

# SHOOTING WITH THE DILLON RL 550B 49

in the caliber of your choice; powder measure with standard large and small powder bars; a priming system with large and small primer parts, along with one each large and small primer pick-up tubes and a low-primer alarm unit; an interchangeable toolhead assembly; one powder die; a loaded cartridge catch bin; a set of Allen wrenches and a written instruction manual. With this reloader you can load over 160 different calibers, both handgun and rifle cartridges; it also uses standard 7/8" x 14 dies (dies are not included in the kit). Lastly, there's a "No-B.S." lifetime warranty, if it breaks they replace or fix it, no matter when you bought it!

I'm not going to bore everybody with a "blow-by-blow" account of all the steps necessary to set up the RL 550B, you can read the manual, watch the DVD or give Dillon Precision Tech Support a call (1-800-223-4570), they're happy to help you.

Once I got everything assembled, filled the automatic powder measure with IMR Trail Boss powder, packed the automatic primer system with Winchester large pistol primers, set a box of .452" 200-grain round nose, flat point, lead bullets on one side of the bench and a bowl of clean, mixed .45 Colt brass on the other side. I still clung to my old balance-beam style powder scale and then I adjusted the powder measure to throw 6.0 grain charges, which – according to IMR loading data – is a mid-power load for a 200-grain bullet in .45 Colt.

Of course, I had to know how my reloads would shoot in a couple of my favorite guns, so I took

some samples with me down to a nearby range and did some test firing. My chronograph showed that out of a 7-1/2" Ruger Vaquero, my .45 Colt hand-load produced an average of 813 feet per second (FPS), and out of my 20" barrel Model 66, it produced 909 FPS. The load was very easy on the shooter in both handgun and rifle. Next, I fired three five-shot groups with the Vaquero and the Model 66, using a benchrest, the guns supported by a rolled up blanket. The distance to the target for the revolver was 45 feet and for the rifle 90 feet. I actually did better with the revolver than with the rifle, my group average with the Ruger was 2.03", with a best group of 1.63", while my average with the rifle was 2.08", with a best group of 1.71." There were no high primers, stuck cases, nor malfunctions of any kind attributable to my reloads made on the Dillon RL 550B.

With the RL 550B, .45 Colt dies and conversion kit, DVD, and Strong Mount, my order came to \$548.80. As I have hundreds of .45 Colt cartridge cases and plenty of powder on hand, my biggest expense is bullets and primers. I estimate that I'm producing cartridges at about 10 - 12 cents a round, so it won't take long at all for my new Dillon loader to pay for itself.

For more information on Western Action Shooting check out the Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) website at [sassnet.com](http://sassnet.com) and/or National Congress of Old West Shootists (NCOWS) site at [ncows.com](http://ncows.com).

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