

Sea & Sea YS-D3 Duo update

by Dan Bolt

If you read my review of the new Sea & Sea YS-D3 Duo strobe in the last issue of UWP mag then you'll be aware I had a few occasions when the strobes would mis-fire and I wasn't able to isolate the root cause.

Since then I've been wracking my brains to try to think what could be causing the issue. RC mode is a protocol, and all units adhering to the protocol should be firing at almost a 100% accuracy rate.

My first thought was that the sending unit (on-camera flash in this case) wasn't using a strong enough signal. With Olympus cameras you can adjust the signal strength in the RC Mode menu; it has 3 levels of low, medium and high and defaults to low. Changing it to Medium made some difference and mis-fires were reduced, but not eliminated.

Then after a few dives and pool sessions, I started to notice a pattern forming. It seemed that when I used a certain fibre optic cable the mis-fires went away entirely! So after a bit of experimentation, I struck upon the ultimate solution to this "problem" - and as it turns out there was no "problem" with the camera nor the strobe in the first place!

It would seem that if I used any

of my right-angled fibre optic cables, I would get mis-firing of the strobe; as if only part of the RC signal was getting through. The strobe would give me confirmation on the rear control panel that it has received a signal, but it didn't fire.

Switching to straight-ended fibre optic cables, and this problem disappeared completely! I've since done a few dives and pool sessions with all of my cables and I'm certain this is what was causing the issue.

The YS-D3 Duo units I have are now working extremely well and I'm shooting a mix of manual and RC-mode light on all my dives will very pleasing (and consistent) results.

So just to complete the picture; I used three different types of right-

Set of images running through the aperture range from f/4.5 to f/22) Olympus OM-D E-M1, Panasonic 45mm macro, ISO 320, 1/250th, Aquatica housing, Subsee +5 dioptr. 2x YS-D3 Duo strobes in RC mode.

L to R: Weefine straight cable, Sea & Sea 90° (old style), Sea & Sea 90° (new style), Weefine 90°

angled cables: an old (grey) style Sea & Sea cable, a new (black) style Sea & Sea cable and a Weefine 90° cable too. All these caused issues.

I have only used a single make of straight cable, made by Weefine, and this had proven to be faultless in its light transmission when in RC mode on my Olympus OM-D EM-1 mk1.

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