

The Dillon Leather/Mitch Rosen Stylemaster-DL Shoulder Holster 53

By Duane Thomas

Dillon Precision recently enlisted well-known holstermaker Mitch Rosen as their manufacturer of Dillon Leather brand holsters and gunbelts. I have admired Mitch Rosen's work from afar for years, but had never owned an example. Obviously I needed to rectify that sad state of affairs, and let you guys know about the experience. I chose for this purpose the Dillon Leather Stylemaster-DL (stands for Dillon Leather, natch). The Stylemaster is an example of horizontal shoulder holster. (My longtime editor Jan Libourel argues that such rigs should actually be called "diagonal" shoulder holsters since that's actually more descriptive of the attitude at which the gun is held. For myself, I'll defer to the common terminology, though I admit Jan has a point.)

If you're going to carry in a shoulder holster, the horizontal rig is definitely the way to go. It's much more concealable than the older vertical shoulder holster system, where the gun is held muzzle down, butt sticking out the front. In the horizontal system, the gun is held muzzle pointing to the rear with a slight upward cant. This angles the butt of the gun along the body so it's quite concealable, especially if the gun also has a short barrel that doesn't protrude very far to the rear, thus won't print through the back of a concealing garment.

The great advantage of the shoulder holster is that it's a complete concealment system, all in one place. Your gun, carry gear and spare magazines are all of a unit, and may be put on and taken off all at once. The spare ammo supply is a part of the holster, typically a double mag pouch on the opposite side of the harness from the gun to counterbalance the weight.

Another great thing about a horizontal shoulder holster: in a situation where you feel threatened but are not yet justified in pulling a gun, you can wrap your hand around the gun butt under your jacket without exposing the piece. This can be hard to pull off with a belt-holstered gun that requires sweeping back the concealing garment to expose the gun butt.

I would less than totally honest if I didn't mention that shoulder rigs of any type do come with a few problems, or

maybe concerns would be a better term. For

one, you can never take off your jacket while wearing the holster in public.

Also you have to be extremely careful when bending over or the gun and holster will

flop out into the open. It's worth mentioning that Mitch Rosen recom-

mends wearing a horizontal rig high and tight, under the armpit, to minimize that possi-

bility. This also makes it easier to reholster the gun since it's snugged in tight to your armpit.

Examining the Stylemaster, this is an amazingly well-designed horizontal shoulder holster. Every feature on it is obviously the work of a man who knows what he's doing, and what a real-world carry holster needs. For instance (and this is something you might not realize until you actually wear it), the design of the harness, and how it's attached to the holster, serves to cant the bottom of the gun in against the body, as opposed to some other designs that cant it out at bottom, away from the side of the body. Obviously, the former will be more concealable, and more comfortable because it minimizes the gun's tendency to whack you in the side every time you move.

...continued on Page 64



See Page 20
to Order