

WEIHRAUCH HW77K

£620 WEIHRAUCH.CO.UK

The HW77K can trace its roots back to the early 1980s and it's no accident that the model soon dominated early field target competitions. Today, the HW77K underlever is available in a number of different stocks including the green laminate on our test .177 rifle.

The 'K' designation stands for Kurz, or 'short' in German, suggesting there is a longer version and there is, although importers Hull Cartridge will supply one only as a special order. However, at just over a metre, the HW77K is nice and compact and the fact that it's 4kgs evaporates when you put the rifle to your shoulder, is testament to the sublime balance.

The solid rubber shoulder pad is not adjustable, nor is the comb. However, the ambidextrous sporter stock is well-proportioned with a raised cheekpiece on each side and a steeply raked pistol grip that is finished with panels of laser-cut chequering to aid grip. There's more chequering on the elegant fore end that slims and narrows.

Much of the success of Weihrauch springers is down to the two-stage Rekord trigger, which many believe still sets the standard for other manufacturers. The two-stage unit on the test HW77K is not only precise, clean and utterly predictable, but also easily adjusted thanks to a large screw behind the trigger blade.

Pushing a button in the catch under the muzzle releases the 290mm underlever from underneath the 370mm barrel. Sweeping it down requires minimal effort to cock the action and open the loading port into which a pellet is pushed directly into the breech.

Cocking also sets the cross-bolt safety – a feature on all Weihrauch springers – at the rear of the action. With the underlever pulled down, an anti-bear trap prevents it flying up and potentially injuring a finger in the loading port should the trigger fail.

Even with the safety catch pushed in, the underlever stays where it is until you return it. The downside is that the HW77K cannot be de-cocked, and the only way to re-set the safety catch once pushed in is to pull the underlever down again.

On the range, our .177 test rifle showed commendable consistency, varying just three fps over a 10-shot string using QYS FT Domed pellets. Power was 11.6 Ft/Lb. Like most Weihrauch springers I've shot, the HW77K emits a slight twang. It had no bearing on accuracy, though, as 10p-sized, 10-shot shots at 20 and 30 metres proved, and if it does bother you, a professional tune will take care of things.

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Soldiers going into battle on horseback may no longer be a thing. Fortunately, the style of rifle developed for them is. At a time when everything is getting bigger – national debt, TVs and

waistlines – air rifles, especially fully featured models, are not immune.

Carbines offer a way to retain all the features of their full-size siblings, but allow you to save a little weight and add a little more in the way of handiness without compromising on performance.