

ADJUSTING STOCK LENGTH

Dear Technoid:

Congratulations to you for a very accurate understanding of my bruised right cheek. Although cast was not my problem, a long face and a low comb was. The addition of a Sorbothane cheek pad closed the distance and allows me to mount my 425 quickly and consistently.

My next question has to do with length of pull. It appears with a 35" sleeve my stock Browning is quite short. How do I correctly determine this measurement? Since I have already had quite a good experience with Sorbothane, will the Kick-EEZ recoil pad and spacer do the job in place of my current pad?

Regards, CH

Dear CH,

Glad that I could help. Few things are more uncertain in life than long distance gun fitting.

I am not a big fan of Sorbothane pads for adjusting height as I feel that they have too much "give" and do not allow precise repeatability. Not everyone has this complaint, though, and they sure are comfortable to shoot. When you use a pad to add height to a stock, you want to make sure to watch out for increasing cast-on (thickening of the stock for a right hander) if the pad is draped over the inside of the stock in addition to the top. Changing the cast-on will alter the horizontal impact point of the shotgun. Make sure to test for this.

As to recoil pads, I think that the Kickeez is the best on the market at this particular moment. They require a bit more "aging" or fine sanding than the plastic topped Decelerators do, but I like the solid pad better. One thing to watch for when adding a pad is too much thickness. I have not had good luck with the 1.2" Kickeez pads. They collapse a bit too much on firing for my taste. When they give, the entire gun moves back along the face and this increases face slap for me. I usually use the .8" or 1.0" Kickeez and find that a nice compromise between face slap/gun movement and recoil reduction.

Be aware that Kickeez pads are solid Sorbothane and are very heavy for their size. Anticipate a slight rearward shift in your gun's balance. Obviously, the thin Kickeez pads weigh less than the thick ones. The Pachmayr Decelerators are hollow and weigh less. The difference can amount to a couple of ounces.

As to stock length adjustment, nothing is easier. Just buy a bunch of spacers and some long stock screws. Screw on the pad and a couple of spacers (don't do any trimming of pad or spacers yet) and try it out. Add and subtract spacers until it feels right. I carry the spacers and an electric screw driver to the gun club. It is really necessary to test each spacer change by shooting the gun for a round or two before assessing any change.

The old solid spacers were quite heavy. Like a thick Kickeeze, several spacers can quickly shift your gun's balance rearward. When I use the old spacers, I skeletonize them. There is a new "foamed" light weight spacer out on the market from 100 Straight Products (through Brownells). They weigh about half of what the old ones do, but need some lacquer on the outside edges to bring up the shine when ground down.

Once you get your gun all padded and spacers, it will look absolutely awful, but it will fit. Shoot it for a while to make sure that it is right. Then take it to the stockmaker and have things ground down and bent permanently so that it returns to its former beauty.

Just as an aside, like you I have a 35" sleeve. Depending on the pistol grip of the gun, a stock length of 15" to 15.25" feels about right for me. A lot of it has to do with the shape and position of the pistol grip, rather than the actual measurement of trigger to center of pad. In a double trigger SxS with English grips, I prefer about 16". It sounds long, but it works.

Regards,
Bruce Buck
Shotgun Report's Technoid