

KOC's Back Country 3-9x42 scope

by senior correspondent John Dunn

The Back Country 3-9x42 scope is the second of two scopes supplied for review by Teznic Australia, the Australian importer of King Optic of Canada (KOC) products. KOC regards this scope as their entry-level model. It is nowhere near as functionally sophisticated as the Presidential Series Highlander II 3.5-12x50 scope I looked at previously, but is still a very substantial and practical piece of optical equipment nonetheless. The Back Country series of scopes was designed to provide a more affordable scope for those hunters who want good-quality optics at the best possible price. Although there are four scopes in the series, at the time of writing, the 3-9x42 was the only one currently available in Australia.

The scope

Like all KOC offerings, the Back Country scope is of mono-body construction, made from a single piece of 6061 aircraft-grade aluminium, with a black-finished 1"-diameter tube. Appearance-wise, it's similar to many other scopes in its magnification range, perhaps a little chunkier than most American-made scopes currently available, but it's not as bulky as some of those from Europe.



With the fast-focus ring wound right out, the KOC 3-9x42 Back Country will focus back to a minimum range of around 3m. That makes it suitable for a wide range of shooting applications, including being mounted on air rifles.

A KOC Back Country 3-9x42 scope mounted on a Ruger No. 1 in .270 Winchester. The scope is suitable for a wide range of rifles and calibres.

The power-change ring is quite large, coarsely notched with an additional lug on the circumference to provide a positive grip, even if the user should happen to be wearing gloves. Magnification changes are quickly and easily made, with the reference point located top dead centre of the tube, where it can easily be seen.

The ocular lens has a fast-focus ring, which allows the scope to be set up to meet individual eye requirements. The effort required is quite firm, so once the correct focus has been found, the chances of changing it accidentally are minimal. All lenses are multicoated to provide bright and sharp images.

Like all modern telescopic sights, the Back Country has an etched reticle. The reticle is of duplex design, located in the second or eyepiece image plane of the scope to ensure its size remains the same at all magnifications within the scope's range. The gold-colored windage and elevation turrets are finger adjustable, each click having a nominal value of quarter MOA at 100 yards. The scope is factory sealed and is warranted to be fog-, water- and shockproof.

Like all the scopes in the KOC stable, the Back Country is fitted with removable, flip-up, see-through lens covers. While lens

covers can be a bit of a nuisance at times (and you can see *much* better if they're flipped up out of the way), they do provide a useful function in keeping not just dust and grit off the lenses, but also water droplets, which is not an uncommon occurrence when you're hunting in mountain country.

From the box, the Back Country is housed in a protective Cordura case. The package also includes some quite useful instructions on scope mounting, together with a warranty card. KOC offers a limited lifetime warranty to the original purchaser on all their products.

Testing

For testing, I mounted the Back Country on a Ruger No. 1 medium sporting rifle in .270 Winchester calibre, using Ruger mounts. Initial sighting was conducted at 25m, then at 100m.

My primary interest was to check and make sure the scope responded to windage and elevation adjustments as required, and as it was with the Highlander II reviewed previously, the scope performed extremely well. The click adjustments are both tactile and audible, so moving the point of impact is simple, even when you're wearing earmuffs.

With the fast focus on the ocular lens



The gold-colored windage and elevation turrets have ¼" MOA click adjustments, which are both tactile and audible, making sight adjustments easy and very positive.

adjusted to suit my eye, the sight-picture was crystal clear. The only time I had to make significant adjustment was during the sighting-in process, when I was working on the target at 25m. Once the rifle was sighted-in, there was no need to reset the

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KOC'S Back Country 3-9x42 scope

focus for field conditions.

Target resolution in the field was checked under a range of light conditions, ranging from the gloom of early morning/late afternoon to range work in the bright light of the midday sun. Except under very lowlight conditions, the sight-picture was clear and the reticle was easy to find, which is pretty much what you'd expect from a scope like this - no matter how good the optics are in any scope, they can't transmit any more ambient light than what is available.

Changing magnification was easy, requiring just half a turn of the ring to go from 3 to 9x. Though some folk may have a need for scopes larger than this, most



The magnification ring on the scope is heavily notched with an additional lug to provide a secure grip, even if the user is wearing gloves.

The King Optics crowned lion logo is a label that Australian shooters and hunters seem set to become familiar with.



hunters will be more than happy with what a scope of this size has to offer. It's probably too much for most rimfire hunting rifles, but it's more than suitable for the bulk of general-purpose centrefire hunting rifles.

Just in case you were wondering, the scope is also suitable for air rifle use. With the fast-focus ring wound right out, a clear view of both the target and reticle is achievable down to a minimum range of around 3m. Structurally, all the KOC scopes are designed to cope with high levels of recoil stress,

and according to Teznik, that includes being mounted on an air rifle. That gives the KOC Back Country scope a very broad application range - a benefit that thinking shooters and hunters will no doubt appreciate.

Having worked with the scope, I can only observe that it seems to live up to all the manufacturer's claims in terms of design and performance. As a new brand in the marketplace, it will no doubt be critically looked at by a wide range of people with a swathe of different expectations about what they want in a scope. I reckon a lot of them are going to be pleasantly surprised with what the King Optics of Canada company scopes have to offer. ●

Specifications

Manufacturer: King Optics of Canada

Model: Back Country

Magnification: 3-9x42

Distributor: Teznik

Overall Length: 320mm

Weight: 530g

Field of View: 40-13.2m

Exit Pupil: 13.3- 4.4mm

RRP: Around \$800



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