

GUN CASES

Once, again, Bruce I come to you for some advice.

I finally received my NJ FID card and took possession of the Caesar Guerini Summit, picture attached. My camera doesn't quite get it right, but for this price (about \$2,500) the wood came out better than expected. The gun comes in a hard case, but I would like to get a full length (the gun measures 48", but may need a bit thicker pad) soft case with a pouch for chokes and small items. I want one that will afford some protection to the gun, both from mild knocks as well as water, with lining that is designed to keep the gun dry and won't snag. I'd like to stay within \$100. Any suggestions?

BTW, I hope to get out this weekend to the shoot, weather permitting. I've shot this model so I don't expect any surprises, but it will certainly be nice to be using my baby. Thanks, again, for all of your help.

Incidentally, I've had no luck with finding Kemens shells, and neither Rio nor Kemens has returned my email inquiries. Hope all is well. It's certainly warmer where you are than it is here (10 deg), so for the time being I envy you.

Best regards and appreciation,

Ken

Dear Ken,

For the past 25 years I've used Boyt gun cases. I literally wear them out (zipper and carrying strap). Boyt refurbishes for free under their lifetime guarantee (which continued after Bob Allen bought them). For current production, this is the Boyt case I'd recommend:

http://www.boytharness.com/catalog/product_info.php?cPath=31_40&products_id=134[http](http://www.boytharness.com/catalog/product_info.php?cPath=31_40&products_id=134)

It has a number of advantages that might not be apparent. Just about any case will do for transportation in the trunk of the car, but not all cases will work for carrying it around comfortably whilst assembled, as on the sporting clays course. At some shoots where there is a backup on a station, all the gun racks and convenient tree nooks are filled. It's really nice to have a one's gun in a case then. Also, a proper carrying strap will allow over the shoulder carry to leave both hands free for shells and a stool or whatever.

So, what I looked for in a case was:

1) a really really strong FULL Length zipper. I find the top opening flap-top cases like the Gun Boy and others less convenient to use than the full length side zip ones. Others may disagree.

You see a lot of these top loading cases being used, so they must suit many people. They are certainly inexpensive enough.

2) well placed full length carrying strap. You want something that will hold the case comfortably over your shoulder. I have one of the inexpensive Bob Allen canvas/foam cases that is side zipper and has a fairly adequate carry strap, though not perfect. The Boyt cases I have have excellent straps. They are nice and wide, though I'd prefer it if the straps were sewn to the case at the top, rather than buckled. The buckle can be felt on the shoulder.

3) decent amount of padding. Just about everything has that, but I find that the guns don't slip in quite as easily in fleece-lined cases. Cloth lined seems better. I've never had a snagging problem with the Boyt cases.

4) get a long enough case. Like getting a gun safe, get the largest you can afford/deal with. A 30" gas gun needs a 52" case. A 32" O/U with long extended chokes needs one too. Get a case with enough length for your current gun and for your next one. A slightly long gun case really isn't much of a bother. One that is too short is useless. A good gun case may well outlive your current gun, so think ahead.

Also, make sure to get a full length case, not a take down case, unless you will use it only for travel.

5) the disadvantage of the Boyt is cost. They list at over \$160. You can get a lot of cases much cheaper. Check Bean's and Cabela's for something similar. Just make sure that the strap offers comfortable carry. Many of the straps that look like a rifle sling are too short to position the gun case properly on the shoulder. You may find that a strap like this

<http://www.cabelas.com/cabelas/en/templates/links/link.jsp?id=0005656224028a&type=product&cmCat=search&returnPage=search-results1.jsp&QueryText=shotgun+case&N=4887&Ntk=Products&Ntx=mode+matchall&Nty=1&Ntt=shotgun+case&noImage=0>

won't be comfortable.

Boyt certainly isn't the only good brand. The Orvis case is pretty nice

http://www.orvis.com/store/product_choice.asp?pf_id=2627&dir_id=1089&group_id=11640&cat_id=9286&subcat_id=9288&feature_id=17

I have one for my wife's gun, but always seem to pick the Boyt cases due to their wide comfortable carrying strap.

Up to you. There's certainly enough choice out there and I don't pretend to have tried them all. Early on I found that the Boyts worked for me so I never switched and they never wore out.

Another point: good gun slips work well for air travel when you go hunting. Just put your gun in your Boyt, Orvis, etc soft case and then put it in a Pelican hard case. Add a little extra padding

and you are set. The hard Pelican exterior case will survive any amount of airlines baggage toss events, while the guns are safely protected in their soft cases inside. When you get to your hunting destination, you'll have the necessary full length soft case to use in getting to the field or in the field cart if that's the situation. I've flown with guns a lot and you'd be simply amazed at how hard the baggage handlers can be on gun cases.

Best regards,

Bruce Buck
Shotgun Report's Technoid