

THE TARGET

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA SHOOTING SPORTS ASSOCIATION

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Why Cast Bullets?

In reviewing what I have written previously, there is more I should have included in my latest article concerning CB information sources. There are some super good CB articles from the Handloader magazine by Wolfe Publishing written by Mike Venturino who also has articles in the Rifle magazine and others. He has been casting bullets for going on 50 years, and like Rick, casts bullets for black powder rifles, pistols, revolvers and rifles, especially military rifles. In reviewing these, I would classify them as "must read" for all bullet casters and especially for beginning casters.

Here they are with a small bit of info about each one:

Bullet Casting Basics from Handloader 271, April-May 2011. Here Mike gets into the economics of bullet casting from a beginner's standpoint, just like Rick did in his latest article in "The Target". In addition he discusses bullet designs and melting pot suggestions with differences between the bottom pour and dipping pots. There are many pictures of molds and cast bullets plus a good intro to the safety aspects of bullet casting.

Trouble Shooting Bullet Casting from Handloader 289, April-May 2014. There are times when we experience some difficulty in making good bullets and here many of these are addressed. He covers faulty molds, mold adjustments, alloy differences and more.

Beginning Bullet Casting Part I from Handloader 302, June-July 2016. An excellent article aimed at helping the beginning caster. Covers accuracy potential and economics of bullet casting. Safety is addressed in a very practical way and a way to lessen boredom during casting sessions. Pot selection is addressed and explained along with lead alloy selection.

Beginning Bullet Casting Part II from Handloader 304, October-November 2016. Much more info on bullet design and interesting results from CB use in handgun and rifles. As with all of his articles there are many good pictures which are a good help to see what you are reading about.

Beginning Bullet Casting Part III from Handloader 307, April-May 2017. Still available on shelves in book stores and is the second to the last of a series. The final series will deal with loading the CB. In this article Mike tells, shows and explains why there are bullet defects and how to fix the problem. More discussion on fluxing the pot metal and also how to deal with the "sprue scar" from different types of molds. Also CB accuracy results are discussed along with the effects of slightly flawed bullets. Again, an excellent article with many pictures.

After finding these articles and reading or re-reading them, I'm re-thinking topics for future articles. This is because I cannot improve on what Mike has presented in these articles. And, much of it is so much better than we can do in "The Target" because the articles include some super nice pictures. So, if you are thinking about bullet casting, get these articles. Here is the source: Wolfe Publishing Co., 2180 Gulfstream, Suite. A, Prescott, AZ 86301. Tel: (928) 445-7810. WWW.handloadermagazine.com. Their information indicates you can buy individual copies, so I'd order the first 4 and then subscribe to the Handloader magazine to get the rest of these. There is also much more good information in these magazines and if you reload, you need this magazine.

I'm an avid believer in reading to learn and therefore, with the goal of helping people learn to cast bullets, I cannot stress enough how important it is to have and read the above information. Sometimes people want to do things like cast and load bullets in a hurry with a minimum of information but there are so many things and details to know in order to be successful.

However, Rick's last article talked about making it simple and I agree with his suggestion. Decide what you want to load for and my suggestion would be a pistol or revolver. So, like Rick said buy a Lee Precision bullet mold for the selected caliber, preferably a TL which means tumble lube mold. This mold has many grooves to hold the Lee Liquid Alox. I'd also add a 10 lb bottom pour Lee melting pot to the order and some Lee Liquid Alox. Then find some wheel weights and some pure lead or plumbers lead or a stick or 2 of 50-50 which is 50% tin and 50% lead. (Continued on Page 3)

Editorially Speaking

As I write this, the indoor shooting season is coming to a close within the next few weeks. Our juniors who have earned invitations to USA Shooting's 2017 Junior Olympic National Championships have another month to improve their skills before they compete at the Olympic Training Center. That is not an easy task at the competitive level that exists around the nation today.

Our 2017 schedule of events is a bit different in order to fit matches around the change in the NRA and CMP National match schedule. We do not know if they are done adjusting their schedules, but they say that what we have now will stand. Keep an eye on the match schedule available on our NDSSA Website for up-to-date information on matches in North Dakota.

This issue contains an interesting mix of topics. I hope that you enjoy them. Thanks to Sam May, Rand McLeod and Morgen Dietrich for the articles in this issue.

Again, if any of you have what you think is an important thought about the shooting sports in North Dakota, write it down and email it to me.

During the next year, volunteer to help our match directors and coaches who make the matches possible. Almost all of our match directors would welcome your help, and you will learn more about what it takes to put on a good match. I think you will enjoy yourselves while you help.

This issue contains Rand's interview with Katie Zaun, a 7th grade student who has been shooting for 6 years (nearly half of her life). She has been a dominant competitor here in North Dakota and in the J3 age group in the United States ever since she began to compete with an air rifle 5 years ago.

Katie is another perfect example of how much supportive parents and a good coach can accomplish for a young competitive shooter here in rural America. Katie, her parents and her coach do not have to deal with the distractions of metropolitan USA on a daily basis. The cooperation of people in her small community in support of the Buffalo Sharpshooters shooting program has been a crucial part of her success. However, Katie's drive for excellence is the real key to success in any sport. She has earned state and national records in the shooting sports, and if she continues to enjoy this sport over the next 4 or 5 years, I believe that she will continue to find rewards here in North Dakota, the USA and beyond. Connie and I will have the pleasure of watching her and our other North Dakota junior women compete in the USA Shooting Junior Olympic National Women's Air Rifle Championships this year, and we may get a chance to watch her shoot smallbore as well. It should be fun. Good Luck to all of our North Dakota Junior Olympians.

NDSSA is a small organization that gets a lot of good things done. We are always searching for people to [join us](#) as members or officers. If any of you have a prospective member, share your copy of our newsletter or help them fill out the membership application that is on page 5 and send it in to **P O Box 228, BISMARCK ND 58502-0228**.

"If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn't sit for a month."

— [Theodore Roosevelt](#)

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More about bullet casting

Before casting, read and re-read the instruction that came with the Lee mold and order the stick lube suggested for the mold lubrication. Aluminum molds are great but will not survive without care as shown in these instructions. Then prep the mold as instructed and add metal to the pot. Use the wheel weights plus the softer lead, up to half softer lead. This is because WW's are too hard for most auto and revolver bullets. Flux the molten mix by stirring in a very small amount of the stick lube you have for lubricating the mold. After the bullets are cast, lube with the Lee Liquid Alox as suggested in the instructions. When prepping the brass, make sure you have enough bell on the case so the bullet will start to enter easily without scraping lead as it is seated. In a separate step, crimp the case using a roll crimp for a revolver and a taper crimp for an auto. You need not worry about this, however, because chances are the dies for an auto will be a taper crimp and dies for a revolver will have a roll crimp. Select powder based on data from the Lyman or Lee manual. This will be a faster burning powder than for a heavier jacketed bullet load and chances are will be more accurate and much more pleasant to shoot.

Much is written by Mike about safety in the above articles. Also the Lyman CB manual stresses safety and tells how to be safe when casting, so take this seriously and set up your casting station with safety in mind.

Notice in the above suggestions, I did not mention sizing the bullet. Lee says that most of the time their TL bullet designs can be shot unsized which makes it simple. However, as Rick suggested, you can use Lee's inexpensive sizer. My suggestion would be to load one round unsized. If that drops in the chamber of your auto or fits into the cylinder of your revolver, you are good to go, and I wouldn't worry about sizing the bullet because you don't need to.

So far, you might have less than \$100 invested, depending on what you had to pay for your lead alloy, whether you bought a 2 or 4 cavity mold, etc. But you are off to a good start and can get the feel of how it goes with the casting, the loading and the shooting of your load without spending a lot of money. My guess is you will be happy with the process and the shooting and will be ready to do it again, maybe with other calibers. Rick or I will continue from here next time. Sam May

Shooter to the line

Normally I like to have at least 2 people for these articles so it doesn't seem like I am picking on or highlighting just one individual. All of our young shooters are important no matter what stage their skill level or scores they are currently shooting. That being said I had picked Mari Butler and Katie Zaun from the Buffalo Sharpshooters, both coached by Dan Geurts, and both very accomplished shooters. Mari is getting ready to graduate and go on to Nebraska and shoot for the Huskers. Her life at present is very hectic and her current schedule of shooting, working, test taking and getting ready for college and maybe even having some actual fun gave here with little time for my questions, so you are left with Katie. I hope to still get Mari in a future article, maybe she will be able to give us a comparison

of shooting for a college team as opposed to club shooting, Good luck Mari. It has been fun watching you progress over the past few years into a hard working competitive shooter. I assume you all know that Mari's parents are Rich and Carrie Butler from Casselton who also have a son, Soren, who is finishing up his college shooting career for the Nanooks in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Katie is the daughter of Todd and Sarah Zaun, Buffalo, ND. She is a very competitive young lady, works hard, and I have a feeling that she does not like to be in 2nd place, if she has a say in it. I enjoyed reading her answers and hope you do.

Name **Katie Zaun**
Grade/School attending? **7th Grader at Maple Valley**
Club? **Buffalo Sharp Shooters**
Years shooting? **6**

Name someone that has influenced you to shoot or whom you aspire to emulate.

(Try to equal) My brother Tyler....I've always wanted to beat him in the sport only because he was always cocky about it!

In your mind, what is the most significant accomplishment, victory, goal, that you have attained up to this date in your shooting career?

I've shot air rifle for 5 years and .22 for 3 years; every single year I have shot in the Junior Olympics.

Do you set long range goals or feel that short term goals are better and why.

Short term—Baby steps are key because then you can look back and see how far you've progressed.

Average hours of practice per week during shooting season. **4.5 hours per week**

What other activities that you are interested in through high school? **Volleyball, Track.**

Do you feel there are any aspects of shooting that carry through or are useful in these other activities?

Yes, staying and being in good shape will help you elevate your performance in any sports you do.

What has the discipline of shooting taught you?

To stay humble. Also to never give up.

Other interests or something most people may not know about you. **Aside from shooting and volleyball, I feel I am a pretty boring person.**

What do you think you want to do after graduation?

I would love to shoot in college someday and start a career of some sort.

Do you see shooting as a lifelong sport for you?

My 13 year-old-self would say "for sure" but you never know what God has in store for me.

What, if any, regrets do you have from being involved in the shooting sports?

Absolutely none, I've tried to think what I could be doing right now without shooting and I can't think of one thing that would be the same.

Katie has her name on a number of State & National shooting records as a Sub-Junior or J3 competitor. This is her last year of competition in that age group.

If she continues enjoy the sport of competitive shooting and chooses to pursue excellence over the next 6 years as she has during the past 6 years, her future in and outside of this sport will be extremely bright.

Loading Precision Rifle Ammo on a Progressive Press

Erik Rhode wrote this. He is a High Master XTC and LR shooter from Farmington, MN. Morgen Dietrich arranged for us to publish it here. I have edited for length and to make it a bit more concise in regard to loading quality rifle and pistol ammo with the Dillon 550B. [Rick]

Generally-speaking, most would agree that ammo loaded on a progressive press is good enough for pistol shooting, high-volume "blasting" fodder for AR's, or any application where top-level accuracy is not the primary concern. When top-level accuracy is needed, conventional wisdom leads most hand loaders to a single-stage press. While I agree that most single stage presses are capable of producing excellent match-grade ammo, I don't agree that they are the only option.

The first press that I ever bought was a Dillon 550B. My reason for getting interested in reloading at the time was to feed my 9mm and .45 ACP pistols, which I was shooting A LOT. I wanted to be able to crank out as much ammo as I could in short order, and the 550B was the right tool for the job. Having never loaded a single round of ammo before, and not knowing anyone else who had, the saintly Mr. John Walton put up with all of my dumb questions, and prevented me from blowing myself up on more than one occasion. The learning curve on the Dillon was a little steep for a complete greenhorn like me, but once I started to understand how everything worked, I really started to appreciate the efficiency that was possible with this press.

It would be a few more years before I developed any interest in rifle shooting, and a few more after that before I started to understand some of the differences between "good" and "bad" ammo. I finally discovered NRA/CMP Highpower in 2007, and that is when my loading needs started to change. In my first season shooting the service rifle, I loaded all of my .223 ammo on the Dillon 550 in the exact same way that I would load pistol ammo. Basically, I'd just put a fresh case and bullet on the press, pull the handle, advance the shell holder, and watch a new cartridge fall into the tray. I didn't have anywhere near enough skill with the rifle to be able to tell if my ammo was good or bad, and all lost points on target were definitely caused by shooter error. After I switched to a match rifle for OTC matches, I started to expect better scores, particularly at the 600-yard line, and started to notice things in my reloading process that could potentially be holding my scores back. I experimented with some single stage presses at this point, but found I couldn't stand the slow pace of production after my years with the Dillon. I like talking about loading ammo, but I have no love for actually doing it. I decided that a single stage was not going to work for me.

Now, I don't claim to be an expert at anything, but when I look at a press, it seems to me that the only thing it really does is move things up and down. The inherent problem in this department with the Dillon presses is the

interchangeable toolhead system. It is designed to be able to quickly change your whole set of dies at once, and it is very good for that. The down side is that there is a lot of "slop" in the fit of the toolhead to the press. The dies are locked into the toolhead, but the toolhead fits loosely into the slot in the press. I normally have 3 dies in my toolheads when loading rifle ammo; a sizing die in station #1, a powder funnel die in station #2, and a seater in station #3. This means that every time the handle is pulled, 3 different things are happening to 3 different cases at the same time. The case in station 1 is getting sized, #2 is getting a powder charge, and #3 is having a bullet seated, all at once. Tiny variances in neck tension, case length, powder charge, etc., will cause uneven stress to be put on the different stations on the toolhead, and will cause it to "twist" differently in the press. This can cause your final product to be less straight, or less concentric. Some will argue the importance of having concentric ammo, but I think most would agree that all else being equal, straighter ammo is better.

The way to solve this issue on a Dillon press is to lock the toolhead in place so it doesn't move. There are 2 phases to this modification, and 2 parts you will need to make it happen. I believe that you could choose to only do one or the other and still see some benefit, but doing both will yield the best results.

The first item you need is the Floating Die Toolhead from Whidden Gunworks. These toolheads are CNC machined to be flat in the places they need to be flat, and they have a post and special lock rings at stations 1 and 3 to allow you to float your dies. The toolheads are available here: <http://www.whiddengunworks.com/product/floating-dillon-toolheads/>

Second is the Uniquetek Toolhead Clamp kit, available here:

<http://www.uniquetek.com/product/T1230>

The kit consists of a tap & die set to thread the post holes in your press and toolheads, some tiny screws and washers, and even tinier heli-coils to put into the newly threaded holes. If you are handy and know your way around a hardware store, I'm sure you could just buy the stuff in the kit separately and save some money. Once you have used the kit to thread the holes and have installed the heli-coils, you are ready to lock your toolhead down. Presuming that your dies are already correctly set up in the toolhead, you will place an empty case in Station #1(sizer die), and a loaded round in station #3 (seater die). With the ram all the way at the top and both the loaded round and empty case fully engaged in the dies, your toolhead is pushed all the way flat against the top of the slot it rides in. In this position, you will insert the tiny screws into the heli-coils and tighten them to lock the head in place.

With the toolhead locked down, you won't have any twisting of the toolhead to deal with. The Whidden floating die toolheads allow your sizer and seater to float independently and self-align on the cartridge as it enters the die, similar to the way a Forster Coax press operates.

(Continued on page 6)

Spring Schedule of Opportunities

| | | | | |
|----------------|--|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Apr | Light Rifle Match | Grand Forks | Tom Reiten | 701-775-0008 |
| Apr 22 | USPSA Match | Bismarck | Delmer Dyk | 701-222-4194 |
| Apr 23 | Bullseye Pistol (22 rimfire only) | Grand Forks | Tom Reiten | 701-775-0008 |
| Apr 30 | Military/Lever Action Silhouette | Bismarck | Jim Vollmer | 701-226-4156 |
| Apr 29 | Highpower Clinic – issue NDSSA Rifles | Bismarck | Tom Thompson | 701-255-4601 |
| May 6, 7 | Vintage Rifle and Garand (Sat), Long Range (Sat), High Power, X-course (Sun) | Bismarck | Tom Thompson | 701-255-4601 |
| May 13 | Varmint Rifle Benchrest Match | Bismarck | Gary Vennie | 701-515-3427 |
| May 13 | USPSA Match | Bismarck | Delmer Dyk | 701-222-4194 |
| May 20 | Cowboy Action | Bismarck | Mike Ripplinger | 701-223-3085 |
| May 20 | Bullseye Pistol | Bismarck | Kevin Hertz | 701-223-4225 |
| May 20, 21 | 2016 North Dakota Mid-Range State Champ (make-up date), The 2016 Bruce Alexander Memorial High Power Tournament (make-up date) | Rolla | Andy Johnson | 701-477-6687 |
| May 21 | Blackpowder Cartridge Rifle Silhouette | Bismarck | Ken Heier | 701-255-0675 |
| May 27 | Vintage Rifle, M1 Carbine and Vintage Sniper Match | Grand Forks | Tom Reiten | 701-775-0008 |
| May | Junior High Power Clinic And Practice 80 Shot Match | Grand Forks | Tom Thompson | 701-220-4601 |
| May 27 | IHMSA Pistol Silhouette | Bismarck | Ray Utter | 701-595-1136 |
| May 28 | Military/Lever Action Silhouette | Bismarck | Jim Vollmer | 701-226-4156 |
| Jun 3, 4 | ND Outdoor Smallbore State Champs, Position, 200yd, Prone | Grand Forks | Denny Coulter | 701-746-6959 |
| Jun 3 | Cowboy Action | Bismarck | Mike Ripplinger | 701-223-3085 |
| Jun 3, 4 | North Dakota Lever Action Silhouette State Champ (.22, Pistol Caliber, 30/30) | Bismarck | Dave Tokach | 701-663-8626 |
| Jun 10, 11 | Palma (Sat), ND Long Range State Champ (Sun) | Bismarck | Tom Thompson | 701-255-4601 |
| Jun 16, 17, 18 | Perry on the Prairie High Power, 3 times X-course and Garand Match | Rolla | Andy Johnson | 701-477-6687 |

-Application-

North Dakota Shooting Sports Association

P O Box 228, BISMARCK ND 58502-0228

Also join via the web: <http://www.ndssa.org>

Yes, to protect my right to keep and bear arms; I would like to join the NDSSA and support the legislative efforts of the NDSSA. My dues for a membership as noted are enclosed.

Please return this form. Print name and address as you wish it to appear in our records.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-Mail Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Interests

___ Legislation ___ Jr. Program

___ Hunting ___ Conservation

___ Collecting

___ Bullseye Pistol

___ Air Rifle ___ Hi-Power Rifle

___ Air Pistol ___ Smallbore

___ Police PPC ___ Other

Membership Dues Schedule-(Effective May 1, 2015)

Life.....\$500.00 One Year\$25.00 Clubs One Yr.....\$25.00

5 Year.....\$100.00 Junior.....\$10.00 Club 5 Yr.....\$100.00

___ Rifle Silhouette

___ Pistol Silhouette

___ Hunter Safety

Make check payable to: North Dakota Shooting Sports Association and mail to above address.

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The Official NRA State Association Newsletter



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The Target

January, February, March 2017

More about Precision Rifle Ammo on the Dillon 550 from page 4

For all intents and purposes, it is now like running 3 separate single stage presses simultaneously. Doing this has brought concentricity measurements from .003"-.008" before modifications, to .000"-.003" after, with most rounds falling below .002". I don't really even measure runout any more unless I change something in the process, and then only to confirm that everything is still working. I am confident that any ammo I make on this system will have runout below .003".

I have also done away with the Dillon powder charge system and instead use a generic powder funnel die in its place. I use a separate powder dispenser/scale combo off the press to throw each charge, and then dump them into each case at station #2. At this point, the speed of your powder system will be the limiting factor in how fast you can make ammo. Mine is pretty fast, and the time it takes for each charge to dispense is roughly the same as the time it takes me to do the other tasks. The timing works out well, and I am able to load about 100 rounds per hour with this process. This is the best ammo I can make, and it includes sizing, priming, powder charging, and bullet seating.

If you are a progressive press user wanting to fine-tune your ammo production without sacrificing the speed, these simple modifications might be the ticket for you.
Good luck!

Notice: Our next issues of the Target will be published electronically and sent to our members via Email. Please make sure that we have your correct Email. Of course, it will be available on our NDSSA Website as well.