

# PREVIEW:

## NIKKO STIRLING PANAMAX 3 - 9X40 SCOPE

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### OVERVIEW:

The new 1 inch Panamax 3 - 9x40 scope is rated for centrefire, rimfire and airguns, and the magnification range is possibly the most popular for our wide-ranging New Zealand conditions, covering most general purpose hunting situations. Its specs state that it's waterproof, shockproof, nitrogen filled, and has multicoated lens, and it features a half Mil Dot reticle. It also boasts improved field of view, claiming up to 20% more than conventional 1 inch scopes. And it comes with elasticated transparent scope covers, plus a micro cleaning cloth.

It is part of the Panamax family that has a range of models up to the 4.5-14x50 AO IR.



### FORM AND FUNCTION:

The new Panamax 3 - 9x40 is compact, lightweight, and ergonomically designed to be more user friendly than may slimline models, marking an improvement in form and function.

While looking modern and aesthetically pleasing, I was impressed with the functionality above all. The ocular lens and eyepiece has a large-grip, easy turn focus wheel that has good range, and very useful for us 'older' hunters. Focus on the reticle was precise and crisp.

The power ring is also large, slip resistant, and easy to turn. Again for the 'older' hunter here, is the very large type on the magnification numbers - excellent for quick reference in the field and avoids frustration of low light conditions, or when needing to adjust for hasty shots. Be wary though, it operates opposite to some models like Leopold, turning clockwise for lower magnification like Swarovski, and anti-clockwise for increased magnification. You need to be aware of this if interchanging brands of scopes.

The adjustment turrets similarly have large-grip easy-turn caps, and the elevation/windage turrets are clearly marked, raised, and beveled with with crosshatch grip for easy finger purchase: really nice to use and more practical than the old coin slots. The Panamax operates on the standard 1/4 MOA adjustment, rather than the European 1/3, so will be familiar with most Kiwi day-to-day hunters.

### MOUNTING CONSIDERATIONS:

The compact, ergonomical design comes with some compromises. The large ocular housing requires high scope mounts to clear the bolt action - at least on my rifles - so check this before mounting. When mounted with low mounts the positioning was fine in relation to the eye, but the



bolt couldn't travel back when open. It's not a big issue - just something to be aware of.

The short, compact design when combined with the long taper the objective bell creates a shorter 1 inch tube, so affords less range in adjusting for eye relief, which means you need to be careful when positioning the rings on the scope so you don't risk crimping the flaring. This means the Panamax 3 - 9x40 is ideal for air rifles, rimfires, and short action centrefire rifles, but can be challenging to mount on some long action models, like my old classic BRNO 7mm. I tend to prefer my scopes mounted further back than many.

The good news is that Nikko Stirling is about to release the Diamond Long Range series of scopes to accommodate long action and magnum calibre.



### HALF MIL DOT RETICLE

The Mil Dot was originally developed as a range estimating reticle for the military, but with modern range finders and range finder binoculars, its practical use for rec hunters is likely to be negligible. However, Half Mil Dots can also be used for determining holdover over ranges beyond your point of zero and hold off for windage, but that requires an understanding of the ballistics of your rifle and practise so you can be accurate in the field.

The addition of this reticle does widen the application of this nifty little unit and put it in a class above its price bracket: suitable for day-to-day hunting, small game shooter, advanced hunter, ballistic enthusiast, distance shooter, pest control and target shooter.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

A delightful compact yet rugged scope that will tick a lot of boxes for a wide range of Kiwi hunters. Top of the list is good ergonomics, stylish lines, versatility, and superb functionality. The optics are clear, crisp, and the field of view very good. At a recommended retail price of \$249.00, the Nikko Stirling Panamax 3 - 9x40 certainly raises the bar, punches above its weight, and is guaranteed to be popular with Kiwi hunters.



# PANAMAX

- Compact 1" Hunting Scope
- Very reasonable price point
- Extreme Wide FOV - 20% more than average 1" scopes
- Stable and ruggedly built
- Parallax adjustment starting from 10 yards on AO models
- Professional Half Mil Dot reticle

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### MODELS AVAILABLE

NSX3940AO | PANAMAX 3-9X40 (AO/WIRE) HMD SCOPE

NSX451450AO | PANAMAX 4.5-14X50 (AO/WIRE) HMD SCOPE

NSX41250AO | PANAMAX 4-12X50 (AO/WIRE) HMD SCOPE

NSX3940 | PANAMAX 3-9X40 HMD SCOPE

