

FUSS-BUSTER!

Tim Finley finds out why the Weihrauch HW44 caused such a commotion

Weihrauch Sport has a deserved reputation for making quality airguns. The HW44 pistol caused quite a stir when it was launched, and now I finally get to see why. The action will be familiar to all of you who know Weihrauch's latest PCP rifle, the HW110. Yes, the HW44 pistol is basically a scaled down HW110 rifle. Unless you count paper-punching guns, then scaling down a PCP rifle to make a pistol is how it's been done right from the beginning of the PCP era, and I am old enough to have seen it all happening, so I know this for a fact.

In the UK, only the Daystate Competa pistol was designed as a pistol from the ground up and they didn't make many of those – I have No 57 – so I was really excited to get my mitts on the HW44. I love all things pistol and, indeed, all things Weihrauch, so I had very high expectations of it.

From the start, the supreme quality and design is what sets the HW44 apart. It's based on the 110 action, and this is not a small pistol. They haven't just sawn off a 110, though, they have rejigged the outlying design to make it into a pistol, but the lever action etc. is the same as on the 110. Don't get me wrong, you can fire it successfully with one hand, but it's



The two 10-shot rotary magazines.

far easier using two, and it can also be rested on a bench and shot that way.

SWAP OVER

Whichever way you shoot the HW44, it is supremely accurate, as you would expect. The cocking/loading lever sits on the left-hand side, so a right-handed shooter can hold the pistol and operate the multi-shot function, and the HW44 has another trick up its sleeve. The grip is ambidextrous so a left-handed shooter is just as at home with the HW44, grip-wise, although the cocking lever can be tricky for a lefty because the right hand has to reach over the action to get at it without breaking grip.

However, I spoke to Hull Cartridge and was told that a left-handed HW44 can be assembled, in the factory or at Hull Cartridge, by swapping the lever over to the other side and having the magazine release lever changed to the right, as well. The additional cost for this is £45.

The safety catch is ambidextrous and shows a big red dot when it's ready to fire. A good point is that the safety can only be applied when the action is cocked, so you can easily check if it is cocked or not, just by trying to put the safety catch on.

The 10-round rotary magazine holds the pellets in place with a very simple 'O' ring system, and the flat part of the magazine goes to the barrel face. It can only be inserted from the left-hand side and when the action is cocked and the lever in the rear position and the magazine release lever pushed upward. A fantastic piece of design on all of the HW multi-shots is the fact that you cannot double load, i.e. put two pellets or more into the barrel by operating the cocking/loading lever – the mechanism prevents it.

THE FUN PART

Over the chronograph, the pistol has superb

Tim getting down to some long-range shooting with the HW44.





The steel barrel liner has a steel plate at the muzzle for the moderator to index upon.

readings running at 5.7 ft.lbs. Weihrauch say that the HW44 is 'self-regulating', but that may or may not mean it has an actual regulator in it. It had a variation over the charge of only 16fps and just over 100 shots, that's in .177; the .22 model would give around 120 shots. The trigger is very good and measured at 500g with my electronic trigger gauge. You can adjust the trigger by removing the grip, but I would leave it as factory set.

Enough of the mechanics of the HW44, let's get to the fun part – shooting it. The grip is very comfortable in hand, and I started with

“Enough of the mechanics of the HW44, let's get to the fun part”

the basic layout, open sights and no moderator fitted. Starting at six yards is a pure waste for the HW44 because it literally one-holes. Oh man! This is an accurate pistol and after moving out to 10 yards in the back garden, it still performed superbly with the open sights.

The superb trigger.



LONGER RANGES

The HW44, even at sub 6 ft.lbs. power level, is capable of shooting out to much longer distances. To do this you need to fit a scope of some kind, which will make the HW44 more balanced, and Weihrauch have a dedicated pistol scope in their product line. It's a 2 x 20 scope with a long eye relief – fit this and you can go way out, beyond normal pistol ranges if you bench rest it, and 25-metre, metal FT targets are no issue for the HW44, especially off the bench. If you are like me – a bit of a pistol nut – then you can push the envelope

and go two-handed out to 45 yards. I went prone to have some real fun, and the side-cocking lever makes it easy to do.

Bear in mind it needs Picatinny mounts, not the normal 11mm airgun ones. It can also take a laser on the 70mm long Picatinny rail in front of the trigger guard.

Another accessory you can add is the purpose-made moderator. It's £65, but if you are a back-garden plinker, then it's a must, really because it makes the pistol extremely quiet and neighbour friendly. This would be a perfect gun for FT pistol competitions with the moderator fitted.

WORTH IT?

The asking price for the HW44 is just shy of £700. Is it worth that? Yes, it certainly is, with bells on, and given its performance, I still class



The pressure gauge is useful - just don't look down the barrel.



This is the full extent of the cocking arm swing.

the HW44 as a 'top-value gun'. I'd get rid of a rifle or even two in order to have a HW44 if I did a lot of back-garden shooting. It is a superbly made, accurate, multi-shot, PCP airgun and now I can see just what all of the fuss was about. ■

TECH SPEC

Manufacturer: WEIHRAUCH SPORT

Country of origin: Germany

Distributor: Hull Cartridge 01482 342756

Model: HW44

Type: Pre-charged pneumatic air pistol

Barrel length: 250mm

Calibre: .177/22 only

Action: Sidelever

Sights: Rear notch – adjustable, (with dovetail optical sight ramp)

Trigger: Two-stage adjustable

Trigger weight: 500g

Grips: Target-style stippled for grip (Ambidextrous)

Overall length: 338mm, no moderator. 485mm with moderator fitted

Weight: 1.3Kg (no scope or moderator)

Moderator: £65

Scope: £80

RRP £695