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TEAM SPOTLIGHT
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INTERMEDIATE BARRIERS
And the Police Sniper
BENCHMARKED Rescue Hook

BY: BOB GOEPFERT

As Law Enforcement professionals, we all understand the importance of carrying a cutting device. Whether we carry a tactical folding knife, utility tool, or Swiss Army knife, we know that a sharp blade can literally be a life saver at times. I have personally used my tactical folder on three occasions to cut through seat belts and free subjects trapped inside their burning vehicle as the result of auto accidents.

With this in mind, Benchmade knives is now marketing an edged tool designed specifically for the needs of law enforcement, military and rescue personnel. The new 7 Rescue Hook (or simply 7) is built for the express purpose of cutting seatbelts, webbing, netting and clothing with ease.

Benchmade Knife Company has been producing quality knives and cutting tools since 1988. Currently, they operate out of a 35,000 square foot production facility in Oregon that utilizes state of the art machinery, including metal cutting lasers. They have developed a reputation over the years for producing a line of high quality specialty cutlery and the new 7 is no exception.

I recently had the opportunity to test and evaluate this new tool during patrol and tactical training. At only 4.30 inches long, .114 inches thick, and 1.60 ounces in weight, the 7 is a small, unobtrusive tool. My first impression of the 7 was that it was a simple, well constructed tool with a razor sharp cutting hook. The handle felt a bit uncomfortable at first, but I quickly got used to it and began cutting various materials. The 7's sharpened hook went through 1 inch nylon rope with ease. The design of the 7 makes it excellent for cutting clothing to expose injuries prior to treatment. The rounded edges and recessed cutting head, allow you to quickly cut clothing or seatbelts off of a victim without endangering them with an exposed blade. The 7 is held securely in its sheath and is instantly accessible thanks to an oversized pull tab attached to the sheath cover.

THE 7 IS DESIGNED WITH A CURVED CUTTING HEAD (OR HOOK) THAT IS DESIGNED TO EFFECTIVELY CUT VARIOUS MATERIALS WHILE OFFERING PROTECTION FROM SKIN INJURY.

The State Park Police have been equipped with the Glock model 22, .40 caliber pistol since 1992. While satisfied with the ballistic performance of this weapon, they began looking into options to retrofit their aging line of duty weapons. Their current Glock pistols are all first generation weapons that are beginning to show their age. A recent inspection of issued weapons found numerous weapons with cracks in the polymer receivers.

The State Police have utilized the Glock model 17, 9mm pistol for the past 17 years. This weapon has performed well over the years, but recent events have led the State Police to consider an upgrade. The Troopers have had several shooting incidents in the last few years, including the tragic shooting death of Trooper Andrew J. Sperr in March 2006. These incidents have led the State Police to look into other options for their duty weapons.

Recently the New York State Park Police and the New York State Police announced the purchase of Glock Model 37, .45 GAP semi-automatic pistols to replace their current duty weapons.

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The 7 Rescue Hook is designed to effectively cut various materials while offering protection from skin injury.

THE BALLISTIC PERFORMANCE OF THE .45 GAP IS VERY SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE .45 ACP ROUND. IT HAS AN INITIAL MUZZLE VELOCITY OF 950 FPS AND 401 FOOT POUNDS OF ENERGY.

One drawback of the .45 GAP is the lower magazine capacity. The model 37 has a 10 round magazine, where the model 17 had a 17 round capacity and the model 22 had a 15 round capacity. Each agency will adjust for this reduced ammunition capacity by issuing officers one additional magazine with each weapon. This will give officers the ability to carry 41 rounds total while on patrol.

The New York State Police announced the purchase of the Glock Model 37, .45 GAP semi-automatic pistols to replace their current duty weapons.

Both the State Police and the State Park Police began looking at the options available to their perspective agencies. After considerable review and testing, both agencies decided to transition to the Glock Model 37, .45 GAP pistol.

One of the most obvious benefits of selecting the .45 GAP Glock was the fact that this pistol is fundamentally the same as the weapons that it is replacing. The new Glock functions and disassembles exactly the same as the weapons that it is replacing. This will make the transition very simple for both officers and trainers alike. Other benefits include the finger grooves and accessory rail molded into the new generation Glock. The finger grooves improve the shooters grip over the earlier generation Glock pistols, and the accessory rail allows officers to easily attach weapons mounted light to the model 37.

Both the State Police and Park Police have selected Speer .45 GAP 200 grain Gold Dot HP ammunition as their department’s duty ammunition.

For those of you not familiar with the .45 GAP round, it appears similar to the traditional .45 ACP round, but is in fact very different. The case itself is unique. It is shorter than a .45 ACP with different case wall specifications. The primer is also different, and the case is necked down to accept the smaller diameter bullet.

All together, the new Glock Model 37, .45 GAP semi-automatic pistol is an excellent addition to the state’s law enforcement arsenal. It is lightweight, easy to carry, and very effective at stopping threats.

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being a small pistol primer, rather than the larger primer found in the .45 ACP. The bullet itself remains very similar to the .45 ACP.

The ballistic performance of the .45 GAP is very similar to that of the .45 ACP round. It has an initial muzzle velocity of 950 fps and 401 foot pounds of energy. Tests of this ammunition against various types of material have shown it to have an average penetration of over 12 inches while maintaining almost 100% of its bullet weight.

At this time, the State Police and the State Park Police are both beginning to transition their officers over to this new caliber pistol. They anticipate the change over to be complete by the end of this spring.

Several other law enforcement agencies have also recently made the switch to the .45 GAP pistol, including the Georgia State Police.

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New York State Park Police

(Officer Goepfert is a 15 year veteran of the NYS Park police. He is currently a firearms instructor and lead trainer for their Tactical Rifle Unit (TRU)).