WEPS Pro Pack II

Posted by JDS - 27 Aug 2012 01:59

Although Clay was kind enough to answer a couple questions I had about the new system in another thread, I don't want to hi-jack and I don't really see an official thread on it so i'll ask here...

I know it's barely out but just wondering people's initial thoughts about the price, new accessories, etc.

I've been holding off on buying a WE, one because it was back ordered, then I found out about the new arms, then I found out about the new system. To me it seems like it still has a few bugs although I know it's been out for years. It seems like a great product/design and my hat is off to Clay but i'm reading about the new arms and possibly elongating them, waiting to see if the problems w/the 1200/1600 grit Ceramics are resolved, etc. and it just seems like in a year or so everything might be a bit different or fine tuned.

Even with the addition of his new microscope it seems the techniques will be more advanced in the near future as well.

Also, when will the Pro Pack II be on the site? It seems to be sold only at "Howe's", just wondered why.

Please enlighten me, maybe I'm too critical or do not understand the system completely as I do not even own one. It's just that if I plunk down $675, I want it refined. I don't want to end up wanting longer arms or needing to do anything to the system like filing screws or anything.

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II

Posted by Braveheart - 27 Aug 2012 05:53

I'm with you on that one.

I am the same myself. Having seen issues with pro pack I, and although people have made modifications that have resolved these issues, I want to be sure that when I'm splashing out $675, that I have the polished design.

I completely agree that the WEPS is a fantastic system, with a few niggles. I like yourself just want to know that these niggles have been sorted out and all the modifications have been done to make the system complete.

I'll be keeping am eye on this thread

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by wickededge - 27 Aug 2012 07:30

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These are good points guys. I can't promise that we won't make any changes over the next few years, I'm always collecting feedback and trying to improve on an already great system. Please remember that even the Basic Kit is excellent as is and the mods that people are making are to satisfy the inner OCD in some of us. The Pro Pack II is a continuation of that process - finding the things that can make a good system even better and frankly, I hope we never stop that process. Different than the computer industry though, I'm trying to design all future improvements to be backwards compatible so that even someone with a Gen I system can upgrade to the current model without having to invest in an entirely new platform. Additionally, we support the product 100%.

We'll be adding the Pro-Pack II to our site this week once the last parts come in from the factory in VT.

As far as the 1200/1600 ceramics go, there was one batch that had more of a kiln layer on it so they were more powdery until they were fully broken in. We have worked with the manufacturer to add in a process call "shot siding" that vibrates the stones to remove the kiln layer before shipping so that it doesn't cause any more worry. Even with the addition of the Micro-Fine ceramics, I still very much like the 1200/1600 stones. I had thought for some time about discontinuing them, but have decided against it; they just perform too well. They are very different than ceramics that most people are used to and that causes some concern for people until they get used to them. Once used to them however, people really love them. I hope this answers some of the questions.

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by cbwx34 - 27 Aug 2012 07:31

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The "Pro Pack II" is a new model... not a replacement for the original. I think it's a misconception to interpret this as the original having "bugs" or "issues" (or "niggles") ☺
Forums tend to draw "enthusiasts" that push things to the limits and also draws those with particular issues or needs. When the Pro Pack II comes out, there will be changes to it... heck there already is.... just see the thread "New Arms Shroud". It's my understanding the new model will be sold in addition to, not as a replacement of the original. It's not a redesign to "get the bugs

out", it's a new design or higher end model.

It's like buying a computer or a car... at some point the need outweighs the desire to wait for the next "latest and greatest", and the amount you can afford decides what model you get.

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II

Posted by PhilipPasteur - 27 Aug 2012 09:10

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I just wanted to relate my experience. I got a WEPS something over a year and a half ago. I was pretty impressed with the edges that I was getting, but I wanted soem more refinement. I bought some very fine grit sand paper and some lapping film by 3M (because the finer stones were all on backorder at the time). I sharpened up a bunch of knives using the stock stones, the original arms and by using tape to hold my sandpaper on the 600 grit stones.

I did some knives for a few friends. They were amazed at the edges I put on the kinves and how mirror like they were. The other day I dug out a knife I did back then and myself was amazed at how sharp and how pretty it still is.

Of course, over time I got better with the tool because I learned to use it well, but I did not find anything that was basically "wrong" with it.

As improvements became available (I never should have started reading this forum) in both abrasives and mechanics, I have incorporated them into my use of the WEPS. Some of the abrasives make it easier and faster to get a crazy sharp highly reflective edge. The new arms are impressive in their engineering and construction. Are my edges "better" ?? I am sure that at the microscopic level they could be, marginally. Does the machine work better ? Perhaps incrementally, in that I don't have to concentrate as much or fiddle with getting angles set to 0.01 degree accuracy (it takes a bit less time with the new arms). Yes I can get about 2 degrees less angle with the riser (but out of hundreds fo knives that I have sharpened on the WEPS, only maybe two would I have used this for).

Bottom line, you don't need to spend $675 to get a kit that will give you very sharp knives and serve you well for years. If you are OCD (like me) the WEPS can grow with you as you feel the need. As Clay mentioned, everythingghe has done to improve the system has been compatible with the original machine. I still have my original base and angle rod!!

I have a friend that has been saying that he would wait for the next best processor from Intel for 5 years.

He has a PC that is barely serviceable now

You can wait for the ultimate/perfect WEPS, never get to it (because Clay keep improving the system) and miss out on lots of darn near perfect edges... but it will be your loss.

Phil

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by Braveheart - 27 Aug 2012 09:23

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Personally I feel you have all made very valid points.

Satisfies me certainly. Perhaps I've been too hard on the system. People will always find fault in things.

Just need to drum up the cash now. I also agree that finding this forum could prove to be expensive

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by JDS - 27 Aug 2012 10:36

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I don't see any "problems" w/the system, the major work seems like it's been done, like I said, it just seems like it will be more refined in the future. I think the issue is the price. Not saying it's not worth it in any way, it's just $675 is a pretty penny for most and I think most people would agree it would suck to need another piece two months later (other than stones).

The analogy comparing computer parts is good and you're right. Even at it's present point it will do waaaaay more than I will prob need as a beginner. The funny part is (as i've learned on this forum) nearly everyone on here is OCD (great to find "family") and I think it's just THAT disease that's boggling my brain as I need everything perfect before I pull the trigger, LOL... SOUND FAMILIAR ANYONE?

The fact that Clay or any owner of any company is reachable and supporting a product in a time of 0% customer service gets my money, I'm truly blown away at his dedication and everyone on here. I simply can't wait to start sharpening so I'm now convinced I just need to dive in and order as soon as it's on the site.

When will the "new and improved" 1200/1600's be avail?

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II

Posted by wickededge - 27 Aug 2012 10:45

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Thanks for the great feedback JDS and of course there is some irony here - just this morning I discovered a slight change in the joints that lowers the maximum angle achievable. That plus the angle change due to the addition of the riser now has me hustling to finish the drawings for the new base rods that are calibrated to the Pro-Pack II. The calibration isn't a major issue since the system ships with a digital inclinometer, but it still isn't as good as it should be. I'll have the new base rods out fairly soon and will ship those out to any that currently have the Pro-Pack II or the upgrade. Many thanks to the forum members that spotted the issue!

We should have the 1200/1600 ceramics in stock in about 6 weeks.

JDS wrote:

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by iamtwon - 27 Aug 2012 15:08

I agree JDS; I have been following the forum for a few weeks and watching the Youtube channels like jdavis882, M0DiFiEDZ,and smokeeater908 eagerly waiting for the "right moment" to buy. I decided it was more important to get hands on with the WE rather than to keep waiting. The lurking is over, and the order is in. Less typing, more sharpening, know what I mean?

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Re: WEPS Pro Pack II
Posted by ScottSherman - 27 Aug 2012 22:36

I'll chime in here as someone who has purchased a Pro Pack 2 mostly on spec. I have never owned a sharpening system and certainly not one as expensive as this one. In addition to the pro pack 2 which as everyone knows is $700 (with shipping) I have added more stones and strops and pastes and it appears that this is only the beginning. I can see some of the specialty stones may be in my future. I hope I don't have to lay any more out for newer improved arms or something like that.

What I wanted to say is that after looking at all the other options available including grinders with various sharpening attachments which still would have been cheaper than WEPS, I decided based on user recommendations and the responsiveness of Clay and others at WE to buy admission in this club.

I call it a club because it seems to be almost a cult of fan boys, much like the Mac computer cult. I am one of those and can not even imagine owning anything other than a Mac or one of the Mac spinoffs, (iPad, iPhone etc.)

These sharpening systems are so expensive that once you decide to buy into it, you are somewhat committed. As long as Clay et.al. appreciate and respect his customer base, the club will grow and will go through out the land telling others of how great their system is which will bring more loyal fan boys.

There is one little thing I would like to request. in what is a very expensive system, it should include all the basic components and not require any user to have to McGyver his system. I am referring to the little piece of rubber or chamois you need to put between the knife and the clamp. Every system needs to include this piece and I can not think of any argument that makes sense against it. Just a little detail that bugged me. Not a deal breaker but it should be included. Just saying!

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