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## **ROK STRAP ARTICLE- BY MITCH WEISS**

### **IS YOUR STUFF SECURE?**

Whether off-roading or driving on the highway with anything strapped or tied on their vehicle, most drivers are faced with the agonizing question; is my load secure? We have all seen a multitude of lost ladders, rugs, boxes, coolers, chairs, sofas, etc. strewn on the highways, local roads, dirt trails and dunes.

Most of the bungee cords, tie downs and strapping systems are designed poorly and made to be sold as cheaply as possible. They don't stand up to the devastating effects of UV rays, has metal clasps that don't stay tight or made of such poor materials that they are rendered useless after one or two uses.

If you shop at Home Depot, Costco or Pep Boys or the like for your tie downs, you know your choices are limited to a few similar looking choices. However, I'd like to tell you a story about a different type of tie down bungee type strap: ROK Straps, the strongest, most adaptable bungees on the planet!

My company, PU-Products was started with one goal, "to safely transport difficult to secure items in trucks, trailers and off road vehicles". To meet this goal, I designed holders for carrying fuel jugs, coolers, propane tanks, 11 gallon dump cans and five gallon buckets. The holders fit a variety of vehicles, from pickup trucks to Rhinos, Polaris Rangers and RZR's, etc. All made of .125 inch aluminum, TIG welded with stainless steel mounting hardware.

What I could not find, was a quality bungee strap to secure the loads, which would be bounced around during off road or real world driving. Then I went to the SEMA Show in 2006. There I found a small booth with no elaborate displays or photographs, just a guy named Rich Engle from Rochester, NY and a bunch of straps on a table.

When you first pick up a ROK Strap, you can't help but be impressed, the solid rubber core is surrounded by a polyester coating that is uniformly smooth and colorful, the box stitching on each end is generous, the hooks are solid looking and rubber coated. When you stretch one out, you feel like you could do muscle building exercises with it!

I was mesmerized. This was exactly what I was looking for to secure my products. Aside from the fixed length stretch straps, they had a line of adjustable straps, too. Up to 15 feet long with a weight rating of 200 pounds, yet no one was stopping at this booth.

Mr. Engle, the USA representative of ROK Straps, explained the products to me, then told me the story about how ROK Straps were invented. The story starts in Sydney Australia in the 1970's. A young teenager named Gary M----- and his best friend have jobs working at a supermarket and one of their jobs is to collect the shopping carts from the parking lot and bring them back to the store.

The carts are tethered together by long bungee straps as the boys push them through the parking lot. Australia gets a

lot of sun and things tend to wear out quickly and that is what happened one day when a bungee broke, sending the steel hook into the throat of Gary's best friend. If you have ever witnessed a bungee strap breaking as you pulled on it, you know how dangerous that could be.

During the first Iraqi War, there were more eye injuries from broken bungees than there were from flying shrapnel. I have met a man who lost an eye, another who lost a tooth and a third that had a bungee hook imbedded in his back from rotted, sun weakened bungees breaking while being pulled.

Gary's friend bled to death in the parking lot while he stood watching. This event had a powerful effect on him, one that led to a thirty year obsession and a move to a new land of opportunity.

Gary began to dream of creating a new bungee strap, one that would be safe to use, without fear of injury. While studying engineering in college, his final paper was about bungee straps. Even while working as a civil engineer, he tinkered with different types of straps. He became the president of the Sydney Inventors Society, he sailed and surfed, but he also kept working on his dream of creating "the ultimate starch strap".

Move ahead to the late 1990's, Gary thinks he has finally got it right, the only problem is that it can't be made cheaply enough without having it produced in China. No way is he going to let someone else produce his line of products without him being there, so he sells everything he owns and moves to China so that he can fulfill his dream.

Gary quickly learns that just because a supplier delivers material of a certain quality the first time, the next shipment will probably be of lesser quality, he rejects about 40 percent of the supplies delivered to the factory. 'ROK Straps will not sacrifice quality for price' is a motto he lives by.

But Gary finds the world not wanting a more expensive bungee strap...only lesser quality, cheaply made ones. He finds some success in his native Australia and Europe, but finds the American market very difficult to crack...Forty thousand dollars for a pickup truck, no problem, five dollars for a bungee strap to keep stuff in the truck, no way. However, in the past few years, ideas about some Chinese made goods has begun to shift and consumers realize that maybe a little more money spent, is better money spent.

Today, Gary lives in the factory and produces ROK Straps 2 shifts a day, seven days a week. During the Chinese New Year break, most factories were closed for three weeks, his only two. When a supplier can't keep up with his needs, he'll buy that type of equipment and produce it in house.

There are now four different lines of ROK Straps with weight ratings of 90, 125, 165 and 200 pounds. Available in lengths of 12 inches to 60 inches for the traditional bungees, and up to 15 feet long for the adjustable ones. Colors range from pink, lime green, black and green camo. Some have loops in place of hooks so they can wrap around roll bars, roof racks and motorcycle rails.

Everything Rich Engel said to me about the ROK Straps had a profound effect on me, here I was creating the ultimate holders (we call the RAX) and I was looking at the ultimate straps. I had to have some, and soon I realized that this was a product unlike any other. I tested two of the twelve inch straps by supporting a 325 pound engine block for hours at a time, with my Rolex watch below. The ROK Straps still looked and functioned as new.

I've stacked boxes in my truck to impossible heights and travel hundreds of miles without ever having to check the load. I recently flipped my Yamaha Rhino and the fuel jugs stayed in the bed RAX because they were secured by one 12-42 inch ROK Strap. I also can secure my son's Honda motorcycle in the trailer with a couple of them.

So throw away all of your old bungees and try a few ROK Straps. The few extra dollars spent may save you from having to buy a new ladder or flat screen TV (we avoided one on the 215 in Vegas). Or maybe when you get to the top of that

dune in Glamis, your cooler will still be on the back of ride and the drinks inside free of dust. They are great for securing kitchen cabinets or furniture on vehicles or trailers, the nylon buckles won't damage the finish as metal ones would.

Late in 2007, Mr. Engle sent a sample of a ROK dog leash, featuring all of the quality of a ROK Strap, they were designed to make walking the dog more enjoyable for the animal and owner. Today, ROK dog leashes are selling so fast, we can't keep them in stock.

Anyone who has ever had pain in their wrist, elbow, shoulder or back from a pulling dog will love this leash. The retractable cable leashes which became popular in the last 10 years are being banned from use in some cities because of liability issues; you don't have control of your dog at 15 feet. So the ROK leash is an alternative that allows your dog some 'sniffing' room.

The ROK leash also has a traffic lead, a lower handle, so you can control your dog better in cases such as another animal getting to close or in a crowded area. Off roaders like the lower handle to secure the dog in a Jeep by being able to run the seat belt through the loop.

Take a look at the ROK Strap line, you won't find better quality anywhere. The problem is; they are not sold everywhere. Please go to [www.PU-Products.com](http://www.PU-Products.com) and click on the ROK icon. They can be ordered on our site or e-mail us to find a dealer near you.

