



Making sweet music

Bill Harvey tries out the new slit lamp from Keeler which was featured at last month's Optrafair exhibition

A slit lamp is an essential piece of equipment that should feature in any eye examination. As such, all practitioners have strong views on their design and use and expect ease of use and clarity of image. Some years ago I was asked to list what I felt were essential attributes for a good slit lamp. Keeler has just put into production the new Symphony slit lamp. I tried out a pre-production model recently and am happy to report that all the components on my list have made their way into the new instrument.

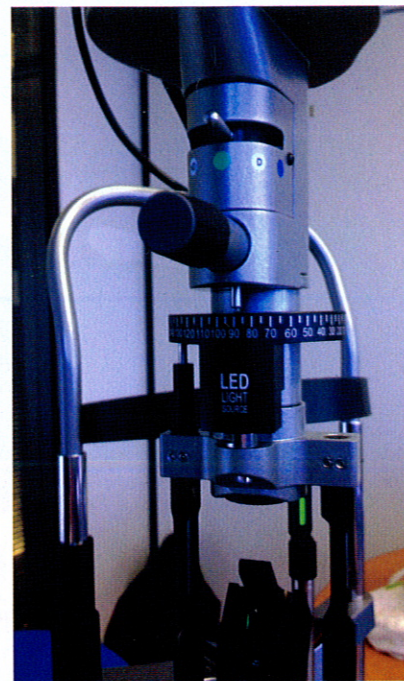
Firstly, the optics of the instrument are excellent – the Galilean converging binoculars offer excellent resolution at high magnification. The image resolution is enhanced by the instrument including an LED light source – I would suggest that LED sources should now be considered the standard for slit lamps. Magnification is available up to 40X (a drum offers 6, 10, 16, 25, and 40X along with a standard 12.5X eyepiece), so no problems in assessing, for example, microcysts in the epithelium of contact lens patients. The column incorporates integral red free, blue and neutral density filters as well as a diffuser (no need for cumbersome mirror reversal) and, essential in my view, there is an orange ('Wratten-style') filter incorporated in the viewing system to improve assessment of fluorescence. No more need for holding up bits of paper and plastic!

The vertical slit adjustment includes a stop for a 1mm cube to ease assessment of the anterior chamber for cells and flare and there is also a 0.2mm stop for assessment and measurement of the tear prism height. The rheostat is positioned usefully adjacent to the joystick, which helps make assessment fluent.

I like the overall design, the gun-metal finish and curves of the base helping the Symphony to stand out. Perhaps more importantly, for someone involved in training where instruments often need to be transported, the Symphony is very robust and feels solid and durable. There is a limit to how much can be changed on the basic design of a slit lamp. I would argue that the new Symphony includes all that is essential for a slit lamp, has excellent optics and is easy to use for all the required clinical demands of practice. Anyone considering investing in a new slit lamp should consider this new addition to the market. ●



The Symphony slit lamp from Keeler



LED light source and all the filters you need



The rheostat is convenient and the base is both ergonomically pleasing and robust



An inbuilt diffuser makes external imaging easy. Clinical images taken with an additional ImageCam

● Further details from www.Keeler.co.uk