

# STAR OF THE SHOW!

Tim Finley tests a whole handful of HW45



Side views of the HW45 Bronze Star.

the cocking and loading sequence. To cock the action, the safety-catch positioned just behind the trigger must be applied first. It's a small ribbed lever and has an 'S' for safe and a red dot and 'F' for the unsafe or 'ready to fire' position. The red-dot, warning you that it's ready to fire, is only on the left-hand side of the action. Flicking the lever back away from the trigger blade into the safe position can be done from either side of the action, no matter if you are left- or right-handed because there are levers positioned on both sides of the action.

the trigger adjustment screw.

The main upgrade over the base HW45 mark are the grips. Gone are the slab-type covers on each side, to be replaced by a wraparound laminated wood grip. It is done in a target style and looks really stunning – the layered wood is in differing shades of gray. They are well sculpted and have a stippled finish to the bottom section, which swells out to a large-section butt cap. As soon as you shoot the Bronze Star, you get to see where the extra money went. The grip transforms the feel of the gun, and I know because I own a standard HW45.

## WORTH THE MONEY?

When looking at a HW45 you can ask yourself two questions: One – is it really worth the cost of a rifle? Two – are the Silver, Black and Bronze star models superior to the base model? The answer to both of those questions is an emphatic 'yes'. Initial tests in my loft range at six yards gave me an 8mm centre-to-centre, five-shot group, with wadcutter match pellets, so there was no need to lighten the trigger from its factory settings. I recommend that you use a two-handed grip with any HW45 pistol. With a power of 4½ ft.lbs, the Bronze Star has all the power you will ever need with a bonus of a reduced power level for indoor target shooting and plinking.

It is comfortable as a single-handed shooting stance, too – I recommend the two-handed style due to the HW45s weight. The ambidextrous grip is not a perfect fit for either left- or right-handed shooters, but as a right-hander it still felt extremely good to me. The compromise in dedicated right- or left-handed shooters design is minimal and whoever designed it did an outstanding job. You can tell they spent time on it; the way the angle of the front top section of the grip follows the angle of the safety catch when in the safe mode is just one example of their deft touch.

Weihrauch launched the HW45 in 1985, I bought a HW45 in 2006 and I then bought myself the Silver Star in 2009. The Bronze Star was launched in 2018 and it has several features that set it apart from the standard HW45 base model. You cannot fail to identify the pistol model because the words 'Bronze Star' are engraved in flowing script behind the HW45 logo on the left-hand side of the action. New to me was the calibre of the Bronze Star I was given to test because it was in .22 (5.5mm) calibre. The two HW45s I own, and all the HW45s I have shot previously, have been .177 (4.5mm) calibre. Incidentally, the 'bronze' colour comes from the action being treated with Cerakote®, a finish normally used on firearms because it is extremely hardwearing.

## SAFETY

I'll cover the operation of the gun for those few not familiar with the iconic HW45. It is a spring-powered air pistol with an over-lever cocking action. The barrel is housed in this top section, which also has the open sights on it, and an 11mm optical sight rail. The top section hinges from the front end of the pistol and is held in place by a pseudo hammer at the rear of the action.

The safety is not an automatic one, so get into the habit of applying it before commencing

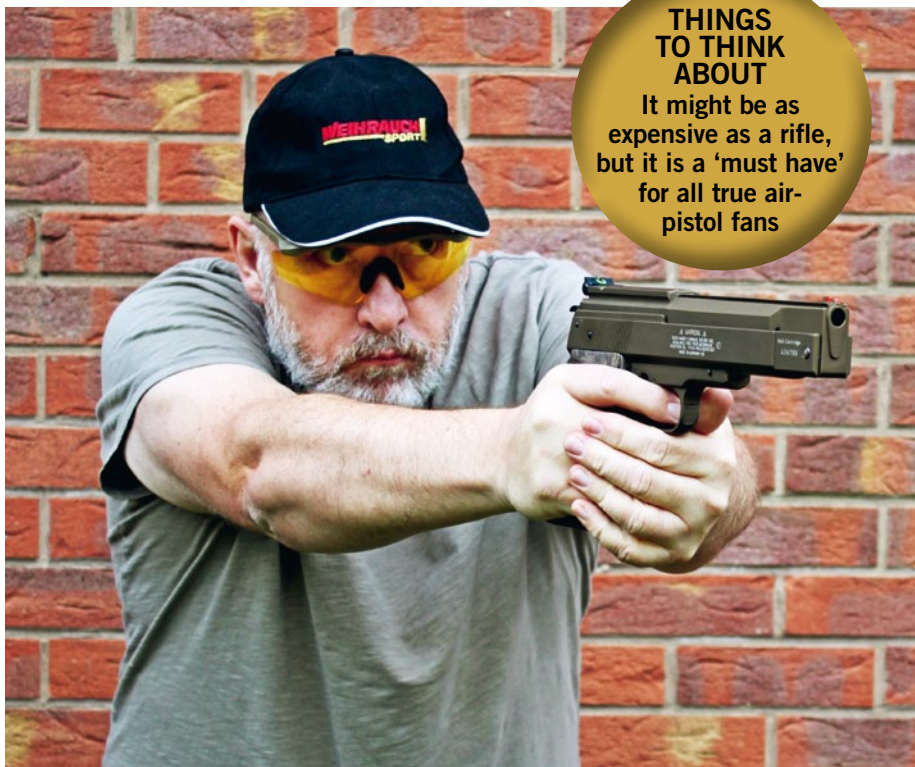
## POWER LEVELS

As with all HW45s there are two power levels available to the shooter. Pulling the barrel section up to almost 90 degrees to the action and engaging the piston latch sets the first power level. On test, this gun come in at 3.8 ft.lbs. with .22, 14.4 grain pellets. After pulling the top section all the way out, the power went up a full 5.4 ft.lbs. and this gain is for only a further 17mm of movement on the piston. The differing power levels affect the trigger pull, as you would expect. The less spring pressure on the trigger sears, the lighter the trigger pressure will be. At 3.4 ft.lbs. the factory-set trigger measured in at 1.2kg. At full power, the trigger weight went up to 1.4kg.

## LAMINATED

The trigger adjustment screws on the HW45 are both situated on the front face of the ribbed trigger blade, and can be accessed via a hole in the trigger guard. The top screw alters the second-stage position, shorter turn to the right, longer turn to the left. The bottom screw is the weight; turn in to increase the trigger weight, and turn to the left to lighten the trigger. The gun comes supplied with a comprehensive instruction guide and spare 'O' ring for the transfer port. It also has an Allen key which fits

**THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**  
 It might be as expensive as a rifle, but it is a 'must have' for all true air-pistol fans



The Weihrauch HW45 Bronze Star is a double-handful of enjoyment and performance.

**SPECIAL PISTOL**

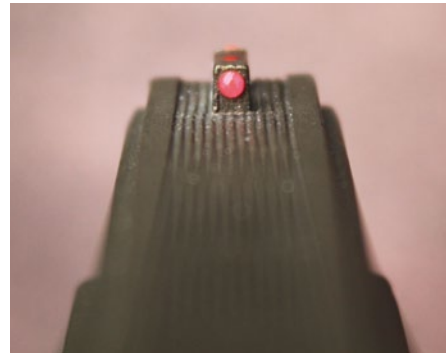
It really is a comfortable gun to shoot compared to the plain grips of the standard model. It has an 11mm, 130mm-long scope/ red-dot sight, mounting dovetail on the front half of the top cocking lever, which extends all

the way to the front of the gun, even past the front sight post. Fitted with a scope it would be fantastic, and you would make full use of its power.

After just a few shots with the HW45 Bronze Star, you realise what a special pistol it is. Build



The rear sight has a green fibre-optic element ...



... which lines up quickly with the front sight.

quality is second to none and it is supremely accurate, and tiny groups with the HW45 are the norm. Yes, it might be expensive, but true quality always is.

Thanks to Tom and Chris at Hull Cartridge for organising the loan of the pistol. ■

Lettering lets you know it's the Bronze Star.



The action at full cock for 5.4 ft.lbs.



Pellet loading can be fiddly at first.



The faux hammer is the release catch for the action



**TECH SPEC**

- Manufacturer:** Weihrauch
- Distributor:** Hull Cartridge 01482 34257
- Model:** HW45 Bronze Star
- Type:** Spring-piston
- Barrel length:** 170mm
- Calibre:** .177 or .22 (.22 on test)
- Action:** Over-lever
- Sights:** Rear notch – adjustable, with fibre-optic elements front and rear (with 11mm dovetail optical sight ramp).
- Sight base:** 238mm
- Trigger:** Two-stage adjustable
- Trigger weight:** 1.2 to 1.4kg
- Grips:** Laminated grey wood, target-style, stippled for grip
- Overall length:** 280mm
- Weight:** 1.1kg

**RRP £386**