

## Xtreme measures

Xtreme capacity and versatility inspires Xtreme confidence

With LCD monitors on digital cameras to preview every exposure, and electronic flash units to balance fill lighting with ambient lighting, we've overcome most of our technical insecurity in shooting weddings, location portraits and events.

With the introduction of the XtremePower 20 (XP20) mobile energy pack, we can say so long to another source of insecurity—the fear that the camera and flash batteries won't last through the entire assignment.

The compact, lightweight, stylish and versatile XtremePower 20 is an external energy pack incorporating the latest lithium-ion (Li-Ion) battery technology. Unlike nickel-cadmium and nickel-metal hydride batteries, Li-Ion batteries are free of memory effects, so there's no need to run refresh cycles or to worry that the battery won't deliver full output after charging from a less than fully exhausted state. Li-Ion batteries also hold their charge when stored. This was true of the XtremePower 20, which remained fully charged after sitting unused for a week.

The XtremePower 20 takes full advantage of the lightweight, compact characteristics of the Li-Ion batteries. About the size of a thin paperback book, the unit weighs just 1.3 pounds, about a third less than comparable external battery packs. The XtremePower 20 ships with a shoulder strap and Velcro belt strap, which I found so convenient that I never used the



The Velcro strap in the Xtreme Power kit conveniently attaches the battery to your belt. A shoulder strap is also included.



The battery includes two output ports to power the camera and a flash simultaneously.

shoulder strap. Except for the connecting cable, I never even noticed it was there.

With two output ports on the XtremePower 20, it's possible to power both a digital camera and a flash from one battery pack. Connecting cables are available (about \$50 each) for nearly all digital cameras and electronic flash units, and custom cables will soon be available as well (see [www.xtremepowerusa.com](http://www.xtremepowerusa.com)). The D1X straight cable supplied with the review battery was too stiff and overly long. I would opt for the coiled cables whenever possible. The connecting cable for the Nikon SB-80DX flash attaches to the low-voltage battery compartment rather than



When you press the test button with no load on the unit, green indicator lights show the level of charge remaining. Four green indicates full charge.



With a load on the unit, orange and red indicator lights show the level of charge remaining. Three orange lights and one red indicate full charge. As power is consumed, the orange lights flash to indicate the depletion.

the high voltage socket on the front of the flash, which increases its reliability without voiding the manufacturer's warranty.

Convenient size aside, what's most important for those long location assignments is battery capacity, which the XtremePower 20 delivers to the max. After fully charging the XtremePower 20 for four hours, I used it for a couple of short test sessions. The power level indicator lights never indicated anything but full charge. One Saturday I ended up with two PR assignments, running from 4:30 to 11:30 p.m. I charged up the XtremePower 20 and both D1X batteries and hoped it would get me through. Seven hours later,

All images ©Stan Sholik

after shooting more than 400 JPEGs and nearly 100 RAW files, with 10-second image reviews, I still had just under 50 percent of charge left in the XtremePower 20. Without this battery, I would have needed to rent a spare Nikon battery for the D1X just in case my two didn't last.

But wait, as they say, there's more! Versatility. The XtremePower 20 is truly a mobile energy pack. With the appropriate connecting cord, it can power or recharge your cell phone, PDA, portable CD or DVD writer, and even your Windows (but not Mac) laptop for 4 to 6 hours. You can even use the included worldwide 120/240-volt charger to charge the XtremePower 20 while you are powering these other devices. There's even a female cigarette lighter adapter available so you can power or recharge any device with a male cigarette lighter cable. With the XtremePower 20, all you wedding, event and location portrait photographers can leave your AC-adapters and spare batteries at home, along with your fear of running out of battery power before the assignment is complete.

Manufactured by Toyo-Systems Co., Ltd. in Japan (where it's been available for some time), XtremePower 20 is distributed by the MAC Group, formerly Mamiya America, which also distributes Mamiya, PocketWizard and other products for photographers. MSRP is \$814; anticipated street price, \$500 to \$550. □

### **specs:** XtremePower 20

**Output:** 2-line, simultaneous (A & B) output

**Port A:** 8.5V, 15V, 16V at 2.0 amp, 19V at 1.8 amp

**Port B:** 3.3V, 5.0V, 7.5V at 1.8 amp

**Battery:** Lithium-ion

**Rated capacity:** 6,000 milliamp-hours / 66.6 watt-hours

**Input:** AC 100-240V, DC 13-16V

**Charge time:** 4 hours

**Temperature:** 41 to 95 degrees F (5 to 35 degrees C)

**Humidity:** 25-85 percent RH

**Dimensions:** 4.3D x 8W x 1.2H inches

**Weight:** 1.3lb.

