

# ZEROING IN

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

# FATTY BOOM BOOM

Weihrauch says its brand new XL moderator is its quietest ever, so Mike Morton breaks out his sound meter and puts it to the test

**F**or years, any discussion of airgun moderators would revolve around how they compared with the standard Weihrauch silencer, as this was among the very best available. But we now have a different benchmark following the release of the German gunmaker's brand new XL and XL-K models, which offer distinctive looks as well as a reduction in noise.

The XL is the longer model of the two, measuring 195mm, while the shorter XL-K variant is 132mm. They both have a matt black anti-glare finish and are threaded the standard 1/2" UNF (unified fine) to fit airguns of .177, .20 and .22 calibres. The matt black is one of the dullest finishes I've ever seen on a moderator, and will really help reduce glare in lamplight as well as daylight.

The XL is definitely a bit of a fatty, weighing in at 198 grams compared with the 110 grams of the standard HW model, and having a diameter of 39mm against the 29mm of the original. It's only about 6mm longer though, so it's the girth that makes it appear so huge. I'll run through my sound testing in a minute, but for many shooters the way this moderator looks may well be the determining factor. It's big and it's bold, and in my opinion looks great on rifles like my HW100 BP, while purists may prefer something a little less "in your face".

Weihrauch's original model is a tough act to follow when it comes to sound suppression, so I wanted to lay down some ground rules for my testing. Both old and new would be pitted against each other on the same rifle, being fired indoors as well as outdoors, with the rifle also being shot with no moderator at all as a control.

Brand new examples of both moderators would be used, as moderators can actually get a little quieter with repeated use. The microphone on my NIOSH Sound Level Meter app was placed exactly 14cm

### KEY SPECS

**UK SUPPLIER:** Hull Cartridge ([www.hullcartridge.co.uk](http://www.hullcartridge.co.uk))

**MANUFACTURER:** Weihrauch ([www.weihrauch-sport.de](http://www.weihrauch-sport.de))

**MODEL:** HW XL (HW XL-K also available)

**PRICE:** £99

**LENGTH:** 195mm

**DIAMETER:** 39mm

**WEIGHT:** 198g

### SOUND TEST RESULTS INDOORS (LOWER IS BETTER)

**NO MODERATOR:** 102.7dB

**ORIGINAL HW MODERATOR:** 92.4dB

**XL:** 91.8dB

### SOUND TEST RESULTS OUTDOORS (LOWER IS BETTER)

**NO MODERATOR:** 98.5dB

**ORIGINAL HW MODERATOR:** 93.7dB

**XL:** 92.7dB

from the muzzle for each reading, and in keeping with the manufacturer's recommendations I took up to five readings for each test category, and then took the average.

When the BP was shot indoors, I recorded 102.7 decibels for the unmoderated rifle, 92.4 for the original HW moderator and 91.8 for the XL – a win for the newcomer. Shooting outdoors yielded a reading of 98.5 decibels for the unmoderated rifle, a reduction on the indoor figure, while the old and new moderators were 93.7 and 92.7 decibels respectively, both of which were slightly louder than the indoor figures, which was something I definitely wasn't expecting, but still another victory for the new XL.

As a rough comparison, clicking my fingers gave a louder reading than any of the moderated options, while clapping my hands was louder than even the unmoderated rifle.

So with these test results in the bag, it's fair to say the XL really is the quietest moderator Weihrauch makes – and that's something to shout out loud! ●



Weihrauch's new XL moderator reduces the sound of a shot even further, and offers a totally different look that's in keeping with more modern styles of rifle



The original HW moderator has been a yardstick in terms of sound suppression for many years, being simple, elegant and effective



Shooters can now choose between the clean lines of the original and the more bulky bulldog build of the new HW XL



The Sound Level Meter app from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health is not only free, but produces reliable results as well



The XL arrives in a sturdy red plastic case that will keep it safe and sound until it's ready to be fitted to your rifle