

In use, the plexiglas cover is removed and the open space is filled with primers, open side up after which the cover is replaced. The die is positioned and locked in place so that the primer is fully seated by pressure on the handles. The entire assembly is held so that the column of primers enclosed by the brass guide strip are fed by gravity down over the end of the priming punch, one by one. It then is simply a matter of popping the base of the unprimed cases into the slot of the die head, squeezing the handles, releasing — which retracts the punch under spring tension, allowing a fresh primer to drop into place — and repeating the process. It is precise and positive and also very fast and convenient although it takes a little time to refill the reservoir when it runs empty.

I had a letter from Bellows & Sons — late in 1965, I believe, saying that production of the device had been discontinued because of Mr. Bellows's health, so apparently the device is not presently available. It seems a pity since it offers numerous advantages.

However, we've seen a working pilot model of the new Bonanza Co-Ax Primer Seater which, according to plans, will sell for \$14.95, retail. This unit is designed for bench mounting rather than being hand-held as is the Bellows unit and it appeared fully equal to the Bellows in output as well as precision. The price includes one primer housing for either large (.210") or small (.175") diameter primers, with an extra housing of either size being priced at \$2.50. A set of three of the rings which are adjustable to serve as the shell holder, permitting the priming of virtually every size of case, costs \$2.50. By the next issue, we expect to have one of the Bonanza units on hand for detailed testing and evaluation and will issue a full report on it at that time. In the meantime, additional information can be obtained from: BONANZA SPORTS Inc., Route 4, Faribault, Minnesota 55021; direct inquiries to the attention of Mr. Dean R. Purdie.

**THE .44/357 B&D IN RIFLES:
AN ARA TEST REPORT**

As previously noted, we had the BSA Martini single shot rifle, chambered for .357 magnum, rechambered for the .44/357 Bain & Davis wildcat cartridge. Performance of the rifle in its original .357 magnum caliber was reported in ARAB #43, March, 1967.



Mr. Keith Davis, ARA #0410, of Bain & Davis Sporting Goods Co., 559 West Las Tunas Drive, San Gabriel, California 91776, performed the conversion and, at the same time, modified the firing pin to eliminate the pierced primers which

had posed severe problems in the original caliber.

The current version of the .44/357, as shown in the accompanying illustration, is made from a standard .44 magnum case (shown at left) by simply running it into the regular full length resizing die used in re-loading for the caliber. It has a shoulder angle of 10° and a neck length of about 3/16". The original version had a longer neck, a sharper shoulder of 25° and the new version seems to be completely free of the problems encountered in the original: brass stretching and head separations. In addition, the new type is much easier to form and produce. In the course of our testing, no cases were lost in forming or firing.

The net benefit of the conversion was to very nearly double the maximum muzzle energy developed out of the same gun in .357 magnum ... from slightly over a thousand foot-pounds to just under two thousand in the new caliber. In effect, the simple process of conversion raised the performance level from slightly better than the .30 M-1 carbine to approximately that of the .30/30 WCF, although it still falls somewhat shy of equalling the .35 Remington cartridge in rifles.

At the time of conversion, we had a set of Weaver scope blocks mounted on the barrel, using these to run some comparative accuracy tests on the range with the aid of a 4X Bushnell scope. Results were encouraging and some groups were surprisingly good, indicating that, with a bit more load testing, the rifle should prove more than adequately accurate out to about 100 yards or so. Several groups between one and two inches for five shots were obtained at a distance of fifty yards with a few somewhat less than an inch.

One unexpected result was the outstanding performance turned in by several bullets originally intended for use in the 9mm Luger round, being of .355" diameter. These not only delivered top velocity in the load evaluation but they tended to give the tightest groups on the range as well. Since some of them, such as the 115-grain Norma hollow point, are intended to expand at Luger velocities ... say, around 1150 fps ... and since the 25-1/4" barrel of the .44/357 rifle got velocities all the way up to 2760 fps, the potential expansion should be impressive and this was amply proved by firing one through a discarded book some three inches and 1500 pages in thickness. The Norma hp left an exit hole fully four inches across and blew confetti all over the floor. It looks like a potent powerhouse well suited for conversions in the tubular-magazine lever actions such as the Model 92 Winchester, where it would offer increased magazine capacity.

Testing sessions are scheduled for the same cartridge in handguns. On hand are two for that purpose: a Model 27 Smith & Wesson with 8-3/8" barrel, on loan from Keith Davis and my Ruger Hawkeye single, freshly fitted with a 10" barrel chambered for the .44/357 B&D. The cartridge made a fine showing as a rifle load but it shows even greater promise as a real record-setter out of handguns. Check these pages next month for a detailed account of its performance.

At the top of the next page, you'll find a table of reload performance of the .44/357 B&D in the 25-1/4" barrel of the BSA Martini. Loads marked maximum or too hot are, in our opinion, exactly that and the data is presented for your interest, not for use in rifles or handguns except at your own risk and/or discretion. Since we have no control over loading methods and techniques, we cannot and do not assume responsibility for results obtained with the use of the data given.

As has often been emphasized here, accuracy results are by no means reproducible from one gun to the next. However, here's a few notes on the group testing — all fired at fifty yards, with powder charges metered from an RCBS Uniflow after setting with a Lyman/Ohaus scale. The 116-grain Norma full-jacket .355" Luger bullet, ahead of 12.0 grains of Alcan AL-8 put four into a single ragged hole, center-to-center spread, 0.275", with a fifth at 1.080, total. The Speer 160, with 9.5 gr of Herco put five into 1.185 inches.

LOAD DATA FOR THE .44/357 BAIN & DAVIS (25-1/4" RIFLE BARREL):

BULLET & WEIGHT	POWDER CHARGE	L.O.A.	PRIMER	MUZZLE VELOCITY	MUZZLE ENERGY	REMARKS (NR: Not Rec.)
Speer SPT 160 gr	28.8 gr RelodeR #7	1.680 in.	CCI-300	1750 fps	1087 ft.-lbs.	Capacity load
Super-Vel SPT 110	27.7 IMR-4227	1.620	"	2300	1292	Near max.
"	25.0 "	"	"	2140	1112	Appeared moderate
"	24.0 Herter-103	"	"	1660	673	
"	27.0 "	"	"	1800	790	
"	28.0 Hodg. H110	"	"	2620	1680	Too hot!
"	28.0 "	"	CCI-350	2310	1300	Too hot!
Speer HPT 146	27.0 Herter-103	1.662	CCI-300	1850	1100	Max.
"	17.0 Herc. #2400	"	"	1700	938	
"	18.0 "	"	"	1780	1030	
"	19.0 "	"	"	1750	992	
"	20.0 "	"	"	1900	1170	
"	21.0 "	"	"	1940	1220	
"	22.0 "	"	"	2040	1350	Near max.
"	22.0 IMR-4227	"	"	2010	1310	
"	24.0 "	"	"	2050	1360	
"	25.0 "	"	"	2140	1480	Near max.
"	25.0 Norma-200	"	"	1680	912	Left unburned powder
Speer SPT 160	25.0 IMR-4227	"	"	2100	1570	Max.
Norma FJ 158	30.0 Norma-200	1.685	CCI-350	2010	1420	
"	25.0 Hodg. H4227	"	"	2130	1690	Max.
Norma HPT 115 .355"	25.0 "	1.650	"	2310	1365	
"	26.0 "	"	"	2400	1466	
"	21.0 Hodg. H110	"	"	2160	1183	
"	23.0 "	"	"	2370	1438	
"	25.0 "	"	"	2560	1670	Near max. NR
"	28.0 "	"	"	2760	1945	Too hot! NR
Speer SPT 180	29.2 Norma-200	1.850	Norma LP	1880	1410	Max.
"	29.2 "	"	Norma LR	1900	1440	Max.
Hornady SPT 200	28.0 "	1.860	CCI-300	1810	1455	Too hot!
Norma SPT 200	28.0 "	1.910	"	1880	1565	Too hot!



DON STRONG, #0156, Box 327, Prairie City, Oregon 97869, has a limited supply of copper 1/2 jackets for sale; order direct and he'll bill you for the postage at following prices for the jackets: 10M .45 jackets at \$12.25/M; 22M .44 jackets at \$12.25/M; 5M .38 jackets at \$11.00/M. ###DAN WONG, Central Shooter's Supplies, Ltd., 6761 - 6th St., Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, wishes to contact someone who can supply dies, advice and know-how for making jackets. Says he has "raw materials available in limitless quantities at prices much more favorable than in the USA" ... everything he needs except the dies and he will settle for a worn-out set that he can use for a pattern. Can some member give him a hand, please? ###GIANCARLO MENSA, #4242, P. Madonna degli Angeli, 2, Torino, Italy ... Is most anxious to contact other members in Italy; also would welcome comments from other members on reloading .243 Win and .270 Win calibers with powders available in Europe, such as Norma, ICI, Nobel, Glasgow and Cooppal. ###EU-GENE GENTLEMAN, #1182, Glen Elder, Kansas 67446, wants plans for a bench rest, boresighting stand and gun cabinets; also would like data on light loads ("parlor loads") for the .30/'06 and .222 Rem. ###Robinson R. North, #5094, 14 Northport Ave., Belfast, Maine 04915, notes that he has had very good results by using the Lee Wad Guide over the droptube

of various makes of shotshell loading presses; says the Lee nylon crimp starter can be adapted for use on such presses by drilling and threading the top for a cap screw, 1/4-20, and using two hex nuts, one as a lock nut tightening against the crimp starter and one as a depth retaining nut under the plate of the press. ###THE MUZZLE VELOMETER, a chronograph mentioned in recent issues, is available from AMERICAN CRAFTSMEN, Inc., 12645 La Cresta Drive, Los Altos Hills, Calif. 94022, at a price of \$59.95, minus batteries. It includes three velocity ranges extending from 500 to 5000 fps. User need add only battery and 1-foot spacer board. Power is from a single 9-volt dry cell available from most hardware, electrical or radio/tv stores. ###SUPER VEL BULLET CORP., of 129 E. Franklin St., Shelbyville, Indiana 46176, announces prices on five of their jacketed softpoint bullets, now available as a separate reloading component; all prices quoted here are for a box of fifty: 9mm (.355") 108-gr SPT, \$2.45; .38 (.3565") 110-gr HPT, \$2.45; .38 (.3565") 110-gr SPT, \$2.40; .38 (.3565") 125-gr HPT, \$2.50; and .44 (.429") 210-gr HPT, \$2.75. The latter is the one used in the velocity tests described in the #44 ARAB. Contact owner Lee Jurras at the address given for ordering. ###ELMER W. STONE, Box 101, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571, #5695, is looking for reduced-load data on the .338 Win mag, using the 225-gr Hornady at about 2100 fps. We can only suggest trying 45 to 48 grains of IMR-3031, not in extreme low temperatures, but perhaps some member has developed a good target load in this caliber - Stone wants to use the .338 for NRA High-Power qualification firing as it's the only rifle he has - so any helpful tips will be greatly appreciated. ###Bench Tips appears again next issue ... send yours in!