



1967

EXAKTA-VX 1000

THE LATEST EXAKTA from Ihagee follows previous practice of this firm; certain refinements are added to a camera already of impressive specification... no radical departures from the Exakta tradition, but each refinement making the entire Exakta system even more comprehensive. The VX 1000, however, has obvious differences to previous models; not least a somewhat improved body, a more stylish lever wind, and the introduction of an instant-return mirror.

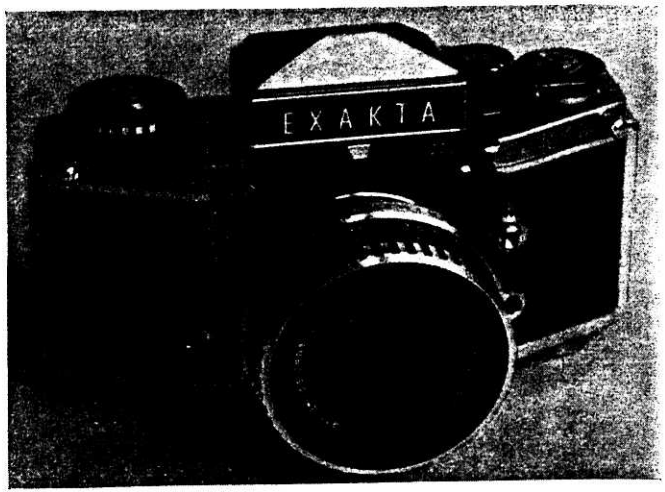
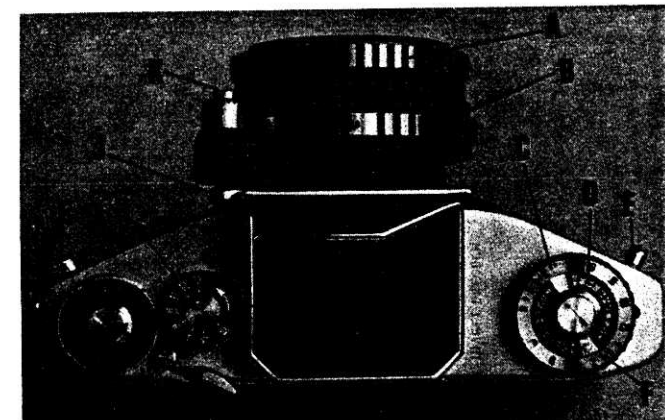
For those unfamiliar with the Exakta it would be well to begin at the beginning! The basics of the Exakta are that it is a 35mm interchangeable single lens reflex with focal plane shutter, and the astonishing shutter-speed range of 12 seconds to 1/1000 sec.

The VX 1000 model submitted for test had interchangeable pentaprism viewfinder and microprism fresnel screen, with 50mm f/2.8 Tessar (Carl Zeiss, Jena) lens and retails at £99 0s 6d.

There are many permutations of the VX 1000 price according to the required and selected viewfinder (reflex hood or pentaprism), screen (standard or microprism) and standard 50mm lens (Domiplan, Tessar or Pancolor) ranging from £73 2s 9d to £109 13s 2d.

It must be supposed that the Exakta has something very special to offer, at around £100 yet boasting only a f/2.8 standard lens (modest in these days of f/1.4 or f/0-point-something!) without exposure meter; and of course, it has something very special. It is a camera built with loving care for *photographers*, without undue worry about those gentlemen who want only the fastest, the shiniest, the most fashionable, etc. etc. Long after the shiny toys of the gadget collecting man have been offered as 'demonstration soiled' at knock-out prices, the Exakta will be quietly doing its job; a technician's delight, and any craftsman's pleasure, amateur or pro.

Below: VX 1000 top-deck. A—focusing ring. B—diaphragm setting collar. C—slow shutter speeds setting dial (black numerals). D—film-in-use ASA speed reminder. E—neck-strap lugs. F—delayed action slow shutter speed setting dial (red numerals). G—rapid wind lever. H—exposure counter. I—Time, Bulb and upper shutter speeds dial, to 1000 sec. J—body shutter release button safety lock in 'on' position. K—on-lens shutter release button



None the less, sound commercial instincts must prompt a firm which has been in the camera business as long as Ihagee, and it is surprising that—even now—should the Exakta-owner want a standard lens faster than the f/2.8, the nearest he can get to it, from the Exakta list, is a f/1.5 Biotar of 75mm focal length. This, whilst a fine lens, costs £63-odd and is not fully automatic, but of preset diaphragm type.

Many other manufacturers' lenses can be used in the Exakta however by use of adaptors (Wallace Heaton's Harmony lenses, for example, with a £2 2s WH Exakta adaptor) but these, if FAD, will not operate as fully automatic on the Exakta, which does not—as most FA type SLRs do—rely on the push movement of a small plate in the camera body onto a pin in the lens, to trigger the diaphragm at the moment of release. Instead, the Exakta diaphragm is actuated entirely by the pressure on the release button which is in-built to the lens; thereafter operating the camera shutter via a lens-to-body plunger. But many lenses other than those listed by Exakta can be used as manually pre-set, the camera shutter being fired by a small button on the camera body, normally struck—when FAD lenses are used—by the plunger from the lens.

Let's sum this up: if you're happy at f/2.8 optimum for general-purpose photography, you're OK with the standard Exakta 50mm lens—Domiplan, Tessar or Pancolor; and all three are FAD. Remember that you could often 'make up' the difference between f/2 and f/2.8 by using a faster film and/or varying your development technique. Available Exakta interchangeable lenses are shown in an accompanying table. If you want to use other manufacturers' lenses you can do so—with a suitable adaptor: but they won't work as fully automatics. But then again, not all the Exakta-listed lenses are automatic either...

The standard 50mm lens—and six of fourteen other Exakta interchangeable lenses listed as available in the U.K., from 20mm to 400mm—is of fully automatic diaphragm type.* That is to say that prior to exposure the aperture remains at full aperture (in this case, f/2.8) for maximum ease of viewing; that at the moment of exposure, the automatic diaphragm closes the aperture to the 'stop' selected and required for that exposure; and that immediately after exposure, the aperture returns to maximum, ready for viewing, prior to the next exposure. The Exakta-VX1000 having a smoothly operating instant-return mirror—newly introduced since the Vorex 11B—the subject can be studied in the viewfinder before and after cocking the shutter, and disappears only fractionally—like the blink of an eyelid—during the actual exposure.

Focusing, from approximately 1 1/2 feet to infinity, is helical, by rotation of a ribbed chrome and black ring, some 250° travel being required between minimum focus and infinity. Index distance figures in feet (red) and meters (white) are clearly engraved on the focusing collar. It is certainly a great convenience to be able to focus down to eighteen or twenty inches without extension tube or close-up supplementary.

The construction of the lens is such that the front element (all are coated) is quite deeply recessed, so minimising flare. Everyone worth his photographic salt will always use a lens-hood, anyway;

*Other lenses in the series of fourteen are 'automatic' to a degree, as the Exakta uses a release/diaphragm system not common to other cameras. Your dealer should be able to provide literature on the Exakta range lenses.

but even the greatest photographer has been known to forget the darned thing! Unfortunately the standard 50mm f/2.8 Tessar does not yet incorporate built-in lens-hood, but *all* lenses will surely have them in time!

Aperture settings engraved on a chrome collar at the back of the lens are f/2.8, 4, 5.6, 8, 11, 16 and 22 with the convenience of *between* stop (i.e., half stop) click stop operation.

The Exakta is one of the few left-handed shutter release cameras. In fact, it's left all the way, for the rapid-wind lever (setting the shutter and advancing the film) is also situated on the left. But you don't have to be left handed—in the real sense—to work the Exakta perfectly easily. Minutes of practice are all that is necessary to adjust your customary right handedness. Rather like taking your car to a country where they drive on the 'wrong' side of the road: in a quarter of an hour, you're accustomed to it, and after an hour, 'wrong' side driving becomes second nature.

To change the bayonet-type lens, a release-catch lever, left of the lens mounting (as held in taking position), is pressed down and the lens twisted anti-clockwise until it detaches and lifts out. To replace the lens, red dots on the lens and the lens mount are aligned, slight pressure used to engage the bayonets and then the lens turned clockwise until a positive click is heard, as the release-catch engages.

The shutter release plunger is on—and an integral part of—the Exakta FAD lens (see illustration). Partial pressure of the release closes the diaphragm to the f/stop chosen via the aperture selection collar; so actual depth of field can always—and instantly—be observed when using any Exakta FAD lens. There is also depth of field indication on the lens barrel, by way of a clearly-spaced indicator scale. To prevent accidental release of the shutter when previewing depth of field—or at any other time—there is a pivoted shutter release safety-lock.

The detachable pentaprism head can be replaced by a reflex hood if required for certain types of specialised work; and there are about 20 alternative screens, from good old plain ground glass to p.g.g. with a + engraved on it, and 1/16th division lines. It should be obvious from this that the Exakta is designed for much technical, medical and specialist work. This underlines an earlier point made: in considering the Exakta system, remember that it is precision, comprehensiveness and consistence of performance for which you are paying.

This is further illustrated by the astonishing shutter, which provides the following range of speeds: T., B., 1/1000, 1/500, 1/250, 1/125, 1/60, 1/30, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2 of a second: and 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 seconds.

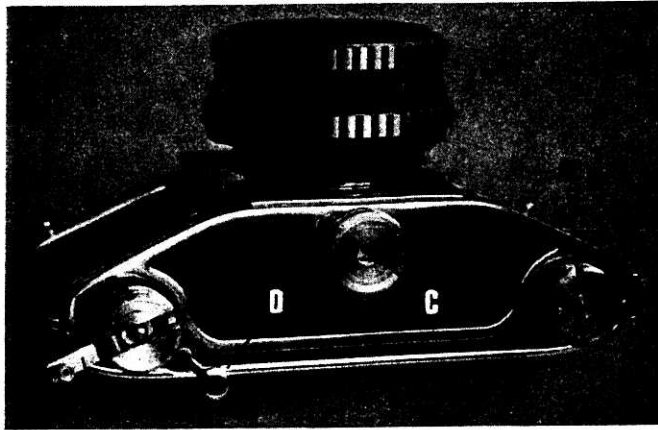
For this great range, two shutter-speed dials are used. On the top plate, left of the pentaprism housing, is a small dial of the pull-up-and-rotate around a stationary core type. The outer ring must only be turned anti-clockwise, and gives the first eight settings of those listed above: from Time and Bulb, to 1/30 sec. The dial is black, the figures bright silver on black, and the setting index spot on the centre core red.

On the opposite end of the top plate is a larger dial (over an inch in diameter) which combines three functions

- (i) operation of shutter speeds (without d.a.) from 1/8 sec. to 12 seconds inclusive.
- (ii) delayed action operation for shutter speeds 1/1000 sec. to 6 sec. inclusive
- (iii) ASA and/or DIN film-in-use reminder dial

For straightforward use of the slower speeds—from 1/8 sec. to 12 seconds—the *smaller* dial left of pentaprism housing is set either to Bulb (B) or Time (T)—it does not matter which—and the shutter tensioned by a single full stroke of the rapid-wind lever alongside. The larger shutter dial (top right) is then turned fully *clockwise* until it stops. It is, in fact, wound up! The outer ring of the shutter speed setting knob is then lifted and turned until a yellow index dot is opposite the desired *black* engraved shutter speed. The outer ring is then allowed to spring back. The shutter is now released in the usual way. Emphasis on the word 'black' is to indicate that there are numerals of another colour on the large dial: *red* numerals, which are used when slower speed delayed action release is required—1/4, 1/2, sec., and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 seconds being the available range. In addition, all the faster speeds (from 1/30 to 1/1000 sec.) can be used on d.a., by a variation of the two-knob system . . . which some readers will no doubt by now have worked out for themselves!

- (a) *For d.a. use of smaller-knob shutter speeds* (1/30 to 1/1000 sec.); set smaller knob at selected speed;



VX 1000 baseplate. A—type of film in use reminder. B—camera back lock. C—tripod bush. D—film cutting knife handle, partly withdrawn. E—fold-down crank on rewind knob

tension shutter; 'wind up' larger knob, place yellow index mark against *any red figure* and release shutter in usual way. This gives approximately 12 seconds before the shutter trips.

- (b) *For d.a. use of larger-knob shutter speeds*

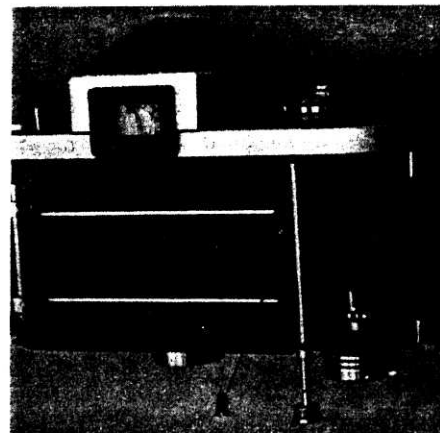
1/4, 1/2 sec. and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 seconds; proceed as above but set small dial at T or B, and the yellow index mark of the larger dial against the *red shutter speed actually required*.

The top plate is free of other controls except a small film rewind 'declutching' button and a film frames-remaining counter, which is a ratchet disc turning beneath a clear plastic window. On first loading, the number 36 or 20—according to the length of the film—representing the number of *unexposed* frames remaining is set manually, thereafter the mechanism 'counts down', always showing frames still available . . . which many people think is a better idea than the more customary recording of frames exposed!

There is, beyond the outer edge of the larger shutter speed dial, a small signal window on the top plate giving warning when the shutter is not cocked. There is also a red 'flag' in the viewfinder for the same purpose.

On the baseplate of the Exakta-VX 1000 is a knob which carries a simple guide to type of film in use, operating by symbols representing various types of emulsion, against one of which is set the relevant symbol for black-and-white, colour negative, daylight, reversal or artificial light reversal. On the opposite side of the baseplate is another knob incorporating a fold-down rewind crank; this knob pulls out, to allow insertion of the cassette of unexposed film, after which it must be pushed home again and waggled round until the 'dog' engages with the bar in the cassette core.

Also on the baseplate, a very useful extra indeed: the operating handle of a film cutting knife. This enables you—without opening the camera back—to slice off a short length of exposed film for development at any time. The Exakta is so designed that instead of a take-up spool only, one can run the exposed film straight into another cassette in the take-up chamber. In that case, the cut off length of film is simply wound into the take-up cassette by the



With the camera back swung open for loading, the film cutting knife can be seen at A. To illustrate its action it is here pictured with the knife-handle partly drawn out. To cut the film the handle must be pulled out until it will withdraw no further

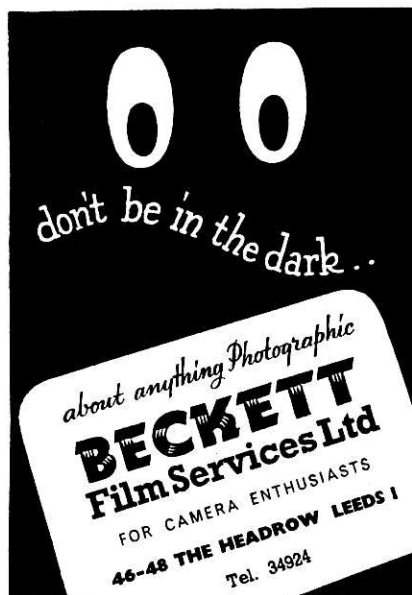
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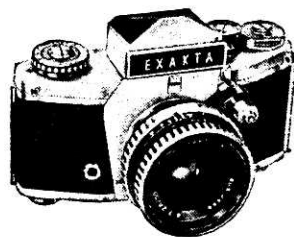
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fold-down crank and removed for development, the consequently fogged piece of unexposed film (lying between the cassette of unexposed film and the take-up cassette) now forming a new leader to the replacement take-up spool or take-up cassette.

This presupposes the desire to remove the 'chopped off' piece of film *in daylight*. If, however, a dark room or changing bag is available, the use of a second cassette (in the take up chamber) is not necessary; the exposed and severed length can—in the dark—be removed from the spool and fed straight into a developing tank, the remaining leader from the unexposed cassette then being attached to the re-inserted empty take-up spool.

The built-in film cutting knife is also used when an empty film cassette is used in place of a take-up spool, and rewinding is not desired. When the last exposure has been taken the film is cut through with the built-in knife and wound right into the receiving cassette, the short, waste end-length—attached to the original cassette—then being removed from the camera.

In preparing film for loading the Exakta, if using lengths cut from bulk film no purpose is served by shaping a long leader. In fact, the sooner the teeth of the film-wind sprocket engage the perforations *on both sides* of the film, the better: and a long, shaped leader 'tongue' with one set of perforations cut away is no way to accomplish that!

The Exakta-VX1000 has three flash synchronisation sockets on the camera front. For electronic flash, the top socket (marked X) of two left of the lens (as held in the taking position) is used, the shutter being set to 1/60 sec. or slower.

For flashbulbs of long burning type (Philips PF 24, e.g.) the synchronisation socket right of the lens is used, marked FP, at shutter speeds varying from 1/60 to 1/1000 sec., according to a table provided in the instruction manual.

For fast-burning bulbs, the lower socket *left* of the lens is used: this is marked F and the shutter speed used is 1/30 sec. For all other bulbs—listed in some detail in the Exakta instruction manual—X setting is used.

The versatility of the VX 1000 has already been indicated. Ihagee are at pains to point out that the Exakta system will not become obsolescent. Complete interchangeability of lenses, viewfinders, focusing screens and accessories guards against this; as also does the policy of the firm which plans its equipment for the decade, not for a season or two.

Bayonet rings, extension tubes, miniature bellows, a number of close-up focusing and operating aids, copying stand, repro. unit, microscope adaptor and ring-flash units are only a small sample of the total extensive accessories range.

The camera itself—some 25 oz. without lens, and 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 6 × 2 in. in dimension—is attractively styled in functional rather than chic manner. In performance it is highly satisfying and reassuring. Of satin chrome and black finish, with dappled black leathercloth, it is thoroughly well made and in every way gives the impression of being designed and constructed for a long life of reliable service.

Interchangeable Exakta lenses

20mm f/4 Flektogon FAD	£120	15s	0d	inc.	PT
25mm f/4 Flektogon FAD	£65	13s	7d	"	"
30mm f/3.5 Lydith	£19	19s	6d	"	"
35mm f/2.8 Flektogon FAD	£61	6s	0d	"	"
75mm f/1.5 Biotar	£63	4s	3d	"	"
100mm f/2.8 Trioplan	£19	19s	6d	"	"
120mm f/2.8 Biometer FAD	£85	8s	2d	"	"
135mm f/2.8 Orestor	£21	19s	6d	"	"
135mm f/4.0 Sonnar FAD	£52	4s	6d	"	"
108mm f/2.8 Sonnar FAD	£108	17s	0d	"	"
200mm f/4 Orestegor	£29	19s	6d	"	"
300mm f/4.5 Telemegor	£65	11s	11d	"	"
300mm f/4 Sonnar	£145	12s	5d	"	"
400mm f/5.5 Telemegor	£48	2s	5d	"	"

Two additional lenses were submitted by the British distributor, Photomarketing Ltd. of London, N.W.6: these we tested together with the standard 50mm f/2.8 Tessar to which reference has already been made.

The 30mm Meyer-Optik Gönlitz Lydith has a 71° angle of view, is

SHUTTER SPEEDS		
Camera: Exakta-VX 1000 1130331		
Indicated Speed	Measured Speed	
	Milliseconds	Fraction
2	1970	2
1	990	1
$\frac{1}{2}$	500	$\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{4}$	260	$\frac{1}{4}$
$\frac{1}{8}$	125	$\frac{1}{8}$
1/30	32	1/31
1/60	19.4	1/52
1/125	7.6	1/131
1/250	3.6	1/278
1/500	1.93	1/517
1/1000	.9	1/1110

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light in weight (6 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.) and the manually pre-set type, selling at £19 19s. Focusing down to 12 in., with good clear distance markings in feet (red) and metres (white) the depth of field at f/11 is from 3 ft. to infinity which, for all-purpose record work (press, for example, covering sports, crowd work or similar functions) gives tremendous range at one-distance setting. Such a lens is the modern press photographer's delight and takes all the guesswork out of focusing.

The pre-set mechanism is simple. An outer lift-ring at the front of the lens bears a red index mark which is placed against the selected 'taking' aperture, then dropped back into position. The entire front element is now turned clockwise until it stops—automatically—at f/3.5—the Lydith's maximum aperture. At maximum aperture, the subject to be photographed is viewed, and focused. Immediately before exposure the front element is turned *anti-clockwise* until it stops automatically at the aperture (f/stop) chosen. For most practical purposes we found it satisfactory to view direct at the stopped-down aperture, without needing to open up, view and close down again: our 'method', of course, noticeably speeding up the proceedings.

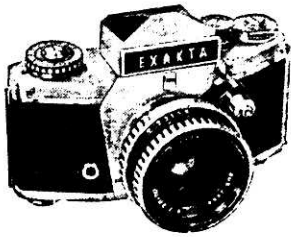
The depth of the lens is 4.7 cm., and it is supplied boxed, with front and rear lens caps. For its price, this 30mm Lydith is indeed good value and—once used—many workers, we believe, would tend to prefer 30mm to the standard 50mm for its greater depth of field and consequent greater speed in use.

The second auxiliary lens supplied also qualifies practically for bargain basement price category, but proved impressive in use. At £21 19s 6d the 135mm Meyer Optik Gönlitz Orestor f/2.8 had us wondering who would pay £52 4s 6d for the f/4 135mm Sonnar: but it is only fair to record that the Sonnar is FAD and the Orestor only manually pre-set. The aperture pre-selection principle of operation of the telephoto is the same as that already described for the 30mm wide-angle. But focusing of a 135mm lens is, of course, critical, and though we found it quite practical to focus at the pre-selected stopped-down aperture, many users would undoubtedly prefer always to focus a telephoto at full aperture and stop down prior to exposure, via the collar at the front of the lens, adjacent to the f/stop index. The lens focuses down to a little under 5 ft. Its weight is 19 ozs. and its depth 11.4 cm.

Finish of both the Meyer lenses is black with ribbed black/chrome grip-indented collars where movement is intended (focusing, aperture selection). The white figures (metres) are always clearer than the red (feet) which makes us wish that the photographers of the world would unite and settle once and for all for the *same* units of measurement! All distance markings could then be larger and even clearer.

The Germans can challenge the Japanese even with inexpensive lenses these days. It is a rare thing to find a lens of really inferior performance; the difficulty is to differentiate meaningfully between degrees of satisfactory performance.

VERDICT: It would be easy for any serious photographer to become hooked on the Ihagee Exakta-VX 1000 and its innumerable accessories. It may be bulkier and not quite as sophisticated-looking as some of the more pricey SLRs, but it has a great specification and a great performance.

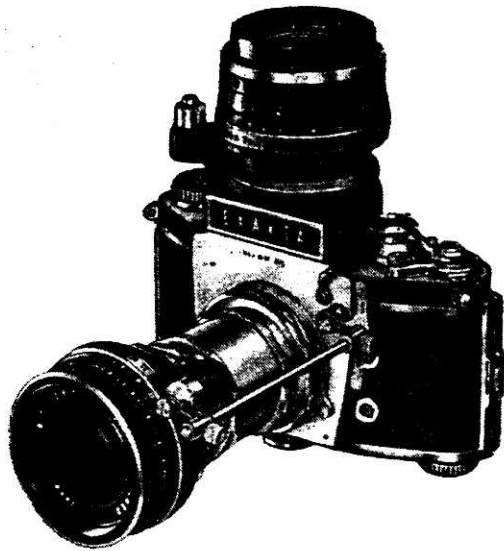


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Schacht Travemat TTL

As this report goes to press we have received and conducted tests with the Schacht Travemat combined pentaprism viewfinder and through-lens CdS exposure meter. This German accessory, priced at £52 4s. 6d., can be used interchangeably with the reflex hood of the Exakta-VX 1000 (or with Exakta-Varex, Exakta-Real, Edixa-Reflex and similar cameras accepting interchangeable viewfinders) and in our opinion adds immensely to the versatility and attractiveness of the VX 1000. Except for special technical use, most VX 1000 buyers would opt to purchase the Exakta body and new Travemat pentaprism viewfinder/CdS meter (which as supplied to us came with fresnel screen and microprism centre focusing spot) as being a standard all-purpose combination, giving a very high quality SLR with the added convenience of through-lens metering.

The Travemat meter is of the type which makes exposure assessment at the aperture (f/stop) chosen for the actual exposure, regardless of focal length or maximum aperture of lens in use, and regardless of whether tele-convertors, filters, extension tubes, bellows or even microscope is being used in addition to that lens. It is thus of optimum versatility.

The meter cell 'scans' the light reaching the viewfinder *over the entire picture area*, and averages it out. The indicated exposure is therefore an integrated value—a compromise between lowest and highest illumination. Needless to say the readings must be made with the exact intended picture area carefully framed in the viewfinder and with the lens stopped down to whatever is the intended aperture (there is a variation to that, which we shall later refer). But if it is desired to expose—particularly in colour work—for a detail taken out of its surroundings (say a yellow rose against a background of dark green foliage) the camera viewpoint should be moved until the important detail is placed *in the lower centre of the picture area*.

The design of the Travemat is such that the pentaprism eyepiece is much smaller than usual, and of construction to minimise possible falsifying of the meter reading by stray light entering the finder via the eyepiece. The meter appears to be more successful in this respect than any other we have seen.

Operated by the usual 1.5v battery (the battery chamber being situated on the left side of the pentaprism housing and having a handsome-sized cover plate with sensible grip indentations) the Travemat proved to be highly sensitive even at very low levels of illumination. With a setting range of from 4 sec. to 1/1,000 sec. and—on the standard 50mm f/2.8 Tessar—7 choices of aperture, each with half-stop option, well over 160 variations of setting are available to encompass the available lighting.

Travemat meter reading is made via a total of three moving parts, all mounted conventionally on the 'roof' of the pentaprism. A lever at the left of a large dial is pushed forward to lie against a letter P, when the state of the battery is to be tested: is pulled back to lie against a letter M when exposure assessment is to be made: and is left mid-way between P and M—against a red dot—when not in

use, the CdS circuit then being switched off, and current conserved.

The outer of two rings is fixed, bearing DIN film speed settings of 9, 12, 15, 21, 24 and 27. An inner ring, which revolves against the outer by a small lug, carries ASA film speed settings of 6, 12, 25, 50, 100, 200 and 400. Intermediate values between engraved factors can be set on the scale by approximation assessment. The inner ring also carries shutter speed markings from 1/1000 sec. to 4 sec.

The speed of the film in use must first be set on the appropriate scale (DIN or ASA) against the appropriate index mark on the outer ring, pointing inwards to ASA markings on the inner ring; or the index mark on the inner ring, pointing outwards to DIN markings.

Before taking an exposure reading, it is necessary to decide which is the more important; a predetermined shutter-speed, or a predetermined aperture. In the case of fast action, a minimum shutter speed of, say, 1/500 sec. may be essential. That being the case, the predetermined factor is the shutter speed—film speed already having been set—and a suitable aperture for that shutter speed must be found. In such a case, the meter having been switched on as previously described, the time lever (a plastic cursor with a red index mark on the outer edge) is set to the appropriate shutter speed marking—in this case 1/500 sec.—and the camera's shutter speed setting also adjusted to this figure, in case you forget later! The subject must now be focused at full aperture and carefully framed in the viewfinder.

At the left hand edge of the viewfinder field will be seen two short, fixed claws (referred to in the instruction manual as the 'measuring bracket'). Correct exposure determination can be made when a traveller needle just centres between the claws. Now the diaphragm is slowly closed until the needle *does* just centre. At that point, aperture and shutter speed are right for the film in use for the subject framed, under prevailing lighting conditions.

The alternative method of exposure assessment is to predetermine aperture—which may be necessary in poor or very bright light, or when a given depth of field is essential—and then to find the shutter speed correct for that aperture.

In this case, the meter circuit being switched on, the required aperture is set on the camera, and the scene carefully focused and framed in the pentaprism viewfinder. Now the meter cursor is moved slowly until the needle just centres between the claws. The cursor must not now be moved further, but reference to it will show the correct shutter speed against its index mark.

The meter proved accurate in use, extremely sensitive and not difficult to manipulate.

