

Nauticam Olympus XZ-1 housing

by Peter Rowlands



I think it's fair to say that in recent years Canon have stolen the march from Olympus at the top end compact market but their XZ-1 sees Olympus jostling for poll position once again. Combining a small size with an ergonomic design and providing full automation or total manual control together with a bright F1.8-2.5 28mm-112mm lens the XZ-1 looks set to take the Canon S95 head on.

From an underwater point of view the most interesting feature is the ability to reduce the power of the internal flash down to 1/64th so, when triggering external optical strobes, the recycling is very quick and there is far less camera battery drain. This is a very useful feature.

Nauticam have released a

housing for the XZ-1 which follows their traditional design of form and function with a solid aluminium build providing complete control over the camera. The result is reassuringly familiar Nauticam in terms of quality and finish as well as ergonomics.

Olympus have a tradition of launching underwater housings with their new models and the XZ-1 is no exception. The PT-050 is a good value for money housing aimed at the mass market but it lacks a control which the more discerning user might require – the rear command dial. Nauticam, needless to say, has incorporated this in their design.

A big problem with a lot of compact cameras is that their built in lenses are getting wider at the wide end i.e. 28mm is now the norm

whereas it used to be 35mm. This is attractive for land use but in a housing it can be a limitation when you want to add an external wide angle lens. The Nauticam design doesn't solve this limitation but they do have an optional wide angle air lens which screws onto the front port and restores the 28mm angle of coverage.

For wider angle coverage INON have announced the UWL-H100 28M67 and the Dome Lens Unit II for UWL-H100

To be honest, after a while it becomes a bit difficult to review Nauticam compact housings and come up with anything new to say. They

are so well thought out and bullet proof that one almost takes them for granted.

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The review camera and housing were kindly provided by Nauticam UK
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