

The Lightstream 4.5-14x44mm

Although Lightstream may not be a name familiar to you in the realm of scopes... it soon will be, states **Tim Finley**

Alan Konyan the man behind AK Sports Optics and the Lightstream has been shooting for many years. Air rifles and FAC rated air rifle hunting is his thing. Frustrated by what he saw as less than ideal scopes made for centerfire and rimfire rifles, Alan set off on a personal crusade to bring a quality airgun

specific scope to the UK. He was utterly selfish in that he wanted a scope for himself, but it so happened that dream specification is indeed what we airgun hunters have been long looking for. So, AK Sports Optics was born, he discarded Chinese manufacturers straight out of hand; superior quality was what he wanted for his Lightstream range of scopes, so that meant Japan, as they are capable of making scopes of outstanding optical quality.

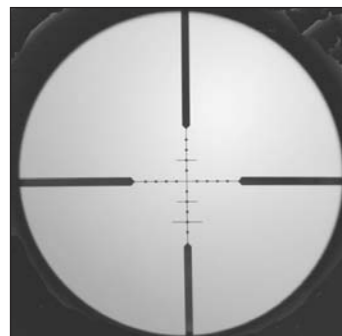
The Dream Spec

Alan actually discussed the specification of his dream scope with me a year ago. I was impressed with his proposed spec, he wanted an etched on glass first focal plane reticle with mil dot spacing, along with good glass and tough anodised finish to the

scope body. The elevation and windage adjustment system would be target shooting spec, even though it was an 'out and out' hunting scope. Again he was not interested in cutting corners and his scope would be designed to last a lifetime. Finally it would have parallax adjustment and a lockable eyepiece focus eye bell. In all, a very highly spec'd scope.

The main feature of this new scope is the first focal plane reticle. Most scopes have their reticle in the second focal plane, which means on a variable magnification scope the reticle size does not change as the shooter alters the magnification. On a first focal plane reticle as the magnification is changed the reticle appears to change size to match the expanding or decreasing image size. The practical upshot is that with multi-aim point reticules the shooter can use the same aiming mark for each range no matter what magnification the scope is set to. Alan wanted this feature to ensure the hunting scope could be used in differing light conditions. Hunters turn the

mag down low at dawn and dusk to get every ray of available light in their scope to keep the image useable. The Lightstream is a 4.5x by 14x times magnification scope. If the hunter has a 40 yard aiming mark he can still use this if the scope is set to 4.5x or 14x, or any mag in-between. The multi aim point reticle is also a well designed item. The reticle has dots you will be familiar with, but these are set one mil apart. A mil is an angular measurement and equals one yard at 100 yards. This system can be used to range find the distance to a target. Alan uses the scope on his FAC rated air rifle to range onto fence posts, as these are a set size normally, so ideal for rangefinding. When lying in ambush position he can then use the dots on the vertical crosshair corresponding to the range to the target/rabbit. The instruction sheet has a blank trajectory planner for the owner



The main feature of this new scope is the first focal plane Mil-Dot type reticle

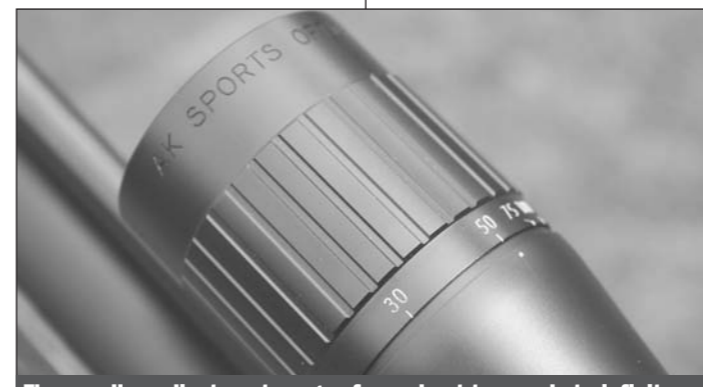


The Lightstream 4.5-14x44mm scope

Lightstream scopes may not be a name familiar to you, but Tim Finley reckons it soon will be



The 'zoom' magnification ring and lockable eyepiece focus eye bell



The parallax adjustment ranges from about ten yards to infinity, with engraved marks on the front objective lens for 15, 20, 30, 50, 75, 100, 200 and 300 yards



The scope has target style elevation and windage adjustment turrets

to fill in. The added twist over the now standard looking mil dot reticle is the addition of short horizontal line intersecting three of the dots. One is set through the second dots vertically up from the center, one is set on the second dot down from center and the last on the fourth dot down. The length of the lines vary, the top two are 2 mils long and the

bottom one is 3 mils long. These can then be used as aim off marks when shooting in a wind, good for the UK again!

On test

The scope arrived and I was pleased it lived up to my expectations, the finish and Japanese attention to detail is obvious. It is supplied with see through scope covers. The adjustment turrets are protected with dust/water caps, with UP/DN and RT/LT (up - down, right - left) engraved on the turrets to ensure correct adjustment. The turrets can be set to zero by removing the Allen screw from the top of the turrets, removing the dial and replacing lining up the "0" with the datum mark. Again a pure target shooting feature, but useful if the shooter does want to use the scope in that way. The parallax adjustment on the front objective lens ranges from about ten yards to infinity, with engraved marks for 15, 20, 30, 50, 75, 100, 200 and 300 yards. It has a 44mm objective lens, fine for hunting and as mentioned before it can still be used in poor light conditions due to the quality of the lens coatings and the ability to turn the mag down to 4.5x and still use the same aiming marks.

I mounted the scope for testing on my Logun Gemini HFT

/Hunting .177 rifle, where it sat very well indeed. With a 40yard zero the first dot up was set for 30 yards and the first dot down from the main crosshair was good for 50 yards. Owners of the scope will have to work out their own trajectory and as mentioned before, mark it down on the planner on the instruction sheet.

It was at the rifle range where the optical quality became to the fore. My own FT club is set in a wood and the reticle was easily picked out, even in the really dark areas. The click values on the adjustment turrets

are 1/8 of an inch clicks at 100 yards, the erector tube is held with a sturdy dual spring system. Make no mistake this is an up market scope, conceived with a high specification. It is also ideal for rimfire and centerfire rifles. It is set to replace a second focal plane 4.5 -14x American scope on my Ruger K77/22 pest control rifle - a combination I never thought I would split up.

If you are fed up with cheap scopes not really giving you what you want, the extra money for the Lightstream is definitely worth it, in spades! **GM**

Tech Spec

AK Sports Optics

Model	Lightstream Long Range Milling
Reticle	
County of origin	Japan
Magnification	4.5-14x variable zoom
Objective Dia	44mm
Body tube	25mm
Exit pupil	9.8 - 3.1mm
Eye relief	64mm - 105mm
Finish	Hard anodised silk black
Overall length	382mm (15 inches)
Price	£389 Sunshade £12.95
Distributor	AK Sports Optics 01992 893001 www.light-stream.co.uk