

DEEP CONCEALMENT FASHIONS

BY BOB PILGRIM

I recently embarked on a project to determine which firearms deep concealment method works best for concealed carry citizens, undercover and off-duty police officers.

I looked at five systems and obtained live-fire deployment times for each one. All systems permitted single-round hits from concealment at seven yards in fewer than three seconds. The least concealable system was the quickest and enabled me to service the threat in less than two seconds.

The complete results of that project were reported here (*THE GUN THAT WASN'T THERE: Deep Handgun Concealment*, October 2011 S.W.A.T.).

CCW BREAKAWAYS

Unfortunately, I was not aware of a relatively new product that would have changed my conclusions, until friend and distinguished trainer John Farnam brought it to my attention. As a result of this revelation, I contacted designer/engineer Jay French and he kindly traveled to Virginia's Commonwealth Criminal

Justice Academy (CWCJA) to demonstrate his CCW Breakaways trousers.

His product line consists of dress pants, cargo pants, shorts and blue jeans that enable the wearer to conceal a substantial handgun and magazines—including big 30-round sticks—without printing and at the same time permit dynamic movement and excellent weapon deployment speed.

In repeated Airsoft engagements, French was able to successfully engage from concealment a knife-wielding assailant during repeated seven-yard Tueller Drills. (As a side note, some instructors now consider the traditional 21-foot distance too short for reaction and recommend at least ten yards between you and the threat.)

MOTIVATED BY NECESSITY

As with many innovations, Breakaways

were born out of necessity. French carried small sub-compact pistols for almost 30 years. Company dress code dictated that his shirt had to be tucked in, and hot-weather engineering assignments precluded jacket wear, so he resorted to pocket carry. Furthermore, his job often required him to be away from his family so, like the ancient Samurai, he taught his wife self-defense skills including the use of firearms. Both he and his wife are now certified NRA instructors.

However, the method of concealed carry became even more of a problem for his wife, so French began experimenting with various on-the-body concealment methods. Unless wrapped in a handkerchief or specially designed holster, pocket-ensconced handguns readily print. Also, when under stress, the hand and gun often become hung up in the pocket upon establishing a firing grip. This occurs because the combined circumferences of the hand and gun often exceed the size of the pocket opening.



**DESIGNER JAY FRENCH DEMOS DRAW SEQUENCE
FROM CCW BREAKAWAYS DRESS TROUSERS.
NOTE COMPLETE LACK OF PRINTING.**

CCW BREAKAWAYS PANTS

More than two years of research followed, resulting in nearly 100 prototypes and design evolutions before four patents were registered that define the CCW Breakaways products and self-defense capabilities. Unlike traditional holsters, which feature speed, concealability and comfort trade-offs, CCW Breakaways' system possesses unparalleled comfort, secretiveness and weapon presentation speed.

OFFICE LOOK

Included in French's criteria was an "office look," so the trousers could be worn with a blazer or sport jacket and fit into both casual and semi-formal environments. He also wanted a "one-handed draw that would incorporate gross motor skills." All of the deep-concealment carry systems that I tested previously require two hands to access and present the firearm. For close-combat encounters, that support hand should be free to block, parry, stun, and create openings or distance from your adver-

sary. CCW Breakaways foster these tactical techniques.

Another outstanding feature is dynamic movement. French located the gun pocket below the hip line where the gun resides in the hollow created by the crotch and inner thigh. Situated below this "hinge point," the wearer can squat, bend over, sit, lie down, ground fight, draw and light up his opponent or run like hell when dressed in these trousers.

The firearm, magazines and other tools are intuitively located and in line with the hip flexors. These unique design features all add up to enabling the wearer to rip out a sidearm with amazing speed.

Another practical possibility exists for plainclothes officers or detectives with CCWs. They could carry their primary sidearm in a concealed strong-side holster and their smaller backup weapon in the support-side pocket. As described below, the additional weight could be handled with suspenders.

BEATING THE MONKEY TRAP

As mentioned above, pocket-carried guns can resist extraction because of narrow pocket openings that are often referred to as the Monkey Trap. The other secret to this system is its "Breakaway Action."

Concealed under a fold of cloth at the belt line are two snaps over the top of each pocket. When a firing grip is obtained on the firearm, an outward push of the wrist releases these snaps, and a huge pocket orifice is created that permits an unimpeded presentation. The draw can also be subtle.

Similar to a leg-drop holster, it does not require the inherent shoulder contortions of a high-ride, strong-side hip holster to liberate the firearm. I have very tight shoulders from working out with weights, and the CCW Breakaways eliminate any joint strain for me during the draw.

BRANDISHING

The beauty of this system is that with



◀ Agent wearing CCW Breakaways cargo trousers assumes non-threatening position ...

▼ ... but can draw his handgun rapidly if needed.



CONCEALING A HANDGUN EVEN WHILE WEARING SHORTS IS NO PROBLEM WITH CCW BREAKAWAYS.

your hand on your gun while still in the pocket, the gun remains concealed and a non-threatening/non-telegraphing, seemingly vulnerable posture can be assumed. However, by eliminating Phase One of the draw, the wearer can gain 0.7 seconds over his adversary. This advantage provides one with additional time to evaluate the threat and react, while avoiding prematurely exposing or brandishing the weapon.

Depending on the jurisdiction and circumstances, inadvertent or purposeful brandishing of a firearm can result in arrest, with charges ranging from a misdemeanor to a felony. Exposing the weapon, even partially as a warning to a potential threat, is generally considered to be brandishing. Pointing a loaded or unloaded firearm at a person in a threatening manner is considered a felony. CCW Breakaways will enable you to avoid that problem and still remain ready.

COMFORT AND CAPACITY

Trouser construction consists of 8.5-ounce cotton fabric that's made in

the U.S.A. An additional inch of material was incorporated in the front and rear rise to create a "streetfighter's" fit. This looseness does not constitute bagginess but, coupled with the positioning of the firearm in a natural body cavity, allows vigorous Muay Thai-style knee strikes while maintaining positive retention of the weapon.

The universal and ambidextrous pockets are made of rip-stop nylon and can be adjusted for barrel length, so the firearm and spare magazine MagSocks can be consistently located. They also feature excellent wear, moisture wickaway and lubricity for a smooth draw. Velcro in the pocket positions the magazine sleeve for a rapid reload, if necessary. French advised that the FN 5.7 is the largest pistol he has carried in these pockets.

The pockets can also be sealed to protect money, passports and other valuable items.

For those of us whose trim tummies are but a memory, a heavy pocketed pistol may drag the trousers down below the waistline. A light polymer handgun

is recommended here. Another solution is to invest in a sturdy pair of suspenders to help keep the CCW Breakaways where you want them to be.

After 33 years as a gunman for the government, my current profile is much more generous than it was in the past, and the "hot" .40-caliber Springer Precision custom XD Sub Compact pistol and its companion 12-round magazine work with gravity to pull the trousers below my navel, which I dislike. However, that's where my unweighted and belted trousers usually end up anyway. I can mitigate this problem by packing a 9mm PT 709 Taurus Slim, but then I'm approaching the pocket pistol genre, which French was trying to avoid.

I have discussed the suspenders issue with Jay and he is researching them as an option to add to his fashion line for the more portly. On range day, a pair of sturdy clip-on suspenders completely solved my anatomical problem.

Even with appropriate adjustments to the pocket's depth, my snub XD was still deeply submerged within its depths, while the additional magazine's

Interior pocket shows adjustable Velcro straps for different barrel lengths.

CCW BREAKAWAYS JEANS CONCEAL A GLOCK PISTOL WITHOUT PRINTING.



Loaded magazine should be inserted in MagSock first, then affixed to Velcro in pocket.



Velcro fixed sleeve was positioned exactly where I want it.

CARGO TROUSERS

The cargo trouser pockets can be quickly opened with a slashing motion from front to rear and amazingly, these pockets will secrete up to four 33-round Glock magazines and four 30-round AR-15 mags without detectable signature. He noted that most tactical trousers with magazine pouches are designed for the 30-round M16 magazine and will not accommodate the longer sticks for other firearms.

With CCW Breakaways, hundreds of stored kills can be carried. They're ideal for executive protection/security details where the lowest possible profile is desired.

PREFERRED FIREARMS AND TRAINING

Striker-fired pistols are preferred over exposed-hammer handguns. The latter (such as 1911s) are not to be excluded, but to avoid snagging, French advocates, "Practice, practice and practice."

Although quite intuitive, some training is recommended. The Commonwealth Criminal Justice Academy will team up with CCW Breakaways to offer a self-defense course using the trousers.

SPEED OF PRESENTATION

On the range, French's times at seven yards averaged 1.23 seconds with hand on gun and 1.79 seconds with hands at sides. With minimal practice, my federal agent and firearms instructor shooting partner performed the same drill at .99 seconds with hand on gun and 1.55 seconds with hands at sides.

It should be noted that the times produced with hands at sides and not on gun in pocket would not defeat the Tueller Drill. Trainers have determined that a maximum presentation time of 1.50 seconds is required to defend against a 21-foot rush.

NO WOMEN ALLOWED ... FOR THE MOMENT

CCW Breakaways are only available for men at this juncture. Although women

often adapt themselves to menswear, such as SWAT attire, they generally prefer tighter and trimmer cuts around the legs, which make this method of concealment all but impossible. But I'm positive that as soon as the jeans are on the market, Jay will focus on accommodating the ladies ... especially if his wife has anything to say about it.

All those who attended the demonstration and I were very impressed. I'm convinced that CCW Breakaways will establish a new standard for concealed carry. To lower manufacturing costs, French is considering going offshore. In turn, these savings will be reflected in reduced product prices for the consumer. ©

SOURCE

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LINEUP

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GUERRILLA SNIPER RIFLE

Rifle Dynamics PSL

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CCW Breakaways Pants

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FIGHTING TRIM

Light(er) Weight Carbine

BY PATRICK A. ROGERS



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TREASURE IN THE TRASH

DIY Economical Target Stands

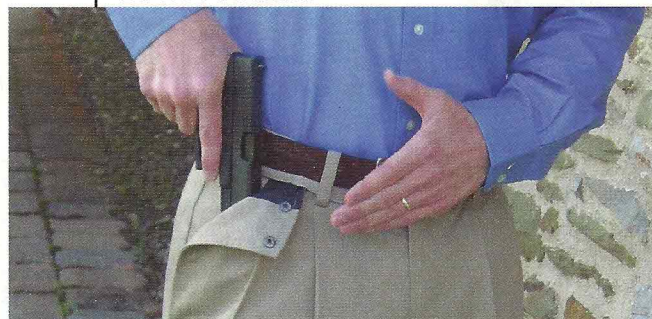
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ANGULAR TRAINING STANDARDS

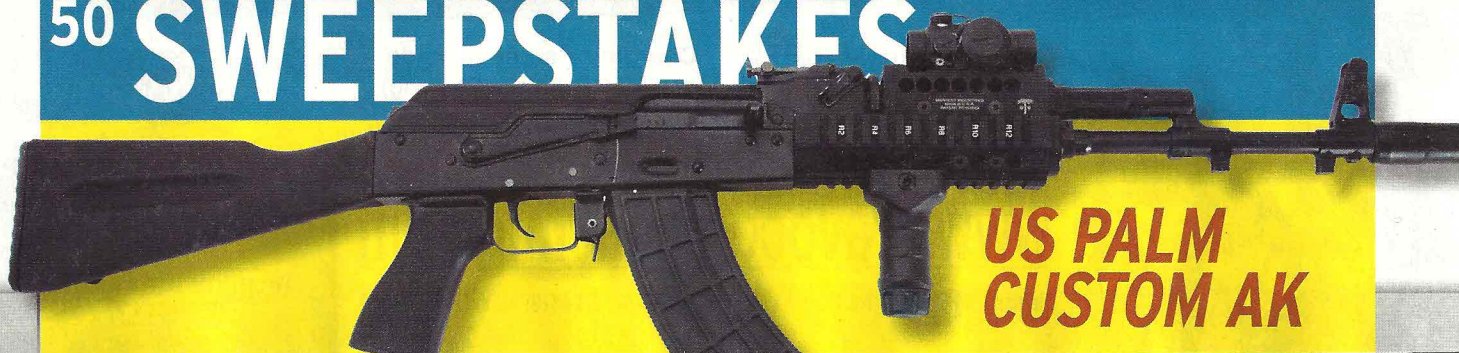
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