

MODERN COLLAPSIBLE BATONS

The traditional police *nightstick* has undergone a tremendous change, both in design and in use. A major improvement was the side-handle baton of the 1970's, which owed its origin to the Okinawa Tonfa stick and made the baton more versatile.

The major improvement of the 1980's is the collapsible baton. This is based on the Japanese Tokushu Keibo and the Taipei Ni batons. The American A.S.P. version eliminates the wrist strap and the automatic spring tension of the previous batons and is a high-quality, sturdy striking tool available in several sizes. The various models are between six and ten inches collapsed, weighing between four and sixteen ounces.

The Concept

The A.S.P. Tactical Baton is a compact instrument that bridges the gap between fists and firearms. Its design solves a major problem with batons because it's compact enough to wear in a belt holster. Uniformed officers need not worry about leaving the baton in the car when they go out on a call. There's also, no problem with the baton hitting against the legs during a foot chase. Because it's compact and in a holster, it's also less vulnerable to snatching by a suspect.

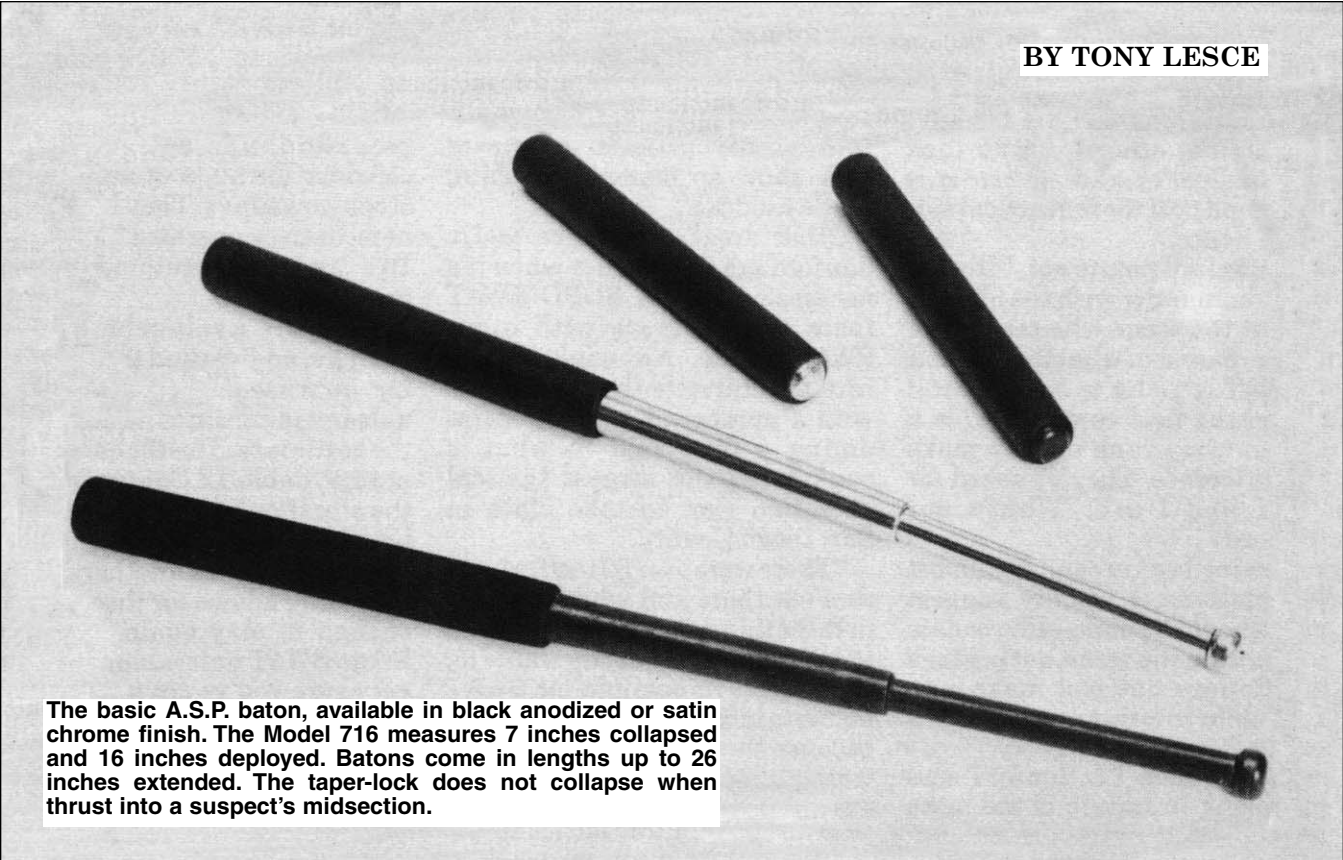
Hardware

A.S.P. Batons use the *taper-lock* design. To extend the baton, the

user flicks his wrist and the baton's sections immediately deploy and lock securely. The taper lock uses two tapered sections to create an instant press fit when they meet, and lock adjacent sections of the baton together. The lock is secure enough to allow hard thrusts into an assailant's body without collapsing the sections. When it's necessary to collapse the baton, a hard end-on strike at a hard surface, such as a cement floor, breaks the taper lock and allows the sections to collapse. An interior spring clip holds the sections together when not in use.

Batons come in different sizes to meet different needs. The smallest is a tiny six-inch, two-section baton that resembles a Kubotan and extends to nine

BY TONY LESCE



The basic A.S.P. baton, available in black anodized or satin chrome finish. The Model 716 measures 7 inches collapsed and 16 inches deployed. Batons come in lengths up to 26 inches extended. The taper-lock does not collapse when thrust into a suspect's midsection.



It's ready at hand, right behind the spare pistol magazines.

From a few feet away, the baton is inconspicuous in its holster.

This is one low-profile carry. Another is collapsed, behind the leg, from which the officer can deploy it and extend it with a whipping motion.





The wrist capture is straight Kubotan technique, and works even better with the stout metal A.S.P. baton.

The officer can employ the baton in a low-profile manner, using it like a Judo stick of Kubotan to capture the suspect's thumb in a come-along.



inches deployed. A key ring fits on the other end. Several other models extend to 16 inches, and one extends to 26 inches, the length of the traditional police nightstick.

The forward section has a knob on the end. There are no sharp edges or knurling, to minimize the chances of cutting. The grip has either a textured metal gripping surface or a vinyl foam sleeve. Both are nonslip, and the textured metal model provides a slimmer profile than the foam sleeve version.

Low Profile

The compact size allows a low profile carry. On the belt or collapsed in the hand, the baton's scarcely larger than a miniflashlight. The officer can deploy it with a flick of the wrist, either while drawing it or afterward, if the situation becomes dangerous. A uniformed officer walking into a possibly explosive situation, such as a family fight, can prepare himself without making (what might seem to be) a threatening move. This can be critically important today, when litigious defend-

ants are more willing than ever to sue police officers for alleged or perceived brutality.

The low-profile look is important in certain police forces, such as the U.S. Capitol Police, which uses one model of the A.S.P. baton. This uniformed force depends a lot on its public image with tourists, seeks to avoid the impression of "goon squad," and a compact baton helps in this regard. A major advantage of the collapsible baton is that it also serves as a pain compliance tool, much like a Judo stick or Kubotan, which the officer can use to subdue an unruly suspect without deploying it to its full length.

Plainclothes officers used to have to give up their nightsticks when they put on civilian clothes, but with the A.S.P. baton, it's possible to carry an impact weapon concealed. The U.S. Secret Service has adopted the A.S.P. baton for this reason. Because Secret Service Agents protect the President during his public appearances, as well as inside the White House, they make a point of not obviously displaying weapons.

This points up the special ad-

vantage of a compact and quickly extendible baton. A close protection officer, whether police or private bodyguard, usually encounters situations that don't justify gunfire. More, if a threat to the protectee develops in a crowd, gunfire endangers innocent parties. This is why Secret Service Agents depend upon *swarming* instead of firepower to overcome potential assassins, such as John Hinkley and Sara Jane Moore. A compact A.S.P. baton is as quick to draw as a firearm, and at close range serves to strike and deflect the arm holding the weapon, without risk of gunshots striking bystanders.

The baton is designed for striking, and its low mass allows faster strikes. The light weight minimizes the bone crushing effect of heavier impact weapons and reduces the chances of excessive injury. The basic use is to strike at motor points and nerve centers, to incapacitate an aggressor. The user holds his off-hand out to block or parry blows and thrusts by the aggressor.

Although it's possible to strike at the head and collar bone, this

isn't the preferred use because of liability. The main striking points for the A.S.P. are the elbows and knees, as well as the major arm and leg muscles.

Training

Progressive manufacturers understand that manufacturing hardware is not enough. Today's high-tech tools call for competent instruction in their use, and the manufacturer unable to meet this demand misses an opportunity to ensure correct employment of his devices. With police equipment, this becomes critical because of the threat of lawsuits, if the agency neglects officer training. Arma-

ment Systems and Procedures provides training courses for officers and instructors in the A.S.P. baton.

The basic 16-hour course provides the officer with a certification in the use of the A.S.P. baton. The course teaches a short series of basic strikes and moves, rather than complicated steps difficult to master. The basic strategy of using the A.S.P. baton is to keep just out of the opponent's reach while striking at him with the baton. Most police officers aren't martial arts experts, so too complicated a course would be difficult to understand. The emphasis is to control a suspect without employing potentially lethal blows. The course

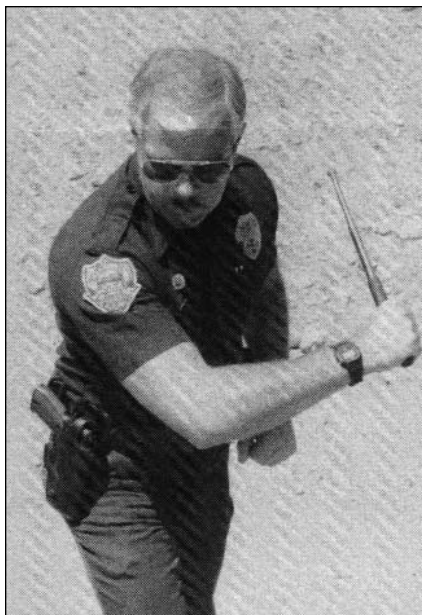
also teaches baton retention techniques for use when an opponent tries to snatch the baton, holstered or deployed. Retaining the holstered baton requires clamping it in place in its holster while striking the suspect with the fist or elbow. If the suspect tries to snatch the deployed baton, the officer yanks it in an inverted J, with both hands, to break the opponent's grip.

Modern Impact Weapon Technology

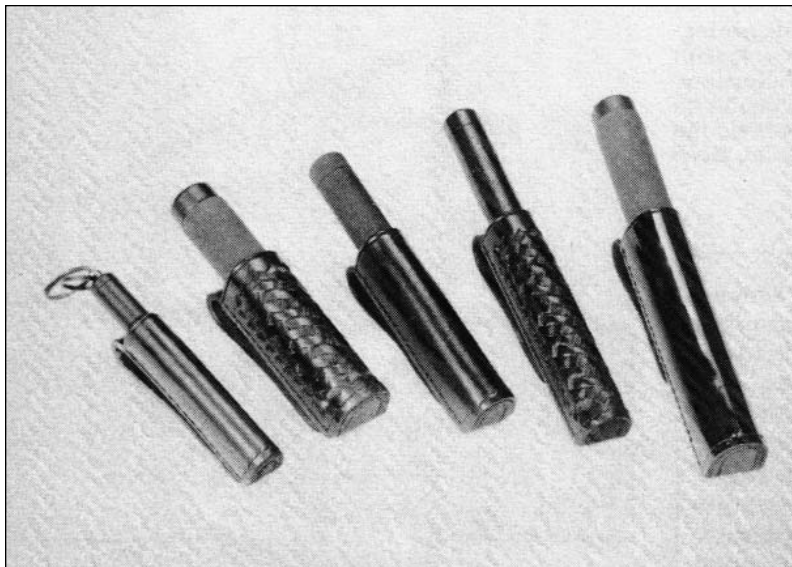
Most police and security agencies in this country still employ traditional methods while more modern ones are available. The more progressive agencies can (and do) take advantage of high-technology manufacturing and modern concepts to equip their officers with more efficient and easily deployed weapons. The collapsible baton is a good example of police science in the 1980's because it provides an intermediate force option in a confrontation.

Manufactured by:

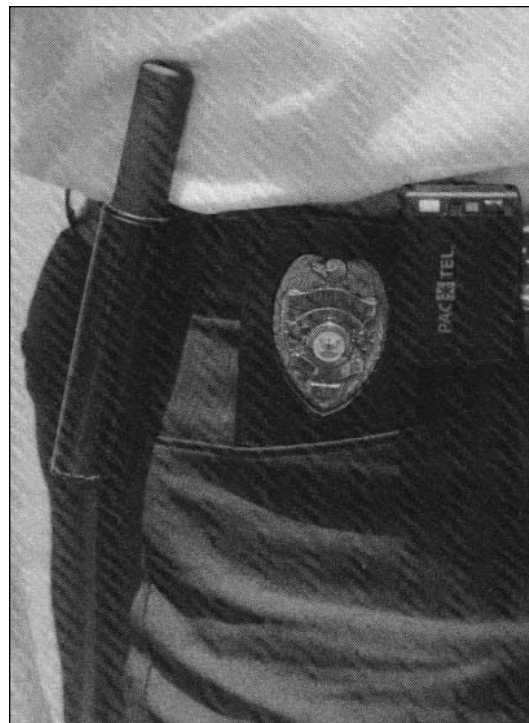
Armament Systems & Procedures
P.O. Box 1794
Appleton, WI 54913
(920) 735-6242
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A strike at the elbow or knee is the recommended way to use this baton.



An array of batons in leather scabbards fit any uniform or purpose.



The plainclothes officer can carry the A.S.P. inconspicuously on his belt.