

Knobloch shooting glasses

by Paul Miller



The K5 is ideal for clay target shooting, as well as hunting.

The old saying 'You can only shoot as well as you can see' seems pretty obvious and is equally relevant to shooters of all persuasions.

Whether you are pursuing the shooting sports with a rifle, shotgun or handgun, it is important that you have the best sight-picture possible to get the job done. When it comes to target shooting, where every target or point counts, then you need to ensure you have the very best equipment you can afford and this applies particularly to your choice of shooting glasses.

Ask any serious target rifle or handgun shooter if they have heard of the firm of Knobloch, and they will invariably smile and pull a pair of weird-looking frames and attachments from their shooting box. I think it would be fair to say that Bruno Knobloch set the standard from the earliest days when, in 1957, he patented his first shooting glasses system. Since that time, there have

been many improvements and new designs, which now include a set of frames and lenses that are ideally suited to shotgunning or rifle shooting in the field.

Bruno encouraged his two sons Frank and Thomas and they are now both qualified ophthalmic opticians and run this highly specialised optical firm in Karlsruhe, Germany. They oversee research and development and travel the world with some of the top target shooters to try to understand the very specific requirements of shooters of all target shooting disciplines. Their range is forever expanding both in terms of additional gadgets to further complement their basic frames, as well as developing new systems and fittings.

Frontier Arms in South Australia is the proud exclusive agent for Knobloch in Australia and the company kindly sent me a set of its superbly made target frame platforms and various attachments to review.

Coincidentally, my shooting mate Peter Papps is related to the principals of Frontier Arms and he has just got a pair of their shotgunning frames and lenses kit, so I was able to examine these as well.

Consult a professional

Peter needed to get prescription lenses put in his glasses, so we headed off to our shooter-friendly optician Grant Hannaford in Bowral, New South Wales, to get that organised. Only recently had I asked Grant to make me up a set of prescription lenses for my Decot shooting glasses. I told Grant I was having trouble focusing on fluorescent orange clays at Sporting Clays and Down the Line (DTL) shoots and the targets sometimes seemed a blur. I said I needed to be able to see DTL targets leave the trap at about 16 to 20m and Sporting Clays targets between about 5 and 50m clearly. He said no problem and he could give me perfect

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vision between 6m and infinity. Imagine how pleased I was about that possibility!

I had him make them up in a particular shade of red to accentuate those infuriating orange clays. These were so successful that I then had him make up a pair of sunglasses with bronze polarised lenses. He also put in a multifocal in the bottom of both lenses, so I can see perfectly at close range to easily tie on trout fishing flies! Just about the only thing these glasses can't do is give me a massage or make a cup of coffee.

When I got the new lenses, I couldn't believe the difference. Being able to see so clearly over such a wide distance was, in a word, awesome. Now I can see the clays perfectly, so long as the background is not too challenging and the targets are thrown anywhere but into the sun.

Tying on flies and seeing fish cruising is a breeze, I can now clearly read road signs at long distances when driving, and the glasses are perfect as simply sunglasses. Talk about covering all bases in one set of glasses. Now I've just got to concentrate on not sitting on them or leaving them on the roof of the car when filling up the tank at the service station!

With the growing interest in the optical issues we shooters face, Grant and his delightful wife Thao, who is a fully qualified optometrist, have invested in a Knobloch demo kit. This means they can now offer a complete optical service to anyone determined to be at their best in the shooting sports. Both Grant and Thao shoot rifles and shotguns, so they are superbly qualified to discuss and handle any shooter's optical needs. They are very impressed with the Knobloch products.

The K1

Now of course, the specific needs of the various shooting disciplines and the ophthalmic solutions are way beyond me, but Knobloch relies on opticians to recognise these specific needs and adjust its products to suit individual shooters. The Knobloch model K1 is the result of more than 50 years of development and is a very sophisticated piece of equipment for rifle and pistol shooters.

The K1's nose piece is adjustable from 35 to 50mm, and the quality of the frames needs to be seen to be appreciated fully. They are engineering works of art and are made from high-grade steel and coated with a material called nickel silver ruthenium. They also have silicon coating for where the frames touch the ears, and thermoplast material for the nose piece where it contacts the shooter's nose and face. These frames act as a platform if you like, and various lenses



Expert target shooter Col O'Brien has had the one pair of Knoblochs for 40 years. He liked the adjustable nose piece on the K1 and the quality lens-holders.



The Knobloch K1 frame supports an iris shutter to improve focus and a cover disc to allow two-eyes-open shooting but stops the non-aiming eye from participating.



State-of-the-art shooting frames and lenses are essential for serious target shooters wanting to maximise their shooting ability and get winning scores.

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and shades can be attached and adjusted through an extraordinary range to get the fit and sight-picture perfect.

The K2

There is also another upmarket frame called the K2. This model is designed for rifle shooters and archers with a slanted nose piece, which is designed to accommodate the sometimes extreme firing positions these shooters experience. All of their frames, regardless of price, are of superb quality and will last a lifetime, subject to sensible use and care.

The K5

The K5 model really grabbed my attention when Peter got his hands on a pair. I can't remember seeing a better made frame in all my years of shotgunning. The K5 is superbly constructed, with the feeling and look of no expense having been spared. They are designed for two-handed shooting and Rapid Fire Pistol, as well as Trap and Skeet. Clearly, they are also perfect for the increasingly popular Sporting Clays events. The big advantage of these frames is they can be adjusted very high, so that the glasses don't come in contact with the comb of the shotgun.

They also feature a magnetic holder, so various colored filters can be quickly attached or detached to adapt to different light conditions or target colors. Particularly relevant to clay target shooters are the brown, orange and yellow filters, which are so useful at different times of the day to accentuate clays under varying light conditions. You can set up these frames with prescription lenses, as Peter is doing, and then the colors can be changed very quickly by just clipping them on and popping the other filters in the supplied carry-case. This means that you only need one set of shooting glasses to cover all conditions and this is an added bonus of this system.



Colored lenses can clip-on magnetically in a matter of seconds.

Summary

If you are serious about your shooting and want to be the best you can be, then you will appreciate and understand the Knobloch motto of 'Besser sehen, besser treffen', which, when translated to English, is 'The better you see, the better you shoot'. Which reminds me of another saying: 'Never a truer word was spoken!'

To find your nearest Knobloch stockist, phone Frontier Arms on 08 8373 2855. To speak with optometrists Grant or Thao Hannaford, phone 02 4861 4369. For more information about Knobloch shooting glasses and to get more of an idea about their sheer quality, visit www.frontierarms.com.au and www.knobloch-scheissbrillen.de ●

Recommended retail prices

K1 shooting frame including lens-holder and cover disc in a case	\$239
Iris 37mm	\$99
K1 clip-on holder 37mm	\$15
Colored filters	\$35 each
K2 shooting frame including 23mm lens-holder in a case	\$225
K5 shooting glasses including clear lenses and case	\$215
K5 clip-on filters	\$50



Knobloch shooting glasses all come with a quality protective case. The K5 case has extra accommodation for clip-on colored lenses.

