

## CENS of adventure

REVIEWED BY:  
**DRENNAN  
KENDERDINE**

**You can't put a price on your hearing. That's why Drennan Kenderdine visited the Mecca of hearing protection to put their earpieces to the test**

I love visiting factories, so I was like a kid in a candy shop at the mighty CENS factory/laboratory in Kent. Their range of state-of-the-art earplugs, designed exclusively for shooters, boasts the ultimate in comfort, performance, style and safety, and the CENS DX5 is truly 'The Don'.

Fully customisable, from the fit in your ear to the vast array of colour options, my favourite DX5 feature is the five different hearing modes (more on this later). First, I want to walk you through my own experience and what to expect.

### The CENS experience

It all starts off with a visit to either head office, or a location around the UK closer to where you live.

This is where your impressions will be taken. All impressions are undertaken by qualified audiologists of the British Society of Hearing, making things tickety boo! It's important to make sure that your ears are clean enough for the impressions to be taken; a simple build-up of wax can throw a spanner in the works. Booking a hearing test/examination is recommended first of

all, and it's free on the NHS (yes, I was given the recommendation to do this and dutifully followed orders).

### Ear impressions and first impressions

The impression itself is a non-intrusive procedure lasting a few minutes. Firstly, a sponge spacer is placed inside each ear, followed by a specially formulated silicone. Don't worry, it's not industrial-grade silicone that will pull the contents of your head out through your ears... it's made for this job!

Whilst the impressions are setting, you can choose your colours for the earpiece and the battery cover. I went for fluorescent orange earpieces and a metallic bright green battery cover; I figure if I have a fumbling moment and drop them (it happens), I'd have a good chance at finding them.

Depending on which set you order, be it the passive sort or the all singing and dancing brilliance of the X5, each earpiece is identified by a coloured dot (blue for left ear, red for right). Simple, but very useful! (As you can guess, I didn't read the instructions. I did eventually enlist the wife's help who, of course, referred to the instructions while informing me I should have done the same thing...)

All electronic CENS ear defenders run on batteries – the type you find in hearing aids. So, at the risk of being blunt and stating the obvious, you must use hearing aid batteries in them. Watch batteries and rechargeable batteries do not work.

The DX Series features a dedicated digital push button for turning on and off. The modes are accessed via the advanced digital multi-switch. The DX5 vocally advises you which mode you are using, and updates you as you change between modes. It also alerts you when you are at a minimum or maximum volume levels.

### THE MODES!

#### MUTE FUNCTION

The power button doubles as a mute function, ideal for competition as quietness enhances concentration.

#### CLAY MODE

I love this mode; it covers a multitude of requirements for me. CENS say: "This mode helps to protect and reduce the exposure of more prolonged loud noise levels, whereby the clay shooter is firing their gun, and other shooters nearby are also firing theirs."

Simply put, clay mode delivers! It offers

**For Drennan, the years of research and expertise behind CENS make this purchase a no-brainer**



The CENS DX5 series offers modes tailored to practically every shooting scenario.

instructors and shooters the ability to engage with students, shooters and officials without removing them... freedom! I have used over-ear electronic ear defenders for most of my shooting and coaching career. They have been fantastic, but when used all day, they do become rather cumbersome and frustrating. I find my ears get too hot, then I put them down and forget them. The CENS DX5 makes ear protection 100% hassle-free.

## RANGE MODE

Designed for use when firing large calibre weapons or at indoor shooting environments. I chose this mode when I used my .223 outdoors. CENS recommend double protection when using large calibre weapons, but with the smaller calibre rifles such as .17HMR and .22. I found them to be perfect.

## GAME MODE

This mode is an entry into superhuman powers! The amplification of sounds otherwise not heard has been nothing short of astounding... things like pheasants moving through the woods far away from where I am standing. Once you have fired a shot, the device reacts instantaneously, reducing the output levels to keep you safe from harmful noise levels. It then returns to normal (well, superhuman level) just as quickly, allowing you to hear everything! It adds another dimension to the shooting experience. I had a right chuckle when the lads a few pegs down had some choice words after missing a few birds!

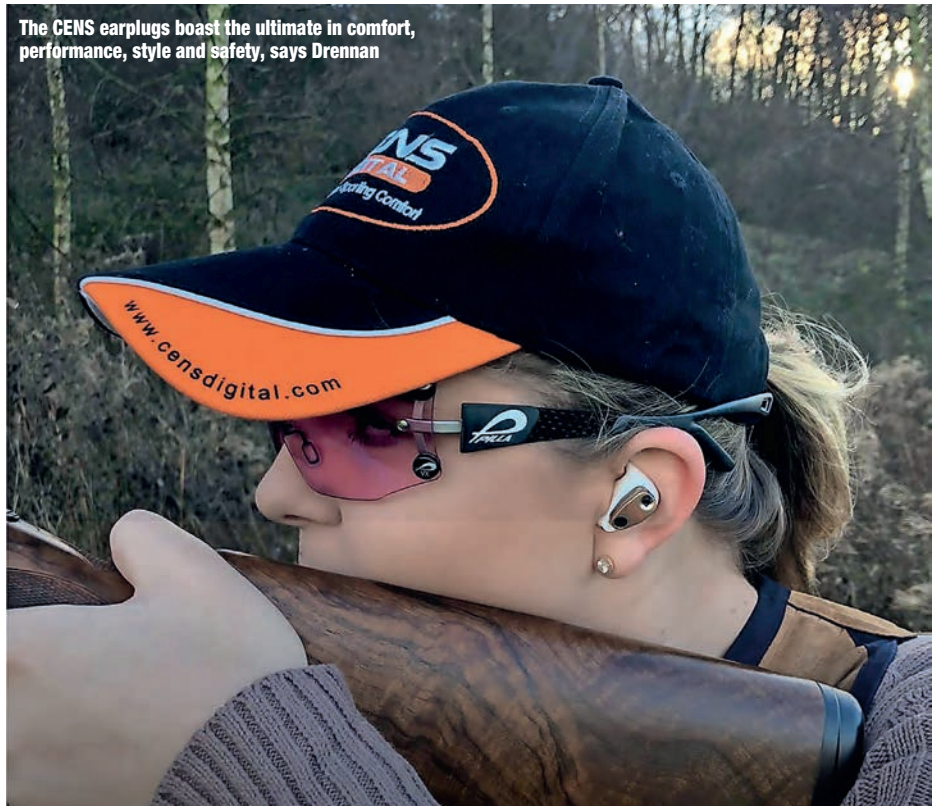
## WIRELESS COMMS MODE

This feature makes using radios and walkie-talkies a piece of cake and is a fantastic addition. I've used this on simulated days, game days, and even clay events. Oh, and on the rare occasions when I go beating.

This mode provides ambient awareness with the added feature of wireless audio input via something CENS calls a 'neck loop'. It's a loop of wire that goes over your head, resting on your neck, which then plugs into any 3.5mm headset socket. This will transmit the audio to the CENS ProFlex DX5 when the Wireless Comms mode is active. This feature really does a marvelous job whilst protecting your hearing.

The Wireless Comms mode eliminates all the fumbling around with walkie-talkies, allowing you to shoot whilst being able to hear what staff, managers, gamekeepers, and anyone else who's

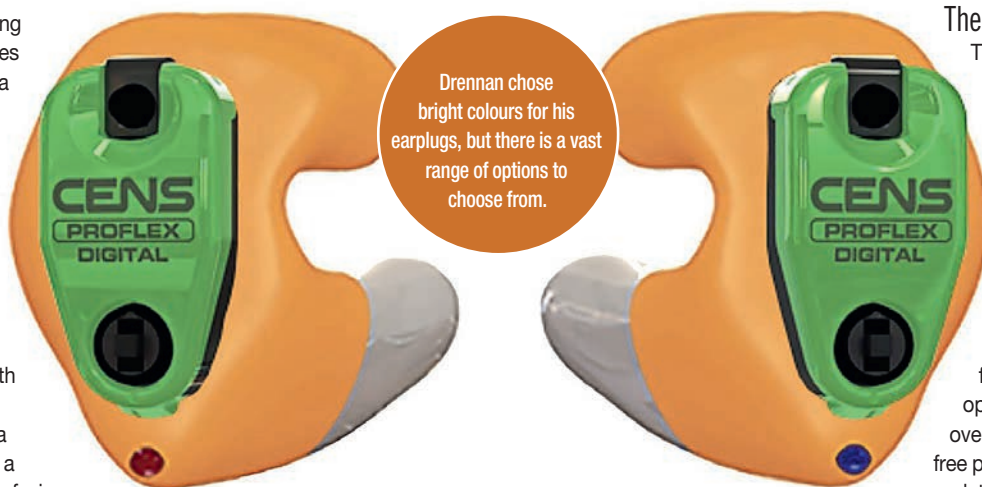
The CENS earplugs boast the ultimate in comfort, performance, style and safety, says Drennan



on wireless comms wants to say.

There is an optional extra called the SRC harness. This is designed to interface the CENS ProFlex DX5 in Wireless Comms mode to a user's own radio, providing full two-way communication. A lapel microphone picks up the user's speech when the PTT (Push To Talk) button is pressed.

matter, ultimately turning you into a... you guessed it... Forest Ninja! This really does help with concentration, giving you the ability to hone all your attention on your quarry. With all these fantastic enhancements to your shooting experience, all modes offer the same level of hearing protection (25dB SNR).



This automatically switches the radio to transmit mode (CENS has got safety covered too with an anti-choke quick-release connector to prevent injury if the loop is pulled accidentally).

## HUNTER MODE

I have renamed this 'Forest Ninja Mode'! Designed for hunters and stalkers, this mode reduces the sound of your own trotters crushing flora whilst helping you focus on the sounds that

## The cost

The time from your order to delivery is within four weeks. Now, £699 is not cheap, but here's my answer to that – "How much is your hearing worth?" To me, it is priceless. You aren't just paying for the perks of a tailored product, or the five modes, or the optional extras, or the overall benefit of a hassle-free product that gives you complete freedom; you're paying for years of research, understanding and advancement. For over 30 years, CENS has revolutionised hearing protection, bringing you the best and most effective modular hearing protection system in the world. My shooting experience, at every level, has been enhanced beyond my expectations. I highly recommend.

RRP: From £699  
[www.censdigital.com](http://www.censdigital.com)