

Hawke's Airmax Touch is a bold broadside to its rivals, note its compact size

The AMX reticle offers a multitude of aim points, with central illumination

Up close and personal

Mark Camoccio investigates Hawke's brand new rival to the MTC Connect

For anyone new to the game, the local club is always a good place to get hands-on with hardware, and I often get asked advice on which scope is suitable for a particular discipline. One model which has made a big impression on the scene is the Connect Viper from MTC, and in a market awash with clones, this radical model was a real original, and highly successful from the outset. Rival manufacturers have been surprisingly slow to bring out alternative models, but that now looks set to change, and on show here is the brand new Airmax Touch from Hawke, which looks set to take on the Connect full on.

In yer face!

So what's all the fuss about? Well, like it's rival, Hawke's new baby - the Airmax Touch 3-12x32 SF AMX IR is designed to operate with minimal eye relief, and the result, for those unfamiliar with the concept, is a unique shooting experience. I'll be right back on that.

The Touch comes with rubber linked lens covers, cloth, a rubber eyepiece, 3" side-wheel, battery and instructions, along with 16-layer multi-coated lenses, and a wide-angle optical system. At £329 the Hawke Touch not only looks competitive but also comes in at exactly the right point to pitch against its MTC rival.

Variable magnification from 3-12x means Hunter Field Target (HFT) fans have the option of setting up between 8-10x, (the popular mags for this demanding sport) and an objective lens of 32mm keeps everything compact. Target turrets, side focus, reticle illumination, and the AMX reticle itself, are all welcome features, so on paper at least, the Touch is an intriguing prospect. As always, what's deemed suitable for the sport of HFT should be equally applicable to a real-life hunting scenario, and that largely holds true here.



The side wheel is a push fit and then tightens in position, note the rheostat and the brightness levels



The well-marked tactical turrets get screw caps and offer 1/10 MRAD clicks



Ultra short eye relief is what this model is all about, make sure you take the time to set it up



Note the fast focus at the rear, and the variable magnification ring

Get it together

This model has a 30mm body tube, so with the mounts fitted, I was almost ready to go. The Touch, as mentioned, comes supplied with a side wheel, and this is intended to be fixed onto the left-hand side focus turret, with the idea that it aids focus, and, as per FT use, it can also expand the gaps between target distances, in theory making them easier to read. Obviously, at the relatively low magnifications in use here, the benefits of a side-wheel are reduced, yet if you just like the feel of it in use, then it is simply a push fit over the turret. It shows regular markings from 8 yards - ∞.

The turrets feel nicely made, but with depth measured at around 4" side to side, they are unnecessarily bulbous, requiring thick padding in any carry case. Unscrew and remove the caps, and the target style turrets are precisely marked up, click values are 1/10 MRAD, and are positive, whilst both turrets also get rotation indicators.

Eyes wide open

Correctly mounting this model is critical, as in use, the ocular lens surround touches the eye socket whilst in the aim. Therefore final positioning is best achieved over a few shooting sessions, gently nudging the scope within its mounts to gain the perfect position for comfort, before tightening the mounts. I tried fitting the rubber cup supplied, but personally for my configuration, and with the fast focus wound quite a way out for a clear reticle, I didn't have room for it.

Take aim with the scope, and the sensation of that ultra-short eye relief (Hawke call it zero, but it is technically 1.2" as opposed to the usual 3-3.5"), really does bring a unique feel. The usual fast focus adjuster sits at the rear, and its relevance with this scope is more critical, since winding it out to achieve a clear reticle at the start, actually brings the lip of the unit more into contact with the eye socket.

The design has the result of a much wider field of view, with the Touch offering around a 30% increase over a conventional scope with a similar specification. The ultra-short eye relief should mean in use, that parallax error is minimized, although consistent head mounting is still the key to accurate shooting, as with any scope.

Glass-etched

Overall, clarity and image quality on the test, was impressive, with no discernable aberration/ distortions, and I soon had the scope zeroed. Hawke's AMX reticle is a floating design, offering their Christmas tree layout, with Mil dots, half Mil marks, and outer hollow dots which also offer Mil values. True milliradian values can be used when the magnification is set to 10x, and being glass etched means that the reticle is somewhat more robust than wire designs.

If you fancy illumination, then the central area can be lit up in red using the rheostat on the left. One-click switches on the first level, (up to six brightness levels) and alternate click points turn the unit off, which is a nice touch. Power comes from a CR2032 battery which is concealed within the cap of the rheostat knob.

Verdict

The Airmax Touch 3-12x32 SF AMX IR comes with Hawkes lifetime warranty, and unsurprisingly comes nitrogen purged, plus is waterproof, shockproof and fog proof. I'm really not keen on the overly wide turrets, but otherwise, the Touch is a bold addition to this increasingly stylish brand. OK; it is maybe stating the obvious, but the Touch system is not suitable for recoiling airguns, due to the way that the scope comes into contact with the face, and the way these scopes handle will not suit everyone, due to that slightly intrusive feel. However, if the system does appeal, then there's no doubting the neatness of the execution, and the theoretical advantage on offer.

Coming to an HFT firing line near you! GM

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Name:	Hawke Airmax Touch 3-12x32 SF
Reticle:	AMX IR
Weight:	572-grams
Length:	10.5"
Click Adjustment:	1/10 MRAD
Field of View:	63.8-18.2ft @100yds
Eye Relief:	1.2"
Body Tube:	30mm
Clicks per rotation:	60
Price:	£329
Contact:	Hawke Optics https://uk.hawkeoptics.com

