



The limited edition Saxon was the launch vehicle, but the Wolverine 2 will forge its own identity.

# IT'S A WOLVERINE TOO!

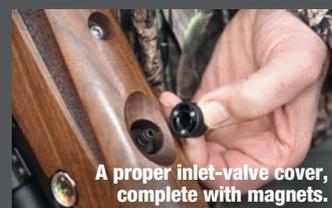
The editor follows up his test of the Daystate Saxon, with a study of the new Wolverine 2



The fore end lip is the perfect location point for me.



The reflex silencer is an option I'd go for every time.



A proper inlet-valve cover, complete with magnets.



Great grip design. Well done, Gary Cane.

Last month I unveiled the latest in a distinguished line of limited edition Daystate rifles, in the remarkable shape of the Saxon. This silver-anodised supergun is ticketed at a tenner short of two grand, and comes bedecked in heraldic symbols, historic lettering, the odd medal, a specially-commissioned Huggett barrel shroud and silencer, and another special commission courtesy of Bison Bushcraft's Harrington hunting knife. For the fortunate few who managed to own one – I think all 150 rifles sold out within days – there is plenty to enjoy and celebrate, not least the fact that the Saxon is a

full-on shooting machine, blessed with jaw-dropping performance. For the rest of us, there was something else to get excited about, because the Saxon wasn't just a one-off 'designer' rifle; it was the launch platform for the brand-new Wolverine II.

#### IN WITH THE NEW

Now, I could have carried on exploring the potential of that super Saxon, but considering its sell-out status, that wasn't really the best use of page space. So, I decided to divert the Wolverine 2 that was headed for the Big Test in our sister magazine, Air Gunner, and see what the production

example had to offer. Publishing schedules being what they are, I had just a week with the Wolverine, but I put in some reasonable range time with it and I feel I know what it offers any airgunner with £1259 to invest in a high-performance sporter.

#### DESCRIPTION

The model on test is the Wolverine 2 Hi-Lite, with the carbon-fibre bottle and ambidextrous, oil-finished walnut, thumbhole stock, complete with the adjustable 3-D butt pad I personally hassled Daystate into adopting, thumb scoops at the sculpted grip, and just enough

stippling to relieve the eye and assure the hand. I particularly like the subtle 'palm shelf', which isn't actually a shelf at all, but there's enough of a ledge to allow the trigger hand to be rested on it, rather than being supported by grip tension. A less-tense trigger hand leads to more control over the Wolverine's two-stage adjustable trigger, which means precise, consistent let-offs and greater success. All of that because Gary Cane, the Wolverine II's stock designer, incorporated a tiny lip at the base of the grip. At this level, those tiny touches count big-time, I assure you.

The handling and performance of the Wolverine 2 is shockingly good.



**SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT**

The final stock flourish is provided, for me at least, by the way the underside of the abbreviated fore end merges with the contour of the buddy bottle air reservoir. There's just enough of a 'step' between timber and carbon-fibre to create a location point for the forefinger of the supporting hand. Touching that location point

*"The result is a stock, and a rifle, that handles superbly"*

ensures that my hand position is repeated every time, which helps to align my entire upper body, and that level of consistency is another small detail that translates into higher performance. If you think I'm making too much fuss about mere micro-features, you're missing the point – along, I suspect, with more targets than you should. These things matter, especially when you're investing heavily in top performance, and you want to see a return on that investment.

**ACTION STATIONS**

The new Wolverine is, as you'd expect, an improvement on the previous model, although these improvements are not the sort that immediately grab your attention, mainly because they're not visible. These improvements came about through an exhaustive information-gathering exercise conducted over the four years since Daystate launched the original Wolverine. That's over 200 weeks' worth of customer feedback, warranty reports and servicing to analyse, and from that have emerged the upgrades.

Daystate assures me that 'critical changes have been made to the barrel dynamics' of the

Wolverine 2. Of course, there will be no giveaway details of that, and the same applies to the 'improvement in main valve function, along with the reconfiguration of key seals, drillings and sleeves'. What counts is that the test Wolverine provides over 270, full-power shots in .177, which should translate to over 300 in .22, from each, 200-bar charge. Like all Daystates, each Wolverine II comes with a small decal set into the action block which states that rifle's optimum

charging pressure, as determined by the factory during post-assembly testing.

Previous advantages are retained, and users of this rifle enjoy the security of a safety system that prevents the Wolverine firing once the bolt is lifted or drawn back. This means you can't de-cock it, but that's no price to pay; just discharge the pellet safely. Also retained is the anti-double-load device, that prevents multiple pellets being cranked into the breech. All good, nothing bad.

**HOW IT HANDLES**

The Wolverine 2 looks heavy, doesn't it? It really isn't. At just over 9lbs, scoped up, it carries enough heft for stability, but the balance is so good that it feels three pounds lighter, at least, and it's reassuringly stable on aim. It's traditional for me to mourn the lack of an adjustable cheek piece at this point, but that 3-D butt pad I bullied Daystate into really does a splendid job of assisting eye-scope alignment, with Gary Cane's stock design doing the rest. The result is a stock, and a rifle, that handles superbly. You'll be amazed when you try one for the first time, you really will.

**HOW IT SHOOTS**

Accuracy is robotically dependable, and each pellet leaves the shrouded barrel with a muted hiss, especially when the rifle is fitted with the optional reflex silencer shown here. As far as groups go, the hideous weather and a storm called Doris conspired to restrict my test ranges to 35 yards, but even so the max-range potential is obvious to see. When a rifle can make pellet holes touch each other at 35 yards, the accuracy at 45 yards is assured. Besides, I've tested enough

Wolverines to know that they can produce sub-inch clusters at 50 yards, and this new one won't be going backwards, especially with those mysterious 'critical changes in barrel dynamics' going for it.

**VERDICT**

The Wolverine platform has been massive for Daystate, and its continued success seems assured with the latest version. If you're in the market for one, I'd advise you to study the options, see which variation suits you best, then get alongside one and try it out. The Wolverine 2 I've just tested is a fine example of what a modern sporting air rifle can do. Daystate has a best-seller, here, and I predict that demand will definitely outstrip supply. ■



A super safety system comes as standard.

**TECH SPEC**

<b>Model:</b> Wolverine 2 Hi-Lite
<b>Manufacturer:</b> Daystate
<b>Country of origin:</b> UK/Italy
<b>Price:</b> £1259
<b>Type:</b> Pre-charged, multi-shot/single-shot sporter/match rifle
<b>Calibre:</b> .22, .177
<b>Cocking:</b> Bolt action
<b>Loading:</b> Via removable, rotary 10-shot magazine, or single-shot tray
<b>Trigger:</b> 2-stage, adjustable
<b>Safety:</b> Manual, plus automatic lift-bolt safety
<b>Stock type:</b> Ambidextrous, thumbhole laminate, with 3D adjustable butt pad
<b>Weight:</b> 3.4kg (7lbs 5oz) Unscoped
<b>Length:</b> 965 mm (38 ins)
<b>Barrel:</b> 430 mm (17 ins)
<b>Fill pressure:</b> Varies. Stated on rifle
<b>Shots per charge:</b> 300 in .22, 270 in .177, 60 at 30-plus ft.lbs. in .22 for FAC
<b>Variation over 50 shots:</b> 12 fps for .177 on test
<b>Average energy:</b> 11.5 ft.lbs.
<b>Options:</b> High-power model
<b>Contact:</b> Daystate on 01785 859 122

**£1259.00**