



The Uberti 1885 Low Wall is a faithful reproduction of the classic Browning then Winchester led design and is especially practical in .22 LR



Single-Shot SPECIAL

Bruce Potts takes a look at a classic from Uberti

Well here's something different. I love a good .22 rimfire and especially a nice classic and it doesn't get more classic than the iconic 1885 Low Wall rifle. It was John Browning who designed the original Winchester single-shot, referred to as the Model 1885. Both low or high denoted the side walls' height and size supporting the breechblock mechanism and it is an easy way to differentiate between the two rifles.

The production of the single-shot started in September 1885 using the Browning patent and was regarded by many as being the best single-shot ever to be made. Winchester produced the new rifle in a huge variety of calibres and original high or low walls are highly sought after. This is why Uberti from Italy have manufactured a faithful copy in all the authentic calibres. However, it is this .22, low wall version that really stands out to me.

The low wall is available in two formats, a standard version with straight grip walnut stock and no chequering or a special sporting version (on test) with very nice walnut pistol grip stock with chequering. The rifle includes a forged steel, octagonal barrel profile at a staggering length, for a .22 rimfire, of 30".

Spec

At the heart of this rifle is that falling block single-shot design. Both simple and stylish, the old 1885 is timeless and ultra-reliable. All made from steel, the action has a lovely colour case hardened finish, which is in keeping with this model and certainly looks the part. The colours of this finish range from ochre to burnt blue, in that lovely and unique flowing pattern on the action, hammer, breechblock, trigger and its guard. Everything about this Uberti screams quality. The wood to metal fit is very good and there is an air of old



Straight in and out with no fuss, that large extractor works a treat

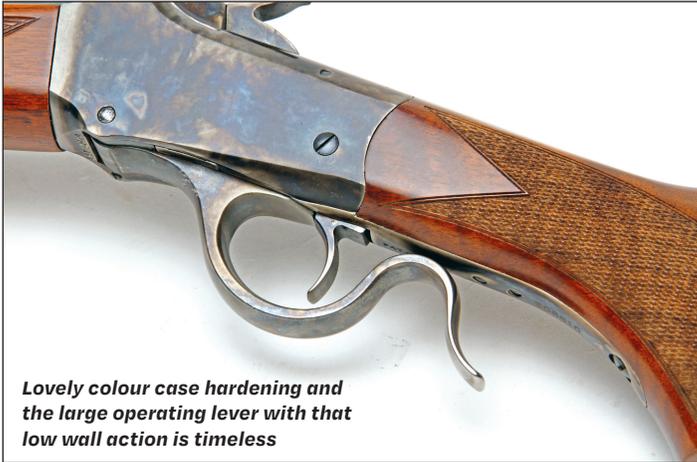
school engineering and gunsmith skills all cemented together with that action. Yes, it can be slow and methodical to use, but that's the fun with this rifle, it will never be a tack driver, but you smile whilst shooting it.

Operation

To load a round, firstly push down and forward on the trigger guard. This is the curved hooked-type, like a

Ruger No. 3 and lends itself for the thumb to do all the work. When fully open it is 90° to the action and you can see the breechblock and hammer has dropped to reveal the empty chamber. The top of the breechblock features a small scallop so a .22 cartridge can be slid in as far as the extractor claw, which has moved forward from its recess in the chamber end. Now close the action by raising the trigger guard and the hammer is now automatically on half cock and safe as the trigger is locked. So, grasp the chequering rear of the hammer spur and tug back. You can see and hear the trigger move and engage the sear, now you are set to shoot.

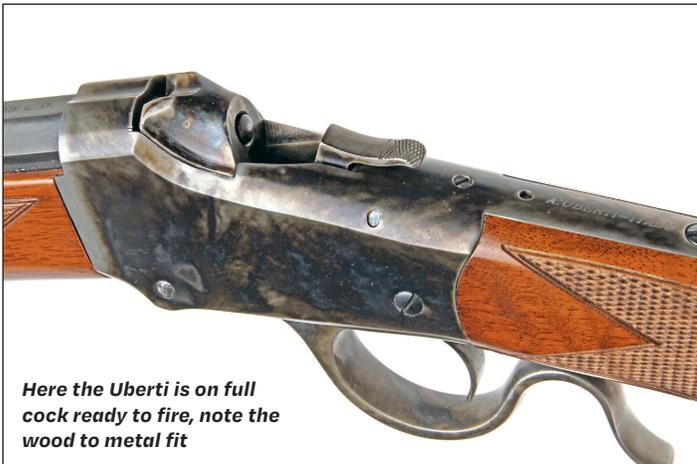
The trigger has a small take up before the 4.25 lb release weight. Yes, the lock time is timely but it makes you think about correct follow through. You have to get used to your firing position as the second finger sits on the cocking lever hook whilst the trigger finger is on the trigger and the remaining digits wrap around the pistol grip.



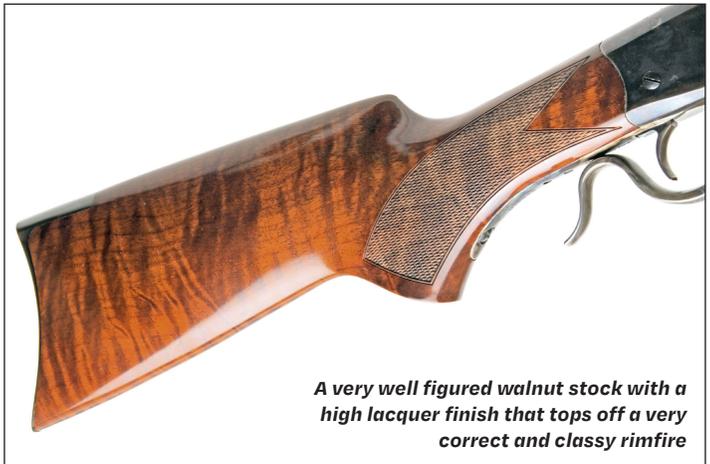
Lovely colour case hardening and the large operating lever with that low wall action is timeless



The slender forend is correct and has some nice chequering too



Here the Uberti is on full cock ready to fire, note the wood to metal fit



A very well figured walnut stock with a high lacquer finish that tops off a very correct and classy rimfire

A lot of metal

The monumental barrel is finished in a lovely rich/ deep bluing. If that's not enough, it also features that old fashioned and period-correct octagonal profiling that just makes the gun, in my view. 30" is long, but with the hand in the middle of the forend, it balances perfectly and feels lighter than it is. The tube comes with a 1:16 rifling twist rate as well as shallow grooves and everything looked very good through the borescope. The muzzle is struck off square but the bore is crowned perfectly, obviously

not threaded, but I guess you could if you wanted to!

Sight wise, the rifle comes with a simple blade foresight, which can be drifted left or right for windage adjustment in its cut slot. It can then be secured in position via a grub screw. The rear sight is that old semi-buckhorn

type that adjusts elevation via a wedge system. Simply lift the sprung steel blade section and slide the graduated wedge via the large grooved thumb rest, to adjust the height. These sights are simple and the buckhorn notch is quite big so the foresight has a lot of space around it.

AMMO TABLE:

Make	Weight (grains)	Muzzle Velocity (FPS)	Muzzle Energy (ft/lbs)	Accuracy at 20 yards (Inches - edge to edge)
Eley Subs	38	1002	85	0.85
Eley Contact	42	1064	106	1.00
Eley Action	42	1066	106	0.95
Norma Subs	40	941	79	0.95
RWS Semi	40	1087	105	1.20
Eley Tenex	40	1006	90	0.80
RWS R50	40	1017	92	0.85
SK Long Range	40	1086	105	0.75
CCI Suppressor 45gr	45	922	85	1.20
RWS HP HV	40	1183	124	1.10
CCI Velocitor	40	1358	164	1.55
Winchester Z Long	29	694	31	1.45
CCI CB Long	29	686	30	2.25
Federal Game Shok	38	1285	139	1.35
Winchester Subs Max	42	1011	95	1.10



The Octagonal barrel is superbly finished and just looks so good, plus the muzzle crown is well executed for good accuracy



It doesn't get any more classic than that action design, which has changed so little over the years



With open sights and my old eyes, this Uberti still produced some really nice groups, I would love to fit a period scope

There is no facility for optical mounting but a gunsmith could easily add some dovetail mounts to the flat top surface of the octagonal barrel.

Furniture

The walnut stock on this special model includes really good figuring and colour from that typical reddish hue, American walnut blank. The thick gloss lacquer is practical but a nice oil finish would really enhance that walnut to its best, so get stripping.

The forend is slim and shows a semi-Schnabel tip. It has chequering on both sides that joins underneath and forms quite a decent hold. The butt stock on this model has a pistol grip that is strengthened by the elongated top tang metal and bottom action tang. It is quite thin but has a long rake to accommodate even the largest hands and is also adorned with chequered panels. There

is no cheekpiece and the comb is low, as expected for open sight use. The butt pad is a nicely blued, steel smooth curved hook. The length of pull (LOP) is only 13" but it seems to work with this type of rifle.

Performance

As with all single-shots you have to shoot a Uberti methodically, and although speed can be obtained with practice, this defeats the purpose in my book. Just take your time and learn how the 1885 mechanism works and you will really enjoy the experience.

The combination of a 30" barrel and the .22 rimfire cartridge means that velocity actually goes down a little. This is due to frictional forces and drag on the lead bullet as the lube usually runs out after 26". But no ill effects at all as accuracy was good, despite the crude open sights and my dodgy eyesight, I just used larger targets! For the test, I used a variety of ammunition. (See Ammo Table)

Accuracy wise, the buckhorn sights were the

limiting factor and I dare say with a period scope fitted, the groups would have been smaller, but that's not the point. I settled on some low noise Norma Subs and we spent some excellent afternoons just plinking away at tin cans, old 35mm canisters and matchboxes to test the accuracy out as far as we dared. We also had some great fun clanging steel rabbits out at 100 yards with a big of Kentucky elevation and windage.

Conclusion

All in all, Uberti make a great reproduction gun. It is both accurate in design and shooting ability, while build quality is very good. However, it's crying out for an original Winchester A3 or old Unertl target scope mounted on dovetail mounts. The special version is worth paying the extra £100 or so as the pistol grip and better walnut stock is far superior to the standard model. Also, check out other goodies in the Henry Krank catalogue to accessorize this lovely Uberti with. **GM**

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name:	Uberti 1885 Low Wall Special Sporting
Type:	Single-Shot
Overall Length:	45.5"
Barrel length:	30"
Length of Pull:	13"
Weight:	9.85 lbs
Calibre:	.22lr on test, .22 Mag and .44/40 available
Stock:	Walnut chequered stock
Sights:	Open Sights
Trigger:	Single-Stage
Price:	£964.00 (Standard version £844.00)
Contact:	Henry Krank Ltd - www.henrykrank.com

