

# TrekPod™ .vs Bogan Manfrotto

Contributed by Gary Wayne Turner, Waldorf, MD

I have been knocking around with monopods at soccer games for some years now. During that time I have had an opportunity to use several different monopods. This is a “lessons learned” comparison of the TrekPod vs. the Bogan Manfrotto monopod.

## Longevity

If there is one thing I have learned it is that plastic doesn't survive the test-of-time. I have seen many rather expensive monopods, including the Bogan, whose plastic joint fasteners fail over a period of weeks and/or months. During my field testing I encountered a failure in one of the collapsible plastic joints that rendered that device unusable. A fracture in the collar eventually gave-way after retightening the fitting several times due to slippage of the top collapsible section of the monopod. The TrekPod, whose parts are metal, had no such failure. In addition, the TrekPod has only one joint for extension/collapse. The fewer joints a monopod has, the less opportunities it has for failure. The Bogan has 3 joints, as such; the Bogan has 3 potential points of failure compared to TrekPod's 1.

## Functionality

I am 6' 3" tall; with the MagMount and the Quick release systems of TrekPod and Bogan respectively mounted on the monopods I had no problems using either monopod. The added height of these device mounting systems made both monopods tall enough for me to use effectively. When I first learned of the MagMount system on the TrekPod I will admit that I was a bit skeptical. However, the rare earth magnet is surprisingly strong. In fact, I was unable to remove the black magnetic mount adapter when I positioned it onto the head without first attaching a device (camera body or lens), the magnet is that strong. When balancing a \$2,000 camera body and lens on top of the monopod a little insurance is nice, TrekPod does provide a safety clip that enables the user to feel better about magnetism, as it provides a robust mechanical connection as well.

A big boon for TrekPod is the built-in tripod functionality of their monopod. The tripod feature was surprisingly stable providing that you align the lens barrel with the forward most leg of the tripod. Generally speaking, longer lens with collars are designed to center gravity on the tripod/monopod head, as such, I had no problem using my 5 pound Canon Prime lens coupled to my Canon 20D camera body. It doesn't replace the traditional tripod entirely but it works nicely in a pinch or when the camera is in the same horizontal plain as the subject (lens and camera parallel with the ground).



Field Use Review



## Ease of Use

I don't carry my Camera connected to the monopod so I generally use the monopod without the safety clip connected. When I move around I always carry the camera by the camera handle with a short strap around the back of my hand. Placing the camera on the monopod only takes a fraction of a second. Both the Bogan and TrekPod worked very well in this regard. I would however give a slight edge to TrekPod when it comes to setup. On takedown the edge however goes to Bogan. This is because when using the black magnetic mount adapter of the TrekPod, the head has a tendency to change position due to the force required to overcome the incredibly powerful magnetic attraction of the rare earth magnet.

## Transporting

In this category the Bogan wins. The Bogan monopod collapses down to a size that makes it easily carried across the top of my camera bag. However, there are tradeoffs here; if a monopod is collapsible to a point where it is more easily carried then it will obviously contain more collapsible joints which increase points of failure. When transporting the TrekPod there are 2 options: either break the TrekPod down into 2 pieces, or, use the TrekPod as a walking staff. When traveling through an airport I find it unnatural to use the TrekPod as a walking staff and so break it down into 2 pieces.

## Style

There is no comparison here; the TrekPod wins this category hands down. When on the trail or around the soccer field I proudly use the TrekPod as a walking staff. The rugged construction provides me peace-of-mind enough to know that I can walk long distances using the TrekPod to steady myself and once I arrive at my destination it quickly becomes my trusted monopod again.

## Suggestions

- The MagMount Safety Clip should be a little sturdier, black, and have a more positive "click" when positioned properly.
- I've always liked a product that includes a spare part or two; it might be nice to include a spare Safety Clip.
- There should be an option for additional Mag Adapters.
- If the Tripod component were designed to be removable for storage and transport then the overall length during transport would be more acceptable. The three pieces would need some method of containment when disassembled such as a bag or a series of clips.
- A shoulder strap option might also be nice.

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*Trek-Tech extends its thanks to Mr. Turner for sharing his thoughts regarding the TrekPod. We also welcome his suggestions and will take them under advisement as we make product development and product packaging decisions going forward. We also wanted to point out that extra Mag Adapters (a TrekPod comes with 2, one light force and one heavy force) are readily available at our web store. Spare parts such as Safety Clips are also available.*

Please visit [www.trek-tech.com/products](http://www.trek-tech.com/products) for more information.