

**Cannondale Grind Pants:
Stylish, comfortable, durable...and affordable!**

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All public safety cyclists seem to be looking for the perfect pair of shorts or pants – stylish, comfortable, durable and also affordable. Many of us need both shorts and pants, depending on the weather in our region. And let's not forget the padded shorts to keep us comfortable. Buying all of these items can be quite costly and often requires dealing with several different vendors.

Does this sound familiar? If so, read on and search no more. A Cannondale representative asked my opinion of the Cannondale Grind pants as a patrol uniform. I said that I would try them out and see how they would fit into the public safety cycling realm.

As I pulled the Grind from its packaging, I noticed that the material felt tough and durable. The material is an "Epic" encapsulated fabric that will withstand the harshest treatment you can dish out. It is described as waterproof and dirt resistant and I have proven that it is both! The fabric is six times more breathable than Gore-Tex and will not saturate, and eventually leak, as Gore-Tex will. Each thread is encapsulated in silicon, which will not wear off in the dryer like other fabrics that are just coated with a waterproofing material. As for durability, I have been wearing these for several months, and have had, as any experienced cyclist, several contacts with the ground. Be it from taking down a suspect or downing the bike on technical terrain, the Grind still looks like new.

Let me take a moment to describe the Cannondale Grind pants. They are actually a three-in-one set. The pants zip off to become shorts. So what's the third part, you ask? They actually come with removable padded shorts. The padded shorts are constructed with Fourteen40 chamois, and are, in my opinion, the most comfortable padded shorts on the market. No more searching for pants, shorts and padded shorts! You get all of them in one convenient package.

I really like their features. The pant legs incorporate two adjustable Velcro straps on each leg to ensure a perfect cycling fit. There are adjustable straps on the waist and two zippered vents on the front, which help provide much needed air conditioning on hot days.

Another nice feature is the "Yank This" strap system, which is incorporated inside the Grind. There are two straps in the front, which when "yanked", pull the shorts up so that they do not grab on the seat when mounting/dismounting. Upon dismounting, you simply flip the tabs upwards and they return to their normal position. This feature allows the Grind to be slightly baggier than most cycling shorts, but still safe for quick dismounts. Many cyclists shy away from the "Sgt. Dangle"-style tight shorts and wind up compromising their safety by wearing a loose fitting short. The "Yank This" allows you to be modest and stylish while still maintaining a proper fit.

For some agencies, the color may be a problem. Like most cycling pants and shorts, the Cannondale Grind is only available in black, which hides dirt and grease. If your department does not permit you to wear black trousers, the Grind may not be an option unless Cannondale broadens their color selection.

Another downfall, which I quickly resolved, is that the Grind does not have belt loops. Therefore, there is no way to secure a duty belt to them. However, if your duty belt has a Velcro backing, a few strips of industrial strength Velcro from your local department store or sporting goods store will fix this problem in a hurry. In fact, my duty belt stays in place better than with the traditional belt keepers.

The last concern I had was the lack of pockets. Is this an issue? I argue that it is not. There is only one large cargo pocket, on the right side. Inside that pocket are a smaller mesh pocket and a magnetic key keeper. Why is it that we like to have 18 pockets on our pants in which to put all of our notebooks, Miranda cards, etc., etc.? If you are like me, you've probably found yourself conducting a pat down of yourself trying to find a piece of paper or your pager because there are too many pockets. With the Grind, there's only one pocket, so you KNOW where the item you are looking for is. Food for thought... K.I.S.S.

Now for the bottom line. The Grind pants can be purchased at any Cannondale supplier. The MSRP is \$125. This may seem steep at first glance. However, if you price buying a quality pair of pants, shorts and padded shorts, you will pay a lot more than \$125. The quality and comfort of this product is outstanding for the price tag. For more information on the Cannondale Grind, visit www.cannondale.com. And while you're at it, check out the latest law enforcement bikes at <http://www.cannondale.com/bikes/07/cusa/specialty/law/index.html>.

Brad is an IPMBA Police Cyclist instructor who has been a police cyclist since 2002. He is a life-long cyclist and can be found riding trails in the Appalachian Mountains of central Pennsylvania. He is diligently working to encourage Cannondale to join IPMBA's Product Purchase Program. He can be reached at ofcbrad@hotmail.com.

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