Lyman Mold " Tune Up "

By Ben Hays

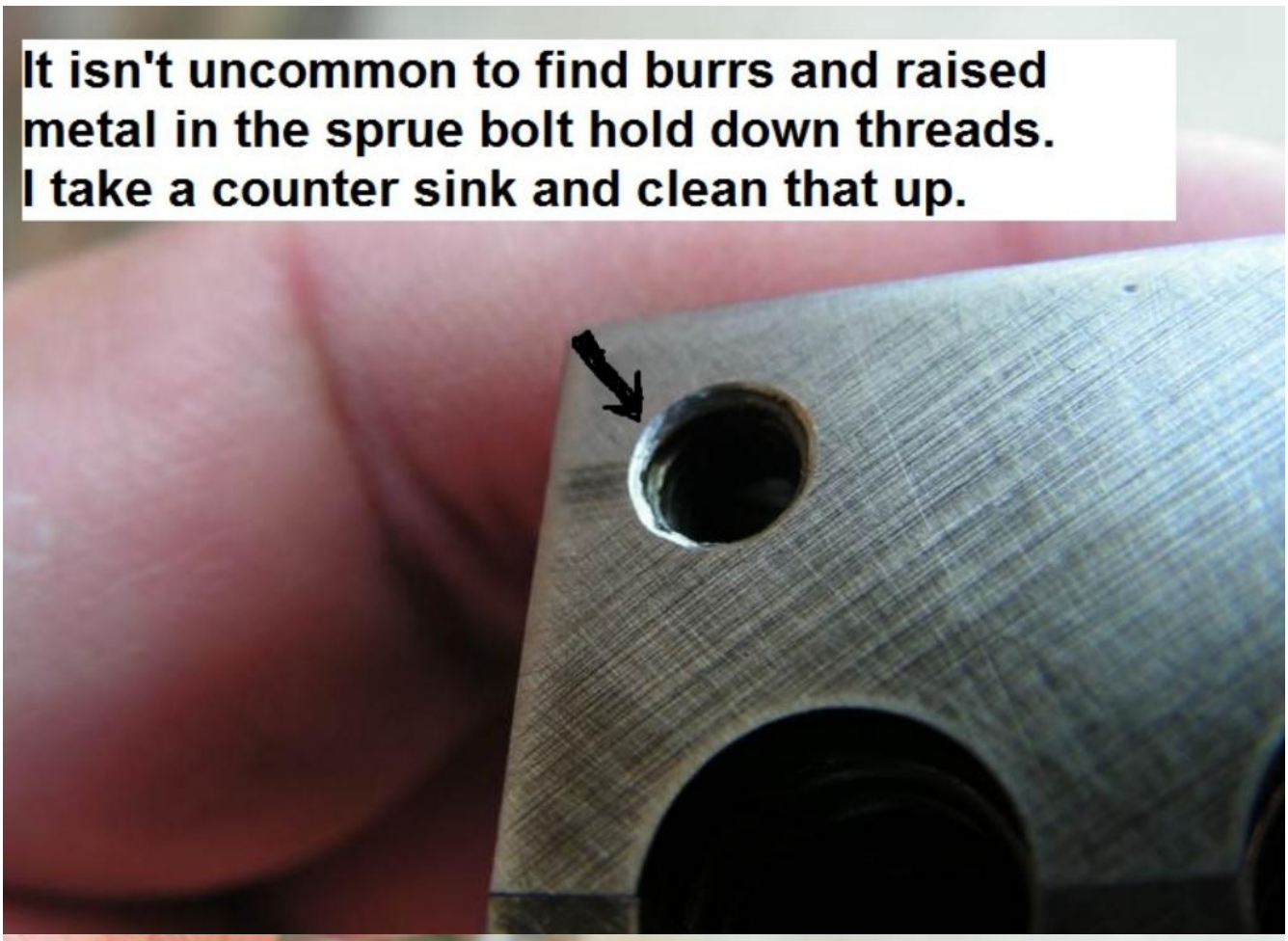
I purchased a nice Lyman, 357446 , 2 cav. mold from a board member a few days ago. The mold arrived today.

I decided to give the mold my usual " Tune Up ". I'd like to point out that this is a very nice mold and my work today to this mold is not an indication of anything that I consider to be a problem by the seller. As a matter of fact, this mold is several steps above what I purchase at gun shows, and from other individuals.

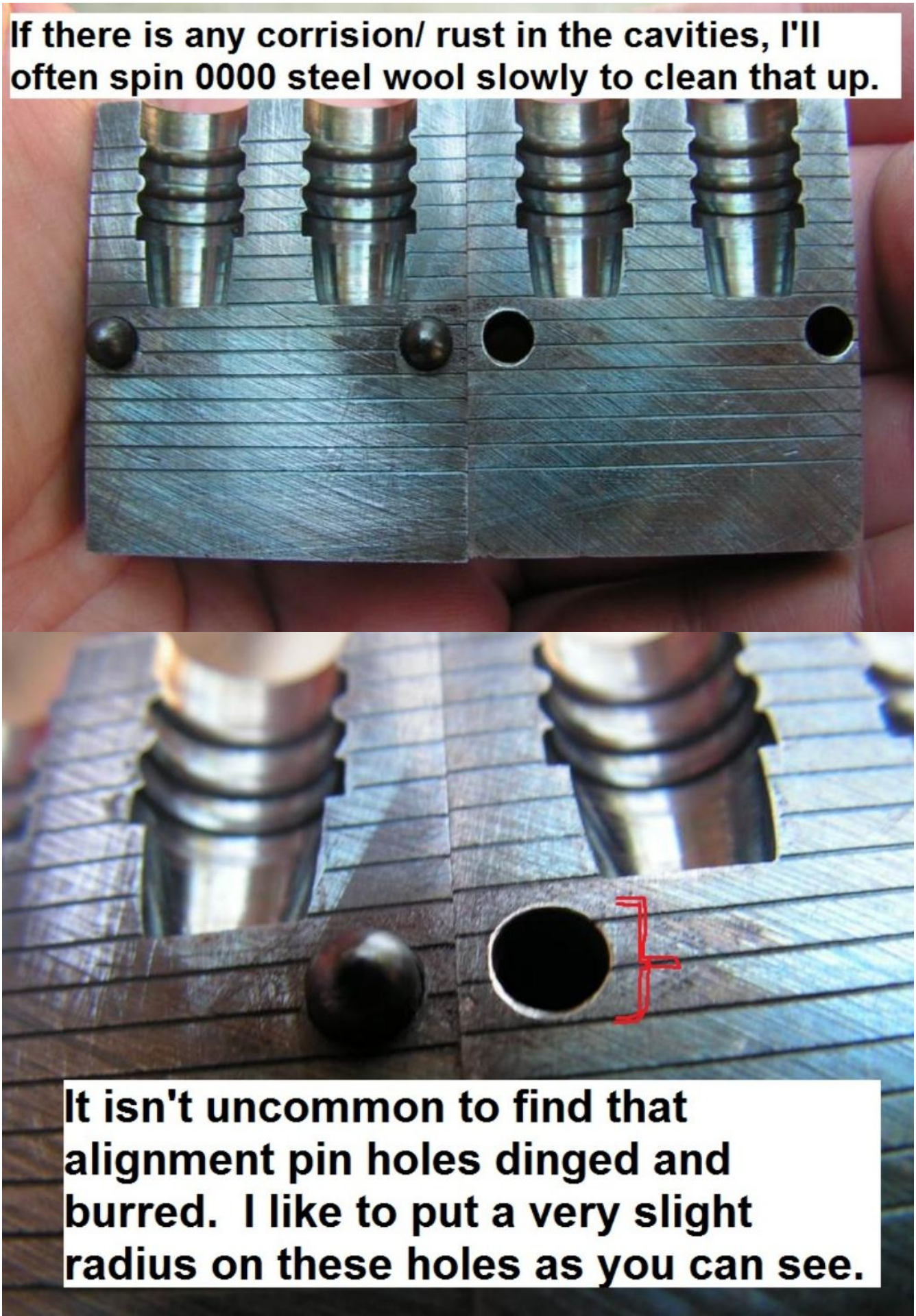
When I decided to begin work on this mold today, I also decided to get my Dig. Camera out and shoot a few photos as I worked, hoping that it might be of some help to some of you.

Most of the work that is needed to a used Lyman mold has to do with the techniques that are used by Lyman to produce their molds (such as stamping out their sprue plates, and the use of those **** split ring washers under their sprue plates. A little bit of time spent on a used Lyman (or for that matter, a lot of other brands of molds also) can make the casting life of the mold a lot longer and much more pleasant for the mold owner.

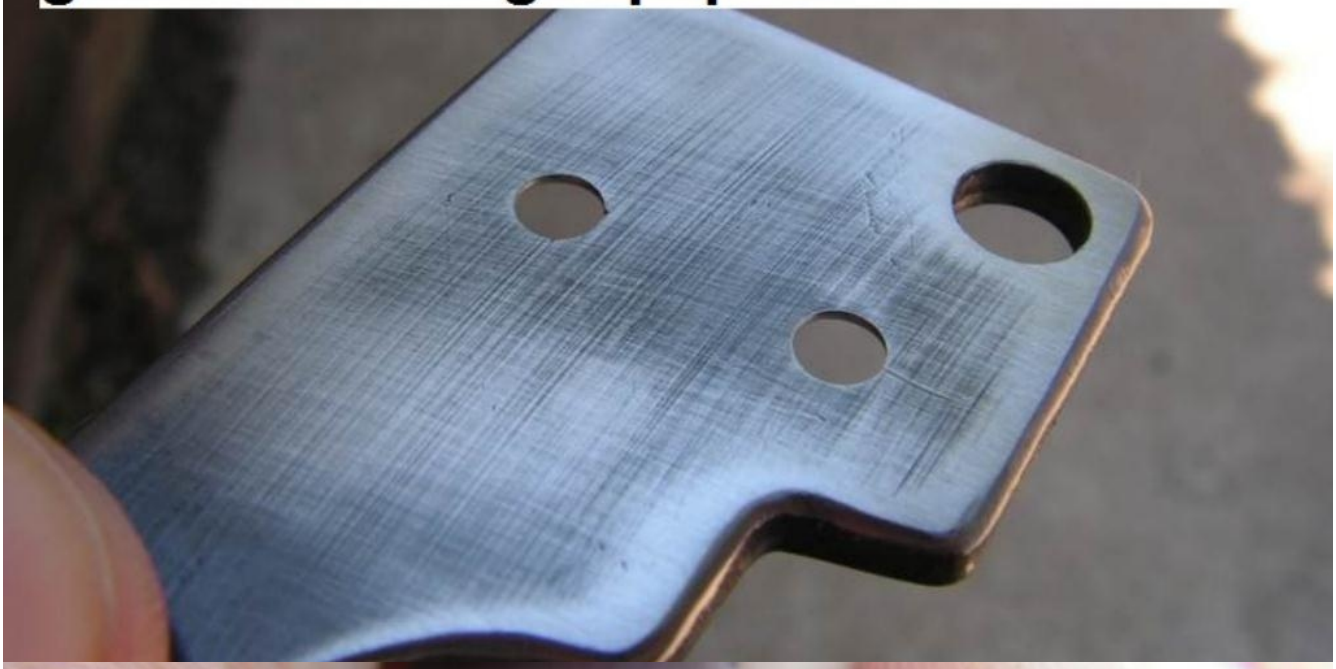
It isn't uncommon to find burrs and raised metal in the sprue bolt hold down threads. I take a counter sink and clean that up.



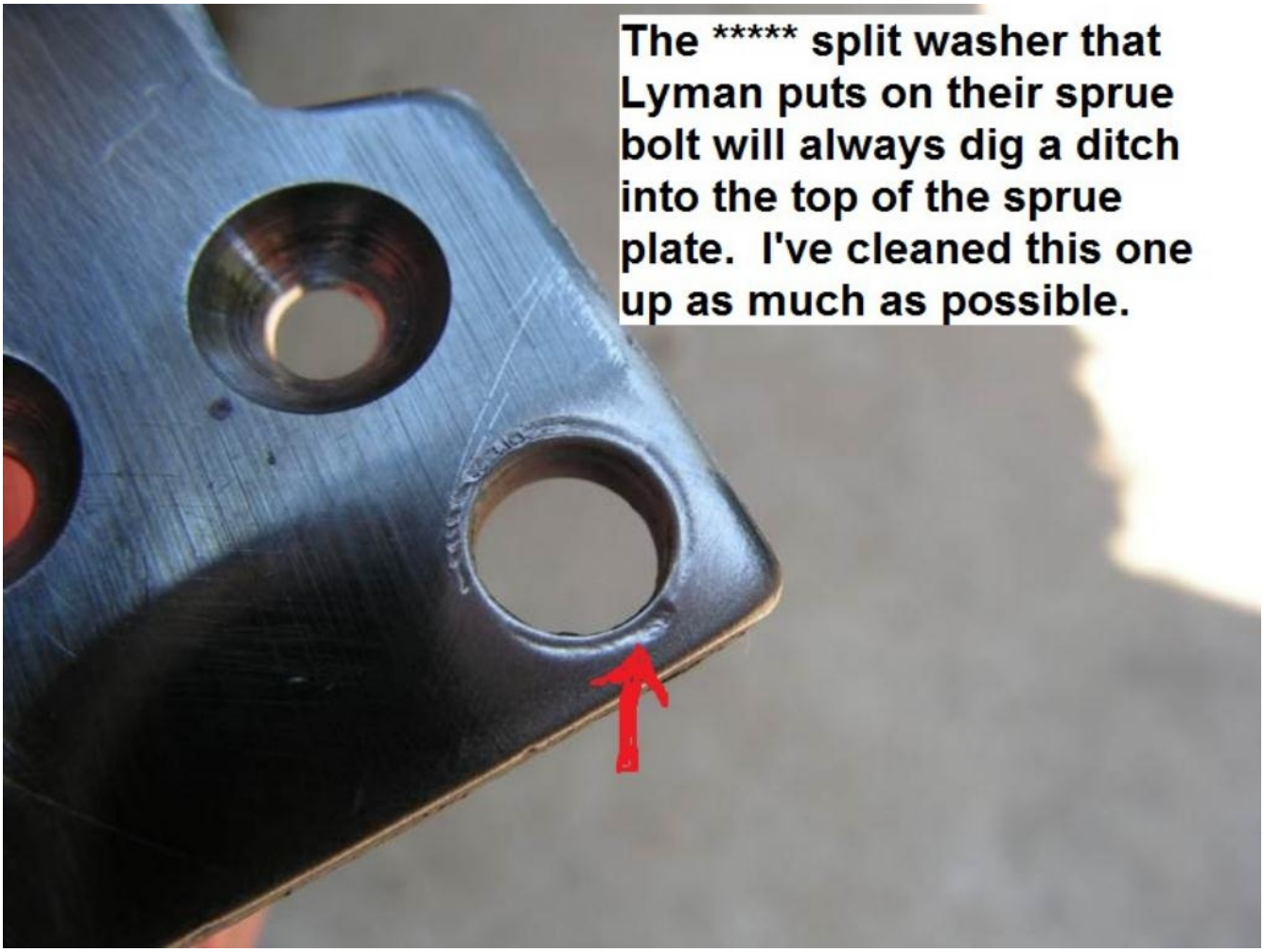
I also clean the outside surfaces of the blocks.


If there is any corrision/ rust in the cavities, I'll often spin 0000 steel wool slowly to clean that up.
It isn't uncommon to find that alignment pin holes dinged and burred. I like to put a very slight radius on these holes as you can see.

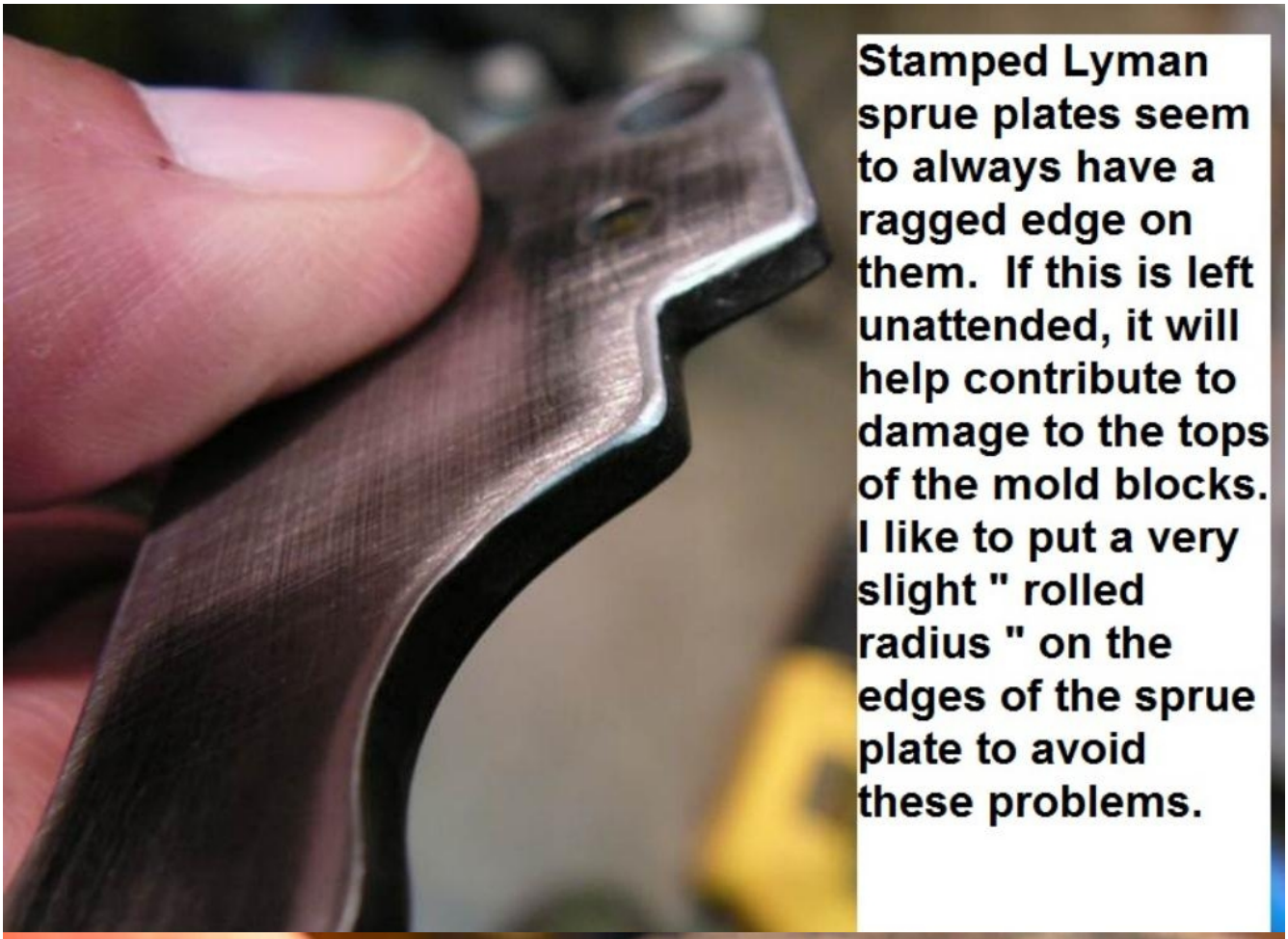
The sprue plate underside will often times need to be polished on a piece of glass with 400 grit paper.



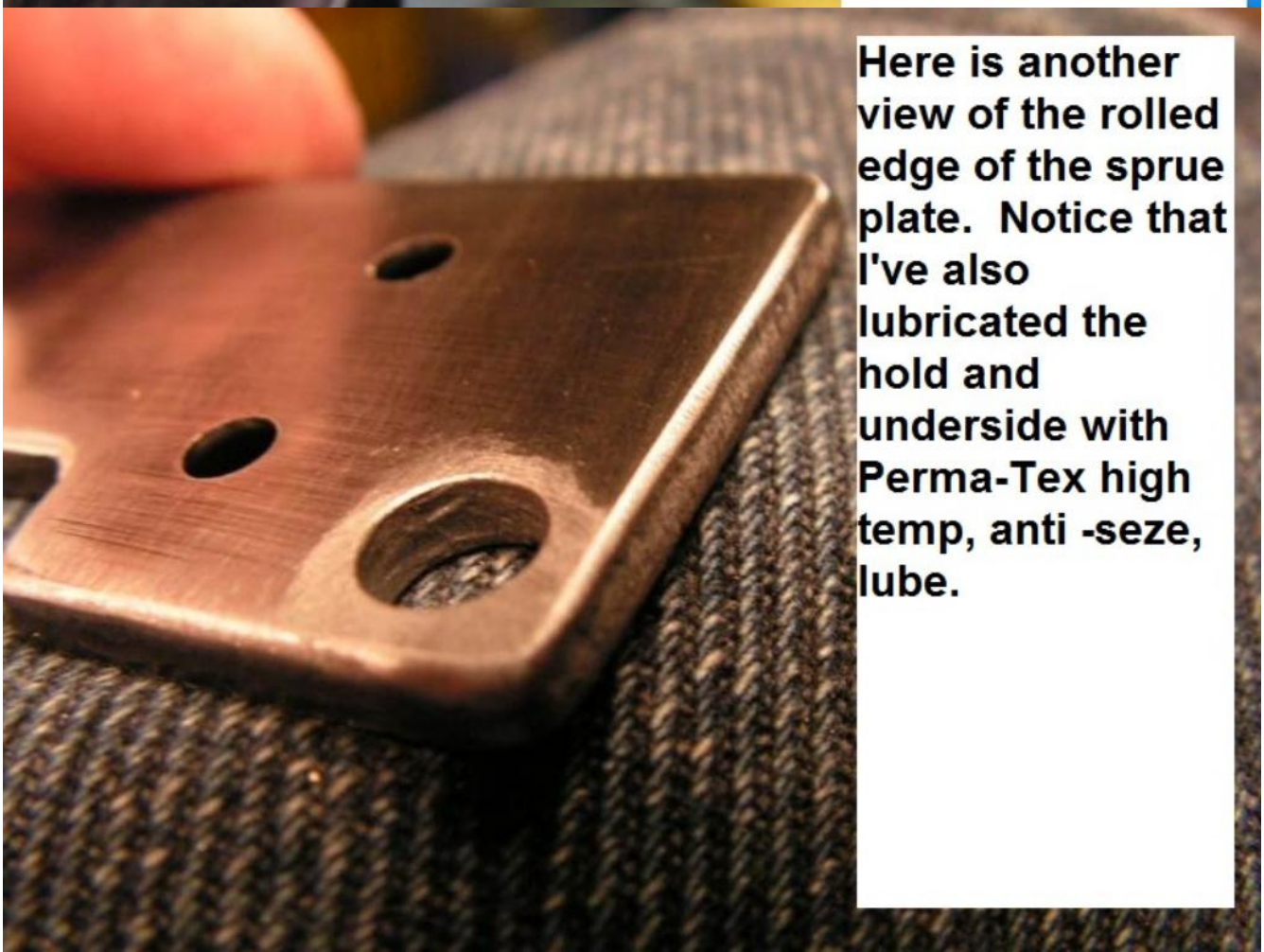
It is not uncommon to find the sprue holes not cut deep enough, they may need to be cut slightly deeper. The sprue holes will quite often times have burrs in them that need cleaning out so the the sprues won't stick. These have been deepened and polished.


The ***** split washer that Lyman puts on their sprue bolt will always dig a ditch into the top of the sprue plate. I've cleaned this one up as much as possible.


These blocks fit together very nicely. No work is needed here ! !



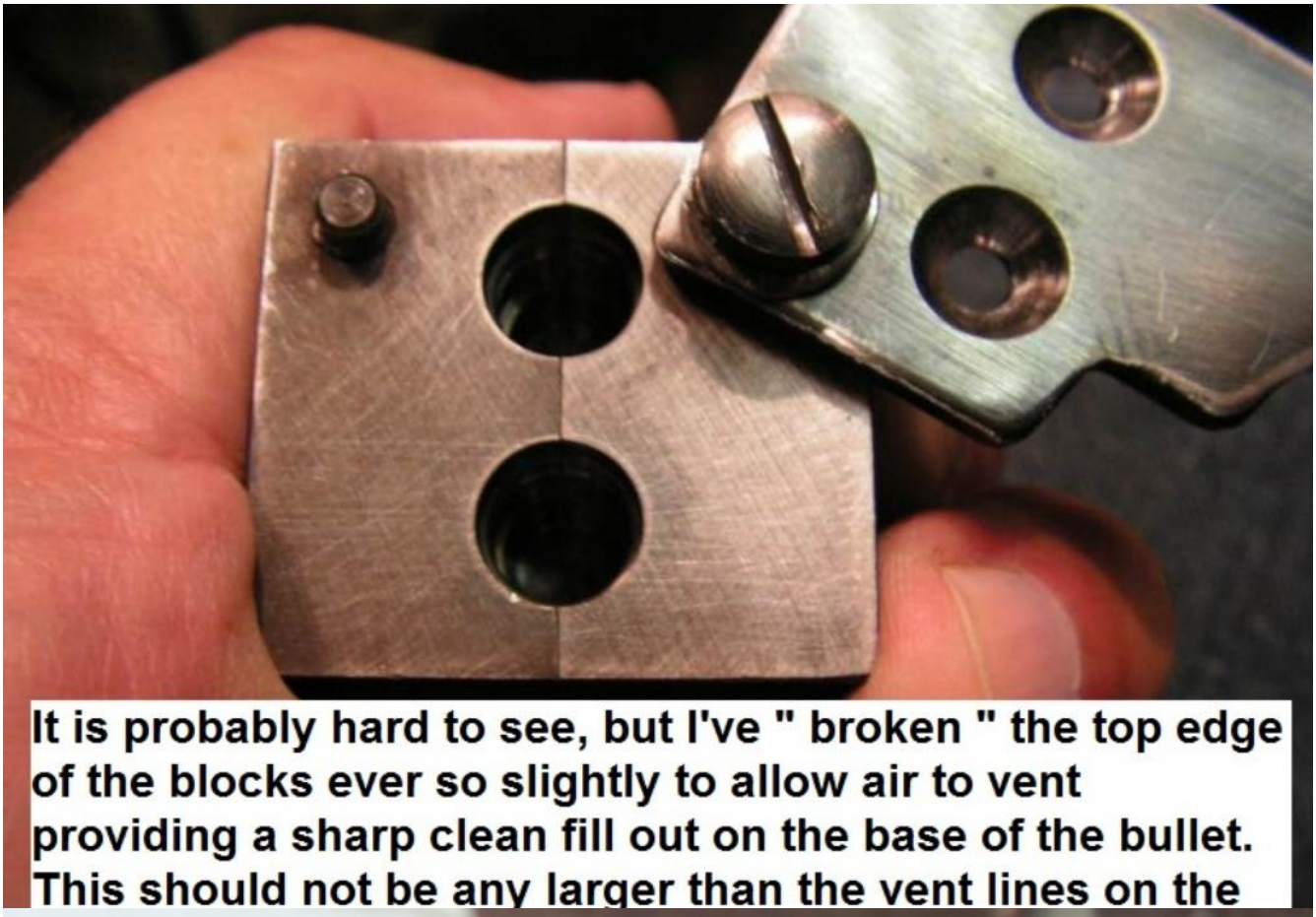
Stamped Lyman sprue plates seem to always have a ragged edge on them. If this is left unattended, it will help contribute to damage to the tops of the mold blocks. I like to put a very slight " rolled radius " on the edges of the sprue plate to avoid these problems.



Here is another view of the rolled edge of the sprue plate. Notice that I've also lubricated the hold and underside with Perma-Tex high temp, anti -seze, lube.

Here is another good look at the " rolled edge of the sprue plate". No chance for this sprue plate to damage the mold blocks. Keep a thin film of Bullplate on the tops of the blocks and the underside of the plate

That **** split washer that Lyman insist on using has been replaced with a double wave washer. Much better now ! !



It is probably hard to see, but I've " broken " the top edge of the blocks ever so slightly to allow air to vent providing a sharp clean fill out on the base of the bullet. This should not be any larger than the vent lines on the

Getting real good base fill out now. Allowing that air to vent under the sprue plate pays good dividends.

The mold is giving real good fill out from each cavity.

Doesn't take long to accumulate some very nice bullets with this mold.

The total amount of time invested in this mold was between 45 minutes and 1 hour. This mold is now a pleasure to use now. No bullets sticking in the cavities, no sprues sticking in the sprue plate holes, great mold fill out and some very nice bullets.

The next time you acquire a used Lyman Mold, use this technique on it, I think you'll be glad that you did.

Thanks,

Ben Hays