



Predator Tools model- 45S

A guest review by SFC John M. Hawkins, Iraq

While serving in Iraq, I was asked to test this folding shovel

designed by George Lesche. The request was to simply put the tool through the hardest use our soldiers could give it. Little did he know I would give them to my strongest men, instructing them to abuse it! The only limits were "don't run the Bradley vehicle over it." Six 45S tools were then handed out and the true "field" test was begun.

When I opened the box, SSG Andrew Allstead of Montana exclaimed, "I could use these for logging back home!" I replied, "First, let's use it here at Chemical Ali's summer home." Inspecting the tool, I saw that the design is similar to the Viet Nam era "E" tool with several improvements, including a foam-padded handle that extends far enough (5 1/2") for the largest of hands. Instead of wood, the handle was aircraft steel and had what appeared to be a better designed locking nut. When I tried the locking ring, I realized that it had a hefty feel to it, plus it only took 3/4 of a revolution to secure the shovel blade (the military version requires 1-1/4 revolutions).

The first real test came when we cleared a trench through an asphalt road, swinging the shovels like pick axes. It had originally been dug a year before, but re-digging it was like chipping through hard packed gravel. The reader wouldn't believe how hard these tools were being swung! I then inspected the tool's condition looking for faults in the welds, locking nut, and bending of the blade or handle.



Except for dulling the blade from chipping through the hard pan, no damage was found. The locking nut even held its tension for most of the dig. Never did it lock into place so hard that we had to utilize other tools to get it unlocked, a problem with the military version. I knew then I was going to take this baby home for relic hunting!

Next, Staff Sergeant Allstead commented, "I bet we could chop a tree down with this thing!" (*NOT recommended by the manufacture-Ed*) We selected a dead one 30 inches in circumference, and so hard that I first re-sharpened the blade (now dull from the gravel in the trench). It took effort, but down the tree came. This will come in handy for when I need to chop through those big tree roots to recover that elusive belt plate back stateside.

The overall consensus was that this tool was a winner, withstanding tests from weapons cache recoveries to tree chopping. The length of the handle allowed the user to actually use it as a tool, while the padded handle along with the ball end kept one's hand from slipping in all conditions. The tool can be used either as a pick or as a conventional shovel. Ours were used mostly in the pick configuration while digging for weapons caches and heavy earth moving. The shovel comes with a nylon cammo pattern case that easily accommodates a 2 1/2" belt.

Though the handle is a bit long to carry on my belt practicably, it easily carries on the back of a pack.

So, would I own one of these tools? Definitely! I may be disappointed when a yard owner denies me

Predator Model 45-S Tiger

Dimensions: 30" overall, 6" x 7 1/2" blade,

Weight: 2 lbs., 15 oz.

For more information, visit predatortools.com, or see their advertisement on the inside back cover.

permission to trench across their yard, but for relic hunting, gold hunting, and simply around the yard digging, I will be glad to have the Predator Tools Tiger folding shovel model-45S in my arsenal of digging equipment.

