

# FOLLOWING THROUGH ON A LEGEND

CRKT AND RUGER TEAM UP FOR AN EDC AS RECOGNIZABLE AS ITS NAMESAKE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOSHUA SWANAGON

**K**nown for high quality knives at an everyday man's price, CRKT has made another great stride by adding a recognizable partnership and joining forces to produce a line of knives for an American legend in the firearms community, Ruger. With a small cadre of top designers like Bill Harsey, RMJ Tactical, Ken Steigerwalt, Robert Carter and the focus of this review, Matthew Lerch, CRKT has launched a line of knives as robust as the Ruger firearm line itself, offering something for everyone. The classic styling and flawless performance of the Matthew Lerch designed Follow-Through Compact exemplifies the highly recognizable Ruger look and reliability.

The modified tanto features a hollow grind and the Veff Flat Top serrations, while the notches at the handle give it a vented look.





The diamond-checked glass-reinforced nylon handles follow the firearm theme and the clip allows the Follow-Through to ride low enough in the pocket to be unobtrusive, while allowing enough to protrude for easy access.

## SPECIFICATIONS

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 7.50 inches  
**BLADE LENGTH:** 3.25 inches  
**BLADE THICKNESS:** 0.125 inches  
**BLADE MATERIAL:** 8Cr13MoV  
**HARDNESS:** 58-59 RC  
**BLADE STYLE:** Modified tanto  
**BLADE GRIND:** Hollow  
**FINISH:** Black stonewash  
**EDGE TYPE:** Veff Flat Top serrated  
**HANDLE THICKNESS:** 0.54 inches  
**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Diamond-checked, glass-reinforced nylon  
**FRAME/LINER:** Stainless steel  
**WEIGHT:** 3.9 ounces  
**USER:** Right hand, left hand  
**POCKET CLIP:** Tip up  
**KNIFE TYPE:** Manual  
**OPENER:** Flipper  
**LOCK TYPE:** Liner lock  
**MODEL:** Follow-Through Compact  
**DESIGNER:** Matthew Lerch  
**MSRP:** \$69.95

## Initial Impressions

When I first received the Follow-Through, I was immediately taken with the diamond-checked, glass-reinforced nylon handles that were very reminiscent of the handles of a Ruger firearm. Being the owner of a Ruger RedHawk .44 Mag, I was impressed by how much the handles of the Follow-Through mirrored the feel of my RedHawk. The frame has some very well placed jimping on the spine at the thumb and at the ring and pinky fingers on the belly, which really help to give a solid purchase while in use. The 3.9 ounces of the Follow-Through are hardly noticeable in the pocket and the .54-inch thickness of the frame has been unobtrusive. I was very pleased to see that it is tip-up carry as this is my personal preference. The clip itself utilizes what appears to be an aluminum spacer which is not only an aesthetically nice touch, but also seems to be less abrasive

on the pant pocket. With the two-position clip, the Follow-Through is perfect for either left- or right-hand carry.

The butt of the Follow-Through is shaped in a fairly aggressive point. However, I'm not sure yet how I feel about this design. On one hand, it would be great as a striking point in a self-defense situation. On the other hand it cuts into the palm during heavy use while the butt is in the palm for added force. Considering the fact that it will most likely be used in day-to-day chores far more often than in self-defense situations, I think I would have opted to round out the butt for comfort during typical use.

Being a fan of the flipper style opening, I was happy to see that it was part of the design of the Follow-Through, although I feel that thumb studs might have been a good option for those who are not fans of flippers. That being said, the Follow-Through utilizes the CRKT IKBS ball



Although there were a couple instances where there was some slight tearing, the Follow-Through was able to cleanly cut both paper and cardboard.





The detent, visible here, does a great job of keeping the Follow-Through closed in the pocket and snaps audibly into place when closing the knife.

bearing pivot for smooth action, bringing the blade into a fully locked position with very little effort. When the Follow-Through is fully opened, it comes in at an overall length of 7.50 inches and takes advantage of the strength of a liner lock to hold the blade securely in place. When

closing the Follow-Through, you can feel the dynamic detent on the blade as it securely snaps into place, giving you the assurance that it will not open in your pocket.

#### The Blade

The Follow-Through has a 3.25-inch blade modified tanto, 8Cr13MoV stainless steel blade, heat treated to 58-59 HRC. Even though 8Cr13MoV is not known for high edge retention, it does a reasonable job and is far easier to sharpen than some other stainless steels. The black stonewash finish on the blade makes it very pleasing to the eye and continues on

the firearm look, while the hollow grind on the primary bevel provides for little drag during slicing chores.

Following on the popularity of their Veff serrations, CRKT included their Veff Flat Top serrations for enhanced cutting power. The blade itself features three tilted rectangular notches, having an almost vent-like appearance, cut out just below the spine, following the grip, helping to round out the firearm theme.

#### Function

While at 2016 SHOT Show, CRKT sent me home with one of the Ruger Follow-Through Compacts and I was very happy

“... THE FOLLOW-THROUGH UTILIZES THE CRKT IKBS BALL BEARING PIVOT FOR SMOOTH ACTION, BRINGING THE BLADE INTO A FULLY LOCKED POSITION WITH VERY LITTLE EFFORT.”



When closed, the blade rests almost completely centered in the frame with only a slight lean to the right.



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The Follow-Through did a good job at a tough task and was able to get through this tire with a little work. There is some slight wear on the edge, but a touch up should be able to get it back to a keen edge.

with the everyday utility it provided. The modified tanto prevents it from being much of a penetrating or thrusting knife, but the slight upsweep of the edge, combined with the Veff Flat Top serrations make it a great slicing blade. Although I have always been more of a fan of a drop-point blade, I have found that the profile of the Follow-Through is beginning to grow on me. The modified tanto has a reverse tanto look to it and if CRKT were to ever decide to sharpen the top edge of the tip, I think it would be a welcome option. The spine is 90 degrees going out over the notches, immediately followed by being completely rounded out, which I found to be a very nice touch.

#### Putting It Through Its Paces

While carrying the Follow-Through, I have used it for a myriad of different typical day-to-day tasks, such as opening envelopes, cutting into packages, cutting paracord, etc. and have found it to be a very capable knife that almost disappears when not in use. With the flipper style opener and liner lock I am able to utilize it fully with single handed operation; although when I first received it the liner lock was a bit stiff and hard to operate one handed. (After some breaking in, it became a non-issue.)

During my testing I decided to see how far I could cut through a phone book by simply pressing the Follow-Through down

through the pages. I was quite surprised with how easily it went right through almost all of the phone book. There were only a few pages at the end that it did not go through and I attribute that to the fact that they were on the bottom and directly against my cutting board. I am certain that if I could have kept going without anything stopping me, I could have gone completely through the entire phone book.

After the phone book test, I tested it on some paper and cardboard and was able to get some very clean slices on both, although there were some instances where it struggled slightly and the cuts weren't as clean as they could have been. Being very hard on edges I was very

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curious how the edge would hold up after cutting up the cardboard and I was very impressed to find that all in all it held up very well and will be ready for more. Being one of the most common uses of an EDC blade, I was very happy to see how it performed and held up during this type of usage.

Finally, although cutting cardboard and simple daily chores are the most common uses of an EDC blade, I can tend to be a little more rigorous on my knives and decided that a little harsher test would be in order, so I cut a heavy duty mountain bike tire in half. Caution, I do not

recommend this type of abuse to any blade and if you do decide to try this with your knife, make sure to use wire cutters to cut the steel beads that go around the lip of the tire or you will destroy your knife, any knife. Although it took a bit of a toll on the edge itself I was impressed with how well the Follow-Through performed, with a little touch up on my sharpener it will be as good as new.

#### Conclusion

In the neverending search for the perfect EDC knife, the Ruger Follow-Through is worth your consideration. With its classic

Ruger firearm styling, easily maintained blade, smooth opening, comfortable carry and ease on the pocket book, CRKT and Ruger have thrown a serious contender into the ring with the Follow-Through Compact, a solid choice for any level of knife user. I found it to be a very capable and solid performing knife that cuts its way through the day-to-day clutter and emerges as strong as its namesake. If you are looking for an EDC blade that you can trust, but won't break the bank, at \$69.95 you can't go wrong with the Ruger Follow-Through Compact. **KI**

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