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**BROCCOCK'S
CENTREFOLD!**
NEW RANGER XR EXCLUSIVE!



I'd have a techno-hamster made for that fore end, and believe me, it would be worth it.

SEEING THE LIGHT!

The Editor gets his hands on Brocock's latest release – the intriguing Ranger XR

First impressions? If you're going to have a tactical rifle – how about one that fits into a rucksack and is so light that you hardly know it's there? If you could add proven performance, a regulated action, silenced discharge, multi-shot, sidelever pellet delivery, and an adjustable stock, then that would be a fine thing, especially when the whole deal is built into a super-tough, matte-black chassis, designed for practicality in the field. How about a mega-affordable price tag, too? Oh well, we can't have everything, I guess.

The new Brocock Ranger XR is all of the above, and quite a bit more, except the budget price. This rifle comes in at £1244, without the silencer and Dual Side Rail Picatinny scope mounting platform fitted to the test rifle. Brocock may be owned by the same company that owns Daystate, but Brocock is no 'Daystate lite'. These rifles are high-spec', precision items, with their own identity, and they carry a price tag to match. Let's see what else is contained within the Ranger XR package.

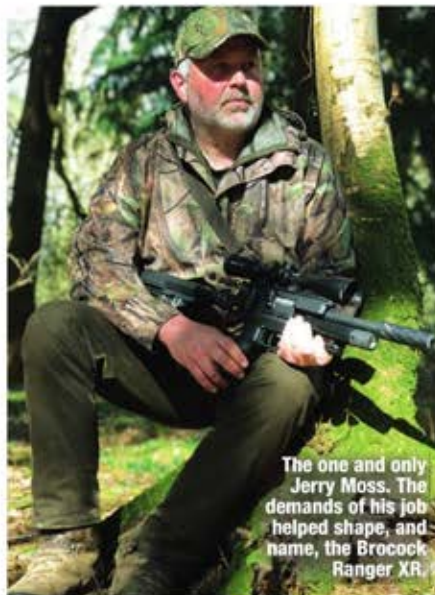
THE RANGER CONNECTION

First, let's deal with the rifle's name. That was inspired, in part, by the input of well-known Red Squirrel Ranger, Jerry Moss, who works to preserve our native red squirrel population via the Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Part of Jerry's duties involves controlling the numbers of invasive grey squirrels that have taken over the native reds' habitat. The greys also carry a virus that is deadly to the red squirrels, so removing greys is a vital task.

This can involve walking miles through woodland, often over rough ground, to visit and top up feeding stations, and Jerry wanted a convenient, lightweight rifle that could be carried in a backpack, leaving his hands free to fill, service and repair the feeders. This rifle not only needed to be easy to transport and totally practical, but it also had to be ready to go in seconds, and totally accurate when deployed. Jerry shoots from hides, confined spaces and vehicles, too, so a super-compact rifle with guaranteed performance would be a major advantage for him. Enter the Brocock Ranger XR.

THE HUMA ELEMENT

From the start, Brocock decided that its new Ranger would be fitted with a Huma-Air regulator. The company has worked with this Dutch specialist supplier for a few years, now, and given the Ranger's ultra-carbine design, Brocock wanted to extract every perfect shot from the rifle's abbreviated air-storage reservoir. The sub-12 ft.lbs. specification Ranger XR produces 40, full-power shots in .177 and 45 in .22, and in Jerry's 15-year professional experience, that's plenty for even the most prolific squirrel-hunting trip. Should more shots be required, there's room for a 3-litre air tank in Jerry's rucksack, but it's a rare session, indeed, when Jerry gets the chance to shoot more than 40 squirrels!



The one and only Jerry Moss. The demands of his job helped shape, and name, the Brocock Ranger XR.

K.I.S.S.

On test, the .177 Ranger XR delivered 42 shots, but I preferred to use a three-magazine output to keep me informed of the need to recharge while testing. Each .177 mag' holds 13 pellets, so 39 shots kept the test rifle comfortably within its usable charge, and I prefer to keep things simple where possible. The .22 magazines hold 11 pellets, and this latest version of Brocock's pellet-delivery system is the one with the fold-down 'door', offering the easiest access to the pellet chambers and making loading as simple as possible. These new mag's also provide improved alignment with the rifle's bore, although I'm not privy to the exact details of that, but anything that gets pellets into the breech more efficiently can only be a good thing. For those who still prefer to load pellets manually, a single-shot tray is supplied as standard, and I have to say it earned its keep

during the pellet-testing phase of this test.

FIXTURES, FITTINGS AND FEATURES

In addition to the features I've already mentioned, the new Ranger XR is fitted with an easy-action sidelever that can be operated by little more than an open-close flex of the fingers of the right hand. I particularly liked the way the lever gently locks itself in its closed position with a positive, and discernible, 'click', without being loud enough to annoy me or spook a nearby squirrel. It's a small detail but it denotes the quality of this rifle, and that level of attention to detail builds confidence in the stuff I can't see and check out for myself.

VARIABLE POWER FUNCTION

Moving slightly muzzleward, Brocock has fitted an external power adjuster, that can be rotated clockwise to reduce the rifle's output, and obviously vice-versa. Even more obviously, this facility really comes into its own on the Ranger's FAC-rated version, where, in 16 ft.lbs. for .177 and 20 ft.lbs. in .22, dropping the output to deal with short-range situations could be extremely handy, and it would provide more shots per charge. In sub-12, dialling down to 8 ft.lbs. or so would still be plenty to take rats and feral pigeons with head shots at 15 yards, so it's worth carrying out your own chrono' tests. Graduation marks on the Ranger's power adjuster and action would make switching the system to the preferred muzzle energy far simpler – Brocock please note.

ADJUSTABLE TRIGGER

As you'd expect on such a high-end rifle, the Ranger XR comes fitted with a precision, two-stage adjustable trigger, backed by a resettable manual safety catch. I've yet to test the FAC-rated version, but the test rifle's trigger mechanism has such an easy life, thanks to that light internal hammer preload, that it's no



Confined spaces? Not a problem.

THE EDITOR'S TEST



You'll need a silencer, and the OdB suits the rifle.



Features aplenty, and they combine perfectly to produce performance of the highest standard.

surprise to find it so crisp and clean on shot-release. As I say, that's entirely to be expected on a rifle that costs this much and comes from a company that knows how to produce precision triggers, but it's always satisfying to find a really good trigger on any rifle – and this is a great example.

BARREL, SHROUD AND ADAPTOR

You'll need a silencer for this rifle, for sure, and the optional OdB model that came fitted to the test rifle does a fine job, as you'd expect. Without it, the 'crack!' from the Ranger's ultra-carbine, 10.1-inch, fully-shrouded barrel will certainly get you noticed. The Ranger XR comes ready-threaded, so fitting a silencer is no problem, but I'd go for a 'less is more' approach in terms of size, or the Ranger could present as 'visually unbalanced', and we definitely don't want that, do we?

CHARGING

This feature won't take long to cover; it's a probe/plug-in system with its air inlet protected by a rotating cover. That's it. Really. Just

charge to the recommended 200 bar, vent the charging hose, withdraw the probe, slide round the cover, and that's you sorted.

THAT VERSATILE BUTT SECTION

The Ranger XR is fitted with a genuine FAB Defense extendable/folding butt section, and an AK grip - and what a bombproof bit of kit it is. A press on the release catch in the butt underside

from one part of a shoot to another, this is definitely one of the most convenient, full-specification rifles out there.

The only downside of this system, is that the test rifle's butt section occasionally imparted an annoying 'clonk' that I could feel, rather than hear. The source of this annoyance is the need for the super-solid components in the butt section to have sufficient clearance to fold and

"I can certainly see why Jerry Moss regards it as ideal for the considerable demands of his job"

allows the butt to be extended/retracted by a maximum of 10 centimetres, thus fine-tuning the rifle's pull-length.

Upward pressure at the pivot point disengages the butt's hefty locking mechanism, allowing the butt to be folded inward, making the rifle easy to store in a rucksack. Obviously, if you're turning a rucksack into a rifle case, the 'securely fastened' proviso remains, if you're transporting the rifle when away from your permission, but for moving

extend without the use of locking/unlocking tools, so it's hard to see how the required degree of 'slack' can remain, without those chunky components coming together now and again.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

By extending or retracting the Ranger's butt section, its overall length, without a silencer, varies between 60 and 70 centimetres. With a rifle-only weight of just over 2.5 kilos, it's easy



The butt fully extended ...



... and fully retracted.



When fully folded, it's easy to see how portable the new Ranger would be.



The classic AK military spec' drop-down grip does what it's always done.

to appreciate how easy this Ranger is to carry, and to manoeuvre in confined conditions, but ultra-light rifles usually come with a handling penalty, due to their lack of ballast. A heavy rifle, within reason, is inherently more stable and less prone to being 'twitched' off target by its user. The same applies to the Ranger XR, if you don't pay attention to your technique. As ever, the answer is training and application, and if you've invested north of £1300 for a Ranger XR, you'd be seriously bonkers not to do all you can to support it.

Personally, I'd be investing in a set of sticks, and using these whenever I can. They'd help when traversing rough ground, and with the Ranger in a backpack, both hands would be free.

ACCURACY AND HANDLING

Handling first, and back to that ultra-light weight for a moment. I'd have a 'hamster' of some sort fitted to the lower Picatinny rail, just in front of the Ranger's trigger guard. I'd have the hamster 'reaching forward', possibly on a rail, to provide a more accommodating grip,

plus a bit more stability toward the muzzle. It should be noted that no such hamster exists, at least to my knowledge, but the pure accuracy of this rifle is so impressive, I'd definitely commission a clever person to make me one.

AS EXPECTED

It was no shock to discover that Daystate Sovereign pellets turned out to be the go-to brand, from my own proven shortlist, anyway. From a bench, with the Ranger XR cradled solidly between the ears of a sandbag rest, the test rifle delivered the expected results at 45 yards. I used all three magazines, plus a manually-loaded pellet to finish, to produce eight groups of five shots each, proving beyond doubt that a properly designed, expertly made, and efficiently directed ultra-carbine can match a full-length rifle for clinical accuracy. My best groups measured just 12mm, centre-to-centre, and only a breeze I couldn't feel or see registered on nearby flags or foliage, widened the remaining groups.

INITIAL VERDICT

The Brocock Ranger XR is an ultra-light, ultra-carbine, heavy hitter with full-size accuracy and a 'last-a-lifetime' build quality. I can certainly see why Jerry Moss regards it as ideal for the considerable demands of his job, and if I were due to walk for miles between feeding stations, and be ready to take every chance that presented, I'd really fancy my chances with a Brocock Ranger XR in my hands. This little rifle has everything it needs to become a monster. ■



Open the lid, drop in the pellets, rotating the inner wheel chamber by chamber, until the mag' is loaded and locked. Easy.

TECH SPEC

- Model:** Brocock Ranger XR
- Manufacturer:** Brocock
- Country of origin:** UK
- Price:** £1244
- Type:** Pre-charged pneumatic, regulated, multi- and single-shot, sporter
- Calibre:** .22, .177
- Cocking/loading:** Sidelever
- Trigger:** 2-stage, adjustable, with manual, resettable safety
- Stock type:** Ambidextrous, tactical, adjustable and folding
- Weight:** 2.56kg (5.5lbs) rifle only
- Length:** 600 to 700mm (23.6 to 27.5ins)
- Barrel:** 256 mm (10.1ins)
- Shots per charge:** 40 in .177 and 45 in .22, at 11-plus ft.lbs.
- Average energy:** 11.6 ft.lbs.
- Best group:** 12 mm centre-to-centre
- Contact:** All Brocock stockists
- www.brocock.co.uk

RRP £1244