

S.O. Tech Sniper Gear

We had been talking to Phil Hagos from S.O. Tech for a while and finally got to meet him in person as well as the S.O. Tech President and CEO Jim Cragg and Creative Director Paolo Johnson at the SHOT Show when we picked up our gear. Phil had been telling us about the line of S.O. Tech sniper gear and we were looking forward to using it in competitions. The gear we picked up from Phil was the BLoCS Contoured Padded Pistol Belt, AI magazine pouches, BLoCS Zippered Accessory Pouch Short, BLoCS Zippered Accessory Pouch Wide, BLoCS Double Pistol Magazine Pouch, Sniper Skid Plate, Rifle Butt Stock Carrier, Rifle Stock Saddle Rest Sniper Rifle Fore end stock Saddle Rest and the Mission Go Bag. I'll explain the how we use each piece.

The Contoured Pistol Belt set up was very comfortable and user friendly in a sniper competition. I have mine set up as follows starting on my right front and going clockwise around my body: 3 AI magazine pouches, zippered accessory pouch wide, zippered accessory pouch short, and double pistol magazine pouch. It might not sound like a lot but it carries all the gear you need on your body for matches. The AI magazine pouches have MOLLE attachments to attach to the belt as do all the pouches. They can carry one 10 round AI magazine or even two 5 round magazines. Although the lower magazine is harder and slower to get out if you use it in this manner. The wide pouch sits in the lower back where the butt pack usually is and can carry gear that isn't needed to be grabbed readily but needs to be accessible and on your person while shooting. The short pouch is on the left hip area and I use it for my LRF, pens, data cards and anything else I needed to get at in a hurry. It can also be used as a dump pouch if needed. Then there is the double pistol magazine pouch which held my two 17 round Glock 17 magazines nice and secure. The two pouches also have MOLLE attachment points on the outside so if you wanted to attach another magazine pouch or any other gear you can. A good part about the belt also is that to get to gear in the back you don't have to take the belt off or contort yourself. You just grab the belt and spin it around your body. It is very fast and easy to use. At this year's Sniper's Hide Cup we used the belt set up for the first time and found it to be the ideal way to carry our gear. The gear is durable, lightweight, efficient, and easy to get us.

Along with the belt I carried along my Mission Go Bag or MGB. In the MGB I carried gear not really needed on my person such as first aid, rifle cleaning, spare parts, ammo cards, and a water bottle. The MGB can be used also as a butt pack as the large cross strap comes right off and the belt can be slid through a Velcro sealed slot but if it's weighed down too much it can be a bouncing problem while running and that is the reason I chose to use it as a separate carry item. With the MGB slung across my left shoulder leaving the bag on my right hip I can simply attach the snap on the rear of the MGB to one of the MOLLE points on my wide pouch on the belt and it holds the MGB in position even when I need to bend over. It is also comfortable to carry the set up this way. The MGB also has MOLLE attachment points on the outside of the bag which is a perfect place to set up the Sniper Rifle Fore end Saddle Rest. You can use the MGB as a pack rest if the bipod can't be used or isn't desirable. All in all the MGB with it's front

zippered pouch and internal compartments can carry a lot of gear and do so with little trouble.

Also in use by the Team was the Sniper Skid Plate. This easily attached and unattached plate fits on the fore end of the rifle behind the bipod and provides a soft surface if you needed to shoot off a hard surface like a window sill or concrete tube. It makes the rifle steadier and also protects the fore end of the stock. It attaches simply by means of two Velcro strips attached to the stock to which the plate's Velcro adheres.

Two other pieces of gear which I didn't get to use at the match on my .308 but have been using at home on my .243 and 300WM while practicing are the Rifle Butt Stock Carrier and the Rifle Stock Saddle Rest. The Butt Stock carrier is similar to others like Eagle and Blackhawk but has some nice differences along with being made in the USA like all of S.O. Tech's line. The zipper zips back towards the shooter to make it easier to get into the pouch while in the prone. Also the pouch is large. It's large enough to fit a 10 round AI magazine without a problem and it has a little Velcro holder inside also. A very well made and thought out piece of gear.

The Stock Saddle Rest is also well designed. It appears to be just like an eared rear bag, which it is, but it also has Velcro on the top of the rest so that you can attach Velcro to the rear of your stock and when the rest is attached you can get up and move and not have to worry about leaving your bag behind in the field. When filled with poly pellets the bag is light enough to carry and not be a problem.

That is a brief breakdown of the gear the Team has been using from S.O. Tech. We are very happy with the gear and look forward to using it at all our upcoming matches. Feel free to come up and ask us about it or check it out if you see us at a match. Do yourself a favor, if you are in the market for new gear for any of your shooting not just sniper related, check out S.O. Tech's site at www.specopstech.com before purchasing gear elsewhere. You will be glad you did.