

## Defender in Review

By Sensei John Enger

Here I was spending much more time than anyone should be riding the surf in the world of our beautiful internet waters looking at the plethora of self-defense tools that are ancient, or so called “cutting edge” and modern in design. I don’t really recall as to why I was so enthralled that particular evening regarding self-defense weapons. Perhaps it was the aircraft aluminum Kubotan sitting next to one of the old plastic Kubotan “Persuaders” on my desk top that I had so faithfully trained with as a law enforcement officer and had occasion to use a few times – okay, many times! I do remember thinking that there sure hadn’t been many changes to that particular tool in a very long time. I also remember thinking to myself that it was nothing more than a newly marketed tool of the Yawara stick.

Well, after a long read on a host of new gimmicks being proposed by every type expert in defensive tactics/martial arts and how easy they were to use on an attacker and of course incapacitate even “Big Foot” “Sasquatch” – “Skunk Ape” – “Wildman” – “Yeti”. Yes, some humor being used here but let me tell you, some of the claims weren’t that far off! It was about at that point that I was more than ready to shut my computer down and enjoy a nice cold drink on a hot evening in Florida while sitting on my lanai (cut me some slack here, I was wore out listening to the gurus fighting giants with the new “Tools” and was very thirsty!), when I caught the phrase “**About the Self Defense tools: Defenders**”. Ah! “Defenders,” sounds like a new tool that I hadn’t heard or read anything about before – thought, this was going to be one last quick read.

Upon opening this webpage (<http://www.pdws.biz/About.html>) what was an immediate visual catch for me was this weird looking tool that looked like (at least to me anyway) some type of medical reflex hammer with a big hole in it. As I began to dig through the material on this site, reading and watching the clips of the “Defender 1” techniques being executed by Master Peter Brusso I was immediately impressed with what was being presented. What I was observing was very little gross motor skills being applied (great for teaching people with physical limitations and very few steps required to work for them!) to not only make the tool function but function to the extent that the aggressor having the techniques applied to appeared to be genuinely in some great discomfort and controlled very easily. Now this was what I was looking for in the way of a serious defensive tool – a tool that would be easy to learn and instruct as well as being honestly effective for the average person without any self-defense training, up to and including a master martial artist. My concern/question was this? Was the effect of this tool over dramatized in order to sell another gimmick!

I know human nature and I especially know it from a martial artist's and former law enforcement officer's perspective. I know that many of my colleagues would take a look at the Defender and say it looks "interesting" and move on – they may even scoff at it and call it a joke, a goofy looking **piece of plastic**, an ineffective and staged performance, etc., etc. Are these justified and valid points? Maybe -- but how can one judge without actually obtaining the tool and apply the techniques and see if in fact it does what it says? Well, my answer – get one! I took the time to see who the person behind the design of the tool was (Master Peter Brusso). It took some time and review of Master Brusso's background and credentials as a martial artist -- it was impeccable. Watching video clips from his **AwarrriorsWay.com** and **AnjingBanfa.com** was enough to convince me it was worth purchasing the "Defender 1" and to put it to the test. I did!

At this juncture I think it most appropriate to make a point here about how some "traditionalists" (*I do not use the term traditionalist necessarily in a negative context because there are certainly good things about tradition*) are afraid of change, even when it can be proven that change can be a better alternative to what is being currently held as dogma in their life. As a firearms instructor I remember doing very comprehensive research on the GLOCK Semi-Automatic Pistol to present to the Chief of Police in order to convince him that we needed to make a transition from the revolver to the semi-automatic. This was treading on sacred ground with some officers. They, in no uncertain terms were not going to use a "plastic gun!" Irrespective of viable proof that the GLOCK was superior in many ways in comparison to the revolver for street and tactical use, the war was on and it wasn't a pretty – however, I prevailed. The weapons were purchased for all officers. The transition was done in the classroom and on the range -- guess what, these unrealistic "plastic guns" as it turned out were really more effective for the work and violent world in which they were now experiencing. The weapon was put to the test and it proved itself!

Now, I am not an engineer, but the moment I removed the Defender 1 from the package and started to examine its design it was quite apparent to me that some serious thought to engineering had gone into the process. There is a slight forward lean to the tool allowing the front striking surface to move at its relatively high speed while performing the "bonking technique. What's very interesting about the design is that looking at the pointed end one will see what I will term as an "isolated lean" both backwards and forward – here's what I mean by this..... holding the defender in your hand with the tool's front striking surface facing to your right you have a natural looking lean to the rear moving towards the pointed end. Now, when flipping the defender's front striking surface to the left you will have that same lean moving forward for its gripping/pulling effect... but here's the neat thing about it, it also has the same ability (because of the design) to be used to perform a "bonk" technique with the pointed end and from what I can determine it uses about the very same amount of striking surface as the front side does which is rounded (difference being is one end is going to poke some

serious holes in you!) Drawing a straight line across from the back point to the front surface and that's exactly what you have. Without seriously examining the defender one would not see this.

Before actually applying the techniques that the defender was designed to be used for I couldn't help but marvel at the multiple features built into this tool. It simply felt "right" for the hand. Nothing that I had examined in my years of experience gave a person a complete set of tools in such a brilliantly designed piece of plastic. You have a point, edges, striking surfaces, pommel, digit hole, simple attachment carrying capabilities, flat, lightweight, easily concealed, nonthreatening in its appearance. And if you are into designer colors, looks like you can have that too!

Features are great, but did it work and did it work as simple as shown by Master Peter Brusso on his website. I called up a few of my martial arts compadres to tell them of my new found defensive tool and we went to work applying the techniques to be used with the defender.

To cut directly to the chase... is the Defender 1 really capable of what Master Peter Brusso says and displayed on his website? Absolutely and then some!

First of all, the self defense techniques are extremely simple and highly effective when combined with the defender. A six or seven step technique will not cut it on the street – good for the mat, good for competition, but deadly on the street. And what I'm concerned about is street, home or anyplace realistic defensive tactics. The very last thing I will do is recommend a tool and/or technique that will in the end be the direct result of a person being seriously injured or killed. People get hurt and yes killed in a fight defending their life or a loved ones – and yes, even Master Level Black Belts. Failure may result in improper use of the tool or lack of proper training in the technique, or being simply overwhelmed by numbers of people or weapons -- not because they were sold on some gimmick or impossible ten step technique to deploy in a real self defense situation. Quite frankly, there are far too many of these things going on for the sake of the almighty dollar.

I can hear some of the naysayer in the background saying.... "Yeah, sure, try those techniques with the defender in a real dynamic, full throttle street type of attack and then see if it works." Well, I did, and it does! Listen, if every technique shown was demonstrated in full dynamic speed with the defender there would not only be injuries, but serious injuries. I limited the dynamic portion of the techniques because I know what damage can be accomplished with the defender.

Did I at the start have some reservations on what could be accomplished with the defender... yes, quite honestly I did. I'm a suspicious person by nature – kept me alive as a police officer more times than not. I'm not gullible, nor should anyone

be. Matter of fact; don't take my review as gospel on the defender. Buy one, test it and see for yourself if what I say is not true. I'm more than confident, matter of fact I'm quite sure you will be impressed as I have been with this remarkable defensive tool called the defender.

I once heard a wise old man say.....

***“The man with an argument is never at the mercy of a man with an experience!”***