

Firenock Review by Dave Conrad, Feb 22, 2009 Firenock GSH, GST (SU)

With the advancement of bow speeds over the last few years it is getting harder to see arrows streaking to their targets. Especially during the prime hunting times of early morning and late evening when trophy bucks like to make their debut. Lighted nocks over the last few years have helped immensely with tracking arrows or better yet finding them. However the reliability factor was somewhat lacking in early models, intermittent lighting or going out once they hit their target were common occurrences. This left me with the decision to omit them from my hunting equipment, but every year I would still try newer versions which hit the market with new promises. Most improvements were of minor change and still left the product unreliable.

This year however is different as one manufacturer has incorporated new technology and features which guarantees reliability. For 2008 the improved Firenock is at the head of the class for illuminated nocks. One of the biggest improvements in the latest version requires no magnet to activate or deactivate.

The thought of attaching a magnet to the inside shelf of the bow riser was a big concern for me, meaning just one more failure point. I also didn't like the fact that my first attempt of attaching the magnet caused a problem with my drop away rest.

In speaking with the developer earlier this year, Dorge Huang, admitted that since he started development of the Firenock, he is always finding ways to improve the product. It

is always going through improvements which results from either testing or advancements in technology. Dorge is not resting on the success of this year's product either and has already promised more advancements in the next product release version in early 2009.

When I received the Firenock it was enclosed in a great marketable package. The clear packaging emphasized the latest feature sets and improvements. Opening the enclosed four page flyer explained the Firenock in great detail as well as other related products and accessories. The back page alone gave a complex but easy to understand chart listing the comparisons of the different models available.

Another interesting service that Firenock provides is the ability to upgrade/refresh older models to the latest and greatest. Upgrades/refreshes are offered at a reduced rate and thereby guarantees that the Firenocks in your arsenal are up to date with the latest technologies.

Models

I received the Hunting as well as the Target model of the Firenock. The Hunting model stays on continually after being shot from the bow. The Target model on the other hand stays lit for approximately 12 to 18 seconds upon release.

Assembly

When I spoke with Dorge, his first question was the type of arrow shaft I was using. He informed me that the Easton ACC 3-60 would require the GS series with one small

modification, removal of the 8 ridges on the nock in order to reduce the outside diameter to 0.2405". With this one small modification I had a couple of arrows prepped and ready to go in no time.

The first step of the installation phase is to attach and secure the battery. I must start off by admitting just how amazing the battery technology available on the market is today. The 3/16" long circular battery is capable of supplying enough power to light the Hunting model continuously for up to 24 hours. My initial reading utilizing a voltmeter on a random selected new battery displayed 3.275 volts, quite impressive for such a compact battery. In leaving a Firenock on continuously I was able to get hours

To assemble start by threading the slim nose of the battery through the looped battery wire and into the circuit board slot. In order for the threading process to go smoothly you must rotate the end of the battery wire counterclockwise. This action enlarges the looped battery wire making it easier to fit into the first indented channel on the battery. I found the new "cross lock wire connector" and O-ring assembly, now patented, to be a big improvement over previous models. This new design combined with the indented battery locks kept the battery securely fastened to the circuitry shot after shot. The documentation included with the Firenocks are much simpler than my explanation above and takes you through a four step illustrated process. After reviewing the documentation and completing the

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first install the remaining Firenocks were a breeze to assemble. The assembly process is exactly the same for the Hunting and Target models.

The next step is to take the assembled battery and circuitry configuration and insert it into the shaft. The instructions recommend using a smudge of bow wax on the nock for lubrication. This worked fine on the first nock but in my opinion really wasn't necessary on the remaining ACC 3-60 nocks I installed. It really depends on type of arrow being used and inside diameter configuration. Earlier I mentioned on small modification that was needed for my ACC 3-60 to fit. I only had to trim the outside ridges, 8 in total, on the outside surface of the nock. This allowed to nock to fit perfectly into the shaft. Once inserted I only had to align the nock with my fletching configuration in order to accommodate my QAD brand drop away rest.

Older versions (pre 2.0) for comparison sake required a lot more effort and pieces. A special end cap with a rubber grommet needed to be inserted down the shaft to aid in holding the battery in place. This added weight as well as required a special tool for insertion and removal. If the grommet moved farther into the shaft the battery would disconnect upon impact. Since the grommet moved the assembly tool was basically useless. To retrieve everything required that the whole shaft be disassembled and a long wire inserted to push out. But this is now a thing of the past. The new design eliminates extra tools and can now

be accomplished easily in the field.

It was now range time to see exactly how the new Firenocks performed. If the performance was anything like the improvements over the original Firenock, I look for it to be the industry leader. First I weighed each arrow with and without the Firenock installed. With a unibushing and G nock the 28.5" ACC 3-60 arrows weighed between 410 and 412 grains. With the unibushing removed and the addition of the Firenock the arrows weighed in between 422 and 425 grains. On average the Firenocks added an additional 12.5 grains.

My Bowtech Allegiance averages 301fps at 29" and the Firenock had no effect on my arrow's impact at 20 yards. On my multiple trips to my indoor 20 yard range, not once did any of the Firenock arrows, whether the hunting or target model, fail. Many shots into the target on my first and many sessions since and no failures yet.

Once illuminated the hunting nock will stay on for approximately 24 hours. I used one of my first test nocks to see how long it stayed on without turing it off. I didn't quite get the minimum 24 hours but close enough to understand that my many practice sessions probably had an impact on the performance.

The ultimate test however would come on a late season Ohio bowhunting trip for a mature doe. This hunt would also give me the chance to test the Firenock's performance in the frigid late winter temperatures. Everything came

together for the final weekend of the season except that my cameraman would be on the other side of the farm filming his son. So I gathered all my equipment which included my own video camera and homemade tree tripod arm as I attempted to capture the action on tape

Everything seemed to be cooperating as I emerged from my truck at close to three o'clock in the afternoon. The temperature was around the 20 degree mark with a steady 10 mph wind from the southwest. Several deer were already in a nearby field. As I started making my way to the stand about a dozen deer began to appear from out of the woods paralleling a soybean plot. Unfortunately they were between me and my stand along with too little cover to hide my movement. The deer slowly worked their way in the opposite direction keeping an eye on me as I worked around the rim of the field edge. Once out of site I quickly made a cut over the sparse cover to my treestand that would take advantage of the southwest wind.

An hour past before the first doe made her way out into the snow covered clover field. The foot of snow which had fallen the week before showed many tracks cutting the field and I felt good about my stand location. The yearling doe fed in front of me offering several shots but I was determined to hold out for a mature doe.

It wasn't until about a half hour before quitting time that final opportunity of the season would present herself. A mature doe made her way up along the field edge and slowly began to cut the range between us. I readied my camera and was

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preparing to begin recording when she decided to cut into the woods behind me. She cautiously made her way up through the woods and as she neared she cut down over a ridgeline changing her course. My camera was situated so that now I wouldn't be able to record the action. It was a decision I had to make, let her go in desperate hopes that she would change course and allow me to capture the shot on video or take the sure 25 yard broadside shot she was now offering. With the sun ducking down behind the horizon I decide to take the sure thing. On my immediate release the crimson trail of the Firenock told me my aim was true. The doe bolted and I could see the blood pumping from the double lunged shot. Within 60 yards she was down putting an end to my season. The glowing Firenock made for easy recovery of my arrow even though it was buried under at least 2 inched of snow. I was a little disappointed that I didn't capture the action on video but I was overjoyed and thanked God for a successful season as I made my way to her final resting spot.

I was also very pleased with the performance of the Firenock as it had held up through my many practice season but also performed flawlessly in the frigid temperatures of the final weekend of the season. It has passed with flying colors and will become a staple in my quiver.

As I conclude this evaluation I look forward with anticipation for the 2009 turkey season. I also look forward to having my cameraman with me to record the Firenock's performance on the opposite end of a Magnus Bullhead tipped

arrow.

Ratings

Design 5 of 5 - the new design of the Firenock puts it at elite status within the industry,. The surface mount technology combined with ultra-mini G switch allows the circuitry to be small and lightweight. The switch is gold plated as well insuring reliability in the field where it counts most. The posted weight of the Firenock is approximately 15 grains but mine average around 12.5. The crosslock battery design is another plus utilizing a unique and durable wire connector while reducing weight. With the many different types of arrow combinations on the market Firenock will fit the most common standard diameter graphite or aluminum arrows.

Brightness 4.5 of 5 - The Firenock performed exceptional in all lighting conditions. On the brightest days you could still see the Firenock perform well within my longest practicing home range of 50 yards. The Firenock high intensity focus is measured at 8000 LUX. Just to give comparison a bright sunny day can be measures starting at 10,000 LUX where a overcast day or TV studio lighting is 1000 LUX.

Performance - Second to NONE. The Firenock utilizes todays most advanced components, including batteries which gives you 18-24 hours of continuous operation. No gimmicks to activate or deactivate the devices and one of the brightest products available.

In closing I would like to mention that new for 2009 is over 50 different color choices to suit your style. To view these color choices as well as the many features and functions of the redesigned Firenock please go to www.firenock.com.

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