



HardBody PSP Daily Case February 2006

By Hector Martinez

Every now and then I hear about someone scratching up their PSP screen, and how annoying those marks look when playing a favorite title. The preventative answer to this kind of trauma is a protective case of some sort, of which there are many. Today we'll take a look at one particular model by Slappa, called the HardBody Case. Is it good enough to take on the PlayGear Pocket and the Capdase Luxury Case? Read on for our full review.

Craftsmanship

What struck me first about the Slappa HardBody case is just how lightweight it is. Rest assured, there's enough tough padding in the overall package, but you certainly won't feel the extra weight for the protection. In addition to the padding, a thick elastic strap is inside to hold your hold your PSP in place, although you can choose to not use it if you wish, as it can slow down the process of taking your system out. The PSP will still be snug once the case is zipped.



Speaking of zipping, you'll find that the zipper gives some significant resistance to being pulled open. Part of this is because there are two protective flaps that fold over the zipper-line and around the case in order to keep moisture and debris out. When the case is zipped up you can barely see the actual zipper line, but it would've been nice to maintain the protection while making the zipper a bit smoother. Then again someone might even see this as a good thing, as no one wants their contents to spill open accidentally.



Where your mileage will vary a bit here is with case's aesthetic appeal. It is a dark gray overall, but the front of it has a shinier thick stripe running down its length. Near the bottom of the stripe is a small circular logo for Slappa, represented by what looks like an open stylized palm. There may be those that may prefer a more uniform finish, but all in all, this is a case I could comfortably use, and in fact I have seen much much worse in terms of exterior finish. As an alternative, the case also comes in white.

Portability

The case is considerably thicker than a PSP sock due to some handy storage extras. Two UMD's can slide into separate slots on an attached fabric that folds over the face of your system, while a larger mesh pocket also sits opposite that. The larger pocket serves to hold the PSP headphones or ones of similar size, although you can also use it to store a couple more UMDs if you wish. This extra storage is nice for those looking to carry more with less.

Function

Other exterior features include a large removable carabiner clip for hooking the case unto a loop in a bookbag, and a Velcro-lined slot to run a belt through, although one could also just throw the whole case into a bag without bothering. To Slappa's large credit, the clip is removable, which is more than I can say for the Aero case, which leaves a hole in its shell if its clip is taken off. What I'd like to see in future versions is a soft handle that runs the length of the case, for users to slide their fingers through. I should also mention that the zipper pull-tabs are sizeable enough to get a good grip on, with a loop that resembles that of a secure padlock. Of course, this being a closed case, there are no openings that will allow you to access the shoulder buttons for playing games, but you can easily charge your unit or listen to music by zipping the case up to the cord in use.

Overall

I may have nitpicked on a couple areas here, but overall this is a solid case to own if you're in the market. The impact protection it offers is secure, the carabiner clip it uses is removable, the Velcro slot adjustable, and it can carry both games and small accessories and still fit into a large pocket. It's resistant to moisture thanks to the flaps over the zipper, and the components held up well under heavy usage. The zipper's resistance could very well be a good thing depending on how protective you are, but I would have liked it to be just a little smoother. At \$20, it's a small price to pay for the protection and portability this case offers.

Score (out of 5):



Product Information:

Company: Slappa
Website: www.slappa.com
Price: USD \$20
Availability: Now