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# "Ringing Out"

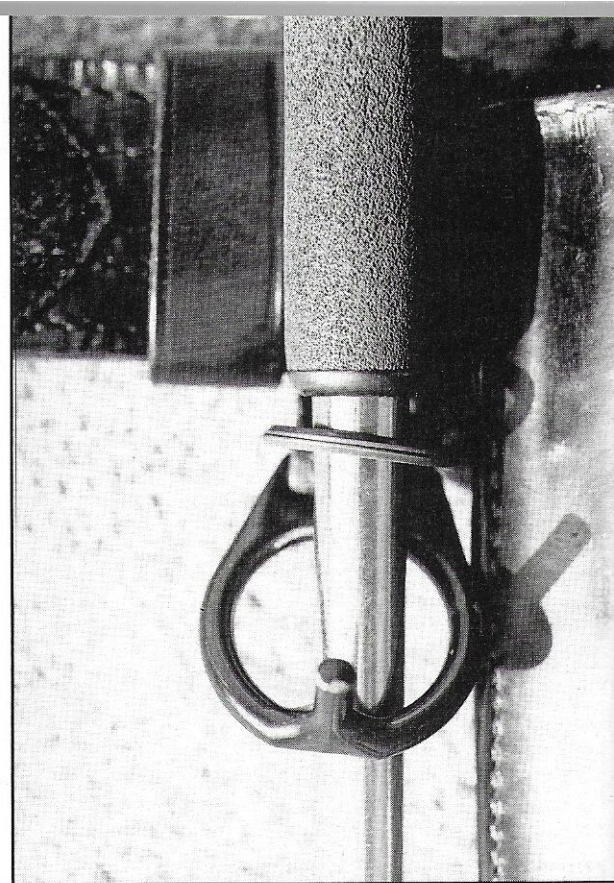
## *a place for the Extendible Baton*

I've been carrying an extendible (expandable) baton for more than eight years. I was first introduced to the Armament Systems and Procedures (A.S.P.) "Cobra" while receiving my defensive tactics instructor's certification in 1984. Since that time, I've carried either an A.S.P. or C.A.S. (Counter Assault Systems) baton nearly every day, both on and off-duty, along with at least one handgun, spare ammunition and handcuffs.

I've found these compact impact weapons to be immensely convenient to carry. On-duty, in uniform, they serve as an ever-present tool to supplement my PR-24. In plain clothes or off-duty, one sits easily concealed under a shirt or jacket, tucked into my back pocket, providing me with a readily available intermediate "level of force" to call upon should the need for its legitimate use arise.

I have, over the years, had occasion to use these handy weapons with wonderful success. In most instances, the mere display, accompanied by the distinctive *whoosh-snap!* sound during presentation, has caught adversaries sufficiently off-guard and had enough "shock" value to cause their surrender without the need for contact. The nickel plated 26" A.S.P. is particularly effective in this capacity. When the weapon's deterrent value has failed, it has ably served in its intended impact role.

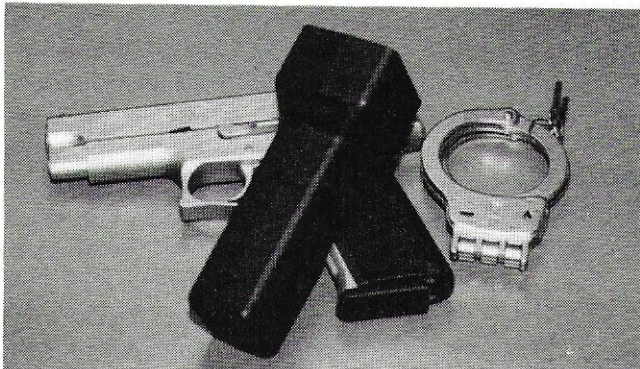
I still recall the very first time I used my new A.S.P. It was the middle of a summer day in 1984, and I was engaged in a foot pursuit of a burglary suspect. He was a muscular male who stood over 6'2", and weighed better than 200 lbs. He was lightly dressed in only a T-shirt,



**Above: A properly sized standard key ring, secured to the leather thong of an existing baton ring... (right) ...provides an inexpensive and handy place to stow the extended baton when field conditions preclude collapsing it for insertion into its scabbard.**

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shorts, and tennis shoes. Fortunately, he wasn't particularly fast on his feet and I caught up to him as he fled into a nearby field.

I initially contacted him at gunpoint, commanding him prone-out on the ground. Instead, he dropped to his knees, but then froze. Back-up arrived within a matter of seconds and we both covered the suspect, reiterating our commands.

He remained upright, on his knees. With my partner still covering the suspect, I holstered my sidearm and then removed my "Cobra" baton from its breakfront scabbard. I carefully approached to within safe striking distance of the suspect and then, without warning, "snapped" the baton into its extended position, causing the chrome-colored metal to flash in the sunlight.

**by Paul Berkowitz**



I simultaneously barked out another command for the suspect to drop into a prone position. The suspect was clearly surprised, as he conspicuously flinched and cowered to the display of the baton. He immediately

it poked a nice, clean hole into the bark. I was forced to carry the baton in its extended position until I got back to the road and could strike it solidly against the concrete surface of the sidewalk.

Since that time, I've had similar experiences with extendible batons. The weapons serve wonderfully in their intended role, but they can present a problem when they need to be re-collapsed and holstered in a less than pavement-filled environment.

As recently as 1990, I was attending an extendible baton-instructor's workshop. The curriculum still stressed that the only sanctioned method for stowing the weapon was to kneel down and strike (poke) the baton sharply against the ground, (supposedly) causing it to collapse for insertion back into its scabbard. When I pointed out that not all of us worked in "concrete jungles," my comments fell on deaf ears.

This experience prompted me to develop this very simple, inexpensive solution.

As depicted in the accompanying photographs, I have secured a properly sized standard key ring to the baton ring thong I already carry on my duty belt. So positioned, it remains completely out of the way for use with either a PR-24 or other similar baton, but also remains ever-ready for insertion of the extended A.S.P. or C.A.S. baton.

An added benefit of having both rings secured to the same leather thong are the elimination of an additional piece of equipment on the belt, as well as the added stabilization the two rings simultaneously provide for the extended baton.

When in plain clothes, I secure a small key ring to one of my off-side belt loops, where it remains inconspicuously positioned until I need to insert the extended baton after use.

It has been said that the best ideas are usually the simplest. This has certainly proven to be the case for my "extendible baton ring," which works like a charm. And, at a cost of only pennies, the price can't be beat!



diately dropped to a prone position, abandoning further resistance, and begging me not to hit him. He was easily taken into custody.

One difficulty I did experience in that first "Cobra"-assisted arrest was that I had no means to safely secure the baton. Its diameter was too small to be placed in my regular baton ring. Further, contrary to what I had been taught, the baton would not readily collapse when I attempted to close it against the ground. (This also serves as a testimony to just how stout and well-made the A.S.P. baton is.) Instead, it simply plowed a hole into the dirt. I was forced to drop the baton on the ground as I approached the suspect for handcuffing. After he was safely in custody I attempted to close the baton by jabbing it against a nearby tree. Instead, much to my surprise,

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