

Logun low down - Forget the hype, Fred Carter tells it like it is

DEC '00

Shooting Sports

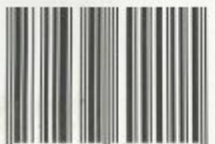
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Red Eye

It's not often that an item comes along that fulfils its design function 100% and also is so well priced that it seems little short of unbelievable, but such kit was supplied to us by a company called Soviet Bazaar, run by Vladimir Dasiukevich. As the name suggests they specialise in Russian-made equipment - in this case optics. Made by a company called Sibir in Belarus, we received two spotting scopes and a set of night vision binoculars.

The scopes take the form of a true telescope - the Yukon Scout 30X50 - and a large monocular style, the 20-50X50 Wide Angle Zoom. Both are rubber armoured with lens caps and zippered carrying cases. The eye-

could focus down to about 30 yards and even with its high power it was possible to read the speedo dial of a motorbike parked across the road from our offices. At this distance the variable went to 38X in terms of focus, but out at 50 it was up to full mag.

More upmarket are the Yukon night vision binoculars (NVB), also manufactured by Sibir Optics. Once the sole premise of the military, this type of equipment has slowly filtered into our marketplace and today there are many purpose-built 3rd and 4th generation units readily available. Cost and facility have always been prime considerations and some of this kit can set you back serious money; not so the NVBs.

A small selection of the Soviet Bazaar optics left to right NVBs, telescope and monocular

piece offers a good degree of focus and the zoom is marked up at 20, 26, 32 and 50 with a soft rubber ring. It also offers an adjustable strap and twin tripod adapters, whereas, the Scout only offers the standard thread. Though light in weight they both offer a solid build.

We fitted both to a camera tripod to see what they could do. Out at 1000 yards clarity was excellent and the Zoom dialled nicely without losing focus at any power. The 30X50

Light in weight, they are made of a hi-strength polymer and offer a one-piece build with a non-slip gripping area. The spec is 2.5X42 which seems about right for this sort of kit as the low mag offers a wider field of view. The eye-pieces are individually focusable, as are the objectives (front lens). These can be set up for normal, close or long ranges by rotating them in the correct direction. The instructions on this are clear and concise.

Lens caps are included and attach to the carry strap, so they can't be lost - an important consideration with night vision equipment. The front ones are pierced by two

small holes, allowing a degree of set-up in daytime. On no account must they be removed when the device is turned on in these conditions as it will damage the internals.

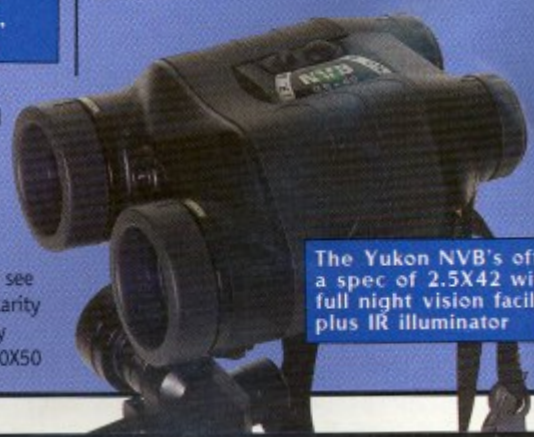
The NVBs are powered by two AA batteries. On top are twin rubber-covered buttons, the larger, domed (rear) one is the main ON/OFF switch and a green LED lights up to indicate its readiness. Should you require more illumination, pressing the raised (front) one activates an infra red (IR) light source which bathes the target in a beam that brightens things up.

In use, the unit's ability to offer a wide and precise focusing band was much appreciated, also the typical speckling at the centre of the image, common to many night vision devices

was barely noticeable. As promised, the IR illuminator really worked and at shorter ranges in total darkness the improvement was noticeable.

Like the two spotting scopes there's little negative to say about the Yukon NVB - it works well, offers sophisticated yet simple controls, is light in weight and for night vision gear very well priced. An ideal addition to a night hunter's equipment.

Overall three very impressive pieces of kit, with the two scopes being equally at home on the range or on the hill and the night vision offering a number of uses. Soviet Bazaar have promised us more equipment and if it's of the quality of this first sample, I reckon that we shooters are going to be spoiled for choice.



The Yukon NVB's offers a spec of 2.5X42 with full night vision facility plus IR illuminator



The monocular is a variable 20-50X50, with focusing eye piece and tripod adapter



The Yukon 30X50 telescope - simple, light yet effective

Prices

Sibir 20-50X50 WA monocular £60
 Yukon Scout 30X50 telescope £30
 Yukon NVB night vision binos £340

Importer

Soviet Bazaar,
 01871 810832