

BACK TO COWHIDE

A tried & true traditional triple play!



By Bob Arganbright

In the 1990s we saw many advances in holster materials such as horsehide, sharkskin, soft padded nylon that molds like leather and Kydex rigid thermal molded holsters. However, as we're well into the Millennium most holsters are still produced from vegetable-tanned cowhide. In this HANDGUN HIDE we'll examine two high ride hip holsters and a crossdraw holster made from cowhide.

Galco COP

First up, a new pancake that's worn on the hip high ride, strong side. Galco calls it their "COP Three Slot Belt Holster," and this versatile rig has two belt slots in the leading edge and one in the trailing edge. For best concealment it's worn with the belt threaded through the top leading edge slot, which places the holster in an FBI angle, with gun butt tipped forward. This eases the drawing motion when the holstered gun is worn over the hip pocket. When less concealment is acceptable, the belt is placed through the bottom leading edge slot, which positions the holster vertically, with no angle. It may then be worn on either the point of the strong side hip or as a crossdraw. The holster pocket on our test model was detail molded for a GLOCK and was trimmed at the top to present a full shooting grip with first hand contact. Security is provided by a thumb-break safety strap and by an adjustable tension device placed at the base of the



New Galco COP offers security of thumb-break strap with the versatility of multiple belt slots.



Bulman Gunleather's crossdraw offers easy access and fast presentation, shown with new Spyderco JD Smith folder.

SPYDERCO'S JD SMITH

A well-known member of the Knifemakers' Guild, JD Smith has earned a reputation for producing top quality custom knives, many of them folders. Out of a collaboration with Spyderco comes their new JD Smith C58BM folding lockback. Features include a 3.25-inch VG-10 stainless steel clip-point blade that's available with either plain or serrated Spyderedge. One-hand opening to an overall length of 8.63 inches is easy with a low-profile thumbhole. A single



Spyderco JD SMITH folding lockback is one of the best of the breed.

handle liner, on the right side, keeps weight to a minimum at three ounces. The handle scales are of black Micarta with what Spyderco describes as a

satin-luster finish. The handle is ergonomically shaped with a prominent finger groove. The leading edge of this finger groove provides a finger guard for extra cutting control. As previously mentioned, this is a lockback design, with a stout spring forcing the locking bar securely into the locked position, preventing the blade from accidentally closing while being used. The pocket clip places the knife very low in a point-down position in the pocket. This is another excellent custom knifemaker collaboration between J.D. Smith and Spyderco.



Kirkpatrick's high ride hip holster is joined with belt and mag pouch.

trigger guard. The front lip is cut low, to the rear edge of the gun's ejection port, to speed the draw. The COP is available in plain black cowhide only, with the edges neatly finished. While this is an excellent high ride concealment holster for the civilian, it will also make an excellent duty holster for the plainclothes detective. For the police market, a matching magazine and handcuff pouch is available.

Kirkpatrick TSS

Kirkpatrick Leather Company has been making holsters for approximately 30 years. While they are best known for their Western rigs and produce a full line of gunbelts and holsters for the Cowboy Action Shooter, they also produce several holsters for concealed carry. I have recently been using their Model TSS "Texas Strong Side" hip holster for my Wilson Colt Gov't Model. This open top strong side hip holster fully encloses the trigger guard for safety and has a reinforced top lip for easy one-handed holstering. A tunnel belt loop places the holster high on the hip with an FBI rake to ease the drawing motion, with a rear edge belt slot to snug the gun butt in against the body for better concealment. The top quality cowhide holster shows neat hand molding, including a front sight channel that prevents sight drag. Though the trigger guard is fully enclosed, the gun butt is readily accessible for a full shooting grip with first hand contact. All edges are neatly finished and double stitched for long wear. The TSS is available with matching belt and open top double magazine pouch, and my sample was finished in an attractive light tan color.

Bulman Crossdraw

I have recently been using a noteworthy crossdraw holster from a new

source, Bulman Gunleather. This top grade cowhide holster is fully lined and has a sight channel formed by twin rails to prevent drag and protect the pouch from sharp edged target sights. The open top pouch fully encloses the trigger guard, preventing premature access. Extensive hand molding ensures a perfect fit for our M1911 Gov't Model. A rectangular piece of cowhide securely stitched to the back side of the holster provides an unusual belt loop, where the rear edge of this piece of leather is stitched down, with a slot providing entry for the belt to a tunnel belt loop. Such a design provides a very secure belt loop, and its placement raises the pistol higher than most crossdraws. The trailing edge of the holster has a belt slot, which offers additional security in the mounting system and pulls the gun butt in against the wearer's body for concealment. The top of the open top pouch is trimmed to allow a complete shooting grip with first hand contact—an important feature in a practical holster. This Bulman Gunleather holster was finished in a dark red-brown color, and all edges have been neatly finished.


For more information contact:

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Bulman Gunleather, P.O. Box 361, Dept. CH, Newry, PA 16665; 814-696-8615

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