



Collins Photo Club

This Month

From the President

Meeting Info

PhotoPro Canon School

From the President

Jim Messina, Prairie Wings Media Productions, L.L.C. will be leading a class for Collins Photo Club on photographing wild flowers this Saturday May 13. The price is \$30.00 a person. The class is open to all CPC members and nonmember friends at the same price. It will take place at Rochester Cemetery. We will meet Jim at the parking lot by Main Plant Cafeteria at 8:00 a.m. and car pool to the Cemetery. Jim has agreed give instruction on photography techniques, setting up a few example shots to show us how to approach a particular situation and he will answer any questions we might have on shots we are setting up. He will also provide some handouts for us that we should find helpful. Participants should bring whatever gear they own and Jim will do the same. Checks for the cost of the workshop should be made out to Jim Messina and delivered to me before hand. There is no rain date. Jim is willing to work with us until 1:00 p.m. if necessary. Checks will be returned unused if rained out. We will still accept additional participants before 8:00 a.m. Saturday if you would like to join us.

Please note later in the newsletter that Photo Pro is holding Photography Schools that will be of interest to most of us.

See you at our next regular meeting, held downtown Cedar Rapids, at our outdoor portrait workshop (For further information see this newsletter).

David Detwiler,

2006 President

Our Next Meeting

Michael Ask, a local portrait photographer who specializes in outdoor portraits, will lead a photo safari during our May meeting on Thursday, May 18. Club members will meet at 5:00 pm in the courtyard-like area across from the Cedar Rapids Art Museum downtown. Please bring your camera and a tripod as we may be shooting in low light conditions. Members may also wish to bring reflectors, strobes, or other gear they feel may be necessary. (Just remember, you have to carry what you bring!) Michael will help us with hands-on learning to set up shots and explain how he deals with difficult lighting situations as we walk downtown Cedar Rapids. He'll show us what to look for in backgrounds and lighting. We are still looking for a portrait model: high school senior to young adult (male or female) who is willing to spend the afternoon being photographed. If anyone knows someone who may be

Continued on Page 2

Our Next Meeting – CoNtinued

interested in light modeling duties, please contact Jessica Trbojevich (jatrboye@rockwellcollins.com or 319-295-1852). Set aside Monday, May 22 as a rain date. An official email will notify members if the safari is cancelled due to rain. Don't miss this exciting event!

Jessica Trbojevich

Canon & Photogenic Photography Schools

sponsored by Photo Pro
June 19, Beginning at 5:30 PM
Cedar Rapids Marriot Hotel
(Formerly Collins Plaza Hotel)

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Photogenic and Photo Pro representatives will be conducting a studio lighting demonstration.

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM (approx)

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR
CANON DIGITAL CAMERA”

Canon's Professional Market Representative,
Brian Matsumoto, will be on hand to talk about
digital capture and file handling.

\$20.00 Registration Fee

Stun Gun

Amazing image quality and shockingly low noise

IN OUR JANUARY ISSUE WE LOOKED at a pre-production version of Nikon's new 10.2MP D200 (\$1,700, body only), and we were left with some unanswered questions. First, what kind of performance would we get from an actual production model? Second, how would the final features and images from the D200 stack up against its newest competitor—the \$1,400 (body only) 8.3MP Canon EOS 30D? And third, would the D200 cannibalize the sales of Nikon's pro flagship, the 12.4MP D2x (\$5,000, body only)?

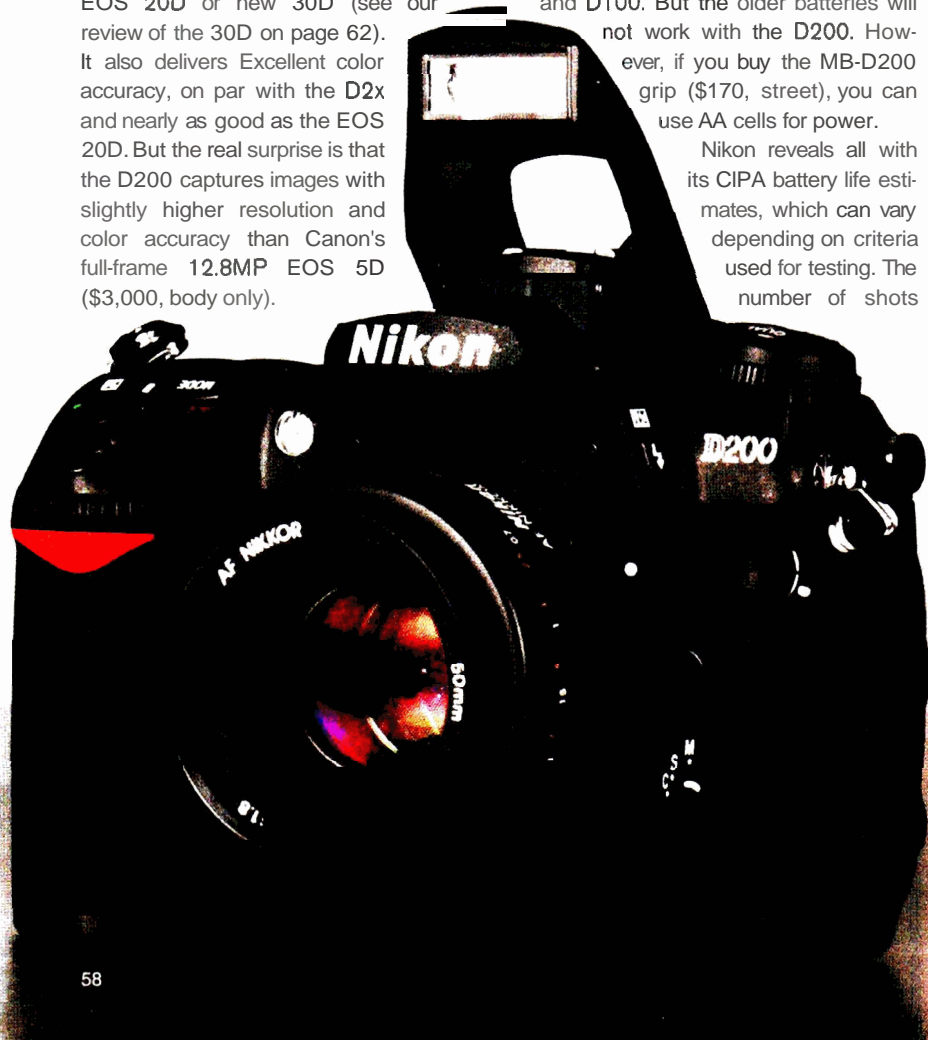
Now that we've run the actual D200 through a host of POP PHOTO Lab and field tests, we've discovered the answers to the first two questions. Images from the D200 rival those from the D2x in resolution, color accuracy, and overall image quality. The D200 averages 2,075 lines of resolution (see test results). That's the same as the D2x—and 300 lines higher than the Canon EOS 20D or new 30D (see our review of the 30D on page 62). It also delivers Excellent color accuracy, on par with the D2x and nearly as good as the EOS 20D. But the real surprise is that the D200 captures images with slightly higher resolution and color accuracy than Canon's full-frame 12.8MP EOS 5D (\$3,000, body only).

Despite their similarities, the D200 body lacks a few features found on the D2x, most notably the monochrome data display on the back. It's also missing the fast FireWire connector for PC and Mac, and it has a shutter mechanism that Nikon rates at 100,000 shots—similar to the new EOS 30D, but not as durable as the 150,000 rating of the D2x.

However, the D200 has a Hi-Speed USB 2.0 connector, plus it offers more flash capabilities. These include a pop-up flash that can be used as a primary or fill flash, or as a means to wirelessly control multiple flash arrangements via the iTTL Commander Mode built into the camera. We also preferred the D200's locking mechanism for its CF card door.

To correct our original description of the EN-EL3e battery: It will work in other Nikon bodies that originally used the EN-EL3 or 3a—including the Nikon D50, D70, D70s, and D100. But the older batteries will not work with the D200. However, if you buy the MB-D200 grip (\$170, street), you can use AA cells for power.

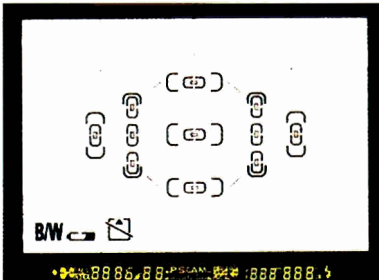
Nikon reveals all with its CIPA battery life estimates, which can vary depending on criteria used for testing. The number of shots



NIKON D200 DSLR

Certified Test Results

Resolution: Excellent (2050Vx2170H x2005D lines). **Color accuracy:** Excellent (Avg. Delta E: 7.54). **High-light/shadow detail:** Extremely High. **Contrast:** Normal, and adjustable to six presets via menus. **Noise:** Extremely Low at ISO 100, Very Low at ISO 200 to ISO 800, Low at ISO 1600. **Image quality:** Excellent from ISO 100 to 1600. **AF speed:** Extremely Fast in bright light (EV 12 to 8) from 0.46 to 0.56 sec, about the same as the EOS 30D (0.49 to 0.55 sec). In moderate light (EV 6 to 4), still Extremely Fast at 0.49 sec to 0.57 sec. In low light (EV 2 to 0) it slowed down to 0.75 to 1.1 sec. At its super-sensitivelimit (EV -2), the D200 tops all at 1.51 sec. **Burst rate:** In tests using a Kingston 4GB Ultimate 100X CF card, captured up to 30 fine-quality JPEGs at 5 fps and stored them all within 15 sec. **Viewfinder:** The etched focusing screen (below) shows 11 selectable AF zones with a center-cross-type in center, on-demand grid lines, battery life and missing CF card indicators. **CIPA battery life rating:** Ranges from 350 to 1,800 shots with rechargeable EN-EL3e Li-ion battery (see main text). **Size/weight:** 5.8x4.4x3.1 in., 2.07 lb with battery. **Street Price:** \$1,700. **For info:** www.nikonusa.com; 800-645-6689.



Viewfinder Accuracy: 95% [Excellent]
Viewfinder Magnification: 0.97X [Excellent]

What's Hot

• Excellent image quality and low noise up to ISO 1600. • Big LCD, accurate viewfinder.

What's Not

• No vertical shutter release built-in.
• RAW-NEF Capture software costs \$99.

TEST NIKON D200 DSLR

per charge ranges from 340 (for large normal-compression JPEGs, focusing between shots, half with flash and flash assist light) to 1,800 (for medium-sized, basic-compression JPEGs, three focusing cycles between shots, no flash or assist lamp, and 5-second LCD playback after each shot).

Since the majority of D200 users probably will buy a separate, more powerful and versatile SB-800 flash unit, and shoot either high-res JPEGs or RAW-NEF + JPEG images, a more realistic shot number is closer to 1,000. At any rate, a look at the D200's battery-life menu screen tells you approximately how many shots remain, and when your battery is past its prime.

The D200's excellent viewfinder also lets you see exactly what you're shooting—and at a magnification that's close to life-size at 0.97X (using a 50mm f11.4 lens). It's fairly bright, and the 11 visible AF zones don't block your view. The AF system is incredibly fast and sensitive, though not as sensitive in the lateral AF zones as the D2x, especially when trying to lock on horizontal detail. Still, the low-light sensitivity of the central AF zones and its overall performance in moderately bright light is outstanding.

The D200's 5 fps burst mode makes it as fast as the D2x and Canon's 30D. But in our test, it captured 30 fine-quality JPEGs at a time, not the 37 that Nikon claims.

Hot Tuner

Nikon did a great design job on the D200's menus and image controls. They're easy to navigate, relatively uncluttered, and you can select them with just your thumb using the four-way dial. Several new controls help improve image quality and fine-tune noise reduction. For example, you can set JPEG compression to either Size Priority or Optimal Quality—besides setting it to Basic,

GREAT BODY: On the back, significant features include the accurate optical viewfinder with diopter adjustment wheel (A), main control wheel (B), four-way rocker control (C), locking lever for the CF card door (D), and large, bright 2.5-inch LCD monitor (E), shown with protective plastic cover in place.

On the top, the D200 shows a typical Nikon arrangement, with a large, easy-to-read, and backlit data display (F). There's also a pop-up flash with wireless multi-flash control (G).

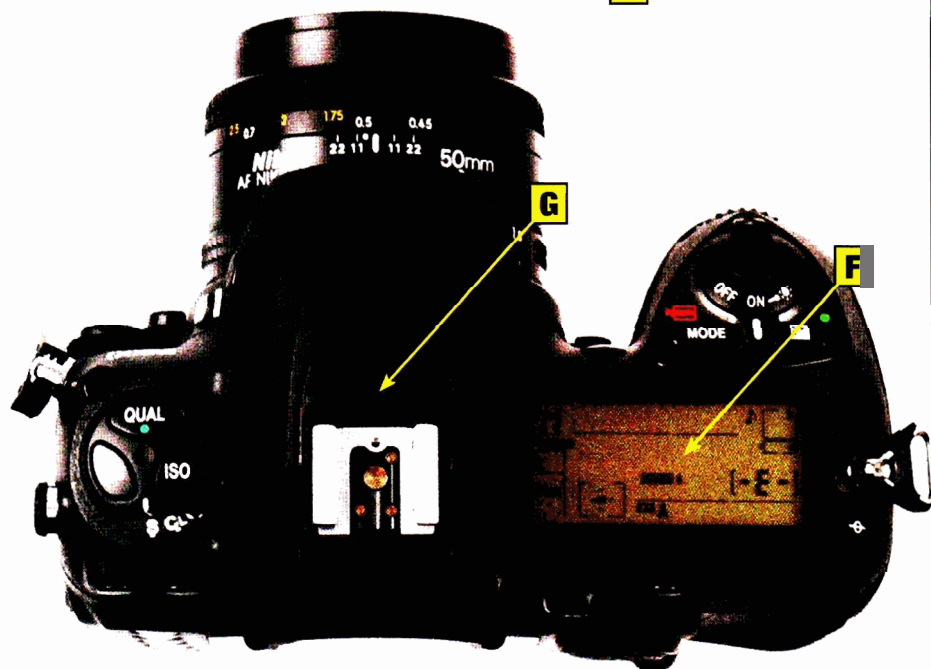
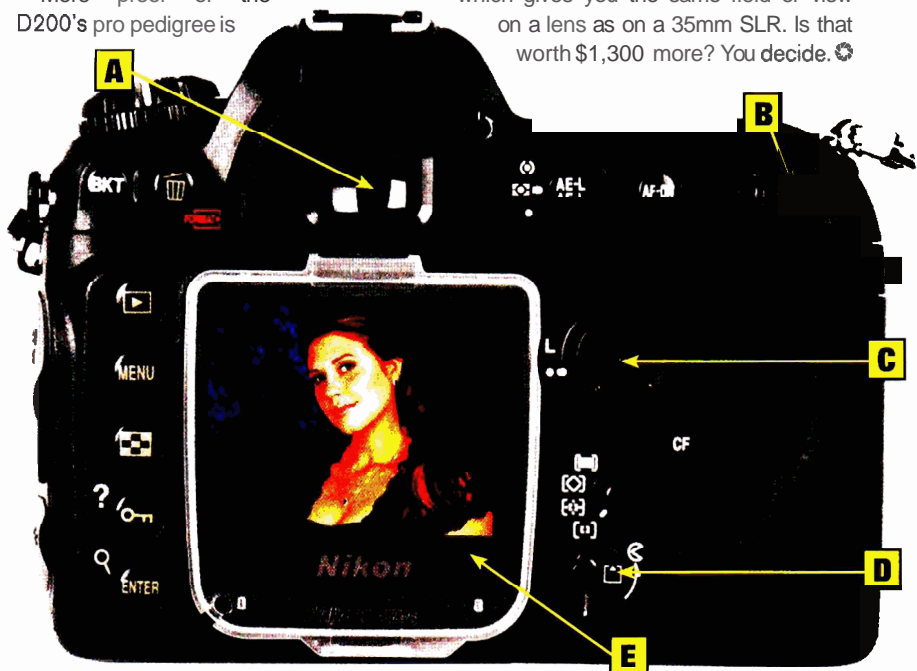
Normal, or Fine. Size Priority compresses each JPEG to roughly the same storage size, independent of scene detail, although highly detailed parts of a scene can suffer a bit. Optimal compression takes scene content into account, typical of most cameras.

Choices for noise reduction include a setting for long exposures or shooting at higher ISOs. In our tests, turning on the higher-ISO noise reduction allowed the D200 to reach Extremely Low noise levels at ISO 1600. That coincided with a 5-percent drop in resolution—a great tradeoff for anyone needing low-light, ISO 1600 shots without flash that rival those taken at ISO 100 by most other DSLRs in bright light.

More proof of the D200's pro pedigree is

its 44 custom settings, allowing you to fine-tune everything from the burst speed to the Optimized Image compression algorithms. Nikon dedicated nearly 30 pages of the owner's manual to custom functions alone.

If you're willing to spend the extra \$300 that the D200 costs over the Canon EOS 30D, and you don't have a Canon lens stockpile, then choosing the D200 is a no-brainer. If you're a pro, the choice is harder. Sure, Nikon's D2x can take more abuse and has a longer-life shutter, but you could buy two D200s, a battery grip, a few lenses, and a flash for the price of one D2x body. And the only advantage an EOS 5D has over the D200 is its full-frame sensor, which gives you the same field of view on a lens as on a 35mm SLR. Is that worth \$1,300 more? You decide. ☺



Farther Figure

Beyond the 20D with a big-screened son of a gun

YOU KNEW THAT CANON WOULD DO this, right? Hard on the heels of the release of the EOS 5D. The Camera Company That Never Sleeps has come out with the EOS 30D (\$1,400 street), an updated version of the highly popular EOS 20D.

Perhaps "refreshed" is a more accurate term for the new camera, which has the same 8MP capture and processor of the 20D (reviewed January 2005). Here's what's new or improved on the 30D:

- The rear LCD monitor has been boosted to 2.5 inches, from 1.8 inches on the 20D.
- The shutter mechanism is beefed up, now rated for 100,000 cycles. (The 20D's projected shutter life was unspecified.)
- A true spotmeter (3.5 percent of the frame) has been added to the selection of evaluative, centerweighted, and 9-percent limited-area meter of the 20D.
- Startup time has been shortened to 0.15 sec from 0.2 sec, and the maximum number of frames in the high-speed 5 fps burst is 30 highest-quality JPEGs or 10 RAW files (up from the 2316 maximum of the 20D).
- Error messages are now diagnostic, and in some cases will suggest a fix, such as to take out and replace the battery.
- A direct-print button (à la EOS 5D) has been added to the back.
- Also from the 5D, a selection of different Picture Styles

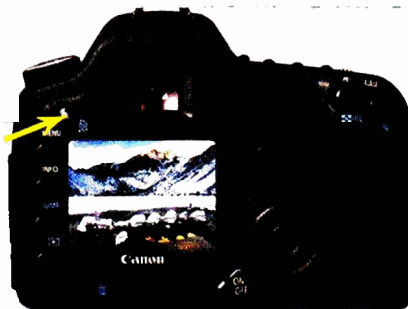
(Faithful, Portrait, Landscape, etc.) lets users specify color/contrast/sharpness presets.

- ISO can be set in 1/3-EV increments.
- The file management allows a single folder to hold up to 9,999 images, quite a step up from the 20D's limit of 100.
- An RGB histogram shows exposure levels of individual color channels, not just overall levels.

While the big LCD monitor may be the most obvious change, upgrades such as the strengthened shutter, tighter spotmeter, and bigger picture folders show that the 20D has truly been accepted as a professional tool. The 30D is backward compatible with 20D accessories, like batteries, grips, remote switches, and power cords.

Handling of the camera is virtually unchanged. The size went up 2mm (just over 1/16-inch) in depth, and weight by about 20 grams (less than 0.75 ounces).

What's missing? We wish Canon DSLRs came with a built-in trigger for wireless TTL flash—like several less-expensive DSLR bodies from other companies. Instead, you will need to buy a Canon Speedlite transmitter ST-E2 (\$210 street). The D30 is fully compatible with the E-TTL II automation of current Canon Speedlites.



TWO CLUES: The direct-print button (arrow) and the bigger LCD mark this new Canon EOS DSLR as the 30D.

Is there a price increase? No. In fact, the announced prices, \$1,400 (body only), or \$1,500 with the 18–55mm f13.5–5.6 EF-S kit lens, are \$100 less than the 20D when it came out. Should you trade in your perfectly good 20D for a 30D? Since image quality should be the same for both, no. But if you're upgrading from an older EOS model, or in the market for a brand new DSLR, the 30D may be an attractive option.

CANON EOS 30D

Vital Statistics

Imaging: 8.25MP (effective) CMOS sensor captures 8.19MP images (3504x2336 pixels) with 12 bits/color in RAW mode. **Storage:** CF Type I and II cards including Microdrives. Stores JPEG, RAW, and RAW + JPEG. **Burst rate:** At 5 fps, up to 30 JPEG or 10 RAW. **AF system:** 9 selectable AF points in a diamond pattern. One-Shot AF, Predictive AI Servo AF, and AI Focus AF (autoselects between one-shot and predictive). **Sensitivity** EV 1–20 (ISO 100). **Shutter speeds:** 30–1/8000 sec (1/3-EV increments). **Metering:** TTL 35-zone SPC. Evaluative metering linkable to all AF points, centerweighted averaging, limited-area (approx. 9% of frame), and spotmetering (approx. 3.5%). EV 1–20 (ISO 100). **ISO range:** 100–1600 in 1/3-EV increments, expandable to ISO 3200. **Flash:** Supports E-TTL II autoflash with EX-series Speedlites, X-sync at 1/250 sec. **Viewfinder:** Eye-level fixed pentaprism with approx. 95% accuracy and 0.90X magnification. **LCD:** 2.5-in. TFT with 230,000-pixel resolution. **Output:** Hi-Speed USB 2.0; video. **Battery:** Rechargeable Li-ion BP-511A. **CIPA battery life rating:** Approx. 500 shots, 50% with flash. **Size/weight:** 5.7x4.2x2.9-in., 1.6 lb. with battery. Street price: \$1,400. For info: www.usa.canon.com; 800-652-2666.

New & Noteworthy

- Big 2.5-inch LCD monitor.
- True spotmetering added.
- Additional image controls.

