



Queen #41L, Mini-Hunter on A Copperhead frame

Dan Lago

Second version 1/3/ 2033

Introduction

This liner-lock pocket knife has been produced by Queen Cutlery since 2004 and now has completed its 10th and final year in the catalog. The transition from Servotronics to Daniels Family Cutlery was not friendly with “liner locks” and this model was dropped in favor of more traditional knives and a greater emphasis on the Mountain Man (3L) and the Woodsman (4L). Each owner needs to stake out a new path and the knives they did choose were solid, but that does not mean the Mini Hunter was not a great little knife. We will cover the catalog knives made on this pattern.

The single blade knife is made on the traditional Copperhead pattern, with a swell at the top bolster providing some hand protection and a firm grip. The tail bolster is curved for a comfortable grip and ease of pocket carry. The knife is 3.75” closed and just over 6.5” open. Reflecting its hunting roots, the relatively massive clip blade has considerable belly, a sharp point, and a substantial half-stop. They are all flat-ground, rather than saber-ground, a concession to costs of production and the realitric acceptance that most were not be used for breaking a carcass. All the catalog versions use D2 tool steel and are polished to a satin or brighter finish.

While liner-lock knives might not be mechanically as sophisticated as other lock blade styles, they can be quite functional. The Mini-Hunter lock is made of steel, not brass as in many other models. The lock is long with small grip serrations along its length and physically captures the open blade; an elegant, comfortable, and secure version of this style lock. Queen has cataloged the knife in eight different treatments, all included in this summary. There may be other knife patterns Queen under Servotronics has plunged into as strongly as the 41L, but I am not aware of them. In its first catalog, 2004-2005, the knife is shown with six different treatments. While all are catalog offerings, for this review they are divided into two subgroups, regular production knives and gentleman's knives, based on handle materials, blade etches, and shields.

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Regular Production Knives.

Five Queen #41L knives have been produced as parts of other knife series using the same handles, blade etches and shields as other models. These include, starting from the most humble (IMO):

41L SBC (Smooth Black Cherry Delrin), (2004-005). Standard “Queen Cutlery Block Tool Steel Blade Etch” including the model #, D2 steel, no shield. (2nd from bottom, figure 1)

41L COBO (Cocobolo), (2004-2005). Standard “Queen Cutlery Block Tool Steel Blade Etch” including the model #, D2 steel, “Relief Knife Q” shield. (Middle knife, figure 1)

41L CSB (Carved Stage Bone), (2004-2006). Standard “Queen Cutlery Block Tool Steel Blade Etch” including the model #, D2 steel, “Relief Knife Q” shield. (Bottom knife, figure 1)

41L BEM (Birds Eye Maple), (2006 -2009). Standard “Queen Cutlery Block Tool Steel Blade Etch” including the model #, D2 steel, “Relief Knife Q” shield. (2nd from Top, figure 1)

41L ACSB (Aged Honey Amber Carved Stag Bone), (2008-present). Standard “Queen Cutlery Block Tool Steel Blade Etch” including the model #, D2 steel, “Relief Knife Q” shield. (top, figure 1)

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Figure 1. Regular Production Queen Model #41L knives. 2004-present
In this image, the Cocobolo example is quite dark, almost like ebony, while others of that treatment have been seen in a much lighter red/brown variable color. Clearly the ACSB is the longevity winner and the only model still in production.

The Mini-Hunter was skipped in the recent Curly Zebra (CZ) wood handle series, suggesting only moderate demand for the model and helping consumers to more easily choose the bone-handled knife. Still, many would say the Amber Stag Bone is also the prettiest of these offerings. Of these five knives, the CSB has been by far the hardest to find.

Gentleman's Model #41L

The other three versions of this knife are displayed in Figure 2. These three were offered in high quality traditional handle materials with no shields, and with special blade etches, including:

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41L AB (Abalone LVS) (2004 -2006). D2 blade steel, with script “Abalone #41L” blade etch.

41 SJ (Sheffield Jigged Pearl (2004-2006), D2 blade steel with script “Queen Pearl #41L” blade etch.

41L P (Pearl) (2004-2006), D2 blade steel with script “Queen Pearl #41L” blade etch.



Figure 2. “Gentlemen's” Versions of Queen #41L, Mini Hunter (2004-2006). Even the difficult D2 steel received very high polish in these models compared to the other regular production models.

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QUEEN Pearls

American craftsmanship at its very finest . . . with quality second to none! Queen Cutlery produces these premium quality knives using genuine presentation-grade Mother of Pearl from pearl oysters off the coast of Northern Australia and the South Pacific Ocean. With meticulous attention to detail, these knives have a beautiful iridescent glow and multi-hue look. Great as gifts!

41LP Liner Lock
1 Blade
3 1/4" closed
D2 Steel

21P Senator
2 Blade
3 1/4" closed

14P Peanut
2 Blade 2 1/4" closed

26P Small Stockman
3 Blade
3 1/4" closed
D2 Steel

96Spat-P Doctor's Knife
2 Blade
3 5/8" closed

Sheffield jigged Mother of Pearl provides an eye-catching look and attractive appearance . . . vintage styling from yesteryear . . . a lost art resurrected in Titusville, PA.

41LSJ Liner Lock
1 Blade
3 1/4" closed
D2 Steel

21SJ Senator
2 Blade
3 1/4" closed

14SJ Peanut
2 Blade 2 1/4" closed

26SJ Small Stockman
3 Blade
3 1/4" closed
D2 Steel

96Spat-SJ Doctor's Knife
2 Blade
3 5/8" closed

2
420 H.C. STAINLESS STEEL BLADES · STAINLESS PINS & BACKSPRINGS · BRASS LINERS · NICKEL SILVER BOLSTERS

Figure 3. page 2 in the 2004-2005 Catalog folder (a series of 2-sided fliers). This one showing the 41L knife at the top of both sets of Mother of Pearl knives – traditional and Sheffield jigged pearl.

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Figure 4. Page 3 in the 2004-2005 Catalog folder (A series of 2-sided fliers). These two catalog pages confirmed these knives were both produced in D2 steel.

The 2006 set of sales fliers showed the same knives in a full-page spread, for all three premium handles – Mother of Pearl, Sheffield jiggled Pearl and Abalone, again with the 41L at the top of the set.

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The pearl and abalone version of this knife are very rare in Queen's long history of making Mother of pearl in a hunter - style knife, with a very tough, premium tool steel. Easily my favorites among this pattern, rising well above its practical liner lock mechanism.

Summary

Production and sales records for this knife are not public, but it is very likely that only small editions of the Pearl and Abalone knives were produced by Queen for the three catalogs that included them (2004-2005, 2006, and 2007). Buyers seeking a locking medium size, capable pocket knife for hard use could choose from the less expensive delrin or wood handled versions (or a non-locking Copperhead #41). Being labeled "Hunter" and being a bit larger than most gentleman's knives (2.5" – 3.5"), and having a locking blade, might have not gotten the attention of most "gentlemanly buyers." Even though offered for three years, it is possible that there has only been one relatively small edition of each of these knives made by Queen and that those took a few years to sell out. They were never mentioned again in any future price lists. Probably less than 250 of each of these special knives have been produced. It may well have been less.

Beginning the search in 2008, except for the current production ACSB, all versions of this knife have been hard to find and now in late 2022, that difficult has greatly increased. The Abalone, Pearl, and Sheffield jugged pearl are VERY hard to find for catalog knives produced in the 21st century and can be called "rare." At least one Special Factory Order (SFO) version of the Pearl Mini-hunter has been produced, but no other SFOs of the Mini-hunter have been identified to date. Queen has produced versions of the Oar carver knife using this frame and lock, but they have a distinct, small carving blade and are also very hard to find – more on them in another article.

One desirable feature of these knives is that early buyers were aware of the quality and generally kept the fancy Model #41Ls in very good condition. When you find one it is likely to be very nice. The Queen 41L Mini-Hunter may not have a large place in Queen Cutlery sales, but is both rare and desirable for collectors. It deserves a special place for its initial grand splash, and its inherent capabilities as a pocket knife. You might get lucky and find one of the used wood or Delrin versions at modest price – truly one of the great values in Queen knives.

Of course, I like them. I have used one to field dress a deer and all of these are in my collection. Why collect any knife you do not like?

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