

The Los Angeles Silhouette Club

A New Source for Hollow Point Bullet Moulds

By: Glen E. Fryxell

We handgun hunters have it really, really good these days. Not only do we have more choices in terms of guns available today, and more cartridges tailored for handgun hunting, but also the excellent selection of commercially available bullets out there, more than ever tailored for the handgun hunter. More commercial cast bullets are out there for those who want to shoot cast bullets, but don't cast their own. All of these commercial cast bullets are solids designed for deep penetration, nobody is marketing commercial cast hollow point (HP) bullets that I am aware of.

For the handgun hunter who does cast their own bullets, there is an excellent selection of mould designs available from Lyman, RCBS, Lee, Rapine, NEI, LBT, Cast Performance, Hoch, and more. These mould-makers have a multitude of styles that can cater to virtually any application, need or personal taste.

If, however, you can't scratch your particular itch with the offerings from those mould-makers, and you want/need to design your own mould, you can go to [Mountain Molds website](#) and play with Dan's online spreadsheet design tool, and chances are you'll be able to use his tools to draw up something that will tickle your fancy (as long as it's not a HP mould, Dan doesn't do HP moulds).

If you're specifically looking for a HP mould, then you can either shop around at gun shows and try to find what you're looking for (good luck!), or shop the online auction houses, where HP moulds tend to command premium prices lately. A faster (and commonly less expensive) way is to buy the standard mould and then have it converted to drop HP bullets. Several machinists offer this service. One that I have had very good experience with has been Erik Ohlen over at [Hollow Point Bullet Mold Service](#) or email erik@hollowpointmold.com, (541) 738-2479). If you can find the base mould to work from, Erik can probably make what you want (within reason). Erik offers not only the traditional HP pin design (i.e. a single cavity mould with a removable HP pin), but also the much faster casting Cramer-style multi-cavity HP design. My experience has been that I can generally cast 5 or 6 HPs a minute with a Cramer-style 2-cavity mould. I really like this mould design.

But is anybody making HP moulds from scratch? Very few people that I am aware of. In fact, I know of only two. One is [Bruce Brandt at BRP LLC](#), or email babrandt@sbcglobal.net, (616) 667-2427). Bruce has a 4-page list of bullet designs he makes, and most of these are available in HP form. Bruce made me a single cavity 358627 HP mould for my Ruger .357 Maximum, that I really like.

The other person currently making HP moulds from the ground up will be the focus of the rest of this article for the simple reason that the mould he sent me is, quite simply, the most beautiful mould I have ever had the pleasure of casting with.

I have never met [Miha Prevec \(MP Molds\)](#) in person. The fact that he lives in Slovenia, and I

live in the Pacific Northwest of the US probably has something to do with that. I originally became aware of him, and his work, through the "[Cast Boolits](#)" online discussion board (just for the record, I generally don't care for the affectation of intentional "cutsie-pie" misspellings -- I don't dot my i's with little hearts or flowers, and I don't replace syllables with numbers -- but in this case I tolerate it for two simple reasons, 1) it helps to identify a unique place online, and 2) there is a large and very knowledgeable community gathered there, and the knowledge is worth putting up with a little "cutsie-pie" crap). Miha is a machinist, and one of the participants on the CB discussion board. He started making a few moulds for people, and his customers started posting a few comments on the quality of his work. He followed that up by doing Group Buys for the guys on the CB board, especially of Cramer-style HP moulds. The reviews that came back were invariably glowing. And on top of this, Miha makes his moulds out of brass! (I have a fondness for brass for three reasons -- 1) it tends to machine very smoothly, so the surface is smooth and tends to release the bullets very easily, 2) it heats up readily and holds its heat very well, leading to a high fraction of "keepers", and 3) brass moulds are just plain beautiful!).

Perusing [Miha's website](#), I found that he offered a Cramer-style HP mould for a copy of the design that Dave Scovill drew up for the .45 Colt -- the RCBS 45-270-SAA. I've worked with the Scovill bullet a fair amount over the years, in a number of different guns, and I have developed a great deal of respect for the design. I have said a number of times (and in print) that I feel that this is one of the best all-round designs *ever* for the .45 Colt. I still feel that way. My fondness for cast HPs is no secret, nor is my fondness for the .45 Colt. Miha's 45-270-SAA HP intrigued me, and the more I thought about it, the more I thought that this would make an excellent hunting bullet for deer, hogs and black bear sized game. Miha's prices were very reasonable, and the reviews I had read of his work were very good, so I placed an order.

A little while later, a box showed up in my mailbox with a Slovenia return address. Like a little kid on Christmas morning, I gleefully opened the box and out came a pretty shiny brass mould. As I inspected it closely, it became apparent to me that this mould was made with real attention to detail. Things that should be tight were tight; things that should be hard were hard; things that should be smooth were smooth; things that should move freely moved freely; things that shouldn't move didn't move. In short, everything about this mould was *right*.



But how did it cast? This mould didn't fit on my handles from Lyman or RCBS, but it snugged up very nicely on Saeco handles. I started off with about 6 lbs of 25-to-1 (lead to tin) alloy (6 lbs of pure lead and half a pound of 50/50 alloy). This is a fairly soft alloy (BHN of about 7.5) that is very well suited for moderate velocity cast HP loads (generally about 950-1200 fps). These bullets dropped from the blocks right at 280 grains and miked .454". All the .45 Colt revolvers that I currently own take bullets sized .452", but having these bullets drop .454" pleased me since if I ever need .454" bullets I can generate them with this mould. In any event, I sized them .452" and lubed them with my homemade moly lube, and loaded them over 18.5 grains of 2400 with a CCI 300 Large

Pistol Primer. This is a variation on Elmer Keith's load for the .45 Colt, and probably generates somewhere around 25,000 psi peak pressure and should not be used in older, weaker guns, but it's a dandy in strong modern guns like the large frame Ruger Blackhawk. The test gun was a 7 ½" Ruger Super Blackhawk that I converted to .45 Colt several years ago, with a proven track record for accuracy (.480" chambers, .452" throats, and .4515" groove diameter). This load generated 1235 fps, and (as usual) delivered good accuracy, with zero leading.

Back when I was working up loads with the 284 grain Scovill bullet (the RCBS 45-270-SAA SWC), the best load I found in my guns was 13.0 grains of HS-6, which gave 1050-1150 fps, depending on barrel length, and excellent accuracy. According to the pressure data in the Hodgdon manual, this load generates roughly 22,000 CUP (again, not suitable for older, or weaker sixguns). So, naturally, I tried that load with the 280 grain (25-1 alloy) Miha Prevec HP. Once again, I got very good accuracy and velocities averaged 1162 fps. I like HS-6, it is a very useful revolver powder.

For many years, my "go to" load for .45 Colt SWC's in the 250-280 grain range was 14.0 grains of HS-7. Sadly, HS-7 is no longer available, so I needed something to replace this load. I have had very good results using 13.0 grains of Accurate Arms #7 underneath 300 grain cast bullets in the .45 Colt, so I decided to try this powder out with Miha's HP. 14.0 grains of Acc. Arms #7 delivered very good accuracy, no leading and 1102 fps. According to the pressure data in the Accurate Arms loading manual, this combination should generate roughly 19,000 CUP. This would make an excellent hunting load.



OK, so now that I knew that Miha's HP shot accurately in the 1100-1200 fps range, I wanted to find out how this bullet expanded. I prepared a bed of water-soaked newsprint and shot 5 of these bullets into it point-blank at ~1150 fps. This expansion testing revealed an average of 9-10" of penetration in the wet newsprint (suggesting about 18-20" in ballistic gelatin) and positive expansion. The expansion indicated that this impact velocity is right at the upper limit for this bullet cast with this alloy. All bullets expanded extremely well, some mushrooming up to .87" diameter and weighing 250-260 grains, and some went beyond this, losing "petals" off of the expanded mushroom late in the wound channel. I expect that part of the problem was that I was shooting them point blank into the wet newsprint, and that if this had been a mulie buck at 50 yards that mushrooming would be near perfect.



Even so, I wanted to try some that were a little bit harder so I loaded up the lead pot with 10 lbs range scrap, and started casting. 45 minutes later the pot ran dry. That amounts to a little over 250 cast HPs in 45 minutes, or almost 6 HPs a minute! Try THAT with a traditional single cavity HP mould! These bullets weighed about 275 grains and had a BHN of about 9 -- just what I was

looking for. Sizing them .452" and lubing them with my home-made Moly lube, I once again loaded them over 13.0 grains of HS-6 with a CCI 300 primer. Accuracy once again was very

good and velocities averaged 1154 fps. Expansion was just what I was looking for. This would make an excellent hunting load for animals up to about 400 lbs in size.

This mould is a joy to cast with, and is beautifully made. Production rate with this mould is excellent. It is an accurate bullet that both shoots and expands well. Handgun hunters truly do have things better than ever right now. And even better news is on the horizon! Miha says on his website that he intends to start making some 3 and 4 cavity Cramer-style HP moulds as well!

- Glen E. Fryxell

Web Master note: In the article Glen made the following statement, to realize what a powerful statement this is consider that it came from a man that owns over 450 molds . . .

The mould he sent me is, quite simply, the most beautiful mould I have ever had the pleasure of casting with!

- Glen E. Fryxell

[The LASC Front Page](#) [Index to all LASC Articles](#)

[Glen E. Fryxell Article Index](#)