

# 34 Feed Me!

By D. K. Pridgen

The title of this article is not only a phrase my wife hears way too often, and the cause of my “expanding” wardrobe, but also the only line I can remember from the movie “Little Shop of Horrors.” I can still hear the man-eating plant’s booming voice shouting, “Feed me, Seymour!” to Rick Moranis.

What the heck, you may be asking yourself, does this have to do with Dillon? Well, bucko, I – like so many other Dillon RL 550B users – have spent many hours pumping the operating handle of my press trying to visualize a way to “feed” my 550 cases. (This is followed closely by a way to automatically index the press, which would make it an XL 650, which already exists. Such are dreams made of.) I’ve considered everything, including gears the size of trash can lids and having my sons risk their fingers by inserting cases and indexing the shellplate while I pumped the operating handle.

Spare your children’s pinkies and give your mind a rest. Dillon has introduced a Casefeeder for the RL 550B! Hallelujah! (The best thing about this feeder may just be that I **don’t** have to build it!)

When I announced the impending arrival of the RL 550 Casefeeder, I had numerous volunteers to set it up at their homes, but chose the “duty” for myself. And then fate – cruel fate – stepped in, delaying my efforts interminably. Finally, I took time off from work just to get the little jewel up and running, only to find my RL 550B that began life as an RL 450 was not updated sufficiently to work with the Casefeeder. As with all their warranty stuff, the folks at Dillon solved the problem with their usual aplomb – no fuss or muss – the parts needed to set my press right arrived posthaste. And then THEY would not fit my partially morphed press. Off the whole shebang went to Dillon for them to make all right, and back it came with all made right.

Rumors are floating around that it only takes an hour to install the RL 550 Casefeeder. After I completed the transformation of the my press, I glanced at the clock to see how well I did. No need to pack a lunch! I’ll not quote any time here. Half would say I was lying because it was too fast, and the others would say it was too slow. The time required was very reasonable, and, best of all, it resulted in a complete and operational casefeeder! I credit the excellent directions accompanying the unit. The tips and reminders made it possible for even a guy with ten thumbs to do it. (I only have eight thumbs, but I extrapolated.)

Of course, you don’t really give a dang about all of this, do you? What you want to know is how well did it work. The short answer is GREAT! I guess that makes the long answer REALLY GREAT!

Here’s how everything works once the casefeeder is set up. Fill the hopper and wait until the feeder motor shuts off. (This looks just like the one found on the XL 650.) Push the handle forward, causing a case to drop from the tube, ready to be fed, then pull the handle all the way down. A little before the shellplate tops out, the case slides into the shellplate, where it gets sized and deprimed.

Push the handle forward again, lowering the platform and priming the case. Rotate the shellplate manually and the cycle starts over.

At the risk of repeating myself, you don’t really give a dang about all of the preceding, do you? What you want to know is how many bazillion rounds an hour can be reloaded, right? I’ve seen claims based on a few minutes that would make any reloader cry with envy. Of course, that’s only for a short period, at a pace no one can maintain for an extended time. To avoid being called a liar for being too slow or too fast, again, I choose not to reveal my speed. (For me the first attraction of a casefeeder is not speed, as nice as speed is, but easier reloading. And, then there is the SPEED!)

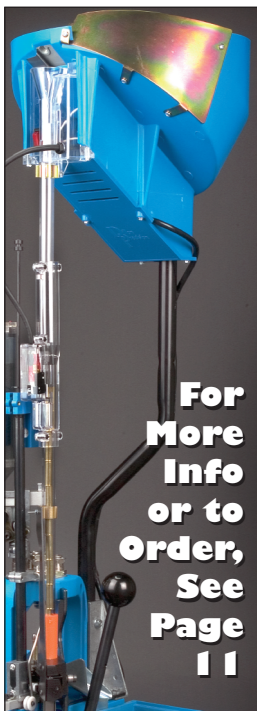
Dillon says your rate should increase by 25 percent or more. My experience confirms their estimate nicely! Are there any problems associated with having the RL 550 Casefeeder? As with the XL 650, it is now a tad more difficult to clear a jam or such, because the Casefeeder takes up some room. (Since access to another dimension for all but the

emerging case does not come with the Casefeeder, that should be a given!) Big deal!

So, should you run out and plunk down your hard-earned greenbacks (or plastic, as the case may be) for the new RL 550 Casefeeder? If you’ve spent long enough working with your 550B to learn all of its nuances and to appreciate the improvement in ease of operation (And speed!) the Casefeeder will offer – do it! If you have to pawn your favorite dog – do it!

I confess to feeling kinda lost now when reloading. One of my stock daydreams is gone. Guess I’ll have to console myself by looking at the Dillon calendars and trying to come up with another! Cause you can’t get my RL 550 Casefeeder away from me!

Now all I need is to have some of my friends who want to sample the RL 550 Casefeeder over for a fence painting – I mean reloading – party. If each one does 500 rounds I’ll be caught up again in no time!



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