

Whips Presentation and Demonstration

© 2008 Sir Bamm! SirBamm@gmail.com

I am considered by many to be a Master with a signal whip. I can use two whips, either two three-footers or a three-footer and a four-footer, simultaneously, and can do so on multiple "victims". I have been into what it is that we do, in one form or another, since about 1976, although in public settings, since only around 1990. I have given this presentation to SAADE, August 2001, at NLA's TLP, September 2002 and at Kinky Aggies, January 2003 and have given portions of it numerous times as part of My class for the SAADE Mentors Program and in numerous private teaching sessions.

Part one is the presentation.

Part two is a demonstration in which I use three submissives of different heights. I show the different markings that the signal whips can make on the different submissives. I then do a short scene using a single tail in each hand, and all three submissives, at the same time.

Definition:

Whip n.

1. A pliable lash used in whipping. (Riverside/Webster's II Dictionary)
2. A flexible thong or lash used for driving animals. (Dictionary.com)
3. A BDSM play toy. (Sir Bamm!)

Note: Even though floggers and "cats" are often called whips, for purposes of this presentation, "whip" will be used to describe single tails, only.

A brief history of whips:

Whips have been used for centuries. Written records show that Ancient Egyptians used whips to drive slaves, and as a sign of authority. Here, in Texas, in the Old West, whips were used to drive cattle and often times used in fights. Whips have even been used in Hollywood movies, such as Batman Returns, Raider's of The Lost Ark, and Mask of Zorro. But that's not all. In Australia, Mexico, during the Roman Empire, and in many other places and times, whips have been used as symbols of authority, strength, courage, and to drive animals and men. And famous whip cracker's, such as Snowy Baker and Douglas Fairbanks, have used whips for show, and for showing off.

Different types of whips:

Stock whip -- long rigid handle, attached thong, fall, cracker.

Bull whip -- short rigid handle, attached thong, fall, and cracker.

Pocket snake -- thong (filled with shot inside a sack, instead of having a handle), fall, cracker.

Signal whip -- thong (filled with shot), cracker.

Reasons for using a whip in BDSM play:

Power -- (For Top) shows skill (For bottom) shows conviction.

Uniqueness -- Nothing else feels or sounds like a whip.

Sensation -- Breeze, slight sting, burning heat, and everything in between.

Smaller toy bag.

How I got into whips:

I first started with a whip around 1993 with My first slave. she was totally into pain and I couldn't find anything to hurt her enough until I hit her with a single tail.

Back then there weren't a whole lot of places to learn about whips, and information wasn't readily available or easy to come by. I learned on My own, making plenty of mistakes along the way. And I started with 4 plait whips.

Since most of our play in those days was limited to private play, or in people's homes, the longer whips weren't practical.

At first, I would hold the whip further down the thong. Then I started cutting the handles off. I moved in and out of the lifestyle for a few years and when I came back, I learned about signal whips.

I practiced on light switches (the electrical kind) and items hanging off the edge of furniture, and finally started on people again. Sometimes, just for practice, I will still take a bulletin board, put nine business cards on it in a tic-tac-toe pattern and practice making light marks on the cards rather than striking to knock them off the board. This helps Me with pinpoint accuracy. Also, I do not recommend practicing on light switches (the electrical kind) for long periods of time or You will be replacing crackers regularly.

My preference is the 8 plait, 3 or 4 foot, signal whip. And My specialty is using two different length whips, one in each hand, and making them strike the exact location I am aiming at. Besides for My! t, whips are My favorite toy.

How I got into using two whips at once:

This was more by accident than anything else. In 1998, during a softball coach's clinic that I attended, the instructors were showing us how to teach girls the way to throw the ball with speed and accuracy. The biggest deal they made was that if we tried using our weak hand to throw we would know what it was like to "throw like a girl". I learned to use My weak hand as good as My strong hand.

Soon after, while working with My whips at home, My strong arm was getting tired so I took the signal whip in My other hand and started cracking it that way. It wasn't quite as easy as learning to throw a softball, but it opened up possibilities that I never imagined.

Different plaits:

The plaiting is the number of pieces of leather braided into the whip. One way to tell how many plaits a whip has is to look at the knot on the whip and count all the

tiny triangles in the first row down the thong. 4 plait (IMO) is junk. Those are the ones commonly found in tack stores or novelty shops. 8 plait is harder to treat than higher plaited whips, and the leather stays harder, longer. 12 plait is softer, and handles much easier, is easier to control, and breaks in, and stays broken in longer with less treatment. The higher the plait, the more expensive the whip. For example:

An 8 plait, 3-foot signal whip, in black, runs around \$180.00.

An 8 plait, 4-foot, signal whip in black, runs around \$195.00.

A 12 plait, 6 foot, pocket snake runs around \$525.00.

12 plait, 8 foot, stock and bull whips run around \$735.00.

Most of the better quality signal whips will not have more than 8 plaits. The reason for this is that a signal whip differs from a bull, stock or snake whip since it does not have a fall between the thong and the cracker. It must therefore end in 4 strands in order to attach the cracker. Anything above 8 strands would demand too many drop points (16 to 8 to 4, etc.) and would end up being inferior in quality and durability and the taper would not be as clean.

What to look for when buying a whip:

Quality of workmanship -- see that the "v" in the plaiting is in a straight line down the whip. Look to see that the cracker is braided into the fall without too much of an awkward looking connection. Using both hands in opposing directions, lightly twist the fall to make sure the leather is braided tightly. Go with the better-known companies if you're unsure. (Wheeler, David Morgan, etc.)

Sometimes the ends of the plaited leather, which are buried under the thread of the cracker, will poke out after the whip is cracked. This is not a cause for concern. The nylon used for the cracker is much more elastic than the leather used in the thong, so when the whip is cracked the threads from the nylon tend to creep out over the leather ends and allow the leather ends to poke out. A good signal whip will have three knots holding the ends to ensure that the whip does not unravel.

David Morgan recommends that You leave the ends poking out, and not trim them off.

Size -- Size does matter. But bigger isn't always better. What works best for You and Your play area is the best size.

Caring for your whips:

Never use light liquid treatments. And never use neatsfoot oil. Neatsfoot and other largely popular leather dressings contain animal fats which provide an atmosphere conducive to the growth of fungus and bacteria, which is very bad when being used in blood related games, and can weaken the leather over time. The lightest thing you should ever use is baseball glove leather treatment. I recommend Pecard Leather Dressing.

Note: When the signal whip or pocket snake is brand new, do not excessively bend the thong. You could break the sack that holds the shot. Once the whip is broken in well and the dressing has been applied numerous times, the thong will bend easier and there is less chance of breaking the sack.

When the fluff on the end of the cracker wears down to the first knot, you can either undo the knot or cut it off, to form a new, second fluff. Since most of the better quality signal whips have three knots, using Your whip until this happens is perfectly fine. However, when it wears down to the second knot, that's the time that the cracker should be replaced.

The physics of whips:

The speed of the cracker can reach supersonic velocity (approx. 1400 feet per second). Since the cracker reaches supersonic velocity, it creates a minor sonic boom.

$F=MA$ (force equals mass times acceleration). (I have no idea what this has to do with this presentation, but an engineer told Me that, so I put it in).

Creating the single tail scene:

Whips are made out of leather. Use the entire whip. Around the neck, rub down the back, press against the bottom's lips, etc...Warm up Your bottom (and Your play partner, too). Do not just go straight to drawing blood.

Single tail scene's can be as varied as the effect they have on the bottom. They can be erotic without ever touching the bottom. They can mark, scratch or be welt producing. Or they can turn Your masochist into a hunk of chopped meat. Remember, too, that some masochists and bottoms are not submissives, and some submissives are not masochists. Adjust your play accordingly.

The rhythm of the strokes can be used to warm up Your play partner by building a layer of sensation.

Allow the bottom to react to the impact, absorb it, and then recover from it.

Sometimes, the reaction is slower than that of a flogger or crop, since the crack and the movement are so quick, it takes a little time to react. The whip does not have to crack to be effective.

Safety:

Whips are extremely dangerous. They can be as dangerous to You as they are to Your bottom.

Remember when swinging a whip, the whip will follow its own path. It is extremely easy to break skin with a whip. Whips were made to make noise. They travel at the speed of sound. They do not like being stopped short by people's bodies getting in their way.

When first learning how to use a whip wear eye protection, thick clothing and if necessary, a helmet.

NEVER use a whip on another living being until you have mastered it.

If blood is drawn, dress the wound and clean the whip. If the cracker is made of leather it is almost impossible to fully sterilize it. Therefore, be sure to use, at the very minimum, hydrogen peroxide, alcohol or an antibacterial soap. Nylon crackers are the easiest to clean and a simple hydrogen peroxide and water solution, an alcohol and water solution, or an antibacterial soap will not damage the nylon, and is very effective in cleaning.

The aerosolizing of blood can contact others in the area of the scene. I have never heard of anyone getting a blood related disease from the aerosolized blood droplets, but I don't know if any studies were done on the subject, nor do I know a whole lot of people who want to get hit with blood droplets anyway. Insure there is enough space to swing Your whip (twice the length of the whip). Pick the right whip for You. Longer whips are not always better whips, or better whips for You. Clean and disinfect the whip between uses, and most importantly between bottoms. Clean and dress any wounds to the bottom.

Basic Strokes:

Posture is relatively important when first learning how to crack a single tail. Start by balancing yourself on both feet, legs spread about shoulder distance apart, knees slightly bent, with your striking arm shoulder facing your target, and your face and extremities well out of the way. Hold the whip with the knot in the palm of Your hand allowing the whip to swivel in your hand as you move it to reduce the stress and bending near the knob, where the shot sack is. And remember that the whip will follow it's own path. After You have mastered the whip You can move around, dance or stand on one leg.

Archer -- simple two-handed stroke that is easy to learn.

Over hand -- controlled stroke.

Backhand -- Basically, an easy stroke. Covers a lot of area. Also used to set distance and accuracy, and to set up combinations.

Forehand -- Very showy.

Back Crack or Circus Crack-- Mostly used with longer whips. If using only 3 or 4 foot signal whips, there is no reason to use this stroke unless You are taming lions.

Circle crack -- over head back crack. Very showy, very loud and extremely painful if contact is made.

Whipiquette:

Be aware that cracking your whip at a public play space can distract others and may also draw a crowd.

Ask before handling someone else's whip (or other play items).

Ask before cracking someone else's whip (or other play items).

Be aware that a whip can leave marks that can last a very long time.

References:

www.davidmorgan.com

Singletails for Sensualists and Sadists by Marc B.

Singletail by Master AI

Riverside/Webster's II Dictionary

Dictionary.com