



# Through The Looking Glass

Mark Camoccio explores the Hawke Vantage 30 WA SF IR 4-16x50

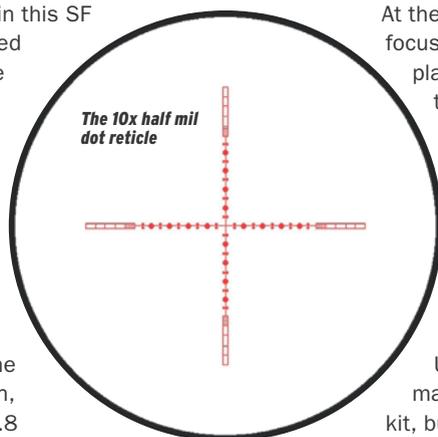
**H**awke are becoming an ever-more dynamic player in the optics market, and with constantly evolving products and an energised team of enthusiasts behind the operation, the shooting fraternity has never been better served.

Admittedly, their newly launched Sidewinders have been grabbing the headlines, but look through their latest slickly produced brochure, and there's an array of models aimed at a variety of shooting scenarios.

## VANTAGE

On test here is one of the Vantage range – the 30 WA SF IR 4-16 x 50 model; WA stands for Wide Angle optical system, SF denotes Side Focus, and IR is Illuminated Reticle; 30 is the body tube in mm, there's a glass-etched reticle, and 11-layer fully multi-coated System H2 optics. So it all looks good on paper!

There are two models in this SF range with WA spec' aimed at airgun use, and Hawke make a point of stating that they have a larger field of view (FOV) than normal. I was intrigued to confirm the difference, and it basically equates to a FOV of 28.8 feet at 100 yards on my test model when viewed on the highest 16x magnification, and this compares to 23.8 feet with the standard front parallax AO version. No big deal in the grand scheme of things, but nice to know, nonetheless. Inside the box, alongside the scope, there's elasticated, see-through lens covers,



lens cloth and battery for the reticle. Pick up the Vantage, and the silky matte black exterior and general high grade finish can't fail to impress.

At the rear there's the usual fast-focus adjuster, and it's worth playing with this at the start, to get everything crisp. Wait until the reticle and target come in sharp together, and the task is done. Click adjustments are 1/10mrad and nice and positive, although one of my regular gripes concerns overly chunky turrets. Undoubtedly, a trend in the market for tactical, boldly styled kit, but unnecessary bulk can be an irritation. Chunky turrets here give this Vantage significant width that will need a suitably wide, padded case to protect the glass from taking a knock. As for the mechanism, it's the push/pull variety. Pull up the

turret, make adjustments, and push down to lock.

## FOCUS RANGE

SF as previously mentioned denotes Side Focus, and that's controlled via the left turret. Parallax is marked up as 10 yards, 15, 20, 30, 75, 100, 200, 300, 500, then infinity. Minimum focus is therefore 10 yards on the turret, but on test, with the magnification set to 9x, everything came in perfectly clear right down to just under 8 yards. Set to 9x, my favourite mag' for hunter field target, and with the parallax knob dialled to 25 yards, clarity through the typical target distances was completely acceptable. OK, granted with a large 50mm objective, this model isn't intended for HFT, but it's still nice to know that it could dual purpose if required. Dial the magnification to the maximum 16x, and clarity and definition is



Variable magnification from 4-16x

impressively sharp, edge to edge.

### ILLUMINATION

My test model came fitted with Hawke's 10x half mil dot, and this is so named because true half mil values show when viewed on 10x mag'. The reticle itself is glass-etched for added robustness, as opposed to wire, and the precise floating design is undoubtedly refined. On the down side, with no thick outer posts, viewing a target up into a dark tree will occasionally prove a little tricky because that super-fine reticle is easy to lose.

I don't mind admitting I'm no great fan of illuminated reticles. Indeed, I've never actually used one in anger. That said, personal taste varies across the board, and I do have friends who swear by them.



Battery storage is in the left turret

Back to our dark foliage, high-rise target scenario, and it's in just such an instance that illumination could really play a part. The Vantage has IR and here, the entire reticle stadia illuminates. One CR2032 battery powers the system, and you choose between red or green, with five brightness levels on each. To replace the battery, simply unscrew the small cap on the tip of the left turret.

### VERDICT

Quite an impressive piece of glassware from Hawke here, and with Hawke's lifetime warranty along with all the usual assurances – nitrogen purged, waterproof, shockproof and fogproof – it's a safe buy for a features-laden hunting scope, designed to take some punishment in the field. ■



Push/pull turrets are easy to use



The left turret adjusts parallax and illumination



Set the fast-focus first

## SPECIFICATION

**Model:** Hawke Vantage 30  
WA SF IR 4-16 x 50  
**Manufacturer:** Hawke Optics  
**Reticle:** 10x half mil dot  
**Weight:** 26.1oz  
**Length:** 13.7 inches  
**Click Adjustment:** 1/10mrad  
@ 100 yards  
**Field of View:** 28.8-7.8ft @  
100 yards  
**Eye Relief:** 3.5"  
**Body Tube:** 30mm  
**Min Focus:** 10 yards marked  
**Turrets:** Tactical push pull  
lockable  
**Clicks per rotation:** 60  
**Number of Full Rotations:**  
4.5 on windage and 4.75  
elevation  
**Price:** £279 inc lens covers,  
lens cloth and CR 2032  
battery  
**Contact:** Hawke Optics  
[www.hawkeoptics.com](http://www.hawkeoptics.com)

RRP: £279