

KOC binoculars

by senior correspondent John Dunn

Much has been written about the utility and advantages of binoculars over the years, so rather than press the point any further with this review, I would simply offer the opinion that any hunter who doesn't own a reasonable quality binocular really isn't serious about their avocation.

Recently, I had the opportunity to review a couple of high-quality telescopic sights from King Optics Canada Incorporated (KOC), so when Nick Vournazos from Teznic, the Australian importers of KOC products, asked me if I'd like to have a look at their binoculars, I was happy to oblige.

At the time of writing, KOC offers two sporting binoculars: the 10x42F KOC-ABB1042 and the 8x36 KOC-BHC836. KOC also makes a military version of the 8x36 that incorporates a rangefinder and has a different external finish.

The KOC 8x36 with its camo armour finish. Note the lens cap hinging off the end of the centre hinge pin.



Binocular construction

Interestingly, the two binoculars offered are of different construction: one is a roof prism binocular, while the other is a Porro prism. This simply means that the way they transmit light and images is different, though the results are essentially the same.

Roof prism binoculars transmit in a vertical plane and are instantly recognisable by their straight leg construction. Due to the arrangement of their internal prisms, they are generally more expensive to produce. Usually, they are more dimensionally compact than Porro prism binoculars of the same rating, but they also weigh more.

Porro prism binoculars transmit in a horizontal plane and are characterised by their bent or dog-legged construction.

All binoculars take their name from the Latin 'binus' (meaning 'double') and 'oculus' (meaning 'an eye').

The 10x42F

The 10x42F is a compact roof prism binocular. Though I have no empirical data to support the notion, I believe roof prism construction is the flavour of the day with most modern manufacturers, though that wasn't always the case.

The barrels of the 10x42 are rubber armoured, each having a panel of chequering to provide a secure grip. The centre focus wheel is rear mounted on the pivot pin, where it's easily accessible to make fine-tuning a quick and simple process, especially



The KOC 10x42F is a typical, modern roof prism binocular with twist-up eyecups and a conveniently located centre focus wheel. The rubber armour coating is textured to provide a nonslip grip. Given the boomerang motif on each barrel, you could almost be tempted to think the binocular was made for Australia.

at longer distances, where a fine touch to the focal adjustment may be required.

Like all binoculars, the eyepieces need to be adjusted to suit individual eye requirements. This is a simple process that can usually be completed in a very short time. The correct method for adjusting the binocular is detailed in the owner's instructions supplied with the binocular.

It begins by closing the right eye and adjusting the centre focus wheel until you have a clear view with the left eye. Now close the left eye and adjust the dioptic ring on the back of the right eyepiece until you can see clearly with that eye. The binocular is now in focus for your eyes, and the centre wheel is used to adjust the view at all the different distances required.

The dioptic ring on the right eyepiece has a graduated scale that ensures the correct focus for your eyes can easily be reset, should the binocular be bumped out of focus or reset by somebody else. Like most modern binoculars, the 10x42 can be attached to a tripod via a threaded hole in the front of the central pivot pin. When not in use, the hole is protected by a coin-slotted screw that is easily removed or replaced.

Protective slip-on eye caps are provided with the 10x42. Each can be attached to the neck-strap supplied with the binocular, and though they can be a nuisance at times, their role in protecting the lenses from dust, moisture or scratches in the field far outweighs their sometimes inconvenience. Though they're a little finicky to attach to the strap, I'd recommend the owner takes the time to put them properly in place, as they really are a very practical accessory.

Also supplied with the 10x42 is a cordura carry-bag that can also be used in the field, as well as an optical glass cleaning cloth.

The 8x36

The 8x36 is a Porro prism binocular, quite different from the 10x42 in the way it looks and functions. It could probably be regarded as a 'traditional' binocular in the sense that it looks the way binoculars used to be, but it still has some very modern twists.

The lightweight body has the rubber armoured finish that's *de rigueur* on all modern binoculars, in this case with a camo pattern finish. On the top of each barrel the rubber is indented, and on the bottom, there is a series of raised dots - all designed to provide a secure gripping surface for both bare and gloved hands.

Apart from construction, the 8x36 differs from the 10x42, in that it's a focus-free binocular. Each eyepiece

has an individual dioptic ring. With the right eye closed, the left ring is adjusted until a clear picture is obtained. The process is then repeated with the left eye closed and the right eye open, at which time the user should have a clear view with both eyes out to whatever distance the binocular is required to be used at. No further focusing is required.

Each dioptic ring has a graduated scale, so if a note is made of individual adjustment settings, the focus can easily be checked and reset without having to go through the original process time and time again. There's no doubt that the system works, but for someone like me, who has used centre wheel focus binoculars all his life, not needing to focus at longer ranges takes some getting used to.

Like most modern binoculars, the central pivot pin is drilled and tapped for tripod attachment. The front of the pin also provides an attachment point for a pair of protective eye caps, and in the name of binocular protection, should be attached to the carry-strap and routinely used to keep the lens clean and free from potential harm.

A cordura carry-bag and a cleaning cloth are provided and it's worth

noting that only the cloth provided (or something similar) should be used to clean the lenses. Don't use ordinary tissue paper, as it can and will damage and scratch the lens coatings.

Summary

The two King Optics Canada binoculars provided for review were both what I consider to be very good quality binoculars. Optically, they are excellent, providing crisp and clear images, even under lowlight conditions - a situation that will always tell you more about the quality of lenses than staring at a green paddock or a blue sky under bright light conditions can ever do. The exit pupil for each is approaching the optimum of 5mm, which is about all the light that older eyes can effectively use.

Both binoculars are light enough to carry all day, and given a reasonable level of care, they should provide a lifetime of reliable use. Starting at around \$1300, these binoculars don't come cheaply, but at the end of the day, the purchaser will get the quality that they're paying for and more. In that sense, they're not expensive at all.

For more information, visit www.teznic.com.au ●

Specifications

	10x42F	8x36
Field of View:	91m/1000m	112m/1000m
Exit Pupil:	4.2mm	4.5mm
Eye Relief:	15.5mm	16mm
Near Focus:	2.2m	N/A
Focus Free:	N/A	Yes
Prism Glass:	BAK-4 multicoated	BAK-4 fully multicoated
Interpupillary Range:	65-81mm	57-73mm
Maximum Dimensions (HxW):	156x117mm	127x177mm
Waterproof and Fogproof:	Yes	100%, nitrogen filled
Tripod Adaptable:	Yes	Yes
Rubber Armoured:	Yes	Yes
Carry-case and -strap:	Yes	Yes
Lens Caps:	Yes	Yes
Weight:	820g	600g
Float on Water:	Yes	Yes
RRP:	\$1350	\$1300