

TUFF-WRITER TACTICAL PENS⁴⁹

By Barrett Tillman

Around the world, the people with guns are mostly military, police, criminals, or terrorists. So the question is: What do you do when the local security apparatus and the progressive-socialist-fascist atmosphere prevent you from legally bearing arms?

The late, great knifemaker Al Mar offered travelers some intriguing solutions. He was nothing if not objective, declaring, "If you need a knife to save your life, you've probably screwed up." But Al had other options: Wear a hat with a garrote coiled inside or, if you're not the physical type, investigate the local bazaar and purchase a couple of "pineapples." There's much to be said for grenades, as they don't leave fingerprints, though proximity to their use could be self-defeating.

The problem is not limited to overseas venues. Last year, a friend of mine was obliged to visit New York City on business. He's definitely one of us – a certified life member of The Gun Culture. But considering the peculiar laws enforced in The Big Apple, he was obliged to leave his normal traveling accessories at home. His hotel was near the Manhattan business district but still he had to walk six blocks or so each way. (Just try hailing a cab in that area!)

"So there I was," he lamented, "walking around NYC with nothing but a room key and a sharp pencil in my pocket." He admits that he enjoyed hearing languages that he never knew existed and smelling new smells (mostly pleasant), though it was still a place for constant Condition Yellow.

Fortunately, there's now another option: a handy, unobtrusive instrument called the Tuff-Writer tactical pen.

Jack Roman is a Phoenix entrepreneur who saw a market for an unobtrusive, multi-functional implement that can write a check or punch a deep hole in whatever needs a deep hole punched in it. As a boxer, Roman realized that the Marquess of Queensbury rules do not apply to the down-and-dirty real world of violent contact. "A good boxer doesn't necessarily make a good street fighter," he says. Consequently, anything solid is an advantage in hand-to-hand encounters.

"Tuff-Writer isn't a substitute for a knife," Roman stresses. But it is a useful tool that, when used with moderate skill and much determination, beats the bejabbbers out of the blade you're not allowed to carry. It's the thrusting equivalent of the old wisdom: "The .22 in your pocket is better than the .44 in your safe."

Though sometimes the mere presence of something solid can deter aggression, Roman emphasizes the need for training. He's posted a video on the company website and plans to produce a longer tape for customers. The information includes modes of carry and specific moves.

Tuff-Writer's elongated thrusting end looks non-threatening to most people. The knurled portion of the handle provides a firm grip. Best of all, from a security checkpoint perspective, the Tuff-Writer actually writes. When the cap is unscrewed, a conventional ballpoint nib is exposed, and it produces a fine line in black ink. Refills are readily obtainable for those pen owners who, well, intend to write something. Both Fisher and Foray refills may be used.

The Tuff-Writer is precision machined to aerospace tolerances in the United States. It's made from oversized stock 6061-T6 aluminum and hard anodized to Mil-A-8625

"F" standards for maximum durability. The custom-designed spring steel clip is attached with hardened bolts, then chemically bonded. "It might not be indestructible, but it's close," Roman asserts.

In nearly two years of use, Tuff-Writer clients have traveled throughout the U.S. and overseas with almost no difficulty. Tuff-Writer has been used on the street, sometimes merely for its presence. An early episode occurred late one Chicago night when a client noticed two young males half a block away. They pursued him, apparently not for conversational purposes. The pedestrian pulled the pen from his pocket, and the clip made that slightly audible "clink" of steel against anodized aluminum. Roman relates, "Once they heard and saw that, the two guys stopped, turned around and walked away. He believes they probably thought it was a knife, but he said he sure as hell was glad to have it.

Tuff-Writer customers include a police officer who used a pen to help restrain an aggressive suspect. Roman recalls, "He happened to have the pen in his hand when the guy started going off during a traffic stop, and it was just natural to use the pen as a control device. He didn't even think about it until afterwards. He just wanted me to know he appreciated the pen and thanked me for making such a product. "It was great to hear something like that since so many of our customers are LEOs," Roman says.

Some other tactical pens retail for \$100 to \$150 but Tuff-writers run in the \$80 range. At that rate, you can afford one for carrying and one for writing.



Tuff-Writer Stealth-Black Pen
H71-18274 \$79.95