

JOHN ROBINSON

Highland RX Rimfire Ammunition



Highland .22 Magnum 40 gn FMJ (full metal jacket).

Some samples of Highland RX rimfire ammunition arrived shortly before the deadline and we were able to run some of it through a quick test program in time for this issue. The RX line of .22 rimfire ammunition has been off gun shop shelves for a while but is now back in stock in 2009.

The Highland RX is manufactured in the Philippines and the current range includes RX Hi Impact, RX Sub-sonic hollow point, ZX Reduced Velocity hollow point, RX Target, RX .22 Magnum JHP and RX .22 Magnum FMJ.

The .22 Magnum ammunition was not able to be tested in a rifle in time, but was shot in a 10" barrel Thompson Contender pistol. The .22 Long Rifle was put through its paces using a Unique T series silhouette rifle (520 mm barrel), a Thompson Contender (TC) with a 10" (250 mm) match barrel and a Ruger .22 MKII target auto with a 5.5" (140 mm) barrel, fitted with a scope.

The .22 Long Rifle groups were not shot with the TC as it was fitted with open sights, and was tested out of interest to compare velocity performance.

The TC .22 Magnum barrel is fitted with a 3X rifle scope and has always shot better than most rifles for no apparent reason.

All the shooting was done off a bench rest at 50 m and a Chrony chronograph was used to measure velocity. 10 rounds of each type of ammunition were fired over the chronograph and the results processed to get average velocity and Standard Deviation (SD). The SD is a statistical measure of consistency and gives a good indication, with ammunition, of the shot to shot velocity variation that can be expected from a batch of ammo.

The results are shown in the table.

Note: Velocity and Standard Deviation (SD) are in feet per second (FPS)

These results are very good, given the price range of the ammunition and it should be kept in mind that each of the firearms used have match barrels, and this can be expected to bring the best out in the ammunition. Any rimfire ammunition with an SD of less than 20 can be considered to be very consistent and expensive match ammunition should have an SD less than 10 – not always the case.

In the firearms used in the tests, the RX Sub-sonic produced the best groups and the low velocity ZX was also very consistent for this type of ammo. The question that must be asked about the Sub-sonic RX is that it



ZX very low velocity 37 gn hollow point.



RX 40 gn target.



RX Hi-Impact 40 gn solid point.



Highland .22 Magnum 40 gn jacketed hollow point.



RX Hi-Impact 37 gn hollow point.

Ammunition	Av.Vel	Unique	SD	Av.Vel TC	SD	Av.Vel Ruger	SD
RX Hi-Impact 37 gn HP	1364	27		1337	21	1124	22
ZX 37 gn HP	934	10		940	14	725	9
RX Sub-sonic 37 gn HP	1172	16		1190	7	974	21
RX Target 40 gn Solid	1163	12		1169	16	962	14
RX .22 Magnum 40 gn FMJ				1605	35		
RX .22 Magnum 40 gn JHP				1702	28		

Groups shot at 50 m – Bench rest. R-Rifle P-Pistol

Group Size mm	Unique T-SM(R)	Ruger MKII(P)	Thompson .22 Magnum(P)
RX Hi-Impact	31 mm	45 mm	
ZX	28 mm	43 mm	
RX Sub-sonic	20 mm	38 mm	
RX Target	26 mm	39 mm	
RX .22 Magnum FMJ			22 mm/30 mm
RX .22 Magnum JHP			11 mm/20 mm



LEFT: Ruger MKII .22 auto set up for ammo testing. All RX .22 rimfires shot acceptable groups from this outfit.

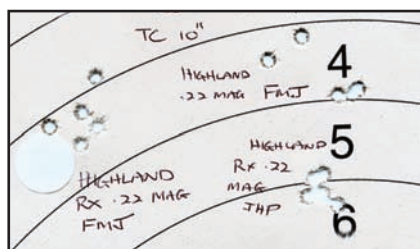
BELOW: Some of the groups shot at 50 m with Highland .22 Magnum ammunition. The JHP 5-shot group was exceptional.

This 25 cm barreled Thompson Contender produced almost identical velocities with the .22 rimfire Highland ammunition as did the 55 cm barreled rifle.

was launched at over well 1100 fps (the Sound Barrier at sea level) from both the Unique and the TC, so is on the other side of the line in that respect.

The RX Hi Impact is moving right along at over 1360 fps, which is right up there for .22 rimfire high velocity ammunition. An interesting bit of info coming out of these tests is the velocity comparison between the different barrel lengths. The 10" TC barrel produced velocities with each type of ammo that were almost identical to that achieved with the rifle barrel, which is more than double the length.

In the .22 Magnum 10" Thompson barrel, the results were excellent. For some reason this barrel shoots well with almost anything,



and the RX ammo was no exception. The 11 mm group with the JHP loads is about as good as it gets with this type of ammo, particularly with a low powered (3X) scope. I will have another go at it when time permits to see if my luck holds with that combination. Unlike the .22 Long Rifle, the .22

Magnum can be expected to do better out of a longer barrel. The JHP loads were moving pretty quickly even then at over 1700 fps, while the FMJ loads were just on 100 fps slower. A rifle-length barrel would probably put another couple of hundred feet per second on the velocity over that of the 10" pistol.

I did not that expect the super soft ZX ammo would cycle the Ruger MKII, but the pistol functioned reliably with this ammo during the test.

All Highland ammunition is distributed throughout Australasia through Highland Sports, and stocks of its rimfire range should now be available through any firearms retailer.