

The grass is always greener eventually

John Horn's excellent account of his upgrading from an Olympus TG-6 to a Canon R7 makes informative reading for those in a similar quandry but it also highlights some aspects which are often overlooked.

As with all increases in both size, weight and performance, it takes time to get used to a new housing layout. The subtle ergonomics are not always obvious until you use the gear underwater and the increased bulk can make some subjects harder to approach. In addition, until you get familiar with a new camera's capabilities and how to maximise its potential there will inevitably be times when you miss a shot making fine adjustments to the camera settings.

Fortunately time and experience will render the new system much more intuitive so that, after the initial frustrations, your upgrade decision will be worthwhile and productive just, as John found.

Don't expect to be able to jump in and start nailing images, but in a short while the capabilities and quality of image that the Canon R7, for example, promises will start to show on the LCD screen.

Editorial

Strobes

I think I can safely say that the single most effective accessory for any underwater camera is a strobe/flashgun.

The light they provide restores natural colours and the almost instant pulse of light freezes the subject in minute, pin sharp detail.

Two strobes are now 'de rigueur' for even, yet variable, lighting which is also good news for manufacturers and retailers.

For many years the strobe market has been fairly static but in 2023, and possibly as a result of the manufacturing limitations of the past Covid times, we have new strobes arriving like proverbial buses.

This can only be good news for end users; giving them more choice and keener prices. So the future has never, and I apologise for the awful pun, has never been so bright :-)

Sync cords

The news that the new Marelux Apollo strobes have wireless triggering and data transmitting systems is both really exciting and groundbreaking.

The achilles heel of all underwater camera systems has always been the sync cord; even going back to my day when there were only two contacts/wires.

With the advent of TTL exposure control where more signals were needed between camera and strobe resulting in five core cable sync cords, the number of potential problems from any slight corrosion went up exponentially. Great when everything is dry but consumer demand for unpluggable sync cords meant that, and I once counted them, there are no fewer than THIRTY FIVE connections from the camera to the inside of the housing, outside the housing to the beginning of the sync cord and the same going into the strobe. Any slight corrosion on any of those THIRTY FIVE connections could result in not triggering or incorrect exposure.

So now do you see why I am so excited about wireless triggering ?!

Smartphones and housings

Here he goes again, I hear your say, and you're right but I think it's an area of photography which is being developed like no other and will become a very attractive route for beginners and advanced alike.

The development of compact cameras, which Smartphones compete with, has remained static for many years but with each new Smartphone rollout it is the camera performance which the marketing dept latch onto.

They are getting more and more quality out of tiny imaging sensors and, with the advent of AI and algorithms, they are already breaking the boundaries of conventional photographic physics.

It's no surprise then that the New Products Section in UwP features more housings in every new issue and their designs are almost all 'universal' so they fit a wide range of Smartphones. And not just that, they will be able to accept new models with their ever improving camera performance as they become available.

Exciting times ahead.

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