

PULSAR
CHALLENGER
GS 1 X 20

Price
£289.95

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Give it **The NOD**

Pete Wadeson tests a rear-mounted monocular that allows you to use your day scope as NV glass, so what's it like?

The Challenger series of monoculars from Pulsar have been around a while and I've had a lot of opportunities to use the most basic GS (Generation Super) 1 X 20 unit on test. The initial aspect that strikes you is its compact, light and fulfils a multitude of roles. Even though it gives real time viewing as a handheld night observation device (NOD) the sight picture is clear and excellent for this level of equipment. It has the usual features you'd expect - onboard IR illuminator (even though it's probably the most 'puny' you'll find anywhere else) but that's been purposely lessened in power.

5-LENS EYEPIECE

Reason being the unit has a 5-lens eye-piece that minimizes distortion at the edges of the wide field of view and increases sharpness and contrast of the image observed. Different is the fact the Challenger is switched on by a front-facing, ridged dial; turn clockwise for ON. To prevent accidental switch on of the IR, the dial needs to be pulled forward then turned clockwise again where under spring tension it returns back to the body.

The test unit offers x1 magnification, which is OK but a bit low powered when using it as an NOD. However, the idea behind a mono of this type is that it can be fitted to your day scope to give an NV facility that uses the variable



The Pulsar Challenger GS 1 X 20. Note adaptor rings of different thicknesses to allow a wide range of scope fitting using the optional extra DSA Adaptor as seen above



magnification of the optic. It's not recommended you go higher than x4 if you want to maintain good resolution and sight picture. This works best with a scope that has a front or side focus facility, as fine tuning the sight picture on both units is what it's all about!

SUITABLE OPTIC

Fitting the mono to your scope requires a day scope adaptor (DSA bracket) which is an optional extra. This slides over the eyepiece bell and uses special rings to take up the space for a secure fit. The monocular then slides into the rear of the DSA and you are connected. You can set up/zero in daylight (less monocular) then put it on after dark and fine tune the focus for best picture. Take time in

setting it up and you'll soon realise this gives an exceptional viewing image when attached to a suitable optic. The mono is 5 7/8" long to the end of the eye-piece and not the extended rubber eye-cup and 3" at its widest point where the onboard IR is positioned. All powered by a single CR123A battery.

After choosing the scope, here I used a Hawke Sidewinder 4 - 16 X 50 fit the DSA using the optimum adaptor ring, then tighten using the thumbscrew



The Challenger 1 X 20 Monocular now simply pushes into back of DSA until it abuts up flush to opposing side - note Weaver Rail for fitting additional kit, higher intensity IR's, lasers etc...

Now the biggest bone of contention - the need for IR and quite frankly lots of it! Unless you are targeting an area in ambush you'll soon get disillusioned adjusting focus rings as well. These are ambush tools, the Challenger being a superb one at that. Being

Front on detail of Challenger, note the operational dial, puny IR and front lens protector cover



rear-mounted it will force your head back from a normal head/stock position. But both the DSA and monocular are quite short so causing minimum disturbance, given the system. This is probably the most head-friendly add-on I've used that doesn't push your head so far back you feel it'd be easier to pull the trigger with your leading hand!

IR

With a selection of add-on IR illuminators available detection range will put you out to approximately 150 yds + and allow clear identification of various quarry species to take the shot - 30 yds (12ft lb air rifle), 50 - 60yds (30ft lb

FAC-rated) and within 80-yds for a rimfire, that's with the optional Laserluchs IR fitted to the integral Weaver rail of the DSA. Check the tech spec for optional extras, but trust me for the price this is one hell of a unit and still the most affordable way to have an NV capability too.

{ TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS }

Pulsar Challenger GS 1 X 20

- Magnification x1
- Objective lens 20mm
- FOV (Angular) 40°
- Maximum detection range with onboard IR 100m
- Tripod Mount Yes
- Dimensions 163 X 3.1 X 2.3mm
- Weight 0.3KG (10.6oz)
- Price £289.95
- Optional Extras
 DSA Bracket £29.95
 Pulsar 805/940IR £89.95,
 L-808 IR £189.95
- Contact Contact Thomas
 Jacks Limited 01789 264100
 www.thomasjacks.co.uk

↑ FOR

Sight picture clarity, build, easy to fit to most scopes, comfortable to use and well priced

↓ AGAINST

You will need a parallaxing scope of good quality

→ VERDICT

This is one of the best add-on NV monoculars around and a good alternative to an NV scope