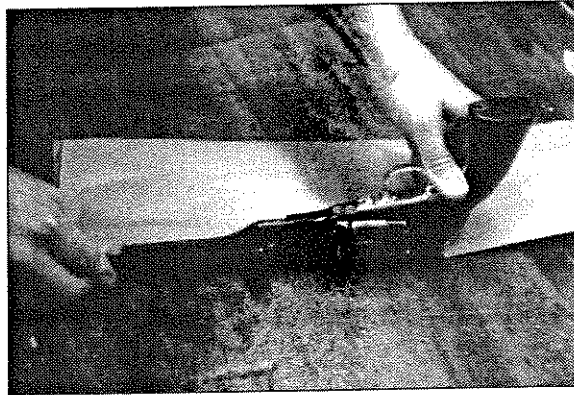


Gunleather: Making the Pattern

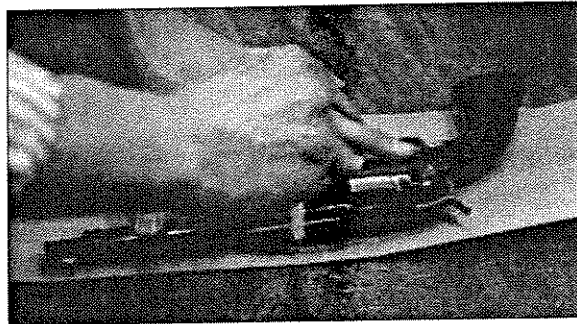
by Will Ghormley

Many a cowboy has spent winter duty in a line shack making his own holster. It's a good time of year to be indoors keeping your fingers nimble. If you're ready to start yours we'll jump right in.

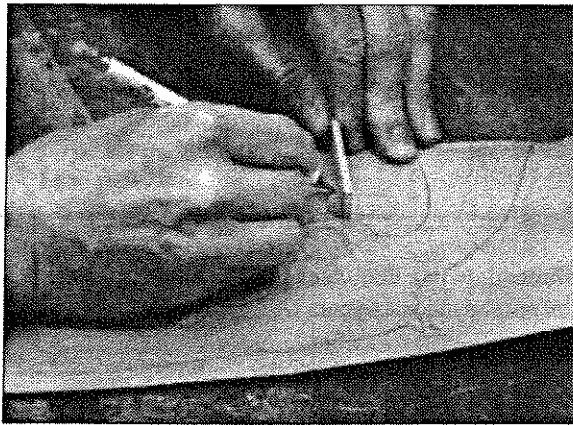
Making the Pattern



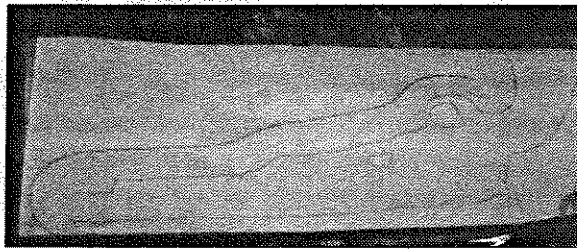
I buy rolls of brown wrapping paper from Wal Mart to make my holster patterns on, but I started out using grocery sacks. Whatever you use will have to be twice as long as the pistol you are making the holster for, and twice as wide. Fold it in half the long ways. Take the pistol and place it upside down along the fold. The center of the hammer and the center of the front sight should be on the fold. Make sure the end of the barrel is about and inch and a half from the edge of the paper.



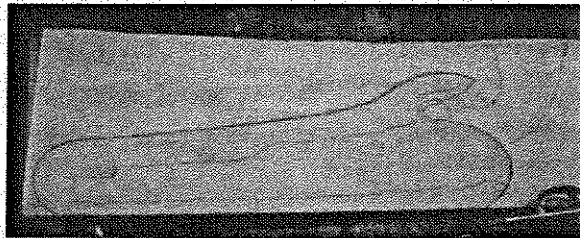
Carefully roll the pistol over to the left to make a right hand holster, or to the right to make a left hand holster. Don't let the pistol shift around on you as you roll it. When the pistol is laying flat on its side, hold it down with one hand and trace around it. I trace inside the trigger guard and make marks where the cylinder is. This just gives me more information about how the pistol will ride in the holster.



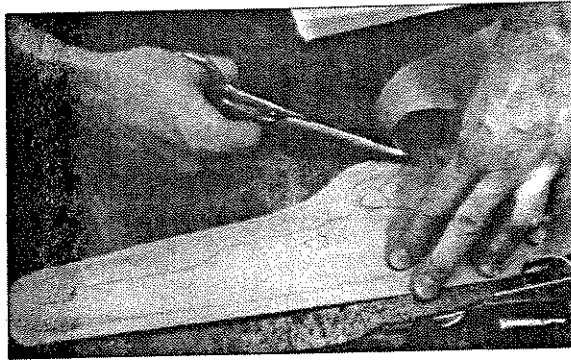
When your tracing is complete, begin marking off $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch around the outline of the trigger guard. You will be making marks that will be used to make a larger outline of the pistol.



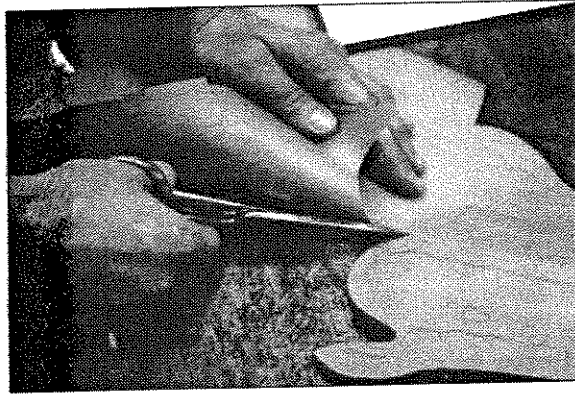
When you've worked your way around the trigger guard outline to the frame, increase the measurement to one inch and work your way down the frame outline and on down the outline of the barrel. At the end of the barrel outline continue making marks in a one inch sweep around the end of the barrel until the marks reach the fold in the paper. Connect your marks with a solid line. This line marks how much leather you will need to make a holster that will fit your gun. It can be modified a little to get the shape you want for your holster, but don't deviate too far from its contours or your holster will be too tight or too loose.



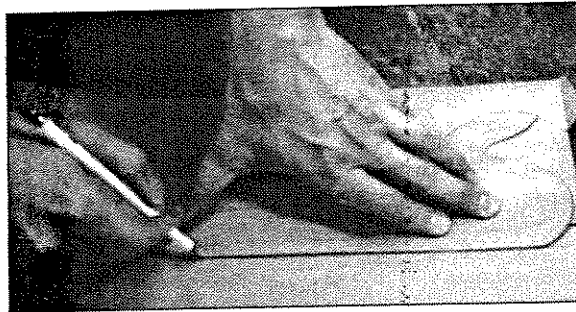
Sketch in the recurve you want for the top of your holster. It should compliment the shape of the outline of the pistol. I am making an early Mexican loop pattern based on the holster Geronimo was wearing in 1886 when he surrendered to General Miles. Adorned with silver conches and spots it had obviously been the pride of the Mexican who lost it to Geronimo, along with his life.



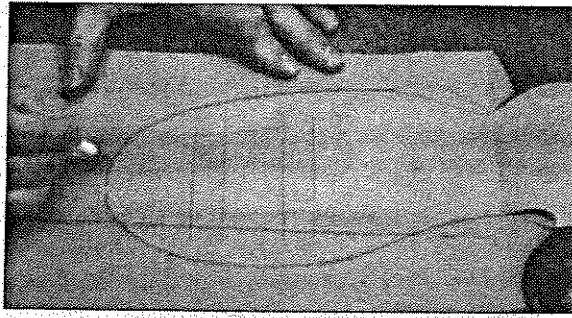
When you have the shape desired, begin **cutting** the folded paper from the toe, up the main stem of the pouch where it will be sewn. Don't continue cutting across the recurve **at the** top of the pouch.



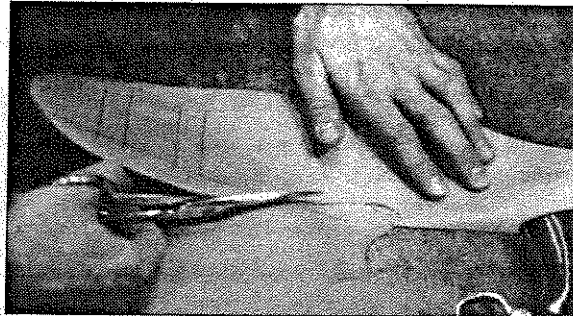
Unfold the pattern and cut along the recurve till you come to the fold. Stop. Fold the pouch together again.



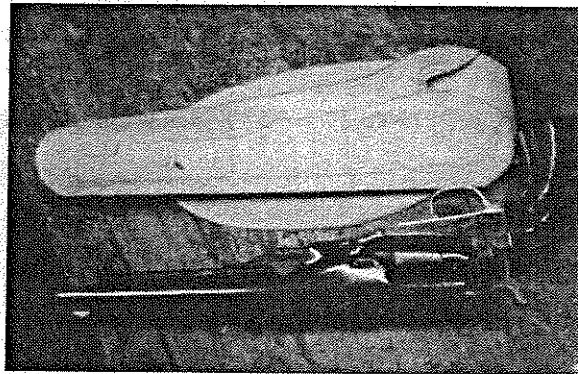
To make the pattern for the skirt fold the upper unused portion of your paper pattern underneath the folded pouch portion of the pattern. Line up the folded edge of the pouch with the crease in what will become the skirt pattern. The fold will be made just a little above the recurve of the pouch. To allow for wider belts, or for a lower hang to the holster, increase the space between the top of the pouch recurve and the crease. Don't make it too big however, because it could allow the holster to ride up when the pistol is drawn.



Open up the folded pouch and draw a graceful line from where you stopped cutting the recurve up to the fold of the skirt.



Continue the cut up from the main stem with a line up to the fold of the skirt. When you have two graceful lines continuing the cuts you have started, continue these cuts up to the fold of the skirt. Draw an outline around your pouch pattern onto what will become your skirt pattern. Lift the pouch pattern up exposing the skirt pattern and the pouch outline.



Draw in where you want your skirt loops to cross the pouch. Make sure the distance from the skirt fold to the top of the first loop is at least an inch wider than the belt that will go through it. Draw an outline to the shape you want for the skirt. Where the loops cross the pouch I like to make sure the skirt is at least three quarters of an inch away from the outline of the pouch. Cut along your skirt outline being careful not to cut into your pouch outline. This is the pattern for your holster.

See you on the range, Will.