

The Search for an Anvil

Written by David Conroy

Tuesday, 14 December 2010 01:28 - Last Updated Tuesday, 14 December 2010 16:49

I now own an anvil!

I watched eBay, which frequently shows anvil listings but drives a high premium. Here in New England, the average anvil up for auction runs about 125 lbs and the average price on an eBay auction is about \$2.25-\$2.50 per pound. Very few offer shipping, so sometimes it also entails a 200+ mile drive each way to pick up the goods. That was a little steep in my book for getting started. Craigslist offered the occasional better deal, but it's almost like there's a conspiracy of blacksmiths out there snatching up every anvil on Craigslist as soon as they are posted. Either that or everybody and their brother have decided to take up blacksmithing in 2010 and they're in the market for an anvil.

Luckily, the old personal touch came through. After several evenings chatting with fellow members of the Knights of Columbus about learning blacksmithing and looking for an anvil, one of my fellow knights found a friend whose 90-year-old father was clearing out his metalworking equipment. One of the items he had around was a rather ancient-looking anvil. A few phone discussions ensued; a meet was scheduled for me to check it out.

First of all, there's something cloak-and-dagger about meeting in a parking lot and striking a deal over merchandise out of somebody's car trunk. I found myself staring at a rusty old hunk of metal, possessing the classic profile of an anvil. Secondly, I've read a little bit about anvils, and know I'd like to spend as little as possible, but I'm no expert on knowing what is a fair price. The asking price was \$200... and after watching many slip through my fingers, I decided to take a chance.

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I did manage to load it into my SUV's cargo area with his help, and once it arrived home I dared to lift it out of my vehicle and onto a cart. A rap with a hammer yielded an adequate ring rather than a dead clunk, so I know I've got some decent steel on my hands and not just a boat anchor.

I would say easily that this was one of the heaviest things I've ever lifted, and that is after a career as a Network Engineer installing servers into computer racks, and a side career as a DJ; loading audio gear, racks of equipment, speakers and subwoofers. I don't yet have a scientific weight for the anvil, and I have not been able to discern any stampings or markings of weight or brand.

Based on the effort required to move it 3 feet from vehicle to the ground, my initial ballpark figure is about 170lbs.



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I will post more pictures of the anvil along during the cleaning and identification process of what will be my new workhorse.