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A DIFFERENT BREED OF BIPOD

GADGETRY

OR

CUTTING
EDGE
GENIUS??

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THE X-VIP / VIP 2

Anyone familiar with long gun certainly knows the value of using a bipod. Bipods have been used for years on any variety of weapons to include sniper rifles and crew served machine-guns. A bipod has become indispensable for providing a expedient rest in adverse conditions and situations. A bipod provides the shooter with the ability to hold his target with more stability and control than almost any other method. In short any shooter with even the shortest amount of time behind a long gun knows the capability a bipod brings to the fight.

For the most part as far as rifle shooters are concerned there has only been one reliable manufacturer of capable bipods. The problem has long been that the available commercial bipod did little but provide a quick portable rest. It has not been that long ago that a new improvement was made with the advent of the "swivel" versions which allow the shooter to move the weapon to compensate for uneven ground or more importantly follow a moving target. From a military prospective the bipod while necessary was somewhat limited in that it was not conducive in a percentage of his firing positions most notably on or out of some form of vehicle.

This has now all changed; several years ago a new product was developed in proto-type form that provides the professional shooter with not only a stable platform in almost every situation but actually dampens recoil as well. This new breed of bipod called the X-VIP and X-VIP II utilizes technology borrowed from the archery community to reduce vibration in the weapon system thus allowing the shooter to hold the target easier in addition to providing faster follow up shots. This bipod on first look brings confusion and doubt, however after using it in conditions where everything else fails miserably it excels.





THE PROTOTYPE

I was provided with a proto-type version during a sniper course I was running and to be honest had my doubts when removing it from the box and seeing it for the first time. My first impression that it was some type of "Frankenstein" device that in all likelihood was another piece of sniper "gadgets" that would most likely not work. Given the robustness of the sample I had I felt it needed to be attached to a heavy recoiling rifle in order to more easily determine its value. Subsequently I attached it to one of my 300 WIN MAG rifles whose recoil I was intimately familiar with. Firing the weapon from the prone I initially thought that it provided a modicum of value but given its size and weight was really not worth what I assumed would be a high price. However after thinking it through I decided that perhaps my testing protocol was flawed so I decided to shoot the system off the hood of a vehicle which for any other bipod would present some unique challenges. Once I positioned the system I commenced to shooting at targets out to 400 yards, immediately I noticed that the weapon was much "tamer" that it should be allowing me to fire repeatedly and quickly at a number of targets. Given that I was running a course I decided to let the students try it out. To a man, everyone has reservations and voiced them loudly, however after firing the rifle they all commented that it was surprisingly mild.



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In order to really test this product I felt that it needed to be tried in a helicopter which would instantly provide or disprove its worth, however firing from a helo is not something easily done. As it turned out the guys I was teaching were scheduled for some aerial platform shooting in the coming weeks so I coordinated with them to take the X-VIP along to see if its claims held "water". Several weeks passed and I did not hear anything, finally one of the guys called me to ask if they could deploy with it overseas. I inquired as to how the testing went thinking that they probably didn't use it and just didn't want to admit it. Surprisingly he told me that not only did it work but it was the star of the training resulting in more hits per shooter than any other method tried. He told me that when the first guy was going out to the helo with the X-VIP on his weapon the other snipers laughed and gave him a hard time, however after seeing the results one-by-one all asked if they could try it. Again to a man they all got off the bird saying that the X-VIP was outstanding and were reluctant to turn it over.



SUPPORTED the MISSION with SUCCESS

Given this success and their anticipated mission scenario these soldiers felt that the X-VIP would come in very handy. As it turns out the X-VIP actually went on 2 deployments with this same group and by their accounts delivered a vibration free firing platform on many occasions when anything else either would have or did fail.

Admittedly, the X-VIP probably is not for your average "paper" shooter and given the size and weight may not lend itself to use on all systems. However having said this the X-VIP has seen use on everything from .50 caliber BMG systems to M4 carbines all with great success. In fact due to it's successes and consultation with the US Military the X-VIP II was developed specifically for use on the M-4 carbine or weapons with rails at the 6 O-Clock position. It is now my opinion that despite first impressions the X-VIP delivers the "goods" so-to-speak and is a valuable tool in especially the sniper's arsenal. As a post script to this article I should mention that last year during a demo the X-VIP was placed on a 338 Lapua Magnum equipped with a very rudimentary muzzle break; what had been a shoulder breaker turned out to be so mild that ladies repeatedly stood in line to fire the system several of which were overheard telling the others how mild the "big gun" was.

In conclusion, if you are professional shooter or a shooter of big guns the X-VIP is the ticket. It will drastically change the way you view shooting either from a felt recoil stand point or from a vibration inherent stand point. The X-VIP and the X-VIP are not currently commercially available, however that should change in the near future and provide everyone with the chance to try one out proving that even something as ordinary as a bipod can be improved upon.



"if you are a professional shooter. . the X-VIP is the ticket."