

# BIG BORES GO COMMERCIAL

**.475 and .500 Linebaugh factory  
ammo is now available!**



(L to R) 440 gr. .500 Linebaugh, 435 gr. .500 Linebaugh, 420 gr. .475 Linebaugh, 300 gr. .454 Casull and 250 gr. .44 Magnum.

**By Dick Williams**

There is no therapy quite like big bore handgunning. While recognizing there are human and hardware limitations, the primary rule of thumb is: the bigger the case capacity and bullet diameter, the greater the value of the therapy.

Unleashing the power of 300 gr. slugs cures most neuroses, but sending 400 grainers downrange is enough to shake all your phobias.

Unfortunately, two of the biggest handgun cartridges, the .475 Linebaugh and .500 Linebaugh, have been a "reloaders only" proposition; even brass had to be manufactured by the shooter or purchased from a custom house. Enter "Doctor" Tim Sundles of Buffalo Bore Bullets.

Tim is an avid shooter of big bore handguns. He is also the owner of Buffalo Bore Ammunition Company, which makes commercial ammunition featuring heavy bullets in large handgun calibers. While there isn't much big game that couldn't be hunted with his heavy loads in .44 Magnum and .45 Colt, Tim owns and hunts with both .475 and .500 Linebaughs.

Regardless of whether his decision was primarily personal or marketing oriented, he recently began production of factory ammo in .475 and .500 Linebaugh

calibers. It's impressive stuff.

With one exception, dimensions are identical to brass built from .45/70 and .348 cases. On the .475 Linebaugh cases, Tim requested a smaller diameter rim (.540" vs. .602"). It is no secret that he hopes Freedom Arms will one day chamber its large frame revolver in .475 caliber, and the new gun could not accept the larger rim size.

Owners of custom .475 Linebaughs need not worry; the Buffalo Bore ammo with the smaller case rims works fine in existing guns.

For test purposes, I had two different .475 loads and three .500 loads. Both .475 loads featured 420 gr. LBT cast bullets with the long, flat nose (LFN). The light load was rated at 950 fps while the big load listed at 1,300 fps. In a blue 6" barreled Clements custom revolver built on a Ruger Bisley frame, both loads exceeded the factory ratings, clocking 992 fps and 1,380 fps, respectively.

There were three loads in the .500 Linebaugh—a "light" load with 435 gr. LBT-LFN cast bullets rated at 950 fps, a heavy load with the same bullet rated at 1,250 fps and another heavy load with 440 gr. LBT-WFN slugs rated at 1,250 fps. Shooting a Linebaugh 6" stainless custom gun, the three actually chrono-

graphed at 992 fps, 1,303 fps and 1,230 fps, respectively.

After chronographing, I did a survivalist's version of accuracy testing at 25 yards—standing, with no supports, allowing my whole body to participate in absorbing the recoil. I was not about to lay across sandbags and let my wrists take the physical beating that multiple shots from these big guns will inflict.

First was the light .500 load, and I'm proud to say I kept five shots in a 1.75" group. I switched to the .475 next since even its heavier load was gentler than the big .500. Both the light and heavy loads in .475 ran 2.5" to 3", but I was already beginning to fight the gun.

The heavy loads in the .500 opened up to 3.5" to 4", but by this time I was testing my physical limitations more than the gun's accuracy. Still, the results weren't bad considering the number of rounds already fired, and I would expect accuracy to be in the 2" to 3" range for all loads if the shooter conducts the tests while still fresh.

One other comment on the .500. Three different shooters felt the 440 gr. slugs at 1,230 fps were noticeably gentler than the 435 gr. bullets at 1,303 fps.

For maximum "stopping" power on a large soft skinned animal, I'd opt for the wider meplat of the 440 gr. WFNs of the .500 Linebaugh. For maximum penetration, I'd take the .475 Linebaugh with the 420 gr. LFNs at 1,380 fps.

Buffalo Bore also offers both Linebaugh calibers with jacketed hollow-points. In addition, a reloader can order brass in either caliber, properly head stamped and ready to load. Prices aren't cheap, but neither are they outrageous considering that Buffalo Bore financed the first run of commercial brass.

Also, consider the cost of buying case forming dies as well as standard reloading dies. Loaded ammo runs between \$2 to \$3 per round depending on bullet selected, while brass runs about \$1 per case depending on the quantity ordered.

I suspect you'll be doing most of your shooting (and probably hunting) with the pleasant shooting, "light" loads that keep velocities under 1,000 fps. But for that possible brown bear moment, or an occasional swagger at the local range, or just to deflate some braggart's ego, the heavier factory loads will amply fill your needs.



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