SMK XS26 Air Pistol (spring/piston)

With a UK legal power limit set to a maximum of 6ft/lbs, air pistols are only ever going to be relatively low powered affairs. Sometimes though, some extra oomph does come in handy – especially when using reactive targets. What we have here is the all new SMK XS26 model, and it's a spring powered pistol, designed to pack a punch.

Sleek styling

The XS26 cuts a distinctive profile, since the bulk of the surface area is non-metallic material. The fore stock and ambidextrous pistol grip are all one moulding, formed from high impact polymer, which also neatly wraps around the end of the cylinder. The steel barrel tube is also set into a polymer shroud and breech block, and the mouldings are precise enough to impart a quality feel to the pistol overall.

The XS26 comes with a neat 3inch strip of dovetails, so a pistol scope, red dot or other sighting device can be fitted. Of course, with an extremely impressive set of adjustable fibre optic open sights fitted as standard, it would be foolish to look elsewhere before exploring their uses.

Triggers on this sort of gun can so often be the downfall, but I'm pleased to report that the XS26's unit is more than acceptable. A chunky, wide, moulded trigger blade certainly helps to spread the load, and whilst the non-adjustable pull has significant creep, careful technique can improve performance. I found it possible to slowly pull through the creep, and have the trigger waiting on the edge of the sear, with only minimal pressure left, before final release. The triggers action is pseudo 2-stage (where the first stage doesn't actually alter sear engagement).

The manual safety catch features a rectangular push through button tab that passes right through each side of the pistol body indicating live or safe, and can be easily toggled on or off when required.

Leverage & Power

As a break open design, having a stubby barrel just 6.5 inches in length would ordinarily create problems through a lack of leverage. With this in mind, SMK supply a barrel shroud extension tube, which simply pushes over the muzzle. Once in place, leverage is transformed. The relatively easy cocking stroke should be within the capabilities of all but a few junior shots. Nevertheless, this is an impressively sized pistol at 18" overall with shroud in place

My tests with a variety of pellets revealed energy levels in the region of 4.6ft/lbs, so the manufacturers can boast one of the highest energy outputs for a spring powered pistol – and it could rise a little more after 'running in'.

A pleasant firing cycle, with little spring resonance, was an added bonus too, and groups of around ¾" at 10yds, using SMK's Black Dome pellets supplied, certainly impressed.



With the barrel sleeve fitted the XS26 pistol looks seriously large, but it handles really well

I managed 2" clusters at 20yds again with the fibre optics, and fitting a scope will of course tighten those groups further.

Good all rounder

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with this pistol. This reminds me of the famous BSA Scorpion pistol, albeit slightly less beefy, and somewhat less of a handful! Tipping the scales at a very manageable 2.2lbs, means this highly appealing pistol is unlikely to tire you on an extended session. So whether despatching quarry at very close range, or just informal target shooting, the XS26 represents a sound choice.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Model:	SMK XS26 spring powered break-barrel pistol .22 only
Contact:	Sportsmarketing (SMK) Tel. 01206 795333 www.sportsmk.co.uk



The SMK XS26 offers a high power pistol in a break-barrel spring pistol format



The barrel sleeve is a push fit and makes cocking easy