

Technology - canada.com


NEWSPAPERS | TELEVISION | CITIES | CHANNELS | CLASSIFIEDS | RADIO
 SEARCHWORD: Search the Web  

TECHNOLOGY

FEATURES STORY

McKlein laptop bag is pricey, but worth it

Murray Hill

Saskatoon Sun

Wednesday, September 08, 2004

On a recent business trip I was walking along an underground mall heading for a meeting at a building about four blocks from my hotel. It was a hot day and since there have only been three of them all summer I wasn't used to the heat and my computer bag seemed to weigh a tonne - it got heavier with each step. I happened to look at my reflection in a store window and was shocked to see how rumped and hot and tired I looked - that made the bag get a LOT heavier.

Then some "guy" - and I say that with more than a little derision; strolled by, pulling his computer bag along behind him. I felt like mugging him. I also came to the realization that if you travel and take your laptop and necessary files with you, then carrying the whole lot in a shoulder bag should not be your first choice.

The bag the "guy" was using was made by McKlein and is one of their Leather Detachable Wheeled Laptop Cases - style 80715 to be precise. His bag was black leather, but McKlein sent me their brown leather case (style 80714) to test and it's the nicer looking of the two bags as far as I'm concerned.

It is a brilliant design. The patented wheel and handle system is what makes the bag. Three sturdy zippers attach the frame to the bag so you never have to worry about the bag coming off the frame by accident.

According to McKlein, the sturdy shell combines with "impact absorbent, recessed in-line skate wheels with high-grade polyurethane sealed ball bearings anchored to steel axles." What this offers you as a user is a bag that you can load down with all your essentials and you'll be able to pull it with ease. It's very smooth pulling and is so sturdy that you have absolutely no fear of your precious laptop being damaged by a bounce off the curb or something like that.

The point-click aluminum telescope handle retracts fully into the shell and when it's fully extended makes the bag easy to pull even for a tall person. Because the handle locks into place as it telescopes, you can easily adjust it to different lengths depending on the height of the user.

The full grain calfskin leather bag easily holds a 17" laptop and all the peripherals - the interior laptop compartment is 43.2cm x 6.4cm x 30.5cm. The entire bag is 46cm x 20cm x 34.5cm and weighs 4.1kg with the frame attached and 2kg without the frame.

The front zippered compartment is easily accessible and conveniently holds pens, keys, cell phones PDAs, business cards and whatever else you can think of to put in there. The padded computer compartment uses an ABS honeycomb construction and the 5MM high density foam is lightweight and provides ample protection for your computer. The main compartment is divided up into three generous areas for storing files. You can expand this compartment by an additional 5cm which McKlein claims will allow for up to 30% more cargo space.

The McKlein detachable wheeled laptop case even comes with a nylon cover to protect the case from rain or snow. The cover is stored in the back of the shell, between the shell and the bag itself, so it's totally out of the way. This is the most convenient computer bag I've ever tried and if you're a road warrior with a bad shoulder from hauling around a 23kg computer bag then this is definitely the bag for you. The leather is classy for even the most uppity of travelers, and the convenience is absolutely unparalleled.

McKlein bags are handled in Canada by ISA, whose website can be viewed at: http://www.isaofcanada.com/corp_cat_briefcases.asp. You can also check out McKlein's website at: www.mckleinusa.com to see this bag plus all the other products they make.

This bag is definitely a case of "you get what you pay for". The leather detachable wheeled laptop case retails in the \$350 range, but if you're on the road a lot and have to haul around the old laptop, spend the money on this bag - it's worth every penny.

You can e-mail Hill at: mhill@sp.canwest.com.