



macOPINION

## HardBody PRO Laptop Case with vSling November 2005

**By Charles W. Moore**

The SLAPPA HardBody PRO laptop case is one of the first designs in SLAPPA Distribution LLC's new line of laptop bags and storage cases, and if this product is any indication, this new laptop luggage will represent some of the most innovative, imaginative designing in the category since the unfortunate demise of Nigel Peck's Willow Design last year.



The HardBody PRO is one slick case. Outstandingly attractive in an understated techno sort of way, it also has a very high-end feel hands-on. The "hard" in the HardBody PRO is not rigid hardness as with metal, but rather a resilient, soft-to-touch hardness afforded by the xEVA plastic material used in SLAPPA's HardBody PRO CD and DVD case lines. It will do a much better job of protecting your laptop from bumps and scratches than a fabric case, but without the weight and coldness of metal.



The V-Sling into which the HardBody PRO case can be inserted to convert it to shoulder-bag mode is also made of xEVA, affording another tough layer of protection in transit, but it is finished in luxurious looking and feeling z-suede, with a generously dimensioned and padded shoulder strap with easy to manipulate Smart Clip adapters.



The HardBody PRO can also be used alone and carried like a briefcase, with its sturdy, spring-loaded retractable handle. With the HardBody PRO inserted in the in V-Sling, the complete unit has a comfortable heft that will be a lot more convenient than carrying the case briefcase-style for extended periods.



The case is a velvet lined, with sumptuous padding, and Velcro closure adjustable web straps to hold the computer securely in place in its compartment, which measures 10 inches x 13 inches and fits my Pismo PowerBook like the proverbial glove.



Indeed, the HardBody PRO case looks like it could have been designed specifically to accommodate and harmonize with the old PowerBook G3 series, but of course it was not.



A 14 inch iBook will fit comfortably as well, (with a classy tuxedo look), as will the 12-inch iBook and 12-inch PowerBook. The 15 inch and 17-inch PowerBooks are too wide, but SLAPPA has other case models that can accommodate them.



On the zip closure divider separating the laptop compartment from the HardBody PRO case's upper compartment, you will find a nearly full-width, flap-closure pocket but the top side of the divider panel.



On the inside of the case's lid you will find another wide, but this time shallow flap and elastic closure pocket for things like cables, power adapters, and a mouse. Speaking of which, one really classy touch with this case is the inclusion of a portable mousepad, embossed with the SLAPPA name and logo, which stores away in a dedicated net pocket on the inside of the lid.



There is also a second net pocket perfectly sized for an iPod, cell phone, or PDA. The body of the lid compartment can hold bulkier items.



The HardBody PRO case closes with double zippers, whose generously sized rubbery pull-heads with the SLAPPA logo are another of the little attention-to-detail factors that make this case seem special. The industrial strength the zipper pulls and zipper heads are combination lockable, and the case comes with two SLAPPA combination locks.



A 3-D rubber business or ID card holder is included -- another thoughtful touch.



So, was there anything I didn't like about the HardBody PRO? Well, I found that one of the zippers on the internal cover compartment closure could be a little stubborn, and the z-suede finish on the V-sling tends to pick up and hold lint-type foreign matter. Neither is a major big deal, and the zipper glitch may be an anomaly with this particular unit, because the other three zippers work smoothly.



In summary, this is a really cool case, with an up-market appearance while still offering serious protection for your laptop.

