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*Bushnell's  
new optics  
range*

# The Forge

## 3-18x50

WRITTEN BY ~ GREG DULEY

**Long standing American optics brand Bushnell has released several new ranges of Asian made rifle scopes**

**The top of the line is called the Forge, and that's what we are reviewing here. Now the fact I say Asian made is not a derogatory comment at all.**

Some of the worst but also some of the best stuff including optics comes out of Asia now. It all depends on the specification they are given to work with, and the quality control to make sure the products meet that spec. So let's

see how Bushnell got on meeting their requirements.

**The Forge is a target/tactical style second focal plane rifle scope designed for use at longer ranges** whether the discipline be competition,

steel gong shooting or hunting. The features that make this scope suitable for this purpose are a multi turn zero stop turret with enough elevation for these tasks, a side focus, and a suitable magnification range. So let's go over these in more detail.

**The basic chassis is a 30mm tube with a 50mm objective** - fairly standard long range fare. The magnification range in this model is 3-18x - probably the most suitable range for hunting anyway. There are also 2.5-15x and 4.5-27x options, also both with 50mm objectives. The turrets are 20MOA per turn, with very positive 1/4 MOA clicks. They incorporate a zero stop feature that doesn't limit you to just one revolution like some do, and the windage turret is graduated both ways from the zero - left and right. They



Clayton and Oliver Mitchell with Ollie's first deer, a Sika hind, and Dad's yearling.

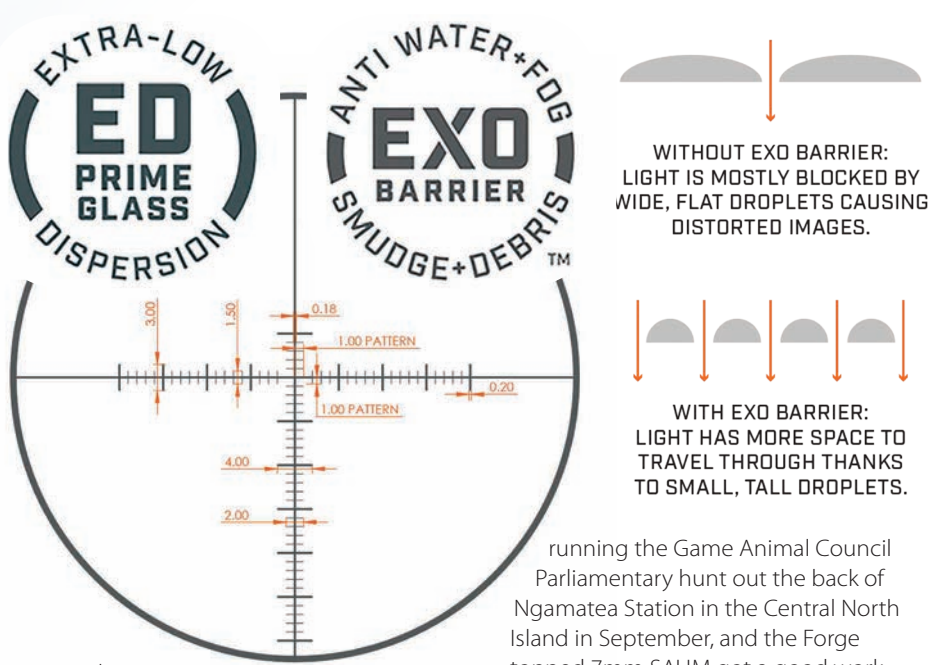


also lock in the down/in position, and when you pull them up/out you can turn them – so you don't knock them off whatever setting you have them on accidentally while pushing through bush etc. **The side parallax adjustment is also graduated, and seems to be very close to actual yardages**, which some scopes aren't. It also has a fast focus eyepiece. There are several reticle options, including a ballistic type, but the one that came in this scope was the one I preferred called the deploy MOA – a simple reticle with MOA hashes on both the horizontal and vertical crosshairs. The scope weighs 29.3oz/831gms, which is getting up there for a hunting scope, but about right for a tactical style scope of this magnification – some are much heavier. The Forge comes with lens caps and a 2½ inch sunshade.

**Optically Speaking**

Bushnell say the Forge incorporates fluorite lens/lenses, which they call ED Prime glass. I can't tell just how many lens elements are fluorite, but there does appear to be the increase in colour fidelity and contrast you usually get with HD/ED/Fluorite lens. Optically, the daylight resolution is pretty good, and twilight performance was also where I'd expect compared with other quality optics of this magnification and objective size. **The Flatness of Field was very good** for a high magnification scope, and the looking into a low sun glare issue

Finsh	Blacke Matte
Power x Obj. Lens	3-18x50mm
Reticle	Deploy MOA
Tube Diameter	30mm
Parrallax Adjustment	Side
Field of View ft@100yds m@100m	35/12 at 3x, 6/2 at 18x
Weight: oz/gr	29.3/831
Length: in/mm	14.4/366
Eye Releif (@ 18x): in/mm	4/102
Exit Pupil: mm	16.7-2.8
Click Value: in@100yards/ mm@100m	.25/6.95
Adj. Range: in@100yds/ m@100yds	+90/2.29
Mounting Length: in/mm	5.85/148
Focal Plane	Second
RRP	\$1469



seemed well controlled. Mechanically the adjustments proved to shift a constant 1.035 inches per 4 clicks at 100 yards, so not quite true MOA. There was no noticeable point of impact shift throughout the zoom range, and the scope tracked precisely round the test grid and back to zero, with no noticeable backlash. As I said previously, the adjustment clicks are quite positive and easy to use without lifting your head to look directly at them. The Forge has Bushnell's Exo Barrier nano-coating on exterior glass surfaces that they say fills every microscopic pore of the glass to repel water and debris that would otherwise block vision. They certainly were one of the first to come out with a rain guard coating of some sort. It also has their Ultra-wide Band Coating – an anti-reflection coating applied to both lenses and prisms, to enhance possible light transmission.

**In the Field**

We mounted the Forge on one of our 18" barrelled 7mm SAUM SuperPigs, shooting the 150gn Berger Classic hunters at 3000fps. We were

Talking Ollie through taking the shot, you can see my custom yardage ring on the excellent Forge turrets



running the Game Animal Council Parliamentary hunt out the back of Ngamatea Station in the Central North Island in September, and the Forge topped 7mm SAUM got a good work out, taking a few tasty Sika over the week. **The scope never missed a beat, and the politicians pulled off some pretty good shots**, including one hind at 500 yards. I made up a simple custom turret by wrapping white strapping tape round the turret, and graduating it in yards to suit the load. This way we were able to simplify the dial up process, enabling me to concentrate on talking the shooter through pulling off a good shot. We had several members of Parliament and their sons and daughters shoot their first deer with no misses, so the system certainly worked!

**Conclusion**

All up I genuinely liked the Forge. Optically and mechanically it was very good. Although a little heavy for a pure hunting scope in my opinion, for the sort of multi-use its designed for, it's about middle of the road weight wise – heavier than some, but significantly lighter than others. **Price wise its cheaper than most of its similar quality competitors, and I think it represents very good value for money.**



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