

Inon GoPro Accessories

by Phil Rudin

GoPro's mission from its beginning in 2001 has been to provide the highest quality and most versatile action cameras available. GoPro cameras can be seen just about everywhere action or sports events occur around the world. The company has become one of the largest technology successes of the past decade. GoPro cameras have also become synonymous with water sports including snorkeling and diving.

Inon Accessory for Action Cameras

Inon Japan is the company that produces excellent accessories for underwater photography and videography. I have used Inon flashes for almost two decades and have dressed out many housings with Inon accessories over the years. Inon also has a complete line of useful and extremely well made accessories for action cameras from GoPro, Olympus and Sony.

For this review I equipped the Hero8 housing with the SD Front Mask for Hero8 with a Z joint (YS-type) mounting adapter. I also used the SD Selfie Set and the UFL-G140 SD Underwater Semi-fisheye conversion lens.

The Inon SD Selfie set S includes the SD front mask for a verity of GoPro housings. The SD mask mounts to the base of the GoPro housings using the housing mounting point and a threaded bolt with a simple heavy plastic thumb and finger tightening point. If you loosen the bolt a bit while in the water you can adjust the angle of the housing forward and back to fit your needs.

The SD Selfie support works much like a mono pod or terrestrial selfie stick. The difference is the SD Selfie is equipped with the common one inch ball head with O-ring on both ends so that it perfectly integrates with most current underwater support clamps and accessories.

The SD Selfie is made from carbon fiber tubing and has two locking points that allow the stick to be expanded. Fully retracted the stick measures fifteen inches including the ball mounting points on each end. On the thickest handle end of the stick is a large rubber grip that allows you to hold the stick steady even when fully extended. The grip end ball head has a durable plastic end attached to the ball and an excellent adjustable wrist strap. I used the wrist strap the entire time I was in the water with the GoPro which allowed me to also carry a second full size camera housing with strobes.

The locking points for the two expandable arm sections have a heavy rubber ring to hold the sections tightly in place. Turn clockwise to lock and counter-clockwise to loosen. With the lower carbon fiber tube section extended the stick reaches from fifteen inches to twenty-two inches. With the second section extended the stick is thirty-two inches from ball head to ball head.

With the camera mounted in the configuration I was using the overall length with the GoPro was thirty-nine inches. With the arms fully extended the SD Selfie will fill with some water as you submerge and you will see a flood of bubbles coming out at the base of the stick. This is normal and the stick is



almost neutral in the water. I found with the stick fully extended with camera and housing that the balance was quite good and easy to control.

To start a video clip you first need to push the on/off button on the housing then extend the camera towards your subject. This process needs to be reversed to turn off so you will always have a bit of awkward unusable shaky footage with each clip. While I was using the extended stick it never collapsed or loosened in any way. The arm weight is 238g/8.3oz air and 97g/3.4oz underwater.

Finally the SD Selfie can also be used for flash arms on conventional camera housings.

The SD front mask which holds the GoPro





housing also has a bayonet mounting point for other Inon accessories including the UCL-G165 SD Underwater Wide Close-up Lens and the UFL-G140 SD Underwater Semi-Fisheye Conversion Lens. Both of these lenses will adapt to the SD front masks made for GoPro Hero housings 5/6/7/8 and 9. M67 filter Adapters for Hero 8&9 are also available from Inon to mount a variety of color filters.

For my review I was using the UFL-G140 SD Semi-Fisheye lens and no additional filters. I would also note that I was filming in shallow clear water in the North Florida springs. The very wide angle of view of this accessory lens made it easy to get very close to most subjects without losing focus or depth of field. The SD Selfie allowed me to get much closer to shy subjects than would be possible with such a wide lens on a larger housing system. The wide

lens attaches to the SD front mask by inserting it into the bayonet mount and turning about a quarter turn. You will hear a snap of the locking device on the front mask when the lens is attached properly.

At first I was a bit skeptical about how well the lens would stay in place but after four hours of swimming and moving around the springs the lens remained rock solid on the front mask. I even removed and reinstalled the lens several times while in the water without any problems.

The UFL-G140 SD lens has a lens sun shade that can be moved by loosening four small Allen screws that hold it in place. The shade can shift a bit and should be realigned to prevent it from vignetting in the frame. The

Phil Rudin using the INON UFL-G140 SD Semi-Fisheye lens and SD Mask on a GoPro 8 camera



If you are online, click above to watch Phil's video footage on YouTube

shade also helps to protect the front optic from damage if it is bumped into a hard surface.

The UFL-G140 SD weights about 300g/10.6 oz on land and 153g/5.4oz underwater. The UFL-G140 SD has a maximum 140 degrees angle of view with a 94 degree Hero lens. On land the view becomes even wider to about 151 degrees. The native DOF on land of the 94 degree GoPro lens is from about 60cm/2ft to infinity. With the UFL-140SD underwater DOF extends to 4cm/1.6in to infinity making it ideal for CFWA shots, close focus wide angle. The front acrylic dome is multi coated and provides professional quality results.

The latest GoPro cameras are

quite impressive in a number of ways including broadcast quality video. These cameras are frequently used as documentary series B roll cameras on network broadcasts like Shark Week and many more.

The SD front mask retails for \$69.99, the UFL-G140 SD retails for \$389.95 and the carbon fiber telescoping arm retails for \$110.95. A shorter 272mm/10.7in total length version and 515mm/20.2in total length version are also available for \$64.95 and \$97.95.

I would once again like to thank inon.co.jp for the loan of the equipment for this review.

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Instagram

www.uwpmag.com

Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter No
White Balance



Digital - No Filter Manual
White Balance



Magic Filter Manual
White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

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