

TESTED BY
PAUL AUSTIN

« HAWKE LRF 8X42 BINOS

Hawke have finally added the finishing touch to the Frontier line with an all-new set of LRF binos. Paul Austin starts pinging and he's impressed!

It's been a long time coming, but Hawke have finally added LRF binos to their Frontier line. It would seem an obvious step, as Hawke are well known for traditional range finders. However, it's a tough market to crack when you combine expensive production costs with the snobbery associated with the LRF bino market.

It appears that the Leica/Zeiss/Swarovski stranglehold on the market, at least at the entry level, may be at an end with Steiner, Delta and now Hawke throwing their hats into the ring around the £1,000 mark. That's way less than half what the big boys are asking for their flagship offerings, all of which weigh in at around £2,800.

The acid test for me with any LRF is the sheep shed! Not just any sheep shed, but the one that sits conveniently high on the mountainside towards the end of the adjacent valley wall opposite my house. Straight out of the box, and with the CR2 battery safely installed, it was my first target.

The first ping reported 1,230m, which is spot on

based on my previous tests, so a promising start. As shed hunting isn't really my thing, I then turned my attention to the sheep peppering the hillside for some real-world ranging tests – not that sheep hunting is really my thing either.

Although the specs quote 1,800m as the maximum ranging distance, that's likely based on a sizeable and reflective target. On the adjacent sheep-splattered grassy hillside, the maximum reliable pings topped out around 1,260m, which is impressive and keeps place with the Steiner and Delta LRFs I've reviewed recently.

If you need more ranging distance you will need to take a look at the big boys, but before shelling out a small fortune you do need to ask yourself if it's bragging rights you're after or a real-world shooting aid. I can't think of or any situation in which I'd even consider a shot, other than on steel, at anywhere near 1,200m.

supplied CR2 battery into the bridge-mounted battery compartment, close your left eye and tap the right-side power button to ping a target. With the OLED display active, adjust the right dioptre to focus the display, then use the main bridge-mounted focus dial for a pin-sharp image. Finally, close your right eye, open your left and use the dioptre on the left barrel to set the focus for that eye. That's it.

With the OLED display active you can use the menu button to cycle through the modes, with a short press on the power button skipping through the six brightness levels. The layout is clear and will be instantly familiar to anyone who's used a range finder in the past.

Modes include Distance/Scan, Horizontal Distance, Angle, Rain, Hunt and Near, all with auto shut-off. The Frontiers also offers true horizontal distance (THD), which when combined with the angle gives you all the information you need to make the necessary ballistic calculations prior to taking a shot at extended range.

The Frontier range is Hawke's

CONTACT

For further information visit:
www.hawkeoptics.co.uk

SETUP AND BUILD

The initial setup is done in seconds. First sling the

BELOW: Simple and sensible ergonomics that really deliver at a distance



PICTURES: PAUL AUSTIN

◀ premium line, whether that be scopes or binos, and as you'd expect the build quality is excellent. This pair have a nice ergonomic design with a textured finish and are not overly heavy given all the electronics tucked away inside.

The various dials and adjusters are nicely weighted and overall it feels like a quality product. In addition to the binos themselves you also get a decent selection of extras, the highlight of which is an included bino harness as well as a standard neoprene neck strap.

The harness is fairly basic but it's a great fit and keeps all that expensive glass nicely padded and secure when climbing gates, and also avoids clanging them against the bodywork, bonnet or flatbed of your truck when you need to take a quick shot. It's a really useful addition to the overall package that neither the Delta nor the Steiner LRFs provide.

In terms of the glass, again there are no complaints; the image is bright and sharp, with nice contrast and no discernible chromatic aberration. You will take a slight hit in terms of light transmission due to the additional hardware within the barrels, but that's a very small price to pay for the ranging abilities that an LRF provides. In typical daylight shooting scenarios you'll struggle to notice any real difference.

Hawke are clearly confident with the build quality and are offering a lifetime warranty for the mechanical and optical components and two years for

the electronics. They're IPX7 waterproof and fog proof, so in terms of longevity it looks as though we are in safe hands.

8X42 OR 10X42?

With only £100 between them it's perhaps tempting to opt for the bigger number, but the fact is there's no bad choice here. The decision should really be based on your shooting style. If you shoot over large areas of open country the 10x42s might be the better option. Essentially there's always a trade-off between the two.

The 8x provide a wider field of view at 7.5° as opposed to the 6° of the 10x model – plus you do save a little weight with the 8x. Basically you can scan more ground more quickly with the 8x at the cost of slightly less magnification. For me there's very little in it but I'd probably opt for the 8x primarily for the added FOV, as that better suits my style of shooting.

THE BOTTOM LINE

These new LRFs fit perfectly into the Frontier line-up. It's Hawke's premium range and it has made real inroads into the market, with serious shooters embracing the Frontier scopes in particular. The new LRF binos are a well-made, nicely engineered product that performs exceptional well in terms of both image clarity and ranging performance.

Any complaints? No, not really. If you're a serious shooter who's more concerned about the ability of a

Available
in all good
gun shops from
December 2022.

8x42 £999
10x42 £1,099



ABOVE: The perfect partnership – the Frontier LRFs and their included harness

product than the brand, the new Hawke LRFs are a great choice that reaffirm the Frontier line's place in the market. Highly recommended. [RS](#)

TECH SPECS

Optical system:	System H7
Magnification:	8x
Objective lens:	42mm
Colour:	Green
Lens coating:	Wide-band/anti-reflection/fully multicoated lenses with water-repellent coating
Field of view:	393ft @ 1,000yd/131m @ 1,000m
Field of view:	7.5°
Apparent field of view:	60°
Eye relief:	16mm
Exit pupil:	5.3mm
Interpupillary distance:	2.2-3"/2.2-3mm
Close focus:	33ft/10.1m
Prism type:	Patented prism system with beam split coating
Eye cups:	Twist-up (replaceable)
Dioptr type:	Left eye
Tripod mounting thread:	No
Height:	165mm
Width:	115-138mm
Weight:	999g
Modes:	Standard, horizontal distance, angle, rain, near, hunt
Display:	OLED
Range:	10-1,800m
Accuracy:	±1m
Angle range:	90°
Battery:	3V CR2
Waterproof:	IPX7

A compact design that at first glance you'd assume were just a standard set of binos

