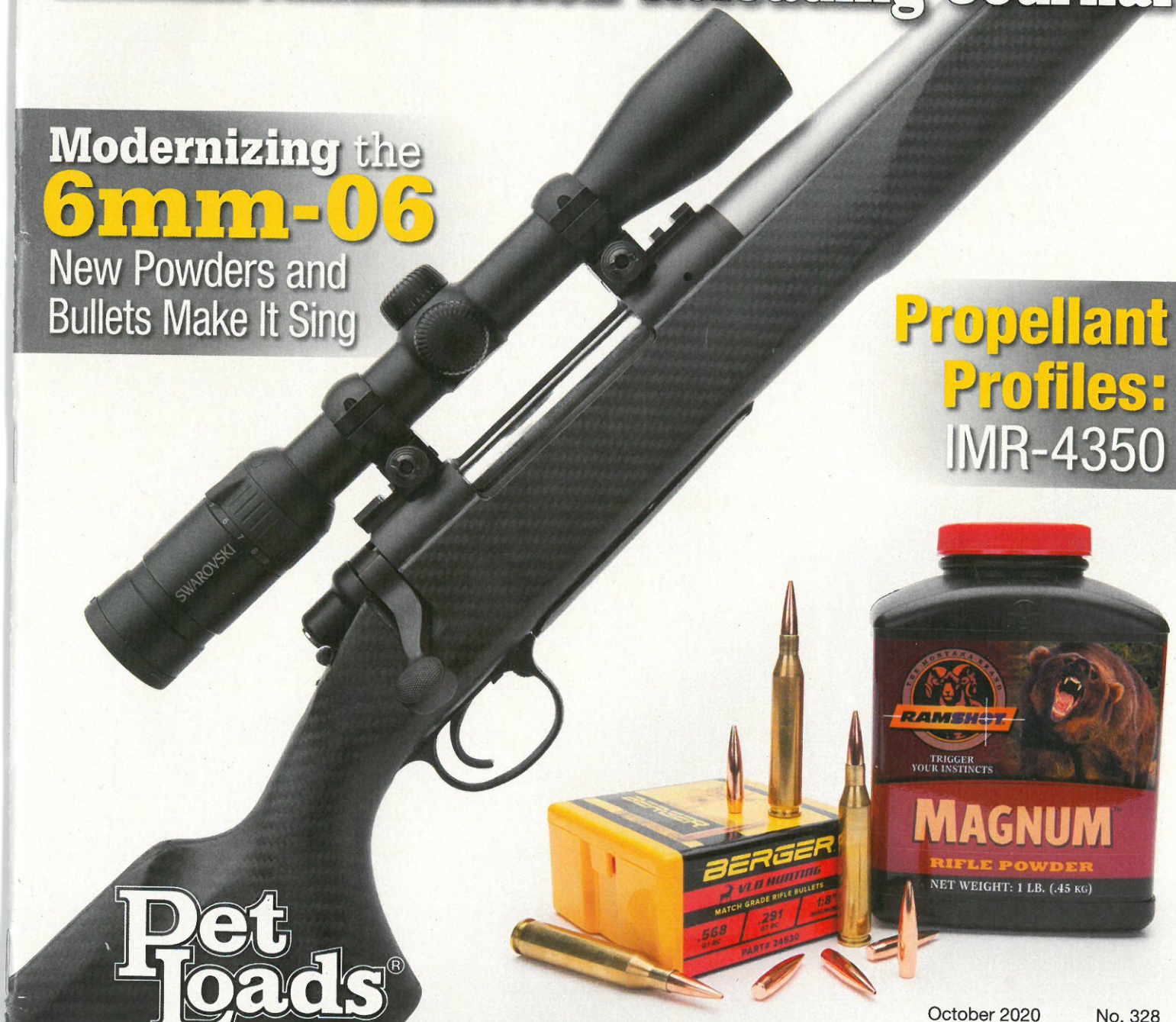
RUGER M77 .220 SWIFT OLD TURN-BOLT, OLDER CARTRIDGE

HANDLOADER®

Ammunition Reloading Journal



Modernizing the 6mm-06
New Powders and Bullets Make It Sing

Propellant Profiles:
IMR-4350

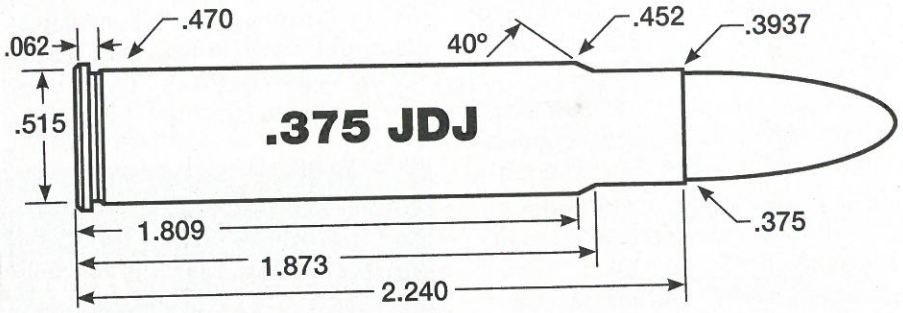
Pet Loads®

.327 FEDERAL MAGNUM
Increasing Accuracy and Versatility

October 2020 No. 328
$6.99US $7.99CAN
10
0 74808 01240 4
Display until 11/23/20 Printed in USA

.375 JDJ

WILDCAT CARTRIDGES by Layne Simpson



The .375 JDJ was introduced in 1978 and was the first of six cartridges eventually developed on the .444 Marlin case by J.D. Jones of SSK Industries for the Thompson/Center Contender single-shot pistol. With the exception of their bullet diameters, the .309, 8mm, .338, .358, .375 and .416 JDJ cartridges are the same. All are formed by necking down the .444 Marlin case and fireforming to slightly less body taper and a 40-degree shoulder angle. Gross water capacity is about 12 grains more than for the .308 Winchester case.

Mention "improved" and the first thing most shooters think of is higher velocity due to an increase in powder capacity. Blowing out the .444 Marlin case to the JDJ shape increases its capacity by less than four percent, so velocity gain over simply necking down the case is slight. But there is another more important benefit. As experiments performed many years ago by P.O. Ackley revealed, decreasing the body taper of a case decreases its thrust against the locking mechanism of a firearm because, during firing, it does a better job of clinging to the wall of the chamber than a cartridge with considerable taper in its case. This assumes the case and the wall of the chamber are dry with no trace of oil or other lubricant.

I have been shooting the .375 JDJ since the 1980s, when only Remington made .444 Marlin cases. The relatively low chamber pressure of the cartridge, along with occasional annealing, has kept most of them going to this day, but they are gradually being replaced by .444 cases made by Starline. The base of that case measures .467 inch in diameter compared to .464 inch for the Remington case. The larger base presents no problem for my SSK barrels in .375 JDJ, .358 JDJ and 8mm JDJ, but it won't work in the tighter chamber of my .309 JDJ barrel. For that barrel I have more than enough Remington cases remaining.

For fireforming cases, 45.0 grains of H-322 behind the Sierra 200-grain bullet is a good place to start. For people who don't have

Cases are formed by using a full-length resizing die to neck down the .444 Marlin case (left) and fireforming to the .375 JDJ shape (right).

The .375 JDJ chamber throat is long enough to seat bullets with their bases no deeper in the case than the shoulder/neck junction: (1) Sierra 200-grain FN, (2) Sierra 250-grain SBT, (3) Swift 250-grain A-Frame, (4) Nosler 260-grain Ballistic Tip, (5) Swift 270-grain A-Frame, (6) Swift 270-grain A-frame.

Layne's 14-inch SSK .375 JDJ barrel has a full-length rib with integral T'SOB scope mounting base. It is shown here with one of a limited run of Contender "flat-side" (no etching) frames, Pachmayr rubber grip and forearm, quick-detachable carrying sling and a Bausch & Lomb 2x handgun scope.

The .375 JDJ is commonly loaded with heavier bullets, but most hunters who use it will find those weighing from 200 to 260 grains the most useful. Bullets from left: Sierra 200-grain FN, Swift 250-grain A-Frame, Nosler 260-grain Ballistic Tip.

the time or inclination to form cases, Quality Cartridge makes .309 JDJ brass, and it is available from Graf and Sons. The chamber throat of my barrel is long enough to allow seating all bullets with their bases no deeper in the case than its shoulder/neck junction. Bullets still have a bit of a jump prior to rifling engagement.

As propellants go, A-2520 ranks high among the favorites of J.D. Jones. When loading bullets weighing from 200 to 260 grains, I have burned more H-322 than anything else. It meters nicely from a good powder measure, burns cleanly in a 14-inch barrel and muzzle flash is mild during early morning and late afternoon low-light conditions when game movement is often at its best. H-4895 and IMR-4064 deliver slightly higher velocities with a 300-grain bullet, but I seldom load bullets heavier than 260 grains so H-322 is the powder for me.

.375 JDJ Handloads

bullet (*grains*)	powder	charge (*grains*)	overall loaded length (*inches*)	velocity (*fps*)	3-shot 100-yard group (*inches*)
200 Sierra FN	H-322	50.5	2.800	2,311	1.80
200 Sierra FN	H-4895	53.0	2.800	2,257	2.18
250 Swift A-Frame	H-322	46.5	2.950	2,114	1.87
250 Sierra SBT	H-322	46.5	2.985	2,140	2.10
260 Nosler Ballistic Tip	H-322	47.0	3.170	2,118	1.64
260 Nosler AccuBond	A-2520	53.0	3.170	2,079	1.77
275 Swift A-Frame	H-4895	46.5	3.020	2,031	2.30
300 Swift A-Frame	IMR-4064	47.0	3.015	1,967	2.44

Notes: An SSK Industries custom Contender .375 JDJ handgun with a 14-inch Shilen barrel (1:12 twist) was used to test all loads. All powder charges were maximum or close to it in the test gun and should be reduced by 10 grains for starting loads in other guns. Cases were formed by necking down and fireforming Starline .444 Marlin cases in a .375 JDJ full-length resizing die. Federal 210 primers were used throughout. Accuracy is the average of four groups. Velocities are the average of five rounds chronographed at 12 feet.

For more data on this cartridge please visit LoadData.com.

Be Alert – Publisher cannot accept responsibility for errors in published load data. Listed loads are only valid in the test firearms used. Reduce initial powder charge by 10 percent and work up while watching for signs of excessive pressure.

In the hands of J.D. Jones and others, the .375 JDJ has been used successfully on all North American game. Moving to the African continent, it has accounted for eland, elephant, Cape buffalo, hippo and other game. When hunting the big stuff of Africa, I'll stick with my rifle in .416 Rigby, but I have used the .375 JDJ to take several whitetail deer and find the 200-grain flatnose bullet made by Sierra for the .375 Winchester to be quite effective. I have bumped off more feral hogs than deer with the cartridge, and while the Sierra 200-grain bullet works nicely on lung shots, they sometimes drop more quickly with a side-on shot

THUMLER'S TUMBLER

BRASS MASTER
ULTRA VIBE CASE CLEANERS

Made of durable steel construction - heavy polyethylene bowl - heavyduty, sealed ballbearing motors - thermally protected - fast, quiet operation - ¾ to 4¾ gallon capacity - industrial and rotary models available.

Send for our free brochure!

TRU-SQUARE METAL PRODUCTS, INC.
P.O. Box 585, Auburn, Washington 98071
TEL (253) 833-2310 or Toll Free 1-(800) 225-1017
FAX (253) 833-2349
email:t-tumbler@thumlerstumbler.com
www.thumlerstumbler.com

"Manufacturers of quality case cleaners, deburring and tumbling equipment since 1959"

through the shoulders with the Sierra 250-grain SBT, the Swift 250-grain A-Frame or the Nosler 260-grain Ballistic Tip. I have not tried the Nosler 260-grain AccuBond on anything tougher than paper, but it will likely work equally well. It, along with the 250-grain Sierra and Swift bullets and the Nosler Ballistic Tip, should also be excellent performers on larger game such as moose and elk.

There is some recoil, but the Contender is actually more comfortable to shoot than some rifles chambered for the same cartridges. Here are examples: I also have SSK 14-inch barrels in .444 Marlin and .45-70, and like my .375 JDJ barrels, they have full-length aluminum ribs with the integral T'SOB scope mounting base. The Pachmayr rubber grips fitted to my Contender frames are much kinder to the hand than the factory wood stocks. Due to the smaller bore of the .375 JDJ barrel, it weighs a couple of ounces more than the other two, but with scopes the complete guns weigh around 5 pounds with either of those barrels. My Marlin lever-action rifles in .444 Marlin and .45-70 weigh around 7.5 pounds and the discomfort factor when firing them is higher than when shooting the Contenders. How can this be? The secret lies in knowing the proper way to shoot the Contender handgun.

During firing, a rifle recoils against the shoulder while also delivering shock to the cheek, which is one of the more sensitive areas of the human body. In other words, the body receives a double-whammy when a .444 or .45-70 round is touched off in a rifle. Not so with the Contender; as it recoils in its upward arc, the arms add weight to the gun, and as they bend at the elbows the arms serve as very efficient shock absorbers. Arms relaxed and a firm, but not excessively hard, grip applied makes it work. Anyone capable of tolerating the .44 Magnum in a S&W Model 29 should be able to handle the .375 JDJ in a heavy Contender. •

GET MORE
BOLT
PUMP
BREAK
LEVER
SEMI-AUTO
ACTION

LOAD IT. PUMP IT. RACK IT. CYCLE IT. FIRE IT. HIT IT. WIN IT. GET IT?

When you're ready for action, you're ready for Starline's precision rifle brass. It's the FINEST brass available at the best possible price, so you can load more, shoot more and get more action.

PURCHASE FROM YOUR FAVORITE RELOADING SUPPLIER OR ORDER FACTORY DIRECT.

Starline™
Made With Pride in the USA

STARLINEBRASS.COM | 1(800) 280-6660

100% AMERICAN MADE & OWNED