

11 BEST

BLADE MAGAZINE KNIFE-OF-THE-YEAR® AWARDS

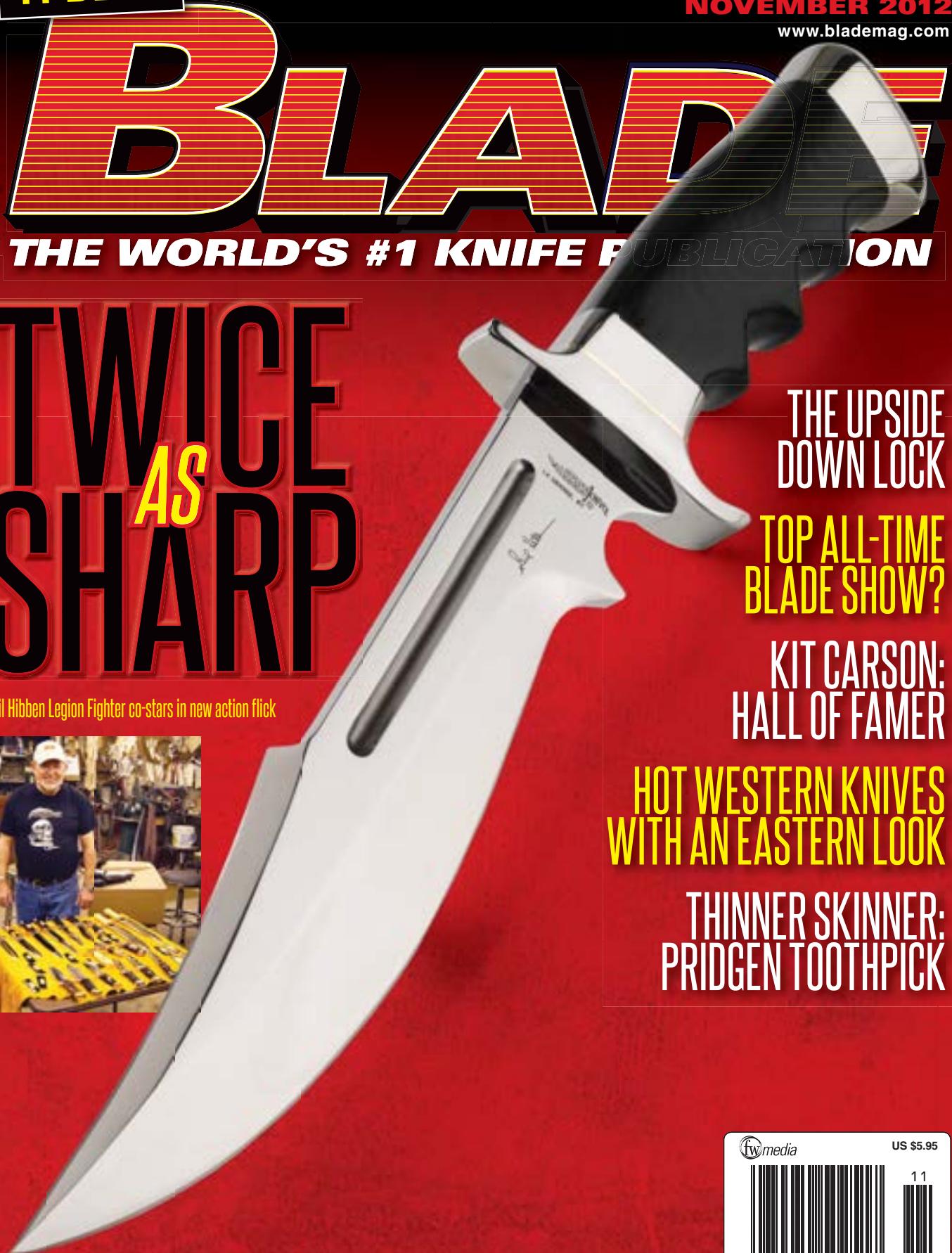
NOVEMBER 2012

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THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATIONTWICE
AS
SHARP

Gil Hibben Legion Fighter co-stars in new action flick

THE UPSIDE
DOWN LOCKTOP ALL-TIME
BLADE SHOW?KIT CARSON:
HALL OF FAMERHOT WESTERN KNIVES
WITH AN EASTERN LOOKTHINNER SKINNER:
PRIDGEN TOOTHPICK



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Advanced knife makers like the ability to customize basic knife kits, showing off their personal creativity and ability to take something standard to an entirely different level. In the hands of someone who knows what they are doing, a kit knife can be truly special. Jantz Supply provides beginners and advanced knife makers many customizable components, unique materials and opportunities for personal inspiration in the creating and personalization of their fixed kit blades.

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NOVEMBER 2012

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Wants More on Knife Mechanisms

Thank you for the very interesting article on the AXIS® lock (page 72, June **BLADE®**). While I enjoyed the interview-style comments about the history of the lock's invention, I do not really understand how it works. Perhaps my 3-D powers of understanding are not working up to snuff.

I have studied the patent drawings reproduced in the article long and hard. I guess I need simplified drawings showing the knife open and closed. Sort of a before-and-after approach to depict the change in the position of the various parts also would be helpful. Perhaps a list of the names of the numbered items would also help. However, I think that coloring the actual pieces of the lock and referring to them in the text would be a huge help, as would a series of simple drawings showing the progressive positions of the parts.

Please continue to write about knife mechanisms. There are so many and I haven't a clue about how most of them work. For example, I have stared and stared at the ad on the back cover for the Famars folders, and do not believe that they really do fold. Is that shiny flush button a release for a spring-activated blade? How does one close such a knife? Does closing it load the spring for powering the blade?

Keep up the good work. I cannot tell you how refreshing it is to read articles written by an actual author (Mike Haskew) as opposed to re-publishing self-serving press releases.

James Speed Hensinger, a letter via e-mail

*Editor's note: For the latest installment of "Knife Mechanisms," see page 88. Meanwhile, the Famars folders on the back cover of the June **BLADE** are autos. You push the "shiny flush button" to both open the knife and to unlock the blade and close it. Look for more on Famars knives in future issues of **BLADE**.*

Another Searson Fan

I absolutely love the articles written by Mike Searson on the 25th anniversary of Ernest Emerson's CQC-6 in the June and July issues of **BLADE®**. I have been

reading your magazine for a while now and have to say I have noticed a real talent in Mr. Searson's work. I would love to see more from him and your other fantastic contributors. Thanks for all that you do!

Shawn D. Phillips, Gray Talon Group,
a letter via e-mail

A Crazy Month

It really was a crazy month. I enjoyed a fair amount of attention due to my mini-bio in the "Knifemaker Showcase" in the April **BLADE®** (page 69), and was really, really busy trying to get ready for the Oregon Knife Show in Eugene this past April. With all the commotion I neglected to send you a proper thank you for allowing me the opportunity to show my work in **BLADE**. I really do appreciate

the chance to have my knives seen by so many.

Exposure is huge for a new maker like me and I cannot thank you enough. As a long-time reader of your magazine, it was a real thrill to see my work on your pages. Hopefully we can do it again some day!

Jon McCargar, Pinole, California

Terrific Sawby Knife

Was I surprised when I turned to page 22 of the June **BLADE®**! How nice of you to publish the Scott Sawby knife. Scott and Marian Sawby did a terrific job, and it is so rewarding to me that others can share in enjoying their work. Thanks for making that possible.

John Wenglewski, Spokane, Washington



www.KnifeForums.com

Pappy Boyington's Mark II or No?

I bought a knife in mint shape with the original sheath. The blade is marked "Kabar USMC Olean New York." It has a wooden handle and a blackish blade. The elderly lady said her Uncle Pappy was a decorated pilot and sent this knife home during the war, and kept his other knife to use. That is why it is in mint shape.

Can anyone tell me more about this knife? The sheath has a name inside the belt loop. It says Greg Boyington MFS 214. Any information whatsoever would be greatly appreciated.

Signchaser

I hate to dash an ice-cold bucket of reality on you, Signchaser, but there are several things you need to know about your acquisition.

Greg Boyington, the name written on the sheath and therefore the supposed owner of the knife, was also called Pappy Boyington of the USMC Black Sheep Squadron. There was a television series made about the squadron and Robert Conrad played Boyington.

Now for the dose of cold reality. It is important to state that the proper name for an example of such knives is "Mark II." The popular designation of "Ka-Bar" is a matter of historical accident. With that said:

• The Sheath: It is clearly marked "USMC" and with the iconic Marine Corps globe and anchor. Unfortunately, no military-issue Mark II sheaths were ever marked this way, and certainly not during World War II when they were first introduced. The sheath marking of MFS-214, I assume, is supposed to indicate "Marine Fighter Squadron 214." That is not how Naval/Marine fighter squadrons were designated during World War II. To me, this is confirmation that the package was intended to fool an inexperienced potential buyer into paying more than it is worth.

• The Knife: Several things about this knife scream "reproduction!" The first is the leather-ring handle. No military-issue Mark II knives ever had handles that looked like this one. The second is the markings on the blade. Though the words are correct, the appearance is all wrong. Any experienced collector of World War II Mark II knives will tell you the same thing.

In short, I firmly believe that this package was created with the intent to deceive a buyer into paying far more than it is actually worth. I sincerely hope you paid no more than \$100 for this knife/sheath combination, and even that amount is generous. I am afraid, though, that you may have paid a good bit more.

Daniel Nightheyes

To read posts like Daniel Nightheyes' and others, visit www.KnifeForums.com.



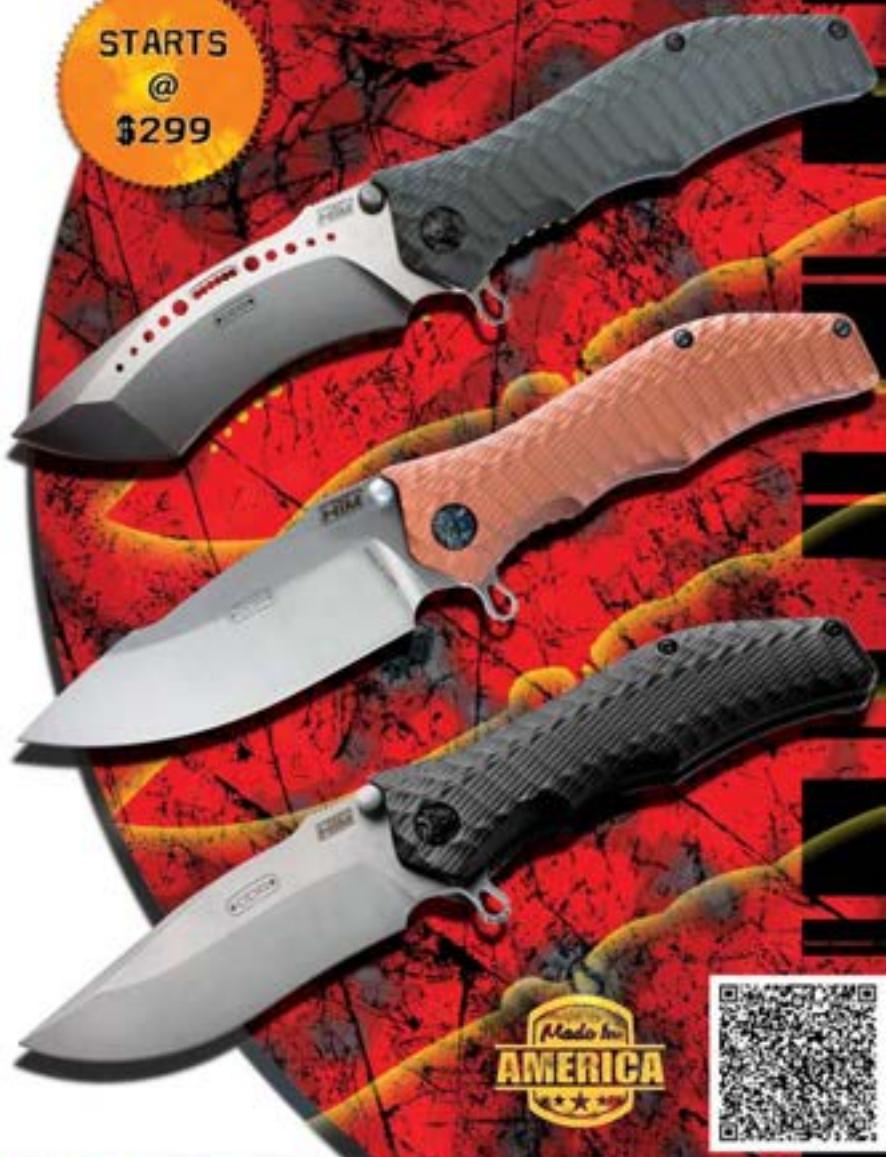
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AUTHORIZED DEALER

The Legion Fighter is a knife Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Gil Hibben said he made especially for **Sylvester Stallone**—with Stallone's input—for the soon-to-be-released action blockbuster, *The Expendables 2*, a Nu Image and Millenium Films motion picture distributed by Lionsgate.

A recurve fighter, the knife has a full-bellied 9.5-inch blade of quarter-inch 440C stainless steel sporting an extended clip point, fuller and pronounced choil. The finger-grooved Micarta® handle in a dropped design is sandwiched between a hefty stainless steel double guard and a bird's-beak buttcap.

The cover piece is but one of several knives Hibben made for the movie. For more on them and the Legion Fighter, see the story on page 24 or contact Gil Hibben, Dept. BL11, POB 13, LaGrange, KY 40031 502-222-1397 www.hibbenknives.com. For factory/custom reproductions of selected knives from the movie, contact **United Cutlery**, attn: Michelle Hampton, Dept. BL11, 475 U.S. Hwy. 319 S, Moultrie, GA 31768 800-548-0835 www.united-cutlery.com.

Kris Kandler photographed the cover knife. **Mike Carter** photographed the inset image of Hibben standing behind a table full of knives Gil made for *The Expendables 2*.

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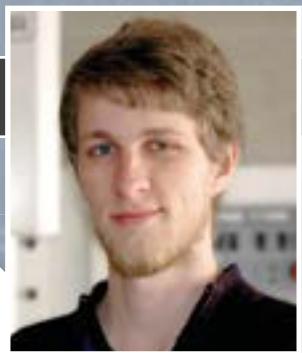
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KNIFE FUNCTION JUNCTION

A knife-related organization holding its annual function or one of its most important yearly events in conjunction with the BLADE Show (see page 38) is nothing new. The **American Bladesmith Society** has been holding its annual meeting—in which it names a number of its awards and master and journeyman smith ratings, and holds the auction of its yearly master and journeyman smith and other knives—at the BLADE Show since the late 1980s, an arrangement that has been eminently beneficial to both the show and the ABS.

And why not? It makes perfect sense for a knife organization to hold its annual function in conjunction with the world's largest knife show, a show attended by more knife collectors, makers, manufacturers and other knife enthusiasts from more countries than any other knife event extant.

Two of the latest organizations to hold their annual meetings in conjunction with the BLADE Show are the **Custom Knife Collectors Association** (CKCA) and **Knife Rights**. From all indications, both organizations' functions seem to be making significant inroads in their respective fields.

For example, at its annual banquet June 7 in Atlanta the night before the BLADE Show, the CKCA announced the awarding of \$45,000 in grants to three custom knifemakers—\$15,000 each to **James R. Cook**, **Robert Kaufmann** and **Elizabeth Loerchner**—via the **CKCA/Jerry Fisk Cutlery Challenge**.

The Cutlery Challenge was officially announced at the CKCA banquet prior to the 2011 BLADE Show. It offered CKCA member makers from 19 countries—including forged, stock removal, etc.—the opportunity to submit a knife innovation project/idea deemed most worthy of one of three grants.

The money is to be used at the discretion of each winner to make a "more



The CKCA/Jerry Fisk Cutlery Challenge winners were named at the CKCA banquet the night before the BLADE Show. From left: Jerry Fisk, Elizabeth Loerchner, Robert Kaufmann, CKCA President Kevin Jones and J.R. Cook. The award winners are Loerchner, Kaufmann and Jones. (Caleb Royer photo)

innovative knife." The innovation can involve a new process, a new design, anything that results in an original and more creative knife than those being done, one that is both representative of and elevates the artistic value and collectibility of custom knives in general.

The CKCA accepted applications until this past May 1, after which time a selection committee met to determine the award winners. The grant money was provided by the "enormous generosity of an anonymous CKCA member."

It is the winners' task to return to the 2013 BLADE Show with a knife resulting from their innovative projects/ideas that will be juried by a cross section of authorities in multiple fields of art. The knives will be displayed at various museums to introduce collectors of art in other fields to collectible custom cutlery.

As for Knife Rights (KR), it held its third annual awards breakfast the Satur-

day of the BLADE Show, including television news analyst **S.E. Cupp** (see page 40) as special guest speaker.

Highlighting the breakfast was KR's presentation of its annual Sharper Future™ awards. Honorees and their awards included: **Georgia State Sen. William "Bill" Heath** and the Freedom's Edge™ Award for his help in passage of several pro-knife initiatives in the state, including knife law preemption; and **Mike Vellekamp** of **Fox Knives USA** and the Freedom's Point™ award for his work on a Washington state bill allowing both the sale and manufacture of assisted openers, and the manufacture of autos (page 10, August *BLADE*).

Also: **Blaine Smith**, associate editor of NRA Publications' *America's 1st Freedom* magazine, and the Freedom's Voice™ award for his coverage of knife ownership rights; retailer **Roger Caunch** of **Knife-Works.com** and the Freedom's Guardian™ award for a knife manufacturer/industry partner who has furthered knife rights issues; and KR's first annual **Carry a Knife – Save a Life™** award to **Jason Hobbs** for using his knife to protect his son from a mountain lion attack (see page 30).

Putting a cherry on top, Knife Rights, along with the **American Knife & Tool Institute**, won a *Blade Magazine* 2012 Industry Achievement Award for its pro-knife legislative victories this year (see page 12).

And so to the BLADE Show's potpourri of accolades you can add one more: Knife Function Junction.

To read all about the latest knives, knife news, forums, blogs and much more, visit www.blademag.com.

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KAI'S THE LIMIT

THE KAI GROUP DOMINATES THE BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 KNIFE-OF-THE-YEAR® AWARDS

The Kai Group has more than held its own in Blade Magazine Knife-Of-The-Year® Awards in recent years, but this past June's performance during the 31st Annual BLADE Show (see page 38) was its best yet.

Kai and its three divisions—Kershaw, Shun and Zero Tolerance—took home four Knife-Of-The-Year Awards in all, with ZT capturing two of the factory knife industry's top honors for the Models 0888 and 0600. Kershaw won for the Cryo 1555Ti and Shun for the Taiyo.

As far as the *BLADE*® staff can determine, it is the first time one company has won more than three Knife-Of-The-Year Awards in one year.

Other Knife-Of-The-Year winners include Columbia River Knife & Tool for the Foresight; Microtech for the Socom Delta; Spyderco for the Autonomy; DPx Gear garnered its first Knife-Of-The-Year Award for the HEST T3; Chris Reeve Knives earned its unprecedented 12th Manufacturing Quality Award; William Henry Studio for yet another Investor/Collector Award, this time for the B12 Freedom (a knife that outpolled all other entrants in the category combined); Wicked Edge's Pro-Pack II angle-guide sharpener for the Accessory Of The Year; and the American Knife & Tool Institute and Knife Rights for Industry Achievement Awards. Since there were two Industry Achievement Awards this year, no Publisher's Award was given.

All the awards but Industry Achievement were voted on by exhibiting booth holders at the BLADE Show, plus a panel of five special judges, the latter whose votes counted double. The *BLADE* staff selected the Industry Achievement Award winners.

Point Seven photographed all the award-winning knives and accessory.



BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 OVERALL KNIFE OF THE YEAR® ZERO TOLERANCE 0888

Pattern: Premium folder
Blade steel: Composite blade S110V edge, 14C28N spine
Heat treat: 59-61 HRC
Blade length: 3.75"
Blade pattern: Drop point
Blade thickness: .156"
Blade grind: Flat
Blade finish: Satin and bead blasted
Handle: Smooth, contoured titanium
Feature comforts: Stainless steel lockbar insert w/integral over-travel stop; built-in clip slides left or right, integrates into design
Closed length: 5.375"
Operating/locking mechanism: Titanium frame-lock flipper; KVT ball bearings in pivot
Weight: 7.6 ozs.
MSRP: \$499
Available: 2013



BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 AMERICAN-MADE KNIFE OF THE YEAR®

MICROTECH SOCOM DELTA

Pattern: Single-action folder

Blade steel: Powdered S35-VN stainless

Blade length: 3.75"

Handle material: G10/carbon fiber

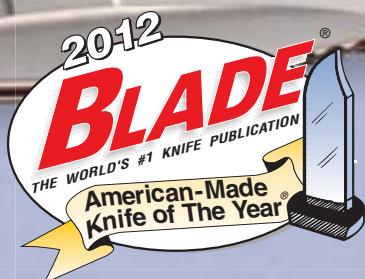
Closed length: 5.25"

Weight: 4.2 ozs.

Special stuff: Carbon-fiber handle has a titanium lockbar w/removable insert to hold the blade securely in place; ceramic bearing system provides smooth, fast action

MSRP: \$330

Available: Now



BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 IMPORTED KNIFE OF THE YEAR®

**COLUMBIA RIVER
KNIFE & TOOL
FORESIGHT**

Designer: Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Ken Onion

Pattern: Tactical folder

Blade steel: AUS 8 stainless

Heat treat: 58-59 HRC

Blade length: 3.5"

Blade pattern: Drop point

Blade grind: High hollow

Blade finish: Black titanium nitride

Handle material: Cold-forged aluminum

Closed length: 5.17"

Operating/locking mechanism:

Flipper with locking liner

What to look for: IKBS ball-bearing pivot system provides a smooth, fast opening

Weight: 6.3 ozs.

MSRP: \$140

Available: Now

BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 MOST INNOVATIVE AMERICAN DESIGN® SPYDERCO AUTONOMY

Designer: Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Sal Glessner

Pattern: Automatic folder

Blade steel: H-1

Blade length: 3.65"

Blade pattern: Sheepfoot/rescue

Blade grind: Hollow

Blade finish: Satin (and a future

DLC-coated version)

Edge configuration: SpyderEdge

Handle material: G10

Closed length: 4.92"

Operating/locking mechanism:

Modified button lock

Weight: 5.5 ozs.

MSRP: \$350+

Available: 2013



TROPHY KNIVES |



BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 MOST INNOVATIVE IMPORTED DESIGN DPx Gear HEST T3

Designer: Robert Young Pelton

Manufacturer: LionSTEEL

Pattern: Tactical folder

Blade steel: German Niolox

Blade length: 3.67"

Blade thickness: .197"

Blade finish: Black-PVD-coated titanium

Edge: 50/50 plain/serrated

Handle: Black textured G10 w/6Al4V GR.5
stonewashed titanium-alloy, PVD-coated frame

Pocket clip: Black PVD coated and tempered,
with Mr. DP logo

Operating/locking mechanism: RotoBlock
frame lock

Skull Tool: Glow-in-the-dark titanium multi-
implement tool w/Pyser SAS survival compass

Sharp fact: The T3 is a triple-black sterile
version of the DPx HEST/F 2.0

Production run: Limited to 500 pieces

Closed length: 4.38"

Weight: 5.1 ozs.

MSRP: \$350

Available: Now

BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 MANUFACTURING QUALITY AWARD CHRIS REEVE KNIVES

for its entire line of knives (an example of
which is shown here)

Knife name: Large Unique Sebenza 21

Blade steel: Stainless raindrop-pattern
damascus by Devin Thomas

Blade length: 3.625"

Lock mechanism: Integral Lock®

Embellishment: Amethyst inlays

Special note: One-of-a-kind graphics by
Lisa L'Eveque-Hague (though she can make
something similar)

MSRP: \$779

Available: Now by special order

BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 BEST BUY OF THE YEAR KERSHAW CRYO 1555Ti

Designer: Rick Hinderer

Pattern: Utility folder

Blade steel: 8Cr13MoV stainless

Heat treat: 58-60 HRC

Blade length: 2.75"

Blade pattern: Drop point

Blade thickness: .121"

Blade grind: Hollow

Blade finish: Titanium
carbo-nitride coating

Handle: Stainless steel w/titanium
carbo-nitride coating

What to look for: Lockbar stabilizer
and deep-carry pocket clip

Closed length: 3.75"

Operating/locking mechanism:

SpeedSafe assisted-opening
frame lock

Weight: 4.1 ozs.

MSRP: \$49.95

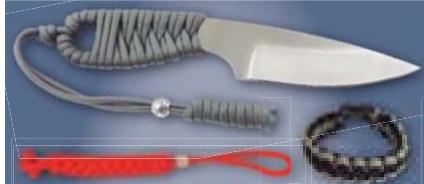
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TROPHY KNIVES |

BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 INDUSTRY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AMERICAN KNIFE & TOOL INSTITUTE AND KNIFE RIGHTS

The legislative offensive mounted by pro-knife activists in the first part of 2012, led largely by this year's award winners, was nothing short of historic.

• In January, an Indiana Senate Committee unanimously passed a bill that would overturn the state's automatic knife ban;

• In February, the Washington state House unanimously passed a bill allowing both the sale and manufacture of assisted openers, and also the manufacture of autos. A bill introduced in Kansas would repeal existing bans on autos, dirks and daggers, and also would enact knife law preemption (which protects citizens traveling through a state from conflicting local knife ordinances). In Alaska, a bill was reintroduced clarifying "bias toward closure" language that would exempt assisted openers from the definition of *gravity knife* or *switchblade*;

• In March, the Alaska House unanimously passed the "bias toward closure" bill. Meanwhile, plans were announced to pass a similar measure in Louisiana. In Georgia, home state to the BLADE Show, the House and Senate passed knife law preemption. Finally, in Washington state, Gov. Chris Gregoire signed the pro-assisted opener and auto bill into law.

• In May, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal signed the state's knife law preemption bill into law, and the Missouri legislature repealed the ban on the possession, sale and manufacture of federally legal switchblades. In July, Missouri's governor signed the ban repeal into law.

Those playing roles in the pro-knife onslaught are too many to enumerate here, though at the top of the list are Knife Rights (KR) and the American Knife & Tool Institute (AKTI), the two organizations dedicated to protecting your right to make, own and carry knives—and also the dual winners of Blade Magazine 2012 Industry Achievement Awards. Accepting on behalf of AKTI at the BLADE Show was Jan Billeb, AKTI executive director, and on behalf of KR was Doug Ritter, KR chairman.



**Jan Billeb, American
Knife & Tool Institute**



Doug Ritter, Knife Rights

BLADE MAGAZINE 2012 KNIFE COLLABORATION OF THE YEAR ZERO TOLERANCE 0600

Collaborators: Zero Tolerance and R.J. Martin **Pattern:** Premium folder

Blade steel: B75P (powder metallurgy version of BG-42)

Heat treat: 61-63 HRC **Blade length:** 4.25"

Blade pattern: Drop point **Blade thickness:** .1875"

Blade grind: Flat **Blade finish:** Stonewashed

Handle: Boldly textured 3D-machined titanium w/carbon-fiber insert

Closed length: 5.25"

Operating/locking mechanism:

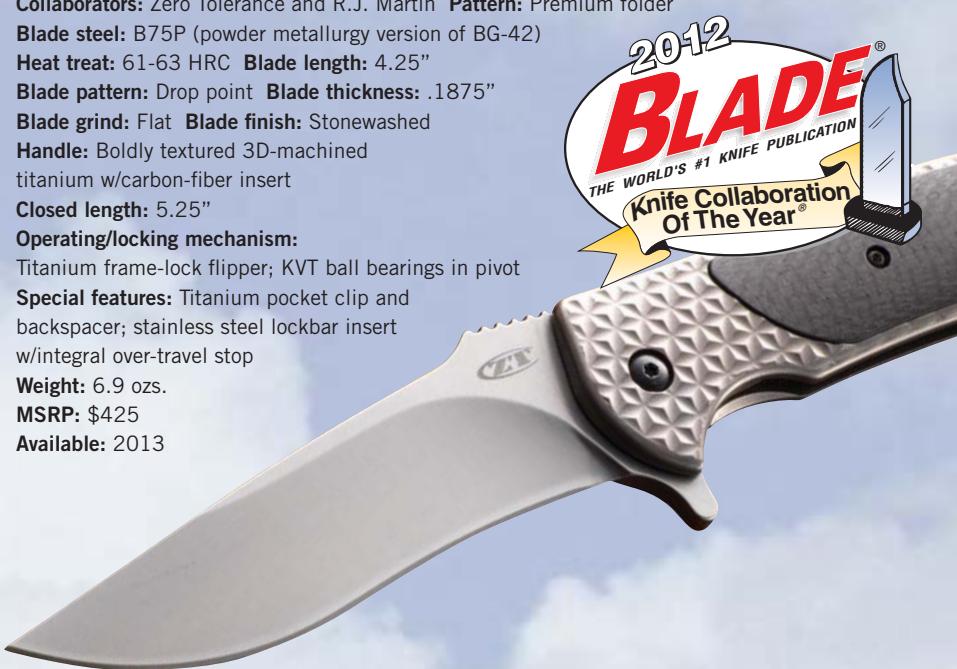
Titanium frame-lock flipper; KVT ball bearings in pivot

Special features: Titanium pocket clip and backspacer; stainless steel lockbar insert w/integral over-travel stop

Weight: 6.9 ozs.

MSRP: \$425

Available: 2013





“

The knife I carry is a custom-made **doctor's knife** with a spatula blade handcrafted by 83-year-old knifemaker **Albert Crenshaw** of Lake Eufaula, Oklahoma.

It is a replica of one my great-grandfather carried as a country doctor in Northern Minnesota in the early 1900s, but with the addition of fancy filework on the blade and backspring by the maker, and pre-ban elephant ivory scales. It's noteworthy in that it has a wharncliffe-style master blade instead of the more traditional spear point. This is a museum-grade custom knife that I carry, but I only carry it on occasions when I can show it off. It's my little piece of functional pocket art! The other 99 percent of the time I carry a partially serrated **Kershaw Chill** to do all the tasks and chores required by a trusty, hardworking, easily deployed blade that clips securely and rides light in the pocket.”

Quintus P. Gwynn, Captain Cook, Hawaii

“

I received my first **Swiss Army knife** when my dad came home from a business trip to Switzerland in 1974. I believe it was a red version of the traditional **Victorinox Ranger** with a magnification lens and scissors, two blades, chisel, wood saw, hacksaw with file, three screwdrivers, corkscrew, awl and probably more implements that I don't recall. So many times I used it and came to trust its presence in my pocket and its dependability. Once I used it for opening a can of oil for my old Willys Jeep and, in my haste, laid it on the square fender and jumped in to drive away. In the rear-view mirror I saw a flash of red when the knife bounced onto the road and into a ditch. I quickly went back to find it somewhat scratched but with no major damage.



“Try as I might to perpetuate the old Swiss Army, I have had several repaired and/or replaced over the years. By finding different variations I have continued to use the trusty tool and currently have two Rangers in my jeans pocket, with somewhat similar but different tool arrangements. It's not unusual for someone to comment on the size of the knife, but then I can show two that I carry and use regularly. I grew up respecting a good knife and a person who cares for a blade with a real edge, too. It's not like me to be without one.”

Lonnie Twohands Sellers, Catoosa, Oklahoma



WIN A
KNIFE!

Tell us what knife you carry. Add a little history or an anecdote. Try to include a photograph (if digital, at least 600 K but no larger than 2 MB) of you with your knife. We will publish your comments in an upcoming “The Knife I Carry.” Your name will then be entered in a drawing to win a free, high-quality, name-brand pocketknife. The drawing will be Nov. 15. Mail to: *BLADE*®, P.O. Box 789, Ooltewah, TN 37363-0789, or e-mail steve.shackleford@fwmedia.com. If you send your entry by e-mail, please include your physical mailing address in case you win the pocketknife.

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WHERE KNIFE COLLECTORS CONNECT WITH KNIFEMAKERS

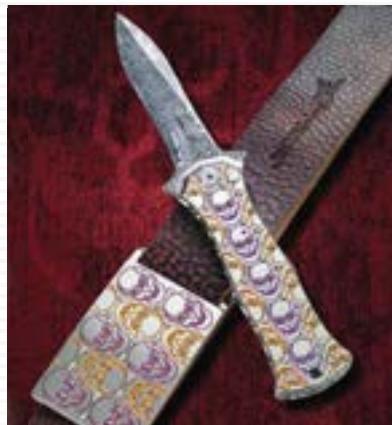
Brian Tighe's Page

I have spent the last 18 years honing my skills as a quality knifemaker, having specialized in folding knives. However, within the last few years I have developed and introduced my first button-lock flipper knives, the "Tighe Coon," "Tighe One On" and "Twist Tighe," with more to come. I also make tactical and art knives, with LinerLock™ and frame-lock construction.

I enjoy working in varying styles, as I find the change challenging and refreshing. All my knives carry a distinctive Brian Tighe trademark look and important design features found on each model utilizing space-age materials and exotic blade steels. I prefer to employ a combination of hi-tech materials with hi-tech styling.

I take great pride in the production of quality handmade knives and it is my sincere hope that you find my site both enjoyable and informative.

Many thanks, Brian Tighe



Brian Tighe's "Skulls Twist Tighe" button-lock folder sports an anodized and engraved 6AL-4V-titanium frame in a skulls motif, topaz, citrine and amethyst inlays, white gold and a matching skull belt buckle.

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



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KNIFE FORUM

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Post: Collectable Knives

(Topic#924218)

hunter32

Member

Total Posts: 6

07-10-12 16:24:04 - Post#2482705

What is proper storage/treatment of collectable knives? Is it proper to polish or repair collectable knives to get the blade looking good? I am a new (one month) KnifeForums member wanting to collect a few knives, and wondered about the ethics of repair or treatment of a knife collection!

In response to hunter32

Welcome to KF. Let's get one very important thing cleared up first—what do you consider a "collectable knife?" I say this because I used to think of myself as a "collector"—and it's only a result of the information I received from others on this forum that I was educated into understanding that I was in fact an "accumulator."

antonio_luiz, Master Member KnifeNut!

07-10-12 16:46:31 - Post#2482714

In response to antonio_luiz

Well, I bought a WWII military personal weapon with no markings at auction for \$18, plus fees of \$22. I am looking at Solingen, Western and other knives that I can pick up at auctions, yard sales and online, but my interest is mostly in fixed-blade knives right now.

In response to hunter32

Hmm. From what you're saying, you seem to be more of an accumulator like me than a dedicated collector. Collectors tend to be more selective on what they choose to collect and often focus on a particular brand, maker, specific style or genre of knife on which they can become very knowledgeable, e.g., WWII military clasp knives.

antonio_luiz, Master Member KnifeNut!

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Blade Magazine shared David Lisch's photo

I would like to show the model I made that won the custom knife award for best damascus knife at the BLADE Show. I call it the Sun Fighter.



Like · Comment · Share

6

38 people like this.

 Brian Ayres My favorite knife from Dave to date.
June 20 at 6:10pm via mobile · Like · 1

Dream TAG-TEAM TEST

SEE HOW WELL YOU KNOW YOUR FACTORY/CUSTOM COLLABORATION KNIVES



Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Blackie Collins initially designed the 1st Response rescue folder for which knife company?



Steven Kelly designed a hunter with a horizontal-draw sheath for Marble's. What was the knife's name?

Through his M16 with Columbia River Knife & Tool, newly inducted Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Kit Carson (see page 84) has one of the most prolific and successful factory/custom collaborations in modern knife industry—which got us to thinking: Why not do a *BLADE*® Quiz centering on factory/custom collaborations?

The questions follow, with the answers on page 22. No peeking!

1) What factory/custom collaboration resulted from a conversation between Cutlery Hall-Of-Famers Henry Baer and A.G. Russell in 1972? A) the Schrade-Collins Knife; B) the Schrade-Loveless knife; C) the Schrade-Uncle Henry/Russell knife.

2) Introduced in 1990, the collaborative Rio Grande Bowie was a tag-team effort among: A) Beretta USA and Cutlery Hall-Of-Famers Jimmy Lile and Ken Warner; B) Blackjack and Cutlery Hall-Of-Famers Bill Moran and Ken Warner; C) Benchmark and Cutlery Hall-Of-Famers Bill Moran and B.R. Hughes.

3) Which of these Spyderco Clipit collaborations was introduced at the 1992 SHOT Show? A) Spyderco/Terzuola; B) Spyderco/Walker; C) Spyderco/Goddard.

4) One of the earliest rescue-type folders, the 1st Response that debuted in 1995 was a collaboration between Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Blackie Collins and:

A) The B&F System; B) Smith & Wesson; C) Meyerco.

5) The Sentinel was a 1997 factory/custom collaboration folder between: A) Benchmade and Allen Elishewitz; B) CRKT and Jim Hammond; C) Browning and Michael Collins.

6) The first Benchmade knife with the Bill McHenry/Jason Williams AXIS-lock was the: A) Model 700; B) Model 710; C) Model 720.

7) The factory/custom collaboration between Outdoor Edge and Darrel Ralph introduced at the 1999 SHOT Show was the: A) Pulse; B) Repulse; C) Impulse.

8) At the same SHOT Show mentioned in the preceding question, Outdoor Edge introduced a factory/custom collaboration designed by Ray Appleton called the: A) Infinity; B) Cosmos; C) Universe.

9) The Mirage was a factory/custom collaboration between: A) CRKT and Jim Hammond; B) CRKT and Ed Halligan; C) CRKT and Greg Lightfoot.

10) Round Eye Knife And Tool collaborated with Pat Crawford on a folder known as the: A) T-Rex; B) Carnivour; C) Raptor.

11) At the time known as the smallest knife in the company line, what was the collaboration between Spyderco and Cut-

lery Hall-Of-Famer D' Holder? A) Guppy; B) Minnow; C) Toad.

12) A fantasy collaboration between United Cutlery and Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Gil Hibben with a simulated red-bone handle carved in a relief texture and an 8.25-inch “forked” stainless blade was the: A) Scorpion; B) Jackal; C) Falcon.

13) The bowie collaboration between Ontario and Bill Bagwell was the: A) Under-The-Hill; B) Hell's Belle; C) James Black Bowie.

14) In a largest version of 14 inches overall, the Forester and its smaller iterations is a collaboration between: A) Spyderco and Jerry Hossom; B) Benchmade and Shane Sibert; C) Browning and Jim Crowell.

15) Introduced in 2008, the Zero Tolerance knife line was initially touted as a collaboration among: A) Kershaw, Strider Knives and Ken Onion; B) Kershaw, Ken Onion and Tim Galyean; C) Kershaw, Ken Onion and Matt Diskin.

16) The Double Take was a collaboration between Gerber and: A) Ernest Emerson; B) Bob Lum; C) Blackie Collins.



This Boker Plus knife was inspired by Sigourney Weaver's character of Ripley from the Alien movie series. Who designed it? (Boker photo)

At the time the smallest knife in the Spyderco lineup, what was the name of the folder designed by Cutlery Hall Of Famer D' Holder? (Spyderco photo)



Production on the original Gerber Guardian started in 1981. Who designed it? (Gerber photo)

Answers: 1) B; 2) B; 3) C; 4) B; 5) A; 6) B; 7) C; 8) B; 9) A; 10) B; 11) C; 12) B; 13) B; 14) A; 15) A; 16) B; 17) B; 18) A; 19) C; 20); and 21) C. Scoring: 0-3—You've lost that cutting feeling. 4-7—You can't get in the BLADE Show without a paying adult. 8-12—Maybe if you started carrying a knife ... 13-17—You're beginning to show signs of knife. 18-19—You can cut paper with paper a la Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Sal Glessner. 21—Your latest design is in production.

17) Timberline's ECS-1 is a design by:
A) Greg Lightfoot; B) Brian Fellhoelter;
C) Russ Kommer.

18) Introduced in 2009, what hunting knife was a collaboration between Marbles's and Steven Kelly? A) Trailmate; B) Ideal Jr.; C) The Webster.

19) Inspired by Sigourney Weaver's character of Ripley in the *Alien* movie series, the Boker Plus Collection 2011 knife is designed by: A) Jens Anso; B) D.F. Kressler; C) Jesper Voxnaes.

20) A flipper folder designed by Liong Mah for CRKT this year is the: A) Eraser; B) Pa Jong; C) White Out.

21) Production on the original Gerber Guardian started in 1981. Who designed it? A) Blackie Collins; B) Bill Harsey; C) Bob Loveless.

To read all about the latest knives, knife news, forums, blogs and much more, visit www.blademag.com.

BLADE

THE HUNTER'S KNIVES

As a hunter, I'm a part of the nature and, though I usually no longer need to hunt in order to survive till tomorrow, I leave the computer world behind me when I grip my rifle and leave for the woods. Should I get lucky enough to get a kill, rest assure that I have both the experience and the sharp tool to take care of the prey.

Usually, any knife will do but of course, it's something special to use a well designed hunting knife where the blade shape and steel characters are well combined in a safe, hygienic knife design. Having spent more than fifty years in the woods, we actually know what you're looking for. So, check these knives or visit our website for more inspiration.

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| Blade length (mm) | 126 | 90 | 67 |
| Blade thickness (mm) | 5 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| Steel | 3G | 3G | 3G |
| Hardness (HRC) | 62 | 62 | 62 |
| Handle material | Thermorun, Micarta, Thermorun | | |
| Sheath | Zytel | Leather | Leather |

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GIL HIBBEN ENLISTS SYLVESTER STALLONE'S INPUT IN 10 NEW KNIVES FOR *THE EXPENDABLES 2*

SYLVESTER AND GIL - TOGETHER YET AGAIN



This issue's cover knife, the Legion Fighter (above) by Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Gil Hibben, was made especially for Sylvester Stallone's new movie, The Expendables 2. The knife sports a 9.5-inch recurve blade of quarter-inch-thick 440C stainless steel. (See page 7.) (poster art Courtesy of Lionsgate)

Stallone (left) holds the Hibben Toothpick (below) in a scene from *The Expendables 2*. Along with the modified version of Gil's Alamo Bowie, it returns from the original film, *The Expendables*. (photo from *The Expendables 2* by Frank Masi; photo of Toothpick by Mike Carter)



The longest-running custom knifemaker/movie star connection of all time will have another go soon with the imminent worldwide release of the action blockbuster, *The Expendables 2*.

Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Gil Hibben has a rich history with writer, producer and actor Sylvester Stallone. It began at Dan and Pam Delavan's 1985 California Custom Knife Show when Stallone visited Gil's table and walked away with several of Gil's custom knives. That encounter led to Stallone calling on Gil to make the third *Rambo* knife (cover inset, August 1988 *BLADE*), which Stallone used in *Rambo III*, and later the stout chopper (cover, February 2008 *BLADE*) in the fourth movie in the series, *Rambo*.

In 2010, *The Expendables*, co-written, directed by and starring Stallone, along with an all-star cast of action-film heroes, again employed Gil's knives. Stallone's

character, team leader Barney Ross, carried a custom Hibben 17.5-inch "Toothpick" model (cover, November 2010 *BLADE*). Meanwhile, Gunnar Jensen, played by Dolph Lundgren, and Lee Christmas, played by Jason Statham, took turns using a huge, 19-inch custom Hibben bowie.

All of the original Expendables except Mickey Rourke return for *The Expendables 2*, which at press time was due to open in theaters Aug. 17. The all-star cast has grown with the addition of Chuck Norris and Liam Hemsworth to the Expendables team. Action star Jean-Claude Van Damme joins the cast as the leader of an opposing team of mercenaries, along with his right-hand man, Hector, played by Scott Adkins. Both Bruce Willis and Arnold Schwarzenegger return with more substantial parts in the new film. The \$100 million sequel was filmed in Bulgaria in late 2011.

Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Gil Hibben stands in his shop before a table full of the knives he made for *The Expendables 2*. (Mike Carter photo)



*The modified Hibben Alamo Bowie is plainly visible on Dolph Lundgren's hip (left). At right is Terry Crews as Hale Caesar. (photo from *The Expendables 2* by Frank Masi; photo of the bowie with Richard Hutchings scrimshaw by Mike Carter)*

SLY ON LINE 1

Gil said he received the call from Stallone early last year to discuss the knives Stallone wanted for the sequel. Two of Gil's knives from *The Expendables* will return to the big screen in *The Expendables 2*. His big custom bowie again will be carried by Lundgren, and both Stallone and Van Damme will be seen with the Toothpick. But Stallone said he wanted more—a lot more.

The amazing 76-year-old Gil set to work and delivered at least 10 different models, including multiple copies of some and a few prop knives with half blades to give the appearance of being embedded into something or someone. As before, some of the knives have the *Expendables* skull-and-raven logo scrimshawed on the handles by scrimshander Richard "HutCH" Hutchings, who does nearly all of Gil's scrimshaw work. HutCH also scrimmed the logo on several sets of black Micarta® Colt .45 pistol grips Gil provided for the film.

Some of the knives Gil made for the movie are based on previous models he has made during his 55-year career, though some are new designs he made especially for the film. Among those expected to be prominently seen is his Legion Fighter, this issue's cover knife, a recurve model with a 9.5-inch blade of quarter-inch-thick 440C stainless steel. The Micarta handle is sandwiched between a hefty stainless steel guard and buttcap.

One of the new, never-before-seen models is a split-blade fighter, somewhat reminiscent of Gil's "Double Shadow" knife, with a stainless steel guard and buttcap and a handle of black Micarta and amber.

Stallone chose the big bowie that appears in both the original movie and the soon-to-be-released sequel after seeing a similar model, Gil's Alamo Bowie, on the Hibben Knives website (www.hibbenknives.com). The decision was made to modify it with a different handle of ivory Micarta that could be scrimshawed with



After all these years, Jean-Claude Van Damme is still cool as Jean Vilain—and so is his Hibben Toothpick. (Frank Masi photo from *The Expendables 2*)

the skull-and-raven *Expendables* logo seen throughout the original film on tattoos, motorcycles, clubhouse doors and the knives. The long, slender Toothpick carried by Stallone in both movies was an entirely new design Gil developed for *The Expendables*.

I have seen some stills from the sequel and a couple of preview trailers that show some of the knives prominently displayed, but it remains to be seen what makes the final cut. "We never know what will actually end up in the movie," Gil notes. "Sometimes scenes are filmed using the knives and then those scenes get cut in editing. I guess we will find out when everyone else does at the theater." (Editor's note: From reports at press time, the Legion Fighter cover knife gets its best movie air time when actor Randy Couture, who plays the role



of Toll Road, uses it.)

IMPROVISE AND REVISE

As is usually the case when making knives that will be featured in a film, designs are revised and changed along the way to satisfy the producers, directors, prop masters and actors involved. Once the designs are finalized and approved, Gil has to scramble to get several copies made and delivered to remote filming locations such as Burma for *The Expendables* and Bulgaria for *The Expendables 2*. The knives he makes for the films are fully functional and sharpened. In some cases the

*Including just about everyone from the cast of *The Expendables* except Mickey Rourke, along with the addition of Jean-Claude Van Damme and a few others, Sylvester Stallone returns as Barney Ross in *The Expendables 2*. (poster art Courtesy of Lionsgate)*

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A drawing of the Legion Fighter is at left on Gil's workbench and from right are an unfinished half blade, Legion Fighter and the split-blade fighter. (Mike Carter photo)



Actors can be impressed with a Gil Hibben custom knife too, as Scott Adkins as Hector seems here with the Hibben Toothpick. (Frank Masi photo from *The Expendables 2*)

prop department will make dull replicas that can be safely used in close-up fight scenes.

The Expendables featured an impressive lineup of stars that, in addition to Stallone, Lundgren, Statham, Willis,

Couture, Schwarzenegger and Rourke, included Jet Li, Steve Austin and Terry Crews as an elite mercenary team. Eric Roberts played the corrupt CIA agent.

The Expendables was No. 1 at the box office in its opening weekend in August 2010. The film's budget was reportedly \$70 million. It grossed over \$274 million worldwide by the end of the year, and that is not counting DVD sales. That was certainly enough success to entice movie officials to make a sequel.

REEL STEEL BY THE DOZENS

Gil has made knives for dozens of movies and television shows, including designing and making Klingon swords and knives for assorted *Star Trek* TV shows and films, throwing knives in Steven Seagal's *Under Siege*, and knives in *The Perfect Weapon* starring Jeff Speakman. He also has enjoyed a following among Hollywood celebrity collectors, among them Elvis Presley, John Wayne, Steve McQueen and Shelley Berman.

Stallone long has been a collector of custom knives and a fan of Gil's work. In fact, Stallone ordered some large custom lockback folders based on the *Rambo III* knife design he had personalized as gifts for Willis and Schwarzenegger during the



Included among the many pieces Gil made for The Expendables 2 were a few prop knives with half blades to give the appearance of being embedded into something or someone—in this instance demonstrated by Gil (left) and the author. (photos courtesy of Mike Carter)

filming of *The Expendables*.

The Expendables 2 will be the fourth Stallone film for which Gil has made custom knives. There are Hollywood rumors of further *Rambo* and *Expendables* sequels, so you may be seeing more of the Stallone-Hibben connection.

Gil Hibben makes handmade replicas of his movie knives for sale to collectors. He also

licenses some of the designs to United Cutlery to produce factory-made replicas for the mass market. For more information contact Gil Hibben, Dept. BL11, POB 13, LaGrange, KY 40031 502-222-1397 www.hibbenknives.com, or United Cutlery, attn: Michelle Hampton, Dept. BL11, 475 U.S. Hwy. 319 S, Moultrie, GA 31768 800-548-0835 www.unitedcutlery.com.

The *Expendables 2* is produced by Nu Image and Millennium Films, and is distributed by Lionsgate. It is written by Sylvester Stallone and Richard Wenk and directed by Simon West.

To read all about the latest knives, knife news, forums, blogs and much more, visit www.blademag.com.

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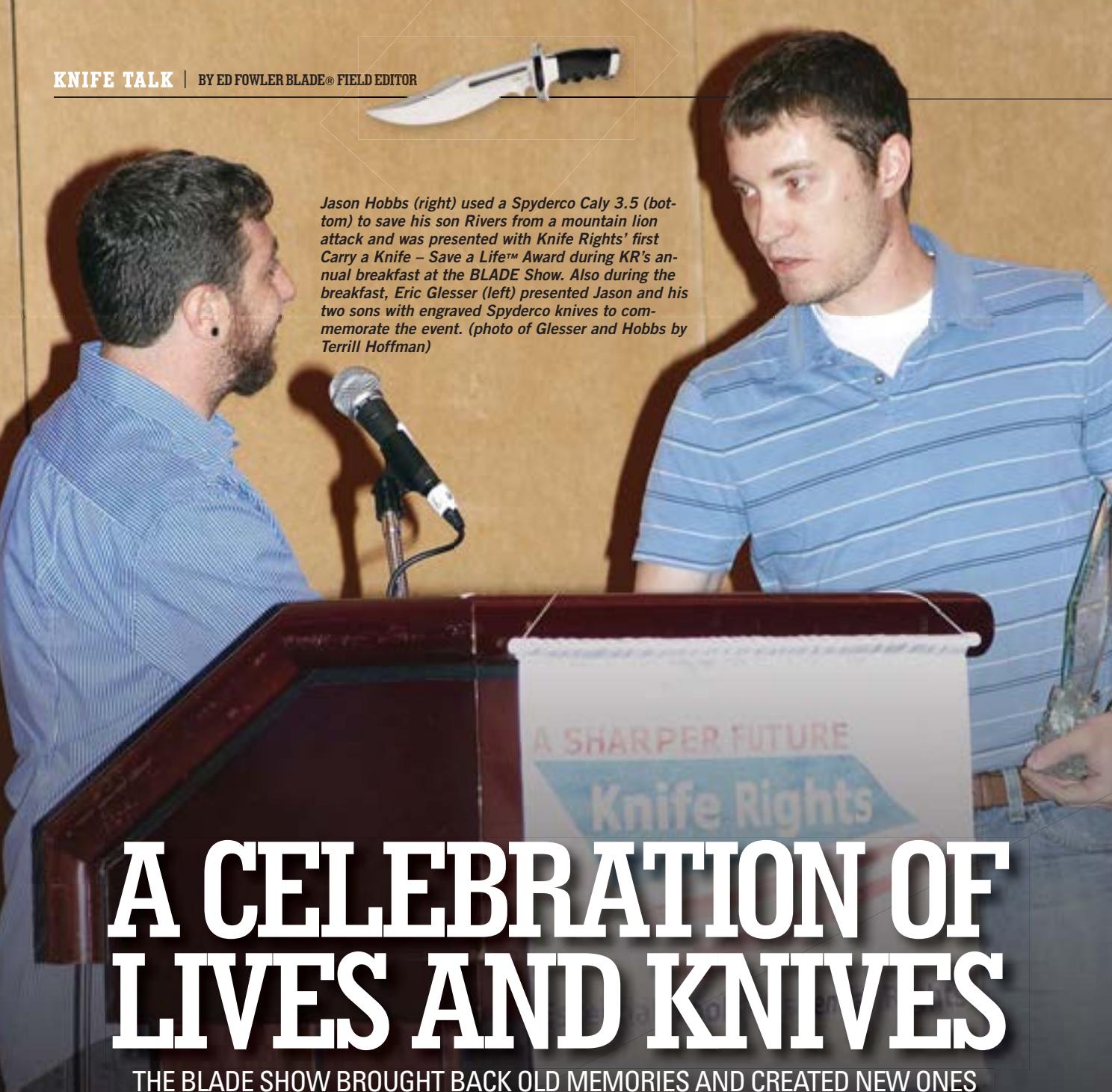
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Jason Hobbs (right) used a Spyderco Caly 3.5 (bottom) to save his son Rivers from a mountain lion attack and was presented with Knife Rights' first Carry a Knife – Save a Life™ Award during KR's annual breakfast at the BLADE Show. Also during the breakfast, Eric Glessner (left) presented Jason and his two sons with engraved Spyderco knives to commemorate the event. (photo of Glessner and Hobbs by Terrill Hoffman)



As close as I can remember, my first BLADE Show was in 1983. Since then I have missed only one. Each show had its highlights for me. At first I was in awe to see makers and authors who had influenced me greatly. Slowly I gained a little confidence and was privileged to actually talk to the many icons of the knife community.

I can still see Clyde Fischer and Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® members Dan Dennehy and Ken Warner standing in the aisle conducting a conversation less than 20 feet from my table. I was in the presence of truly great men, men I still admire. My only regret was I did not walk up and introduce myself, feeling it would have been inconsiderate to interrupt. Later they would become friends I still cherish.

That first show had its highs and lows. One well-known maker and I got into a discussion about the recessed ricasso. He asked me how I could call my blades forged without the recessed ricasso. I asked why a design fault had to be a prerequisite of a forged blade, and the discussion became intense.

The tempo of our conversation increased. We were moving closer and were drawing a crowd when, appearing out of nowhere, Margaret Moran broke in between us and said, "Go back to your table and behave yourself!" to the maker I was talking with, then took me by the hand and walked me to my table. In her way she chastised me for my behavior, sternly advising me a show was no place for such a heated discussion. She then went to the other maker's table, who was an older hand in the knife community, pointing her finger at him while she talked like my mother used to talk to me when I had transgressed. God bless her for she was truly the mother of the American Bladesmith Society. I seriously doubt that the organization would have existed long without her.

I mention this to illustrate that we all share responsibility for ourselves and others while at a show. We are in the public eye and what we do can and will live in infamy. I learned a valuable lesson that day. We may like some knives and some makers and dislike others, but we are family and need to support all knives, be they cheap copies or original one-of-a-kind collector pieces. I

feel that our goal as a community is to provide every person regardless of financial ability the opportunity to have a knife when he needs one.

CLYDE FISCHER

At shows, most makers demonstrate a great deal of respect for their neighbors while they visit with clients. Some will watch their neighbors' tables and maybe even make a sale for them.

I well remember an early BLADE Show when I wanted to visit Clyde Fischer. He was never at his table. I could see where his coffee cup had been by the stain, but no Clyde. Written on his paper table cover were prices of knives that had been there. His neighbor had sold most of Clyde's merchandise for him, with the exception of some cow bone. I asked his neighbor where Clyde was and he said he had no idea, and had spoken to him only briefly. Clyde evidently had more important things to do—visit friends and enjoy the show himself. His neighbor took care of business for him. Every show and every community has its jerks and cheaters, but

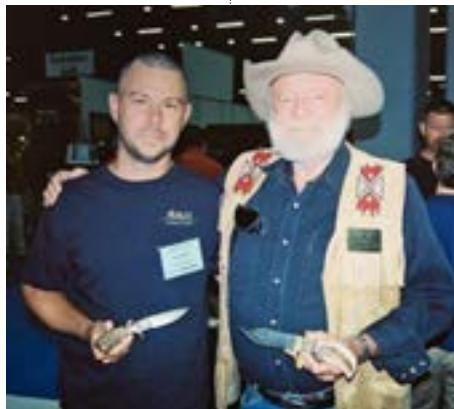
the vast majority of BLADE Show exhibitors are folks you can call friend.

MAKER AT EVERY CROSSROADS

The BLADE Show is our annual family reunion for the blade community; no other show comes close to it. Just as *BLADE* Editor Steve Shackleford noted in his nine reasons why knives rule (page 10, September *BLADE*), the BLADE Show knows greatness for many reasons. First is its diversity. You can see and usually handle knives worth many thousands of dollars as well as cheap, disposable blades, all from many sources. You can visit with the manufacturers and enjoy stone-age knives that have been a part of our community from the beginning of mankind.

There was a time when some makers wanted to limit the growth of their organizations' memberships. Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Bob Loveless stated the knife community would only be a success when there was a knifemaker at every country crossroads in the nation. I believe he was correct, for every maker brings not only his family and friends to our community, but those who like and encourage him or his knives. The BLADE Show knows makers from many nations, occupations and venues of the knife community. Our new and long-out-of-print books and aged knives and antiques from many venues are available throughout the show, so its largest contribution to our community is education. Every booth, every table has its own knowledge—all you have to do is ask.

Makers have the opportunity to visit many suppliers and manufacturers who come to the show to display, demonstrate and share thoughts about their products. This is a tremendous opportunity for makers and hobbyists from



The author (right) and his protégé, bladesmith Chris Amos (left), enjoyed another successful BLADE Show (in background is John Horrigan).



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other venues, as we are able to talk to the men who are knowledgeable and can answer questions. Once in a while we are able to meet the men who participate in the development of new materials and other products used to make knives. The opportunity to discuss such products at this level is truly an honor and well worth the trip to the BLADE Show.

A KNIFE SAVES ANOTHER LIFE

So far I have discussed only a part of the BLADE Show. Most significant are the people, makers and non-makers, all who come seeking a dream and are what make the BLADE Show great. Our greatest asset is the people who come to visit, learn, support and contribute to our community.

Members of our community enter by choice and each brings his or her own knowledge and ability. There is a vast difference between the man who accepts the responsibility to defend his family, home and property and the individual who chooses to rely on someone else for protection, or to rescue a pet, family member or unknown individual, and sometimes fight for justice. As long as those who choose to rely on others remains simply the nature of a few individuals it will be of little consequence, for the loss of a few will not condemn a culture to extinction. Should it come to represent the nature of a significant number of people, a culture, nation or species could very well be in danger of extinction. Members of the knife community are dedicated to being ready, willing and able to render assistance when needed.

This year's BLADE Show was special, honoring the kind of individuals who are prevalent in our community. At its annual breakfast at the show, Knife Rights (KR) presented its first *Carry a Knife - Save a Life* Award to the kind of individual whose actions are to be saluted.

Jason Hobbs, his wife Kristi Harris and their two boys—Rivers, 6, and Hagen, 4—were walking from dinner to a cabin where they were staying in the Big Bend National Park in Texas. A mountain lion attacked Rivers, dragged him a short distance, and had its jaws locked onto the boy's face. Rivers faced certain death without immediate and decisive help. Jason had left his fixed blade in the cabin but, like most upright citizens of the cutlery community, was not without a knife. He took his Spyderco Caly 3.5 one-hand opener from his pocket

and stabbed the lion, the 3.5-inch blade plenty long enough to convince the lion to abandon the attack and release young Rivers. Had Jason waited for someone else to come to their aid, Rivers probably would be dead.

Most of the members of our community are the kind of folks you can depend on to be ready and able to do what needs doing when required. Official help was in all likelihood far from the incident and by the time it could have arrived to save Rivers, it would have been too late. A call to 911 would have taken minutes when seconds counted.

Rivers' face required 17 stitches; the mountain lion was later located and killed. During the KR breakfast, Eric Glessner of Spyderco presented Jason, Rivers and his younger brother Hagen with engraved Spyderco knives to commemorate the event for the Hobbs family. We can be assured this will be a knife-carrying family for generations!

I can remember when "be prepared" was the advice given to all lads I knew. I have never felt comfortable with a companion who did not do his best to be prepared. Each and every member of our industry can help bring this object lesson back to our friends and communities. Sometimes knives save lives; many times they make life more convenient and, most importantly, attest to our intent to be prepared for whatever circumstances await us.

I thank the members of the knife community that support the BLADE Show, as well as those who could not make the trip, and am grateful that I am a member of a community that supports self-reliance and is comprised of individuals who accept responsibility for their own safety and welfare.

Thank you for sharing thoughts with me.

Yours truly,
Ed Fowler

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HOTTEST MAKERS' HOTTEST KNIVES (CONT.)

In the October *BLADE* we covered the hottest makers' hottest knives—but there were so many we could not picture them all. On this and the facing page are seven of those we left out. There will be more in future installments of "Handmade Gallery."

To read all about the latest knives, knife news, forums, blogs and much more, visit www.blademag.com.





1 Purveyor Les Robertson said Tad Lynch's sub-hilt fighter is a great new look on a classic and reflects the maker's recent move to more ivory (the handle) and damascus (guard and sub hilt). "Tad has a great eye for proportion, which gives each knife he creates that flow collectors look for," Robertson said. (SharpByCoop.com photo)

2 Known for his damascus steel, Devin Thomas also makes chef's knives. "His blades are extremely high performing and elegant," purveyor Daniel O'Malley noted. "Devin likes to work in AEB-L stainless steel, which he feels performs at a level approaching the best carbon steels, while requiring less care. He also makes knives from his own damascus and san mai 52100 carbon steel." (BladeGallery.com photo)

3 Purveyor Dave Stark said knifemaker Jim Burke has been doing "incredible" work, including "unique grinds." "His knives tend to be on the muscular side but ride very well in the pocket," Stark added. An example is the Villain. (Steel Addiction Custom Knives photo)

4 Mick Strider's knives are always in demand, EDC Knives' Duane Weikum noted, and Mick's knifemaking partner, Duane Dwyer, is catching up fast. Mick's SMF in damascus is representative of his hottest work. (Duane Weikum photo)

5 Les Robertson said Daniel Winkler's knives have that instantly recognizable look. An example of such a knife with "face" is the Homestead Hunter in stag and damascus. (Point Seven photo)

6 Now that Gerry McGinnis has graduated from college he is making knives full time. "His grinds and fit and finish are way beyond his years," Dave Stark noted. "His stuff is as good as anybody and progressing all the time. The sky's the limit for Gerry. The flipping action is incredibly fast." The folder is the Dress Apex. (Steel Addiction Custom Knives photo)

7 Duane Weikum said Todd Begg blends the classic with the modern for a distinct look on the new Bodega model. Weikum said Begg is one of those makers who cannot make enough knives to meet demand, so as collectors gobble up Todd's knives, the secondary market prices rise. (Duane Weikum photo)

For more information, contact the makers via "Where To Get 'Em" on page 97.

BLADE



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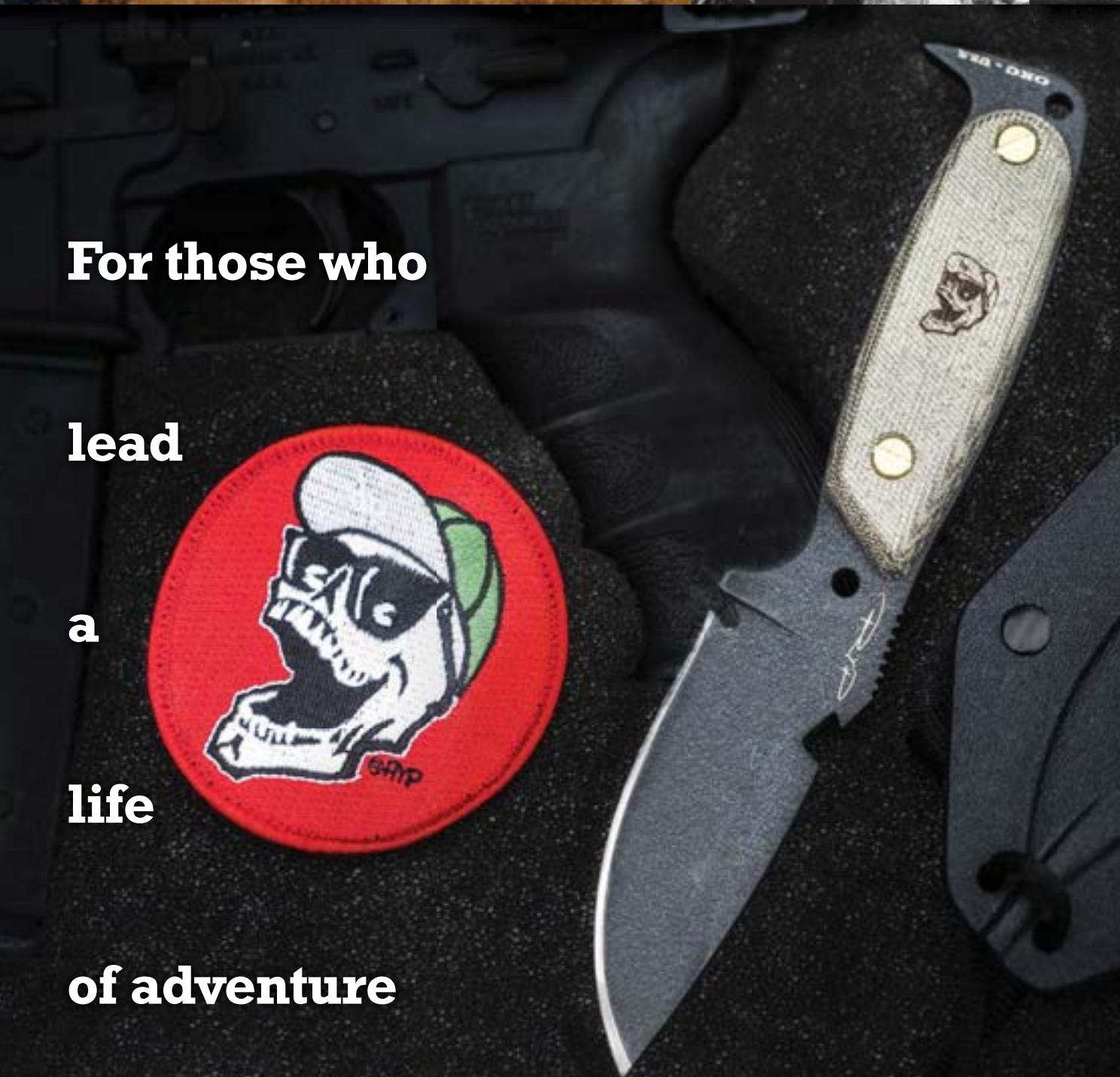
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THE 31ST ANNUAL RENDITION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE BEST EVER

THE BLADE SHOW GLOW

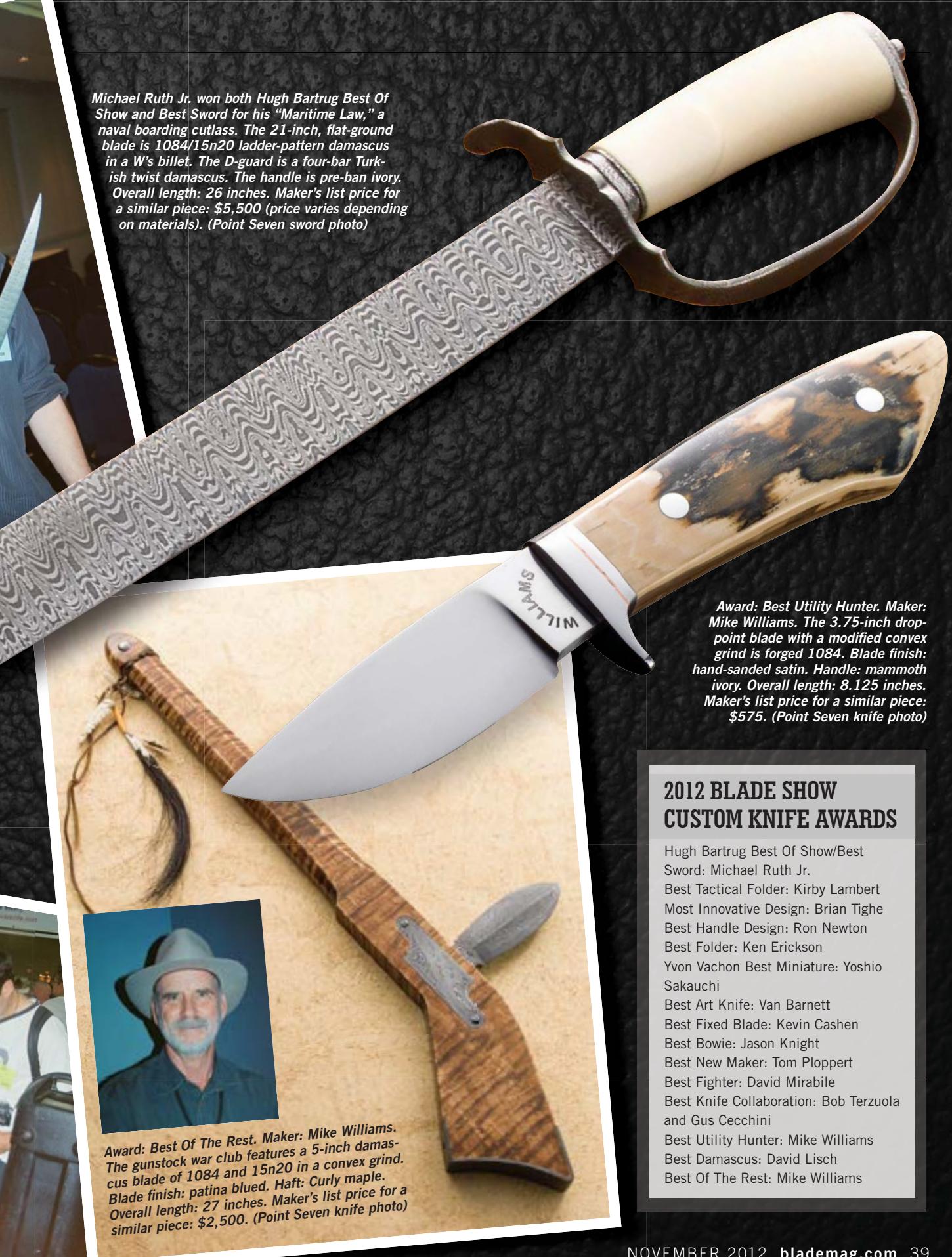
Rating knife shows is relative. While one maker may sell out almost immediately, another may sell few if any knives the entire show—and then there's everything in between.

Though sales are crucial to a show's overall success, there is much more to it, such as the overall quality level of the knives, makers, manufacturers, knife accessories, etc., the accessibility of same, knife seminars and other knife-related activities, and so on. Also, having a good time is a big part of it too, especially to those who have been coming to shows for eons and who want to see friends, hang out and be one of the knife guys.

BARRY'S BIG BLADES Barry Dawson (left) hefts one of his ample models for two interested customers while another customer (right) checks an edge during the 31st Annual BLADE Show.



Michael Ruth Jr. won both Hugh Bartrug Best Of Show and Best Sword for his "Maritime Law," a naval boarding cutlass. The 21-inch, flat-ground blade is 1084/15n20 ladder-pattern damascus in a W's billet. The D-guard is a four-bar Turkish twist damascus. The handle is pre-ban ivory. Overall length: 26 inches. Maker's list price for a similar piece: \$5,500 (price varies depending on materials). (Point Seven sword photo)



Award: Best Utility Hunter. Maker: Mike Williams. The 3.75-inch drop-point blade with a modified convex grind is forged 1084. Blade finish: hand-sanded satin. Handle: mammoth ivory. Overall length: 8.125 inches. Maker's list price for a similar piece: \$575. (Point Seven knife photo)

2012 BLADE SHOW CUSTOM KNIFE AWARDS

Hugh Bartrug Best Of Show/Best Sword: Michael Ruth Jr.
Best Tactical Folder: Kirby Lambert
Most Innovative Design: Brian Tighe
Best Handle Design: Ron Newton
Best Folder: Ken Erickson
Yvon Vachon Best Miniature: Yoshio Sakauchi
Best Art Knife: Van Barnett
Best Fixed Blade: Kevin Cashen
Best Bowie: Jason Knight
Best New Maker: Tom Ploppert
Best Fighter: David Mirabile
Best Knife Collaboration: Bob Terzuola and Gus Cecchini
Best Utility Hunter: Mike Williams
Best Damascus: David Lisch
Best Of The Rest: Mike Williams

Award: Best Of The Rest. Maker: Mike Williams. The gunstock war club features a 5-inch damascus blade of 1084 and 15n20 in a convex grind. Blade finish: patina blued. Haft: Curly maple. Overall length: 27 inches. Maker's list price for a similar piece: \$2,500. (Point Seven knife photo)

CAPITAL OF CUT |



VICTORY CUPP Television news analyst S.E. Cupp (left) was the special show guest of Knife Rights (see page 12). At right is Doug Ritter, Knife Rights chairman.



GOOD TO SEE YA! A smiling Ernest Emerson (center left) negotiates a sea of customers at his booth.

Award: Best Damascus. **Maker:** David Lisch. The "Sun Fighter" boasts a 9.75-inch, flat-ground/convex-edge blade of a sun-pattern damascus in 1080 and 15n20. Images of a sun medallion and sunrays are forged into the blade. **Blade finish:** hand sanded and etched. **Handle:** walrus ivory. **Overall length:** 15 inches. **Maker's list price for a similar knife:** \$3,000. (Point Seven knife photo)



DRESSED TO KILT If there was any draft in the show hall, the Sniper Bladeworks crew felt it. From right to left: Eric Sterritt, Herb Butzbach, Adam Nichols, Lance Abernathy, Sam Jones, Jerry Frazier and Andrew Marr.

There are other qualifiers, of course. However you slice it, held in conjunction with the Survival+Tactical Gear Expo, the 31st Annual BLADE Show June 8-10 at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta appears to have been among the top renditions ever.

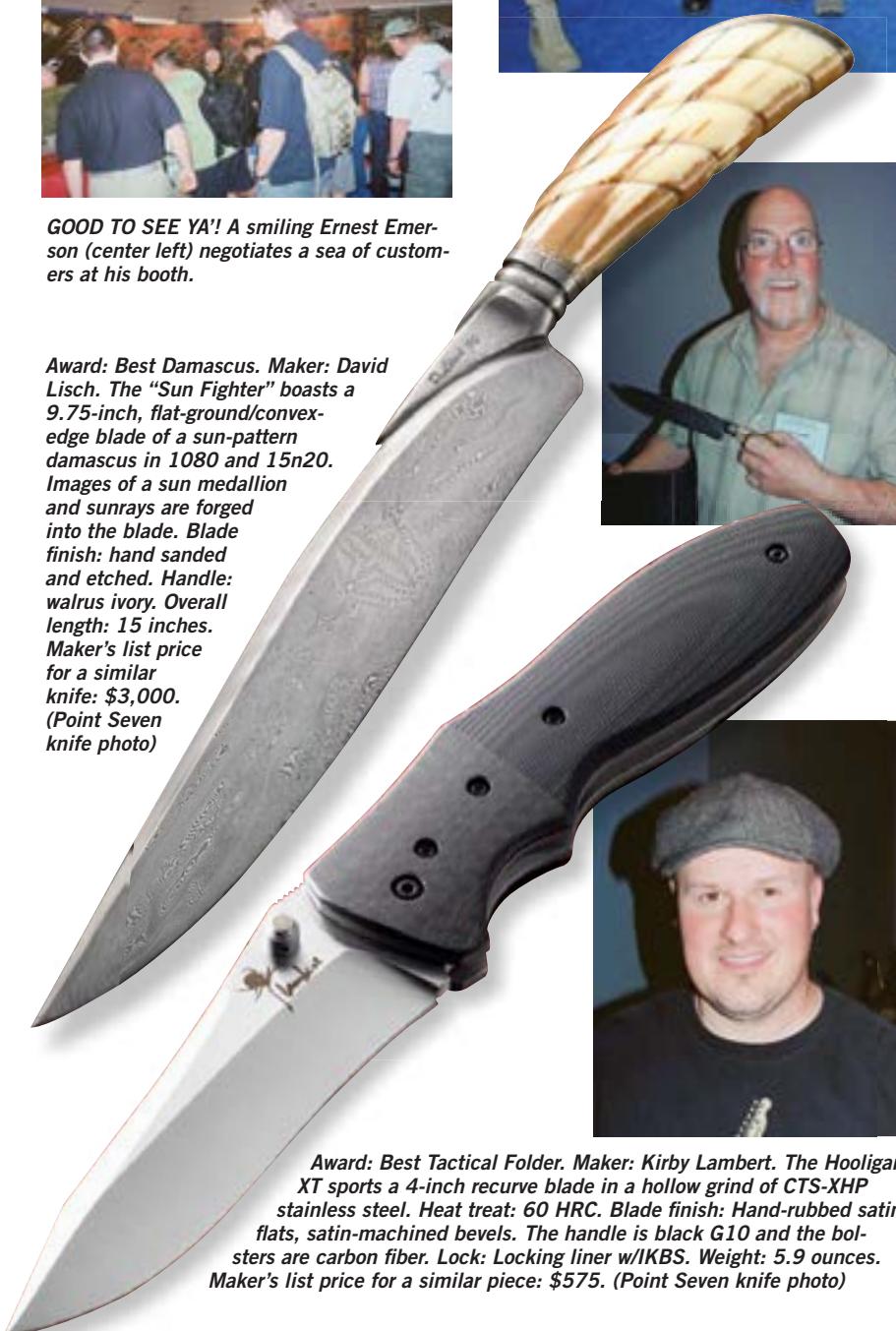
"My best show in 15 years," assessed Dave Ellis, a purveyor of Loveless, Moran, Walker, Schmidt, Lake and other high-dollar custom knives. "The BLADE Show is always handled well by the staff, and I love Atlanta."

"It is 'The Show,' the Super Bowl of knives," collector Peter Gill assessed.

"It was fun, as always," collector Larry Abramson noted. "It's a success if it's busy and I find the occasional knife or trinket that just grabs my attention and says 'take me home.' This year it was a Hogue/Eli-shewitz EX-02 and a Mike Vagnino Zip-slip. My only regret is there never seems to be enough time to visit with friends."

"Stupendous!" Ethan Becker of Becker Knife & Tool/KA-BAR said of the show. "We sold out of the stuff we brought before Saturday afternoon. It never happened that quick before, I don't think."

"Better than ever!" was the opinion of KnifeCenter's Jason Kunkler. "I was able to get around to so many of my important existing vendors, and still have time to seek out new vendors—and time to catch up with industry friends." In addition, Kunkler lauded the increase in related products such as flashlights, sur-



Award: Best Tactical Folder. **Maker:** Kirby Lambert. The Hooligan XT sports a 4-inch recurve blade in a hollow grind of CTS-XHP stainless steel. **Heat treat:** 60 HRC. **Blade finish:** Hand-rubbed satin flats, satin-machined bevels. **The handle:** is black G10 and the bolsters are carbon fiber. **Lock:** Locking liner w/KBS. **Weight:** 5.9 ounces. **Maker's list price for a similar piece:** \$575. (Point Seven knife photo)

vival gear, etc., brought in by the Survival+Tactical Gear Expo, which featured a comprehensive array of survival and preparedness seminars, too.

"I thought the crowd was more intense this year. It was my 18th BLADE Show and I don't remember one this busy," ABS master smith Ron Newton observed. "It was so intense I hated to leave my table because I hate to miss new prospects. I stayed busy talking to new people, lots of new faces with a lot of interest in my work."

ASIAN FORGE GORGING

Among the leading trends observers noted were the jump in numbers of mid-tech knives and of more buyers, especially of handforged damascus knives from China and Taiwan. "There is clearly a developing interest in American forged blades by Asian collectors," Gill observed.

"The Chinese buyers came in and bought me out at the beginning of the show. I sold out instantly thanks to the Chinese buyers I'd developed in the last couple of years," Newton noted. "The Asians have gone nuts over forged damascus blades. [Bladesmiths] can't make enough knives to make them happy right now. The buyers are from both Taiwan and China, though more Chinese than anybody."

"There were lots of new buyers and I did notice a lot more from Asia," Abramson said. "A few new Asian dealers came to the Hogue booth to look into what it will take to become dealers in their countries. For the first time I can ever recall, one was there from South Korea." Ellis, meanwhile, noted an especially large increase in Japanese buyers.

THE MID-TECH SHOW

Makers of mid-tech knives were in abundance. "I think it was the 'mid-tech show' which has been happening the last few years but I felt was more noticeable this year," Plaza Cutlery's Dan Delavan observed. EDC Knives' Duane Weikum agreed. "Yes, definitely more mid-tech stuff in the works—Les George, Michael Burch,



Award: Best Handle Design.
Maker: Ron Newton. Based on a Samuel Bell knife, Newton's integral damascus fighter has a half-interframe sambar stag handle. Two gold pins secure the stag and integral hidden tang. The handle parts are epoxied in a mortise-tang construction.

The 9-inch blade is feather-pattern damascus. Overall length: 14 inches. Maker's list price for a similar knife: \$3,800. (Point Seven knife photo)

Todd Begg," he said. "Tom Ferry and Mike Vagnino are making mid-tech folders."

Ferry and Vagnino, along with Jon Christensen and David Lisch, are among a growing number of custom makers who, instead of taking tables, share booths at the show. Other makers sharing booths included Doug Hartsook and Tom Mayo, and Gerry McGinnis, Peter Carey and Matt Cucchiara. Other custom makers with booths included Daniel Winkler, Darrel Ralph, Allen Elishewitz, Jon Graham, Rick Hinderer, Bob Dozier, R.W. Wilson and Larry Pridgen. A number of the preceding were in at least their second year of renting BLADE Show booths.

SOOTHING THE BLADE BEASTS

You never can tell what will soothe the savage blade beasts. Gill and Weikum praised Vagnino's slip joint with the hidden spring Vagnino and Ferry have developed called the Everflush (page 32, April *BLADE*). "Ferry also had a nice flipper folder," Weikum noted.

"My favorite knife from the show was an old Jody Samson bowie that I found on a random table," Weikum said. "Grant and Gavin Hawk continue to crank out cool stuff. They had their Beetle at the show and sold a ton of them. Fred Perrin was by my table to play with one several times and eventually went home with it in his pocket. He loves the design because it does not have a lock per se, making it legal to carry in Europe." (Perrin is from France originally.)

"Daniel Winkler and Karen Shook, Strider and Chris Reeve all did really well.

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CAPITAL OF CUT |



Award: Best Art Knife. Maker: Van Barnett.

Featured on page 90 of the September BLADE®, the Time Machine was inspired by the book of the same name by H.G. Wells and designed to look as if it were made circa 1890. All the gears work and can be turned with your fingers. The irises on the bolster open and close separately and reveal the name of the knife and the maker. Closed length: 4.75 inches. (Point Seven knife photo)

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2012 BLADE SHOW KNIFE COLLECTION DISPLAY AWARDS

Best Of Show: Buck Gen Five Josh Buck Skinners, by Brent and Dee Schindewolf

Judges Award: Miniatures: Faberge of Firearms, by Tom and Gwen Guinn

Judges Award: Buck Factory Production Knives of the 1960s, by Larry Oden

Judges Award: Buck 110s, by Jim Seagle



Award: Best New Maker. Maker: Tom Ploppert. Ploppert's repro of Shapleigh Hardware Co.'s Diamond Edge Cattle Knife includes three blades of CPM-154 stainless. Handle: Tozaki jiggled bone. "This is an old pattern Tony Bose originally brought back," Ploppert noted. "The nail nicks and long pull are on the same side; this adds to the difficulty of the build." Maker's list price for a similar piece: \$1,250. (Point Seven knife photo)

Award: Best Fixed Blade. Maker: Kevin Cashen. Inspired by an original piece, Cashen's 16th-century-style left-handed dagger has a 14-inch, flat-ground blade of 320 layers of twisted O1 and L6 damascus. The handle features a traditional wire wrap with Copper Turk's heads over desert ironwood. Overall length: 20.5 inches. Maker's list price for a similar piece: \$3,500. (Point Seven knife photo)



The newer makers that are priced more reasonable seemed to do well also," Delavan noted. "Mitch Jenkins, Chad Nell, Bret Dowell and the Texas slip-joint makers all sold out." Delavan also praised the work of Jason Brous and White River Knife & Tool.

Weikum indicated there is an "up-tick" in balisongs. Delavan said he noticed some slip-joint makers building tactical knives, including Joel Chamblin and Richard Rogers, the latter whom "had a bunch" of them.

Gill said he saw new exciting damascus patterns and an increase in handle material prices. Newton indicated he struck the "mother lode of stag" at the beginning of the show, "stag tapers to make your mouth water." He said he also bought a lot of ivory.

2013 BLADE SHOW

The BLADE Show also hosted the naming of the Blade Magazine 2012 Knife-Of-The-Year® Awards (see page 12), the BLADE Show Custom Knife Awards (see pictures and sidebar herein), awards for the best collections (see sidebar), in-

formative seminars, debuts of some of the world's top factory knives (see page 48) and much more.

And as good as it was, we think next year's version May 31-June 2 will be even better. See you then!

Stories on other events that happened at the BLADE Show, including the top annual knives named by the American Bladesmith Society, the 10th Annual BLADE Show World Championship Cutting Competition and more will be covered in future issues of BLADE. Also, any winners of custom knife awards not pictured herein will appear in a future BLADE.

For the contact information for the makers of the pictured knives, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 97.

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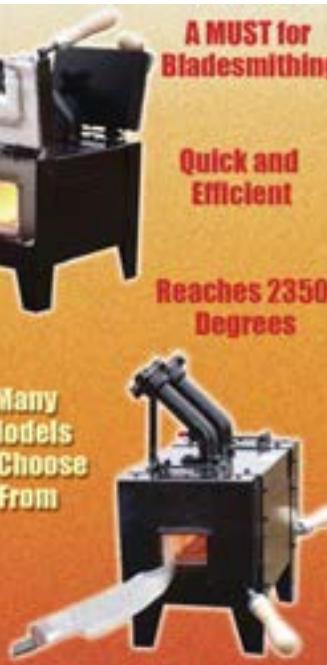
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FALLKNIVEN

CONVEX EDGES WITH SCANDI AESTHETICS

The best way to gauge how well knives work is over the long haul, and the knife specialists at Sweden's family firm of Fallkniven were kind enough to provide four of their top models for my associates and I to put through the ringer. We tested the knives over several months, subjecting them to hard field use while with the Yurok nomads in the Taurus Mountains of Turkey and in the Stara Plaina Mountains in Bulgaria. In rural Bulgaria I recruited a local friend, Ivan Petrov Ivanov, to help with fieldwork.

With the exception of the Northern Light 1 (NL1) bowie, we used the knives for everyday kitchen and utility chores. We cut about a hundred feet of quarter-inch hemp rope, the only size we could find in small-town Bulgaria, and sacks worth of plastic bottles and cans. In the cold months, we split a small mountain of seasoned oak for kindling.

PXL

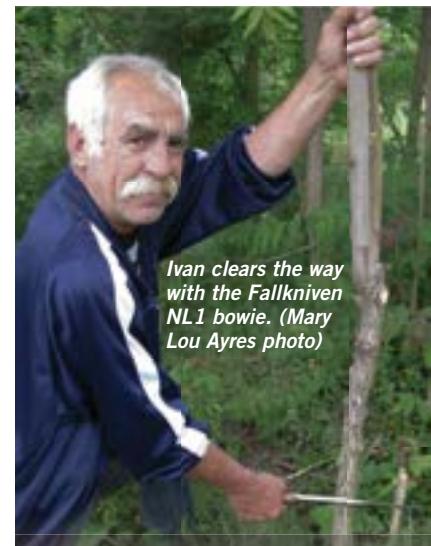
Fallkniven's entry for everyday carry, the PXL is a gorgeous piece that looks like

a gentleman's folder but is a hefty, solid, hardworking tool. It offers a choice of an ivory or maroon Micarta® handle, or a working version with black synthetic scales.

I focused on the PXLim (ivory Micarta). Just looking at it fresh out of the box brought on a severe case of knife lust.

The fit and finish are excellent, comparable to many custom folders. The grinds on the semi-spear-point blade are true. The folder is so handsome I was reluctant to try it in the field. For a week or so I pussyfooted around with it, slicing tomatoes and the like. Then I decided to get down to work.

I started with rope cutting. Easy pushes crunched the blade cleanly through 200 cuts of the narrow hemp. I could have done more but was tired of counting cuts. With moderate pressure the blade sliced through 1-inch saplings cleanly. Two-to-3-inch saplings required two or three cuts, again with moderate pressure, no batoning required. The 3G laminate powder-steel blade still shaved hair afterward.



Ivan clears the way with the Fallkniven NL1 bowie. (Mary Lou Ayres photo)

NL1

Blade material: A VG10 stainless core laminated between 420J2 stainless sides

Blade length: 10"

Blade width: 1.65"

Blade thickness: 0.28"

Heat treat: 59 HRC

Handle: Stacked ox-hide spacers

Guard: Stainless, specially anchored

Sheath: Black leather

Overall length: 15.15"

Weight: 1.15 lbs.

MSRP: \$800





PXLIM

Blade material: 3G laminate powder steel
Blade length: 3.46"
Blade thickness: .14"
Heat treat: 62 HRC
Handle: Ivory Micarta®
Lock: Locking liner
Closed length: 4.37"
Weight: 6.2 ozs.
MSRP: \$480

The author said the PXLim cut 200 pieces of quarter-inch hemp rope without dulling. (Mary Lou Ayres photo)

The handle is sculpted smooth and was comfortable during heavy use over extended periods. The clip looks somewhat short but it worked well, never slipped and held the folder in a low waistband position. I prefer a somewhat slimmer configuration for a folder and would like to see Fallkniven release a similar model about a third thinner and lighter. However, as is the PXL fits into the heavy-duty utility folder concept and is at the top of its class.

PHK

The PHK (professional hunter's knife) combines a curved, sweeping edge with a dropped point for a blade both handsome and efficient. The knife is well balanced, with an ergonomic handle that is comfortable even after an hour or so of work. We used it for preparing a goat to be roasted for a local holiday, and the knife skinned, sliced and disjointed the animal like a light saber. The long, upswept edge served well for all cuts, and the tip is just where it needs to be.

Billed as a hunter's knife and reasoning that a hunter could get caught out

over night, I decided to see how well it worked as an all-around field model. The blade snap-cut poles for a survival tepee with a flick of the wrist. I split kindling and cut a foot-thick pile of weeds for ground insulation. Splitting kindling did not require a baton, and cutting bunches of weeds was almost as easy as if I were using a sickle. The entire process resulted in an emergency shelter in about 30 minutes.

We also used the PHK for rope cutting, slicing plastic and cardboard, and daily food preparation. After two weeks of use the edge would still shave hair, though not as cleanly as when fresh. I like this design very much.

NL1

Fallkniven's NL1 bowie is billed as a chopper and chops very well indeed. It is a good-looking, well-made, well-balanced knife with a handle of stacked ox-hide spacers. I spent an hour or so chopping small trees up to 3 inches in diameter. The handle was comfortable and the blade bit deep and did not stick in the kerfs.

Wanting to see how the edge would fare

FALLKNIVEN

attn: Peter Hjortberger,
Dept. BL11 Granatvagen 8
96143 BODEN, Sweden
+4692154422; fax +4692154433
www.fallkniven.com

Specialties: Fixed blades and folders, including everyday carry, hunting, camp, military, chef's knives, Scandi designs and others

Blade Materials: VG10, 3G laminate powder steel, VG10 stainless core laminated between 420J2 stainless sides, and SPGS (Super Gold Powder Steel)

Handle Materials: Ivory and maroon Micarta®, leather spacers, Thermorun synthetic, Zytel®, mother-of-pearl, cocobolo, jiggled bone, curly birch and other natural substances

Folders: Locking liners, lockbacks and slip joints

Sheaths: Leather and Zytel belt/snap models

Fallkniven Facts: Fallkniven was founded in 1984 and lays claim to being "Purveyor to His Majesty the King of Sweden." The F1 has been the official pilot survival knife of the Swedish Air Force since 1995. All Fallkniven knives have a convex edge, which the company touts as "the ultimate combination of cutting performance and edge strength." The Division of Solid Mechanics at Lulea University of Technology has tested the F1 and other Fallkniven survival knives for breaking strength. The results are published on Fallkniven's website in the form of graphs and exact data.



The PHK blade snap-cut poles for a survival tepee with a simple flick of the wrist—and bears the scratch marks to prove it. (Mary Lou Ayres photo)

PHK

Blade material: 3G laminate powder steel
Blade length: 5"
Blade thickness: 0.2"
Heat treat: 62 HRC
Handle: Thermorun
Tang: Full, protruding
Overall length: 9.4"
Weight: 6.7 ozs.
Sheath: Zytel®
MSRP: \$470

in heavier work, I loaned the NL1 to Ivan, who used it for a long day's work, clearing 2-to-3-inch-thick saplings and brush. At day's end he had three piles of wood and brush, each pile over waist high and about 4 feet wide by 7 feet long. The NL1 made short work of heavy chores. It did not require resharpening over the three days of use.

F1

I worked with an early-model F1 of VG10 stainless steel for over 12 years. During that time I used it as an all-around utility knife, batonned it through auto bodies, scraped through cinder block walls, pried open locked doors and for other jobs. I employed it to process dozens of game birds, two deer, bags of trout, countless tri-tip roasts, chickens, ducks and slabs of ribs. I used it to make quickie shelters, split kindling, dig up wild roots and forage other wild food. The F1 has been my choice of fixed blade for many backpacking trips and extended overseas journeys.

I loaned my old F1 to my survival students who had neither knife-handling skills nor a good knife. The non-slip grip



is secure and comfortable. The dropped blade design with the full convex grind from spine to edge is easily adaptable to most every form of work. It is also tough. The only damage we have seen in over 12 years of hard use is a small chip from the point while working through a concrete block wall. The chip was barely noticeable and a little work with a diamond hone blended the point into the blade.

The new F1 is available in laminated VG10 or 3G. Either choice makes for a great knife; both are stronger and hold their edges longer than the original blade material, and both will do everything the older version does.

Of the four knives tested, the F1 was the choice of Ibrahim, the headman of the clan of Yuroks I visited. He lives with his extended family in tents as they move from low to high elevations to pasture his 250 goats. He uses his knife for everything

F1

Blade material: 3G laminate powder steel
Blade length: 3.8"
Blade thickness: 0.18" (tapered)
Heat treat: 62 HRC
Handle material: Thermorun
Tang: Broad, protruding
Sheath: All-covering leather
Overall length: 8.3"
Weight: 6 ozs.
MSRP: \$360

from slaughtering livestock to slicing the blocks of goat cheese that provide most of the clan's income. After months of use with both versions, I prefer the 3G steel for its cutting and edge-holding ability.

DESIGN SENSIBILITY

According to Peter Hjortberger, Fallkniv-



The new Fallkniven F1 3G steel model (second from bottom) and the author's original F1 VG10 model (bottom) that has seen 12 years of hard use.

en founder, "The goals for my company are and have always been to provide good quality knives at affordable prices." I think Mr. Hjortberger has accomplished his goal, and more. Fallkniven knives are strong, sharp, reliable and work very well. And, considering the quality, are priced reasonably. They also have a design sensibility and integrity that extends to all their knives—restrained, subtle and understated—a sensibility that taps into a deep reservoir of Scandinavian aesthetics.

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WORLD PREMIERE: BLADE SHOW DEBUTS

Enter through the doors to the left, follow the lighted aisles on either side of the theater to your chosen seat. Please turn off all cell phones, remain silent during the viewing, kick back, relax and enjoy the show. Remember to visit the snack bar for some popcorn, candy and soda. This is the initial worldwide screening of production knives that debuted at the 2012 BLADE Show.

Enjoy the presentation!

"These OKC Hunting Knives are made with the same skill and care that was common in the late 19th century, and also with new, ergonomic handles including polypropylene under-molds and Kraton® over-molds. They further a tradition that fine knives be passed on for others to use and admire."—Mike Probyn, Ontario Knife Co.

Manufacturer: Ontario Knife Co.

Knives: (From top) Seneca,

Cayuga and Keuka

Blades: Clip point, drop point, skinner

Blade steel: 420 stainless

Heat treat: 50-55 HRC

Blade lengths: 6", 4.75" and 4.5"

Overall lengths: 10.5", 9" and 9"

Handle: Polypropylene/Kraton® combo

Weights: 6.8 ozs., 5.7 ozs. and 6.8 ozs.

Unusual feature: Mold-injected handles combining polypropylene and Kraton

MSRPs: \$144.92, \$117.58
and \$124.56

Available: Now



"Greg Lightfoot offers unique handle and blade shapes that are natural extensions of the body, and the right fit. He challenged Hand Tech Made Knives to bring a texture out of the gun industry and apply it to his knife handle. Put one in your hand and you'll understand why it's a winner."—Mike Manrose

Company: Hand Tech Made Knives
Knife: Bullwhip
Style: Assisted-opening flipper folder
Designer: Greg Lightfoot
Blade steel: 154CM stainless
Blade length: 3.5"
Overall open length: 8.25"
Handle: Textured 6061-T6 aluminum
Lock: Locking liner
Opening: Flipper and thumb stud
Unusual feature: Available with Darrel Ralph Maxx Glide bearing system and assisted opener
MSRP: \$319.99-\$349.99, depending on style/version
Available: Now

"The Brous series of knives are designed in conjunction with Jason Brous, a 10-year CNC machinist and custom knifemaker. Brous prefers to use stock removal and ground bevels to create his 'functional fantasy' blade designs."—Chris Cashbaugh, SOG Specialty Knives & Tools

Company: SOG Specialty Knives & Tools
Knife: JB02-K Brous Fixed Blade
Designer: Jason Brous
Blade: Tanto
Blade steel: 9Cr18MoV stainless
Blade length: 3.7"
Overall length: 8.1"
Handle: Glass-reinforced nylon
Unusual features: Pierced handle scales and multi-ground blade
Sheath: Molded nylon
Weight: 6.2 ozs.
MSRP: Approximately \$100
Available: November

"The MK-4 'Vuja De' crossover karambit is the first knife of its kind. Never before has a production knife design blended the functionality of a true hawkbill karambit with the acrobatic fun of a butterfly knife. The forced-rotation automatic latch coupled with our push-button plunge lock set this knife apart."—Jared West, Mantis Knives

Company: Mantis Knives
Knife: MK-4 Vuja De crossover karambit
Blade: Hawkbill
Blade steel: M-vX
Blade length: Just under 2"
Heat Treat: 59-60 HRC
Overall open length: 6"
Handle: Black machined G-10
Lock: Push-button plunge model
Latch: Forced-rotation automatic model
Unusual feature: Combines aspects of karambit and butterfly knife
MSRP: \$85
Available: Late summer

"We wanted something that was smaller than the Izula and could be carried in a small PSK [personal survival kit] by the user. It's tough enough to do the work while being small enough to go unnoticed."

—Jeff Randall, ESEE Knives

Company: ESEE Knives

Knife: Candiru

Style: All-integral fixed blade

Blade steel: 1095 carbon

Blade length: 2"

Overall length: 5.13"

Finish: Texture powder coat

Sheath: Black Cordura®

Unusual features: Available in black, desert-tan and olive-drab coatings

MSRP: \$83.18

Available: Now



"The Partisan Nano is a simple design by Sean Kendrick, but made to really use and to take some abuse. At around \$50 retail, it is a functional, useful tool that doesn't break your wallet. The production models are exact replicas of Sean's handmade knives."—Jessica Hall, HallMark Cutlery

Company: HallMark Cutlery

Designer: Sean Kendrick

Knife: Bad Blood BB0104K

Partisan Nano

Style: Tactical fixed blade

Blade: Clip point

Blade steel: 8Cr14 stainless

Blade length: 3.75"

Overall length: 8 7/8"

Handle: Contoured G-10

Sheath: Fitted fiber

Unusual features: Integral finger guard and special clip attachment on sheath

MSRP: \$79.99

Available: Now



"I like the quick-release [assisted opening] mechanism and the compact, textured G-10 handle that includes a pocket clip. It is ideal for straight cuts of cardboard and rope, and for precision cutting in the field."

—Joe Hufnagel, Stone River Gear

Company: Stone River Gear

Knife (below): SRG2SAGB Speed Assisted Folding Ceramic Knife

Blade: Drop point

Blade material: Black ceramic (zirconium oxide)

Blade length: 2 7/8"

Handle: Textured G-10 with pocket clip

Lock: Locking liner

Assisted Opener: Butch Vallotton Speed Assist™ mechanism

Unusual features: Ceramic blade will reportedly hold an edge 10-12 times longer than conventional steel blades

MSRP: \$119.95

Available: Now

"The steel frame is strong, yet the knife is perfectly balanced in your hand, and the handle inlay is gorgeous against the steel finish. The blades are spectacular damascus, and the action is smooth. I'm proud to say that the entire knife, from start to finish, is made in the USA." —Tim Ross, Famars USA

Company: Famars USA

Knife: Steel Piccolo

Blade steel: 416-layer damascus

Blade styles: Tanto and clip point

Opening mechanism: Choice of manual, semi-auto and auto

Blade lengths: 2.125" each

Overall open length: 7.625"

Handle frame: C36 steel

Handle inlays: Alligator skin

Unusual feature: Hidden-pin construction

MSRP: \$999

Available: Now



"Ethan Becker is known for his large survival/bushcraft knives. They are well designed and time tested. However, there are scenarios where a smaller knife would be well served. The BK-17 offers the classic clip-point blade shape from the KA-BAR 1217 USMC F/U knife." —Paul Tsujimoto, KA-BAR

Company: KA-BAR

Knife: BK-17 Short Becker Clip Point

Style: Full-tang fixed blade

Blade: Flat-ground clip point

Blade steel: 1095 carbon

Heat treat: 56-58 HRC

Blade length: 4 3/8"

Overall length: 9 1/4"

Handle: Zytel®

Sheath: Cordura®

Unusual feature: Comes with two sets of Zytel handle scales in black and "doughboy brown" colors

Similar knives that debuted in line: BK15 Short Becker Trailing Point and BK16 Short Becker Drop Point

MSRP: \$107.49

Available: Now



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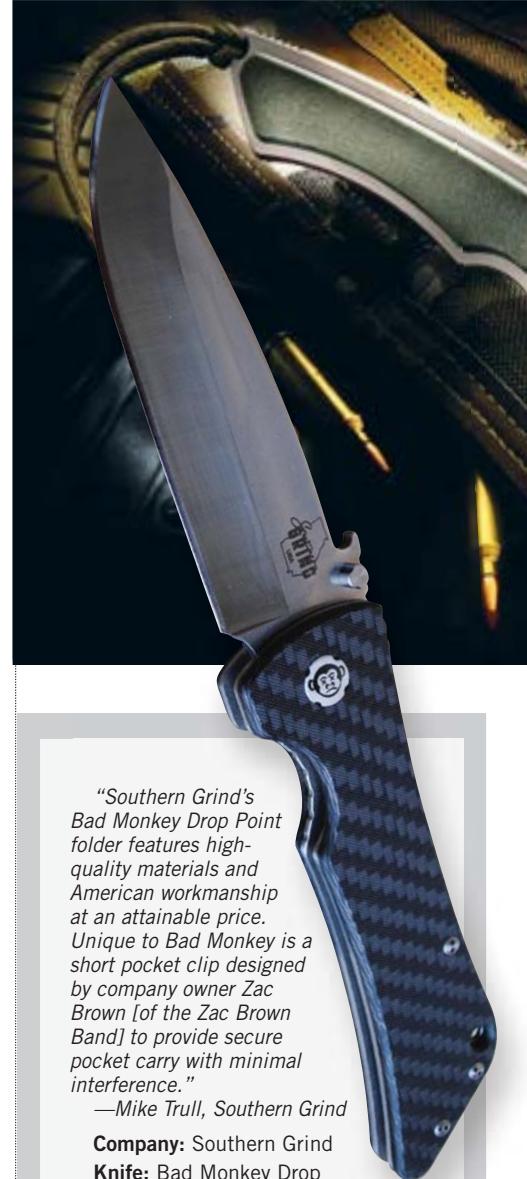
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—Mike Trull, Southern Grind

Company: Southern Grind

Knife: Bad Monkey Drop Point folder

Style: Locking-liner folder

Blade: Drop point

Blade steel: 14C28N stainless

Blade grind: Hollow

Blade finish: Tumbled satin (also available in Armor Black Cerakote™)

Blade length: 4"

Overall open length: 9.25"

Handle: Textured twill-weave carbon fiber

Lock: 6AL-4V titanium locking liner

Bushing: Phosphor bronze

Unusual features: Short pocket clip designed by company owner Zac Brown, and knife comes with a leather koozie (can cooler), leather key chain and paracord bracelet

MSRP: \$180

Available: Now



"We specifically made this knife to address the concealed-carry and bushcraft needs of soldiers and civilians alike. The handle slabs are inset to keep the knife flat when in the belt line or on body armor, making it easier to carry every day." —Curtis Iovito, Spartan Blades

Company: Spartan Blades

Knife: Phrike

Designers: Curtis Iovito and Mark Carey

Style: Integral fixed blade

Blade: Wedged drop point

Blade steel: CPM-S35VN stainless

Blade length: 4.25"

Overall length: 8.5"

Heat treat: 59-60 HRC

Finish: PVD SpartaCoat™

in flat-black tungsten DLC or "flat-dark-earth" ZrN

Handle: G-10

Sheath: MOLLE-compatible lined nylon

Unusual features: G-10 handle comes in choice of black, green or "coyote tan," and sheath available in black, coyote tan or "multi-cam"

MSRP: \$250, or \$265 with Kydex® sheath

Available: Now

For more information on the pictured knives, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 97.

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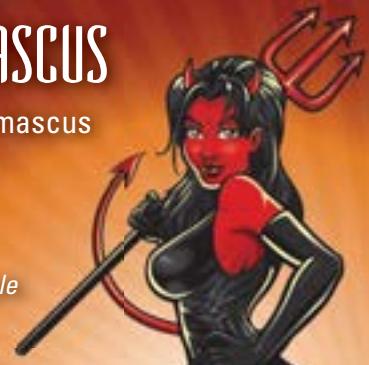
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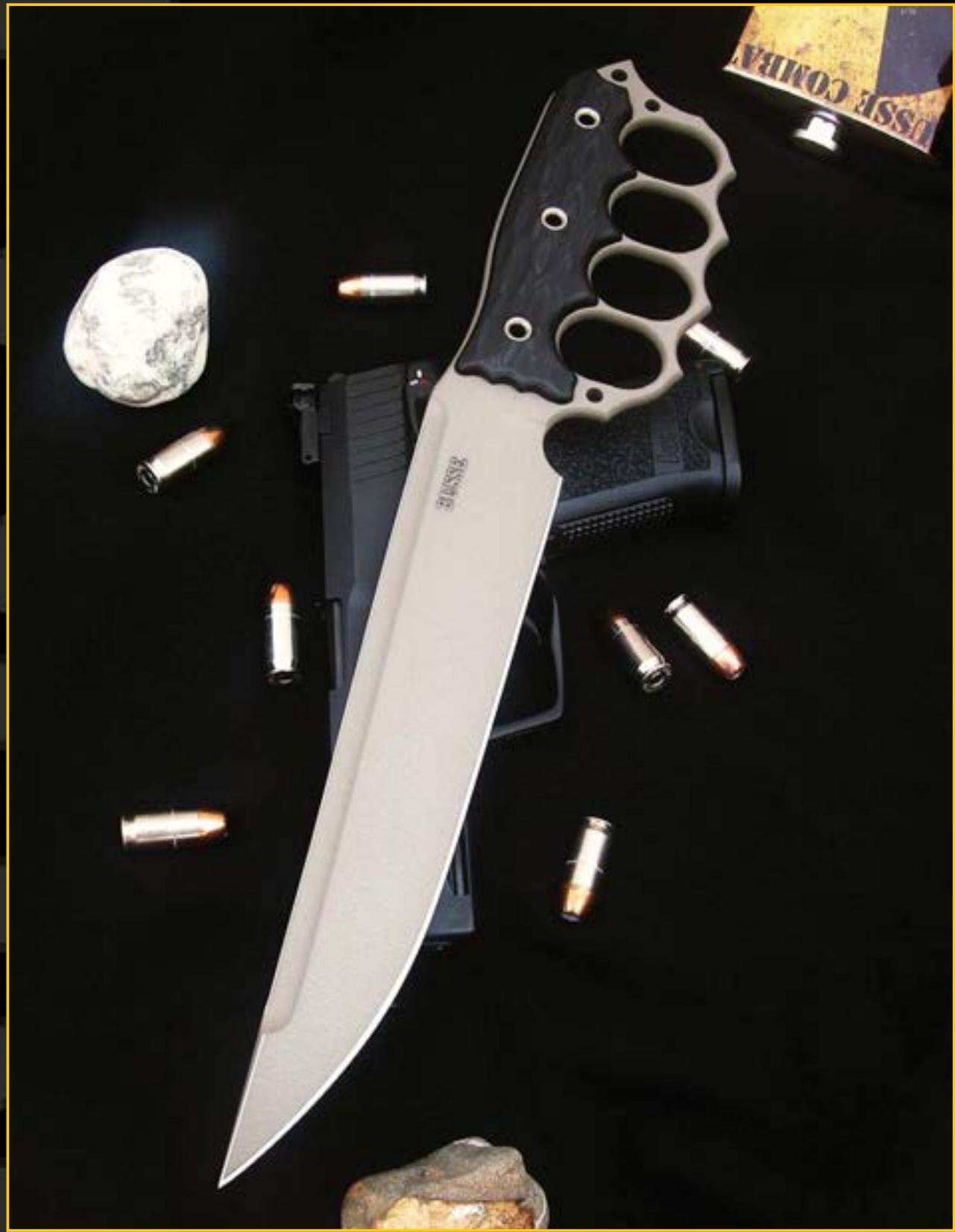
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WESTERN KNIVES, EASTERN LOOK

To those who appreciate the tempered steel of a Japanese sword, the *hamon* is visual evidence of the maker's effort to produce the finest blade work. In the West, the *hamon* appears in much the same fashion on Western knives, a blending of culture and craft. Where East meets West on the steel blade, there is the *hamon*, the graceful temper line.

"From a practical point of view, the *hamon* is a visible indication of a differentially heat-treated blade," explained knifemaker Stuart Branson. "In many cases, it's advantageous to have a harder edge supported by a softer spine in a knife. In this way, you gain the benefits of the good edge retention afforded by the harder edge with the durability of the softer spine region of the blade. In the long and graceful form of the Japanese sword this might seem obvious, but the same is true for Western blades, particularly those hard-use knives or the very popular larger chopping knives."

According to veteran maker Gary House, the aesthetic effect of the *hamon* is behind its surge in demand among Western collectors, clearly defining the transition zone between hard edge and soft back.

"The popularity of the *hamon* on non-Japanese blades today, I believe, is the visual effect of the temper line," he commented. "The movement and variations of the *hamon* are very attractive and visually appealing compared to a straight temper line."

More and more, discriminating knife customers are looking for the *hamon* on the blades of some of the best-known, iconic Western-style knives.

"You will put a little something in the blade, won't you?" is a common request these days," commented Mike Craddock, who started making knives in the 1970s, took a 40-year hiatus and has come back strong recently. "It doesn't necessarily make the knife better, but it does look good. I consider it the spirit of the steel."

Certainly, the hammered and heat-treated steel is expected to be sturdy. However, the quest for the *hamon* is a classic case of discovering what lies beneath.

"For me, it is the mystery of the *hamon*," related bladesmith Erik Fritz. "What shape is it going to take? How much work is it going to entail to bring it out so it can be seen? I think what makes it so special is that each *hamon* is so different and unique."

PRODUCING THE HAMON

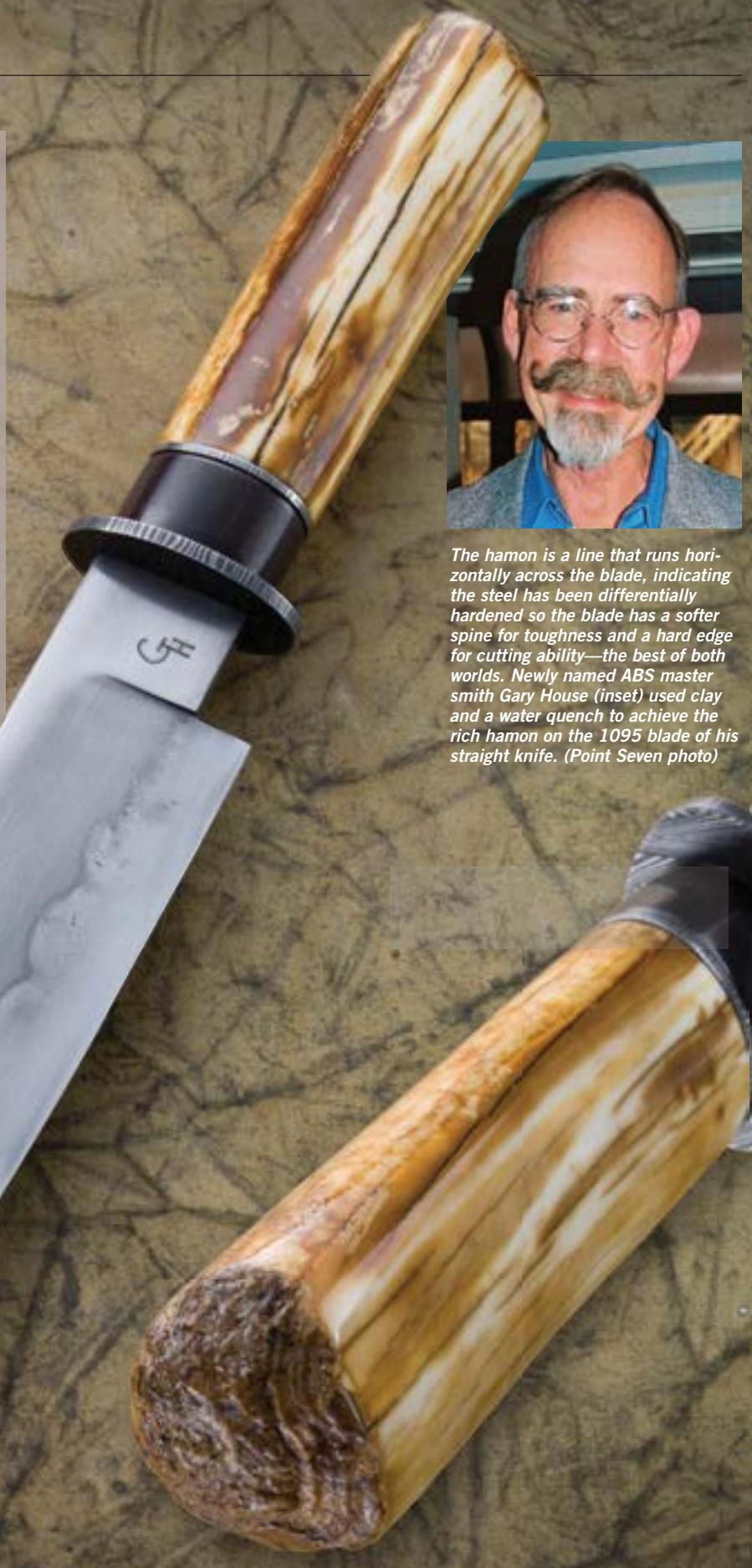
The *hamon* is there, lying within the reach of the knifemaker who is willing to take the time to thoroughly rub the steel to enhance the elusive line. For some makers, that effort is standard procedure. To them, a blade without this unmistakable flair of the Orient just comes up short. A *hamon* on Western knives bridges cultures and demonstrates a willingness on the maker's part to invest the time and energy required.

"Like many, I have always been enamored of the Japanese sword," Branson said. "The *hamon* is integral to its design and construction, and although it isn't necessary that it be brought out to that degree, polishing these swords has been elevated to an art."

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A HAMON

Discriminating knife buyers looking for a quality hamon should bear a few things in mind. A hamon can be wavy, undulating or any number of shapes. Whatever the shape, it must be well formed, clear and unbroken. What's more, according to Don Fogg, it must be possible to describe in an understandable manner using a traditional vocabulary.

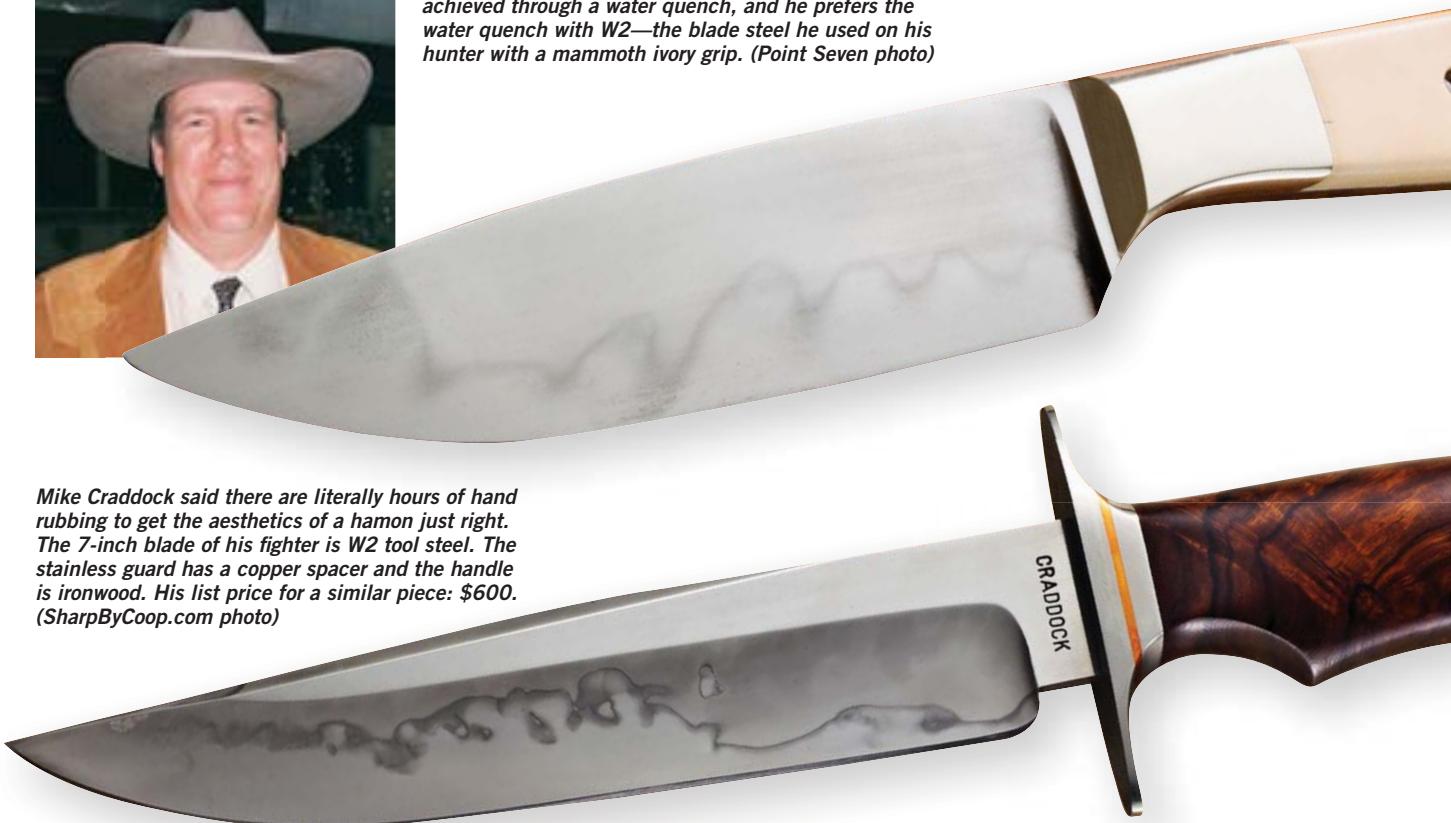
Erik Fritz advises that a professionally done hamon will exhibit a sharp demarcation between the hard and soft areas. Watch out for a hamon line that dips too close to the cutting edge. Stuart Branson agrees that if the hamon comes too close to or reaches the edge of the blade, then a section of the edge is not hardened properly. Levels of refinement in the hamon involve subjective preferences as they relate to clarity and detail.—by Mike Haskew



The hamon is a line that runs horizontally across the blade, indicating the steel has been differentially hardened so the blade has a softer spine for toughness and a hard edge for cutting ability—the best of both worlds. Newly named ABS master smith Gary House (inset) used clay and a water quench to achieve the rich hamon on the 1095 blade of his straight knife. (Point Seven photo)



Erik Fritz (inset) opined that greater hamon activity is achieved through a water quench, and he prefers the water quench with W2—the blade steel he used on his hunter with a mammoth ivory grip. (Point Seven photo)



Mike Craddock said there are literally hours of hand rubbing to get the aesthetics of a hamon just right. The 7-inch blade of his fighter is W2 tool steel. The stainless guard has a copper spacer and the handle is ironwood. His list price for a similar piece: \$600. (SharpByCoop.com photo)

Branson says he attempts to achieve several goals in the production of the hamon. First, he wants to emulate the beauty of the Japanese blade. In the attempt, he learns to see the intricacies of the pattern, theory of design, and the dedication of the artists that have gone before him.

“Producing a hamon is not just adding clay to a blade and hoping for the best,” he reasoned. “It is understanding the steel being used, the temperatures and times needed to achieve your aim, and the

amount and pattern of the clay to produce the hamon you are after, the delicate process of heating the blade properly before the quench and, in the case of water quenching Japanese-style blades, the terror and elation of a successful water quench—the violent transformation of the steel into two forms above and below the hamon line, and the resulting curvature induced. One can understand how the swordsmiths approached their craft with a religious reverence.”

WATER VS. OIL QUENCH

Producing the hamon involves a process of coating the blade with clay and then quenching it in either oil or water. The water quench is more rapid and therefore potentially more catastrophic should a crack or complete break occur.

“I use clay and white crushed stone,” House noted. “A paste of satanite also works well. The clay insulates the blade from heat and will be a thin layer as it comes down toward the edge of the blade.”

Most makers who frequently produce a hamon opt for such tool steels as W1 and W2, and carbon steels such as 1050, 1075, 1084 and 1095. “Simple carbon steels are conducive to the very fast quenching requirements of a clay-coated quench,” Fritz remarked. “This



Lance Abernathy of Sniper Bladeworks shows tactical folders can be home to hamons as well, here on the 1095 blade of the Mini-DH Hawk Bill with a carbon-fiber handle on a titanium frame. (SharpByCoop.com photo)

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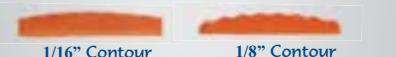
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Stuart Branson (inset) said his Southwest bowie sports a hamon on its 8.5-inch blade of W2 tool steel. The handle is Turkish walnut and the guard is damascus. (SharpByCoop.com photo)

allows the insulating clay to retard the hardening of the coated areas of the blade. High-alloy steels that allow thorough hardening of the blade are not conducive to the creation of a very active hamon. What you get with the high-alloy steels is more of a straight line.

"With W2 I prefer the water quench," Erik continued. "With 1084 and 1095 I use Parks 50 quenching oil. Any hamon requires an insulating layer of clay to be applied to the spine. The biggest difference in hamon activity is in the quenching medium, such as water or oil. In my experience and opinion, greater hamon activity is achieved through a water quench. If you are going the safe route and using oil, there is less chance of

a catastrophic blade failure."

Branson said he sees fundamental differences in the hamons produced and the effects of the water or oil quench on the steel itself. On Japanese-style blades, the water quench introduces *sori*, or curvature, to the blade. As the water quenches the steel, the uncoated steel cools quickly while the coated spine retains heat, staying expanded longer and causing the blade to curve downward. As the spine cools, the hardened edge begins to curve upward. Quenching oils are typically made for industrial use and to prevent deformation of the steel as much as possible. Consequently, the blade tends to curve downward and remain so.

When quenching a blade in water, Stuart added, "The hamon tends to be more cloudlike, more diffuse, and to my mind a little more mysterious and poetic. The oil hamon, however, is more literal, more willing to follow the clay pattern and is more defined on its boundaries. However, the *ashi*, the wispy lines that come off the main patterns, can be very delicate

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HOW TO OBTAIN A HAMON

For more on producing a hamon, see "How To Clay Temper and Obtain a Beautiful Hamon" by ABS master smith Don Fogg in the book, *Spirit of the Sword*. To order a copy call 1-855-278-0406 or visit www.shopblade.com and click on "Books & References."

For his stag "Ferncliff" model, Lin Rhea employs a hamon on the 9-inch W2 tool steel blade. Overall length: 14 inches. (Chuck Ward photo)



and defined. Control of this can make for a very exciting hamon."

The investment of both materials and a significant amount of time impact the cost of a blade complete with a hamon. However, for the maker willing to commit the time and for the potential buyer, a genuine value is readily apparent.

"You do have extra work in claying the blade," Craddock said, "and then there are literally hours of hand rubbing to get the aesthetics right. The steel does what it wants to, but there is a process that you go through. The steel offers it if you are willing to go out and get it. To me, the time involved in the hamon—and about 90 percent of the steel blades I make have them—adds about 10 percent to the cost of the knife. But from the standpoint of hours, [the cost] should probably be double."

LANGUAGE OF THE BLADE

The hamon brings beauty and satisfaction to the maker and the buyer. Further, it is taking its place among the desired aesthetic effects of Western knives, proving that the world is indeed much smaller when the same language is spoken—in this case, the language of the blade.



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Brion Tomberlin is another who employs W2 tool steel to showcase a hamon, on his Persian fighter in this instance. The handle is ironwood. Overall length: 14 inches. (Chuck Ward photo)

For the contact information for the makers of the pictured knives, see "Where To Get 'Em" on page 97.

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AUG. 11-12 MISSOULA, MT Montana Knifemakers Association 17th Annual Custom Knife Show & Sale, Montana Harley-Davidson. Contact Dan Westlind 360-795-0228 westlind@wwestsky.net or Nancy McLaughlin 406-728-2861 macnancymclaughlin@yahoo.com.*

AUG. 17-18 NATCHEZ, MS The Natchez Bowie Knife Show, Natchez Convention Center. For information e-mail mikeworley@worleyco.com.*

AUG. 17-19 DENVER, CO Professional Knifemakers Association 20th Annual Denver Custom Knife Show, Crowne Plaza-DIA. Contact Mike or Denise Allen 903-489-1026 whiskersknives@aol.com.*

AUG. 24-26 LEXINGTON, KY Central Kentucky Knife Club Knife Show, Clarion Hotel. Contact Jim Thompson 859-623-1419 thomp@adelphia.net.*

AUG. 24-26 TROY, OH The ABS Mid-America Hammer-in, Miami County Fairgrounds. Contact Butch Sheely 419-832-5801 e-mail sheelyblades@gmail.com, americanbladesmith.com.**

AUG. 25-26 PHOENIX, AZ The Arizona Knife Collectors Association Knife & Gun Show, The Phoenix Elks Lodge. Visit arizonaknifecollectors.org for more information.*

AUG. 30-SEPT. 1 LAS VEGAS, NV Usual Suspect Network’s Gathering IV, Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino. For info visit www.usngathering.com.*

S E P T E M B E R

SEPT. 1-2 TYLER, TX G&S Promotions Gun & Custom Knife Show, Harvey Convention Center. Contact Glenn or Stephanie Ellis 918-659-2201 gnshpr1@aol.com.

SEPT. 3-OCT. 28 CANTON, OH “Cutting Edge: Evolution of the Knife” ornamental knife exhibit, Canton Museum of Art. Call 330-453-7666 www.cantonart.org.**

SEPT. 7-8 LEBANON, MO Shepherd Hills Cutlery Case Celebration In The Ozarks 2012. Contact 800-727-4643 www.casexx.com/NewsEvents-Celebration12.asp.*

SEPT. 13-16 LOUISVILLE, KY The 43rd Annual Knifemakers’ Guild Show, Seelbach Hilton Hotel. Contact Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Gil Hibben 502-222-1397 gil@hibbenknives.com.*

SEPT. 14-15 OAK LAWN, IL The 33rd Annual A.E.C.A. Knife Show, Oak Lawn Community Pavilion. Contact Marty Witek 630-357-8557 WITEKMA1@aol.com.*

SEPT. 14-16 LAS VEGAS, NV The Las Vegas Antique Arms Show, Riviera Hotel & Casino. Contact Beinfeld Productions 760-202-4489 gunshowpro@aol.com.

SEPT. 15-16 WASHINGTON, AR The ABS Fall Piney Woods Hammer-in, Texarkana College/Bill Moran School of Bladesmithing. Contact B.R. Hughes 903-838-0134 e-mail billrhughes@cable-one.net, americanbladesmith.com.**

SEPT. 23-24 PARIS, FRANCE The 23rd Capitale du Couteau d’Art/SICAC Show, Espace Charenton. Contact www.sicac-salon-couteaux.com.

SEPT. 29-30 BRANSON, MO Branson Hammer-In & Knife Show, The Shepherd of the Hills Farm. Contact Gary Mulkey 417-335-0123 (day), 417-348-0123 (night) gary@mulkeyknives.com.**

SEPT. 29-30 EASTON, PA The 6th Annual Lehigh Valley Knife Show, Charles Chrin Community Center of Palmer Township. Contact Bill Goodman at 610-253-2745 (office); 610-258-5063 (home); 484-241-6176 (cell) goodknives@goodmancpa.com, www.PAKnifeShow.com.*

O C T O B E R

OCT. 5-6 JANESVILLE, WI Annual Fall Knife Show sponsored by Northern Lakes Knife Co., Holiday Inn Express/Janesville Conference Center. Contact Bob Schrap, Dept. BL11, 7024 W. Wells St., Wauwa-

tosa, WI 53213 fax 414-479-9765 e-mail rschrap@aol.com.*

OCT. 6-7 ANAHEIM, CA California Custom Knife Show, Embassy Suites of Garden Grove/Anaheim. Call 714-549-3932 or visit www.plazacutlery.com.*

OCT. 6-7 LAKELAND, FL The 15th Annual Florida Knifemakers’ Association Knife Show, in conjunction with the Gator Cutlery Club, Lakeland Center. Call Dan Piergallini 813-967-1471 or 813-754-3908.*

OCT. 6-7 TOPEKA, KS The ABS Heartland Hammer-In, Washburn Institute of Technology. Call Steve Culver 785-484-0146 e-mail sculver@americanbladesmith.com or visit americanbladesmith.com.**

OCT. 6-7 KELSO, WA NorthWest Knife Collectors 14th Annual Big Knife Show, Red Lion Hotel and Conference Center. Contact Don Hanham 425-241-1701 e-mail dwhanham@gmail.com.*

OCT. 12-14 FREDERICK, MD The 1st Frederick Hammer-In & Knife Show, Eventplex at the Frederick Fairgrounds. Call 301-874-5012 or visit www.silverado-gunshow.com.*

OCT. 19-20 CAMBRIDGE, OH Ohio Classic Knife Show, Pritchard-Laughlin Civic Center. Call 740-219-1141 or visit www.ohioknifeshow.com.*

OCT. 19-21 VISALIA, CA The ABS California Hammer-In, College of the Sequoias. Contact Mike Vagnino 559-636-0501, e-mail mvknives@lightspeed.net, americanbladesmith.com.*

OCT. 20-21 CLYDE, NC The ABS Smoky Mountain Fall Hammer-In, Haywood Community College. Contact Bill Wiggins 828-226-2551 e-mail wncbill@bellsouth.net, americanbladesmith.com.**

OCT. 26-28 SHEPHERDSVILLE, KY Kentucky Cutlery Association Knife Show, Paroquet Springs Conference Center. Contact Jerry Bodner 502-968-9546 or 502-552-1103 (cell) kca@insightbb.com.*

N O V E M B E R

NOV. 3-4 MT. VERNON, IL The 30th Annual Mt. Vernon Knife Show, Roland

Lewis Community Building, Mt. Vernon Veterans Park. Call 618-242-4514 fax 618-244-5536 jcckc1982@yahoo.com.*

NOV. 9-12 GEMBLOUX, BELGIUM The 13th Belgian Knife Society Show, Community Hall Gembloux. For info visit bksgembloux.blogspot.com.*

NOV. 10-11 TULSA, OK Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show, Expo Square (Tulsa fairgrounds). Contact Tulsa Gun Show, Dept. BL11, POB 33201, Tulsa, OK 74153 918-492-0401 tulsaarmsshow.com.*

NOV. 10-12 BOISE, ID The Rocky Mountain Knife Show, The EXPO Idaho. Contact David Jacobson 208-447-7000 www.rockymountaintknifeshow.com.*

NOV. 16-18 LOUISVILLE, KY The S.H.A.R.P. Show, Fern Valley Hotel. Contact Spirit of Steel, Dept. BL11, POB 22007, Chattanooga, TN 37422 423-238-6753 spiritofsteel@ymail.com.*

NOV. 16-18 JERSEY CITY, NJ The 35th Annual New York Custom Knife Show, The Westin Jersey City-Newport. Contact Fifty Fifty Productions 417-866-6688 www.nyckshow.com.*

NOV. 24-25 MILAN, ITALY Corporazione Italiana Coltellinai Show, Marriott Hotel-via Washington. For info visit www.corporazioneitalianacoltellinai.com.*

DECEMBER

DEC. 6-8 SEVIERVILLE, TN Parkers' Greatest Knife Show on Earth, the Sevierville Events Center at Bridgemont. Call Ed Henley 423-892-0448.*

To ensure timely publication of your show in the "Show Calendar," BLADE® requests that you send all pertinent information concerning your show in written form—dates, locations, etc.—at least three months before the show takes place to Krause Publications, a division of F+W Media, attn: Joe Kertzman, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54945 715.445.2214 fax 715.445.4087. BLADE depends on the shows themselves for prompt and accurate information.

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ANSSI RUUSUVUORI

"When I was 6 years old, my father thought it was time to teach my brother and I how to use a traditional Finnish puukko knife for wood carving and other tasks," Anssi Ruusuvuori relates. "The story goes that my mother was so terrified we'd hurt ourselves, she locked herself in a closet for the rest of the day. Well, I ended up not killing myself, but instead learned how to use a puukko in all possible ways, carving wood, making toys, building birdhouses and cleaning fish." A part-time knifemaker, Ruusuvuori got his start in 1993 by attempting to build better handles for puukkos with plastic grips found around his family cottage. He forges, oil tempers and differentially heat treats high-carbon steel blades. "Recently, I have also started to experiment with stainless steels like ATS-34," he notes. "I love working with various woods for handles. Every piece is different, and sometimes you find a block that just makes your day with expressive grains and colors. I have to confess, though, that traditional Finnish curly birch remains my favorite." The puukko (right) showcases a stacked-plastic-washer handle in alternating colors, a handforged high-carbon-steel blade, a Duralumin™ end cap and a leather sheath with bead chain. Ruusuvuori's price range for his knives: \$150-\$2,075 each. Contact Anssi Ruusuvuori, Dept. BL11, Verkkotie 38, 21500 Piikkio, Finland +358-50-5208057 anssi.ruusuvuori@akukon.fi, <http://mmkhorasani.com/>.



GARY LEBLANC

The intriguing thing about making a knife by hand, proposes Gary LeBlanc, is the relentless pursuit of perfection. "I visited a sporting goods store and saw a black-powder-rifle kit. Being a hunter and fisherman, I decided to make a rifle, and it turned out pretty good," he remarks. "I had seen some knife parts in a catalog and decided to make a kit knife to go with the rifle. It turned out ugly! I ordered a couple more kits and the end results were not much better. Fourteen years later, I'm still working to make the perfect knife." The hunter and fillet knife set (left) includes ATS-34 blades, pre-ban elephant-ivory handles scrimshawed by Lori Ristinen, Vernon Wagner-engraved 416 stainless steel bolsters, Marvin Wuertz beaver-tail-inlaid sheaths, and a walnut box. LeBlanc's list price: \$4,500 for the set. Contact Gary LeBlanc, Dept. BL11, 7342 145th Ave., Royalton, MN 56373 320-584-5859 butternutcove@hotmail.com. (Hoffman photo)



STEVE NOLTE

A retired businessman, Steve Nolte began making knives five years ago and builds about 150 pieces a year. "I started with files as blade steel, and it evolved from there," he says. "I was hooked on knifemaking with the first one, and continue making them to see what response I get from my wife, Barbie. I really love it. I have never considered myself an artist but am told so frequently." Nolte practices lapidary work on knife handles, and recently took a silversmithing course to add yet another dimension to his craft. The "Turritella" drop-point hunter (right) dons a 3-inch Alabama Damascus blade, a Turritella (agate) stone handle, brass bolsters and a leather sheath. Nolte's list price for a similar piece: \$650. Contact Steve Nolte, Dept. BL11, 10801 Gram B Circle, Lowell, AR 72754 479-629-1676 snolte@alertalarmsys.com, www.snlteknives.com. (Ward photo)



JERRY JOHNSON



"I grew up with a father who was handy, and from his example I learned woodcraft," says Jerry Johnson. "Dad also owned a butcher shop where I worked after school, so knives are familiar to me. After I earned my degree in dentistry, I put aside the table saw, thinking it would be a good idea to keep my fingers intact." In 1989, Johnson embarked on a successful elk-hunting trip with some friends, but their knives performed poorly. "I knew I could make one better, he says. I found the book *Step-By-Step Knifemaking* by David Boye, and studied it enough to turn it into a dog-eared volume." Inspired by a Bob Loveless "Delaware Maid," the "Minnesota Maid" sub-hilt fighter (right) dons an 8-inch, engraved 440C blade, a whitetail-antler handle, vulcanized-paper liners, and engraved 416 stainless steel guards and pommel. Johnson's list price: \$1,200. Contact Jerry Johnson, Dept. BL11, 29847 260th St., Worthington, MN 56187 507-376-9253 doc-torj55@yahoo.com, <http://jljknives.com>. (Hoffman photo)



SUCHAT JANGNATONG



"At the age of 14, I began my lifelong profession by becoming the third generation of knifemakers in my family," Suchat Jangnatong explains. "I learned the trade by assisting my father and grandfather in our family's knifemaking business in the Uthai Thani province of Thailand." Jangnatong attended technical school and, after graduating in 1982, worked as a trainee with a knifemaking team. Now in his own shop, he fashions butterfly knives and other folders, specifically with carved or inlaid mother-of-pearl handles. The "Odyssey" locking-liner folder (left) includes a 3-inch Robert Calcinore mosaic-damascus blade and bolsters, an anodized 6AL-4V-titanium frame, mother-of-pearl and abalone inlays, and red sapphires inlaid into the handle and thumb stud. The list price: \$1,600. Contact Suchat Jangnatong, c/o U.S. dealer Keith Newman of Mr. Damascus Knives, Dept. BL11, 10901 W. Cave Blvd., Dripping Springs, TX 78620 512-992-0125 shakeallpoints@yahoo.com, www.mrdamascusknives.com.



DON HANSON III



"Forging steel on hundred-pound Little Giant power hammers is what trips my trigger," states Don Hanson III, who followed in his father's footsteps and took up knifemaking in the early 1980s. "My dad gave my brother and I pocketknives at 6 or 7 years old. He had dulled them, and it took us two days to get them sharp. We used a flat rock and sharpened like we saw him doing on a stone. Mom was not happy, but Dad was proud. He taught me the basics, and I got completely wrapped up in it. I went full time in 1991 after a move to Missouri, and I have no regrets at all." Hanson says he was "getting burned out" on making folders, and started forging large fixed blades in 2004, now splitting his time between folders and fixed blades. "Large damascus bowies, fighters and damascus folders, with top-shelf natural materials, are my specialty. Fossil mammoth ivory and fossil walrus ivory are what hold my interest," he remarks. "I have been influenced by some talented makers, too many to mention. I also would not be where I am today without the help of my wife, Tina. She takes care of all the book work, and built and maintains our website. My main goal is to continue to make a variety of knives that keep folks interested." The fixed-blade fighter (right) sports a 7.75-inch damascus blade with a full-tapered tang, a damascus guard and ferrule, and blue-mammoth-ivory handle slabs. Hanson's list price: \$3,800. Contact Don Hanson III, Dept. BL11, POB 13, Success, MO 65570 info@sunfishforge.com, www.sunfishforge.com. (SharpByCoop.com photo)



WHAT'S NEW



Folding Tanto Treated To "Odin's Eye" Damascus

Weighting in at 3.6 ounces, Michael Henningsson's lock-wing-liner folder sports a 2.5-inch tanto blade of "Odin's-eye" damascus and an engraved stainless steel handle frame.

Contact: Michael Henningsson, Dept. BL11, Ruddalsvagen 9B, 426 68 Vastra Frolunda, Gothenburg, Sweden +46-702-55-57-45 michael.henningsson@gmail.com, <http://henningssonknives.wordpress.com>.



Kitchen Knives Come In Oiled Bubinga Wood Grips

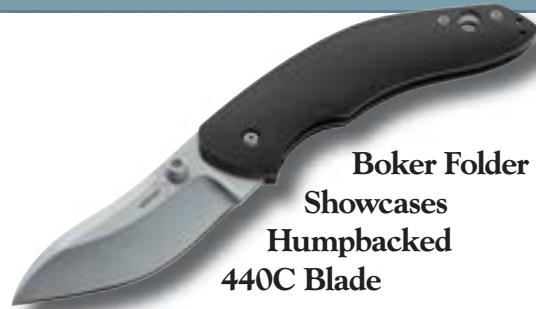
Mohac Knives introduces a line of household cutlery featuring RWL-34 blades ranging from 7-9 inches each, riveted, glued and oiled bubinga-wood handles and brass bolsters.

Contact: Mohac Professional Knives, attn: M. Uhac, Dept. BL10, Kornettsgatan 11, 211 50 Malmo, Sweden +46-0-40-124-809 info@mohac.se, www.mohac.se.

File Marks & Bottle Opener Help Define Friction Folder

Michael Morris fashions a friction folder from a file, leaving file marks on the 2.75-inch, drop-point blade, turning an extended tang into a bottle opener and adding tan-Micarta® handle scales.

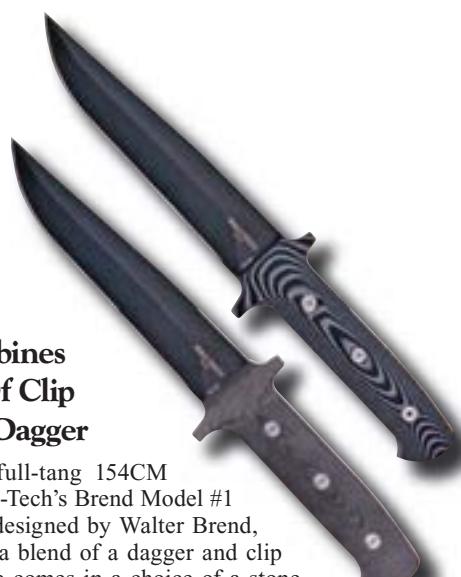
Contact: Michael Morris, Dept. BL11, 609 S. Main St., Yale, MI 48097 810-887-7817 mykulmorris@yahoo.com, www.michaelmorrisknives.com.



Boker Folder Showcases Humpbacked 440C Blade

The Boker Plus "Whale" locking-liner folder, designed by Jens Anso, includes a 3 1/8-inch humpbacked, two-tone-finished 440C blade, curved G-10 handle scales, bronze-anodized hardware and a titanium pocket clip.

Contact: Boker USA, attn: D. Weidner, Dept. BL11, 1550 Balsam St., Lakewood, CO 80214 800-835-6433 sales@bokerusa.com, www.bokerusa.com.



Blade Combines Elements Of Clip Point And Dagger

The 7-inch, full-tang 154CM blade of Pro-Tech's Brend Model #1 Combat knife, designed by Walter Brend, is described as a blend of a dagger and clip point. The knife comes in a choice of a stone-washed or black (shown) blade, and with a black-and-tan G-10 (top) or black-Micarta® (bottom) handle.

Contact: Pro-Tech, attn: D. Wattenberg, Dept. BL11, 11009 Shoemaker Ave., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670 562-903-0678 dave@protecknives.com, www.protecknives.com.

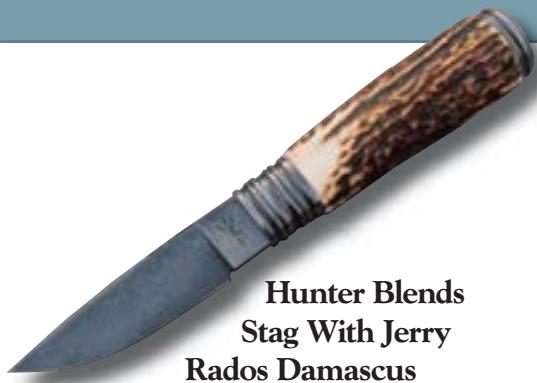


Rotation-Loc Secures Blade At Any Five-Degree Angle

Seber's "Ratcheting Locking Utility Knife" incorporates a Rotation-Loc™ that props the blade open at any five-degree angle, and also locks it closed for safety. The one-hand utility knife also features a stainless steel blade holder and frame, an anodized-aluminum handle and a carabiner clip.

Contact: Seber Design Group, attn: K. Wilson, Dept. BL11, 1438 Cades Way, Vista, CA 92081 760-727-5555 kenwilson@seberdesigngroup.com, www.seberdesigngroup.com.

WHAT'S NEW



Hunter Blends Stag With Jerry Rados Damascus

A Jockl Greiss fixed-blade hunter parades a 4.25-inch Jerry Rados damascus blade, a grooved-damascus bolster and pommel, and a stag handle.

Contact: Jockl Greiss, Dept. BL11, Herrenwald 15, D77773 Schenkenzell, Germany +49-7836-95-71-69 info@jockl-greiss-messer.de, www.jockl-greiss-messer.de/e/knif_e.htm.

"Chubby" One-Hand Folder Dons Wrought Iron Bolsters

Michael Burch's "Chubby" locking-liner folder boasts a 2.25-inch, hollow-ground 1095 blade with distinct temper lines, a one-hand-opening hole, wrought-iron bolsters and a stag handle.

Contact: Michael Burch, Dept. BL11, 3620 S. Kansas Ave., Springfield, MO 65807 417-300-0768 michael@burchtreeblades.com, www.burchtreeblades.com.



Gold Inlay And Engraving Embellish Folding Knife

Amenities of Johnny Stout's "The Squire" locking-liner folder include a 3-inch Robert Eggerling Turkish-twist-damascus blade, mammoth-ivory handle scales, and damascus bolsters engraved and gold inlaid by Jim Small.

Contact: Johnny Stout, Dept. BL11, 1205 Forest Tr., New Braunfels, TX 78132 830-606-4067 johnny@stoutknives.com, www.stoutknives.com.



Tactical Folder Incorporates "SafeSpin" Blade Deployment

Buck's 770 FlashPoint LE features a 2 7/8-inch, drop-point, titanium-coated 420HC blade employing a SafeSpin™ one-hand-opening mechanism, an anodized-aluminum handle, SUR-Lok™ mechanism and a carabiner/bottle opener.

Contact: Buck Knives, attn: S. Young, Dept. BL11, 660 S. Lochsa St., Post Falls, ID 83854 800-326-2825 syoung@buckknives.com, www.buckknives.com.



Ancient Ivory Handle Scales Anchor Clip-Point Bowie

Randy Golden's bowie showcases a 6.75-inch R154CM blade with a false edge along the pronounced clip point, ancient-ivory handle scales, a stainless steel guard, ferrule and pommel, and a nickel-silver escutcheon plate and pins.

Contact: Randy Golden, Dept. BL11, 6492 Eastwood Glen Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117 334-271-6429 rgolden1@mindspring.com.

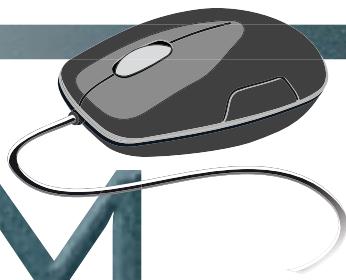


Blade Exhibits High Hollow Grind & Blade-Tech "V-Hole"

Designed by Mike Vellekamp, the 3.25-inch AUS-8 blade of 5.11 Tactical's "LMC Modified Clip Point" locking-liner folder parades a high, hollow grind and a Blade-Tech one-hand-opening "V-Hole™." The folder also sports ergonomic, textured fiberglass-reinforced-nylon handle scales and a reversible pocket clip.

Contact: 5.11 Tactical, Inc., attn: T. Janny, Dept. BL11, 4300 Spyres Way, Modesto, CA 95356 209-527-4511 tylerj@511tactical.com, www.511Tactical.com.

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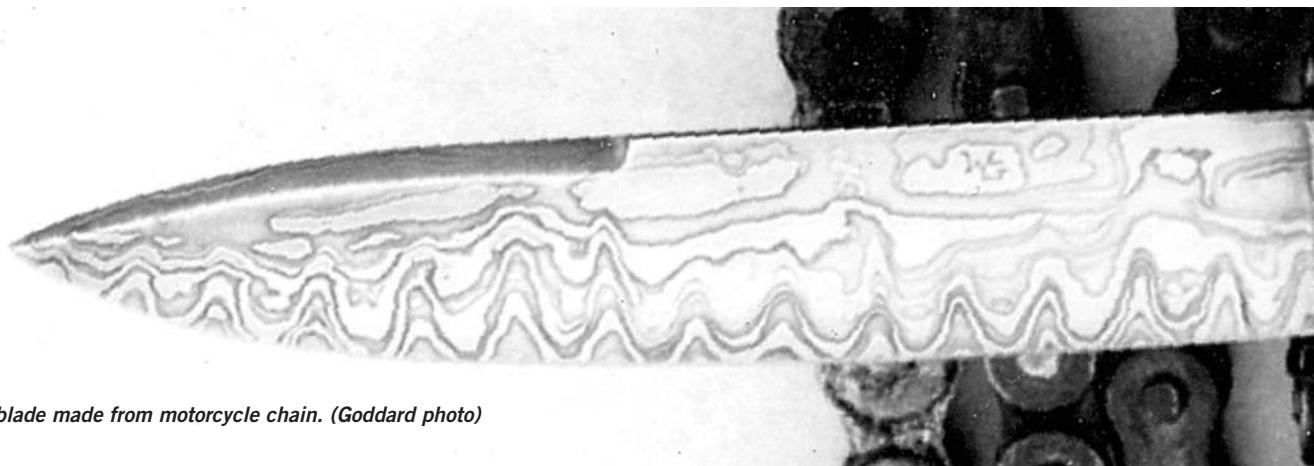
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FORGING MOTORCYCLE CHAINS...

... AND CHAINSAW CHAINS AND WIRE ROPE INTO SERVICEABLE BLADES



A blade made from motorcycle chain. (Goddard photo)

1: Your book, Wayne Goddard's \$50 *Knife Shop*, is very informative and well done. I have built my own forge from an upside-down lawnmower body, and a brake rotor surrounded by refractory cement or fire clay. I have made simple hooks for our potholder hanging from the ceiling, and a pair of tongs. I am interested in learning about forging motorcycle chain into a bar and shaping a knife from it. I have made a few knives from farrier rasps and saw blades, but would like to make one from my old Harley-Davidson® drive chain. I bought some borax but was told I need some other kind of flux before forging the chain. (Bob Quesada, Arizona)

Thank you for the kind words. It is always nice to hear from those who are helped along the way on their journey into knife-making.

Turning out good forge welds takes getting a lot of little things right, and it starts with the type of borax. I recommend anhydrous borax. It has been processed so there is no moisture in it. It melts onto the surface of the billet and sticks to the hot surface. Household borax bubbles and,

quite often, more of it falls into the bottom of the forge than survives.

Welding up the chain from a motorcycle, bicycle, chainsaw or timing chain takes practice. Start by checking the chain to see if it is all steel. Some chain has neoprene seals on the rollers, and I have been told some chains have bronze bearings for the rollers. Before trying to weld up a chain, grind into a link and roller in order to make sure you have 100 percent steel.

To make a billet of chain ready for welding, use an abrasive cut-off wheel to cut the chain into 4-to-6-inch pieces. Wrap them with wire to make a bundle. Weld a handle onto the billet and you are ready to go.

HOW TO GAUGE WELDING HEAT

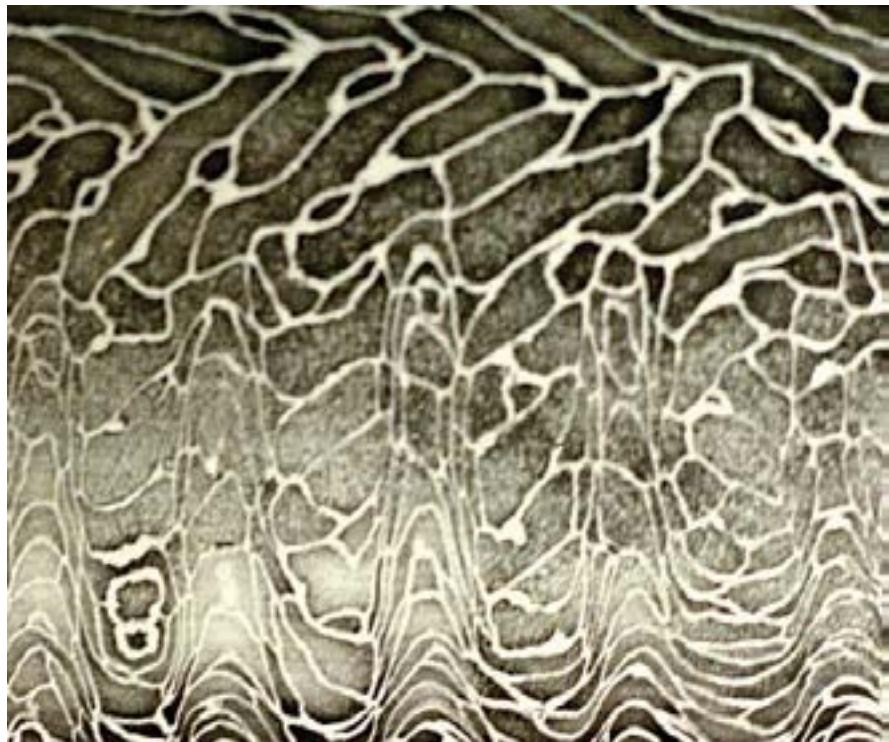
Take some coil spring material, an old file or whatever you have that you do not mind wasting. Build your welding fire and apply the borax on the rising heat before a lot of scale forms. Then watch the action of the borax on the steel. When it reaches the welding heat it should appear wet, runny and drippy; it is OK to add a bit more flux along the way. Apply it with

a long spoon or pull the billet out and sprinkle some on it.

Steel has a lower welding temperature than iron. To test your welding fire, use a low-carbon piece of steel—such as a metal coat hanger—and see if it will stick to the steel while in the fire. If it sticks, you have a welding heat.

Next, fold the steel piece over on itself; an inch will do. Bring it up to the welding heat, fluxing again on the rising heat. Once the welding heat is reached, it does not hurt much to let it soak for a minute or so as long as the heat is not rising to the burning range (sparkling). Hammer the folded section together, then do another welding heat and draw it out a bit. From there, grind into it to check to see if it is welded. That is elementary school on welding damascus.

2: I have been using your \$50.00 *Knife Shop* book as a reference for some time now. I appreciate all the ingenuity, simplicity and creativity. I also enjoy that it encourages folks to use readily available materials, which promotes sustainable/low impact/recycling values.



Steel made of chain-saw chain. (Goddard photo)



Steel made of wire rope/medium-coarse wires. (Goddard photo)

I bought a 67-pound, 1-inch wire sling/strap from my local metal recycling center. I am not sure if I got the right stuff, but figured for 20 cents a pound I could not go too terribly wrong! In reading your information on wire damascus, I noticed the illustration of single wires taken from various ropes to show the carbon/steel ra-

tio. The center strand (B) is said to come from 1-inch diameter rope, which seems to give the best balance for blade function as well as pattern. Of course, I am hoping that applies to the 1-inch strap I bought. Is there any way to tell if it is desirable cable? I know a picture means very little to this sort of evaluation, but I was wondering if

you have encountered/used similar tow/sling straps in your history of scrounging for usable material. (Danny Robinson, address n/a)

You will need to use the old tried-and-true quench test to determine the hard-enability of the wires.

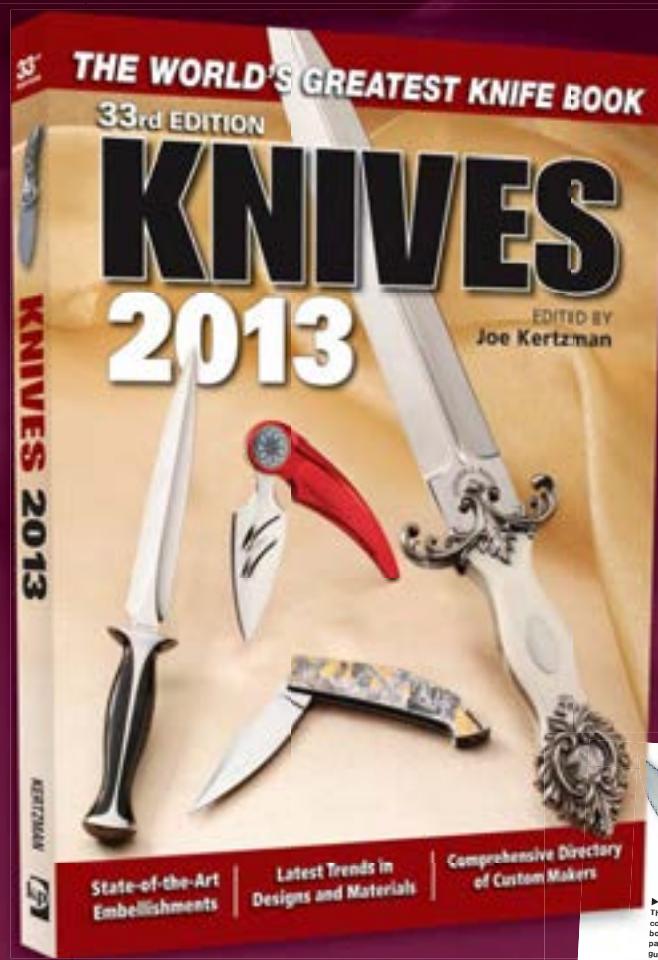
Cut the cable into pieces 12 inches long. Take one piece and heat a couple inches of one end to nonmagnetic, or slightly hotter. (Hotter fixes that.) Quench it in heated (130°-150°F) oil or whatever you use for quenching. Keep the quenched end in the oil until it cools enough to touch. Being sure to wear eye protection, place the quenched end on your anvil and give it a couple of hammer blows. If all the wires break like glass, it will make a good knife. Low- and medium-carbon wires will bend without breaking. Some cable will have wires of two or three different carbon contents; this type will make an interesting outer skin of a blade but not the best cutting edge.

Heat and twist the foot-long pieces, making them as tight as possible. Cut each foot-long piece into 3- or 4-inch pieces. Wire them together and weld a handle of half-inch or larger rebar onto the result. Forge it into a rough square section in the first heat. The second welding heat is forged on the corners, back into a square cross section. Do one more welding heat, once again forging it on the corners back to square. Weld and draw the billet out without folding it. I find this the best way to get flaw-free materials. The method is best done with a press or power hammer.

One tool I consider essential is an abrasive saw for cutting the wire rope. Mr. Robinson's sling should have enough steel in it to make 30-to-40 knives.

3: What size diameter of 52100 bar stock should I get to produce a blade 7 inches long, 2 inches wide and 3/16-inch thick? I am trying for the first time to make an integral santoku chef's knife using a 30-pound Kerrihard power hammer. I want the blade

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This is the sling Mr. Robinson bought for 20 cents a pound. (Goddard photo)

to be at least 2 inches wide near the choil to provide room for the user's fingers while working the knife on a cutting board. (Kurt Swearingen, address n/a)

Determining the weight of the blade is how I work it out. For example, a full-tang, 5-inch hunting knife blade 1/8-inch thick might weigh 9 ounces. It will take 9 ounces or more of round or square stock to make the same blade of damascus. You will need to add a couple ounces for the integral bolster.

In the reference section of most steel catalogs is a table that tells the weight of bar stock. I use the one from a 1971 Pacific Machinery and Tool Steel catalog. It indicates a 3/16-inch-thick bar that is 2 inches wide will weigh 2.13 pounds per foot. If you taper the blade, it will decrease the weight some.

Send your questions for Wayne Goddard or Joe Szilaski to BLADE®, POB 789, Ooltewah, TN 37363-0789 steve.shackelford@fwmedia.com. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your name and address for a personal response from Wayne, or e-mail him at wgoddard44@comcast.net. E-mail Joe at joe@szilaski.com. If you wish, BLADE will not print your name with your question.

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RIGHT THING FOR THE RIGHT REASON

KIT CARSON'S INDUCTION INTO THE CUTLERY HALL OF FAME REFLECTS HIS APPROACH TO LIFE IN GENERAL

Teacher, mentor, retired Army master sergeant and friend to the knife industry, knifemaker Harold "Kit" Carson became the 49th member inducted into the Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall Of Fame® during the 2012 BLADE Show at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta.

Formally inducted by his friend and fellow Cutlery Hall-Of-Famer Ken Onion during the Blade Magazine Awards Banquet on show Saturday night, June 9, Kit was unable to attend due to health concerns. Accepting on his behalf was another of his many industry friends, Rod Bremer of Columbia River Knife & Tool.

Kit is probably best known for helping popularize the flipper style of folder and for his M16 folder, and also his M4 and M21. The latter three knives have been reproduced by CRKT in factory/custom collaborations, the M16 in 20 different iterations in the current CRKT catalog alone. He also collaborated with Roy Helton on the CrossLock for Buck in 1996. Kit designed the Intrepid for Buck and also the Magna folder for Outdoor Edge.



Kit Carson holds one of his factory/custom CRKT M16 collaborations at a past SHOT Show.



The newest iteration of Kit Carson's M16 for CRKT is the M16-SS EDC. Depending on the choice of model you have the option of a spear-point or tanto blade of 8Cr13MoV stainless steel. Handles are "retro-flavored" stainless in a classic black oxide finish. MSRP range: \$46.99-\$49.99. (CRKT photo)

However, as much as he is revered for his knives, perhaps his most lasting contribution is his willingness to teach any and all how to make them. Combined with the timing of it—when knives and knifemaking exploded on the Internet circa the late 1990s/early 2000s—his mentoring benefited perhaps as many new and upcoming potential knifemakers as anyone before or since.

TRUE AMBASSADOR

"This isn't about how wonderful his knives are—though they are impressive—it's not so much about his 40 years as a custom knifemaker, not about his military service, though he did spend 20 years in the Army, retiring in 1993 as a master sergeant," Onion began in his induction speech. "It's not so much his collaborations with factories, though they are impressive. It's about one of the most beloved custom knifemakers ever, a true ambassador of the handmade knife and this industry, a man who deeply loves his craft, this group of enthusiasts here tonight, and spending the last four decades selflessly teaching and promoting his craft to any and all who wish to learn.

"The list of makers he's taught, encouraged and promoted is impressive and includes names like A.T. Barr, Jerry

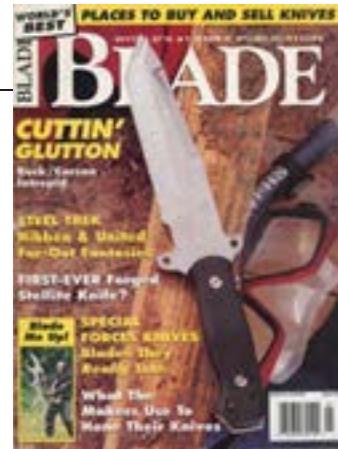
Corbin, John Greco, Jim Smyth, Jon Graham, Jerry Hossom, Marty Young and Brian

Fellhoelter, to name a few.

He's just one of those guys who loves to help everyone around him, to help new guys refine their techniques, find their footing or learn a few new tricks, to encourage the new or old makers

with his 'C'mon in guys, take your shoes off and sit a spell' personality, his calm demeanor, and his caring and nurturing nature. It is no wonder he is so admired.

"He took me under his wing when I was just a snot-nosed little punk knifemaker and taught, encouraged and con-



Designed by Kit Carson, the Buck Intrepid was the cover knife for the January 1999 BLADE®.

gratulated me for my entire career," Onion continued. "This guy is also a patriot, an amazing patriot. I've known him for as long as I've been making knives and he's been sending a good amount of his custom knives to active-duty servicemen without asking anything in return, just doing the right thing for the right

reason. He's definitely a lead-by-example kind of guy. He also supports many veteran and law enforcement charities every year. I can think of no one more deserving, no one that emphasizes the purpose and meaning of the Hall Of Fame more so than my friend, Mr. Harold 'Kit' Carson."

SOWING THE M16 SEEDS

Accepting on Kit's behalf, Bremer recalled a special meeting with the inductee.

"The first BLADE Show we attended as

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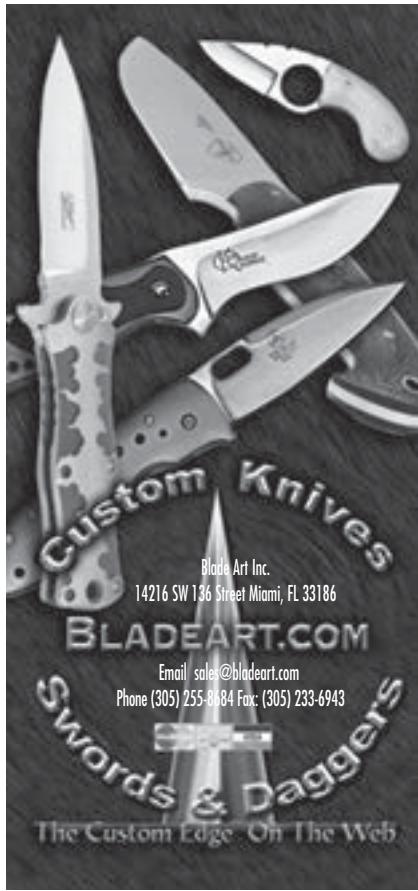
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CRKT was in 1996. Kit came to our table and he talked to me and I was blown away that he even gave us the time of day," Bremer said. "He offered up a fixed blade to us that was a killer design and I was mesmerized because that was back in the day when he [helped develop] the Cross-Lock for Buck. I was thrilled he gave us any attention whatsoever, but that's the kind of guy Kit is.

"I brought the knife back to my old partner and I said, 'Kit Carson has given us this opportunity to do one of his designs.' I was so excited but we didn't know what to do with it. It was clearly not something we could do a good job for him on, so we didn't know how to say no thanks because it was Kit Carson. We said, 'Kit, we can't do this knife justice.' We were honest with him and I believe he did it with Buck and it was a big success and they had the right horsepower to do it, and we didn't at the time. What's very cool about Kit was he didn't throw us under the bus for that.

"A couple years later at a Guild Show we looked on the corner of his table and there was his M16 and I thought, 'Man, that is just too good to not try one more time to see if we couldn't put something together with him.' And you know, that's the bread and butter for CRKT, one of many, and that's just a little snippet of the kind of guy Kit Carson is," Bremer concluded.

Noting that Kit was struggling with his health, he added, "But he's going to be good and his spirit is always good." Bremer then read the following statement prepared by Kit.

IN KIT'S WORDS

"It's indeed an honor and privilege to stand before you tonight to fulfill another goal in my life's journey with a totally unexpected honor—to be inducted into the Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall Of Fame. Understanding that only one individual is selected each year makes this an even more special event for me.

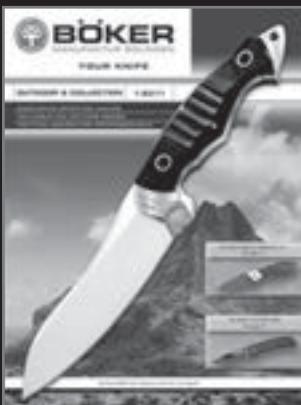
"Having grown up not far from here in North Georgia, I've always been interested in anything mechanical. I've carried that fascination to find innovative and creative things, to make things work better throughout my life. After high school I served a four-year apprenticeship here in Atlanta, finishing in 1972. That year I started making knives and was also drafted into the Army. I served in numerous positions throughout Europe and the United States.

"It was during my last 10 years in the Army that knifemaking became extremely interesting and a challenging hobby. Those were extremely rough years, long hours as both a soldier and knifemaker while always trying to ensure that our kids had a sandwich and a lunchbox. I was working in small sheds, basements and garages, or wherever I could find space in government housing, apartments and houses, to grind a blade shape or handle, or try to figure out how a locking mechanism worked.

"If it weren't for the love and patience of my bride, Miss Betty, children Jody and Christy, or equally the friendship of folks like Bob Cargill to be there to answer questions, I would've never survived as a

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maker. It was the friendship of those like Bob, Ken Onion, Gene Baskett, George Young and Les Robertson, as that is what this craft is all about.

"We did not have the Internet, all the books or the specialty tools. Many of us still today do every piece by hand, filing, sanding, honing blades, slowly creating knives, spending hundreds of hours at knife and BLADE shows establishing our names in the industry and, most importantly, making lifelong friends.

"The profession of knifemaking ranks right up there with any profession that requires dedication, devotion, passion, honesty. It's all about customer service and the pride of stamping your name on a blade which communicates to the world it's something you've created. Regardless if it's a unique custom, one-of-a-kind or production model that millions of copies were produced from, it's yours, it's who you are, it's where you've been, and it's your creativity and innovation. However, it must stand for quality."

"I know there are no limits to this profession as to where it can go. Thanks to the Internet, our blog and forum sites, publications like *BLADE* Magazine that support manufacturers like CRKT, Buck, Spyderco, to name just a few, coupled with the fact that knifemakers come from every background and every walk of life, the continued progressing of this profession is unlimited. Shoot, one could even argue that if you put a group of knifemakers, blacksmiths and collectors together, you could build a spaceship.

"I've pretty much dedicated the past 35 years of my life to our country and my family in trying to progress the profession of knifemaking throughout the world. The recognition of my dedication is extremely humbling, much appreciated and will never be forgotten. This is the highlight of my knifemaking life. I pledge to you all that I will continue to progress this profession through continued memberships of both young and old knifemakers—and we'll see ya' on the moon."

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BUILT FOR STRENGTH AND RELIABILITY, SPYDERCO'S COMPRESSION LOCK CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

THE UPSIDE

In the simplest of terms, Spyderco founder and Blade Magazine Cutlery Hall-Of-Fame® member Sal Glessner describes a knife lock as "putting a broomstick in the spokes." Introduced by Spyderco in 2000, the Compression Lock represents a distinctive approach to the problem of safely securing a folding knife blade in the open position, while providing strength for uses in life-or-death situations.

The details define what makes a successful knife lock effective, and the Compression Lock is well deserving of close examination. The lock traces its origin to when Sal needed a very strong one for a martial-blade-craft (MBC) knife that would become the Gunting, designed by

Bram Frank.

"I was looking at a LinerLock® and I was thinking that this could be done a different way," Sal recalled. "And I drew a sketch for Frank Centofante and our factory manager, and I said, 'Is there any reason why this wouldn't work?' Both felt it should work just fine." The Compression Lock debuted on the Gunting, followed closely by appearing on the Frank Centofante Vesuvius, the Lil' Temperance and, later, the all-metal ATR knife.

While the Gunting and ATR are heavy-duty MBC knives, the Spyderco brass was also beginning to use a new offshore maker in whom they saw potential. This resulted in the Compression-Lock-equipped Salsa. Another knife from the

same factory was the "S" model, which was a successor to the famous blade-cutout "Q" knives that are now so collectible.

This is where the story takes two different paths. While the original thought was to use the Compression Lock on MBC knives, there are also advantages in using it on smaller models. Because the traditional LinerLock has the release in the same spot near the end of the tang, the maker is limited in handle options. Since the Compression Lock release is atop the knife, the bottom surface that contacts the user's fingers can incorporate a wide variety of cutouts and grooves that would be difficult to incorporate with a LinerLock.

The best example of this thinking is



From left: 1) The Spyderco Compression Lock near its closed position; 2) with the lock tab pressing against the blade as it opens, and 3) in the fully locked position with the lock tab between the stop pin and the rear of the blade. (David W. Jung photo)

DOWN LOCK

demonstrated with the Spyderco Junior designed by Alexandru Diaconescu. Though the original design was directed toward young users whose fingers would be protected by the deep cutout in the handle, the actual model has a very small footprint while incorporating a substantial blade.

This illustrates another advantage the Compression Lock shares with the LinerLock. In both cases the lock is out of the plane of the blade, allowing more room for the blade in the handle. The common back lock takes up a sizable portion of the handle architecture instead of being tucked away to the side. As for the movement toward small knives, Sal says, "We are making smaller knives because we feel that as people get older

and maintain their interest in the knife world, they want smaller, more sophisticated knives they can enjoy without raising an eyebrow."

On the other end of the spectrum are knives such as the Paramilitary 2 and Super Leaf. Designed for heavy-duty use, they are built to function reliably under most any circumstance. While the Paramilitary might seem just a smaller version of the popular Spyderco Military LinerLock, it has a very different feel and design. The Spyderco team has learned when a knife is made smaller, it is not just a matter of shrinking the dimensions.

The Paramilitary 2 also represents a major revision of the original Paramilitary. With larger nested metal liners, more

ergonomic handle design and smoother lines when closed, the Paramilitary 2 takes advantage of a revised Compression Lock to provide a very solid lockup. Both versions come from Spyderco's factory in Golden, Colorado.

With a 3.4-inch VG-10 blade, the Super Leaf folder manufactured in Seki City, Japan, represents a different avenue for the Compression Lock models. The flat-ground blade answers the user's desire for a larger leaf-shaped pattern. Though quite substantial, the comfortable G-10 scales fit the hand well, with multiple grip options.

HOW THE LOCK WORKS

To understand the Compression Lock, it

The Spyderco Compression Lock has appeared on several Spyderco models, a few of which include, top row from left: Super Leaf and "S"; second row: ATR; third row, from left: Paramilitary 2 and Lil' Temperance; and bottom row: Junior. (David W. Jung photo)



helps to look at the closest lock relatives, which include the LinerLock and Integral Lock, the latter also known as the frame lock. From the outset there are significant differences.

LinerLocks use a long cutout from the liner, which engages the back of the blade in a sideways direction when open. Frame locks use the back part of the integral handle scale in the same manner. The Compression Lock uses a tang that can be very short or just as long as the LinerLock. The closing pressure is not directed along the length of the tang, but rather across the cross section end of it.

A good way to visualize the difference in strength is to fold a piece of paper lengthwise. The length of paper flexes very easily from end to end. Take the same folded paper at the narrowest section and try to compress the edges together and the difference is apparent.

The way closing pressure is applied to the locking tang is one of the greatest strengths of the Compression Lock. Compare it to the open LinerLock, which directs pressure down the length of the liner, allowing for the possibility of flex anywhere along the length. To compensate, a LinerLock can be made stronger by adjusting the material and thickness of the lock. However, there is a point of diminishing returns, as the lock becomes too heavy or bulky for the chosen knife design.

This is true to a lesser extent on frame-lock knives as well. When the knife is



The Compression Lock on the Paramilitary 2 (right) has refined geometry and dimensions compared to the original (left). (David W. Jung photo)

in the closed position, the locking tab remains in the plane of the liner. As the lock reaches the fully open position, it springs toward the opposite liner. Since the pin now stops the blade's opening movement, the lock tab moves into the channel formed by the stop pin and the beveled edge of the rear of the blade. The end of the tab is relatively small but the closing force is directed across the cross section of the lock tab, making it extremely strong.

Choosing a knife is always a matter of personal taste, and the choice of different lock designs makes the decision much harder. As with other Spyderco folders, opening is easy, with the opening hole falling under the user's thumb. Holding the opened knife, the user will notice the lock release sandwiched between handle scales on the top, resting under the area where some position the thumb. Unlocking is accomplished by pressing the lock tab to the side until it nests within the handle scale. Some use their index finger to push the tab. Others hold the handle with the left hand, pressing the tab with the thumb while controlling the blade with the right hand.

If there is a disadvantage of the lock, it is the unlocking motion must be more deliberate than with the LinerLock, and it is slightly harder to close with one hand. Still, it is unlikely a user will accidentally unlock this knife. The mechanism of the Compression Lock is very simple and reliable, so the decision comes down to comfort and the suitability of the knife to fit the buyer's needs.

The Compression Lock has an interesting position in the Spyderco lineup. While it has a definite use as an MBC-rated lock, it also fills certain applications because of its reliability and simplicity. When asked where it might not work, Sal took the opposite tack, saying, "If we can't fit a lock, we will look at the Compression Lock."



From an angle, the locking tab can be seen extended into the channel created by the stop pin and the rear of the blade. (David W. Jung photo)

ONE TOOL IN THE LOCK ARSENAL

When Spyderco began making LinerLocks, the company had the assistance of custom knifemakers Michael Walker, the Cutlery Hall Of Famer credited with creating the lock, and Bob Terzoula, each



The Spyderco Junior folds into a compact handle with the opening hole easily accessible. The deep handle cutout provides protection for the hand during use. (David W. Jung photo)

of whom offered tips and advice on making the LinerLock function well. With the Compression Lock, Spyderco had a clean slate and had to work out the issues early. The younger half of Spyderco's knife design team, Eric Glessner, described it this way: "In my opinion, the lock has evolved very far and will continue to evolve very

far. If you take out the original Compression Locks that we did in the past versus the one we do today, we have come a long way. The geometries, the materials used, the forces that are in the locks and how they are used, and the detents, all are completely different these days on most models. And there is still a lot of different

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KNIFE MECHANISMS |



The rugged ATR, which came with titanium or stainless handles, had the Compression Lock exposed to the side similar to an Integral Lock, aka frame lock. (David W. Jung photo)

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ways we are going. As time goes on, you can see that there has been evolution and we still have a lot more ideas."

With over a decade of experience, Spyderco officials seem very comfortable with the Compression Lock. They do not use it on all their knives, just as one tool in their lock arsenal. In addition to the current lineup, Spyderco has several new knives planned using the lock with some interesting variations—if you have the patience to wait. If not, a visit to your local knife store is always therapeutic.

For more information on Spyderco knives with the Compression Lock, contact Spyderco, attn: J. Laituri, Dept. BL11, 820 Spyderco Way, Golden, CO 80403 800-525-7770 www.spyderco.com, customerservice@spyderco.com.

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A THINNER SKINNER

LARRY PRIDGEN'S .100-INCH-THICK DAMASCUS BLADE TACKLES A MEDIA ASSORTMENT

Brad Vice of Alabama Damascus introduced me to Larry Pridgen during the Arkansas Custom Knife Show. After some general knife discussion and a quick question-and-answer session on heat treating, I had my pick of any knife on Larry's table. He had a bunch of styles to choose from but his toothpick Skinner felt different. I looked forward to cutting with the thin-bladed damascus knife. Let's get slicing and dicing.

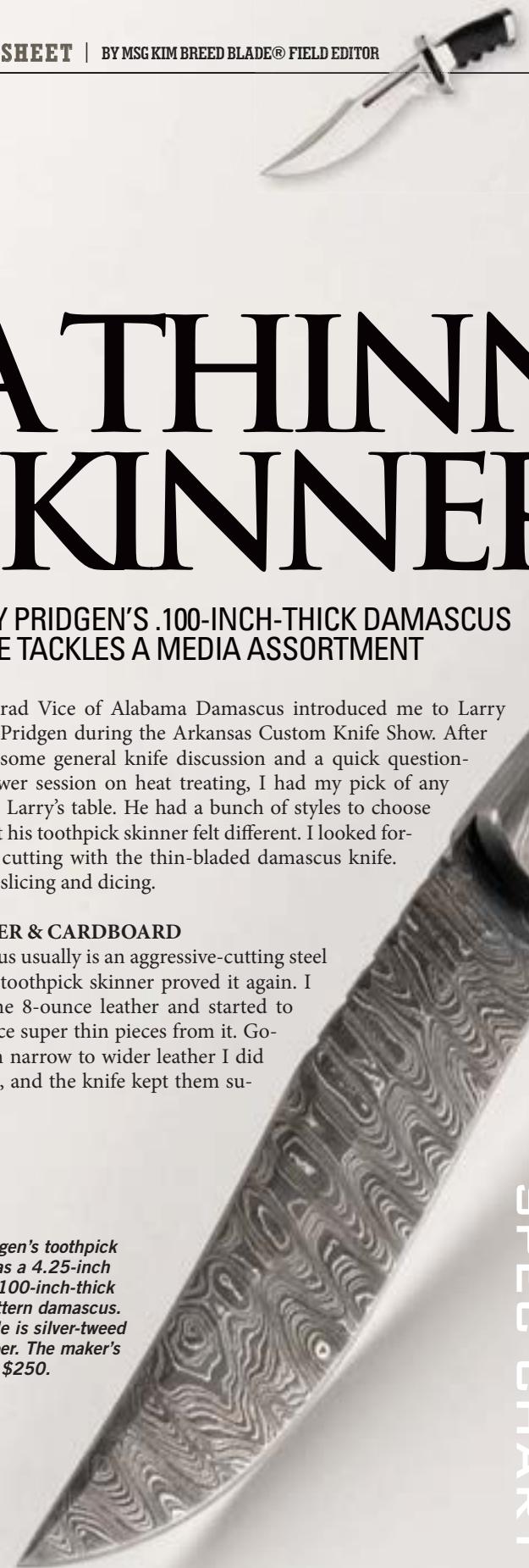
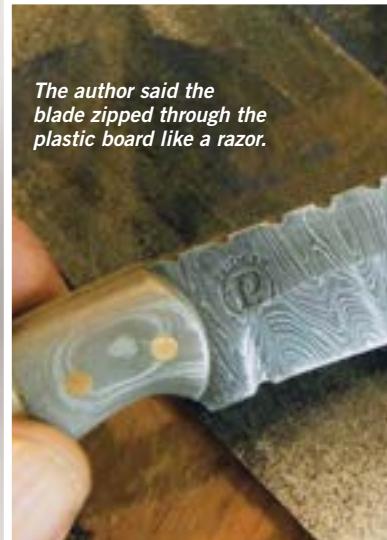
LEATHER & CARDBOARD

Damascus usually is an aggressive-cutting steel and the toothpick Skinner proved it again. I had some 8-ounce leather and started to skive/slice super thin pieces from it. Going from narrow to wider leather I did 25 slices, and the knife kept them super thin.

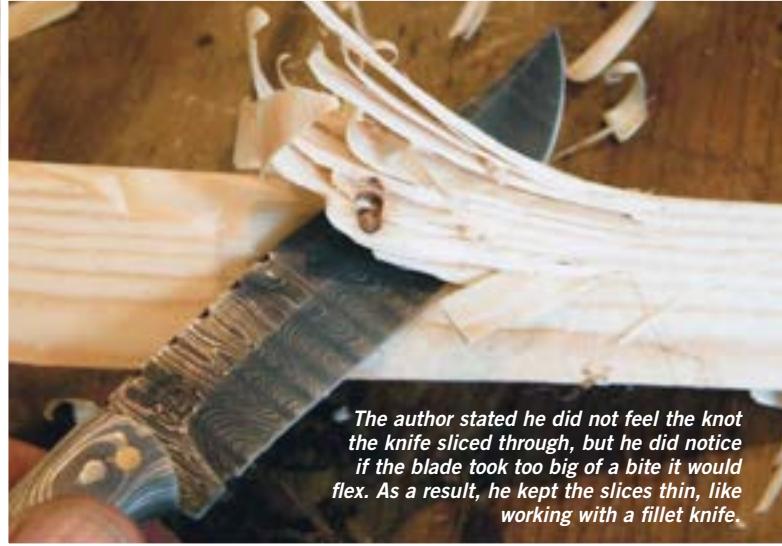
Larry Pridgen's toothpick Skinner has a 4.25-inch blade of .100-inch-thick ladder-pattern damascus. The handle is silver-tweed carbon fiber. The maker's list price: \$250.

SPEC CHART

KNIFE: Toothpick Skinner
MAKER: Larry Pridgen
BLADE MATERIAL: A ladder-pattern damascus of 1084 and 15N20 steels
BLADE LENGTH: 4.25"
HEAT TREAT: 57 HRC
HANDLE: Silver-tweed carbon fiber
FITTINGS: Damascus
PINS: Mosaic
SHEATH: Hand-stitched 8-ounce leather
OVERALL LENGTH: 8 7/8"
MAKER'S LIST PRICE: \$250



Going from narrow to wider 8-ounce leather, the knife made 25 slices and kept them super thin.



The author stated he did not feel the knot the knife sliced through, but he did notice if the blade took too big of a bite it would flex. As a result, he kept the slices thin, like working with a fillet knife.

It was time to clean out the stack of cardboard boxes that keep multiplying in my garage. I usually wait until the stacks of them fall over three or four times and block my way before I do something about them. This time it was fall down No. 5 and the boxes fell on my Harley. After flinging the boxes off my bike and into the driveway, I cooled down enough to grab the thin skinner and reduce the boxes to a pile of flat pieces. I really like the thin blade. It handled 150 cuts on the cardboard and did not falter. As a last slicing challenge, I grabbed the plastic board and zip, zip, zip, the thin blade smoked through it like a razor.

1x2 PINE SLATS

I found a stash of 1x2 pine slats. I grabbed a 2-foot slat and started whittling. The thin blade sliced through the wood fast and smooth. I did not feel the knot it severed, but I did notice if the blade took too big of a bite it would flex.

As a result, I had to keep the slices thin, like working with a fillet knife. I tried to do some chopping with it but the lightweight and thin blade made getting deep bites difficult. It was faster to slice into the wood. Remember, the blade is only .100-inch thick and is made for slicing and dicing.

HALF- AND 1-INCH ROPE

I pulled a new roll of half-inch sisal rope from the shelf, grabbed my cutting board and went to town. As I reached 100 cuts, a strong gust of hot wind blew in the open door and scattered my cuttings from one end of the garage to the other. It figures it would be when Melissa brought me some iced tea. She had that I-know-you-will-clean-this-mess-up-shortly look. I reached for the shop vacuum and a half hour later I was cutting again. This time I closed the door and made another 125 clean crunching cuts—225 cuts in all—and the edge was still going.

I reached for a length of 1-inch hemp rope. The thin Skinner gave another 40 clean cuts in the thicker rope before the edge started to slide. With the thicker rope, the slim handle was more difficult to establish a strong grip, but it was comfortable during cutting.

A FEW EXTRAS

The Skinner has a few extras that take it up a notch in looks. Larry fileworked the blade spine and used mosaic pins to secure the handles—a nice touch of class.

I WOULD ...

... like to see the same knife in eighth-inch-thick stock to handle more uses in camp.

BOTTOM LINE

Larry's knife is very comfortable to use and excellent at cutting and slicing. The thin blade is great for such lighter work, though of course a little thin for heavy use.



The thin Skinner gave another 40 clean cuts in the thicker rope before the edge started to slide. On the thicker rope, the slim handle was more difficult to establish a strong grip, but it was comfortable during cutting.

For more information contact Larry Pridgen, Dept. BL11, POB 707, Fitzgerald, GA 31750 229-591-0013 www.pridgencustomknives.com.

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GROUP EFFORT RESULTS IN A STUNNING KNIFE TO BE AUCTIONED DURING THE UPCOMING GUILD SHOW

A classic custom knife made in a cooperative effort will be sold in a live auction on the ballroom floor of the Knifemakers' Guild Show at the Seelbach Hilton Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky, Sept. 15 at 3 p.m. All proceeds will be "for the good of the Guild."

The semi-integral Bob Loveless-style fighter is a knifemaking collaboration between Edmund Davidson and Steve Johnson. Davidson did the milling, tapering, filing and sanding, and Johnson the hollow grinding, polishing and etching.

Barry Lee Hands did the sculpting and 24k-gold engraving. Peters Heat Treating heat treated the blade, and Fine Turnage Productions provided a fine pair of dark blue Siberian mastodon scales. Paul Long made the sheath, which is faced with wood-grain shark skin over cow hide. A "bow-tie" keeper strap is designed to protect the engraving when the knife is sheathed.

The knife was finished in time to pass around at the Custom Knife Collectors Association Banquet (see page 10) the day before the BLADE Show. Point Seven shot the knife and sheath shown in the photo at right.

For more information contact the Knifemakers' Guild, attn: Linda Hibben, Dept. BL11, 2914 Winters Ln., La Grange, KY 40031 502-222-1397 gil@hibbenknives.com.

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BLADE



Impeccable materials, workmanship, engraving, heat treating, sheath work, photography and more distinguish a lavish Bob Loveless-style fighter completed by a team of Guild members/supporters. It will be auctioned the Saturday of the Guild Show, Sept. 15, at 3 p.m. in the Seelbach Hilton Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky, with all proceeds going to the betterment of the Guild. (Point Seven photo)

SPEC CHECK

KNIFE: Bob Loveless-style integral fighter
MAKERS: Edmund Davidson and Steve Johnson
BLADE LENGTH: 6 1/8"
BLADE STEEL: CPM-154 stainless
HEAT TREAT by Peters Heat Treating: 62 HRC
HANDLE: Blue Siberian mastodon courtesy of Fine Turnage Productions
ENGRAVING: Barry Lee Hands
SHEATH: Paul Long

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