

US Optics SN-3 and SN-3 TPal

US Optics is a small company out of southern California who has taken the tactical shooting scene by storm over the past few years with their excellent combination of great glass and custom features, like reticles and knobs, that can't be found anywhere else.

US Optics was founded by John Williams Jr. in 1990. John started the company in his garage and had his son, John Williams III, working with him. John Williams Jr. was sadly lost to a motorcycle accident in 2004 but John Williams III took charge and has been doing great things with the company like new reticle designs and the development of a spotting scope, getting the Maine Corps contract for building and servicing the MST 100 scopes and taking the meaning of customer service to a higher level. John III can be reached through his website but for people who frequent Snipers Hide.com they know him as JBWIII. Also on the Hide from USO is Steve Field known as "Skunk" there. You have a question or problem and John and his crew at USO answer it or take care of it.

USO has a long list of scopes built from 6061-T6 aluminum from the excellent fixed 10x ST10 to the extreme long range SN-9 as well as some CQB/medium range style scopes like the SN-12 and SN-4. We here at Team Blaster use the scopes from the SN-3 line in the power range of 3.2-17, which we find gives an excellent power range for tactical shooting. USO offers other power ranges in the SN-3 line to include 1.8-10, 3.8-22 and the newest 5-25. All of which are first focal plane, FFP, so that you can use your mil based or MOA based reticle on any power.

As mentioned USO builds custom scopes so due to that our Team scopes are set up differently as the shooters like them but we all like to have mil based reticles and mil adjustments on our knobs which makes it easier when it comes to holds and calling corrections. Tony and Kevin both have 3.2-17x44 low profile ERGO objective scopes with 35mm main tubes, .1 mil EREK elevation, .1 mil #3 windage and illuminated GAP mil based reticles. I run two scopes from USO. First is a 3.2-17x44 low profile ERGO objective with 30mm main tube, .1 mil EREK, .1 mil #3 and illuminated MPR mil based reticle. The other is a 3.2-17x44 TPal set up exactly like my other scope.

The myriad of options and combinations offered by USO would fill up more pages than I'm sure you would want to read so I will go over some of the basics like elevation knobs, objective choice and reticles. If you want more information you can go to the USO website at www.usoptics.com

First elevation knobs. US optics offers three basic options, the EREK, #1 and #3, all of which are available in .1 mil clicks or graduations of the standard MOA. The #1 knob comes standard on most of the scopes and is what most shooters would recognize as an elevation knob on a scope. It has caps and 48 clicks of elevation per revolution, which is 4.8 mils or 12 MOA with ¼ MOA clicks. The #3 knob is a little different in that it doesn't have caps but gives you the appearance of a standard knob but it gives you 105 clicks per revolution, which is 10.5 mils and 26.25 MOA with ¼ MOA click values,

which is good enough to get a .308 far out there in a single turn. The third option is the EREK knob. This knob is different in both looks and function. To zero the knob you use a supplied allen wrench through a hole in the knob cap for your coarse adjustments and then use the dial to fine tune. This system is similar to the Unertl MST100 elevation knob. It sounds complicated but it is fairly simple. The EREK in appearance is a low, wide knob which allows the shooter to grasp it and turn it easily with gloves on or not. It is easy to read and gives 90 clicks per turn, which is 9 mils or 45 MOA if you used ½ MOA clicks as many do with this knob. A quick note on the knobs, USO being a custom scope builder can put your windage knob on the right or left side of you scope and also can do the same with the illuminated reticle knob and TPal knob. A nice option to have wouldn't you agree?

Now on to objectives. USO offers two sizes of objectives, 44mm and 58mm, for their ERGO or TPal scopes. They also offer the option of low profile in the ERGO objectives which gives the scope more flowing lines but still keeps the strength that USO is known for in their scopes. The ERGO objectives adjust parallax as standard scopes do in that turning the objective focuses and takes out the parallax. The ERGO is adjustable from 50 yards to infinity but I have used it in as tight as 10 yards and you can still see the target well enough to make hits. On the TPal the parallax adjust is what some would call a "side focus" in that it is on the turret body of the scope. Some find this easier to use as you don't have to reach the front of the scope to make adjustments. The TPal works excellent and is adjustable from 50 yards to infinity like the ERGO. Some have said that the image on the TPal is not as sharp as the ERGO because an extra lens is added for the TPal function but with the quality of glass used by USO I don't see it in my two scopes.

Lastly, reticles. USO offers a wide variety of reticles for their scopes in both MOA and mils dependent on what the shooter wants. We like mil based reticles so we chose the GAP and the MPR. The GAP is a hashmark mil reticle in there is no dots but hash marks. The GAP has both full and half mil marks with 4 mils to the right, left and top and 9 mils down for hold overs. The MPR reticle also has hash marks in full and half mil but it also has marks in .2 mils on each side of the full mil marks. This makes some holds and ranging easier but it is done in a way that it doesn't become too cluttered and confusing. The MPR has 5 mils on the right, left and top and has a full 10 mils down. Both the GAP and MPR are marked with numbers on the milscale so to help the shooter not lose track. They are marked at 2 and 4 mils right and left and 2, 4, 6, and 8 mils down. For people liking their reticles in MOA then USO has choices for you also. Please go to their site at www.usoptics.com to see the pictures and descriptions of the MOA based reticles and also to see pics of the reticles I described above. I'm sure you will find one you like and remember that USO scopes are first focal plane so you can use that reticle on any power setting on your scope.

On a side not in relation to the reticles I have to mention USO's reticle illumination system. It works off of a 11 position rheostat to adjust the brightness of the reticle. The knob is capped for protection and runs off of a CR2032 coin battery. The reticle clarity and lack of color bleed needs to be seen. It's the best I've seen in a reticle. Also the whole reticle is lit up for the shooter to see and not just certain areas like the center or

certain dots. This helps in the shooter to be able to use the whole reticle for holds or ranging. Again the custom shop title comes in to play in that you can get your illumination in either red or green.

Well I think I have spoken long enough on the USO scopes so please make sure to check them out and use their site www.usoptics.com to configure the scope of your choosing as well as see all the options I didn't have the space to put into print like color, tube size etc. And if you have any questions from there give John and his crew at USO a call and they will be happy to help you in your purchase of a USO scope.