

Getting a FIX



Fixed-power scopes often play second fiddle to the zoom, but **Thom Jarrino** has been finding out that Optisan's new 10x44i EVX wants for absolutely nothing...

I won't deny that I have plenty of zoom scopes in my collection – but when I actually think long and hard about the way I use them, 99.9 per cent of the time I shoot on a fixed magnification setting! On my higher-spec tellies, that's 10x – exactly the same as the power that comes on the brand new, fixed-mag Optisan EVX 10x44i being distributed in the UK via MTC Optics, in fact.

MTC tell me that this latest variant builds on the now-defunct Viper series they used to market, a scope range of which I was a big fan. Side by side with my own Viper, this brand new model in Optisan's EVX line-up clearly trumps it in every respect: cleaner lines, sharper optics and, in the MH10, a far more airgun-friendly crosshair with an improved illumination facility.

In fact, the only thing that this new Optisan gives away to its forebear is mounts – you'll have to supply your own 30mm rings. All else, though – position-adjustable metal flip-up lens covers, lockable BDC turrets, sidewheel P/A down to 10 yards plus a 75mm sidewheel, quick-focus eyepiece and screw-on sunshade – comes as part of the £244 deal. Incidentally, this is the only fixed power model in the EVX range, and the most affordable – the six zooms (from 3-12x to 6-24x) cost from £279 to £369.

Such prices, of course, position the EVX in the upper echelons of glassware – and the fixed 10x model certainly lives up to my expectation. Where the sight picture of my old Viper often became 'milky' – particularly when shooting in dim light against a bright backdrop – the EVX's is far better rendered. As you can see from the chart here (right), the multi-coated lenses fitted in the 10x44i returned a flawless performance in my standard clarity test.

Testing under controlled conditions is one thing, but what

about in a real-world scenario? Well, whatever field conditions I've used the test sample in over the past few weeks, I've never struggled to 'see' not only the target, but its finer details. In tricky lighting, the 10x44i has always managed to return a faithful target image, with no 'haloing' around its edges, nor any glare to interfere with things. Even against strongly back-lit scenes, it's performed outstandingly – and while there's the option to screw on the 75mm sun shade, I've not yet found this necessary.

By comparison with my old Viper, the sight picture is overall much sharper, too. You don't so much as aim at your target's outline with this EVX, but more at a specific point within it – and being able to aim so precisely, I've found, really pays dividends on your subsequent accuracy.

The crosshair is focused courtesy of a fast-turn eyeball, and then you can fine-tune the sight picture's sharpness by way of the sidewheel parallax system. You can't really range-find with this – even with the larger sidewheel that Optisan supply screwed into place – so I tend to leave it set to just under my chosen zero range, tweaking it only on the extreme near or far shots if the target's looking too blurry.

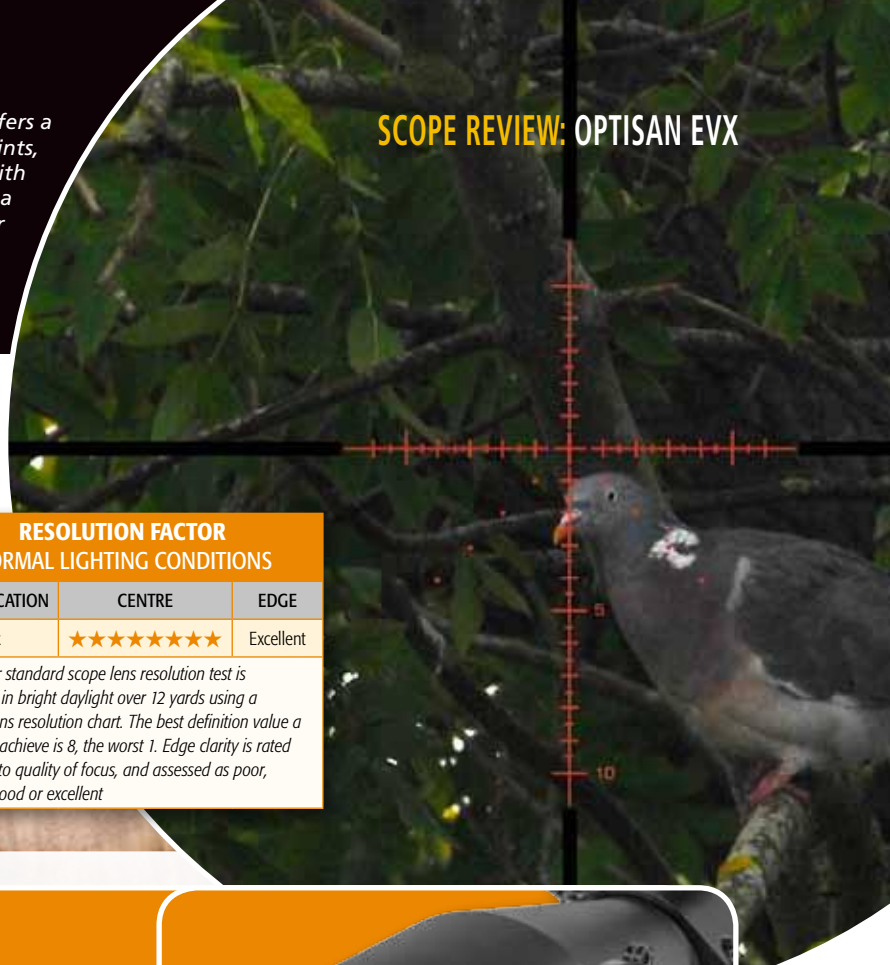
The 'i' suffix of this EVX defines it as having an illuminated reticle – but the EVX's side-operated rheostat has gone a lot of steps further by providing



Stylish turrets adorn the EVX's one-piece tube, and feature resettable push-lock windage and elevation adjustments, along with six-level reticle illumination that has an 'off' mode between each intensity setting



The EVX's MH10 reticle offers a myriad of milliradian aimpoints, including dots to assist with windage allowances and a light-up centre section for tricky sight pictures



RESOLUTION FACTOR NORMAL LIGHTING CONDITIONS		
MAGNIFICATION	CENTRE	EDGE
10x	★★★★★★★	Excellent

NOTE: Our standard scope lens resolution test is conducted in bright daylight over 12 yards using a bespoke lens resolution chart. The best definition value a scope can achieve is 8, the worst 1. Edge clarity is rated according to quality of focus, and assessed as poor, average, good or excellent



Courtesy of a supplied tool, the metal flip-up lens covers can be positioned to hinge open in any direction – and Thom uses the ocular lens's as a blanking plate for his non-shooting eye



not only six, very practical levels of illumination, but putting an intermediate 'off' setting between each of them. I've never seen this before... but I can tell you now that it's the most practical system I've ever used. (And such an obvious thing to have!)

As for the reticle itself, Optisan have equipped their 10x44i EVX with the MH10 – a periscope-type design which provides for milliradian references in half-mil aimpoints. Despite a myriad of marks, the MH10 is actually not half as confusing to use in practice as it may appear at first glance, thanks to Optisan cleverly differentiating the mil, half-mil and 5 and 10-mil markers.

The aimpoints work very nicely with an airgun's trajectory and a bonus touch is the four, outwardly radiating dots either side of the lower crosshair. While these have no doubt been mathematically calculated (to four mils at their widest), I found them absolutely spot-on (no pun intended) as windage markers in the kind of breezy conditions I'd be prepared to shoot in. Being able to pick a specific point, as opposed to aiming

'somewhere in mid air', is a lot more conducive to hitting the mark when having to allow for wind drift.

There are plenty of other 'shooter aids' afforded by this fixed-mag EVX, too. I like the fact that the flip-ups are metal and, courtesy of the supplied tool, can be rotated so that their opening aspect suits you and/or your rifle. There are times when you want them opening to the side. For example, being a two-eyes-open shooter, I like to use the eyepiece's cover as a 'blinking plate' for my non-aiming eye.

Then there are the target-style BDC elevation and windage turrets, the knurling of which has been dumbed down to remain practical while looking far less obtrusive. They click around, very positively, in 0.1 milliradian intervals – but *not* by accident! You have to deliberately pull the whole turret upwards to unlock it for adjustment; then push down to lock it back in place to avoid inadvertently turning it. A thinner, serrated ring beneath the knurled section can be slackened off to free-spin the vernier to '0', then re-tightened to keep your setting in place.

Mind you, I doubt any 10x44i EVX owner will use the bullet drop compensation method of aiming (where you adjust the clickers to always aim dead-centre, regardless of the range over which you're shooting). Firstly, there's no vernier under the turret to stop you from dialling back the wrong way and then being out of zero by a complete turn. And secondly, why would you even want to... when you have such an amazing reticle in the shape of the EVX's MH10? ●

