

Special Report:



Super Trap Tactical Target

By Bill Battles

Originally developed to meet the needs of police, military and special operations groups for realistic tactical training at point blank range, the Super Trap Tactical Target is a portable bullet trap designed to safely stop and contain centerfire handgun bullets up to .44 Magnum.

The Tactical Target measures 24 inches wide by 36-inches high, providing 6-square feet of target area. The target "box" itself is only 3-inches deep and consists of a 1 1/2 inch thick replaceable styrene butedynne rubber ("SBR") panel to which standard paper targets are attached, followed by a 1 inch air space, and terminating at a 1/4 inch armor resistant steel plate. Top and side plates are 1/8 inch thick non-armor resistant steel, with a slide-out bullet tray mounted along on the bottom for quick and safe removal of spent bullets and lead fragments.

The three-piece system includes the target box, a steel mounting post, and a rugged ground stand with wheels at one end for moving the target around. Assembly takes all of about 10 seconds, and total weight is in the area of 175 pounds.

So how does it work? It's actually pretty straightforward. The bullet's velocity is reduced substantially by its passage through the SBR panel, then stopped dead in its tracks by the armor resistant steel plate. Lead dust, ricochets and bullet fragments are all contained within the target box, then fall into the tray for later disposal.

We tested the Tactical Target with the full range of popular handgun calibers, starting with .22 Long Rifle, then working up through 9mm, .40 S&W, and .45 ACP. In accordance with the manufacturer's directions we used only lead and full metal jacket bullets during testing, as hollow points chew up the SBR panel and greatly reduce its service life. Wearing safety glasses, we fired more than 500 rounds at the Tactical Target at ranges of 5 to 25 feet. The Tactical target performed flawlessly, with only minimal erosion of the SBR panel evident on the inside surface.

Feeling pretty comfortable that we had a winner on our hands, we decided to bring out the big guy: a .44 Magnum Smith & Wesson Model 629. Using my favorite "practice" handloads at just under 1,000 feet per second, we launched a dozen 240-grain Hornady lead semi wadcutters at a range of 25 feet. And the Tactical Target ate them all without complaint!

In addition to normal range safety practices, the included owner's manual contains a variety of additional cautions, all of which should be judiciously observed by the user. The Tactical Target should only be used outdoors, in a well-ventilated area and in front of a safe backstop; given its relatively small dimensions, the Tactical Target should be used only by experienced handgunners who can assure accurate bullet placement; bullet velocity should never exceed 1,500 feet per second; the bullet path should be perpendicular to the target surface to minimize the chance of ricochets; armor piercing, tracer or incendiary bullets should never be used; the shooter and all spectators should wear safety glasses; pellet guns, BB guns and shot shells should never be fired at the Tactical Target as the projectiles may ricochet off the SBR panel.

The Tactical Target is used by the F.B.I. the U.S. Marine Corps, the California Highway Patrol, and many other military and law enforcement agencies, and sells for \$695. Replacement SBR panels cost \$60. Super Trap also manufactures backstop systems for indoor and outdoor shooting ranges, as well as rifle and pistol hot boxes for the safe clearing of firearms at ranges and for test firing by gunsmiths.

Source:

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