WINCHESTER ACTION PISTOL POWDER (WAP)

Winchester introduced Winchester Action Pistol powder (WAP) in 1994. It's intended for use in semi-automatics like the 9mm Luger, .38 Super, .40 S&W, 10mm Automatic and .45 ACP, but it should be of great interest to combat shooters who load for the .38 Super.

WAP has been around for a few years in much of Winchester's commercial pistol loads. Since this ammunition has met with such strong sales, Winchester is offering WAP in canister form for handloaders.

Reviewing Winchester's loading data and then confirming my suspicions with their staff, the burning rate of WAP lies between Hercules' Herco and Hodgdon HS-6; Vihtavuori's VV-N340 is also between these two powders. While WAP is a double-based powder, it has a flake configuration and a gray-silver coloring.

In reviewing the loading data and pressures, note there are no reduced loads shown. This powder, as its name implies, is for action pistol shooting, and this means full house loads. Thus, so there can be no mistake, let me reiterate, this powder is designed for maximum loads. Winchester discourages the use of WAP for reduced loads and suggests going to a faster powder if lesser velocities are desired.

Handloaders will like WAP, it meters very evenly. I conducted an experiment with four powders: WAP, HS-6, VV-N340 and Herco using the No. 15 Hornady pistol powder bushing and dispensed five charges of these powders onto an RCBS electric scale; the results were averaged and the standard deviation calculated. As can be seen from the results below, WAP gave the lowest standard deviation. Thus, this powder, because it meters so evenly, should produce consistent shot-to-shot velocities.

So the reader can better see how WAP stacks up against other powders of approximately the same burning rate, I have taken a comparison for random bullet weights with their maximum corresponding powder charges and velocities in different calibers. (See Table I.)

Running a few rounds of this powder in .45 ACP over a chronograph verified that Winchester engineers know what they are doing. From a Ransom Rest with 200-grain-Bull-X cast bullets, two separate five-shot groups from an S&W Model 25-2 measured just over 1¼ inches. By the time this article makes it to print, the powder should be on your dealer's shelf.

Winchester's load data for WAP is provided in Table II. – **John Kronfeld**

Table I

Data Comparison for WAP, HS-6, VV-N340 and Herco

bullet (grains)	powder	charge (grains)	velocity (fps)	barrel (inches)
9mm Luger				
115	VV-N340	6.6	1,362	4
	Herco	6.6	1,300	5
	HS-6	7.0	1,234	4
	WAP	6.0	1,155	4
.38 Super				
124	VV-N340	6.9	1,299	5.5
	Herco	6.3	1,180	5.0
	HS-6	8.2	1,237	5.0
	WAP	7.3	1,270	5.0
.40 S&W				
170	VV-N340	6.8	1,197	4
	Herco	7.4	1,125	4
	HS-6	8.0	1,097	4
	WAP	6.4	1,075	4
.45 ACP				
200	VV-N340	7.9	1,051	6
	Herco	6.7	930	5
	HS-6	8.4	907	5
	WAP	8.0	956	5

Note: The above data represents maximum loads and should be approached with caution; reduce charges by 10 percent to start.

Table II

Winchester's Load Data

bullet (grains)	charge (grains)	velocity (fps)	pressure (psi)
9mm Luger (4-inch test barrel)			
95 FMJ	5.6	1,140	29,100
	6.4	1,285	33,000
114 lead	4.8	1,040	26,200
	5.7	1,160	33,200
115 FMJ	5.3	1,055	27,200
	6.0	1,155	33,100
115 JHP	5.3	1,065	28,500
	5.8	1,150	33,200
124 lead	4.4	955	25,900
	5.1	1,080	33,200
124 FMJ	4.9	1,005	28,000
	5.6	1,105	33,300
147 FMJ	4.2	880	29,200
	4.6	940	33,200
147 JHP	4.0	865	29,300
	4.4	920	33,300
147 lead	3.9	845	24,600
	4.7	985	33,100
.38 Super Auto (for use in guns marked .38 Super only; 5-inch test barrel)			
115 JHP	6.6	1,190	26,500
	7.8	1,340	34,300
124 FMJ	6.2	1,150	27,500
	7.3	1,270	34,300
130 FMJ	6.3	1,120	27,600
	7.3	1,250	34,600
147 JHP	5.5	990	27,200
	6.3	1,110	34,500
160 lead	4.6	930	26,100
	5.5	1,035	34,200
.45 Automatic (5-inch test barrel)			
154 lead	8.2	1,035	15,900
	9.0	1,135	19,700
180 lead	7.5	940	14,900
	8.3	1,055	20,000
185 JSWC	7.2	865	14,900
	8.1	1,000	20,000
185 JHP	8.3	970	17,100
	8.9	1,045	19,900
200 lead	6.6	850	14,900
	7.6	970	19,700
200 FMJ	7.0	825	15,000
	8.0	965	19,400
200 JHP	7.0	855	15,200
	7.7	965	20,100
230 lead	6.6	845	16,600
	7.3	915	19,600
230 FMJ	6.8	820	16,800
	7.4	885	19,600
230 JHP	6.1	760	16,200
	6.6	835	20,200
.40 Smith & Wesson (4-inch test barrel)			
150 JHP	7.0	1,110	27,300
	7.5	1,190	32,800
155 JHP	6.9	1,100	28,300
	7.4	1,170	33,500
170 lead	5.7	980	25,700
	6.4	1,075	33,400
170 JHP	6.2	1,020	28,000
	6.7	1,085	33,500
180 JHP	5.5	920	25,000
	6.2	1,020	33,200
200 lead	4.2	795	25,600
	4.9	900	33,000
10mm Automatic (5-inch test barrel)			
150 JHP	8.7	1,290	28,700
	9.8	1,395	35,500
155 JHP	8.8	1,265	29,800
	9.7	1,355	35,400
170 lead	7.4	1,180	29,200
	8.4	1,270	35,300
170 JHP	7.9	1,165	27,800
	9.1	1,285	34,600
180 JHP	7.5	1,110	27,200
	8.4	1,210	34,400
190 FPJ	7.4	1,100	27,800
	8.3	1,185	34,700
200 lead	5.8	975	27,500
	6.9	1,080	35,200

Be alert – Publisher cannot accept responsibility for errors in published load data.