

# White Hunter -

## Black Electronic Heart

*Pete Wadeson's had the Daystate MCT Airwolf Tactical on test for some time - his brief from Daystate's was simply 'do your worse.' Read on to see who broke first...*

**T**ony Belas, the man behind Daystate's ongoing development of hi-tech PCP's, offered me a challenge I couldn't resist.

Maybe he chose me for this extreme test as he knew the personal goals I'd met with my own .20 calibre FAC Airwolf. He'd certainly given me enough good advice over the years...

For Daystate, it's not just another feather in their cap to flag up that the 'electronically'



*The Daystate MCT AirWolf Tactical is a PCP rifle that will stand as a benchmark to air rifle technology, but is also is one hell of a hunting rifle*

**"Is there a hunting PCP out there to better this supergun? I don't think so"**

operated rifle can cope with anything. These rifles have more than proved themselves as reliable both in competition and, more relevantly, in the field, in all weather conditions. During this test the gun fell out of a case - twice (sorry Tony), allowed to run flat, left lying in sodden fields (switched off) as I retrieved a kill, left to the dogs... well they'd trusted me with it...!

**It's the wolf, it's the wolf!**

Right, time to tell you the facts on this impressive creature.

The MCT AirWolf Tactical has a rubberised finish overlaid onto a walnut wood stock. In my opinion, it's very much the 'all-weather' version of the stunning looking walnut stock Daystate MCT AirWolf Mk4.

An unashamed 'hunting machine' this PCP air rifle runs a 10-shot magazine, or can be used as a single shot by inserting a simple loading tray. It has an electronic, computer-controlled, fully regulated action, where just about every feature and virtually all performance statistics, are metered, monitored and

tailored to suit the shooter's requirements. From the most basic information such as telling you the number of shots you've fired per session, through being able to reset your magazine shot count, even how you'd prefer to view the backlight on the side mount LCD display screen for ease of view depending on the surrounding light conditions.

In fact I'll start here, even though it was feature of the rifle I used the least, except to check air status, and what



*The 10-shot removable magazine is amongst the best of magazine designs*



**The Daystate MCT AirWolf Tactical – an incredible hunting machine with accuracy to rival any top flight FT or hunting rig**



started to become addictive was a read-out of the performance 'given' after firing a shot.

Nine modes in all can be accessed and changed by using the trigger as your 'toggle switch' (rifle empty of magazine of course). All information is clearly visible on the LCD screen as you can keep an eye on the rifle's internal pressure, the shots left in the magazine, the amount of shots you've fired over a session, plus you can alert yourself to low bottle pressure and when it's time to change the magazine. You can set the rifle's power, turn on/off the display screen's backlight, and also set the rifle to fire only once you've disengaged the safety catch, which is also electronic.

This whole computerised wizardry is known as MAP (Map Compensated Technology), a fitting name as the electronics continually 'Map' (monitor) everything that's going on inside the rifle, and as it's doing

so it 'Compensates' (adjusts) the firing mechanism and readouts to maintain perfect performance. Is this too hi tech for what basically in essence is a PCP air rifle that fires in the 'normal' way – of course it is, but you soon get to like it... yes, you most certainly do.

### Black rubber coated

The stock is the now unique and familiar ambidextrous AirWolf design, with elongated thumbhole, steep drop down pistol grip and a swept back and upward rising comb that flares out to the continually widening cheekpiece. Broad thumb rests are set on either side being finished at the shoulder with a very well contoured ventilated black rubber butt pad.

The forend is deep and substantial with stylish yet practical tapered recessed channels running out from the lower forward trigger guard area on both sides. These can be used for grip and even though you have no chequering or stippling, the non-slip feel given to the overlay of the special rubber coating ensures you have good grip anywhere on the stock. At the very forward section the forend finishes by sweeping down to form a sturdy platform that runs quite a way underneath the fixed air bottle.

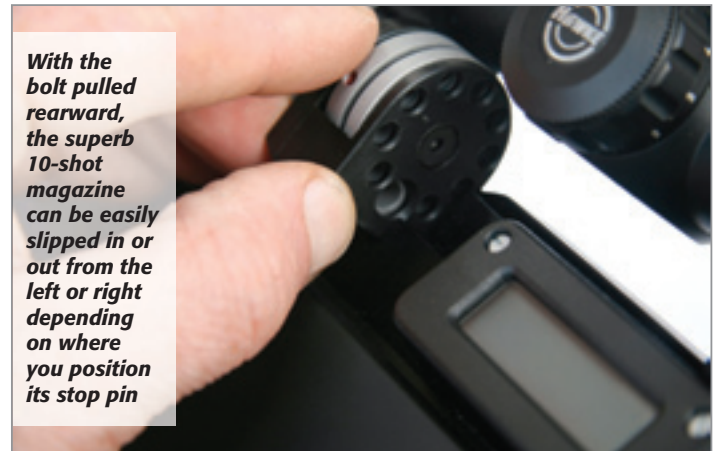
The stock and virtually all exposed metalwork are matt-black. Perfect sense because Daystate are going for the total stealth approach, creating a nigh on perfectly practical hunting



**The trigger and safety**



**The bolt doesn't cock the rifle, rather allows the magazine to index around, then when pushed in probes a pellet into the breech**



**With the bolt pulled rearward, the superb 10-shot magazine can be easily slipped in or out from the left or right depending on where you position its stop pin**



**The forend curves down to form a platform that runs quite a way underneath the 'fixed' air bottle.**

tool, they've even ensured the graphics on the breech block are subdued. The polished chrome plated trigger can be forgiven, as most times it will be obscured – but it would have been pretty nifty if it had been black.

You can choose to have the rifle with a fixed 400cc buddy bottle, or the 500cc bottle option (at extra cost) should you believe you need more shots. I'd say go for 500cc if you're getting a FAC version, as you have the option to have the rifle set up to 40 ft/lbs. However with a 230-bar charge in its 400cc bottle, a legal limit rifle does well over 250 full-power shots in .177

and 300+ in .22. The 500cc bottle takes a 250-bar fill.

The barrel is 17" long complete with aluminium shroud and screw cut to take Daystate's carbon fibre MKV Reflex silencer –an optional extra but highly recommended. The rifle is supplied with a 10-shot magazine, single-shot loading tray, mains battery charging, keys and a comprehensive user manual.

The cover capped fill point is underneath the rifle and takes the usual bayonet style adaptor supplied, obviously there's no air gauge on the side, as your MAP LCD screen takes care of letting you know what's going in.

## The Key

As I'm sure you're now aware, the AirWolf MCT Tactical is fully electronic and as such its on-board battery needs charging and you need the 'keys' specific to that rifle to switch it on. As said by others, possibly the ultimate safety switch!

The LCD screen immediately gives you up-to-the-second information on your power reserves, plus its sensors will bleep a reminder at you when the internal air reserves reach a particular point and a re-charge is needed. Should you ignore these alerts; the Wolf will annoyingly 'beep' at you every time you 'switch it on' so there's absolutely no way you'll be running out of air. It's recommended you set the alert to beep when the rifle's pressure drops to 100-bar - time to get a 'top up'.

The test rifle came ready scoped with a Hawke Panorama IR 4 – 12 X 40 EV. I chose to use Daystate's own Rangemaster Li pellets (kindly supplied) for the bulk of this test, although I did use a few other brands from my usual line-up of tried and trusted test pellets. While the Rangemasters Li did give impressive groups, good old H&N FT Trophy (a usual test pellet) will take some beating in any air rifle.

The accuracy of the rifle can only be described as clinical, but after shooting various electronically operated Daystates it was expected, but it does leave you very much at a loss by way of not feeling an important part of the equation when a target is hit. The Tactical may be built as a rugged, 'take whatever's thrown at it' sporter PCP, but the accuracy capability is easily up there alongside the highest flying FT rig. Some say they don't get on with the 'feel' of the shot release the electronic trigger gives them. Well, I remember the Harper 'Wolf' Rifle, where of course the AirWolf concept is taken from, and they used a simple rubberised press button for the trigger. Now Daystate give you an actual 2-stage adjustable trigger unit that controls what in essence is an electronic pulse



**The LCD screen that displays what you need to know at an instant**



**Daystate's 'Reflex design' Carbon Fibre MkV Airstream Silencer reduces muzzle report to a whisper and adds no 'felt' weight to the front end**



**The unique ambidextrous AirWolf design, with elongated thumbhole, steep drop down pistol grip and a swept back rising comb**

at the point the second stage pull trips the sears. For me, to have an electronic trigger that gives feel and control is another remarkable feat, as is the incredibly quiet report with the optional Daystate MkV Reflex Carbon Fibre Moderator screwed up front. No weight at the muzzle and certainly no movement as the pellet exits the high grade tube, even watching .177 calibre pellets zing across the sight picture begins to excite and even more so 'tingle' when you watch the projectile hit the kill zone with unerring frequency. At 40 yards, this rifle easily gives the much sought after one-hole groups. I managed these at 50 yards, although many feel this not a realistic hunting range for a legal limit rifle, then again when using kit such as this and you're own level of accuracy is up to it..? Only you will know that.

## Performance in the field

Usually as reviewers we don't get enough time as we'd like to hunt with a test rifle, but this time I did. I managed to use the rifle in many hunting scenarios and

weather conditions. I think it's only then you begin to really get the full picture if a rifle balances right or the overall length, and weight with scope on-board suits you. I had total confidence of knowing it would put a pellet exactly where I needed it. If I missed, it was my fault, as these rifles usually produce performances far exceeding the shooter using it. But there are many less expensive PCP's

that can do that, but can they do it so assuredly giving you the feeling you can take every shot and have an almost 100% hit rate? I reckon not.

Granted, nothing's perfect, but is there a hunting PCP out there to better this supergun, come hail, rain, snow or blow? I don't think there currently is. I'm heartbroken that Daystate want it back after all the effort I put into trying to break it... **GM**

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

<b>Model:</b>	Daystate AirWolf MCT Tactical
<b>Type:</b>	Fully electronic, PCP bolt action, multi-shot or single shot modes
<b>Calibre:</b>	.177 on test .22 available .20 & 25 special order
<b>Stock:</b>	Black rubberised over layer finish over Walnut, ambidextrous thumbhole sporter 40.5"
<b>Length:</b>	8 lbs. un-scoped
<b>Weight</b>	No but grooved for scope mounting
<b>Sights</b>	17"
<b>Barrel</b>	
<b>Price:</b>	£1310 including 10 shot magazine, single shot pellet tray, mains charger, two keys, plus comprehensive users/owners handbook
<b>Optional Extras:</b>	MkV Reflex Silencer £58 Spare Magazine £46 Bottle Cover £22 Daystate Padded hard Case £99
<b>Contact:</b>	Daystate Ltd 01782 791755 www.daystate.com