

# KOC Commander Series

# Scopes

by senior correspondent  
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Though designed for hunting larger game, the KOC Commander also works well on a small-game rifle such as this heavy barreled Howa M1500 in .223.

It's been 12 months since I last had a look at King Optics Canada (KOC) products, so when Nick Vournazos from Teznic Australia phoned and asked me to have a look at an example of the current Commander Series scope, I was happy to oblige.

Slowly but surely, the good word about KOC products is starting to spread here in Australia, and Nick remains convinced that eventually, the sceptics will see the light and support his products to the extent they deserve. As a group, Australian hunters and shooters tend to be a fairly conservative lot and as Teznic has discovered, it takes time for new products to be accepted.

The Commander Series comprises four different scopes: two with 30mm tubes and fluted silver (Model CSFS) or black (CSFB) bodies; and two with 1" tube unfluted silver (CSS) or black (CSB) bodies. All four are 3.5-12x50mm scopes with 8 Plex etched

glass reticles with a central illuminated dot for lowlight conditions. All are designed as hunting rather than target shooting scopes and this is reflected in their construction and design features. All come out of the box in a zippered cordura bag.

## The review scope

The scope supplied for review was the Commander Series silver-bodied version (CSS) with a 1" tube. Like all the KOC scopes, its monotube body is made of aircraft-grade 6061-T6 aluminium. The scope is rated as waterproof, fogproof and shockproof.

It has three turrets: one each for windage and elevation as usual, while the third turret on the left-hand side of the body houses a rheostat and battery to power the illuminated reticle. Windage and elevation click adjustments have a nominal value of quarter MOA, which is both audible and

tangible.

The illuminated reticle has a variable brightness level from 1 (low) to 11 (high). At the rear of each turret is a black dot that provides a reference point for adjustments. Magnification adjustments are made with the power ring on the ocular bell; the full range of magnifications from 3.5 to 12 is available in about half a turn. The ring is quite firm to turn.

The ocular lens has a rubber-edged quick-focus ring that ensures the scope is quickly and easily adjusted to suit individual eye requirements. Both the objective and ocular lenses are fitted with slip-on see-through flip-up lens covers designed to help keep lens surfaces clean in the field or in the gun cabinet.

All lenses have a green multicoated film that offers excellent clarity and target definition at all ranges under all reasonable ambient light conditions. This is especially

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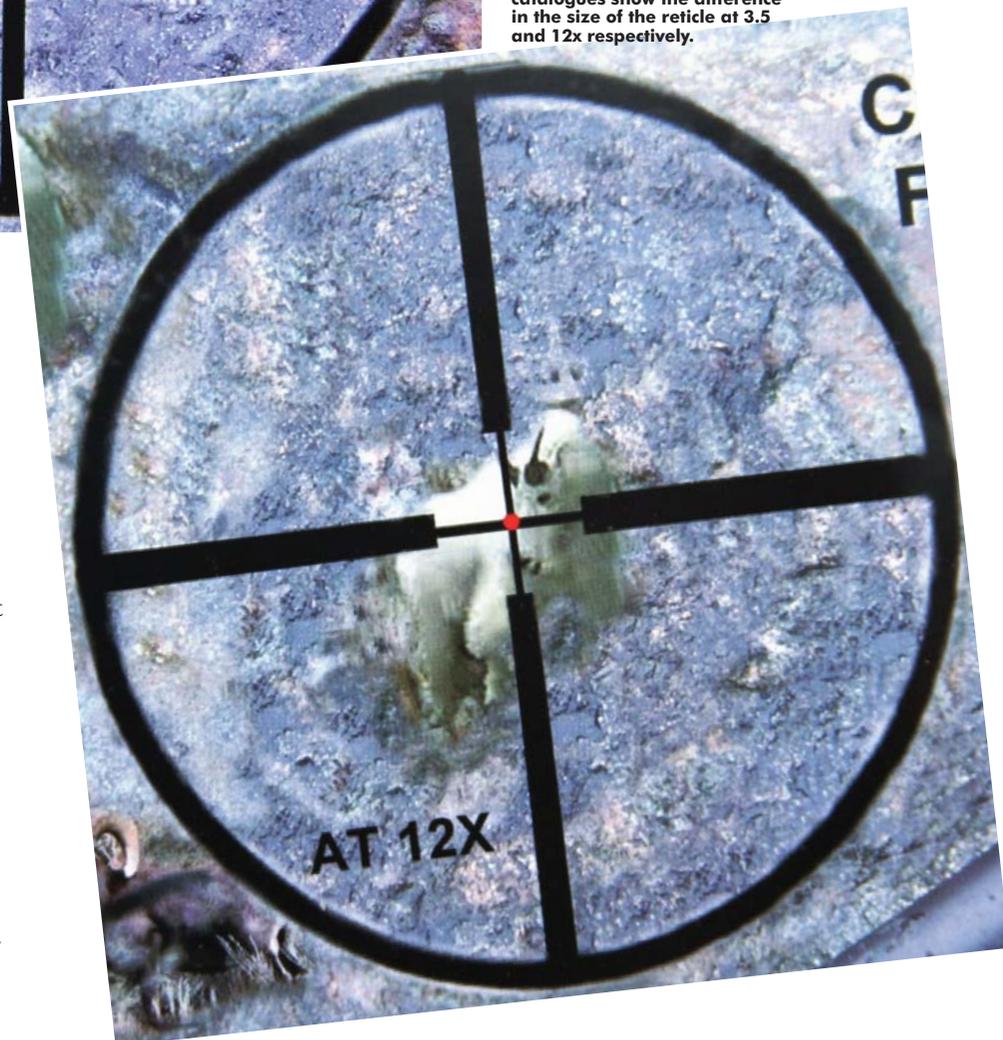


### First Focal reticle

Apart from its large objective lens, the other hunter-friendly feature the Commander Series has is that the reticle is located in the first focal plane. That means it doesn't move as the magnification rating is cranked up or down. If it doesn't move, there is no chance of the scope zero being affected by magnification changes. It also means that as the magnification is changed, the apparent size of the reticle changes with it - growing larger at higher magnifications and smaller if the lower ratings are used.

While those who shoot smaller game at longer ranges can find this feature a little disconcerting (a larger reticle covers more of the target than a finer one), those who hunt bigger game usually find that a coarser reticle is a plus, as it ensures the cross-hairs can be seen even under lowlight conditions. This is enhanced, of course, by the illuminated reticle that can be turned on to provide a readily seen central aiming point if required.

Illustrations from KOC catalogues show the difference in the size of the reticle at 3.5 and 12x respectively.



so in the early morning and late evening when light conditions are low and game is often moving about. The 50mm objective lens helps a lot, with the scope delivering more than 14mm of exit pupil at 3.5x and a tad more than 4mm at 12x.

There are still some people out there who insist that the exit pupil (or transmitted light, as some call it) is greater in a scope having a 30mm tube. Their theory is that a larger hose will always deliver more water; therefore, a larger scope tube will have to deliver more light. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. The major benefits of larger tube diameters are structural strength and more room for internal reticle adjustments.

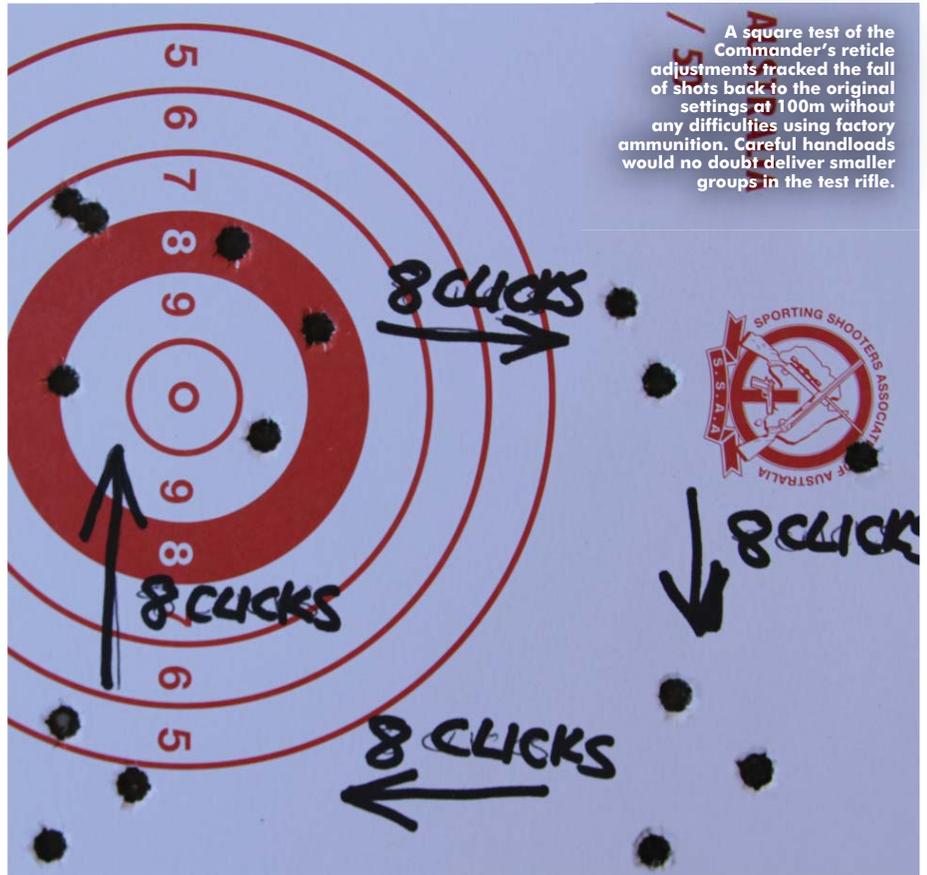
The exit pupil delivered by any given scope is determined by dividing the size of the objective lens (in millimetres) by the magnification rating being used. The larger the objective lens, the greater the derived exit pupil will be. As an example, a 4x32 scope will have an exit pupil of 8 ( $32/4=8$ ), while scopes such as the KOC Commander Series with a 50mm objective will deliver an exit pupil of 12.5 ( $50/4=12.5$ ) when set on 4x.

**Testing the CSS**

For testing, I mounted the Commander CSS scope on a heavy barrelled, stainless, laminated thumbhole-stocked Howa M1500 rifle in .223-calibre, which I recently purchased from the estate of the late John Neville (Tanta Gunsmithing). There were two reasons for choosing this rifle. Firstly, I needed some fire-formed cases so I could start reloading for it. Secondly, there aren't too many Howa rifles that won't produce reasonable accuracy with factory ammo. Given that I wanted to check the Commander's capacity to respond to adjustment, that effectively allowed me to 'kill two birds with one stone'.

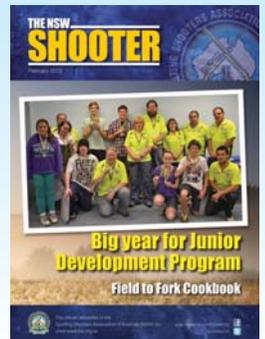
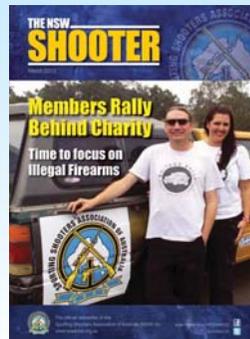
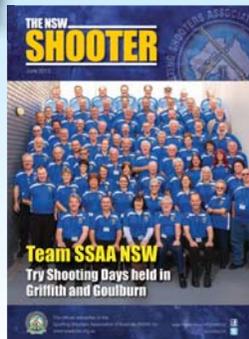
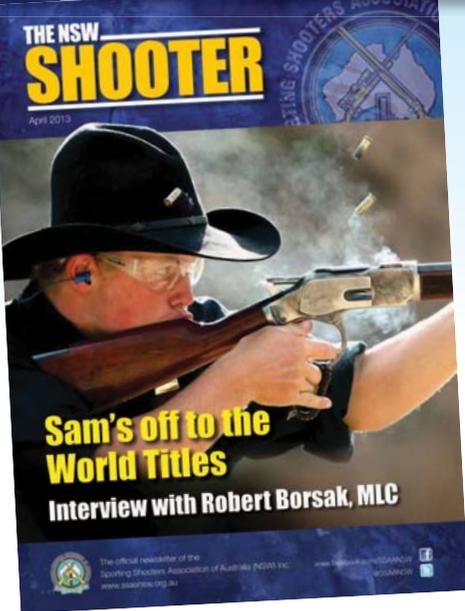
Using Winchester 55-grain factory ammo, I sighted-in the rifle at 100m. This produced groups of around 26 to 30mm, which I considered good enough to provide an indication of the scope's reliability under adjustment. At 100m, I fired a centred group and then conducted a square test, moving the reticle eight clicks to the right, eight clicks down, eight clicks left and then eight clicks up to theoretically return the group to its original place of impact. At each stop, a three-shot group was fired to verify the shifted reticle.

The accompanying photo tells the story pretty well. While the accuracy of the rifle



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isn't particularly brilliant, at this point in time, there's no doubting the ability of the Commander to track and react to changes accurately, which is what I needed to know. The other interesting result from that testing is that the central dot in the reticle doesn't cover as much of the target as I expected it to. On 12x, the reticle is very coarse, which is how it was designed to be, but the dot doesn't quite cover the inner rings of a standard SSAA 25/50m Rimfire target. In fact, there's a small white ring around the dot inside the red circle, which makes aiming much easier than I thought it would be.



The ocular bell on the Commander, showing the power change ring and the quick-focus ring, which allows the scope to be precisely focused to suit individual eye requirements.

In the paddock, that means holding on a rabbit's head is feasible, and while the amount of rabbit covered will increase with extended ranges, the reticle still provides a very precise aiming point, especially on the bigger game the scope was designed for. If the user still finds the central dot too big, all they have to do is wind the power rating back. In doing so, the size of the dot and the area it covers will decrease proportionally.

With the quick-focus ring set up for my eye, target definition was excellent at all ranges. Clarity of the sight-picture was also excellent across the full width of the objective lens, and had no hint of a shadow anywhere around the edges.

### Summary

As I've noted in previous reviews, I regard the King Optics Canada offerings as quality products. The Commander Series scope reviewed here is a very good scope, with a great selection of features that most serious hunters and shooters will appreciate. All they have to do is shake off their natural conservatism about new products, open

their eyes and minds and take an honest, unbiased look at what KOC has to offer. Like me, I'm sure most will be pleasantly surprised.

The KOC CSS 1" tube unfluted silver-bodied scope retails for around \$1400. For more information, speak to your local gunshop or visit [www.teznic.com.au](http://www.teznic.com.au) ●

## Specifications

**Magnification:** 3.5-12x  
**Objective Lens:** 50mm  
**Ocular Lens:** 36mm  
**Field of View (100m):** 31.48m -7.8m  
**Exit Pupil:** 14-4.17mm  
**Construction:** Monotube 6061T aluminium, silver finish, waterproof, shockproof and fogproof  
**Overall Length:** 340mm  
**Windage Movement:** ±30 MOA  
**Elevation:** ±25 MOA  
**Weight:** 569g  
**RRP:** \$1400

Flip-up lens covers are supplied with the scope. They do a good job of keeping debris and dust off the lenses both in the field or when the rifle and scope is stored.



The windage and elevation adjustments on the Commander scope are click-adjustable in quarter-MOA increments. Adjustments can be felt, heard and tracked in reference to the black dot on the scope body behind each turret.

*Commander Series  
Etched Glass Reticle  
First Focal Scope*

The script on the objective bell tells it all.

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