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A.G. Russell General Purpose Blade FeatherLite One Hand Knife

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- Gear reviews and tests - Edged tools - Folders -



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Description :

For the past couple weeks, I've had the pleasure of toting a pair of AG Russell FeatherLite One Hand knives for test and review ...

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AG1

The knives are available in either clip point versions or what AG calls his "general purpose blade" (shown). You also have your choice of blade steels with either model, including AUS-8 hardened to 57-59 HRC or ATS-34 at 60-61 HRC. Blades on both of my samples are hollow ground to absolutely scary sharp, toothy edges. OAL of the knife open is 7" and, although AG says the knife weighs 1.5 ounces, each of mine tip my certified scale at 1.42 ounces. The blades measure 3.125" and rest in one of the most comfortable FRN handles that I've used to date. Those handles are thoughtfully designed to keep the sharp back corner of the lockback blade from abrading your pocket when closed, too. There is no pocket clip or ugly pocket clip holes - this knife is designed for in pocket carry. The lockback mechanism is both very strong and a pleasure to use once you break out of the traditional lockback mental box. The one hand opening hole works fine bare handed, but took a little getting used to with gloved hands. With a little practice, gloved hands can manipulate the blade without any problem.

I've used both knives hard. They've cut all of the typical and boring materials I usually subject a knife of this type to ... cardboard, recycleable plastics, foodstuffs, mail and packages, etc. Both knives remained sharp through the typical materials and to date, neither has required sharpening beyond an occasional stropping on my charged leather hone. Using the knives at the park is one area where the FeatherLites really impressed me. They were subjected to not only lime and the standard surface we usually use, but also to a new finer surface we acquired. Those substances are extremely gritty and they will clog up some knives so badly that they are rendered useless until they're painstakingly cleaned and reoiled. The AG Russell FeatherLites took the materials without a bobble. The actions, although gritty, kept working perfectly. When I had the chance to clean the knives, a quick rinse in warm water and a drop of oil after drying was all that was required to remove any grittiness in the action. The unusual lockback design allowed for the lock to be lifted a hair during the rinse to allow for flow through water to get the grit out quickly and very easily.

Another area where these knives impressed me was in their toughness. As a lot of you know, Care and I are in the process of self remodeling our home. While working on putting up some oak trim in the kitchen last Saturday, I had one small 9" x 1.5" section that had to be cut in half lengthwise to fit perfectly and match the rest of the trim. I was hot, tired and frustrated and unwilling to mess around with the appropriate tools for the job and in a hurry to finish, clean up, and end the looming argument that was about to occur. Without thinking, out came the ATS-34 FeatherLite and my rubber hammer. I measured and marked the piece to be cut and I batoned the little knife through the trim, making a near perfect split. Two minutes later, the piece was sanded to perfection and tacked into place.

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Yeah, you read that right. I batoned a folder. :o

The folder, AG Russell's FeatherLite, took the punishment and shrugged it off like water off a duck. Unfortunately, there was no picture taking to mark the event. There was a camera available on our rain soaked Memorial Day when it came time to start our cooking fire in the firepit, however

I wanted fire and I wanted to put the FeatherLite to a tough test. We had wood, but no tinder or dry kindling, so I made some ...



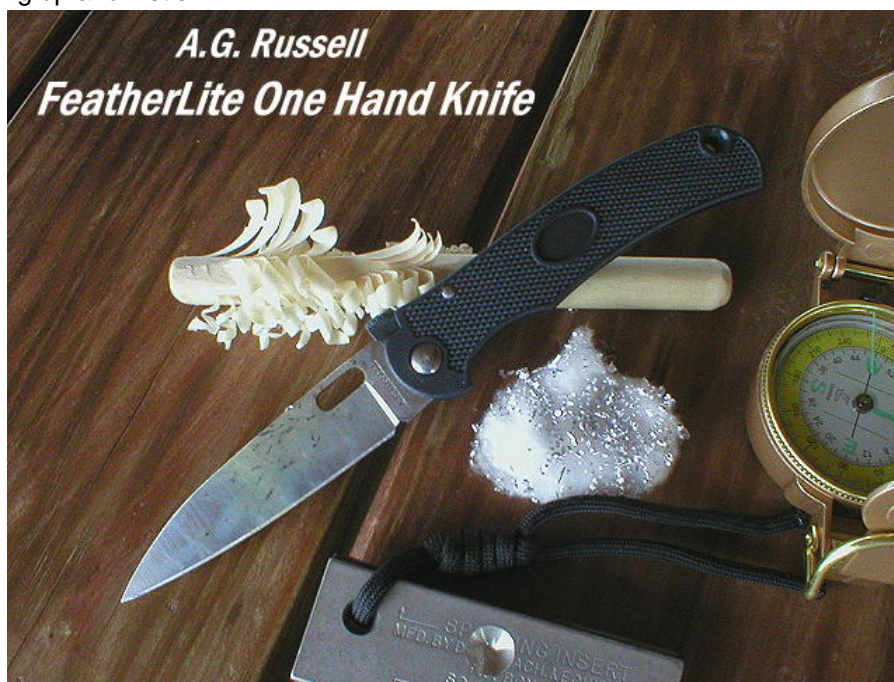
AG3

The FeatherLite was used to baton out some kindling and again, took the punishment without a bobble. The lock not only held, the knife still has excellent lockup with no blade play whatsoever.



AG4

Tinder was no problem, either. The knife's great edge made quick work of creating an ample pile of hardwood shavings and whittling up a fuzzstick.



AG2

The FeatherLite's spine proved not just ample at scraping an MFS or striking a spark ... it proved worthy.

Worthy is a key word with this knife. It's that and a lot more. Mine rides in my back pocket, behind a folded bandana. There is no perceptible signature to give away the fact that you're carrying a knife in that manner. AG will get mine back only if he outlives me and is able to pry it from my cold dead fingers. The FeatherLite is 1.5 ounces of one tough piece of kit.

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Going ultralight? The FeatherLite fits right into that niche, IMHO. I've read of some ultralight backpackers carrying and relying solely on the diminutive SAK Classic at .75 ounce for their cutting tool. I don't quite think they'd be able to match the demonstrated performance of the FeatherLite which weighs in at less than twice that much ...

The FeatherLite is available from AG Russell, currently \$34.95 for either AUS-8 version or \$49.95 for either ATS-34 version.

Mike