

Sea & Sea YS-D1 Strobe

by Phil Rudin

The newly designed Sea & Sea YS-D1 strobe was one of the standout products at DEMA 2011 in Orlando, Florida. With an all new TTL system called DS-TTL II the YS-D1 becomes the worlds first slave TTL strobe equipped with an exposure compensation (EV) control. What this means too the photographer using two or more strobes is that while working in TTL using fiber optic cables a large number of +/- EV combinations can be set to create dramatic lighting ratios. You can also set the main light to DSTTL II and the secondary strobe(s) to manual and have the flexibility of 11 different steps of light from a guide number of 1 to a GN of 32. The revised algorithms of the DS-TTL II adjust the intervals between the pre flash and the main flash making the system compatible with a wide range of current and future digital cameras.

The strobe is powered by four removable AA batteries contained in a rear compartment on the strobe and sealed by the well regarded snap locking cap used on many current and past Sea & Sea strobes. The strobe uses current Sea & Sea fiber optic cords as well as the Five pin Nikons V type wire cord. The YS-D1 uses

the same arm mounting system as past Sea & Sea strobes and will easily integrate with all current ball arm support systems.

The YS-D1 strobe has a single flash tube with a beam angle of 80X80 degrees and a guide number of 32 which is 25% more powerful than the YS110a. Without any diffusers the 80 degree beam angle has a color temperature of 5600 Kelvin. By adding one of the two included diffusers the beam angle is increased to 100X100 degrees and the guide number is reduced to 24 with the second diffuser the beam angle is increased to 120X120 degrees and the guide number becomes 20. With a diffuser added the color temperature is changed to 5250 Kelvin and their is also noticeable light falloff toward the edges of the frame with wide angle lenses. The 32 guide number should be particularly useful for macro/ closeup photographers using large sensor cameras with long macro lenses that require shooting at F/stops of sixteen and above to improve depth of field.

The strobe has a depth rating of 100 meters (328 feet) and the on/off switch has a button that can be pressed in to turn on an LED targeting



Goliath Grouper on the M/A Castor in Boynton Beach, Florida. Olympus E-M5, Panasonic 7-14mm zoom lens at 7mm, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing, ISO-640, F/6.3 at 1/30th sec

light. Sea & Sea_s tested the number of flashes and the recycle times using Ni-MH 2400 mAh batteries with posted results of 250 flashes at full power and a 1.9 second recycle time. These strobes have an automatic on/off slave control and a blue LCD ready light for slave TTL mode. The strobe also has a red LCD ready light and a green LCD confirmation light which glows when proper TTL



exposure is acquired. The YS-D1 is also compatible with both the L-type fiber-optic cables or if you prefer a bulkhead connector a 5-pin Nikons



Gold-Line Sea Goddess, Olympus E-M5, Olympus 60mm macro lens, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing, ISO-200, F/7.1, at 1/250th sec

type sync cord can also be added to the connection port at the bottom of the strobe. The fiber-optic port is also on the bottom of the strobe and has a small spring loaded door which covers it when not in use to prevent accidental mis-firing. I can't imagine that this very tiny spring would not corrode over time so a through wash-down is suggested after every dive.

I shoot most of the time with my strobes set to manual and found the wide range of eleven manual exposure settings quite useful for that task both for single and multi-strobe use. While shooting macro in the TTL mode with the Olympus E-M5 and 60mm macro lens I found the exposures to be quite accurate over a wide range

of F/stops. When using the focus targeting light with the same camera in the Nauticam NA-EM5 housings with fiber-optic cords I found that the target light would go out when the shutter was released and then come back on after the shot was taken a very useful feature. The strobe also recycled at a very expectable speed both in TTL and while shooting in manual mode. In terms of its size the S&S YS-D1 is smaller than the less powerful YS-110a and larger than the well known Inon Z-240 by about the same amount. The strobe is selling for \$699.00/£554.95. Thanks to Reef Photo Video for equipment support.

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