



Mike Powell reviews the PVS-14C night vision monocular

Compact, lightweight and a great quality picture

THINK it would be fair to say that for years now the PVS night vision unit has achieved almost legendary status among those of us who shoot after dark. In years gone by it was impossible to get hold of a PVS by normal means, and the few that appeared were snapped up immediately.

Since those early days, things in the night vision arena have undergone pretty radical changes and thermal and digital equipment has moved on in leaps and bounds. Tony Jones of Night Master fame has been involved with the Canadian firm of GSCI for some time now and is now the UK importer of their products.

The PVS-14C is a lightweight and compact unit that is very easy to attach to the rear of a conventional day scope by a simple clamp that is also easy to use in the dark. This has certain advantages, especially if the unit is being used as a spotter in conjunction with a thermal scope such as the excellent Pulsar Thermion, a scope I shall be looking at (and through) in the nights to come.

Something else that really appeals to me about the PVS-14C is just how simple it is to use

The PVS comes in two formats – a green or a white phosphor screen display. I chose the latter as personally I think this is better when using it as a night vision add-on whereas the green version has the edge as a pure spotter; however, both do the job extremely well.

The PVS-14C weighs in at around 14oz which doesn't interfere with the balance of the rifle. In the past there has always been a query over rear mounted add-ons causing problems with eye relief. Because the PVS is quite short I really didn't find this to be a problem at all. However, should users find they do need a little more eye relief all you need to do is to slip on a rubber butt pad which will sort the problem immediately.

Do remember to remove the butt pad after use, as if you have a wooden stock slip-on rubber butt pads it can, for some reason, leave a mark where they have been.

Something else that really appeals to me about the PVS-14C is just how simple it is to use. Nowadays, many of the digital units, although they work very well, do have a considerable

number of features, many of which to my mind are unnecessary for the practical shooter, and can tend to confuse the user in the heat of the moment! In the case of the PVS controls are very simple; there is a single on/off and infrared control, clarity and focusing are carried out by turning the appropriate control rings mounted on the eye piece and front lens, and that's it!

Incidentally, the unit is powered by using either one AA or a CR123 battery, and an extender cap is provided to enable an AA battery to be used. UBX technology ensures long battery life and also rather uniquely means you cannot install a battery the wrong way round, as it doesn't matter.

target, so confirmation has to be made with a conventional night vision unit and this the PVS-14C does very well indeed.

I found the PVS simple and very straightforward to use compared with some of the digital night vision units. While it has its own source of infrared built in there may be situations where increased infrared is needed. I used the Wicked Lights A51iR which worked brilliantly with the PVS. I also liked the fact you could increase the magnification on the scope, in fact I tested the PVS on 14x and got an excellent picture.

Priced at £2,760 it isn't cheap, but it is good!

As mentioned earlier, attaching to the ocular lens of a scope is simple; however, the choice of scope as in the case of most add-on night vision units can be critical. Quite often, high end scopes with their very sophisticated coatings don't lend themselves too well to being used with night vision add-ons. I use most of my add-ons with Hawke scopes that do work very well.

As with most night vision it can be a case of trial and error. When you first get a night vision scope or add-on it really does pay to get to know it before using it in the field. I have known a lot of people who almost give up night vision because 'it doesn't work that well'. Most of it does work very well indeed, but half an hour spent getting to know it in the garden really is time well spent.

The PVS-14C is an excellent night vision add-on/monocular; it has a Gen2+ tube and the one I tested had the white phosphor screen. Priced at £2,760 it isn't cheap, but it is good!

I liked the compact size and the light weight, but above all I liked its ability to give a really good picture either through the scope or when used as a spotter. It's always had an excellent reputation and now with the back-up Night Master offers I'm sure it has an excellent future.



So how did the unit perform in the field? As a spotter, while not in the same class as a thermal, it does the job very well indeed. As I mentioned earlier, I am in the process of evaluating the Thermion thermal scope.

Thermal imaging in the civilian market has come on in leaps and bounds over the last few years and although I have used thermal for some considerable time as a spotting medium (I have a pair of Accolade thermal binoculars that are amazingly good), it's one thing spotting but another thing altogether using thermal to shoot with.

I would say that while a good thermal scope will give you probably a 95 per cent identification rate that isn't good enough to shoot at a living