

Hunting Handloads

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into the Test Tube travel about half as deep as in game, about like they do in dry newspaper. The basic Test Tube is 6 inches in diameter and a foot long, which handles most expanding handgun, varmint and deer bullets. Tube "XTenders" are added for deeper-penetrating bullets, and the 6 inch diameter will handle anything up to about .375 in caliber. (I believe an 8-inch model will eventually be available for larger calibers.)

In my experience the Test Tube does closely reproduce *relative* penetration and tissue damage in game animals. It also provides a graphic look at some of the basic principles that all too many hunters don't understand, such as the fact that high retained weight is not the only factor in penetra-

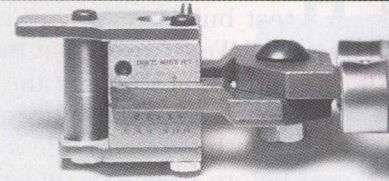
tion of expanding bullets. The frontal area of an expanded bullet is at least as important.

There will also be some surprises. The first test I made with Richard involved several 9.3mm bullets, shot from my wildcat 9.3 BS. He expected the 250-grain Barnes Triple-Shock to out-penetrate the 286-grain Nosler Partition. Instead the Partition penetrated deeper, something I predicted – because I'd retrieved some from big game and knew Nosler had moved the Partition forward in the 286 9.3mm, so it retains an average of about 90 percent of its original weight. With a Test Tube, you can find out things like that before going hunting.

The basic Test Tube costs \$69.95. Various XTenders cost from \$39.95 to 69.95, and moulds \$13.99. For more information visit its website: www.thebullettesttube.com. •

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