

The Victorinox® Blade

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The Victorinox Story Continues...

From the early cave dwellers to the populations of today, cutlery tools were important to man's existence and survival. Everywhere on the planet that man has existed, there is evidence that these tools were one of man's first and most useful tools. Cave dwellers used crude cutlery tools and understood their importance. As many as a million years ago, the utility of adding a cutting edge to a tool helped insure man's dominance over lower forms of life.

The predecessor of the knife was probably a flake of broken stone, which was created by nature and used by man as a cutting tool. He was able to recognize its usefulness, and improved on it by flaking both sides of a stone to make the first knife.

During the Stone Age, man made cutting, scraping, and stabbing tools from flint, obsidian, slate, quartz and hard limestone. Some-

times, history shows it was supplemented by bone, animal teeth, stag horn and other animal materials. Today we view these cutlery artifacts as crude, but we need to remember that they served man well, and without them, we may never have reached today's civilization. As a tool and as a weapon, and as the working implement most personal to him, it meant survival to man. The cave dweller that used them understood their importance, and served to influence their need for development. Time and technology have certainly changed the way things happen, but the need for development in the industry is no less important.

Victorinox® has embarked upon some dramatic and exciting new product introductions during the past couple of years. This company, which prides itself on its consistent quality and a stable product base, has resisted major



product changes and trendy styles over the years. Recently however, new products have been coming out of the pipeline at a vigorous pace.

In 1998, the USA distributor began to import the larger lock-blade series, including the Forester Parachutist, Fireman, Trailmaster, Centurian, and Nomad. Some of these knives incorporate the liner style locking mechanism. Hopefully, some of the other models, which are available in Europe, such as the Outrider, Atlas, Hercules, and Workchamp, will also be imported for the American market.

Perhaps the most important new product introduction during 1998 was the Swisstool. This extremely rugged tool took the market by storm, and today remains one of the best in a crowded field of multi tools. Two new additions to this model are due in the summer of 2000. The Swisstool RS will add a scissors and seat belt cutter, while the X model will add a scissors only. Also, miniature LED lights

added to a number of 58mm models during the late 90's provide an interesting variant.

The most important new product introduction in late 1999 was the Cybertool 34. This knife was revolutionary in that it incorporates a bit wrench and case which holds 3 extra double sided bits, including Phillips, Torx and standard blade heads. In addition, this is the first Victorinox® knife to use the new translucent scales (handles). This is truly the Swiss Army™ knife for the millennium. A new smaller Cybertool 29 is now available. Translucent scales have also been added to many of the 58mm models, including the Classic, Signature, Signature II, Signature II Lite, and Manager II. Translucent Swisscards are also available now. The colors are ruby, sapphire and emerald.

A new series named the "Lifestyle" tools, was also introduced late in 1999. Among them are the Sportratchet, and Autotool. These are hybrid products combining components from Victorinox® with

items produced in other countries, including the USA. Another new hybrid called the Briefcasetool will be produced this summer. The Golftool, with its highly unusual design, has proven to be a popular addition to the lifestyle model selection. The retractable divot fixer is a unique feature of this new model.

Summer 2000 will also bring two new models, the Classic with a whistle built into the scale, and the Altimeter knife. The Altimeter will not only provide a digital elevation measure, but will also provide temperature readings in both Fahrenheit and Celsius scales.

Needless to say, we are witnessing a serious metamorphosis in new product introductions by Victorinox, and we wish for their continuing success in this process.

The cutler's trade as we know it today, began to take shape in the Middle Ages. Production of steel started to develop in England and Germany during the 10th and 11th centuries. It was only natural that cutlery crafting would someday

bring us to where we are. As to the future, who can guess?

COLLECTORS' BITS & PIECES

6.) cont'd – About 30 years ago, the toothpicks on some models were hand carved from ivory, and tweezers had metal ends.

7.) Prior to 1891, German cutlers in Solingen Germany made the Soldier's knife.

8.) The first Soldier model knife made by Charles Elsener had no markings on the wooden scales.

9.) 1908 change to fibre scales added Swiss emblem-circle with a cross inside, inscribed with letters W K - denoting WaffenKontrolle, control of weapons by the army.

10.) Some of the scale markings you may encounter on Victorinox® knives: see illustrations p. 4



#1 - First emblem used - pressed imprint on wood or fibre scales



#2 - Emblem embossed on knife models with Alox scales (example - 1961/1965 Soldier)



#3 - Emblem embossed on Alox scales (example - 1980 Soldier)



#4 - Emblem embossed on models with Alox scales & models with molded nylon scales (examples - Pioneer & Safari Range large pocket knives)



#5 - Inlaid emblem - first used on 1909 Officer model



#6 - Inlaid emblem - used on 1937 Officer model and ?



#7 - Inlaid emblem - used on 1951 Officer model and ?

Note: #5, 6 and 7 may also be seen as emblems hot stamped on Cellidor scales



#8 - ECONOMY model designation, hot stamped - may also have main blade stamped ECONOMY



#9 - Emblem etched on anodized finish of some models with Alox scales (example - Classic variations)

11.) Emblems #6, 7 and 8 are the Swiss government authorized emblems for use by Victorinox® only.

12.) Some special order knives have been made for other countries armies also, including Denmark, South America, Lithuania, Netherlands, Nigeria and Germany. These are custom models with special blade combinations.

13.) The 1999 factory catalog shows 39 different blades, tools and accessories, which when added to different sizes, colors and scale materials, make up over 200 different model knives, not all of which are imported into any one country.

14.) Custom knives used as promotional items by many different companies, etc., provides a large volume of business over and above the standard product line.

To be continued-----

FROM THE PREZ

I want to thank Doug Dillman for the information he sent regarding the new products Victorinox® is showing this year. Great stuff!!!

The club is still growing - slowly but surely. We have another country represented , Scotland! That makes 4 countries now, but the same 18 states as before. QUESTION? Would any one object if we were to mail a list of names and addresses of our members in the next newsletter? Just names and addresses - it would be for the members only. It might encourage some interaction and who knows? Drop a note and let me know your thoughts.

On the newsfront, Doug Dillman traveled to the factory in Switzerland, and presented a proposal regarding a possible collectors' book. It might be a possibility, we'll be talking about it some more for sure!

I'm finding that there is a lot of good history information out there in the club, and I have already begun gathering what I can find into a reference archive. I'd like to hear from you if you have anything that you would donate or have for me to copy to add to that file, all to help if and when the book becomes a reality. Catalogs, fliers, brochures, price sheets, etc., anything that relates to these knives that we share interest in. Tell me what you have and let's make a deal.

The website might be pretty close, I've such a deal that I can hardly refuse. If it happens between news letters, it will be in the next issue. Keep watching and always-----
Cut Clean,

DAN

WORDS OF WISDOM

Before they invented drawing-boards, what did they go back to?

If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?

If one synchronized swimmer drowns, do the rest have to also?

Age is a very high price to pay for maturity!

CLASSIFIED

Estate sale - Victorinox stock from a store that never opened. Knives bought approx. 1980, new in boxes or plastic sheaths. 42 models available. Call or e-mail for price sheet or send \$5 for picture catalog to:
G. Kettles, P.O. Box 1301,
Bancroft, Ontario, Canada
KOL 1CO (613) 332-5864
egailk@northcom.net

Buying, selling, trading all brands of kitchen, hunting and pocket knives - Doug Dillman, Freeport Knife Co., 148 Main St., Freeport, ME 04032

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