



ACCURA STALKER 2-12X50 RIFLESCOPE

A sub-\$500 scope with solid optics that punches above its price tag

By Selwyn Smith

We all know that adage: spend as much on your optics as you spend on your rifle and you won't go wrong. Scrimp on your scope and it will eventually bite you - probably right when you have that massive trophy in your sights.

I've purchased numerous scopes over the years in the search for the holy grail - optics that deliver a lot more than their equivalent priced competition. To date, this concept has been a bit of a myth; generally you get exactly what you pay for with optics. I threw the towel in many years ago and stopped buying 'fair value' optics, instead buying the best glass I could afford. The Accura line-up might just shatter that long-held viewpoint.

THE ACCURA SERIES

The name 'Accura' was introduced back in 1967, used for a line of camera lenses and binoculars

manufactured in Japan. The Accura name now features a brand-new line of riflescopes designed in Australia.

The Accura series encompasses hunting, varmint and tactical scopes with a model for nearly every conceivable shooting scenario. Think of Accura as slotting into the mid-tier/value range of hunting optics. Models include:

- The Stalker 2-12x50 30mm RX Illuminated
- The Tracker 3-18x50 30mm G4 Illuminated
- The Reacher 4.5-27x50 30mm BDC Illuminated
- The Varminator 5-30x56 30mm A60 Illuminated ▶

ABOVE:

The Accura Stalker proved its worth on this evening hunt with consecutive deer at 350m+. The slotted turret cover holds the standard button cell battery to power illumination.



ABOVE:

Fading light across fringe bush was a great test for the fully multi-coated HD lenses. Note the illumination adjustment on the left turret.

The RX floating crosshair is similar to that used by the likes of Burris and Steiner and can be illuminated in the usual manner with a twist of the cap on the outer of the parallax turret.

- The Recon 4.5-27x50 TH Illuminated FFP, Zero Stop.

I'm reasonably familiar with most of the names across the hunting industry, but when Phil mentioned that we'd be reviewing a new line of Accura scopes, I must admit I'd never heard of the brand before. The box turned up and I immediately whipped the scope out, got the turret caps off and twirled everything for a quick first impression.

C.R. Kennedy - another name I'd never heard of before - are the distributors of Accura as well as many other lines of hunting gear. They've been around since 1954 and are the oldest international distributor of the well-known brand Pentax. They also have relationships with Zeiss and are experts in cameras, lenses and Pro Video as well as lighting and studio gear. They really know optics and have recently started redistributing hunting gear (they imported firearms in their early years). I suggest every reader goes to their website for a full list of the hunting and outdoor gear they stock.

STALKER 2-12X50 RX ILLUMINATED FEATURES

Designed to be a multi-purpose hunting scope, this second (rear) focal plane scope features a one-piece 30mm maintube, illuminated reticle and a useful 2-12x zoom with a 50mm objective. Clicks are ¼ inch with 100 MOA total travel. The scope weighs in at 730 grams and is 320mm in length. Turrets are capped, making it ideal for

hunting in the tight stuff. Accura use a floating crosshair in the centre of the reticle, calling this 'Rapid Cross', or RX. The RX floating crosshair is similar to that used by the likes of Burris and Steiner and can be illuminated in the usual manner with a twist of the cap on the outer of the parallax turret. Every second notch increases illumination across the six brightness settings with every other notch turning illumination off. Flip-up lens covers are included to protect both the objective and eyepiece lenses.

MOUNTING THE STALKER

Using the Porter Machine Works rings that were already on my Tikka 595 in .260 Rem. I left them mounted on the 20 MOA rail and levelled the scope in short order. Mounting took all of five minutes.

A final check to ensure eye relief was okay in the event of a steep uphill shot, and screws were torqued to 20 inch/pound. The crosshairs sit 600mm above the bore centre, so the high rings will accommodate the biggest objective scopes. The 320mm length of the Accura Stalker was absolutely perfect for a short action and the 50mm objective blended right in.

AT THE RANGE

Readers will understand that high rings often mean your cheek needs to be well off the standard comb height to get your eyeball centred on the reticle. This does nothing for precision shooting, with a strained neck and increased felt recoil the likely result. The ideal is a comb height that allows a natural cheek weld and a scope mounted as low to the centre of the bore as possible, so your eye settles on the middle of the crosshairs. This aids recoil management and will improve your shooting no end. The very high Porter Machine Works rings wouldn't allow this, so I installed a simple Velcro padded cheek piece to increase the comb height and help to align my cheek weld and line of sight with the scope reticle.

A couple of tweaks of the quick-focus eyepiece saw the reticle nice and crisp against the target. I wound the power change ring throughout the full range, noting the reticle stayed in place, which was encouraging. The magnification ring has a ribbed centre to aid grip and doesn't have any bits jutting out, such as a quick power change ring, so it won't snag

on anything in the field. Winding from the 2-12 setting was nice and firm. I needed to grab the power change ring with a reasonable grip to wind it throughout the power – although the amount of travel is about half a turn from 2x to 12x, so it's quick to adjust when that wall hanger drifts out of the gully in front of you.

Windage is via a capped turret with the standard ¼ inch at 100-yard adjustment. Clicks were firm and precise and clearly audible.

The left-hand parallax turret features the usual graduating scale from 15 metres to infinity. It takes very little adjustment to go from 50-500m; it sometimes does require some careful tuning at longer range to get a clear sight picture. Usefully, the outer half of the parallax turret is larger than the inner, allowing quick engagement and ensuring your fingers don't intertwine with the illumination setting. The outer half is also ribbed. A great design. Parallax rotation is nice and firm.

Windage on the right-hand side is via a covered/non-exposed turret. Again, clicks are ¼in/100yds and were firm without any sponginess.

The RX reticle was outstanding for precision work and is one of the best I've used. Illumination is a nice luxury, especially against a black bullseye background, and the six numbered brightness settings got a real workout during the range session. Every second notch turns illumination off with every other notch increasing the brightness. The outer cover/screw holding the illumination battery has a knurled edge that unfortunately is the same diameter as the illumination knob. This means it's easily engaged and can unscrew when you want to turn on your illumination – unless it's tightened with a bit of authority. It would've been good to see the battery cover inset, or a smaller diameter to the outer turret to avoid your fingers grabbing the knurled edge when adjusting illumination.

BOX TEST

The box test was conducted with the standard A2 tracking sheet. Firing at the centre bull, turrets were wound around the target with a shot fired at each setting. Walking adjustments around the A2 target showed perfect performance throughout the test.

Eye relief was so comfortable that I almost

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ignored it. The fact I hardly noticed it reminds me there's plenty of margin for larger calibres. This is just as well, as removing the flip-up scope cover on the eyepiece showed there was no protective rubber around the outer edge of the ocular lens. You'll know all about it if you scope yourself without the flip-up cover.

IN THE FIELD

After a gruelling 4WD trip into the big Otago tussock country, we were on the lookout for big red stags. It was the first weekend in March – too early for the Roar, although we'd heard anecdotally from a pest controller that there were a few stags about with harems in tow. Temperatures were forecast to climb into the mid-20s, so early morning and late afternoon were our only hopes of locating a big wall hanger.

I had plenty of time to assess the scope in the field – winding the power change ring in and out across some of the grass-filled gullies, snow-tussock scree fringes and matagouri-choked creek beds. Optical resolution was very good with the HD glass showing excellent colour rendition and edge-to-edge clarity. Every time I looked into the recesses of a dark matagouri gut, the Accura Stalker reminded me that its lenses are fully multi-coated. The sight picture was surprisingly detailed and ►



ABOVE:

Flip-up scope covers are provided to help keep dust and moisture off the lenses before setting up.

BELOW:

At 320mm in length, this scope is ideal on a short action. The 50mm objective is hardly noticeable.





ABOVE:

Faultless performance and solid optical clarity in a compact package – whether on the tops or in the bush, the Accura Stalker is highly versatile.

clear – defying virtually all my expectations of a sub-\$500 scope.

Despite seeing a promising stag with a group of hinds at 950m, we never got anywhere near them as the anabatic wind sweeping up the surrounding gullies pushed a whiff of the neighbouring hunting party’s signature directly to the big boy and his harem.

Later that day, we were perched atop a steep slope overlooking a promising face. The screaming southerly had us glassing with some haste to find something to chase to get off the tops. Alas, it wasn’t to be. We did, however, get an opportunity to line the Accura up on some departing deer after sunset. On 6x, low-light ability with the 50mm objective was reasonably good – a fair bit better than the naked eye alone, adding another few minutes to last-light hunting.

We trudged back via a different route under headlamps and managed to find a thick hedge of head-high matagouri. The two bikini scope covers that came with the scope didn’t survive the next 15 minutes being dragged through the wall of thorns; the front cover was ripped off somewhere in the darkness and the rear cover snapped under some pressure as we forced our way through a tight wall of sharp branches. I don’t use flip-up covers for this very reason – if you hunt in the thick stuff, they’ll likely fail.

A couple of weeks later, we were hunting the fringes hoping for a few groans at the beginning of the first balloted Roar period. Disappointingly, the 20-odd hinds that we glassed over the first two days had no stags with them! Conditions were just too mild – warm and muggy ... not what we needed to get the stags into first gear. A wet, foggy day had me lining up Douglas’ Meopta Meosport

3-15x50 and Bryce’s VX5 3-15x44 scopes alongside the Accura. All scopes were set on 12x for comparison. Foggy conditions and dim light post 5pm and the Accura was starting to lag behind the Meopta and the VX5. Remember the Meopta is twice the cost of the Accura and the VX5 more than four times the cost, so we’d expect some difference in crisp detail, colour rendition and optical brightness. Irrespective, the Accura with fully multi-coated HD lenses held up pretty well in the poor light conditions.

Day Three, and Bryce spotted four deer ghosting through a gap in the scrub across the gully; the range was 352m. The four red deer were gradually making their way to a 50m clearing. Bryce was itching to get a round downrange as opportunities had been challenging – despite glassing so many animals over the preceding two days.

I flicked the illumination on to 5 and adjusted the parallax. There are no hash markings on the reticle and the elevation turret isn’t designed for dial-up, so Kentucky windage it was. I knew the ballistics of this rifle inside out so settled the crosshair just above the shoulder of the lower animal. Bryce fired and I squeezed off on the report. Two distinct hits echoed back. Bryce lost the animals due to his narrower field of view on 15x. Not so with the Accura.

The next animal darted uphill. The Accura’s sharply illuminated crosshair followed this animal and again settled above the shoulder. As soon as it paused, I squeezed off. Another direct hit with the .260.

The 140gr Sierra TKG showed devastating performance on both deer with neither projectile recovered, which has been typical. An outstanding result to top up the early autumn barbeque stocks before winter.

CONCLUSION

At less than \$500, the Accura 2-12x50 RX will appeal to a wide range of hunters – from bush hunters who demand the ability to dial magnification down and combine solid clarity in low-light bush settings, to those that get out onto the tops and need reasonable magnification with solid optical performance without breaking the bank.

Does the Accura punch above its price tag? It truly is more than meets the eye ... ■

<p>SPECIFICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnification: 2-12x • Objective lens diameter: 50mm • Tube diameter: 30mm • Focal plane: second • Turret: capped • Click value: ¼" • Total travel: 100 MOA • Parallax: 10-∞ • Eye relief: 41-35" • Field of view: 2x: 44yds, 12x: 7.3yds • Length: 320mm • Weight: 730g <p>RRP \$499</p> <p>MORE INFO www.crkennedy.co.nz</p>
