

**E**sex-based mega-supplier, Sporsmarketing, has just released a pair of budget-beating rifles intended for the growing army of CO2 enthusiasts out there. Dubbed the XS78 and XS79, these single-shot, bolt-action sporters are designed to compete in the mid-power hunter/super-plinker sector of the airgun marketplace – and if first impressions are anything to go by, these new rifles are set to compete extremely well!

The main difference between the sub-£170 XS78 and its similarly-priced XS79 stablemate is the very obvious one; the XS79 runs off an externally-mounted, 88-gramme 'bulk-fill' CO2 tank, while the XS78 is powered by a pair of standard, 12-gramme capsules installed within a chamber beneath the barrel.

Available in .177 and .22, both models have slimline, ambidextrous sporter stocks, sturdily made and well finished from



*Dual-fuel! The 88-gramme 'bulk-fill' tank of the XS79 and two, 12-gramme capsules for the XS78.*

mechanisms of both models are identical, and feature a full-sized, blued steel bolt handle which operates a spring-loaded probe. Drawing back the bolt cocks the firing-valve striker and also locks back the probe so it can't slide forward during loading. Once you've rolled the pellet into

On the test range, they are capable of 20 mm. diameter groupings at 20 metres, making them both perfect for controlling rats or feral pigeons at close-to-medium ranges.

The XS78 produces just over 10.5 ft. lbs. muzzle energy in .22, with its bulk-fill partner a little ahead in the power stakes, at 10.7 ft. lbs. As with all CO2-powered guns – rifles and pistols – performance depends partly on ambient temperature. They perform best at around 20 degrees Celcius.



The shots-per-charge count varies widely depending on which model you go for, of course. The XS79 'bulk-fill' version

# FOR YOUR

Eastern hardwood which has then been stained and protected by a durable matt varnish. There's nothing flash or complicated about this woodwork, but its production quality is set to surprise a few sceptics, that's for sure.

With a pull-length of 350 mm., these guns are unashamedly geared for adults – though it would be the simplest of operations to cut off the excess – or should that be 'XS!' – and reduce the length of the butt to suit junior proportions. Considering

## SCOOP! A TOP-VALUE CO2-SOME!

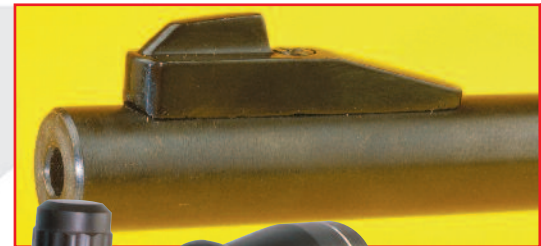
the manageable weight, lack of recoil and simple operation of these remarkable air rifles, the role of 'starter gun' is well within their remit.

The bolt-action cocking and loading

the loading slot, you push the bolt-handle forwards and lock it down into its 'keeper' slot.

In operation, this bolt-action is slick, positive and easy to use. When the bolt is drawn fully back, the pellet probe even seals the loading slot so that pellets can't roll backwards into the breech housing.

The SMKs feature 550 mm.-long steel barrels, choked at the muzzle and button-rifled to a 12-groove pattern. Fixed and stabilised at the breech end only, these barrels are 'free-floating' and play a major part in the rifles' outstanding accuracy.



*Right: Gassing up the XS78. Unscrew the cap and drop in two 12-gramme CO2 capsules, back-to-back.*



produces around 200 shots at full power, while the dual-capsule XS78 supplies around 35 shots for each double dose of gas. Whichever way you look at it, that's an awful lot of ferrets and rats for your money!

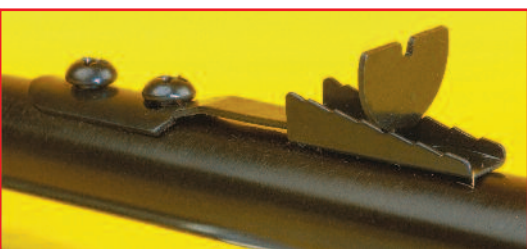
Installing the CO2 power sources is simplicity itself – though slightly different according to the XS model you're 'gassing up'.

For the XS78, begin by making sure the rifle is

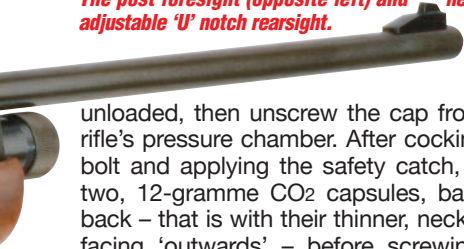
**The XS79 (left) and XS78 (bottom left). A duo of new CO2-powered sporters that are set to become superstars!**



# EYES ONLY!



**The post foresight (opposite left) and height-adjustable 'U' notch rearsight.**



unloaded, then unscrew the cap from the rifle's pressure chamber. After cocking the bolt and applying the safety catch, insert two, 12-gramme CO2 capsules, back-to-back – that is with their thinner, neck-ends facing 'outwards' – before screwing the chamber's cap back on.

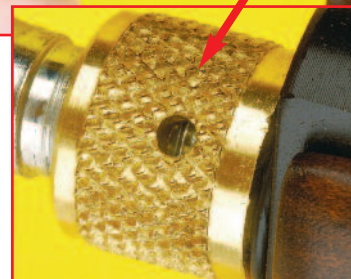
Next, tighten the cap firmly by hand as tight as it can go before finally unscrewing it a quarter-turn to release the CO2 from the forward-most of the two capsules.



**The XS79's threaded adaptor makes fitting its bulk-tank a doddle. The gas-vent (inset) allows any unused CO2 to escape safely when removing an 'empty'.**

'Blank-firing the gun – with no pellet in – after completing this process pierces the rear capsule, primes the rifle's pressure chamber and makes it ready for loading and firing proper. In practice, the whole exercise takes less than a minute, and no tools are required.

Fitting the bulk tank is even easier! As with the XS78, begin the gassing-up process of the XS79 by making sure it's unloaded, cocking the action and applying the safety.

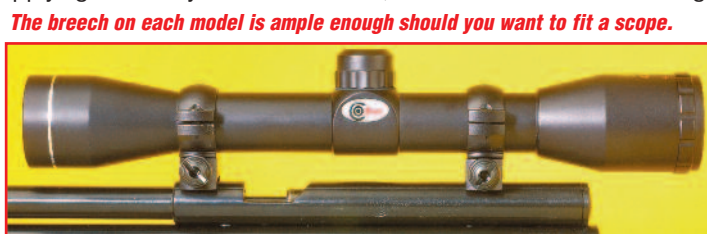


Then, start unscrewing the 'spent' tank in order to replace it with a fresh one. Initially, there may be some gas still left in the tank, but this will vent from the holes in the knurled, brass collar. Once the hissing →



**The rifles' three-way adjustable trigger is backed by a manual, resettable safety,**

**shown in the 'safe' (main picture) and 'fire' (inset) positions.**



**The breech on each model is ample enough should you want to fit a scope.**

# SCOOP! BULK-FILL OR CAPSULE – THESE GUNS ARE A GAS!



The XS79 (top) sports a rubber butt pad, while the XS78 is fitted with a synthetic one. Both rifles' furniture are tastefully-finished European hardwood.

has finished, you can then unscrew the tank completely off the XS79 and screw on a full one.

After it's been fully tightened, 'back off' by a quarter-turn to ensure the tank seal has been pierced and the CO<sub>2</sub> can flow freely; you'll actually hear the hiss as it does so. That's all there is to it – the XS79 is primed and ready for action!

Both rifles' trigger function is adjustable in no fewer than *three* separate ways, including sear engagement, trigger over-travel and pull-pressure – not at all bad for models costing under £170!

These rifles also have a somewhat novel, yet effective, lever-type safety catch on the right-hand side of the trigger block. Internally, a semi-rotation of the lever blocks the trigger mechanism, while

## SMK XS78 & XS79 – FACTS

### XS78CO2

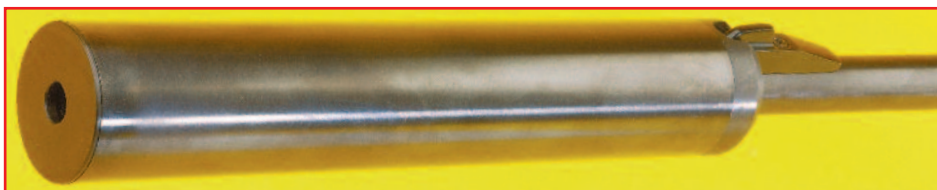
SMK  
☎ 01206 795333  
.177 (4.5 mm.) and .22 (5.5 mm.)  
2 x 12 gr. CO<sub>2</sub>, single-shot  
Bolt-action  
35  
1,015 mm. (40 ins.)  
550 mm. (21.6 ins.)  
2.6 kg. (5.75 lbs.)  
Single-stage, three-way adjustable  
Manual, resettable  
Height-adjustable post and notch  
Eastern hardwood, ambidextrous sporter  
10+ ft. lbs. (13+ J)  
£169.95  
£0.79 each

**MODEL**  
**MANUFACTURER**  
**CONTACT**  
**CALIBRE**  
**ACTION**  
**COCKING/LOADING**  
**SHOT-CAPACITY**  
**OVERALL LENGTH**  
**BARREL LENGTH**  
**WEIGHT**  
**TRIGGER**  
**SAFETY**  
**SIGHTS**  
**STOCK**  
**POWER**  
**PRICE**  
**CAPSULE PRICE**

### XS79CO2-88

SMK  
☎ 01206 795333  
.177 (4.5 mm.) and .22 (5.5 mm.)  
88 gr. CO<sub>2</sub>, single-shot.  
Bolt-action  
Approx. 200  
1,015 mm. (40 ins.)  
550 mm. (21.6 ins.)  
2.6 kg. (5.75 lbs.)  
Single-stage, three-way adjustable  
Manual, resettable.  
Height-adjustable post and notch  
Eastern hardwood, ambidextrous sporter  
10+ ft. lbs. (13+ J)  
£169.95  
£7.99 each

Optional noise-suppression for the XS78CO2 rifle, courtesy of SMK's high-performance moderator.



a little arrow on the outside of the unit provides a visual check on the safety's status. The lever itself is even spring-loaded to assist disengagement.

Open sights are fitted as standard and these are fairly basic in design, but offer elevation adjustment on the rearsight and a usable sight picture via the traditional post-and-notch set-up.

Scope mounting is catered for, too, courtesy of a pair of 11.5 mm. grooves cut into the breech block. Like the rest of this rifles' features, their sights and scope mounting facility are extremely easy to use.

There are slight differences in the stock between the XS78 and XS79. A rubber butt pad is fitted to the XS79, whereas the XS78's is a solid, synthetic one. Obviously, the fore-end of the bulk-fill model is shorter to accommodate its 88-gramme tank without adversely affecting the rifle's overall balance.

Before being offered for sale, every rifle imported by SMK is calibrated by its team of gunsmiths and this process includes replacing the rifle's standard seals with more efficient polyurethane ones, and re-polishing all of the rifles' internal ports. Next comes power-testing

and final inspection before each rifle is re-lubricated, repackaged and despatched to the gun shop.

To increase the rifle's stealth-potential, there's a high-quality moderator option available, price £39.95 – though due to a slight difference in the diameter of the outer barrel, it only fits the XS78's.

Developed in Europe and based on technology designed to suppress the muzzle crack of 9 mm. automatic pistols used by law-enforcement authorities, this blued steel moderator tames the muzzle report of the SMK a treat, making it the ideal accessory for noise-conscious gas-gunners. What's more it's a cinch to fit – slide it on and tighten up the grub-screw!

Since being taken off ticket back in 1997, CO<sub>2</sub> gas-powered airguns have never been more popular in the U.K. – and while much of the market is catered for by pistols, it's a welcome sight to see a company like SMK swelling the rifle ranks.

Both the XS78CO2 and XS79CO2-88 are set to sell in big numbers – and if you can't decide on one, why not get both? At just over a ton each, you *could* afford to!

## LOADING UP THE XS78 & XS79 BOLT-ACTION RIFLES

Operating the rifles' bolt-action is as easy as 1, 2, 3...



**1.** Draw back the bolt-handle until the mechanism 'clicks'...

**2.** ...drop a pellet into the ample loading channel...



**3.** ...palm the bolt forward and down.

