

Wait, What ? A Dogless Long Spring ?

Heck yeah ! I have always liked dogless traps and Longsprings. I don't know why i just do, so why not have both in trap!



First off, just to get it out of the way, if there is any debate about which is better, Longsprings or coil spring traps, this is not the intent of this writing because different traps have different applications. Depends on what you intend to trap and in what the ground conditions are. Generally speaking coil spring traps tend to rule the predator trapping world, one of the main reasons for this is your trap bed doesn't have to be dug as large and this saves you time and energy. If you would like to get a specific with a trap for the mixed bag trapper I would personally recommend the MB 550/Duke 550.

However this is about the Long spring, because a modification of the # 3 DLS size trap is ultimately what I show here.

The #3 double long spring trap is stable in the ground due to its design. It offers excellent holding power for large animals like coyotes and beavers. Yeah I said beavers. I have front foot caught plenty of 'em on drowner and been just fine. However, its pros are balanced by cons including its large size and weight, which make it difficult to conceal and require more effort to set and bed in the ground.

Advantages of longspring traps

- **Durability and reliability:** Longspring traps are known for being rugged, long-lasting, and consistent in their performance, especially compared to some older designs.
- **Superior holding power:** Double longspring traps, in particular, are considered very effective for larger animals due to the straight-line motion of their springs.
- **Effective in winter:** Their ability to cut through frost makes them a good choice for use in cold or frozen conditions.
- **Good for specific sets:** The weight of longspring traps can be beneficial when using a submerged set.
- **Versatile:** They can be used for a variety of animals, from small furbearers like muskrats and mink to larger predators like coyotes and beavers.

Disadvantages and alternatives

While effective in certain situations, longspring traps have some disadvantages when compared to more modern coil-spring traps.

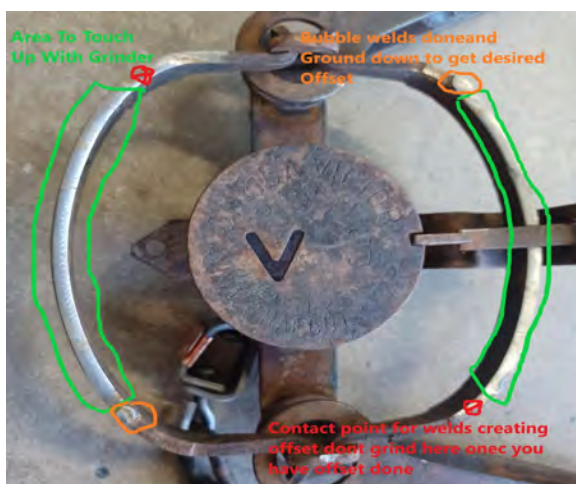
- **Larger profile:** The prominent spring on each side of a longspring trap makes it larger and heavier than a coil-spring trap of a similar jaw size. This makes it more difficult to conceal in land-based sets.
- **Slower closing speed:** High-speed camera tests have shown that coil-spring traps close faster than longspring traps. While the longspring provides a strong final hold, the faster speed of a coil-spring can lead to more consistent catches in some situations.
- **Less compact:** For trappers who need to carry a large number of traps, the bulkier profile of longsprings can be a disadvantage when space is limited.

As I walked through The Oklahoma Fur Bearers Alliance Fall convention and looked at all the vendors tables a picked up a few odds and ends kept seeing like i always do at these things alot of used #3 DLS type traps. And i kept saying to myself man those are still good traps and i would stop and look at them and move on. I think I have a special place in my trappers heart for that trap. First off it looks like a trap should ..at least to me anyway. The first real traps i ever owned were #3 DLS my uncle gave me back in the winter of 1988 when i was 14 years old and he took me down into Johns Creek behind my house and showed me *"the right way to catch a coon"*, which was a basically a pocket set with a chicken egg for bait with a #3 in front of the pocket. Well it didn't take me long to figure out I didn't need a #3 but it worked, and there were better baits than an egg , especially because my mother cut off my egg supply.

So back to the Fall Convention and how this modification journey started. On saturday i stopped at a vendor in the back of the hall and he had a box of nine victor #3 DLS He wanted \$54, that's \$6 a trap..pretty good and they all were in decent shape. By the time we were done and with no real effort on my part he had thrown in a Blake and Lamb #3 and lowered the price to 50 bucks.. I mean how could I say no to that! So I took them home with the intent on offsetting the jaws (which i have done before) to make them Oklahoma legal. I also base plated and center swiveled them all, and was going to night latch the pans. The B&L went on the wall though.

The Double longspring such as the ubiquitous Victor #3 DLS that one commonly sees at trapper conventions in various conditions and that can be had for \$4-\$10 a piece. Granted the \$4 trap may be missing a dog or pan or both but for this modification that's ok because you wont need them for the Mod.

The Mod:



I start by inspecting the trap spring, set the trap, and I look at the overall condition of the trap to ensure I even want to mess with it or should it be a wall hanger or whatever.

2 Next I set the trap and put a vise grip on each spring as a safety. Then I weld a bubble on each jaw that I grind down until I have the desired offset . Oklahoma requires no less than $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch. Note : I also grind the inside of the jaws between the bubble welds and where they contact the opposite jaw just to clean them up a little; You do not need nor do you want to remove a lot of metal here.

Same applies to the jaws where the springs engage the jaw in the utmost position(outside of the jaw) you have to take just a touch off here so you get full lock up of the springs, again just take off a little.



If your trap was in good working order to start with you can base plate and/or center swivel it if you desire. There are several options to do so. And you could Night Latch the pan if you desire or however you do it. Now most of these old traps have a lot of wobble in the pan (side to side movement) . One easy way to take a lot of it out is to take a heavy hammer and lay the trap on heavy vise or on the concrete. Pound the cross hump on the side just enough to close it some and take the play out of the pan. A little at a time. After you do a couple you will get a feel for this and be able to do it fairly fast.

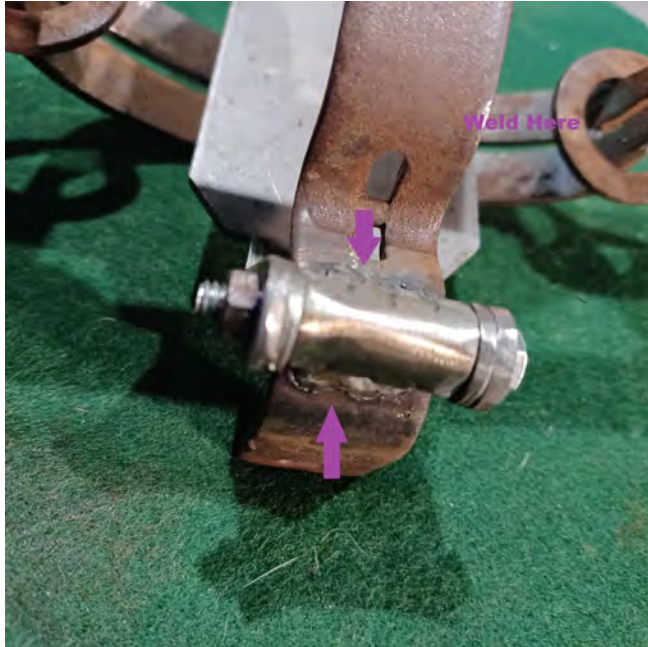
Now you could treat your traps and go start getting fur.. Keep in mind to get it to this point I have maybe 15-30 minutes (I've done a few) and \$6 total in one of these particular DLS.



However I am taking this a step further , I am going to make these dogless traps. I personally used some bridger #2 dogless pans with the cross bolts two #10 washers and four ¼ in nuts.



At this point I have removed the pan and dog and set the trap manually holding the jaws open and position the pan where i want it, tack weld it. Once its tacked i check the operation of the trap before welding



The picture shows where to weld. You want to weld the nuts to the frame, not the washers or the bolt. I also tack my nuts together and then hit them with the grinder to smooth it out.

As you can see below the trap sets and drops into the night latch just like any other dogless trap.



Pro Tip: If it doesn't

quite go into position touch up the inside of the jaw with your grinder.

Now you're pretty much done , just clean it up however much you want and Dye, Paint ,or dip your trap however you do it and some wax and off you go .

I wish I could say I thought all of this up on my own , but I have seen examples and various things online of these different mods. If I could remember them all I would mention them here, but this is how I do it.



I hope this helps some folks breathe some life into some old traps, especially if you like tinkering in the fur shed like I do. So go trapping with some old traps and have fun! Don't forget to invite someone trapping this season; Good luck and tight chains this season!

John Rice

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