



WILEY X SABER ADVANCED

VERMILION LENS
MATTE BLACK FRAME
PRODUCT NUMBER: 304

WILEY X SABER ADVANCED

RUST LENS
MATTE BLACK FRAME
PRODUCT NUMBER: 301

WILEY X VALOR

GREY LENS
MATTE BLACK FRAME
PRODUCT NUMBER: CHVAL01

Putting it to the test

Wiley X claims its eyewear offers absolute, premium protection for shooters since it achieves the toughest military ballistic standards in the world. GTW editor-in-chief John Hunter tested them for himself.

Here at GTW, we see many products with bold claims that “this is the best X on the market” or “no-one makes a better Y”.

Over the last year Wiley X’s marketing campaign for its protective eyewear has centred on the fact that its entire range of hunting/shooting glasses meets or exceed the hardest eyewear tests in the world – the military ballistic standards.

An ISO 9001:2008 certified company, Wiley X has the testing, processes and documentation to prove it with every adult model meeting/exceeding ANSI Z87.1 safety ratings and being EN.166 certified for protection. These standards demand protection from a 6mm steel ball fired at the lens at around 165 km/h.

Meanwhile, all of its hunting models also meet or exceed MIL-PRF-32432 (GL) VO Ballistic Impact Standards for spectacles. The Ballistic standard requires a spectacle to withstand the impact of a .15 calibre (3.8mm) fragment fired at between 640 to 660 fps, (195 to 201 m/s or 700-72km/h).

This all sounds amazing but what does it actually mean in practice, and how many glasses get tested before such claims are made?

DETAILED APPROACH

So when Wiley X Europe (now EMEA) vice-president and director, outdoor department, Thomas Waever invited *Gun Trade World* to its headquarters in Vemb, Denmark to test the eyewear for itself, we jumped at the chance.

The impressive premises have recently been expanded to accommodate a growing company and make space for an inspirational showroom where buyers can see the entire range and learn about the different standards and tests that they have to meet or pass.

From the design and graphics team to the slick sales operation and the highly efficient warehousing and despatch department, it is clear that the team really believes in the brand and all it stands for. What’s more, it prides itself on ensuring the

little details are just as correct as the major items – something that mirrors the products themselves.

Everything is checked and double-checked and nothing is left to chance – it’s the same whether it’s the facility and its operation or the actual eyewear.

TESTING TIMES

This is of little consequence if the product doesn’t actually do what it is meant to.

Our first test was actually to try out the eyewear for lens clarity and comfort, so we took to a boat and spent the morning chasing pike with Thomas.

Swapping styles and lens colours allowed me to get a feel for the clarity of each lens, the effectiveness of different colours and, of course, the polarisation abilities, not to mention how comfortable they felt in driving winds and warm sunshine.

They were certainly not found wanting in any of these departments. They were comfortable enough to allow you to forget you were wearing them – until you took them off and

realised what a massive advantage you gained through the polarised lenses, which allow you to cut the glare of the water and see, not only the lake’s topography, but also the fish themselves as they reacted to various lure movements.

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

That test was easy in comparison with what was to follow.

Thomas had shared with me a number of stories of shooters whose eyesight had been saved by wearing Wiley X glasses during hunts – along with one or two who suffered through not wearing them – and now it was time to find out for myself how good they were.

The ultra-protective eyewear certainly looked the part, thanks to its durable but lightweight materials including shatterproof Selenite polycarbonate lenses with scratch-resistant T-Shell Hardcoat and virtually indestructible Triloid nylon frames, not to mention flame-resistant materials.

A local shooting club kindly allowed us to carry out the

extensive testing so, throughout the afternoon, I tested 40 pairs of Wiley X protective eyewear.

The lenses were mounted on hooks in a bale of straw and then I shot at each one using a standard 12-gauge shotgun and typical Gamebore steel shot size 7 clay cartridges.

All of this at a distance of just 10 metres – far closer than you would typically expect any stray shot to find you and certainly with far more force and a greater number of pellets.

By the time the arm-aching test had concluded, every single lens had been battered with steel shot but, despite plenty of dents and marks, not a single pellet had actually fully penetrated the materials – an impressive result indeed.

I even tried shooting a pair at just five metres distance, using the same shotgun and load. While the frame was pushed backward by the impact of so many shot in such a tight area, it was clear that the lenses had, again, survived intact.

One final test on the firm’s

Saber Advanced and Valor eyewear saw each product mounted on a melon on a pole and, again, shot at a distance of 10 metres.

The melon, as you might expect, failed to survive a single blast but the lenses again showed no penetration or fragmentation despite repeated shots, with one lens even seeing a pellet lodged in it. Many firms make proud claims about the effectiveness of their products but few are prepared to fly you out to their headquarters and get you to test them out for yourself.

It just goes to show that Wiley X has as much confidence in its shooting products as I now do and I am happy to confirm that these glasses deliver exactly what Wiley X says they do – absolute, premium protection. GTW

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