



E'S HELLION
TVOR 2020

Mykel Hawke

162

There is reason the angle in the primary cutting edge of the blade is an indent offset of 2 to 3 percent; it's enough to assist in chopping cuts.

Let's get something straight; the Hawke's Hellion is not a sword, but a large and heavy tactical knife, a tool knife. It measures 14½ inches, including its tough Micarta handle. The handle also has a divet as a socket for the fire starting, bow drill method. The knife's metal is high-carbon spring steel S160 with a given RC of 56-58, and has a blade thickness of 3/16-inch. The RC 56-58 tolerance has to do with heating, hardening, and cooling process variances. It comes with a Lansky sharpener, TOPS fire starter, and a pocket survival saw.

The sheath is made of rot-reducing ballistic nylon with a Kydex insert.

Mykel Hawke teamed up with TOPS Knives to produce this survival knife, which is made entirely in the U.S. The steel is manufactured/forged in Iowa, the micarta is from Illinois, and all of the cutting, grinding, shaping, heat-treating, assembly, engraving, and sharpening is done at the TOPS facility in Idaho.

MYKEL HAWKE, THE KNIFE'S DESIGNER

Tactical knives are most often designed by custom knifemakers, martial arts practitioners, or people with a military background. Mykel Hawke is both a warrior and a scholar. Hawke has more than 20 years of combined military, civilian, and government experience, serving as a senior enlisted soldier of the U.S. Army Special Forces, and as a commissioned officer and team commander. He has also been a U.S. government contractor and country project manager in the world's hot spots.

As a scholar, he has taken courses in a number of languages and has earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and a Master of Science degree in Psychology, graduating Magna Cum Laude. And as for that martial arts thing, Hawke is an Aikido black belt and an instructor in other martial arts.

CUSTOM KNIFEMAKER'S COMMENTS

Jack Davenport is a core member of the 100-member Florida Knife Makers Association, a former a gunsmith, and a former Florida Everglades game officer who now crafts handmade knives. He has survived a serious knife fight and hunted (including



The thickness of the blade (3/16 inch), which travels nearly to the tip, the sharpness of the point, and the two sharp sides of the blade lend themselves to fantastic penetration.



A brief stint as a chef's knife in the kitchen, carving steaks for the grill, also adds testimony to the Hawke's Hellion's finer cutting abilities.



Mark Prince took the Hellion into the woodlands of Ohio. Here, he put the knife to the test by chopping, sawing and whittling.



The Hawke's Hellion is a tool knife. It is shown here with two other tool knives: (center) fixed-bladed Glock M78 Combat Field Knife, with a special attachment also serves as an Austrian special operations bayonet; and (top) the non-issue, but popular, Cattaraugus World War II Utility knife.

alligators), fished, and camped in the rough backcountry of Florida. Davenport also served in the U.S. National Guard.

Upon looking over the Hawke's Hellion, he said it was a knife that could be used for anything; even an Army tank mechanic could use it. There is a reason behind the angle in the primary cutting edge of the blade: it is an indent offset of 2 to 3

percent, enough to assist in chopping cuts.

The knife is an American tanto with a thick point. The tanto blade can be easily sharpened with a stone. On the top of the blade, the blade spine, there is a cutting edge that extends to a saw tooth section. Davenport said he would prefer that it not have the saw teeth since they can weaken blades.

“Many companies tout knives as survival blades when, in reality, they are just knives with a few additional features. After several days of evaluating Hawke’s Hellion, the knife proved to be different from the rest.”



Mark Prince has also trained in Great Britain with the late Peter Robins, the curator of the Fairbairn system known as Defendu.

The knife has an excellent tactical handle made of Micarta (layers of cloth or canvas and resins compressed and heated). It is so tough and well made that Davenport thinks that if the blade was put into a vice, not even a strong man could bend it.

The Hawke’s Hellion Survivor 2020 is a three-piece knife, meaning that the blade and tang were cut from one piece of steel and there are right and left sections to the handle. The hand guard is cut from the same steel as the one-piece blade and full tang. There is an indented small choil just in front of the hand guard, where the blade meets the handle. Just behind the hand guard is a finger groove. The butt of the handle contains two side-by-side lanyard holes for a wrist-fighting lanyard.

There is a flat butt extension for hammering purposes and a small, pointed skull cracker on the butt.

The sheath uses Velcro, which Davenport considers to be better than snaps. It’s

a good sheath with a Kydex insert. He believes that even when running, the knife would be held in the sheath.

**MARK PRINCE,
FIELD EVALUATOR**

Mark Prince is a former member of the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) elite Special Response Team, which is tasked with the detection, apprehension, and neutralization of terrorist threats against the DOE’s assets and personnel. Prince was recruited by Central Ohio Technical College, where he now works full-time in

PARA-CORD.COM

SURVIVAL BRACELETS | 870-423-3319

MADE IN USA **UTICA CUTLERY CO.**
UTK WARRENTED CATSKILL HUNTERS

Features:
Honey Brown-Polished Bone Handles
1095 Carbon Steel Blades
Nickel Silver Bolsters

Utica Cutlery Company
820 Noyes Street
Utica, New York 13503
PHONE 800-888-4223
FAX 315-733-6602
Sales@kutmaster.com
www.Kutmaster.com



Many companies tout knives as survival blades when, in reality, they are just knives with a few additional features. After several days of evaluating Hawk's Hellion, the knife proved to be different from the rest.

Our field evaluator, Mark Prince, is also one of three people certified by the late Col. Rex Applegate as an instructor trainer in the close-quarters combat system of the WWII era, profiled in the nationally recognized book, *Kill or Get Killed*. Our Hawk's Hellion is shown with some WW II and Korean War-era Garand M1, 30-06 battle rifles.



criminal justice and law enforcement technologies, developing and teaching specialized programming, as well as teaching in the police academies. Mark also works with Hocking College's Police Science Technology in the combative skills areas, and is a wilderness survival skills instructor for the National Ranger Training Institute.

Prince is a certified Ohio police officer, currently deploying with a tactical team at the Put-in-Bay, Ohio, police department. He is also one of three people certified by the late Col. Rex Applegate as instructor trainer in the close-quarters combat system of the WWII era, profiled in Applegate's book, *Kill or Get Killed*. Prince has also trained in Great Britain with the late Peter Robins, the curator of the Fairbairn system known as Defendu.

Prince has served as a close-quarters combat instructor to military units that include Army Special Forces in areas of armed and unarmed subject matter, and has trained a multitude of people in the law enforcement state and local special-operations community.

“I feel that the Hawke’s Hellion may be in fact the best survival knife on the market. I think it is more of a survival tool that can also double very, very well as a field knife.”

MARK PRINCE'S FIELD EVALUATION OF HAWKE'S HELLION SURVIVAL 2020 KNIFE

When TOPS Knives' Hawke's Hellion arrived at my castle, I was quite excited. The reason for this excitement was that, for the first time, I actually would be conducting a field evaluation on a real survival knife designed specifically for the purpose of wilderness survival. Many companies tout knives as survival blades when, in reality, they are just knives with a few additional features. After several days of evaluating Hawke's Hellion, the knife proved to be different from the rest.

For starters, one need only review the credentials of its namesake, Mykel Hawke, to determine its real usage. And if one would visit the TOPS Knives website, where the Hellion is profiled with additional pictures, diagrams, and explanations of features, one would clearly see that this knife was a very serious venture into creating the best survival knife of its time.

I began evaluating the Hellion as I normally do to determine how tough it is. I

hammered all sides of the blade (except the sharp edge) 100 times with a metal hammer to see if it would break. I also hammered the point on the end of the handle (also known as a hole punch for making holes in field tools, eggs, etc.) 100 times to see if it wouldpeen over excessively or break. I then hammered the blade on the backside (100 times) until it was buried into an old poplar stump. Although I marked up the finish, it did not break.

Next, I slashed the stump aggressively several hundred times to see if I could chip or dull the blade or if the knife would injure my hand. And to complete the poplar stump test, I covered the handle of the knife with cooking oil (to simulate blood, gore, etc.), and thrust (stabbed) the point of the blade aggressively 100 times into the stump to see if my hand would move excessively up the handle. Throughout all of these tests, the Hellion performed superbly.

Next, I took the Hellion into the woodlands of Ohio. Here, I put the knife to the test by chopping, sawing, and whittling. Grabbing the Hellion in hand, I chopped (hacked) through a piece of green maple



The sheath is well put together, being made out of nylon and Kydex.

KEN UNION Ripple™

GENTLEMAN'S TACTICAL FOLDER

- Stainless steel frame lock build.
- Fast flipper opening action.
- IKBS internal ball-bearing pivot system.
- Titanium nitride black or blue coating.
- Acuro+ stainless steel blade.
- Available in two sizes.



IKBS



www.crkt.com



Tactical knives are most often designed by custom knifemakers, martial arts practitioners, or people with military backgrounds. Mykel Hawke is both a warrior and a scholar. Hawke has more than 20 years of combined military, civilian, and government experience, serving as a senior enlisted soldier of the U.S. Army Special Forces, and as a commissioned officer and team commander.

According to Mark Prince, for starters, one need only review the credentials of its namesake, Mykel Hawke, to determine its real usage. And if one would visit the TOPS Knives website, where the Hellion is profiled with additional pictures, diagrams, and explanations of features, one would clearly see that this knife was a very serious venture into creating the best survival knife of its time.

approximately 3 inches in diameter, with little-to-no issue. The degree of the angle of the blade is excellent and feels fit for such a task. I then shaved a small piece of dead and hard maple to a point. Although the blade is a big 9 inches, the design and balance of it is as such that it allows for smaller tasks like whittling. A brief stint as a chef's knife in the kitchen carving steaks for the grill also adds testimony to its finer cutting abilities. The 5-inch-long handle, which is covered with Micarta, was easy to grip for both chopping and whittling.

Lastly, I inverted the grip in my hand and sawed through a piece of green cherry. The saw blade on the backside is unique in that it is very thick, with two lengths of teeth with left and right alternating angles. This "snaggletooth" design, coupled with the blade's thickness, creates a true workhorse of a saw.

To continue the realistic evaluation of the Hellion, I then went to a wooden pallet to first hack through and then pry up an oak board. Realizing that the knife was not meant for such prying, I did discover that the blade is able to withstand an average-size man standing on it if shoved in between rocks as an expedient step. So I thought, surely I could pry with it. I did, and the tip of the blade did not break off.

The next test took me to the water, specifically, salt water. Although not marketed as a dive knife or one for waterborne operations, I feel that such pieces of equipment should meet a certain level of resilience when being marketed for survival or field applications. Again, many knife companies want to market "tactical" or "survival" knives for those of us who go into harm's way but, when evaluated, the knives can come up embarrassingly short.

I submerged the Hellion into a bucket of water with a salt-to-water ratio that would support fish taken from an ocean. I left it in the bucket for 24 hours. When I removed it from the bucket, the extreme edges of the knife and the parts of the knife where I had knocked or rubbed the powder coat off the blade exhibited mild orange/red corrosion. A mere swipe of a rough cloth removed all signs of rust.

Regarding maintenance, the Hellion is easy to take care of. Simply wash, scrub, dry, lube, and sharpen. The Micarta slabs on the handle did not fall apart during the





THE HAWKE'S SPECS

- It measures 14 1/2 inches, including the Micarta handle
- The handle also has a divot as a socket for the fire starting
- The metal is high-carbon spring steel 5160, with a given RC of 56-58
- The blade thickness is 3/16 inch
- The RC 56-58 tolerance has to do with heating, hardening, and cooling process variances
- It comes with a Lansky sharpener, TOPS fire starter, and a pocket survival saw

salt-water test. The coating on the blade only came off after the punishing blows of the steel hammer. Any exposed, shiny metal that resulted from the testing I lubricated with oil, just like any other metal knife.

The knife also comes with a few extras: The Lansky Quick Fix pocket sharpener that comes with the Hellion is an excellent match in that it actually sharpens the blade. I have evaluated many field sharpeners in survival courses and found them to be terribly inadequate. The knife also comes with other real-world additions, which include a military-issue can opener, an emergency whistle, a small hacksaw, and an emergency fire starter. I have used them all, and they work well.

The sheath is well put together, being made out of nylon and Kydex. It has two heavy Velcro straps to keep the knife in the sheath and enough MOLLE-style straps to

The Hellion is not tiny (14 inches long), nor is it light.

assist the operator in attaching it to required gear, or to the operator him/herself. It can be affixed vertically or horizontally. It can also be worn on a belt, tied to the operator's leg with a provided length of 550 cord. The pouch on the outside of the sheath that holds all the above-mentioned survival extras is secured with a "stealth" plastic buckle.

Regarding usage for extreme close-quarter tactical crisis resolution between humans, the Hellion would thrive since it is well balanced, decently weighted, and very sharp on both sides of the blade. The thickness of the blade (3/16 inch), which travels nearly to the tip, the sharpness of the point, and the two sharp sides of the blade lend themselves to fantastic penetration. The balance, weight, and angle of the blade (17 degrees) lead to incredible chopping efficiency. An operator in the bush should feel assured that they are well protected with "only" a Hawke's Hellion.

I feel that the Hawke's Hellion may be in fact the best survival knife on the market. I think it is more of a survival tool that can also double very, very well as a field knife. The Hellion is not tiny (14 inches long), nor is it light. It is also a bit pricey for an operator, as it has a price tag of the \$239. However, at this point in time, and based upon my evaluation, if I were to go into the bush and only be allowed one tool for survival purposes, I would choose the Hawke's Hellion Survivor 2020, currently built and sold by TOPS Knives. **KI**



**WORTHY OF
BEING CARRIED
ON ANY FRONT
IN THE WORLD...
EVEN YOUR OWN
BACKYARD.**

The PowerAssist takes multi-tools to the next level. It's earned the right to be called "Gunny Approved™". With patented technology, such as SOG's Assisted Fast Opening Action, and Compound Leverage, it packs what no other multi-tool does. The PowerAssist comes with over a dozen components that you can depend on in any situation. That's just one of the many reasons why R. Lee Ermey has carried SOG Knives and Tools around for over 10 years.

SOG
Specialty Knives & Tools



www.sogknives.com
888-SOG-BEST

HOTTEST TREND! VINTAGE HAND-MADE WHO TO BUY!

Knives



THE PREMIER CUTLERY MAGAZINE

REVOLUTIONARY!

TWO STEELS IN 1 BLADE!
KERSHAW RAKE'S
COMPOSITE BLADE

AMERICAN
ART KNIVES
STORM GERMANY

STRONGER,
LIGHTER AND
GOES GREEN-
ECOLITE
BUCK KNIFE

NEW!
UZI'S
LATEST
DESIGN

ONSITE REPORT!
2010 KNIFEMAKERS'
GUILD SHOW

PURSE-PERFECT!
12 BEST
KNIVES
FOR
WOMEN!

HAWKE'S HELLION