

# Ssssssh-Power

## Softly, Softly Shootee Rattie

Review courtesy of Sporting Gun

The name of Hushpower has been synonymous with sound-moderated shotguns for a long time. I first tested single shot versions in 12- and 20-bore about twenty years ago and so was delighted when the Saddlery and Gunroom offered me a pump action .410 for test and review.

The Mossberg pump action has almost a century of sterling service behind it and is still, in 2015, the standard against which all others are judged. Solid, rugged, reliable and slick – we don't have to question that part of the package!

Sound moderators have evolved over the years but they do, inevitably, make a gun look bulky and unbalanced. In some cases that means the gun *is* bulky and unbalanced but that most certainly does *not* apply to this .410 model.

Even before firing the gun, I had it on my table on the NGO's Stand at the CLA Game Fair where quite a few gamekeepers – men who really know guns as working tools – picked it up and said, "Blimey, I reckon I could shoot with this." Now that really is coming straight from the horse's mouth!

Since I am by nature a nosey git, the first job was to take the thing apart to see how it worked. That simply involves unscrewing the moderator from the barrel but I was surprised to see how much muck had been left behind by the Proof House's failed attempts to blow it up. I cleaned it all carefully which, when I finally read the instructions, probably wasn't a good idea. But at least we then started with a clean sheet.

The instructions suggest that the moderator will do its best work after fifty to one hundred shots have been fired, so clearly a bit of crud in the tube helps with sound absorption.

First, was a session of patterning with Lyalvale 2½" cartridges loaded with 14gms (½ oz.) of No.6 shot. Patterns were excellent out to at least twenty yards, and probably twenty-five, but thirty yards was too far with that load. (See the photograph of my "pattern plates.") Results might be different with other loads and cartridges but I haven't yet tried any 3".

It was noticeable that, as the instructions suggested, the gun appears to shoot a bit low. This is, of course, because your line of sight over the moderator is higher than we are used to, but you soon get the hang of it and I managed to nail a few rats and a passing pigeon without difficulty.

After that, an evening's rabbit shooting with lamp and pick-up truck seemed essential. I know it's a rotten old job, but someone's got to do it, so with the help of Steve and Sue at Chirk Castle, an outing was arranged. At this stage I have to admit that the business was accompanied by a good deal of unseemly and unprofessional merriment as we got the hang of the new gun in

the dark, and laughter was at its loudest when our efforts to unload the magazine and chamber before leaving a field resulted in showers of cartridges in the back of the truck.

“When all else fails, read the instructions,” so we did, and we now know how to do it properly. Even so, we bagged quite a few bunnies and noticed that the ‘bang’ of the little gun didn’t seem to alarm the others very much. *(If you really want to know how it should be done, read Ed Cook’s excellent review, published in Sporting Gun in March 2008, which has a link on the Saddlery and Gunroom website, [www.saddleryandgunroom.co.uk](http://www.saddleryandgunroom.co.uk). Over 500 rabbits in one night!)*

So the gun worked very nicely and *seemed* quieter than a normal .410. But that’s hardly a proper test so we had to do it properly, using the only really valid sound measuring device, the Mk 1 human ear-hole.

Three guns were used for this – and I am once again indebted to Steve at Chirk Castle for his assistance and for supplying two of the guns. The Hushpower Mossberg was tested for comparison with a little folding .410 and an older single barrel Hushpower with a full length moderator. (See photo)

We each shot all three guns with the “assessor” backing off about fifty yards towards the wood and agreed that the little folder was very much louder than either of the moderated guns and that the single shot model with the full length moderator was *very* slightly quieter than the Mossberg pump. Perhaps of even more interest is that the moderated guns made a curious little “snap” which didn’t really sound like a gunshot and may account for the lack of fright in the quarry even when they are close enough to hear it. They’ll soon find out, of course, so best make hay while the sun shines!

The Hushpower Mossberg pump is an efficient and effective tool for pest control - and it is also a lot of fun to use. Recommended retail price is £650.

George Wallace  
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