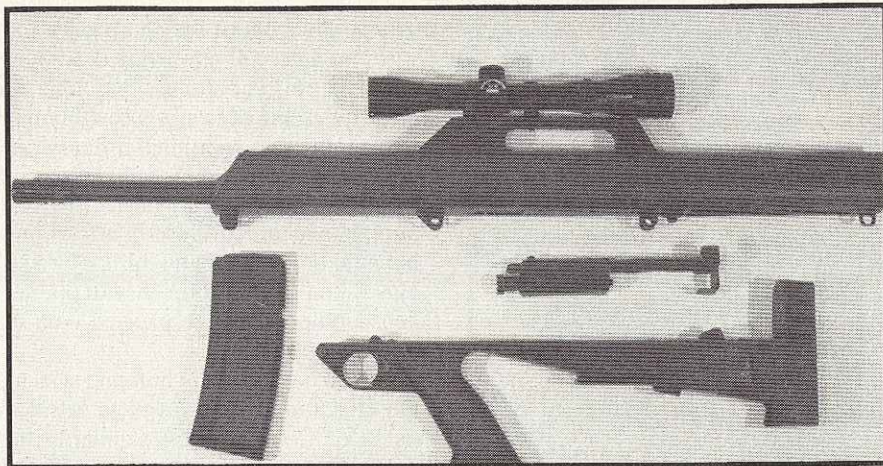
The M-17S action relies on a spring-loaded rotating-bolt, which unlocks by gas assistance. During field stripping, the M-17S breaks down to three major sections: the upper receiver, the lower receiver and the bolt assembly.

The upper receiver houses the barreled receiver, gas system and the charging handle. In the M-17S, this section resembles aluminum pipe. A number of machining procedures are required, however, before parts are fitted.

The barreled receiver mounts in two places near the chamber and the muzzle. The muzzle mounting point uses a cap to center the barrel within the upper receiver. This cap can be removed to allow separation of the barreled receiver and the upper receiver. The separation is necessary when cleaning the gas system.

The gas system is located inside the upper receiver just above the barrel. This system rarely needs to be cleaned. I'm told this is due to a new self-cleaning, stainless steel design. However, the gas system should be checked occasionally. I fired roughly 300 rounds through the prototype, with no traces of carbon build-up.

I found the carrying handle to be the most impressive feature of the M-17S. This handle is also a cocking mechanism. The handle actually is made in two pieces. The forward piece mounts to the upper receiver with two screws and is mounted firmly to insure a tight scope base. The rear part of the carrying handle is the cocking device. To operate, grasp the rear portion of the handle and slide it toward the rear of the bull pup. As soon as the rearward movement halts, return the device forward. For



By removing three loose fitting pins, field-stripping the M-17S is a breeze. It breaks down to three units: upper receiver, lower receiver and bolt assembly.

those who are wondering, this device is like an M16 charging handle; it stays in a fixed position during firing.

The lower receiver is made of 30% glass-filled plastic. This material is known for its resistance to wear and breakage, but maintains flexibility. Besides the stock, exterior features such as the carry handle, trigger, magazine release and the safety are constructed with this plastic.

The moulded lower receiver houses the trigger group, magazine well and the pistol grip. Unlike most rifles, the trigger group and the trigger are separate from each other. The trigger group is located in the rear of the stock. Due to the amount of distance between the two pieces, a trigger bar is needed. This trigger bar is over twelve inches long and rides in a fitted, moulded channel.

The trigger group is of excellent design, but is far from being a new concept. This John M. Browning design has seen its successes in other famous mili-

tary rifles such as the U.S. M1 series, M16 and the Soviet AK 47. The trigger group is actually a box of small parts — hammer, main sear, disconnect, and a number of springs and pins. This box mounts within the receiver, and is held in by a single screw positioned behind the magazine well.

The safety and magazine release are operated by a simple push button. To start with, the magazine release is centered behind the magazine well, and operates when enough force is applied. The old fashioned through-bolt design has been used in the M-17S safety. This device slides back and forth to either side of the stock, depending upon what setting is desired.

On the test model, if the safety extends from the right side, the sporter is in the safe position. By simply pressing in on the extended portion, the safety will appear from the other side, now making the M-17S ready to fire. If unsure of the safety's position, the fire position is in-

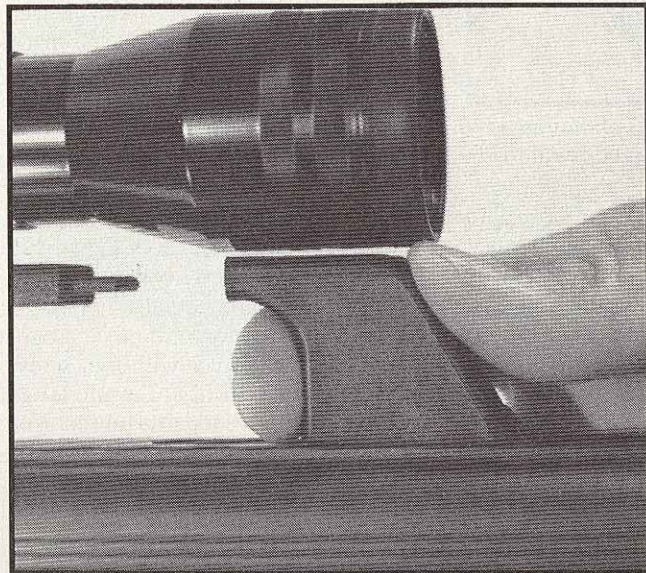
dicated by a small amount of red paint. This is only noticeable when the safety is off. The way the safety works is by not allowing the trigger to travel; completely trustworthy and reliable.

The magazine that came with this prototype was manufactured from the same plastic of which the lower receiver is made. This magazine holds 30 rounds. Incidentally, the manufacturer informs me the production magazine will be made of a aluminum. Like the upper receiver, this magazine will be hard-anodized for added strength. Examining the prototype, I noticed the design was similar to the magazine for the M16. Later, I discovered, with little modification, the M16 magazine can be adapted to fit.

The bolt assembly is the heart of the M-17S, and once again, this concept is far from new. I first encountered this system in an Armalite AR 180, a rifle that earned a reputation for accuracy and superb reliability.

As mentioned, the bolt rotates within the bolt carrier. The bolt, bolt carrier, recoil rod and springs constitute a unit, and like the gas system, this bolt assembly rarely needs to be disassembled for cleaning. To clean, simply remove the visual dirt and lubricate moving parts. Like the gas system, again, the bolt assembly can be disassembled easily.

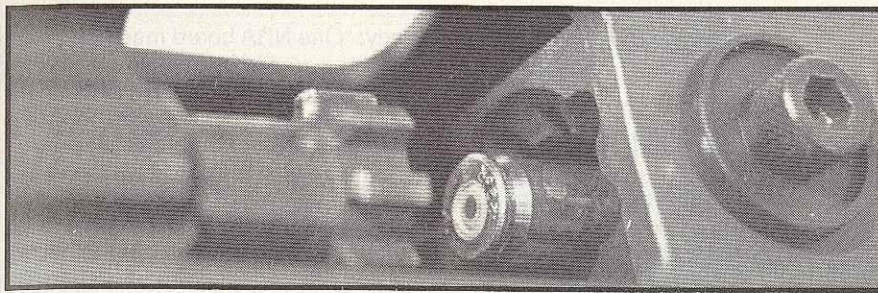
The manufacturer, Bushmaster Firearms (Dept. GW, 999 Roosevelt Trail Bldg. 3, Windham, ME 04062), originally planned to produce the M-17S in a two-tone shade — olive drab and black. Clude Warren, the M-17S project engineer, has since told me that the final production model will be black on black. Personally, I found the two-tone effect more attractive. Incidentally, Bushmaster Firearms is a division of Quality



The charging handle is a unique feature of the M-17S. It is also part of the carrying handle and scope mount.

Specifications: IBUS M-17S

Caliber:	5.56 NATO (.223 Remington)
Weight:	Nine pounds (empty magazine)
Length:	31 1/2 inches
Magazine Capacity:	30 rounds
Mechanism:	Rotating bolt, gas operation, semi-automatic, air-cooled, magazine-fed
Trigger pull:	Eight pounds
Barrel length:	22 inches
Rifling:	Six lands and grooves, one-in-nine-inch, right-hand twist
Retail price:	\$999
Distributor:	Edenpine, Dept. GW, 320 Turtle Creek Ct. San Jose, CA 95125



The M-17S's locking and feeding system is similar to the M16 and AR 180.

Parts Co., which is well known for the manufacture of quality AR15/M16 parts.

At the time of my tests, Edenspine — which controls marketing of the M-17S — sent me the bull pup without a sight system. Rocky Green at North American Specialties (Dept. GW, 25422 Trabuco Rd, Suite 105-328, El Toro, CA 92630) was able to set me up with a new 4x32 Leatherwood Meopta scope. North American Specialties is the only company that distributes this quality Czechoslovakian scope.

The production M-17S, I'm told, will come with a much smaller 1.5x scope and be equipped with one-inch scope rings. This makes the system far more versatile than any other small caliber bull pup sporter in my experience.

Bull pup firearms in general have their share of drawbacks. For military or civilian use, the M-17S — and other bull pup types — are made for right-shoulder firing only. On a brighter note though, the manufacturer told me that an ambidextrous model is planned for the near future.

Models such as the French FAMAS and the Austrian AUG can be converted to fire from either shoulder. Another design drawback involves ejection of spent brass. It's virtually impossible to fire around a right-hand corner, since the brass deflects off the wall, and bounces back into the shooter's face. A cure for this problem is for the brass to eject from the bottom of the firearm. This also would cure the ambidextrous problem.

A mixture of materials is used throughout the IBUS system. Besides the plastic lower and the aluminum upper receiver segments, some other parts are made of various types of chrome moly steel. All steel parts, except for the stainless steel gas system, are coated with 171 phosphate, better known perhaps as Parkerizing. The aluminum receiver will be plated with black hard anodizing. The mixture of the anodizing and the Parkerizing give maximum resistance to unwanted corrosion, the makers claim.

Like the prototype, the production models will come equipped with a 22-inch chrome moly barrel to allow maximum accuracy. Warren of Bushmaster said, "We wanted maximum accuracy, and with a 22-inch barrel, the M-17S is still shorter in length than the M16, with a 16-inch barrel." Bushmaster chose the one-in-nine-inch twist rifling because of the various types of ammunition available. The next step was to see if this was a good choice.

On a calm, cool morning, I drove out to the South Coast Gun Club in Irvine California, hoping to complete my test before the day got warm. I decided to try four types of .223 Remington (5.56 NATO) ammunition. All brands differed in bullet weight, but group sizes were consistent. The tests were from benchrest at 100 yards.

The first 10-round group was shot with the Hansen 55-grain full metal jacket round. This brand gave me a group of four inches. If it weren't for two flyers, the group would have been an inch and a half smaller. Next, I tried Remington's 55-grain hollow-point. This load produced a 3 1/2-inch group. The best group — without flyers — was with the Israeli-made Samson ammo. This 55-grain soft-point, boat-tail bullet printed a group measuring 2 3/4 inches. Winchester's 65-grain soft-point gave me a group of approximately three inches. Unfortunately, though, four of the ten shots missed the paper!

I did another test, this time offhand. I took advantage of the bull pup's weight distribution and fired at a 100-yard silhouette. The M-17S produced little muzzle rise, and the ease of controlled rapid-fire was apparent. With a loaded magazine, I easily hit a six-inch square plate with 28 of the 30 rounds the magazine held.

Without the muzzle weight, the bull pup was easy to handle, and I think the M-17S would be an ideal varmint gun. The system is designed to handle easily the roughest terrain, and being only 31 1/2 inches in overall length can be packed into a favorite hunting spot easily. **GW**

PRODUCT WARNING AND RECALL NOTICE

To owners and users of Llama XI-B (.9mm) and IX-A (.45 cal.) single action semiautomatic pistols.

Serial numbers:
848184 to 848223
A 07876 to A 07915
A 08422 to A 08661
A 11788 to A 99999
B 00001 to B 09512

Some of these pistols may have a firing pin which extends past the breech face if the hammer is in the full down position against the rear of the slide. If the chamber is loaded and the gun is dropped with the hammer in this position, the gun can fire.

A round should not be chambered in a Llama single action semiautomatic pistol until you are ready to shoot. If the gun must be carried or handled with a round chambered, the safety should be engaged. The gun should not be carried or handled when a round is chambered, with the hammer down and the safety off. No gun should be dropped.

In order to minimize the potential for accidental discharge if these rules are violated, Stoeger Industries is inspecting those guns which may have the above-described firing pin condition. We will modify any gun with this firing pin condition, free of charge.

Owners of guns within the serial numbers listed above should call Stoeger's customer service department at **1-800-631-0722**.

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