



DUAL RANGE PHOTO-ELECTRIC METER CELL

FIVE ELEMENT 75mm XENOTAR F/3.5 LENS

EXPOSURE METER DIAL, SCALES, AND DEPTH-OF-FIELD INDICATOR IN KNOB

PHOTOS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY TED RUSSELL.

**ARE THE
NEW ROLLEIS
REALLY BETTER?**

WHEN A NEW IMPROVED ROLLEIFLEX model camera is announced there are always a certain number of photographers who automatically trade in their old ones for the new model just as they would trade in a 1956 car for a 1957 design. Unlike cars, however, Rolleiflex cameras don't really need trading in after a year of use—or two—or three—or more. A discriminating camera buyer wants to know if the new model is really an improvement over the old—or has a little bit of useless chrome been added instead.

Will the Rollei user find a five element lens, a built-in exposure meter and an automatic depth-of-field indicator sufficient reason to buy a new Rolleiflex? This is the question MODERN set out to solve when we ordered a new Rolleiflex 3.5G delivered for testing. Although the Rolleiflexes with f/2.8 Zeiss Planar or Schneider Xenotar lenses are also available with exposure meters, we tested the Rolleiflex 3.5G since this is the first five element f/3.5 lens ever available in a Rollei. This test would allow us to compare it directly against the four element f/3.5 Schneider Xenar. Is a five element lens of a given focal length and opening really better than a four element lens of the same focal length and opening? Well, we would see.

There's no reason to dwell on the features which have already made the Rolleiflex a standard of excellence—the automatic loading, crank winding, automatic parallax compensation, LVS coupled Synchro-Compur shutter. Instead let's concentrate on the new features—the new exposure meter, the new lens and the new automatic depth-of-field indicator.

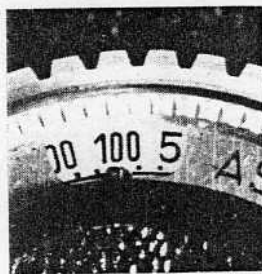
Are built-in meters any good?

First, the exposure meter. The photocell is built directly into the front name plate of the camera. A small lever (*see directions for use at right*) selects either a highly sensitive scale for low light intensity readings or a standard light level scale for average light intensities. The cell remains exposed at all times. All controls and dials for the meter are located on the focusing knob. We compared this meter with a number of well known brands of separate exposure meters in general professional use.

The built-in reflected light Rollei meter with incident light attachment is quite simple to operate, although the camera owner must learn to use the LVS system with it. The meter does not give individual shutter speed and lens aperture indications. If you want to know what lens apertures and shutter speeds are available at any given light level, you must set the camera controls to the proper LVS number as indicated in the pictures opposite and then check the speeds and aperture in the window atop the viewing lens (*picture 3 at right*).

There's no doubt that this LVS system at first may be a source of confusion for photographers accustomed to selecting and choosing their own f/stops and shutter speeds from exposure meter dials. Actually, however, by eliminating these two settings from the meter and concentrating on the LVS (*Continued on page 130*)

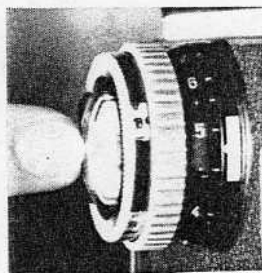
HERE'S HOW EXPOSURE METER WORKS ON NEW ROLLEIFLEXES



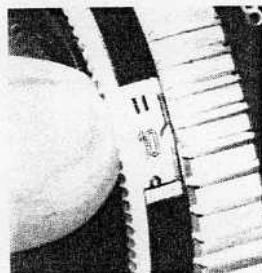
1. First set film's ASA index in dial window on the outside of the film wind knob. Numbers range from 6 to 800.



2. For low light intensities, flip lever on top of name plate to show red dot. For bright light, flip to cover dot.



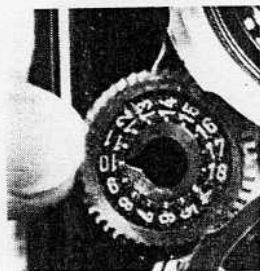
3. Take reading with meter. Turn outer rim of focusing knob until broad top arrow coincides with meter needle.



4. If using low light scale, read LVS setting from red bordered window. For high scale read black window.



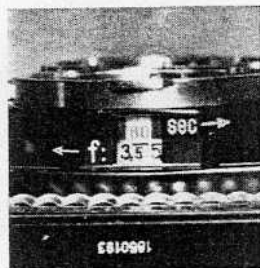
5. Uncouple LVS by pushing in control button on front of camera so black notches do not line up with white.



6. Turn either the shutter or aperture wheel until the arrow on the shutter speed wheel points to the LVS number.



7. Relock LVS by pushing in control button, aligning notches and white markings. Shutter, aperture, are locked.



8. Turn either control wheel and select desired shutter-lens LVS combination in window atop viewing lens.

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NEW ROLLEIS

(Continued from page 51)

number combinations available on the Rolleiflex controls, correct exposure can be obtained far more swiftly than with a separate, non-LVS meter. You only lose time coupling and uncoupling the LVS system to change numbers before and after setting (pictures 5 and 7). The mechanics of meter use, as shown in the pictures, are simple. The top ASA index available is 800. This does seem a bit too low with faster films being introduced to the market so frequently.

How accurate is the meter? In low light levels it read correct exposure as accurately and easily as a number of expensive separate dual range exposure meters and meters with booster cells. Moreover, readings in low light often prove difficult with some meters due to the crowding of the scale at the lower light level end of the dial. Readings were not only just as accurate with the Rollei meter but were very swift indeed. There are no lines or crowded scales to confuse.

How sturdy is it?

Does the meter hold up? It's too early to tell how the meter will last over a period of years. In four months of use with considerable rough treatment, the meter survived without difficulty or adjustment. (We would like to see some sort of zeroing adjustment on the meter to reset the scale needle when and if necessary. We must say in fairness however, that no adjustment of any sort was necessary after the test.)

We were worried about the constantly exposed photocell. It seemed logical that the cell would suffer from constant exposure. But it didn't. Still, we'd be tempted to fasten a piece of black tape across the meter cell if we were going to use the camera for extended periods outdoors in bright sunlight.

Summing up, is the meter worthwhile? Answer: It depends on you. The meter is accurate and sensitive. It's handy to have it built into the camera. The big question: how easy will it be for you to become accustomed to a meter marked only in LVS numbers?

Five or four element lens?

Now let's take a look at that five element f/3.5 lens. It's no secret that there was a cry from professional photographers for a Rollei with an f/2.8 lens and that these camera enthusiasts only got what they wanted when a five-element optical system was developed.

With a maximum f 3.5 aperture in 75mm focal lengths, the story has been quite different. The four element Zeiss Tessar and Schneider Xenar 75mm f/3.5 lenses have long been standards of excellence for Rolleis and many other

(Continued on page 132)

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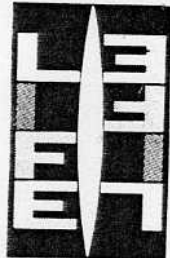
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NEW ROLLEIS

(Continued from page 130)

cameras. What more can the new Xenotar five element offer? For all but the most persnickity professional, a good Xenar or Tessar will do nicely. Testing the new Xenotar against a good example of a Schneider Xenar, the resulting picture definition with both lenses was almost identical. This is not to disparage the new Xenotar but rather to point out that a good four element Xenar or Tessar can be a very good lens indeed. Perhaps the Xenotar lens proved a shade sharper in the corners at full aperture than the Xenar. However, in actual photographic practice we doubt that this difference would be perceptible. Xenar or Xenotar? They're both fine lenses.

The depth-of-field indicator

The new automatic depth-of-field indicator is unquestionably an improvement over the older model. On former Rolleis it was necessary to check the aperture which you were using and then examine the footage scale on the focusing knob to see what footages lay between the two aperture markings. No more. A white strip adjacent to the focusing knobs expands and contracts to indicate the exact depth of field (see picture page 50).

There are other smaller improvements on the new Rolleis, including a sturdier neck strap catch and graphic indications for flash and electronic flash (lightning for one, a bulb for the other) so you can't get the settings mixed up. How goes the new Rolleiflex? As ever up to date and then a little. As fine a lens as on any camera today, a built-in exposure meter which in sensitivity rivals many separate independent meters plus the new depth-of-field scale and all the other well known Rollei features. No new chrome grill or useless tail fins here. Good solid improvements for one of the finest cameras in the world.—H. K.

