

# THE ITALIAN JOB

American brands have dominated the UK market in underlever rifles for some considerable time, ever since we all went out and purchased them when handguns were taken away. More recently, however, with these stateside manufacturers experiencing alleged issues with both availability and quality, other gun makers have come to the fore and are offering a number of models in direct competition with the transatlantic makers. Uberti is one such maker, marketed exclusively in the UK by Henry Krank & Co., and they offer a very large range of guns in 20 calibres. So how do they measure up against the competition?

The gun on test sports a 24¼" octagonal barrel, very thick-walled and weighty. The woodwork is walnut and the wood-to-metal fit is extremely good, something that modern manufacturing techniques have made far easier to achieve, and everything feels solid and strong. The gun is heavy, tipping the scales at 8lb, but it is very well balanced and handles nicely. There is no recoil pad, but the crescent-shaped metal butt plate sits really nicely in the shoulder. Felt recoil, even with full .357

magnum factory ammo, is surprisingly light, due in no small part to the weight of the gun, and it is easy to hold on target for follow-up shots.

## THE FINISH

The rifle is finished 'in the white' which is unusual, very much like a matt or brushed steel. If you imagine a gun without the usual blueing, but still finished and polished to the same high standard, that is what you get. It looks good with the walnut and being a matt finish there is no glare interfering with the sight picture. The finish is very tough and hard-wearing, with no applied finish to get scratched or damaged, and an occasional application of a suitable sealer will keep fingerprints or tarnish at bay (Flitz gun and knife wax brings it up a treat).

## TRIGGER AND ACTION

The gun cycles and fires very smoothly, like it has been pre-run in, but it is still nice and tight and locks up solidly. All of the visible parts of the action are properly finished, with no machine marks or burrs. Uberti have obviously put some time and effort into finishing

## CONTACT

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www.henrykrank.com

RRP  
£1,232

the gun properly. My Marlin took a couple of years and a fair bit of polishing of parts to run this smoothly. There is no creep in the trigger and although

it is heavy, it breaks crisply and very consistently, which is great for competition shooting.

With a capacity of 13+1, the gun holds more than enough ammunition for competition applications and the rounds fed smoothly with all of the types of bullet used in testing. The loading gate functions nicely and you can either fully insert a round or leave it slightly protruding to speed up and ease the insertion of the next round. In common with other underlevers, you cannot feed full-wadcutters from the magazine, as the Cartridge Overall Length is too short, so they have to be loaded singly.

Cases are ejected vertically, which of course restricts the fitting of optics, but then this is not really the sort of gun that suits a large telescopic sight.

## SIGHTS

The sights are semi-buckhorn, with the rear sight blade having a nice wide

**BOTTOM LEFT:** The Uberti 1873 is a beautiful and very accurate rifle

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Crescent-shaped butt plate is surprisingly comfortable in use

**BELOW:** The white finish is attractive, durable and practical





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## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS



<b>Product:</b>	Uberti 1873 Special Sporting Rifle
<b>Calibre:</b>	.357 Magnum
<b>Magazine capacity:</b>	13+1
<b>Barrel length:</b>	24¼"

main cut out and a smaller, tighter, U-shaped notch in the bottom. The sight picture is clear and target acquisition is very fast. Elevation adjustment is achieved using the sliding-wedge design and Uberti have given some extra attention to the shape of the wedge, adding a dip in the middle of the top, making it much easier to grip and slide.

The front sight is nice and thick, so it will not get bent easily, and it is a plain post with no brass bead so the sight picture is much better defined. Both front and rear sights are adjustable for windage and the front sight has a small locking screw to hold it firmly in place. Overall, the sights are extremely good; the sight picture will definitely suit action-shooting and target shooting alike.

### EXTRA FEATURES

The 1873 carries a couple of extra little features that are practical and useful. Firstly, there is a cover over the top of the action, over the ejection port, to keep out dust and water. The cover slides on rails and automatically opens when the action is cycled, staying open after the first round in chambered. To

**RIGHT: The rear sight is well designed, strong and easy to adjust**



open or close it manually requires just a push with your thumb.

The second feature is a type of safety catch, a small latch which engages with the back of the lever to stop the gun being cycled. As well as stopping the lever moving while transporting the gun, it means that the gun cannot be cycled and cocked with the lever unintentionally. A quarter turn of the latch is required to put the latch on or off and it is a very practical way of preventing a round being chambered accidentally.

### CONCLUSION

This is a particularly well-finished gun, both inside and out, and it functions very smoothly straight out of the box. The 'in the white' finish is durable and looks great and they have even lined

up all of the slots in the screws on the gun – now that is attention to detail.

I shoot underlevers for fun and occasionally for pest control, and this is certainly a fun gun to shoot. If you shoot competitively, this Uberti is definitely a gun you should consider. For gallery rifle competition and speed shooting, the gun holds target and functions as fast as you can cycle it, with both magnum and .38 special loads.

The trigger is the best out-of-the-box example of an underlever I have experienced. Priced very competitively, all of the guns in the Uberti range compare very favourably with the transatlantic alternatives and if there was a spare slot on my ticket then this gun would not be going back to Henry Kranks! [RS](#)

**BELOW: The fit and finish of the gun across the board is impressive**



**“THE TRIGGER IS THE BEST OUT-OF-THE-BOX EXAMPLE OF AN UNDERLEVER I HAVE EXPERIENCED”**