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FIELD TEST

LADIES PROTECTION HOLSTER SYSTEM

By Todd Rassa

The old saying, "This is a man's world" is no truer than in the Law Enforcement community. I come to this conclusion by teaching female students, watching them perform and listening to them. A continuous problem for female students is the fact that most firearms and holsters were designed for the male user. Most duty-sized pistols are designed using the dimensions of the average male's hand; normally too big for the average female's hand.

Many holsters on the market do not take into consideration a woman's hips or their shorter torsos. These two features often change the angle of the gun and the height in which it rests on the hip. The result is an awkward and uncomfortable draw (with a weapon that is too big for her hand) that takes longer than it should. And, when she gets it out of the holster, she often feels behind the curve and rushes herself. It is a wonder she can hit the target at all. Also, most holsters are designed to be worn on or around the waist line and concealed by some outer garment. This usually works well with men's fashions but I can't figure out how it works while wearing a dress (not that I have tried!).

I ran across a company, Ladies Protection LLC who has placed a holster inside a high-quality purse. Given, this is not the first company that has ever produced this type of holster for female concealed carry. However, what attracted me to the product was its quality, versatility and the fact that women designed the product and own the company. The Ladies Pro-



tection Holster is made of brown, black or burgundy leather. The dimensions are 11.25 inches high by 11 inches wide and has an adjustable strap that can be moved from 43.5 to 47.75 inches. Inside the main pocket, the pistol is held tightly in an adjustable holster that is secured into the purse by Velcro. Since it is remov-

able, it can be swapped out for holsters that secure all sizes of pistols—from full sized 1911's to J-frame revolvers. No matter the size of the holster, all position the pistol in a vertical, muzzle-down position. In addition, there is an adjustable magazine carrier which is also held in a vertical position. The center

compartment of the Ladies Protection Holster System is designed to hold a tactical-sized flashlight (like a Surefire 6P) and still have room for additional magazines. Finally, there is still room for all of the stuff that women usually keep in a purse (which to this day, still amazes me).

I gave my test and evaluation sample to a female coworker and asked her to carry her full-sized service weapon in it. The internal holster that came with the purse was not large enough to accommodate this weapon, but after calling Ms. Linda Smothers of Ladies Protection LLC, I received a full-sized holster in short order. The purse was carried in all types of environments and went well the outfits that she wore—which I was told is a very important factor. The purse was also taken to the range and put through its' paces. Ladies Protection LLC states that the purse is "engineered to support speed and accuracy performance standards comparable to conventional holsters." This proved true while at the range. The lady wearing this holster system found it easy to draw, fire and return the pistol to the holster. In addition, the magazine pouch proved to be accessible and practical. The only complaint that she had was with the shoulder strap. The lady testing this holster system has a short torso and found the strap did not have enough holes in it to allow it to be shortened to a length comfortable for her. In later discussions with the company, I was advised that the strap now has additional adjustment holes to solve this problem. After months of testing, the purse has held up to daily wear and tear and it looks as good as new.

During the conversations that I have had with female officers who complained of not being able to find the right sized gun and/or style of holster I am usually told that their frustration leads them to decide not to carry their weapon while off-duty. There is absolutely nothing that I like about that solution! For the female plainclothes detective or off-duty officer, the Ladies Protection Holster System is a much better solution. Retail price – \$120.00

For further information, contact:

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