

A DAD AND HIS LAD

PART 2

Tim introduces young George to his new rifle

Having decided on a Weihrauch HW30 to get my son, George, really going on his shooting journey, it was an exciting day when it arrived at the Finley household. From the outset, we could tell it was a quality item and I remember the excitement on opening the box of my first HW77 back in 1987. I hope it gave George the same feeling that I had and can still remember to this day. Enough of the mushy stuff and on to the nitty-gritty – what did George think of the HW30S when he finally got his hands on it?

The HW30 is deemed a 'family' rifle by Weihrauch, and I can see why. It's a perfect introduction to shooting, and built to the German firm's legendary quality levels, so it will stand up to the regular use that a whole shooting family can throw at it. We went for the 30S version which comes in a wooden or synthetic stock, and being a modern boy, George picked the black synthetic one over the more traditional wood stock. Keeping with the family theme, Weihrauch have made the stock on the HW30S ambidextrous – ideal if one of you is left-handed, as in our family. There are cheek piece raised sections on each side, and the fore end has raised panels for added grip. George and I both liked the stock; the grip panels are semi-rough textured, giving great interaction between shooter and rifle.

MIND YOUR FINGERS

As with all new rifles, we took it out into the garden first, without pellets or targets. I wanted George to get the feel of the gun, check out its balance and learn the controls. Lesson

"if you have no experience with a break-barrel rifle, it can be a bit baffling"

number one with all break-barrelled spring rifles is how to break the barrel – seems an easy prospect? Not really, if you have no experience with a break-barrel rifle it can be a bit baffling. All break-barrel rifles have a



George just getting a 'feel' for where the trigger sits on his finger, and lining up the sights.

spring-loaded detent catch that keeps the barrel aligned to the action once the rifle has been cocked, and that's fine, but when in the uncocked condition the spring that powers the rifle also can assert pressure to the barrel via the cocking arm, so to break the barrel initially, the shooter has to overcome the barrel-locking system and the main spring.

the rifle can then be placed up against the knee/leg touching the ground. The gun hand then goes under the action just back from the pivot point – don't hold too near the moving barrel in the jaws of the breech because you could trap your fingers.

SAFETY FIRST

George did struggle at first with the lock-up on the HW30S – the detent on the gun is a ball bearing – and as I said earlier, the lock-up pressure is also partly the large mainspring. Holding the rifle correctly and bracing the gun on the floor helped him get to grips with the first step in the loading process. Being able to take the lock off is also needed to carry a break-barrelled rifle to show others that the gun is not cocked. »

The easiest way to do this is to tap the end of the barrel with the flat of your palm. For right-handed shooters, hold the rifle with the right hand and tap with the left. I like to teach in the kneeling position, initially. The butt of



Side views of the HW30S.



This is what you need to do.

When the rifle is not in a gun slip or bag it must be shown in this state.

As we all know you never let go of the barrel – ever – when going through the loading process. The HW30S is a massively safe rifle and has an automatic safety catch, but remember, the final and most important safety device is the shooter. Always keep pointed in a safe direction and only take the safety catch off and put your finger on the trigger when you are about to shoot. I wanted George to get used to the sights before we got to shooting,

and off his own bat, he said that he liked the sights and found them easy, quick and simple to line up.

So you now know how the safety features work on the gun, but where do you shoot it? As long as you have a safe backstop, the back garden is a safe place as long as the pellets stay in your property – in fact, they should all stay in your backstop. Don't forget the safety glasses too.

The HW30S is not a cheap rifle at £190, but as the old saying goes, 'You get what you

TECH SPEC

Manufacturer:	WEIHRAUCH SPORT
Country of origin:	Germany
Distributor:	Hull Cartridge 01482 342756
Model:	HW30S
Action:	Break-barrel
Type:	Spring-piston
Power:	6.8 ft.lbs.
Barrel length:	390mm
Calibre:	.177 (on test) or .22
Sights:	Open
Sight base:	385mm
Trigger weight:	1.3kg
Overall length:	985mm
Pull length:	355mm
Weight:	2.5kg

RRP £190.00

pay for', and the sheer build quality and design touches take the HW30S into another league when it comes to starter rifles.

Weihrauch also sell 'kits' in which you get a scope with the HW30. Next time we see how the HW30S actually shoots. Will the thing shoot as good as it looks, and how it's put together? ... and more importantly, will George be able to shoot it?

POINTS OF INTEREST

A brilliant beginner's rifle, well-made and accurate German engineering at its best. ■

