

Class Glass **PART 1**

Dave Barham walks us through the amazing Conquest V4 4-16 x 50 riflescope from Zeiss

This is without doubt the highest quality scope that I have reviewed to date, and as such I feel it warrants a two-parter. I'm just going to lay down the specifics in this first part, before taking it out into the field and putting it through its paces in both hunting and range situations.

I've never actually peered through a Zeiss scope properly, only at various shows I have been to over the years, probably because I have always felt that the price was out of my reach.

To put it simply, I posted a photo of this particular scope on my Facebook page, and a few hunting friends, who shoot small and full bore rifles, commented saying, 'Waste of time on an air rifle', to which I quickly replied, 'Loads of people own Ferraris and Lamborghinis in the UK – waste of time on UK roads with a 70mph speed limit'.

That analogy sums this scope up perfectly – if you can afford the best then why not buy the best. For sure it costs as much, if not more than a lot of my rifles, but as a very good friend of mine who used to be a sniper once said, 'Always spend more on your glass than your rifle'.

The reason for that soon becomes apparent when you look through a scope of this quality. The resulting imagery and definition, especially at high magnification, are far superior.

If you check out the June issue of our sister title, *Airgun World*, you'll see how Terry Doe used a Zeiss scope back in the days of his competitive shooting to win countless titles and competitions, both here in the UK and around the world. He reiterated the fact that excellent glass can give you an edge, and specifically recalled when he first got to grips with a Zeiss all those years ago, citing that he could actually pick out the fresh pellet



ABOVE: You can't put a price on glass of this quality!

marks on a metal target from the old ones, seeing where the previous competitors had hit said targets, and that really gave him an edge regarding windage and elevation.

Anyway, that's enough of the 'hard sell'. I'm yet to discover for myself just how much of a difference this scope will make to my own shooting, but more on that next month in Part 2. Here's what Zeiss has to say about their Conquest V4 series.

FIVE MODELS

There are five different scopes to choose from in the Conquest V4 range; 1-4 x 24, 3-12 x 56, 4-16 x

the tried-and-true ZEISS optics concept with a rugged and functional design. Their compact design and perfect balance between a wide field of view and large magnification range is ideal for all types of hunting. The V4 models are equipped with high-precision and fully reliable mechanical components.

Specific models have a ballistic turret with a wide reticle adjustment range (elevation and windage). As a result, the hunter has the flexibility needed for a variety of different hunting methods. Optional ballistic reticles are also available that allow the hunter to quickly make elevation

"He could actually pick out the fresh pellet marks on a metal target from the old ones"

44, 6-24 x 50, and the 4-16 x 50 model that I have here.

The Conquest V4 line-up of high-performance riflescopes combines

and azimuth corrections with no mechanical adjustment necessary.

Thanks to its zoom range, the Conquest V4 4-16 x 50 is the perfect

choice for daily use over medium and long distances in difficult lighting conditions. With its 16x setting, you can easily recognise every detail and therefore always accurately identify your target.

LAYERED GLASS

This higher definition glass produces 90% to-the-eye light transmission, great low-light performance and excellent target resolution across the entire magnification range.

ZEISS T* coating is a guarantee of the brilliant, high-contrast images you will experience above all in adverse light conditions and during twilight. Behind it all, though, there is no specific formula for building up the layers. Instead, it is a technology that is constantly adjusted to suit new glass materials and requirements, which varies from lens to lens.

I must admit that the 'rose' tint effect on the lenses of the scope sent to me looks pretty funky. (No, you don't see a rose tint when you look through it, man!).

ILLUMINATED RETICLE

The ZMOAi-T30 reticle is the illuminated version of the ZMOA-T30. It offers the perfect balance between sport and hunting shooting. Hunters and target shooters prefer this option for their all-around riflescope. The MOA (minute of angle) crosshairs contain MOA tick marks and dots that provide a distance of 1 MOA at reference magnification and cover a bullet drop of 30 MOA.

The lateral lines and holdover points are extremely useful for wind correction and are positioned in the field of view for maximum



ABOVE: The three turret system is superb

TOP RIGHT: Parallax adjustment and rheostat settings

ABOVE RIGHT: The ocular bell and zoom rings are slick and smooth

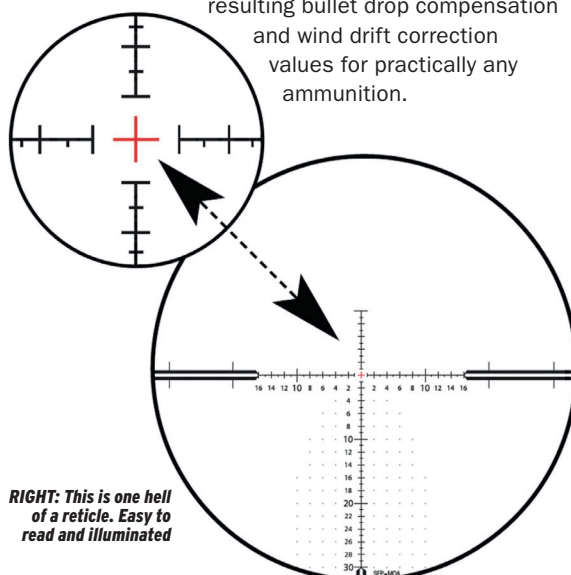
BELOW LEFT: The 'rose' tinted lenses

"What's more, there are ten brightness settings on the rheostat, with 'off' positions on each one"

effectiveness and minimum distraction.

What I really like about this scope is that the reticle illumination is limited to the central fine crosshairs, preventing you from being affected by glare and providing an extremely effective and precise aiming point in adverse lighting conditions. What's more, there are ten brightness settings on the rheostat, with 'off' positions between each one.

For those who shoot powder, the ZEISS Hunting app can be used to determine the change in sub-tension, quickly and precisely, and the resulting bullet drop compensation and wind drift correction values for practically any ammunition.



RIGHT: This is one hell of a reticle. Easy to read and illuminated



NEXT MONTH

In Part 2 of this review, I'll be taking this scope out hunting and on my local range, which goes out to 60 metres. From what I've seen so far - I can't wait to get out there! ■

SPECIFICATION

Model: Conquest V4 4-16 x 50

Manufacturer: Zeiss

Country of origin: Germany

Website: www.zeiss.co.uk

Lens diameter: Objective

50mm. Eyepiece 34.5mm

Exit pupil dia: 8.5 to 3.1mm

Eye relief: 90mm

Field of view: 28.5 - 7.1ft

Focal range on full

Magnification: 10 yards to infinity

Tube diameter: 30mm

Length: 356mm (14in)

Weight: 652g (23oz)

RRP: £895

Class Glass **PART 2**

Dave Barham reveals just how good the Zeiss Conquest V4 is in the field, after a month of testing

In the July issue, I gave you a brief rundown of what this scope is all about, and what it is designed for, and I received quite a few comments regarding the price tag, most of which were positive, I'm pleased to say. Having had the scope to play with for over a month now, I can completely justify said price tag, and only wish I had enough spare cash to buy one for myself!

A BRIEF RUNDOWN

If you missed last month's introduction, there are five different scopes to choose from in the Conquest V4 range, including; 1-4 x 24, 3-12 x 56, 4-16 x 44, 6-24 x 50 and the 4-16 x 50 model that I have here. Their compact design and perfect balance between a wide field of view and large magnification range is ideal for all types of hunting.

Thanks to its zoom range, the Conquest V4 4-16 x 50 is the perfect choice for daily use over medium and long distances in all kinds of lighting conditions.

OUT IN THE FIELD

My main aim for this follow-up test was to take the scope out into my



ABOVE: What a combo - Air Arms and Zeiss!

BELOW: This illuminated reticle is nothing short of superb!

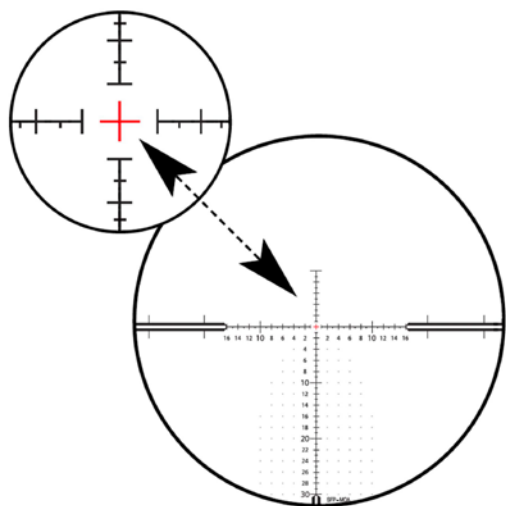
everyday hunting scenarios, to see just how much of a difference it made in varying conditions. As it turns out, I was faced with everything from fog to rain and hail! Needless to say that the hunting conditions were ever so slightly tricky, and despite putting in four short sessions, I only managed to bag one rabbit for my troubles, but being there and peering through the scope for hour upon hour told me everything I needed to know.

Let's kick off with the main selling point of the Zeiss Conquest V4 – clarity! I'm actually quite amazed by just how crystal clear and defined the image is through this scope. It really is noticeably different to the other scopes I have on my rifles, but this clarity really comes into its own in low light conditions. As the light began to fade around dusk, I found it much easier to see every little detail along the hedgerows through the Zeiss. That's testament to the

quality of the lenses. I found myself zooming in and out far more often than I would normally, just to get an idea of how well everything comes into focus in a hunting situation. I could see individual flies and bees landing on flowers 30 yards away with amazing definition – something I've never really been able to do in low light with my regular scopes.

Don't get me wrong, this review isn't all about singing the Zeiss' praises and slugging off every other scope I have ever used, and still use daily. I'm trying to show you why paying £600+ more for a scope than I normally would consider is justified, in my opinion.

Getting back to Terry Doe's adage of being able to see every fresh pellet mark on a knockdown target due to the clarity and definition of colour, I can now see exactly what he was talking about. Differentiating between shades of grey/silver as in 'old and new pellet strikes' is something that





LEFT: The zoom ring is silky smooth



LEFT: There's a massive range of adjustment on the ocular focus ring



RIGHT: Even with gloves on, the adjustments are easy

you just can't do with a cheaper scope. Not that this makes much difference in a hunting situation, but it's all about the clarity.

On one particular evening, it was quite overcast and drizzling. I could see the rabbits hopping about underneath the hedgerow in the field quite clearly through the Zeiss, even zooming into 16x magnification, the definition of some of the rabbits' eyes was amazing, but unfortunately for me, they just didn't want to come out into the field and feed in the rain – I can't really blame them. There was no way I was going to start taking shots and trying to dive under bushes and hedges to try to retrieve them!

IMPRESSIVE ILLUMINATION

The ZMOAi-T30 reticle is the illuminated version of the ZMOA-T30. The horizontal lines and vertical points are extremely useful for wind correction and for working out holdover/under. They are also crystal clear, thanks to the massive range of adjustment in the focusing ring on

the ocular bell.

I love that the reticle illumination is limited to the central fine crosshairs, providing an extremely precise aiming point whilst allowing uncluttered vision around the rest of field of view. I found it extremely useful in the low light situations that I was faced with during testing, with the precise rheostat settings allowing for minute adjustments as the light fades.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

There are a range of optional extras for this scope, including flip-up lens covers to replace the rubber-band ones, a quality zoom ring knob to aid turning the already silky-smooth zoom ring, and a neoprene scope cover – a brilliant idea, especially when out hunting in the rain like I was!

BELOW LEFT: These flip-up lens covers are an optional extra

BELOW RIGHT: If you want to pimp it further, grab the zoom ring knob

BOTTOM RIGHT: A neoprene cover is a great idea in the rain



CONCLUSION

I think I've said it all, to be honest. It's a case of 'if you can afford it, buy it'. What I would say, though, is that if you're serious about your competition shooting then a Zeiss Conquest V4 is going to certainly aid your performance.

My only quandary now is ... is £895 too much to put on the Christmas or birthday list? ■

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