

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to complain about the shockingly bad service I have received in relation to my 62mm Leica APO spotting scope (reference number 2204608, purchased in the UK about 3 years ago). Since I now live in France, I contacted your French dealer 6 weeks ago to find out about repairing a minor mechanical fault. I finally got the scope back today, only to find that the optics are no longer working. I describe in detail below my appalling experience with your customer services.

During a weekend of birding in Provence on March 18th-19th, the support which attaches the body of the scope to the tripod snapped. The support snapped while I was using the scope, and was not the result of a fall. Although the support was damaged, I was able to tape the scope together and use it for the duration of the weekend. The optics themselves were undamaged, and I was able to take the following photos through the scope:

<http://www.surfbirds.com/blogs/rjhall/archives/003696.html>

On returning to my home, I emailed the authorized French dealer for Leica on March 22nd, at the email address obtained on your website:

http://www.leica-camera.com/markt/adressen/vertretungen/europa/index_e.html

I described the problem and attached this photograph showing exactly what the fault was:

http://www.surfbirds.com/blogs/rjhall/archives/broken_scope.html

This email was not acknowledged until March 28th, when I was instructed by Gerard Sarazin of Leica France, to send the scope to a dealer in Paris (Procirep, 14 Blvd Auguste Blanqui, 75013 Paris). I took the scope into the shop on March 29th, and on phoning them on March 31st I was told that the scope had been sent to Leica HQ in Germany for a quote.

Over the next 2.5 weeks I made regular phone calls to the dealer in Paris who was unable to give me an update on the progress of my order, or any clue as to when I might expect to see the scope again. Eventually, I was told that a quote had been issued on April 18th. Even though only the central ring of the body armour was affected by the break (see photo), I was told that all of the exterior body armour would need to be replaced, and was given a repair quote exceeding 900 Euros. Since this is a substantial fraction of the price of a new scope, and currently outside of my budget, I declined the quote and resolved to fix the problem with superglue (cost 5 Euros) when it was returned to me.

Again, several phone calls to the dealer in Paris left me with no idea when the scope would be returned. Finally, on May 5th, I received an email to say my scope had arrived at the shop in Paris.

Today, May 9th, I collected the scope from Procirep, and proceeded to glue the support to the main body of the scope. However, when I attached the eyepiece to look through the scope, I couldn't see anything! Even on removing the eyepiece and looking down the objective lens of scope I am unable to see any light coming through the scope - I guess

one of the internal lenses has been displaced. Since this problem was not reported in the quote, I assume that it happened in transit from Germany to Paris (the scope was certainly optically fine when I delivered it to the shop in Paris back in March).

I am furious with my experience with your service. I am also extremely disappointed in this outcome, as the scope was optically excellent, and has brought me much pleasure over the last three years. For a company that prides itself on reliability and excellence, the quality of the service received ranks extremely poorly in comparison with rival manufacturers. For example, when the focus wheel on my Swarovski binoculars broke last year, Swarovski not only fixed the problem, but replaced the body armour, eye-cups and lens covers for free.

My specific complaints are as follows:

- The time between my first email to Leica and your first response to me was unacceptably slow.
- The time taken for a quote to be given was unacceptably slow. I also don't see why I wasn't given a quote after sending you a photo illustrating the exact problem with the scope.
- I was given no information as to the progress of my order, and the French dealer was unable to put me in contact with anyone in your main office.
- The quote was prohibitively expensive, and replacing all of the body armour seemed unnecessary.
- When the scope was eventually returned to me, the optics were broken.

I expect a rapid response to my complaints: in particular I want to know exactly when I can expect to have an optically functional scope, as delivered to you 6 weeks ago. I have sent this message to Leica HQ in Germany, Leica UK, and have also posted a copy on my birding website:

<http://www.surfbirds.com/blogs/rjhall/archives/003889.html>

The readers of my website and I look forward to your response.