I tried something different...thoughts?

Posted by WayneReimer - 07 Sep 2012 09:24

Most of the knives in my collection fall into the more "tactical" styling, and I pocket carry at least one per day. I use all of my knives regularly, and none too gently, so my needs for an edge are dictated by overall usability, sharpness, and durability. Appearance (i.e. polish) is a secondary concern.

I have a number of Striders of various sizes depending on the job I may need to do. Lately, I've been carrying a mini SJ75 a lot. This is a bit of a polarizing design; some love it, some hate it (looks wise), but the ergonomics are superb, and it's a tremendous little knife. The problem is that it's a knife that, to me anyway, screams for a polished edge, so of course you lose a bit of cutting ability with a good polish. I should mention that my standard for a good polish is different than many of you; for me a good polish stops at 1000 grit, with stropping to 1 micron followed by bare kangaroo leather.

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My question is this; what other ideas do you have for having a polished edge that still has some tooth? I've tried stopping at a lover grit stone and stropping from there, but the toothiness is muted by the stropping. It seems to me that re-introducing some fresh tooth after the strop like this gives a bit more "bite" to the cut, but I'm sure curious about others experiences

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?

Posted by cbwx34 - 07 Sep 2012 09:31

Your idea is a good one. You might also try stropping at a lower angle than what you sharpened at... if you read Clay's posts with microscope pics... that indicate stropping at the same angle rounds over the edge.

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?

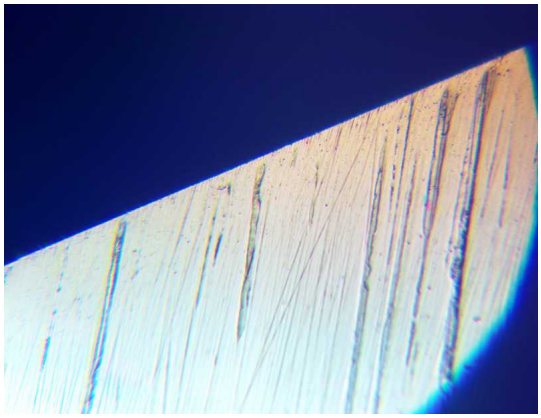
Posted by PhilipPasteur - 07 Sep 2012 12:58

Hey CBW. I have seen the rounding thing mentioned based on some 800X migrographs that Clay did. I have a question. I will go back and see If I can find the exact thread and ask there too.

Is what we are seeing "rounding" the edge, or is it the micro-convexing that is epected, and often sought after, when using leather?

I have seen videos out there by respected sharpeners that insist that you "need" to do a bit of stropping on a bench strop to get the maximum sharpness and durability for your edge. I have tried decreasing the angle, it seems to work OK, but so far I haven't noticed any real detectable difference in my edges. I guess this is why I need to build one of Dan's testing jigs...

I know that Wayne is not looking for the HHT type edge that Clay was only getting with stropping using specific media. So my thought for Wayne, have you simply tried not stropping at all? I think that this goes to the polishing the grooves concept that Tom was talking about. But if the polish is not getting you what you need...



In the above picture you can see that even if coming from 600 grit, stropping with 1 micron on leather eliminates most of the tooth. That was from one of Clays progressions.

www.wickededgeusa.com/index.php?option=c...d=4705&Itemid=63

This may be why you need to go back and do a 1000 grit microbevel to get the agressiveness back.

One other thing, have you tried stropping with a higher grit, perhaps 6 micron or above. I have found that stropping at 6 micron (the coarsest that I have)leaves my 1000 grit edges seemingly sharper, but still pretty aggresive for cutting harder materials. I have not done this with S35V so your mileage may vary on that one. It has worked on some of my S30V Spyderco working knives. I intend to try it with the M4 blade I just got.

Ken Schwartz has some coarse stopping compounds that I want to try. 15 micron or 30 and 45 micron comes to mind. Also WEPS has the 14 micron paste. I have been meaning to try some of these to use on the edges where I need tooth.

If you get a chance to try any of these, please let us know how it goes.

Phil

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?

Posted by cbwx34 - 07 Sep 2012 14:11

PhilipPasteur wrote:

Is what we are seeing "rounding" the edge, or is it the micro-convexing that is epected, and often sought after, when using leather?

I don't know... but either way, if it's killing the edge he wants, it's not a good thing.
I guess it all depends on the edge desired... a stropped edge will do things a "toothy" edge won't, and vice versa.

The other thing I forgot to mention earlier, is you can also try polishing the blade out with a stone instead of a strop (since a polished edge is desired). The MicroFine stones leave a decent polish edge that still has some "bite", as do some of the other types of stones sold. You could also try balsa (I haven't, so don't know what the result would be) or polishing tapes on glass or aluminum blanks (I have done that with other methods, and this has worked well).

Just some ideas!

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?
Posted by PhilipPasteur - 07 Sep 2012 17:40

[quote="cbwx34" post=5192]**PhilipPasteur wrote:**

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I don't know... but either way,

[quote]

My concern is the term "Rounding" the edge. That is pretty much absolutely the opposite of what you want to do when sharpening. Since Clay posted some photos that show a change at the edge when stropping and mentioned that he was reducing his angles when stropping, I have seen several people write about rounding the edge being the result of stropping on the WEPS. I am real curious as to whether that is an accurate description... or not. Certainly if someone reads that without knowing the background, it has to be a concern!

I sure don't want to round my edges. I can do that when cutting things over time. In the case of the edges that I have stropped, rounding does not seem to happen. More so the micro convexing scenario. The pic I posted previously sure does not show evidence of rounding...

Of course, I have been wrong before (a couple of times) ☺

Phil

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?
Posted by cbwx34 - 07 Sep 2012 19:09

You're right, and this is something that I've thought about too... what happens to the very edge with leather? And you're also right, the picture above doesn't appear to show rounding, although I don't know how Clay stropped that particular example.

My point in this case was that whatever is going on, is killing the edge of the original post. The fact that

he wants a polished edge with some "bite" was what I was basing the suggestions on.

Also, rounding or smoothing the edge isn't specific to the WE... it's talked about with all methods.

Good points... hopefully others will weigh in on this.

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?
Posted by davidmcm77 - 07 Sep 2012 19:15

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I have done a similar thing as you with some of my knives that I want to have a nice polished edge with some bite. I'll polish them up at a shallower angle then put a micro bevel on the knife with the desired edge I want.

Also I hear a lot of talk about rounding the edge stropping, and I think of rounding the edge as the micro convexing that occurs, and rolling the edge to be the bad one. You definitely don't want to strop and roll the edge. To me I think rounding is ok. Did we all get the two terms mixed up at some point, or is it not good to round the edge now either?

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?
Posted by PhilipPasteur - 07 Sep 2012 20:02

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Yeah... defining terms is real important.

Convexing, in my frame of reference is sort of rounding the bevel but keeping the edge of the edge at a very small width (Sharp). Rounding the "edge" would be something entirely different. If the edge of the edge was rounded (meaning semicircular, rather then a very thin line approaching zero thickness) this would certainly not be a good thing in my interpretation, at least. OTH, I have read of those that will not strop because they believe that a stone is the best way to get the sharpest edge of the edge....

(???) I think of rolling the edge as what happens under pressure when the edge loses integrity and bends over on itself. While creating a burr may be similar, it doesn't look or feel the same. Yes rolling the edge is bad, but I usually don't think of that happening while sharpening.

I find that stropping, with the resultant convexing, improves the edge for about anything that I am doing. But that is what I am doing and using my techniques... different for each intended use by the grit I use for the stropping stage. As I mentioned, the next purchase I want to make is of some of the coarser

compounds. I really would like to see what the 15 micron CBN on leather does after the 1000 grit plates (7 micron). As is, I am using the 6 micron DMT paste on leather when I want a utility edge that will cut plastic and rope well, and it seems to refine the edge (convexed) but still leave it quite agressive. Interestingly. I have actually increased the angle by a half degree when using the 6 micon paste...

I am hoping that when Clay is back from his other job he will mention what this means to him...

I think that the term, rounding, was applied by somone commenting on ,specifically, one of his migrographs.

AND more importantly what he specifically was trying to do by reducing the angle when he strops.

He does all kinds of different things to see how they work. I don't know if he ever said that he got something that he wanted with the technique. For a long time now, he has been a proponent of stropping and reported some great results from doing it, including on some esoteric knives with specific requirement for the end use.

Interesting thoughts though... and makes for a good discussion !

Somebody said once "words mean things". Which is great as long as everyone agrees on the meanings when having a discussion!

Phil

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?

Posted by Jet B - 07 Sep 2012 23:22

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WayneReimer wrote:

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Hey Wayne, I read in a thread on Bladeforums a while back that J. Ankerson and some other guys actually get some of the best cutting performance and edge retention as well by sharpening just like you describe.

Putting that toothy micro-bevel on a polished back bevel was supposedly a very good way to sharpen your edc for maximum performance and retention during both slicing and push cutting.

I think you stumbled on to a good thing.

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Re: I tried something different...thoughts?

Posted by WayneReimer - 07 Sep 2012 23:43

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I think you stumbled on to a good thing.[/quote]

Isn't that interesting! Maybe I did...? I used the knife off and on all day, and I'm very pleased with the way it's performing so far. Things like this are one of the reasons I am really enjoying the WE. It lets you experiment with things a lot more without the time investment that free hand sharpening would demand.

It's also such a noticeable improvement over other "systems" and various sharpening "enhancements". I got this particular knife from another knife lover. He told me he'd sharpened it with a crock stick and was really pleased with the edge it had, and how well it had lasted.

It was sharp when I got it. 15 minutes later, it was SO much sharper, and I hadn't even stropped the blade at that point.

The SJ75 is such a fantastic little EDC knife, I'd really like to find the optimal progression for this edge. It's a small knife that cuts awfully big right out of the bag...being able to really fine tune the edge will really make it a "wicked" little everyday knife

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