New auxiliary equipment

During my hunting trip I had the opportunity to test a potpourri of new auxiliary shooting equipment. My new "toys" included a Newcon Optik LRB 7X50 laser rangefinder, a set of Bob Walker's power muff quads in camouflage, plus a MicroLevel anti-cant device from Long-Shot Products LTD. My synopsis of how each item operates and performed follows next.

My Newcon Optik LRB 7X50 laser rangefinder binocular is a marvel of design, as its performance belies its very reasonable price. Optically, the design works as a perma-focus designed binocular, and once you have it focused to your eyes the images are sharp from about 20 yards to infinity. The images appeared sharp, clear and distortion free. This design uses a LCD, rather than an LED design, and as such, it is easy to see the range reading during the daylight hours, but not during dusk. Because of its electronic design it exhibits a slight bluish cast. What separates this unit from others in its price range is the smaller laser divergence and increased range. Laser divergence is typically measured in Milirads, and this unit is listed as having a vertical ellipsis pattern. I was told that at least eighty percent of the units fall within the following laser divergence specifications: Ellipsis pattern in a vertical orientation of .80 Milirads by about .50 Milirads in width. At 1,000 yards a one Milliradian beam will cover one yard, and after a smidgen of math I figured my laser rangefinder emits a pattern that would be about 26" in height and 18" in width at 1,000 yards. This is considerably smaller than about 95% of the models on the current market. For comparison, even the top of the line Leica Geovid laser rangefinder has a beam divergence of 1.5 X 0.3 Milirads, which means at 1,000 yards its laser beam is 4.5 feet wide by 10.8 inches in height.

On the far side, my new LRB 7X50 laser rangefinder is capable of giving me accurate distance readings from approximately 800 to over 1,000 yards (and over 1500 yards on very reflective objects) when I have it mounted on a tripod. The maximum readings are dependent upon the angle of the readings and the particular subject's objects) when I have it mounted on a tripod. The maximum readings are dependent upon the angle of the readings and the particular subject's laser reflectivity back to the unit. Typically, during a bright sunny day, (when laser reflectivity is generally more difficult to determine), my unit is capable of giving me hand-held readings of real-world objects, like rodent mounds or rock chuck dens, out to around 650 yards (from a bad angle and a very non-reflective target) and extending to beyond 900 yards. I have tested many different brands and types of laser rangefinders and typically, during a bright sunny day, I have had a difficult time in obtaining distance readings in the field once the range exceeds about 500 yards, even if the unit I was testing was rated for 1,000 yards. My overall impression of the Newcon Optik LRB 7X50 is quite favorable, especially when one considers that its price is typically less than 1/3 of what its competition is priced at.

The author's setup for ground squirrel shooting. With everything ready for action, a .204 Ruger rests atop a BR Pivot bench and a Newcon Optik LRB 7X50 laser rangefinder on a tripod.

Warren Williamson takes a distance reading with the author's Newcon Optik LRB 7x50 laser rangefinder.

Above, author's new laser rangefinder — a Newcon Optik LRB 7x50. This rangefinder provided the author with accurate distance readings to over 1,000 yards.