

THE **CRKT PROVOKE** TAKES THE TRADITIONAL KARAMBIT DESIGN TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL OF DEADLY INGENUITY

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LETHAL ENGINEERING



“THE 2.41-INCH BLADE IS CONSTRUCTED OF D2 TOOL STEEL AND HAS A BLACK TITANIUM NITRIDE FINISH TO PREVENT RUSTING OR WEAR.”

They say that necessity is the mother of invention, but sometimes, it really is just the culmination of looking for another way of doing things.

This year while I was at the SHOT Show, I stopped at the CRKT booth to visit a good friend of mine, as I always do, and he showed me a few new models that impressed me to no end. The engineering involved in some of their new designs is next level — to say the least — but the Provoke really caught my eye as something I would have never even thought of in a million years.

CRKT is no stranger to innovation. With designers on their roster who brought us ingenuity like the IKBS bearing system, Field Strip Technology, the ILS

The 7.25-inch overall length of the Provoke provides ample room on the grip for tactical gloves.

Safety, Slide Lock, and the upcoming Deadbolt locking mechanism, they have maintained a place in the lead pack for quite some time. The new Kinematic Technology of the Provoke only solidifies their position in the grand scheme of things.

The innovation involved in the construction of the Provoke is mind-blowing, but as we all know, the performance is the real key.

First Impressions

I will admit, my inner child looks at the Provoke and sees a Decepticon from the Transformers. Yes, it is a total geek reference, and I will speak with my inner child about that later.

At first glance it was a little hard to tell

what to think; this is not like any knife I have ever seen. For the most part, when I pick up a knife, I know how to open it and immediately get to work with it. However, the Provoke had me a little perplexed with such a unique action. But it looked so aggressive, and I do love a good karambit.

The ring is a bit oversized so that your index finger is comfortable when opening it in reverse grip — due to the position of the hand during opening. While in both reverse and standard grip, the thumb is placed perfectly at the upper crossbar for speedy actuation. The top crossbar has some light jimping to prevent the thumb from slipping while applying pressure to open the Provoke. Once pressure is applied to the upper crossbar, the mechanism

moves in a bit of a catapult type fashion, launching the blade into its open position, locking into place with a discreet locking lever just forward of the ring.

The 2.41-inch blade is constructed of D2 tool steel and has a black titanium nitride finish to prevent rusting or wear. The hawkbill blade features a chisel grind, with a slight edge bevel on both sides of the blade for increased utility.

The handle and crossbars are constructed of aircraft-grade 6061 aluminum for its toughness and durability. For me, the 4.96-inch handle is a little long, and my average-sized hand rests a finger-width away from the blade regardless of whether I am using a reverse or standard grip. However, if you are wearing gloves or have big hands, this would not be an issue. I like my hand closer to the blade for better control.

The pocket clip is as ingenious as the rest of the design. Following around the ring, the stainless-steel pocket clip rests inside a channel to remain out of the way during use. When ready to place back in the pocket, just press on the end of the ring and the clip raises out of the channel and slips comfortably over the pocket, for a deep, low-profile ride. While in the pocket, the Provoke does take up a lot of room due to the rounded nature of the hawkbill design, but this is inherent with all folding karambits. The one thing I have come to notice, however, is that while

On the rear of the upper crossbar is some light jimping for secure, slip-free actuation via forward pressure by the thumb.

“I WILL ADMIT, MY INNER CHILD LOOKS AT THE PROVOKE AND SEES A DECEPTICON FROM THE TRANSFORMERS.”

The Provoke is locked up via a small lever lock just forward of the ring.





drawing the blade, the upper crossbar catches the lip of the pocket, opening the knife and leaving the exposed blade in the pocket as the handle comes out. However, I have found that if I reach my thumb deep while drawing it, I can get hold of the upper crossbar and prevent it from catching.

Through the Paces

Seeing that karambits are not really designed for utility, I opted to focus my tests on the slashing ability of the Provoke, although I did do some minor utility testing as well.

My first test consisted of constructing Porkman — a knife testing/training device developed by Michael Janich,

The Kinematic Technology of the Provoke launches the blade into lockup like a catapult. It is quick and decisive.

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consisting of a meat roast, wooden dowel, plastic wrap, twine, and denim. After constructing Porkman, I did a few exploratory slashes with the Provoke, which went through with zero resistance. After the first few slashes, I couldn't resist reducing Porkman to

chum (which only took a few more slashes), it really was that much fun. Initially, I was really impressed with how well the Provoke sliced through Porkman like butter on a hot day, but it wasn't until I deconstructed it that I found deep slashes to the wooden



“WHILE IN BOTH REVERSE AND STANDARD GRIP, THE THUMB IS PLACED PERFECTLY AT THE UPPER CROSSBAR FOR SPEEDY ACTUATION.”

dowel underneath. Although it is not a hardwood dowel, it is still a testimony to the sharpness of the Provoke and the effective design of the karambit and its ability to slash deep — all the way to the bone.

Following the Porkman test, I worked on some thick cardboard, because of its destructive nature to a blade. At first, I used the Provoke in more of a utility fashion and slowly cut up some of the cardboard, followed by delivering multiple slashes to the large sheet. With the chisel grind on the primary bevel, it took some adjustments of the angle of the blade to get clean cuts, but once I found it, I was able to get them a little more consistent.

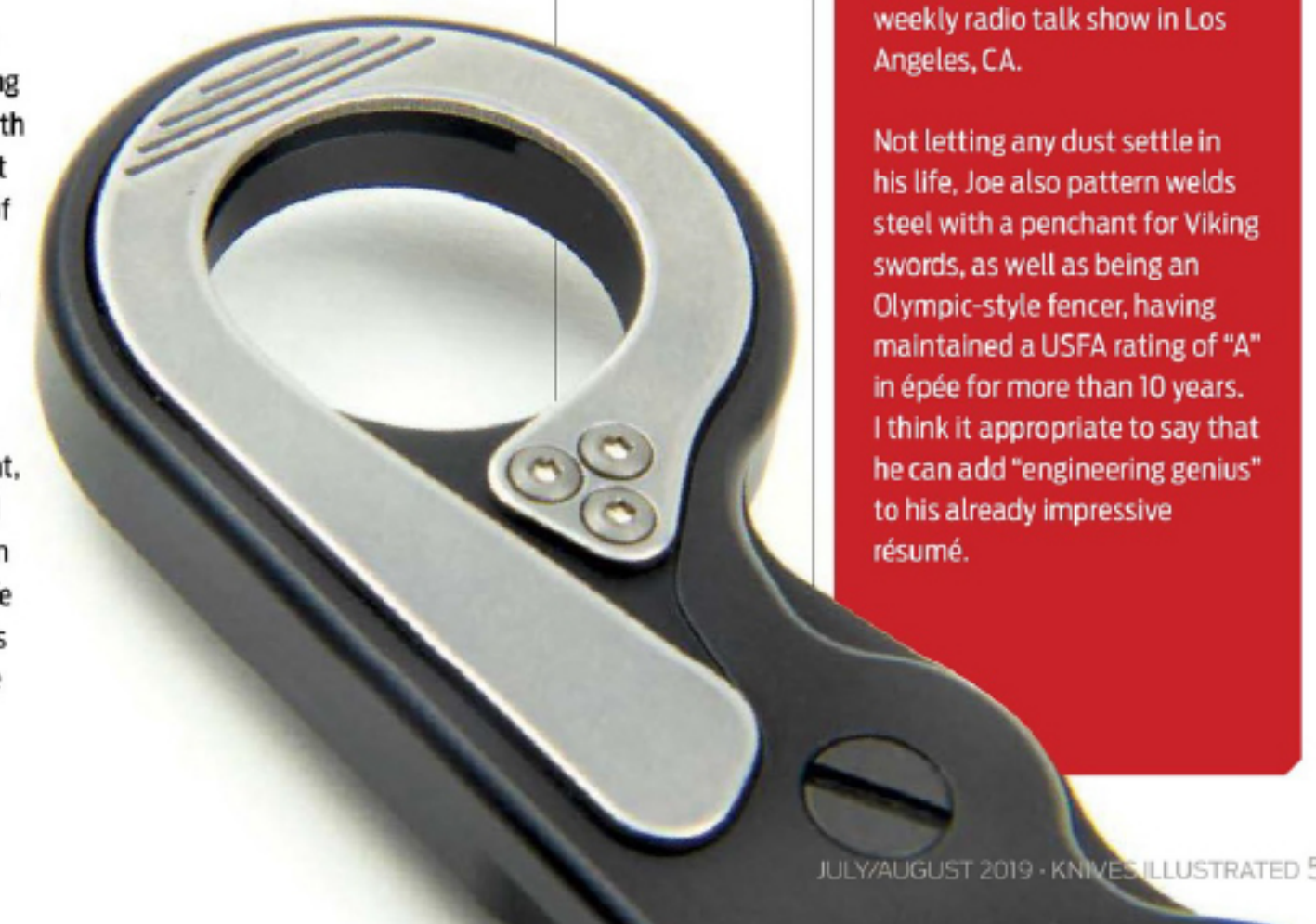
Next, I took some 0.5-inch climbing rope and strapped it to an anchor point, pulled it tight with my non-knife hand and almost slashed cleanly through on the first swing. Unfortunately, the knife did not go all the way through, but this was due to the angle I was at from the rope, since I was holding it tight with

the opposite hand. In my next attempt, I adjusted my body's angle and was able to get cleanly through with no resistance.

Finally, I finished off by taking an old bike inner tube and folded it over twice, creating four layers, for more

Above: Once I got a feel for the chisel grind, I was able to carve up a large sheet of cardboard with slow utility cuts and menacing slashes.

Below: The zero-profile clip nestles into a channel, keeping it out of the way until needed.



Joe Caswell

Custom knife designer, Joe Caswell, is the brains behind the newest innovation in the CRKT lineup with his Kinematic Technology.

Joe has been a full-time knife and tactical equipment designer and maker since 1995 and has a background in art and journalism. Being an avid moto-sports journalist for many years, Joe garnered the nickname “Moto-Joe” and has periodically co-hosted a popular motorcycle-related weekly radio talk show in Los Angeles, CA.

Not letting any dust settle in his life, Joe also pattern welds steel with a penchant for Viking swords, as well as being an Olympic-style fencer, having maintained a USFA rating of “A” in épée for more than 10 years. I think it appropriate to say that he can add “engineering genius” to his already impressive résumé.



of an elastic resistance. Again, the Provoke slashed right through all four layers without any issue, even with the stretchy give of the rubber.

A Serious Standout

Every year at the SHOT Show I am asked what the coolest thing I saw was, and it is usually really hard to answer that because there is always so much great stuff. However, this year was a little easier, thanks to the Provoke. Although there was a lot of really cool stuff as always, the Provoke had me

Above: The Provoke is very reminiscent of a Transformer. It has a really aggressive look.

Bottom-Left: I was able to reduce Porkman to chum, and the hawk-bill blade cut all the way into the wooden dowel at the center.

Bottom-Right: Even with the elasticity of a folded-over tire inner tube, the Provoke passed through all layers cleanly.

thinking about it long after the show, which is what I feel makes something stand out.

I hate to put it in the same class as something so benign as a fidget spinner, but the sheer cool factor of the Provoke is that it's something you will have a hard time putting down — sort of an adult fidget spinner, but deadlier. As a karambit fan and as a fan of ingenuity in all its forms, I am extremely impressed with the sheer engineering that went into the Provoke and I can easily recommend it to any karambit lover. **KI**

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SPECS

Blade Material: D2
Blade Length: 2.41 inches
Overall Length: 7.25 inches
Closed Length: 4.96 inches
Blade Thickness: 0.209 inch
Blade Finish: Black titanium nitride
Weight: 6.1 ounces
Handle Material: 6061 T6 aluminum
Style: Folding knife with Kinematic
MSRP: \$200.00

