

Hatsan AT 44-10 .177 PCP Air Rifle



It would appear that air rifle manufacturers have taken a very pro-active interest in shooters health, with the proliferation of pre-charged pneumatic (PCP) air rifles that are now on the market. For those of us that are keen hunters and a little unfit this new breed of PCP air rifles may well save your bacon. You not only get a terrific rifle but a great cardio vascular work out every time you go to do some shooting practice!

This new breed of air rifle has some other great features like being able to fire 50 effective shots per fill, and this new model from Hatsan will fire as many as 90 according to the owners manual. There was a second charge cylinder (available at extra cost) so you can conceivably fire 100 shots per fill.

The rifle received for test is a futuristic looking almost paramilitary style rifle with an ambidextrous thumbhole synthetic stock with an angular cheek piece on both sides of the butt stock and an adjustable butt pad, which is achieved by a single clamp screw in the centre of the recoil pad. When this clamp screw is loosened it allows the pad to be moved up and down 15mm each way and because the pad is on a semi circular guide track it changes the pads pitch so it still fits on your shoulder correctly. The very full pistol grip has two panels of moulded checkering and a sculptured area to hold your index finger on each side, a bit like putting on a glove. The forend has no defined grip area although it has shallow finger grooves along the top side of the forend. All metal work is well blued to a deep black colour. Fiber optic open sights are standard equipment and are adjustable for windage and elevation as well the front blade is also adjustable for elevation. The rear sight had been removed from our test rifle and a scope and mounts were fitted (these are extra).

Our AT44 - 10 is the magazine version and was supplied with two magazines. These are an uncomplicated alloy casting with an indexing ratchet around the perimeter, which allows rotation one way only. There is an O ring groove in the middle of the ratchet which allows the O ring to go just into the pellet holes to retain them in the magazine (see photos). When the pellets are placed in the magazine the O-ring sits in the waste of the pellet to



(Above) The Hatsan AT 44-10 air rifle is futuristic looking with an ambidextrous thumbhole synthetic stock.



(Above) The magazine fitted into the action. Take particular note of the slot to the back of the magazine which takes the small boss spoken of in the text. (Above inset) Shows the magazine slot in the action with the magazine retaining bolt and the pellet punch which chambers the pellet and remains in place during the firing process.



(Below) The two different faces of the 10 shot magazine. The left hand one shows the front face and the right hand one shows the rear face into which you put the pellets. Note how the O ring comes just into the pellet hole and retains the pellet.

(Left) The ratchet with the O ring in the centre.

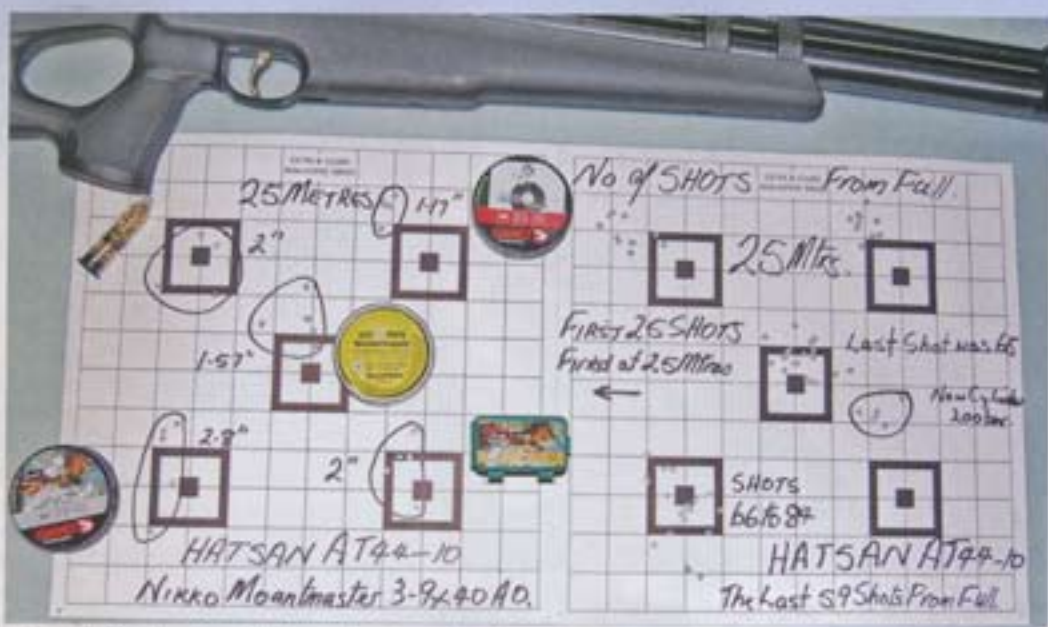


(Right) Three tests combined: firstly the left hand sheet is the first 25 shots in a number of shots from a full reservoir. Also 5 x 5-shot groups at 25 metres. The right hand target sheet is the continuation of the number-of-shots test, with the LH top bull the next 10 shots the RH top another 10 then I adjusted the scope to centre the groups on the target so it would be clearer if and when the pellets started to drop due to lack of pressure. The top LH bull was shot on 9 power and the top RH on 3 Power. The centre bull was shot 45 to 65 the bottom LH bull is shot 66 to 84 and shot 85 failed to fire. Now the velocity variation from the first 5 shot averaged 1051 fps; shots 45 to 50 averaged 992 fps. The last 5 shots to fire averaged 604 fps So Hatsan have their regulation worked out to a pretty fine art. Its interesting to look at the centre bull and the bottom left bull and see how the pellets started to drop as the number of shots increased. The Bottom RH bull I fitted a new cylinder and fired a further 5 shots so there is a slight difference between full and empty.

(Right) The Hatsan 10m test target with different pellets. Different rifles have favourite pellets and that's why you have to source all the pellets you can get your hands on and try them all. This rifle did demonstrate that it could do a pretty fair job with all the pellets I had on hand.

hold it in place. The front face is flat while the rear face has a concave groove where the pellets are placed so they go below the face of the magazine so as not to catch while the magazine rotates for the next pellet to be indexed to be in line with the barrel. There is a small hole in the middle of the magazine through which the magazine retaining bolt slides which is then the axle that the magazine rotates on. There is also a small boss around the pin hole on the back side which is proud of the face of the magazine which has a corresponding slot in the action to guarantee you can not put the magazine in backwards. All these ideas come together to make a very simple almost fool proof system that has worked well through out the test. I did have a bit of trouble if I only put 5 pellets in getting it to line up on the first one but then it was not designed for just 5.

This rifle requires a special pump to charge the reservoir, which supplies the air to propel the projectile. This is where you pay for lunch! It requires anywhere from 65 to 120 strokes of the pump to achieve the 190 Bar recommended maximum pressure. The hard part is the last 20 to 30 strokes are much harder than the rest. However shooting is a real pleasure when you get there. The rifle came already set up so after initial checking of all screws in the mount system and the first few shots were close to zero. After a couple of minor adjustments the first 10 shots fired at 10 metres clustered together in 0.51" which



(Below) The whole Hatsan kit supplied for testing. The only extra that you will have to buy is the scope and mounts. The rifle comes complete with pump and spare cylinder and 2 cylinder caps for around \$1200.





SPECIFICATIONS

Hatsan AT 44-10 PCPAir Rifle

Maker: Hatsan, Turkey
Action: Bolt to cock and rotate magazine
Calibre: .177" (.22 available)
Overall Length: 1000mm (39.4")
Barrel Length: 495mm (19.4")
Weight: 3.3kg (7.3lb)
Stock: Synthetic thumbhole
Metal Finish: Blued
Sights: "V" sight, fibre optic, Dovetail for scope
Safety: 2-position auto activation
Distributor: Highland Sports,
www.highlandsports.com.au
Warranty: 12 months
Price: \$950, pump included.

(Above) Shows where the air reservoir fits in under the action. It screws into place and is relatively easy to change. Note the end cap supplied to protect the spigot which screws onto the action.

(Right) The charging end of the reservoir, Hatsan supply a small plug to keep the dirt out of the fill hole. It is retained in place with an O ring.

(Right) The gauge on the end of the storage cylinder and the threaded muzzle cap.

(Below) Shows the safety off and on (below right).



(Below) The adjustable butt pad moves the same distance above the stock. Note how the pitch changes thanks to the clever semi-circular guide track. (Left) The retaining screw for the adjustable butt pad.



(Above) The cocking lever in the open position.



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from a new rifle is the way it should be. However conventional wisdom is that most air arms require many hundreds of shots to run them in, so if that holds true this rifle will be super special when run in. With this sort of an introduction to the new Hatsan AT44 - 10 I proceeded to do our normal test with the following pellets. Clock wise around the target starting at the top left hand bull: 1) Gamo Match 0.92" 2) Gamo Raptor 0.89" 3) Gamo Pro Magnum .34" 4) RWS 0.64" and centre Gamo Rocket 0.7". I must say I am suitably impressed and would have to say this is as good as I have ever had an air rifle shoot



(Above) The Hatsan was put to work culling starlings. Ranges were all under 30 metres and it made it easy not to have to cock the barrel every shot. Like all magazine guns it was always empty!
(Right) The inscriptions on the left hand side of the Hatsan action.



with this sort of consistency with this range of pellets.

From what I read in the owners manual the next test I need to conduct is a Number shots from a full cylinder and chronograph all shots and see what you might reasonably expect from your new Hatsan AT44 - 10. While doing this test I decided to also shoot at 25 metres so we could get an idea of the rifles longer range performance. After firing a 5 shot group with all 5 different pellets.

First 5 shots with the gauge showing 200 bar the Gamo Match pellets averaged 1051 fps. The next pellets fired were the Gamo Raptor as I wanted to see what they were capable of as they are much lighter than the lead pellets, they averaged 1084 fps. The Gamo Pro Magnum averaged 988 fps; RWS averaged 967 fps and the Gamo Rockets averaged 976 fps. Now back on to the task of plotting the velocity: shots 26 to 35 average velocity was 1032; the next lot from 45 to 50 velocity was 992 fps; the last 5 shots were 604 fps and shot 85 failed to fire. The pellets didn't come below the centre horizontal line in the target until shot 71 and then they all stayed below the line. So there we have a bit of a guide as to how many shots you may get from a full cylinder and when you could look at a refill.

It is interesting to note the last 5 shots I fired after changing the cylinder climbed up the target. This may be different in a rifle you buy but do a test in a similar way to what I have just explained and see the results for your self.

Field testing consisted of a morning thinning out the starling population as there has been a good spring for starlings and they are everywhere.

The Hatsan AT44 - 10 with pump and spare air cylinder and 2 magazines sells for approximately \$1250, a scope and mounts are an extra. I am a bit sorry the rear sight was missing, as I would have liked to try it with the open sights, because personally I like open sights for close shooting.



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