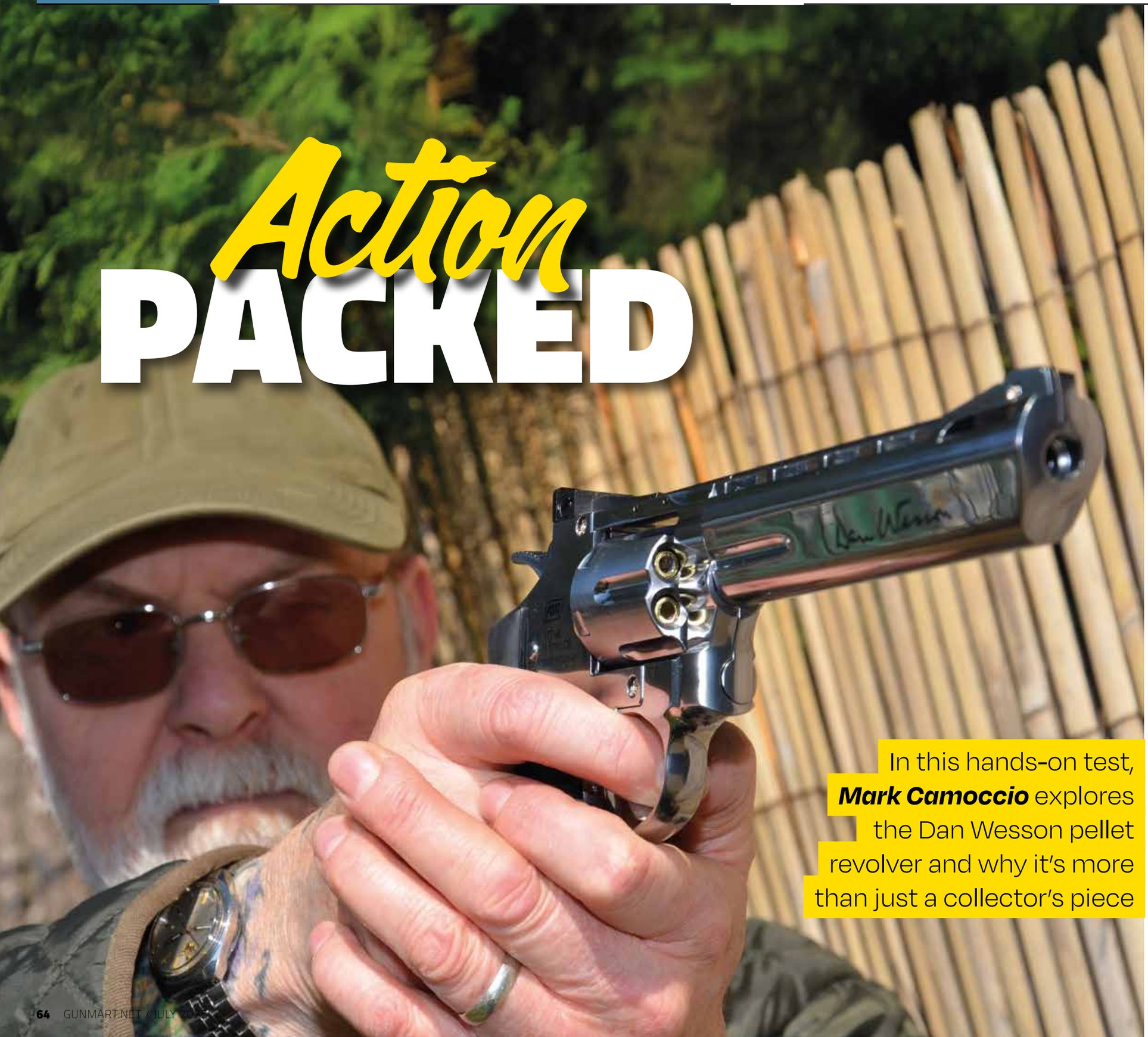
Action PACKED



In this hands-on test, ***Mark Camoccio*** explores the Dan Wesson pellet revolver and why it's more than just a collector's piece

› CO2 as a power source is a godsend for designers, as the standard 12g capsule that's normally used takes up so little space inside the action. Manufacturers are therefore freed up to produce all manner of exciting multi-shots, and Action Sports Games (ASG) is one such big player that has earned its place in this crowded market. Mimicking live firearms in both appearance and functionality is a huge part of the appeal, and factoring in the fast-fire capability, it's not hard to see why this type of airgun remains so popular.

Quality feel

On test here is a classy example of ASG's craft, in the form of the Dan Wesson 6" Revolver, and inside the box, alongside the pistol, there's an instruction manual, an Allen key, a speedloading device, six dummy rounds, and a Picatinny rail. The revolver is well machined and finished, and when you pick it up for the first time, its 2.3lb weight adds a real air of authenticity.

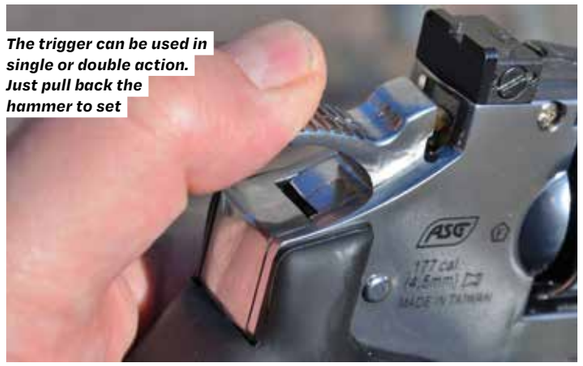
My test gun features a rifled barrel and fires pellets, but there is also a BB-firing version. Why would anyone wish to go down that route? God alone knows! Suffice it to say, the pellet version will be an altogether more rewarding, not to mention safer, experience. And whilst talking pellet firers, I should also point out that among the extensive ASG product portfolio, there is a 2.5" barrel version of this same silver finish revolver, for an altogether more compact feel. Opt for my full-length version, and there is of course a touch of Dirty Harry about the proceedings, and it balances superbly in the aim.

Gripping stuff

As usual with this style of pistol, a standard 12g CO2 capsule is neatly stowed inside the grip. So, to gain access and 'gas up', the rear panel of the synthetic moulded grip just pulls up and slides clear. A fresh capsule can now be dropped into the cavity neck-first, and then the tensioning bolt in the base can be tweaked to pierce the capsule. Try and do this in a positive way so that no gas is wasted in the process. Snap the grip cover back to the closed position, and the pistol now has power.

Six-shots

Loading pellets can be done in several ways, and here are the options: the six dummy rounds are each fitted with a synthetic liner, so just insert a pellet into the liner, and push it flush, just to ensure there's no fouling of the pellet as the cylinder rotates. Pellets can be loaded while the dummy rounds are in situ in the cylinder, or separately, and chambered after filling. As for the speedloader, this requires the primed rounds to be pushed into place in the unit rear-first. Then, when all six are in place, the rear spring-loaded plunger is compressed, and twisted, which locks and holds the rounds. This whole assembly is then



The trigger can be used in single or double action. Just pull back the hammer to set


A nice, broad blade is always welcome

offered up to the gun's open cylinder, and forward pressure releases the rounds into the gun.

And action!

I find it an appealing feature that the trigger can be shot single or double action, and although either route works well, by far the more subtle route is single action. Pull back the hammer each time to set the trigger and to significantly reduce its pull weight, which obviously aids accuracy. The hammer is very smooth in operation, as is the pleasantly broad trigger, and it's all very satisfying — a word I keep returning to with this pistol.

Aiming up, the sight picture is pretty good, with a perfectly proportioned rear notch and a foresight that features a small red dot. The rear sight is adjustable via a screwdriver, for both windage and elevation, but if you fancy fitting a scope, red dot, or other alternative sighting system, this is also possible. It is, however, a fiddly process that requires a tiny drift pin to be knocked out so that you can remove the rear sight. With the rear sight removed, the small Picatinny rail supplied can be screwed into position. I stuck with open sights on test, but again, plenty of options.

Results

Firing the Dan Wesson is an enjoyable process, and I'd guess it's quite efficient on air, as it's actually not very noisy. Groups of around 1.25" centre-to-centre at 10 yards with Remington Express Spike Pointed pellets are perfectly respectable, and that level of accuracy makes rewarding plinking or informal competitions a real possibility.

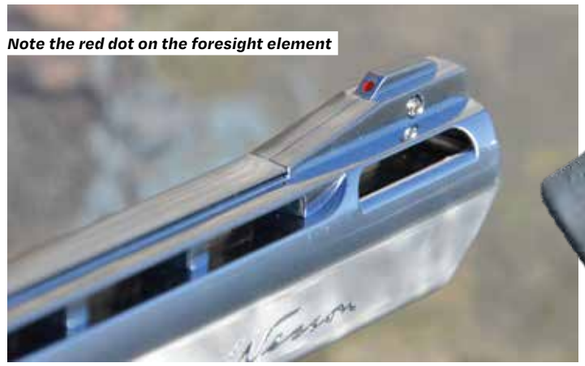
Where the number of shots is concerned, the caveat remains with CO2 that this is dependent upon the type of pellet used and the ambient temperature. Super cold weather will make the system less efficient, dropping the shot count accordingly. On test, I recorded an impressive 115 shots before the tell-tale velocity drop, signifying the end of a charge.


Pellets can be loaded in situ


Use this key to tension the 12g capsule


Push this catch forward to release the cylinder


A speedloader is supplied


Note the red dot on the foresight element



Detail of the attractive synthetic grips

Afterthought

As for the speedloader, I wouldn't get too excited, as it's largely unnecessary and feels rather laboured. It's also a bit awkward to create enough space to eject the rounds. So, for everyday use, stick to loading pellets into the rounds while they are in situ within the gun's cylinder. It's easy, fairly quick, and really no big deal. Indeed, for the record, I managed to load all six within 17 seconds!

The speedloader could come into its own if you had a spare set of rounds already primed and were taking part in a timed competition, and in that scenario, grabbing the speedloader for follow-up shots would add an exciting edge, all against the clock.

Verdict

As it stands, this Dan Wesson revolver is just a very nice airgun to use and own. The firearm looks will appeal to many and definitely add an extra layer of intrigue, but it is of course so much more than a collector's piece. Stunning looks, great build quality, and rewarding performance, all for reasonable money. So a big thumbs-up from me, and an easy recommendation. **GM**



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name: Dan Wesson 6" Revolver (silver finish)
Type: CO2
Calibre: .177 pellet
Barrel Length: 6" (rifled)
Overall Length: 12"
Weight: 2.3lbs
Energy: 2.5ft/lbs (approx)
Price: £189.99
Contact: Sportsmarketing - www.sportsmk.co.uk