

DOPING THE WIND:  
TIPS AND TACTICS

RELOADING THE  
.475 LINEBAUGH

VENOLA: THE PLEASURES OF PLINKING

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**WARNING:**

The loads shown here are safe only in the guns for which they were developed. Neither the author nor InterMedia Outdoors Inc. assumes any liability for accidents or injury resulting from the use or misuse of this data.

# THE .475 LINEBAUGH



Barnes  
275-gr.  
XPB

Speer  
275-gr.  
GDHP

Hornady  
325-gr.  
XTP

Speer  
325-gr.  
GDSP

True Shot  
355-gr.  
Lead FN

Hornady  
400-gr.  
XTP

■ Here, in profile and point-on, is a selection of .475-inch bullets used. ■

In Ruger's No. 1-S, this number qualifies as a bigbore powerhouse. And you can use .480 Ruger loads as well.

**T**HE .475 LINEBAUGH CARTRIDGE WAS DEVELOPED BY custom gunsmith John Linebaugh in the early 1980s as a revolver cartridge for big game. To this end, it certainly succeeded. A 400-grain bullet at over 1,500 fps is impressive. The .475 was based on the old .45-70 Government cartridge shortened to 1.400 inches and straightened a bit to allow the seating of .475-inch bullets.

**Tim Sundles of Buffalo Bore Cartridges improved on the original design considerably by reducing the rim diameter from .608 to .542 inch and strengthening the base of the case to better handle the high pressures of the round, making a great cartridge even better.** Our test rifle this month is a brand-new No. 1-S in .475 Linebaugh, and it proved to be as accurate

as it is beautiful.

The falling-block action of the No. 1 handles the .475 with ease, and as an added bonus, the rifle also handles the .480 Ruger cartridge. And the fact that the .480 is but the .475 case shortened by .115 inch is a real plus, as .480 ammo is somewhat more widely distributed.

Handloading equipment is readily available, but components can sometimes be a problem. We used a set of RCBS carbide dies in a Redding T-7 turret press to load test ammo, and this worked perfectly. The 1/8-inch spacer that comes with Redding .44 Special/Magnum dies is only slightly thicker than the difference between the two case lengths, and its use between the die lock ring and the turret minimizes die readjustment when switching from loading .475 Linebaugh

to .480 Ruger cases.

Homemade rounds for repeaters should have a very heavy crimp because of the powerful recoil generated by these loads. While bullet movement is not a consideration for the single-shot No. 1, a heavy crimp is still required to ensure reliable ignition of the relatively large doses of slow-burning powders used.

Handloading the .475 Linebaugh has its own set of idiosyncrasies. You'd think that with its 22-inch barrel, the No. 1 could utilize even slower pistol powders and achieve higher velocities. Unfortunately, it doesn't work

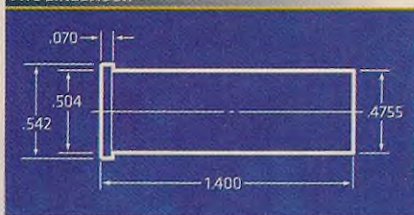
that way. For example, the velocity with the 400-grain Hornady XTP and 24.0 grains of AA-1680 in the .480 was only 1,163 fps. Powders that are most suitable for handguns also work best in longer-barreled rifles.

Another thing to keep in mind is primer size. While the .475 uses rifle primers, the .480 takes pistol primers. The primer pockets of pistol cases are a smidgen shallower than for rifle pockets, and rifle primers are tough to seat below the case head. For .480 ammo, just stick with pistol primers and all's well. The efficacy of the Federal No.



The Ruger No. 1-S in .475 Linebaugh has plenty of bigbore power, and it proved to be very accurate with a variety of handloads.

**.475 LINEBAUGH**



210 large rifle primers used in the .475 is evidenced by the single-digit SDs of almost all loads.

While suppliers such as Graf & Sons, MidwayUSA and others list .475 Linebaugh and .480 Ruger ammo, and .475-inch-diameter bullets, these items were in short supply at the time of our testing. A good supply of Ruger .480 cases was obtained, but we had to make do with .475 cases from fired factory loads—plus a few Starline cases.

We must offer a caution. It's easy to get .480 and .475 data mixed up. While a .480 load in .475 cases would present no problem, the reverse would be a dangerous overload. Finally, reloaders should also be careful not to use these or any other modern loads in older cases formed from .45-70 brass, as dangerously high pressures will result.

Bullet selection for the .475 is pretty good, starting with the 275-grain Speer Gold Dot Hollow Point and Barnes X-Pistol Bullet, up through the 325- and 400-grain Hornady XTPs, as well as the 325-grain Speer Gold Dot Soft Point. The excellent 355-grain Flat Point Gas Check cast bullets from Laser Cast are just dandy for either full-house hunting loads or "light" plinking loads. A load of 24.0 grains of AA-5744 with the True Shot in the .475 Linebaugh clocked 1,283 fps and was very accurate. Just remember that the term "light load" is relative, as this combination roughly equals a maximum .44 Mag load.

Because of the No. 1's ability to shoot both .475 and .480 ammo, we developed representative loads for both rounds. There has been a continuing debate among shooters about the effect of shooting shorter cartridges in longer chambers. I hadn't previously noticed any differences in this regard in handguns or rifles. Be that as it may, the average group size of the .480 rounds tested in the No. 1 was 50 percent larger than for the .475 loads. Velocities of the .475 loads averaged about 46 percent higher than for the .480s as well.

Powder selection for the .475 and



The .475 also handles .480 Ruger ammo, and the Redding spacer between the die lock ring and the press makes switching between the two cartridges quick and easy.



Accuracy was outstanding with many combinations. This cluster was made with the .475 and Speer's 325-grain GDHP over 26.0 grains of Lil'Gun.

.480 is easy—just stick with the slow-burners. Winchester 296, its ballistic twin Hodgdon H-110, Accurate Arms Nos. 9 and 4100, and Vihtavuori N-110 were all exceptionally accurate in the No. 1 with all bullets tested. If we had to

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**.475 LINEBAUGH LOAD DATA**

BULLET	BULLET WEIGHT (GR.)	CASE	PRIMER	POWDER	CHARGE WEIGHT (GR.)	MUZZLE VELOCITY (FPS)	STD. DEV. (FPS)	MUZZLE ENERGY (FT-LB)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
<b>SPEER GDHP</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>BBA</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>AA-9</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>1,921</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2,254</b>	<b>.74</b>
SPEER GDHP	275	Starline	F-210	Lil'Gun	30.0	1,992	6	2,424	0.83
<b>BARNES XBP</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>Starline</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>AA-4100</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>2,016</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2,482</b>	<b>.90</b>
BARNES XBP	275	Starline	F-210	AA-9	31.0	2,047	6	2,559	1.02
<b>HORNADY XTP</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>Starline</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>H-110</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>1,862</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2,503</b>	<b>.57</b>
HORNADY XTP	325	Starline	F-210	Lil'Gun	31.5	1,974	6	2,813	.83
<b>HORNADY XTP</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>Starline</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>Viht. N-110</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>1,752</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2,216</b>	<b>.98</b>
SPEER GDSP	325	Starline	F-210	Viht. N-110	23.0	1,504	9	1,633	1.00
<b>TRUE SHOT FPGC</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>Starline</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>AA-4100</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>1,804</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>1.00</b>
TRUE SHOT FPGC	355	Starline	F-210	AA-9	29.0	1,834	2	2,652	.88
<b>TRUE SHOT GC</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>BBA</b>	<b>F-210</b>	<b>AA-5744</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>.61</b>
HORNADY XTP	400	Starline	F-210	W-296	25.0	1,469	7	1,917	1.06



cast lead bullet is always a good choice, and here the 355-grain True Shot Gas Check would shine, as would the lead bullets from 375 to 425 grains available from Cast Performance Bullet Co.

Trajectory limits the hunter's range with this rifle, and a maximum range of about 150

pick a "best of show" for either round, it would be Hodgdon's Lil'Gun. It metered and burned uniformly, and delivered top-notch accuracy and high velocities with all combinations.

Given the superior accuracy of the .475

Linebaugh in these trials, max loads in the longer .475 cases are recommended. Either of the 275-grain bullets tested would be perfect for deer and the 325s and 400s for just about everything else. For maximum penetration, a heavy, hard-

yards seems reasonable.

A Ruger No. 1 in .475 Linebaugh is obviously a specialized tool, but it would be the perfect companion for a .475 or .480 revolver and provide a unique ballistic opportunity for handloaders. **G&A**

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## PROOFHOUSE



### Smith & Wesson Governor

<b>TYPE:</b>	Double-action revolver
<b>CALIBER:</b>	.410/.45 Colt/.45 ACP
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	6
<b>BARREL LENGTH:</b>	2¾ in.
<b>OVERALL LENGTH:</b>	8.5 in.
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	29.6 oz.
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Fixed tritium night sight
<b>GRIPS:</b>	Synthetic or Crimson Trace Lasergrips
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$679 (\$899 with Lasergrips)
<b>MAKER:</b>	Smith & Wesson www.smith-wesson.com

PHOTO: MIKE ANSCHUETZ

## S&W GOVERNOR

Capital idea: There's always room on the scene for another .410/.45 snubbie.

**I**FIRST BECAME AWARE OF THE .410/.45 HANDGUN'S APPEAL WITH A THOMPSON/CENTER Contender during a high-desert quail/rabbit hunt sometime in the early 1980s. Since then, the single-shot sporting proposition of such a versatile arrangement has now expanded into the arena of self-defense revolvers. First the Taurus Judge, now the Smith & Wesson Governor—a 2¾-inch-barreled matte-black double action featuring a scandium frame and a stainless steel cylinder. It's a pretty imposing handgun, sort of a 21st century take on the old British "Bulldog" Webleys. The unloaded weight is 29.6



PHOTO: MIKE ANSCHUETZ

From left: Winchester's .45 Colt PDX1 and .410 PDX1, Buffalo Bore's .45 Colt 225-grain Hard-Cast Wadcutter, Black Hills 185-grain TAC XP and .45 GAP 185-grain Silvertip were all used separately, but with moon-clip sections (at right) you can mix and match everything in the same cylinder.



PHOTO: ERIC R. POOLE

ounces. There are smaller and lighter carry guns out there, but no polymer compact auto or small-frame snubbie combines the power and versatil-

ity of the Governor.

S&W has expanded the shotshell/metallic appeal of the stubby, long-cylindrical template considerably. First

off, the Governor handles .45 ACP with moon clips as well. Second, it's a six-shooter, as opposed to its five-shot predecessor, with which Taurus has

## S&amp;W GOVERNOR SHOOTING RESULTS

LOAD	BULLET WEIGHT (GR.)	AVERAGE VELOCITY (FPS)	ES	STD. DEV.	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
<b>.45 COLT BUF. BORE HCW</b>	225	954	88	13.1	2.5
.45 COLT WIN. PDX1	225	804	21	9.9	3
.45 ACP BLACK HILLS TAC XP+P	185	651	33	14	4
.45 ACP HORNADY TAP +P	230	686	37	11.9	3.2
.45 GAP WIN. SILVERTIP	185	844	63	22.1	2.5



PHOTO: ERIC R. POOLE

Another option: One of the best 25-yard performers was Winchester's .45 GAP 185-grain Silvertip load.

been so successful. Smith supplies each Governor with two full six-round moon clips along with two-round sectional clip segments that allow for a mix-and-match assortment of loads in a single cylinderful.

Unlike the Judge, however, the Governor won't handle three-inch .410s—2½ inch is what you've got, although the Governor's more extensive .45-caliber menu makes for powerful compensation.

One caveat: If you're going to employ .410s in the menu, stick with the Federal or Winchester loads specifically tailored for revolvers. Standard .410 buck or slug loads may be annoyingly tough to extract and could even tie up the gun, as we found when we attempted to use 2½-inch .410 Federal Power-Shok slug loads (those quarter-ounce projectiles, however, did average an impressive 1,169 fps over the chronograph). The slick-surfaced PDX1 Winchester disk/pellet hulls and Federal Premium Personal Defense No. 4s presented no problems in either cylinder

rotation or extraction.

What was extremely interesting was the discovery that the almost-moribund .45 GAP—that shortened .45 ACP that premiered back in 2003—worked very well in the Governor, both at a 25-yard target and over the chronograph, where it logged significantly higher numbers than the other 185-grain .45 ACP load tested. Whether this is due to the shorter GAP case allowing for more tube to burn powder in or simply because of the powder used is an interesting question.

The Governor proved exceptionally pleasant to shoot. The double-action trigger on our test gun was a reasonably smooth, nonstacking 13 pounds. The single-action pull broke at four pounds. Recoil, even with the stouter .45 Colt and .410 loads, was quite manageable. As of now, there are two Governor variants. One—the gun we used—features semi-soft synthetic grips, while the other (more expensive) model features

Crimson Trace Lasergrips, which only increases its utility as a nightstand gun.

The Winchester PDX1 disk loads patterned very well on a 12-inch Shoot-N-C bullseye target at 15 feet, which is pretty much what they were designed for. All the disks and about half the No. 4s were in the black. And the Federal Premium No. 4s put about 50 pellets in the same area.

However, as interesting as the .410 possibilities are, I think the Governor's strongest suite is its versatility in the .45-caliber range. Hell, it handled premium defensive loads in .45 Colt, .45 ACP and .45 GAP and produced more than acceptable 25-yard results with all three. If you wanted, you could even use Black Hills' .45 Schofield load in the gun. Obviously, at 25 yards there were point-of-impact differences with the variety of stuff we were using, but at the self-defense distances the Governor is so obviously tailored for, they'd be inconsequential—more so if you opted for a mix-and-match cylinder employing shotshells in conjunction with the .45s.

The fixed, square notch sights featuring a tritium bead on the front blade were easy to acquire and very effective, but the wide range of ammo possibilities almost made me wish for a set of low-profile adjustable sights. But that's a pretty small quibble about this seriously versatile defensive revolver. **GA**



PHOTO: ERIC R. POOLE

With its soft synthetic grips and heft, the Governor was comfortable to shoot with everything we used.



PHOTO: ERIC R. POOLE

Full-moon clips are quicker than speedloaders and allow the use of .45 ACP, which is as close as we have to a national pistol cartridge.