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MARCH/APRIL 2007

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**18 FORCE
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**MORRIS CUSTOM
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THE '1911 IN COMBAT'

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Ultimate 1911 Accessory**





HANDGUN LEATHER

Dave Douglas

FROM CLASSICS
TO CUTTING EDGE
IN CARRY METHODS

Hunchbacked And Bespectacled?

Did you ever have a picture in your mind of what someone looks like based on their occupation? My mind's eye always pictured a true high-end custom holster maker as a grizzled man in his 60s or early 70s; hunchbacked and bespectacled from bending over a dimly lit workbench 10, 12, 14 or maybe 16 hours a day; large hands with crack-skinned fingers rough enough to sand titanium. The lines on his face wouldn't be laugh lines but would have been honestly earned by thousands of frowns from constant phone interruptions from customers wondering when their holster would be done — he hadn't even started on it yet.

At the SHOT Show a few years ago I met Josh Bulman, a true high-end custom holster maker and owner of Bulman Gunleather — so much for the mind's eye stuff. Josh is a 34 year old clear-eyed erect young man whose level of craftsmanship far surpasses his years.



Devils In The Details

Bulman has been making holsters since age 16 when he became interested in the art, watching his grandfather craft and carve saddles and tack for their horses on a Pennsylvania ranch. Josh has been selling his designs commercially for about 10 years now and doing quite well at it.

The reason for his success, I'm convinced, is quality. The holster designs are well thought out and traditional in style. The quality of the leather is the best available. But the detail work is what sets Bulman Gunleather apart from the competition.

RETENTION QUALITY

Except for his shoulder rigs you'll find no external retention devices on Josh's work. Retention is accomplished by hours of fitting and hand molding the leather to a specific gun type. He pays extra attention to the tension and zero-tension areas keeping the gun secure even when things get rough. After only a .25" initial resistance, the gun easily and smoothly clears the holster ready for action.

Josh dyes and finishes the leather surface by hand and you won't believe the luster and depth of the color. He also hand burnishes the edges. The edges are the first area I look at when inspecting a new holster — they tell the tale of quality. The norm today seems to be some dye and an acrylic dip to protect the leather edges. Josh takes his time, uses several types of wax and a great deal of handwork to get it right.

If you don't mind buying your next holster from a maker who hasn't yet acquired hunched posture, cracked fingers and a face that looks like a road map of Indiana, give Bulman Gunleather a good long look. It's very high quality work at more than reasonable prices.



For more info: www.bulmangunleather.com.

