

GUNS&AMMO RED DOT

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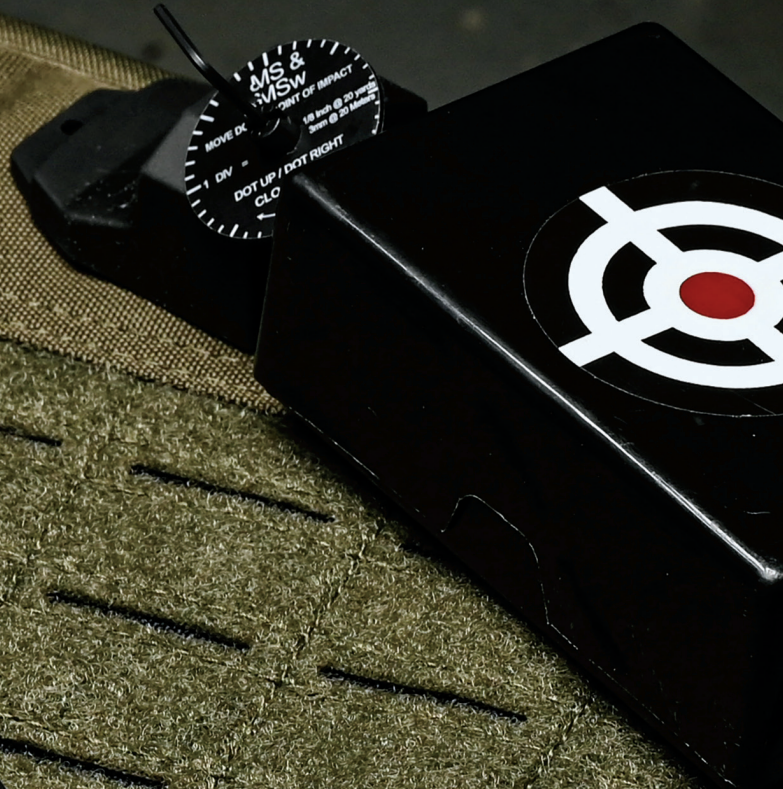


By Frank Melloni

Photos by Andy Grossman

Shield OMSx

This clear-top sight
cures tunnel vision.





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ne of the hardest transitions in the shooting world is switching from iron sights to red dots. Aside from a slight change in presentation, many shooters can't get over looking through a tunnel. Enclosed-emitter optics have it the worst, but even the open-emitter variety blocks a good portion of the view you get with iron sights. If the preceding describes you, don't worry. You're not

alone. The first time I started working with red dots, it was so tough that I had a hard time accepting they were faster. However, as I watched nearly every competitive shooter move to one, I realized that I needed to put in the work. What if I told you that there was an easier way, one that doesn't make you decide between the speed of a dot and the awareness of open iron sights? Shield Sights has given that to us in the OMSx.

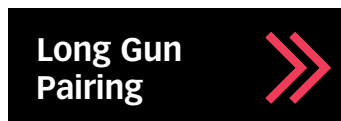
The OMSx, short for Open Mini Sight XL, is a brilliant display of material melding, as it features an aluminum base bonded to an acrylic hood. Together, the pair hold an oversized glass lens — 80 percent larger than their standard RMS lens, to be exact. Connecting these materials is indeed a challenge, but by refining each and perfecting a specialized adhesive, Shield created an optic that will withstand slide abuse and even take a fall. The new optic is designed explicitly for competitive shooters, which is why the makers saw no need to burden it with a side-loading battery compartment. The undermounted battery does require removal of the sight to change, but as it'll likely happen on a range, you could immediately reconfirm a zero. On the same note, I have found that if you use a torque driver to install sights like



The Shield OMSx excels in competitive shooting environments.

this and then torque the mounting screws back to the same value, your zero is virtually preserved, especially given the generous target allowances of USPSA and Steel Challenge. This brings us to the available reticles, which include either a 4- or 8-MOA dot. These are a perfect match to the respective sports I just mentioned. There is also a version with a 2-MOA dot and a 65-MOA ring, which would work well for NRA bullseye shooters. At the time of this writing, red is the only available colorway for each SKU.

Aside from giving you a better view of the shooting field, the OMSx is built to be idiot-proof, which is good because my mind seems to go blank about three minutes on either side of hearing "Shooter ready." To that end, the unit is buttonless, remaining permanently lit and automatically adjusting brightness based on input from the deck. Because it uses a CR2032 battery, it provides about 20,000 hours of runtime — or slightly over two years. So, if



you remember to put a fresh one in before the start of every other match season, you'll likely never raise a dead optic.

As this is a Shield sight, it is built to their signature RMS footprint. This footprint is slightly less common than Trijicon's RMR, so some shooters will need an adapter plate to mount it on their pistol. I had a Canik Mete sitting idly, so I enjoyed an effortless installation. Shield includes two different types of screws with the optic, plus the option to add others at checkout. Canik also includes a good variety of screws with their pistols, so between the two companies, I had what

Looking for a quality optic for your PCC to go with your pistol? After years of development, the AMSx (Advanced Mini Sight XL) is just about ready for prime-time. Built for the long gunner, the AMSx offers features such as automatic brightness selection and a 20,000-hour battery life. It's also built on the RMS footprint, allowing you to attach it to any pistol or offset mounts that can accept it.

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I needed. Also in the box is a 1-degree shim and a set of nylon washers, both of which I forwent for this installation. With the optic secured, I chose Federal's Syntech

ammunition for the test, as it's a popular competition load and representative of what would be paired with this shooting package.

Zeroing a Shield is an interesting process, as the windage and elevation screws are set under tension and do not click. To quantify your adjustments, a dial is included with graduations marked for 1/8 inch of movement at 20 yards. Placing these lines on a detachable wheel instead of trying to inscribe them on a tiny housing is far easier on the eyes.

With the sight ready for action, I started with 10 presentations from the holster. While I was expecting the dot to be easier to find on account of the larger window, I wasn't expecting the hood to also be part of that equation. I have a tendency of pointing upward out

■ OMSx

Magnification	1X
Length	1.7 in.
Width	1.4 in.
Height	.9 in.
Weight	.61 oz.
Material	6182 aluminum base; acrylic hood
Finish	Anodized, matte black
Adjustment Value	1/4 in. at 20 yds.
MSRP	\$490
Manufacturer	Shield Sights shieldsights.com

of the holster. This time, when that happened, I quickly found the dot through the acrylic, corrected it, and fired. This is not the intention of this feature; it is a welcome

bonus. Moving to the Texas Star did, however, make me aware of the clear hood's benefits, as having less in my way helped me to track the rotating plates.

I finished the day by running standard transition drills, and I can indeed confirm this is a viable feature with real utility. I wish something like the OMSx existed 10 years ago when I started to make the switch, as it's certainly a red dot for folks who don't like red dots. When this story is finished, I just might permanently park this on my match pistol or even on my woodland-defense handgun, as seeing more of a charging threat could be advantageous. Either way, I have a new appreciation for this design — not to mention the manufacturer — for giving us the full picture. •

