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Kershaw's Scallion

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Description :

What started as a novelty purchase has ended up being one of my most used knives. Read on to find out why!

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Introduction

Perhaps two years ago I was attending a gun show with a friend of mine and we stopped to browse the table of a knife dealer. Although always interested in knives I wasn't in the market for anything particular at the moment and frankly didn't have much cash to spend at the time. While my buddy was examining various sharp and pointy objects I was chatting with the dealer who asked me if I'd seen one of Kershaw's latest offering's, the Scallion. I hadn't. While I'd generally heard good things about Kershaw I had no experience with their knives. The Scallion proved to be a small folder with a pocket clip on it and didn't look like anything I'd be interested in.... until the dealer tapped the flipper spur on the back of the folded knife and the blade popped open. This was my first introduction to the world of assisted opener knives.

The speed of the Scallion rivaled that of any of the auto's I'd seen up to that point. It was neat, but I still didn't need it. As any good salesman can do, the dealer took my denial of interest with good grace but continued to play with the Scallion while we talked. Open, closed, open, closed, open, closed until, perhaps from being mesmerized by the continued * snick * of the little blade magically appearing time and again, I finally broke down and bought the damn thing. The dealer sat with a smug smile as I walked away with my unforeseen purchase knowing that he'd played me like a fiddle. What was I to do with this pint sized piece of novelty cutlery I thought, still baffled that I'd actually bought the thing. As it turned out, quite a lot over the past few years.

About the Scallion

Kershaw's Scallion



What started out as a purchase on a whim has ended up being one of my most used knives to date. The novelty of the assisted opener with the flipper release has proved to be not just entertaining but quite handy as well. Just sitting there opening and closing the knife over and over again is rather pleasing (in an autistic sort of way) to the owner although it can be annoying to those around you. Just ask my wife.

Regardless, it really causes you to spend a lot of time just handling this knife and it there that you start to see the utility of it. It really is a handy sized blade. The knife measures $3 \frac{1}{4}$ (8.4 cm) closed and has a $2 \frac{1}{4}$ (5.8 cm) long blade and weighs 2.3 oz.. It's constructed of 420HC stainless steel with a hollow ground edge and has black Zytel scales and a well-designed pocket clip. The knife is locked through a liner locking mechanism. Lockup is very sound with no lateral play, even after a couple years of use. The flipper lever on the rear of the knife acts as a finger guard when the knife is opened and there is a serrated thumb ramp at the base of the blade where it meets the handle.

It has a solid feel to it without being heavy. It sits better in my hand than any other small knife I've used so far. It also rides in the pocket very comfortably too. The clip is solid but not bulky and well shaped as to not snag on or wear excessively on clothing. I've carried my Scallion in everything from BDU's to jeans, to shorts and even swim trunks

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and its always remained secure yet easy to access. The clip position keeps it well down into the pocket and protected and out of the way but not so far as to be hard to reach when you need it. A poorly designed clip on more than one otherwise decent knife has caused it to be relegated to my junk drawer in the past. If it's not comfortable to carry I'm not going to have it on me when I need it. If I don't have it when I need it it's useless to me.

I know that pocket clip knives aren't for everyone but I'm sold on the concept. They keep the knife secure and close at hand and they don't move or bounce around in the pocket. I hate having loose items rolling around in my pockets and the clip keeps the knife above the lint in the depths of the pocket and from rolling around in any loose change that might be found there.

About the Assisted Opener

While the assisted opener initially seemed like just a novelty to me I've found that I've really come to like it after using it for a couple of years now. The Scallion is a Ken Onion design and uses Ken Onion Speed Safe torsion bar technology . So what does that mean? Well, from a user's standpoint it means the blade is fast. It seems to spring into your hand the minute you draw it from your pocket. Not that I need fast necessarily in a small pocketknife but it is handy. You only need one hand, very little finger pressure and almost no hand or thumb manipulation to have it ready. Just tap your index finger on the flipper lever on the spine of the knife as you draw it and the blade is out. The only thing faster is a fixed blade. I have an auto opener that I've used at work off and on and its actually slower than the Scallion to open as it has a side mounted button that requires you to shift the knife in your grip before you can actuate it.

As an added bonus the flipper acts as a finger guard when the blade is locked open. Optionally you can open the knife using the dual thumb studs on the blade. These thumb studs act as a blade stop when the knife is opened. There's also a sliding safety at the base of the folder that can be used to keep the knife from popping open in your pocket. Frankly I find it annoying and disable it by leaving it in the open position on tightening down the torque screw so that it can't move. The knife hasn't opened inadvertently yet but the safety has slid on and kept the knife from opening when I wanted it to before I tightened it down.

Using the Scallion



I titled this section using rather than testing because I can't see a small folder like this being put to any heavy tasks

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like a field knife would. Not that the Scallion isn't solid but it's not going to replace a camp and trail knife so I didn't see any reason to test it like that.

The Scallion is what Reid would refer to as a city boy knife. Fair enough, I live in the city and that's where most of my knife use takes place. When I do get out in the woods I take different knives. For a city knife though I find that the Scallion gets quite a workout. Being that it is so easy to carry and fast to put into play it tends to get used a lot. Generally it's for routine day to day stuff. Like cutting open packages, bags and boxes of all sorts; cutting rope, strings, twine, zip ties; sharpening pencils, digging out splinters and any other myriad of things that need cut during a days time.



While certainly not a good chefs knife or even a camp knife it's still seen its fair share of minor food prep cutting everything from pepperoni and cheese to sawing through sandwiches too large for its diminutive blade. It tends to do better at the meat cutting than the cheese and bread although it's worked on all of them in a pinch. I've stopped short of using it to cut cake for fear of loosing it in an icing covered double layer confection. Icing has got to be bad for your locking mechanism.

Edge Retention and General Durability

The Scallion has held up well considering the amount its been carried and used over the past couple of years. It's showing some slight rust in the hard to clean spots by the thumb studs but that's not uncommon for my folders. I have very corrosive sweat apparently as I've been known to rust folders, assorted handguns and multi-tools carried near the skin, even other stainless ones. The Kershaw has done better than some others in this regard and about as well as the rest.

As far as edge retention goes, believe it or not I'm still on the factory edge! I'm probably due for a good sharpening and I'm sure it could have been touched up here and there but generally its been fine. No chipping or other blade damage has occurred despite routine use and perhaps even some mild abuse. The blade certainly isn't shaving sharp but it still cuts boxes, twine, etc. with ease. I've used a lot of other knives as well since I've had this one so I can't say its seen everyday use but it has been carried more than just about any other knife I own so its seen its fair share of work.

Conclusion

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If you're looking for a small unobtrusive pocketknife for every day carry then the Kershaw Scallion has a lot to offer. Its comfortable to use, tough enough to tackle all of your everyday tasks and fast and convenient to put to use. If you like something a bit more aesthetic than the black Zytel model I wrote up then Kershaw has you covered there too. They make models with aluminum scales in red, green, blue and now OD green as well in both satin finish and black blades. Serrations are also an option. Prices range from just over \$30 US for a basic one like mine to about \$45 for some of the aluminum scale models. All in all I think that's a pretty good deal for what you get.