

A Gladius was provided to the membership of <http://www.candlepowerforums.com>
This was a review provided by one of those members during a Gladius "Passaround"

Posted by permission of the Author - Username [UVvis](#) on the Forum

Night-Ops Gladius Review

Highlights:

Positive points/features:

Constant on can be used in combination with lock out, momentary strobe, and momentary on.

Constant on has three default settings, the low to high is my favorite, high to low is ideal for police, memory mode is my least favorite.

Flanges for holding the light in assorted handgun grips.

1" tube outer diameter for weapon mount applications.

No Knurling, instead four flutes and two flats provide 12 sharp angles on body for grip.

Bezel is of diameter to work with all Surefire brand bezel accessories (filters and speed holster)

Plastic rear button feels very smooth and has lots of play.

Long runtime at low power settings, great for a survival light.

Negative Points, room for improvement and questions:

I would like to see the grip flanges to be adjustable for different sized hands (It is just a hair small for me, both in outer diameter and length from rear of light). As this is in production, I can live with it.

It would be nice to know how much recoil this light can take. Is it shotgun mountable?

I could not get the two clicks in the constant on mode to return to full brightness.

Noticed that full intensity in constant on was not as bright as full intensity in momentary on.

I do not like how the low battery indicator works. When the light is set constant on at high power or in momentary channels it would blink to say low battery, if you set the constant on at low power with the same batteries did not blink. It seems that the light takes battery conditions into effect only for the present output level. These means that I could be using the lowest output level and not receive warning that the batteries are low. If I needed to use the strobe or constant on at a high output, I might not get it. These should be addressed in my opinion, but I am not sure as to how the electronics for this operate.

I would like to see the constant on in the High to Low mode stay at high power on the first click and dim on the second push in and hold. This would avoid someone mistakenly dimming the light. If using the light in a covert setting, one would have to cover the bezel to dim regardless.

Note

I think it is important to point out that this light is still relatively new on the market and only time will tell of its long term reliability. Based on the company's commitment to quality, it would be disappointed and unexpected to see anything less than excellent quality and long term reliability.

Review:

Many people have taken the time to review this rather innovative light, and noted the features of this light, namely the strobe and dimming features. The general view is that this light is a standard Luxeon 3 watt light, with a great beam, has a wide range of dimmable settings, and a strobe feature that would be "disorientating." Individual beam characteristics and tint of the LED will vary, so it is pointless to mention this, provided they are constantly as good as the test model.

Often this light is compared to other lights such as the Surefire U2 and the custom Aleph lights by Don McLeish. It was my original intention to compare this light to a Surefire Z2 with a KL5, which I quickly realized was like comparing apples to oranges. Comparing the Gladius to other lights on the market is rather absurd as this light is innovative and unique so as to have no rivals in its category. Most of the time, you can only find one or two features on other lights to make comparisons against the Gladius. In a sense, there is no other light on the market to compare with the Gladius's unique and advanced functions. The Gladius is a combination of many highly desirable features culminated into one well thought out and designed package.

For a close quarters combat/tactical light, LED's offer several advantages over conventional tungsten filament/noble gas filled bulb based lights. First, the LED itself is more robust being a solid component than the tungsten filament. This means no replacement bulbs to carry around. The second is that an LED's light output is cut immediately upon ending electrical flow. Compare this to incandescent lights where the light will quickly, but noticeably dim out to orange over a second or so before completely going out. Though it is unlikely that this dimming of incandescent would give one's position away, it does have a drawback of adding a continuous point of light to be seen while used to "strobe" in traditional low light fighting techniques. Providing a continuous, or easily followed light source is a negative in that it is more revealing of one's position. To be fair, the LED will emit a very faint residual glow for some time after it is turned off, this is enough that it can be seen by night vision devices. However, the night vision device is less likely to see the faint light over the person holding the light.

Features:

Momentary On

This is a standard setting on most lights today. If the switch is no longer held in, the light turns off. If a person drops the light, it will not remain on. This virtues of this concept have been covered in great detail and needs no elaboration.

Constant On/Dimmable

In the Gladius's different channels there is the constant on/dimmable channel, which has three different modes that operate on a basic on/off switch.

There is a memory mode, where the light remembers the setting in the wide range of intensities possible to which it was last set. This would allow for the end user to set the light on a moderate output setting desired, be that low to moderate output for battery conservation, or a moderate to high output to meet a recurring lighting need.

The next mode starts the light at the highest output setting when turned on, regardless of where its last setting was. This allows the user to turn the light on, and dim it down to the desired level for that condition. This is the mode that seems ideal for most police users to operate the light on. The reason for this is rather obvious, if the light is off, turning it on in any setting (constant on/strobe/momentary on) will allow the light to emit the highest level of output possible. This would prevent the user that wishes to deny the target's visual capabilities from only shining a dim light when a more intense beam is called for.

The final mode, and my favorite, is the opposite of the last mode, in that it starts low regardless of its last setting, and from there can be intensified to the highest setting. This setting is ideal for military personnel, camping hiking, and special law enforcement teams that wish to start their light on the lowest and most covert setting possible and wish to preserve low light adjusted eyes.

From any of these modes, the Gladius's output can quickly be ramped up, or scaled back in seconds. Switching modes should take no more than a minute. All of these actions can be performed one handed.

The Strobe

Many have mentioned the possible usefulness of the strobe for law enforcement, but this use should not be neglected for the defense minded citizen. The strobe itself is a rapid series of pulses at full output, which are faster than a human's hand could physically pulse the light in the momentary on channel.

Most people will find the strobe annoying and first instinct will be to look away, giving the holder of the light precious moments to react. The benefits of this are obvious, you are now are a moments ahead of the other person's reaction and have an advantage. However, this is not much different than performing the same with any other bright light on the market.

Where the strobe really stands out is its ability to reduce the effectiveness of the other individual's resources. Let us quickly discuss how this works. The human eye sends signals to the brain for processing. We are used to signals that are relatively continuous, and our brain likes interpret these signals. The strobe interrupts the continuous nature of our vision, and instead we get a confusing series of pulses. These pulses represent a fraction of the 'video feed' we are used to getting. Naturally, our hand eye coordination is severely reduced or disabled, as we are getting less information as to where our hands are and what they are doing. The brain is now seeing a non-continuous series of pulses that deny us the ability to determine range, traveling direction, or closure rate of that light and other objects surrounding us. Apart from the

Gladius, the next best option to this is using the momentary feature on any other light, and using quick pulses while moving, while this is disruptive to our sense of sight, it is not nearly as effective as the strobe of the Gladius. The Gladius is simply far superior tool in this regard.

Scenarios describing use of the strobe, out of personal experience:

The short story is that while examining the light outside in a very dark environment, and moving with the light in strobe mode, I ran into a tree. Embarrassing? Yes. Education and Enlightening, YES! Luckily no one was around to laugh, save for me, and I now consider this to be funny.

The reason I ran into this tree was that my brain was not able to get enough information as to how close I was to the tree until there was not enough distance left avoid the collision. Now picture a bad guy getting quick series of strobes while an officer moves in for a tackle. The officer knows they are moving in for a tackle and will likely have his shoulder down, and be ready for the impact. Though the officer will not be sure as to when it will happen as they would under normal light, they will have a good idea. The effect for the bad guy will be worse. The bad guy would be unlikely to see the officer due to the light, and unsure if the officer is closing quickly or slowly, or moving left to right. If the bad guy is lucky, they might hear the last few closing footsteps and see the officer due to light reflected off the surroundings. However, the bad guy now has even less time to react and interpret the limited visual information they are getting. The point here is that the light user's disadvantage is minor in comparison the person the light is being used on.

Now a scenario for the general person using the Gladius. I've had the opportunity to help instruct in a few martial art based classes, such as basic women's self defense. One of the main concepts covered in these classes are that you do not have to defeat the opponent to escape, only disable the person long enough to get away. The Gladius on strobe mode helps to offer this option more so than other items on the market today. The Gladius can give the user a added second or two of head start time to run away, to act aggressively to disable the attacker, reduce the attackers hand eye coordination and the ability to defend against the attack while drawing attention from others due to the strobe. Even if being pursued on foot, strobe pulses aimed behind you are going to make it much more difficult for a chaser versus a more conventional light that could help light their path to you.

In general the strobe and momentary on modes of Gladius (and other) lights provide an active form of stealth. It equates very well to using radar jamming. The opponent knows you are there, but not exactly where (see FBI modified technique). The strobe takes this one step further in making it hard for the bad guy to tell if they are being rushed, if the light holder is standing stationary, or if that light holder is moving to take cover. Combine this with the good practice of keeping the light in motion (up, down, left, right, diagonal motions), you will have very confused opponents, which gives you a major advantage.

Using the combined features of this light:

Most of the reviews have focused on the features of the Gladius as individual segments. This light really stands out in its ability to use the features in combination, which should not be overlooked.

One can use the constant on and set the light to whatever brightness setting they want, and then put the light in lockout mode. If the light is dropped, it will stay on instead of landing on the switch and turning itself off.

One can set the light on a low level constant on, and switch it over to the strobe mode. If a bad guy shows up and is undeterred by the low level of light, a simple press of a button allows for a quick burst of disabling light then darkness for one to hide, approach and engage, or withdraw in.

Conclusions:

The Gladius is an excellent light overall; there is literally nothing in the market that comes close to this light at present. This light offers more features, which translates into more advantages, to the users of this light. The Gladius is an extremely flexible light that would be useful for any individual that needs a handheld light source. This light's utilization of a Luxeon LED is an ideal close range durable light source. Night-ops has set a very high bar with their entry Gladius light, and I hope this will not be their only offering.

I will be buying one of these lights in the near future. For the features present, this light is a bargain compared to most other offerings.