

# One of the best airguns in the world just got better

## Mat Manning puts the new Weihrauch HW100 X to the test...

Any new airgun release from Weihrauch tends to cause a lot of excitement, and the HW100X is no exception. The Weihrauch HW100 is widely regarded as one of the best PCP airguns in the world – so a new version is a very big deal indeed.

Distributed in the UK by Hull Cartridge, the Weihrauch HW100X has a recommended retail price of £1,440. That is pushing into what I regard as the territory of high-end airguns, and I have heard one or two critics suggesting that it's a little expensive. However, having used the HW100X for a couple of weeks, I think the refinements made to this version of the HW100 amount to something very special – and, when you compare it with other airguns in the same price bracket, the new Weihrauch's price tag is more than justified.

One of the big upgrades on the HW100X is that, thanks to a very efficient regulator and a new and improved cylinder, it delivers significantly more shots per fill than previous models. It also happens to be lighter. The version featured here is the Sporter Laminate Adjustable launch model, which weighs a very manageable 3.4kg.

This model is just under 1050mm long with the supplied silencer fitted and about 880mm long without it. I really like the stock, which – apart from looking great – has also been designed for functionality, and results in an extremely well-balanced gun.

### Thoughtful stock design with adjustability for refined gun fit

The laminate pattern gives this airgun a very distinctive look and its colour swatch looks very at home in the British countryside. Its long forend will accommodate a wide variety of hold styles and is enhanced by a groove that runs along both sides of the forward section. It even has a rail with MLOK slots sunken into its underside as well as a thread for bipod or sling attachment.

There are panels of really crisp stippling on both sides of the lower part of the forend. There is also similar stippling on both sides of the pistol grip – and what a great grip it is. Suitable for a thumb-up or thumb-around hold, the HW100X's pistol grip fills the palm very nicely and is really steep, which I certainly appreciated as it set me up very well for the trigger.

At the rear of the stock, you have a height-adjustable butt pad. The rubber pad is ventilated, has a bit of squishiness to it and feels great in the shoulder. Even more significantly, though, this stock features a height-adjustable cheekpiece – a very nice touch indeed. It has a neat push-button mechanism; give the button a press and the cheekpiece shifts up and down, then release it and it locks solidly in position. The result is perfect eye-scope alignment, whatever height mounts you are using. Again, I have seen a few purists bemoaning the fact that the cheekpiece is made from polymer and not the same laminate as the rest of the stock. I don't see that as a problem, it still matches the overall aesthetic of the HW100X, and it feels very solid – unlike some of the cheap plastic cheekpiece arrangements out there.

*Below: An adjustable butt pad and cheekpiece means there is no compromise on eye alignment with the HW100 X*



## **Two scope mounting options and an effective sound suppressor**

Returning to the subject of scope-mounting, the HW100X features the usual dovetail scope rail that most of us would associate with Weihrauch airguns. However, it also comes supplied with a removable Picatinny rail. It has three fastening points for super-secure attachment and provides a very useful Picatinny mounting option with about 170mm of uninterrupted clamping space. This feature will be particularly useful when attaching night vision optics with integral mounts and should also prove popular with shooters who have a preference of Picatinny-type mounts.

As I would expect from Weihrauch, the build quality of the HW100X is excellent. The finish is absolutely flawless wherever you look, and it feels rock solid. With the general standard of airgun build quality across the board seeming rather more flimsy than it was a few years ago, the robustness of this one, along with its precision German engineering, is very reassuring. My old Weihrauch HW100 has given years of dependable service with very little maintenance (as has my HW95K) and I get the impression that this Weihrauch has been built to the same uncompromising standards.

The model featured here has a 410mm (16in) barrel which has a half-inch UNF thread for silencer attachment. The supplied Weihrauch High Efficiency silencer does a brilliant job of keeping the HW100X very quiet and I can't imagine many shooters feeling the need to change it for anything else.

## **Super-crisp trigger and proven magazine-fed loading**

Apart from solid build quality, Weihrauch also has a reputation for making good trigger mechanisms, and the two-stage unit on this airgun is just brilliant. The blade is very gently curved and is nice and wide, which means it transmits plenty of feel. The mechanism is adjustable for length and weight of pull but, as ever, I tested it on its factory setting to give you an idea of what to expect straight from the box. First stage weight and travel felt just right and concluded in a very clear stop which was followed by a totally creep-free second stage break. The second stage felt relatively light and short but, thanks to its excellent engineering, it still delivered a crisp and utterly predictable shot release. I felt no need whatsoever to make any adjustment to this trigger setup.

The safety catch is sensibly positioned away from the trigger blade towards the rear of the action. There is actually a switch on each side to facilitate ambidextrous operation. I like the fact that it can't be moved when the gun is not cocked, so it's a good way to check. Positive and very quiet in operation, it is safe when in the backward position and you simply push it forward when you're ready to take the shot.

The HW100X runs what I think is one of the best airgun magazines out there. It's really easy to load: just push pellets in nose-first from the side with the cog in the centre. The mechanism is so basic that there's virtually nothing that can go wrong on it. Nonetheless, it works with absolute precision. You get two magazines supplied and each holds 14 shots whether you go for .177 or .22 calibre. Push back the retainer switch in order to remove the magazine and then return it to its forward position (to engage a pin that keeps everything perfectly aligned) after you slot it back in.

## High performance regulator and increased fill pressure

The tried and tested magazine is driven by an extremely slick sidelever action, which comes supplied with a detachable biathlon-type dropdown handle but can't be reversed for lefthanded operation. The magazine and lever work together like clockwork – it is an utterly dependable mechanism, delivering quick and reliable cocking and loading shot after shot. It's great for fast reloading on the range and even better when you need a rapid follow-up shot in the field.

The HW100X has a new ultra-efficient regulator and a high-grade aluminium cylinder. The new cylinder is removable and brings a significant weight saving – 360g on the standard model and 240g on the carbine. Maximum fill pressure has also been increased to 250 bar. Pressure inside the cylinder is displayed on a very clearly marked gauge. Although that gauge is positioned at the front of the cylinder, it can easily be read from a sideways angle – so you don't have to put your face in front of the dangerous end to check your air reserves.

The new regulator is definitely doing its job in terms of consistency. The sub-12 .177 calibre model I was sent to test was running at 11.5ft/lb and shot to shot variation was staying within four feet per second over a ten-shot string. The combination of a very efficient regulator and increased air pressure also means that the HW100X delivers considerably more shots per fill than its predecessor – up to 90 percent more, in fact! You can expect the standard model to return 210 shots per fill in .177 calibre and as many as 250 in .22. When it is time to refill, simply remove the plug from the inlet at the front of the cylinder and plug in the supplied quickfill probe.

One important thing to note is that you need to remove the cylinder from the gun the first time you fill it – unless it has already been filled. This is only a one-time job though, and the cylinder can stay in situ for refilling thereafter.

*Below: The Weihrauch HW100 X has a maximum fill pressure of 250 bar - pressure inside the cylinder is displayed on an easy-to-read gauge*



## **Pinpoint accuracy and easy handling for versatile hunting**

As for shooting performance and accuracy, I have a Weihrauch HW100 of my own which is almost ten years old. It is a very accurate airgun, but the HW100X feels much more refined and is definitely more accurate – its super-consistent power output is no doubt contributing to that. Match it with the right pellet (the test gun had a liking for H&N Baracuda 8) and it's a pellet-on-pellet gun at 30m. Shooting off the bench, it's still a single-hol-er at 40m and grouping remains very tight at 50m. This isn't just a bench gun though; its great handling means it has the potential to shoot well from any stance and I can see it being a great choice for hunting.

The HW100X really has taken what I believe to be one of the best off-the-peg PCP airguns out there to the next level. It is lighter, it delivers more shots per fill and it is incredibly consistent – plus you've got Weihrauch's proven pedigree and solid German build quality. Most importantly though, it's just a really nice gun to shoot. In short, it has all the makings of another legendary airgun from Weihrauch.

## **VITAL STATISTICS**

**MAKER:** Weihrauch

**MODEL:** HW100X Sporter Laminate Adjustable (standard length)

**UK DISTRIBUTOR:** Hull Cartridge

**RRP:** £1,440 (for model featured)

**LENGTH:** 1050mm (41in) with silencer

**WEIGHT:** 3.4kg (7.5lb)

**BARREL LENGTH:** 410mm (16in)

**MAX FILL PRESSURE:** 250 bar

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