



The 1761 set up for testing with Bushnell 3-9x40 Prime scope.

# Classy Anschutz doesn't disappoint

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As someone who places great faith in first impressions, I'd have been bitterly disappointed if the Anschutz 1761 hadn't lived up to the bling it projected when I took it out the packaging. In my hands was a rifle with all the hallmarks of quality - classic good looks of blued steel and walnut exuding that understated air of elegance only European makers seem to do properly. Before I even put the rifle to my shoulder I felt I was going to enjoy this review. I was right.

## **Anschutz Model 1761 rimfire**

Anschutz began production in 1856 and the name has become synonymous with innovative, eminent firearms, especially their rimfire rifles which are internationally renowned for their construction,

workmanship and precision accuracy, notably in biathlon shooting.

The Model 1761 is a new series of rimfires designed for shooters and hunters - the next generation of an already legendary brand - representing years of research and development. There are two rifles in the series, the Classic and the Thumbhole. Appearance wise they're significantly different but both are based on a common action, calibres available being .17HMR, .22LR and .22WMR. The rifle supplied for review by Nioa was a Classic in .22LR.

## **Receiver and barrel**

The receiver is made from a solid billet of chromoly steel with flat sides and bottom, the latter having an integral recoil lug at the front, the top domed with an 11mm

dovetail for scope mounting. The review rifle arrived with a Picatinny rail attached, secured to the dovetail by a trio of grub screws pushing against the top of the receiver, the rear screw doing double duty as a recoil lug in a cross-cut slot at the rear of the dovetail.

On the left of the receiver is a spring-loaded bolt stop, the tail functioning as a bolt guide in conjunction with a slot in the bolt body. Receiver wall thickness is 4mm so there can be no doubt about the strength of the action. An L-shaped slot on the right accommodates the bolt handle, a rebate for the side lever safety and usual ejection port.

The bottom has a port for the magazine well and a recess towards the rear to assist the trigger group, it's also drilled and

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Pistol grip with its laser cut panels of chequering.



Centre locking bolt with lugs set at 120 degrees to each other to provide a 60-degree lift. Notice protruding cocking indicator at rear of bolt.

tapped to accept Torx head action screws, the first time these have been used on an Anschutz rifle. The receiver ring is precision bored to take the shank of the barrel in a tight, slip fit, the barrel accurately located by a short pin in the shank mating with a slot in the front of the receiver ring.

Inside the ring is a virtual V-block mounting system made up of two shallow C-shaped locking clamps housed in recesses in the bottom of the ring, internal curve of the clamps exactly matching the shank diameter. Screws through the bottom flat of the receiver are wound up to push each clamp against the shank and hold the barrel in place, a simple but precise way of locking everything together while still allowing barrel interchanges.

The precision barrels are available in two lengths - 457mm (18") with muzzle threaded 1/2"x20 UNF for a suppressor and 515mm (20.3") for the plain, unthreaded barrel - the review rifle fitted with the latter. Barrel diameter is 22mm at the knox form and 19mm at the muzzle which has a relatively flat, slightly angled crown. When the rifle is assembled the barrel floats, both barrel and receiver boasting an attractive matte black finish with no signs of machining or polishing marks.

### Bolt

Like the receiver, the three-part bolt is something of a departure from the rimfire bolts we've become used to, the bolt face recessed with an extractor similar to but smaller than the one used in the Match 54 bolt. The extractor uses an internal spring and plunger arrangement instead of the more common, external C-shaped spring that wraps around the top hemisphere of the bolt face body, the underside having a square rail which rides in a guide at the rear of the magazine well recess. A lug on the side of the bolt guide provides ejection when the bolt is pulled back.

The short bolt handle with oversize knob sits in the centre of the bolt and has three equidistant locking lugs around its circumference which give it a lift of 60 degrees. Its central location delivers a shorter overall bolt length, allowing the use of a lightweight firing pin and single-spring striker system installed in the tail of the bolt.

A small roller bearing in the cocking piece sits between the striker and firing pin, reducing the force required to cock the bolt and allowing a stronger spring to be used. The bolt operates smoothly and quickly and cocks on opening, a red-banded pin protruding from the tail giving an indication of the status that's visual and tactile.



Recessed bolt face.

### Trigger

The trigger group sits in a recess in the bottom of the receiver where it's held in place by a couple of transverse roll pins. The 5061 trigger is single stage with adjustment for weight of pull and travel and has an adjustment range of 800g to 1.2kg, arriving with the weight factory set at 1kg. The sears are hardened and lapped to provide fast and clean release.

A warning on the left of the trigger group housing advises adjustments should only be made by a qualified gunsmith. The group includes a lever safety catch on the right that's fast, easy and silent to operate, the



Component parts of the 1761.

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safety locking the trigger but allowing the bolt to be opened if required.

### Triggerguard and well

The black polymer, combination trigger-guard and magazine well sits in the belly of the rifle where it's retained by the action screws.

### Magazine

This has a black polymer base with stainless steel housing which holds five cartridges in a single stack. A spring-loaded magazine latch is located inside the front bow of the triggerguard and when the latch is pushed forward the magazine drops directly into the hand.

### Stock

This is arguably the most striking feature of the 1761, the appeal being it's made in a classic style from a quality piece of walnut. Internally the action mortise and barrel channel are cleanly cut and lacquer sealed to keep out moisture. There are no bedding pads, the marks indicating the receiver sits flat and square as it arrives from the factory, though it would be easy to bed the action should the need arise.

Externally the stock is straight-grained with a semi-gloss lacquer finish that's understated in line with the Classic designation of the rifle. Two-piece panels of laser-cut chequering are provided on the pistol grip and forearm, the gap between the panels offering a distinctive look which makes the chequering feel more raised than it is.

The buttstock has a straight comb and is fitted with a soft, non-slip recoil absorbing pad, the U-shaped forearm tapering gently upwards from the belly to a simple, rounded fore-end which needs no embellishment. QD sling swivel bases are included.

### Range testing

For testing, Nioa supplied a 3-9x40



Trigger group and safety is secured in the receiver bottom by roll pins. The plastic lever forward of the trigger is the magazine release.

Bushnell Prime scope and a set of Leupold PRW2 1" steel rings to suit Weaver-style rails. Bushnell has been part of the US optics world for more than 65 years, always offering good quality items at affordable prices. The 3-9 provided is more scope than an unreformed rabbit hunter like me needs on a rimfire but probably not enough for competitive rimfire shooters. For review purpose I expect it was a good choice and set up on the 1761 it gave no grounds for complaint.

The table lists the ammunition I put through the rifle and results obtained with each at 50m, the average taken from 5x5 shot groups. As with any other rimfire the points of impact of the various ammunition types varied considerably, highlighting the need to resight a rifle whenever ammunition is changed.

### In the paddock

I enjoyed a couple of morning rabbit hunts with the Anschutz. Accuracy was excellent, it's easy to carry around the hills and provided I did my bit, it delivered rabbits on the ground every time. The best hunt yielded five bunnies for the freezer, three of them shot offhand out to around 45m, the other two taken at 50m and 70m off a field rest.

### Overview

There's a lot to like about the 1761. It feels good, hefts nicely and functioning was flawless throughout testing. I especially enjoyed the oversize bolt knob and the trigger as it came from the factory, no adjustments necessary. I expect the model will see more range work than rabbit shooting but wherever it's used it will give a good account of itself - it really is one classy rimfire. ●



The 5-shot magazine has a stainless box with polymer base.

**Table 1: Anschutz 1761 Classic - accuracy at 50m**

Ammunition	Best	Worst	Ave
Fed Prem Hunter Match	16	22	19
Federal Champion	24	38	27
CCI Standard Velocity	15	22	18
CCI Mini-Mag	19	22	21
SK Flatnose Match	20	23	21
SK Rifle Match	15	15	15
SK Standard Plus	15	18	16
Eley High Velocity HP	13	15	14
Eley Match	18	19	18.5
Winchester Xpert	20	25	22
Winchester Subsonic	22	35	25
RWS Subsonic	21	35	27



Picatinny rail slides over the dovetail on the top of the receiver and is secured by three grub screws, the rear one doing double duty as a recoil stop.

## Specifications

<b>Make</b>	Anschutz
<b>Model</b>	1761 Classic
<b>Action</b>	Bolt-action
<b>Bolt</b>	Three-piece, centrally located bolt handle with oversize knob, 60-degree lift.
<b>Trigger</b>	Single stage 506 I, adjustable for weight and travel
<b>Safety</b>	Side lever, right-hand side
<b>Barrel length</b>	457mm with threaded muzzle, 515mm without
<b>Calibres/Twist</b>	.17HMR/9", .22LR/16.6" (tested), .22WMF/15.8"
<b>Sights</b>	None. 11mm dovetail on receiver. Picatinny rail also supplied
<b>Magazine</b>	Single stack 5-round detachable
<b>Stock</b>	Classic style, walnut with lacquered finish. Thumbhole stock available
<b>Length of pull</b>	36cm
<b>Weight</b>	2.89kg bare
<b>Overall length</b>	96cm
<b>Distributor</b>	Nioa
<b>RRP</b>	Around \$2200