

60 To "Funnel" or Not to Funnel

By Duane Thomas

Should your carry/self-defense gun be fitted with a magazine funnel? Here are my opinions on the matter.

For a competition gun, a mag funnel is a non-negotiable necessity as it makes reloading the gun faster and easier. In USPSA/IPSC your points on target get divided by your time to run the stage; in IDPA your score IS your time to run the stage (with time added for points down on target, etc.). Therefore, obviously, anything that makes your speed-load faster is *de facto* a good thing.

But that's for competition. How about the real world? Some folks opine a mag funnel has no place on a carry gun. I profoundly disagree. To paraphrase firearms instructor Ken Hackathorn: "You may think you don't need a mag funnel when you're just standing there reloading the gun on the range. But when your hands are shaking and your body's pumping enough adrenaline to power a dragster, someone's trying to kill you, your gun's empty and you need it reloaded RIGHT NOW...anything that makes that process go faster and easier is a good thing. You'll probably be pretty glad your defense gun has a mag funnel." Hackathorn's carry 1911 is so equipped. Mine, too.

The only argument I've heard against installing a magazine funnel is, "It adds length to the butt and makes the gun less concealable." Before I comment on that, let's recognize a few facts: (1) When we talk about adding a mag funnel to a carry gun, in overwhelming probability we're talking about a 1911; (2) the 1911 auto is a very popular carry gun; (3) despite the existence of smaller options,

Commander, Officer's, etc., the vast majority of people who carry a 1911 carry a Government Model; (4) if you're carrying a Government Model then deep concealment is probably not an over-riding concern; (5) most people who are really serious about 1911s toss the issue magazines and upgrade to Wilson's. All that being true, when the guy telling me, "I wouldn't put a mag funnel on my carry gun because it makes the gun less concealable," is carrying a full-sized Government Model with a Wilson magazine's 1/2" thick plastic

baseplate sticking out its bottom, I find it really hard to understand how a 1/4" long mag funnel is going to make the gun "less concealable."

The problem with most mag funnel installations is the part is just stuck on the gun with no blending. If you look at most funnels as they come from the manufacturer,

you'll see their openings are barely larger than the mag well itself. Around that narrow opening there's an angled skirt of metal I call a "bump shield." If you hit the mag well less than perfectly, i.e. you hit the bump shield instead of the hole, the mag skitters off the bump shield and you just fumble around for awhile, trying to get the mag into the well. Even if you do eventually get the mag in, best case scenario is you've just lost whole tenths of a second. Speaking as someone who once lost an IDPA match by .02 second (yes, that's right, I said two/one-HUNDREDTHS of a second), I'm not willing to sacri-

fice anything. And that doesn't even consider how little I want to give away should I ever need to reload my gun "for real" during self-defense.



See Page 69 for more information about *Evolution Gun Works'* two-piece flat checked mainspring housings with bolt-on magazine wells.

When the guy telling me, "I wouldn't put a mag funnel on my carry gun because it makes the gun less concealable," is carrying a full-sized Government Model with a Wilson magazine's 1/2" thick plastic baseplate sticking out its bottom, I find it really hard to understand how a 1/4" long mag funnel is going to make the gun "less concealable."