



OMG IT'S THE LGU!

Here's the brand-new underlever from Walther that has springer fans all sorts of excited. The editor gives his version of what this new supergun is really like

You find me stiff of hand and sore of ribs, yet smiling like the simple fellow I'll always be, thanks to Walther's new LGU rifle. The ribs are still recovering from my involvement in the unfortunate meeting between an Armex minibus and a couple of fixtures on a Belgian motorway, but the hand is purely the result of cocking a springer 1500 or so times over a too-short timespan. I told you about the minibus crash last month – and thanks for the kind responses on that – and one of the reasons our party was heading from the Birmingham base of Armex, the Umarex main UK agent, for the Umarex headquarters in Germany, was to test the Walther LGU. Never mind,

we got there in the end, and that test is well under way.

As I write, I've just flipped the third, empty .177 Air Arms Diabolo pellet tin into my man-cave bin, and I've planned to take the test rifle with me on a 48-hour camping and fishing trip. Whichever way I look at it, I've shot the wossname out of it every chance I've had, and now I know this rifle, its potential and its ways. I'm ready to share what I've learned, and I think you'll be interested in it, which is handy, seeing as this is the magazine's main test feature.

Anyway, let's begin with the traditional tour of our test subject, and see for ourselves how effective the combination of classic design

and top springer techno can really be.

LGU FEATURES

I said 'classic design' and that's what we have here. Weihrauch and Air Arms have blazed the sporting underlever styling trail,

our own Air Arms, Daystate and BSA, among others, and sought the services of Italian stock maestros, Minelli to produce the LGU's woodwork.

The resultant stock is an uncomplicated, ambidextrous, smooth-handling study in stained

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and Walther has acknowledged this in the production of its LGU. The famous German company, now under the expansive wing of Umarex of course, has also joined

and lacquered beech, with well-cut chequering at the grip and flutes along the fore end which guide the leading hand to an agreeable settlement on a comfortable, downturned tip.

Gosh, what a surprise, I'll have a moan about there being no adjustable butt pad, but seeing that this is also the case with rifles costing far more than the LGU's £350, I'll qualify that criticism with the fact that any rifle with this much potential, deserves an adjustable pad.

The grip angle is steeper than some picky classic sporter fans would prefer, but I'm sure even they will accept that efficiency trumps style every time – and this rifle is certainly efficient.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

That efficiency is strongly hinted-at as soon as you detach the underlever from its sprung ball detent and begin the cocking cycle. The smooth, near-silent progress of the underlever and its attached internal hardware is punctuated by two precise 'clacks' from the rifle's safety mechanism. »



You want remarkable accuracy?
We'll show you remarkable accuracy!



It's a spring-loaded 'interruptor' system, similar to that used by the Air Arms TX200, that has to be manually disengaged as the underlever is returned after the rifle has been cocked and loaded. There's a neat automatic safety-catch, too, so the LGU user enjoys belt 'n' braces security. The

rifle can be de-cocked, though, so all in all, it's a useful, practical design that will assist safe handling, but won't annoy you ... until you forget to snick off the safety-catch before attempting that vital shot. I've been shooting auto-safe springers for around 40 years now, and I still forget to slip

that safety a couple of times per session. It's the rules – you just have to deal with it.

LIKES, MORE LIKES, AND DISLIKES

I like the overall styling of the Walther LGU, and the more I

shoot it, the prettier it gets. Success does that to a rifle, or rather to the person who assesses it. On a purely visual basis, the LGU's muzzle brake is understated, elegant, and considering its lack of internal baffles means it's not a genuine silencer, it does a splendid job of muting any blast from the sharp end. Give that feature a 'like' as we cool kids say in Facebook land.

The same goes for the rest of the rifle's visuals, apart from one, and if we really were living this test on Facebook, I'd be unfriending that underlever grip, no doubt about it. Actually, it's not so much a 'grip' as 'a pair of fat 'O' rings', and I can see aftermarket replacements being offered within weeks. My beloved customised underlever rifle, has what I believe is the ideal solution, and it's a knurled tube that slips over the lever, adding grip and elegance in one. This rifle deserves it, too – because it really is something special.

I can see the LGU's trigger set-up causing a raised eyebrow or two, mainly due to the extremely long first stage when the rifle is used in factory-set mode. Some considered treatment with the hex-wrench provided will have the trigger more to everyone's liking, where its performance can see it shine like the little star it is.

WHAT GOES AROUND

Inside the LGU, the rotating piston concept used on the LGV has been called up and perfectly deployed. A pair of synthetic bearings on the piston ensure the smoothest of runnings, and the firing cycle feels so close to that of a fully-tuned springer that only the hyper-technical airgunner will need to tinker further with it. It is to be understood that some of those who introduce nano-tweaks to a rifle that shoots like this one, are after 'improvements' that 99% of airgunners wouldn't actually notice.

The production rifle on the left shot disturbingly like the fully-customised one on the right.



Shoots like a tuned springer for production gun money.



So, while the 'ready-tuned' production airgun will never please all of the people all of the time, this new LGU is the closest thing to achieving that I've ever tested – and yes, that does include the break-barrel LGV I was raving about mere months ago. In fact, I shot the .177 LGU test rifle alongside an LGV of the same calibre, and those two rifles were mighty close in terms of 'feel', consistency and accuracy, more

of which later.

FANTASTIC FINISH

Before I get to the shooting phase of this test, here's a brief appraisal of its exterior metalwork. The pre-finish polishing and the subsequent blacking of the LGU's action, have combined to present an extremely pleasing standard of

craftsmanship.

The effect is right up there with the old-school Webley and Theoben standard, and for those who have arrived too late at the airgun party to remember such things, be assured that this is high praise indeed.

ON THE RANGE

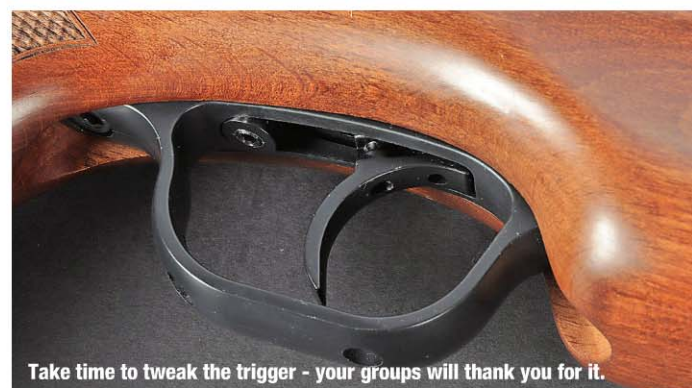
I began my shooting investigation with the usual degree of assistance from my chrono, bench rest, target glove, beanbag and selection of pellets. There then

followed a zero session, during which I detected a faint whiff of lube being cooked, or dieseling as it's otherwise known. By the time I'd established a reliable 35-yard connection of cross hair, target and pellet, the mist had cleared from the LGU's sliding breech, and all was cycling sweetly. Time to crank up the chrono.

'I can see the LGU's trigger set-up causing a raised eyebrow or two,'



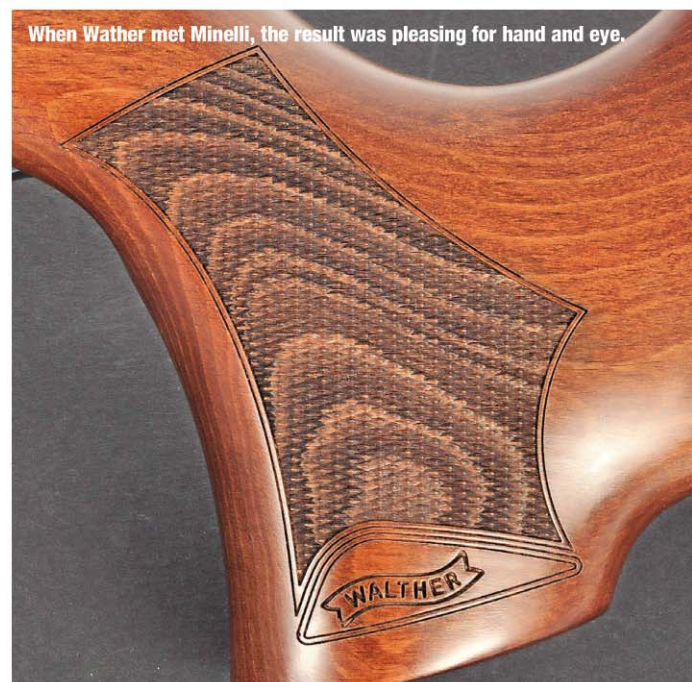
The convenient, resettable, automatic safety.



Take time to tweak the trigger - your groups will thank you for it.



Everyone likes the little pellet moulding on the piston-lock release catch. Bless.



When Wather met Minelli, the result was pleasing for hand and eye.

Here's a thing; the first 20 shots I recorded from the test rifle showed a 5 f.p.s. variation. Yes, I used sorted pellets from my personal stash, but that's still incredibly impressive feedback

Elegant solution. The grip on the right runs big, fat rings around the LGU's.



from a rifle still well inside its 'running-in' period. Subsequent batches of chrono-tested shots confirmed the amazing consistency of this underlever, and it settled at 11.2 ft.lbs. with Air Arms Diabolo Field as its preferred diet.

JUST ACCURACY

Having already established the existence of an ultra-smooth

'When you play your essential part, the return will boggle your disbelieving eyes'

consistent firing cycle, and efficient handling, two elements of the holy trinity of ultimate performance, I just needed clinical accuracy for the set. I got it, too, and so did others who tried out

the test rifle. You still have to do your bit, of course, and an inconsistent hold, variable grip tension, dodgy trigger technique, or lack of follow-through, will always wreck the potential performance of any rifle, especially a springer. But, when you play your essential part, the return will boggle your disbelieving eyes and lift the corners of your mouth in ways you won't have thought

possible.

Just before I sat down to write this, I hit a one-inch diameter 'swinger' target 22 times out of 25 shots, at 45 yards. No wind, that supportive bench/beanbag/

Even those 'not usually inspired' by springers gave the LGU a nod of appreciation.



SPECIFICATION

MODEL: LGU

Manufacturer: Walther

Country of origin: Germany

Price: £350

Type: Spring-piston, single-shot sporter

Calibre: .177, .22

Cocking: Underlever

Loading: Direct to barrel via sliding breech

Trigger: 2-stage, adjustable

Stock type: Ambidextrous, beech, lacquered

Weight: 4.2 kg (9.2lbs) unscoped

Length: 1050 (41.3 ins)

Barrel: 307mm (12.1 ins)

Variation over 30 shots: 5fps for rifle on test.

Average energy: 11.2 ft.lbs.

Best group at 40 yards: 15 mm diameter

Average group at 40 yards: 18 mm

Favoured pellet of test rifle: Air Arms Diabolo Field

Contact: Armex on 0121 643 4900

squishy glove combo, and total confidence in a remarkable rifle, amount to a truly potent combination, which produced a series of groups that were worth cutting out and keeping. The best of these was a 10-shot example at 40 yards, which would barely accommodate a fingertip. My accuracy tests will be completed in next month's edition, but I already know only mechanical breakdown will stop me producing a stack of frameworthy groups that sad folk like me actually do gaze upon with pride.

INITIAL VERDICT

The Walther LGU will sell in significant quantities, and deservedly so. At £350 it isn't expensive, and its performance will delight those who invest in one. As a confirmed admirer of quality spring-powered rifles, I know that this underlever will broaden the appeal of my beloved 'boingers', and that can only be a good thing.

Next month I'll have put more tins of pellets through the test rifle and we'll both be shooting at peak performance. I'm expecting that peak to be high ... possibly the very highest of its kind, and I can't wait to chart it.

See you next month. ■