

Panasonic S1 and S1R

by Team Backscatter

Panasonic released its first full frame mirrorless cameras this year with the S1 and the S1R. The S1 is a 24MP version with great low light capability, while the S1R is a much higher resolution 47MP. The really big news is that both of these cameras shoot 4K 60p. 4K 60p is the holy grail for video, and few cameras have this spec. The Canon 1DX Mark II is the only other full frame camera to shoot 4K 60p, albeit at about 2 times the price. I was shooting the S1 version on this trip, and I stuck to shooting wide angle stills for the day.

Being that Panasonic is new to full frame, there's not a lot of native lenses for this camera, and certainly not any that are popular for us underwater photographers. Sigma makes a mount converter to adapt Canon EF mount lenses to the Panasonic body. I shot the S1 with the Canon 8-15mm fisheye lens.

The image quality from the S1 was excellent. Very sharp detail, excellent dynamic range, and great low light performance are all top notch and compare well to other full frame cameras. This camera easily rises to the top in image quality.

However, with using the Sigma mount converter and Canon lenses, the camera is only able to operate in AF-S mode. Also, the focus is a bit slower with this lens combination. As a note, the Sony A7 III series with the Sigma mount converter focuses really fast and can do all focus modes, including AF-C.

I think the intended user for this camera is a hybrid video/stills shooter. For video shooters, the

AF issue is not much of a problem as for video focus is locked down. The AF performance is certainly adequate and a good compromise for the video performance and excellent stills image quality you get for the price.



Jim Decker
CEO: Backscatter

The new full-frame Lumix S1 from Panasonic was my preferred system to shoot for most of the Shootout. I've been a long-time fan of the Lumix series, whether it's a compact like the LX10 and LX100, the mirrorless GH5, and now the full frame mirrorless S1. These cameras are often the best



compromise between image quality, white balance color, and pro video potential. The S1 maintains this trend by producing almost-perfect color at depth, and where it doesn't get it just right, often a single-click white balance correction in post will get it there. Because the S1 uses a new lens mount and the new lenses currently on offer don't align well with the needs of underwater imaging, we opted to use a lens adapter and shoot Canon lenses, primarily the 8mm-15mm fisheye and 100mm macro lenses. These worked well, but likely due to the adapter, autofocus could have been just a touch more snappy. Both the still image and 4K 60p video footage results looked gorgeous, and this camera really does

nicely fill the hybrid photo-video system role. For fans of Panasonic systems or new shooters looking for another competitor into the ever-growing full frame mirrorless market, definitely consider the S1 as a top-choice for the versatility, color, and image quality that it provides.

Robin Dodd
Producer

The long-awaited full-frame mirrorless camera from Panasonic didn't disappoint. The impressive specs on the lower-end S1 are a little more geared towards video shooters, but the 24.2 megapixel sensor shoots great stills too. It's a big camera body, so don't expect any size or weight savings over DSLR.

Learning the controls of any new camera is always a challenge, and there are a lot of them on the S1. The controls on the camera are laid out in an ergonomic way. Coming from Canon, I found the camera intuitive to operate. The menu organization was easy to understand and the custom function buttons added to the



ease of use.

The S1 produced excellent underwater color with deep, pleasing blues and good contrast. Though not the fastest autofocus in the game, the S1 managed to keep up shooting turtles and groupers. Though there aren't many L-mount lenses available, the handy Sigma MC-21 adapter allows you to use Canon's many lenses.

Dylan Silver
Backscatter Team Member

I have been looking forward to trying out the Panasonic Lumix S1 with the Nauticam NA-S1R housing for a while now. It did not disappoint!

Regarding the camera, the bright and crisp OLED LVF and LCD monitor really stood out to me. It was generally easy to use and understand the menus both on video and photo mode, and I was surprised with the amount of customization was possible - this is definitely a plus on my book.

One of the features I enjoyed the most was the ability to change from photo mode to a spectacular 4K 60fps video mode. This video mode is cropped which, when using an



8-15mm lens, works quite well. The only feature that needs tweaking, in my experience, is the Autofocus - it feels on the slow side and as if it relies heavily on a strong contrast. Not sure if it may have been due to the use of a Lens Adapter with Canon lenses - I will be looking forward to seeing what native lens will come out! The NA-S1R housing has the smooth ergonomics that Nauticam as used us to. Every control is quickly accessible and you can feel them within your natural reach underwater. All-in-all, this is still a camera system I would love to try again and work with.

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