

CCW BREAKAWAYS MULTI-PURPOSE BELT

This isn't what you think it is. I mean, yeah, you could use it to keep your carry holster safe and secure while you tote your defensive handgun, but it's actually a whole lot more. Just like a multitool is handy to have since it can handle life's little emergencies, CCW Breakaways' new Multi-Purpose Belt can also help with emergencies, both big and small. But how's that?



Have you ever needed to tie down your trunk lid after buying that new lawn mower? No rope? No sweat if you have this belt. Note the holes punched all the way around the belt? You can use it as a strap to hold down your trunk — or just about anything. Loop it around something, then use the buckle to snug it down. Carry that bundle of firewood to the camp fire. How about a temporary sling for a broken arm? Need to drag that injured person out of the fire? How about “handcuffing” that miscreant you just took down?

I think one of the most important uses is as a direct pressure device or tourniquet for serious wounds. I saw some still photos taken immediately after the Boston Marathon bombing. It showed a bystander approach a downed person, then whip his belt off, which he then applied as a tourniquet on the badly damaged leg of the victim. He kept his wits and used what he had at-hand to stop the serious bleeding.

It seems we're always saying how “simple is best” around here, and this certainly qualifies as both simple — and best. At around \$34.99, it's nicely made, looks good and could easily be used to save a life. Maybe even yours. Oh, it does a good job of holding up your pants too, and all those holes makes it easy to adjust after that big Thanksgiving dinner, just so you know. I'm wearing mine as I type this. *For more info:* www.americanhandgunner.com/ccw-breakaways, (717) 774-2152

PML7019-3 Rev(13.0)

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Roy's actual carry gear. Clockwise, from top-left: Pocket holster for J-frame, Renegade ankle rig, Haugen Handgun Leather belt-slide with snaps for Kahr P45, mag pouch Roy made to fit Kahr or Kimber Solo mags, Duluth Suspenders and Bianchi "Foldaway" minimalist holster (like the Gould & Goodrich one he sometimes substitutes). The Kahr will also ride in the Bianchi.

HOLSTER

Just about every day, I get a call or e-mail from a reader going something like this: "Hey Roy, I just bought a Ruger LC9 (or other handgun). Can you tell me what holster I should buy?" The answer is: No, I can't. It'd be like you asking me what shoes you should buy. I'd have no idea. A comfortable holster is like a pair of shoes — a very subjective, personal thing. A carry method fitting my own 170-pound frame, might not work on your 115- or 260-pound self. The type of gun (all-steel or lightweight?), the type of build you have, what you'll be doing (duty gun? off-duty? trail pistol?) even the weather, all dictate the kind of holster you might look at. And, maybe a gun-bag, pack, case or other such thing might make better sense. In all honesty, it's a genuine pain to *actually* carry a handgun on your belt in a holster all day, every day. Even the lightweight ones get heavy, prod you, make you have to keep your jacket on all the time and generally cramp your style.

Clint Smith is famous for saying, "A handgun should be comforting, not comfortable" — and he's exactly right. I've carried guns for going on 40 years now, and I'll be the first to tell you I cheat all the time when it comes to trying to stay comfy. I've tried about every holster style possible, guns of all shapes and sizes, packs, bags, goodies and widgets, and basically nothing is 100 percent. Some methods are comfortable, or at least tolerable for a time, then the weather changes, and you have to rethink things again.

For *me*, the only thing seeming to be consistent are small guns like J-frame S&W revolvers and small autos (like



REALITIES

a Kimber Solo I carry) in a pocket holster or ankle rig. The ankle rig is exclusively one from Renegade, made of "surgical" elastic (there are others like it now). I've worn them for over 25 years and have never lost a gun out of one, and you can wear one every waking hour with no discomfort. I also wear suspenders from Duluth Trading company (a unique side-clip style) to help hold things up. Am I fashionable? Not usually, but my gun is secure and the suspenders help me to not be lazy and leave my gun at home.

If I do wear a belt holster, I tend toward simple belt-slide type rigs, usually with snaps so you can snap them on or off your belt easily. I also really like the new ultra-minimalist style, as epitomized by the Low Profile Belt Slide hol-

ster by Gould & Goodrich (see *Carry Options*, July/Aug 2013) or a similar one by Bianchi. It is essentially a simple flap of leather with two belt cuts in it. Your own belt is the "back" panel of the holster. It's adaptable to just about any semi-auto, and when you take your gun out and stow it, the holster looks like a simple leather piece and most people would have no idea what it is.

Inside the waistband holsters seem to work for many people, especially slender people, and there are some very good new designs around. Keep in mind you generally need to buy pants one or two inches larger around the waist. Ditto for your belt. I've experimented with the new N8² models (see *Gunny-sack* in this issue) and Versacarry rigs, and find them both workable — for *me*.

Pocket holsters need to be sorta' "sticky" on the outside so when you draw your gun, the holster stays in your pocket. But even that's not 100 percent so I practice drawing and sort of "wiping" the holster off with my off-hand as I draw. Just don't cross your hand with the muzzle when you do it. Pocket holsters are handy since you can put your hand on a firing grip on the gun, in your pocket, if something seems amiss. Like the old saying goes, the



Top: Maxpedition almost invented the high-quality "off-body" carry methods using innovative personal "kit" bags. Bottom: The CCW Breakaways pants broke new ground in concealed carry and are a favorite of Roy's.

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fastest draw is one starting with the gun in your hand.

The CCW Breakaways pants are a real innovation and I wear them at times. They have a built-in simple pouch system allowing you to basically custom tailor the fit to your gun. I can actually carry a Kahr P45, Officer's ACP 1911 or similar medium-sized auto perfectly comfortably, and the draw is very fast and sure. Their website explains it all well.

Packs and bags are good ideas, but you need to remember the gun is *off* your body. If you lose the pack you lose your gun (and reload, which you carry,

right?). Companies like Maxpedition wrote the book on these "gun-packs" but now dozens of companies have joined the rush and everything from big "messenger" bags to small personal totes can be found with gun compartments. The draw tends to be slow and a bit fumbly-fingered, but at least you have a gun with you.

If you're set on a standard belt holster, especially if you're carrying a full-sized gun, be prepared to buy several before you get one you like. But don't buy those \$12 nylon rigs. They are shapeless, wear out fast and are often generic fits. If you have a \$600 gun, buy a decent \$100 holster. Then buy one or two more. Any old gun-guy has a big box of holsters. You will too. I just can't

carry the big, heavy guns anymore, like some people do. Or at least they say they do. I guess I'm just a whiner in my old age, and hate to be uncomfortable. Lightweight for me, thank you very much.

If you have questions about specific rigs you're looking at, feel free to reach out. We likely have experience with the gear, or the maker. Do some research on your own, decide what method of carry seems right for you, then explore models in that category. But, be prepared to buy plenty of holsters. Besides, you will likely need to feed that growing box you have in your closet, anyway. *For more info:* www.americanhandgunner.com/product-index and *click on the company name.*

ADD IT UP

10 MILLION

Total number of Mossberg 500 shotguns made since 1961.

5 YEARS

LaserMax's warranty on new products.

\$1.6 BILLION

Amount hunters contribute to conservation efforts yearly.

77 PERCENT

Earnings increase in 2012 over 2011 for Ruger.

86 PERCENT

Increase in membership and upgrades at 2013 NRA show over last year.

\$10,425

Donation to H.A.V.A. by Freedom Munitions.

313,237

Number of rivets in a WWII B-24 Liberator.

1.25 MILLION

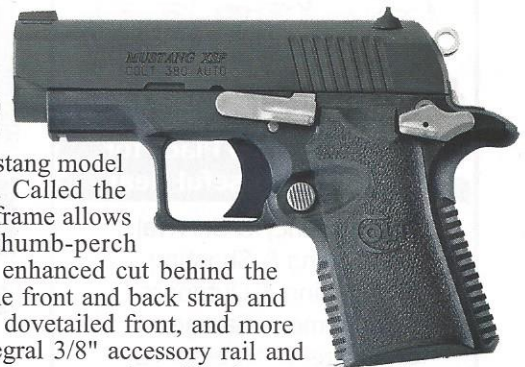
Total parts in a B-24.

49,234

Sherman tanks built 1941-1946.

COLT'S NEW POLYMER MUSTANG

Colt has upgraded the popular Mustang model with a polymer framed version. Called the Mustang XSP, having a molded frame allows some innovation, like the molded thumb-perch under the safeties. It also allows an enhanced cut behind the triggerguard, enhanced texturing on the front and back strap and other goodies. The slide now offers a dovetailed front, and more user-friendly slide serrations. The integral 3/8" accessory rail and squared-off triggerguard also offer some new options for shooters. And, at only 12 ounces, this is the lightest Mustang ever! Priced at \$649 at full-retail, look for it soon. *For more info:* www.americanhandgunner.com/colt



JADE JOINS US

I'd like to welcome Jade Moldé to *Handgunner's* ranks. You might recognize Jade's name from our masthead as FMG's photography assistant. Jade has done most of the filming and editing of our *Insider Tips* videos available at www.americanhandgunner.com, and has done a great job with them. Jade is now the Managing Editor for *Handgunner* and I plan on taking good advantage of that to push some work off in his direction! He's learning the gun-ropes, and has already been to several industry events, including two SHOT Shows, representing FMG. Jade says, "Being a young guy allows me to keep tabs on what younger *Handgunner* readers might be interested in, and I look forward to providing my own insight as I gain experience. I'm also hoping younger generations will wise-up, get off their phones and go learn how to field strip a 1911 or zero a scope!"

Jade wanted me to tell you, "If you see a young person at the range, go over and introduce yourself with a



handshake. That'll do wonders to welcome them into our shooting family. We can benefit from a little support in our ranks, especially from the younger crowd!" And he's right.

And speaking of scope-zeroing, Jade is editing a new series of vids, and has already posted several new ones online, so check 'em out. Let us know if you'd like to see a certain topic covered and we'll make it happen. We actually do cover how to zero a scope!

Now, get to work, Jade ...

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