



Member Tested and Recommended Program

Monday, October 05, 2009

Thank you for participating in our “Member Tested and Recommended Products Program.” The Critical Defense .380 Auto Cartridges has been tested and recommended by the members of the National Tactical Officers Association. Your overall score was a 4.02. The NTOA Member Tested and Recommended logo may be used solely on the specific product that was tested.

Attached with this letter, is the Member Tested and Recommended Logo which can be used on all marketing pieces for this product. Also attached is a copy of the complete reviews that your company can use as well.

Press releases written regarding this product review must be emailed to NTOA for review before release.

Since the review is completed, it will now be added to online Member Tested product database. To make the review complete, please send us a digital image of the product that has been tested. This is now listed on the NTOA’s Member Tested and Recommended online database and review will soon be published in *The Tactical Edge* journal.

Please contact Corey Luby at advertising@ntoa.org if you would like to advertise in *The Tactical Edge* journal. Once again, thank you for participating Member Tested and Recommended Program©.

Thank you,

Corey Luby
800-279-9127x120



Hornady Mfg
Critical Defense .380 Auto Cartridges
Overall Score: 4.02
<http://www.hornady.com>

TESTER

Tested by a police officer from Louisiana

Design 4

Performance 4

Ease of Use

Size 4

Quality 4

Durability

Storage

Versatility 4

Convenience

Application 4

Comfort

Accuracy 4

Cleaning & Maintenance

Individual Score 4

I was supplied with fifty rounds of Hornady's new Critical Defense 90 grain .380 ammunition for test and evaluation. In researching information on this product Hornady lists the muzzle velocity at 1000 fps with muzzle energy being 200 ft lb. The product specification sheet also shows a photograph depicting a bullet being shot from a Ruger LCP into a gelatin block with heavy clothing. The penetration appears to be approximately 11 inches. There is a photograph of eight bullets that show good performance of expansion. Another photo shows other bullets with varying degrees of expansion performance. Hornady also claims that the powder used in this round reduces the muzzle flash normally associated with firing a weapon.

The anatomy of the bullet would seem to promote good function in handguns in that it comes to a narrow point versus a wide hollow point that may not make it past the feed ramp or throat of the chamber. Hornady calls this a "Flex Tip" patented design. "Upon entering soft tissue, the tip swells and imparts equal pressure across the entire circumference of the bullet cavity".

The ammunition was fired through two handguns for testing, a Bersa and a Walther. Both weapons had a reputation for reliability and reasonable accuracy. The weapons performed with no malfunctions during all tests. Accuracy test with this ammunition was impressive. At seven and fifteen yards off hand five shot groups measured approximately 1-¼ inches. Five shot twenty-five yard off hand group measured approximately 4-½ inches. Accuracy was very acceptable with this ammunition and weapon combination. This combined with no malfunction would make me comfortable using this combination in personal defense.

The following is an incident that occurred in the line of duty. While not scientific in nature, is

understandable. A vehicle accident occurred between a car and a whitetail deer. The deer was severely injured but alert and suffering. An officer used his back-up handgun loaded with Hornady Critical Defense ammunition. One shot was fired from close range (approximately one foot) into the cranial area. The round penetrated the cranium but did not exit. The results were immediate in that the animal did not appear to suffer any longer.

TESTER

Tested by a police officer from California

Design 4

Performance 3

Ease of Use 4

Size 3

Quality 3

Durability 3

Storage 3

Versatility 4

Convenience 3

Application 4

Comfort 4

Accuracy 3

Cleaning & Maintenance 3

Individual Score 3.38

Three members of my team tested the .380 caliber 90 grain Hornady Critical Defense ammunition and compared notes afterwards. Our perceptions were consistent.

We tested this ammunition in a Walther PPK pistol using Remington Golden Saber 102 grain JHP ammunition as a control.

Because .380 caliber is considered to be marginal for self-defense, ammunition which provides the most power /penetration / expansion for its size - such as Golden Saber - is what we would load in our Walther pistols if we carried them for back up or off-duty use.

Frankly, since the creation of subcompact pistols in .40 / .45 calibers have become more prevalent in recent years that is what the three evaluators who tested this ammunition carry for back-up and off-duty guns. We had not fired our Walthers in more than 10 years until this test! But we are aware that the slim profile, small size, and small caliber may appeal to members for both a back-up gun and perhaps for family members who may be reluctant to shoot larger caliber weapons. Additionally, the penetration and expansion on the Hornady website for this ammunition were impressive - close to the larger calibers (of course we did not have ballistic gelatin or other ways to verify this data).

We conducted the test at an outdoor range using standard NRA rifle targets at approximately 7 yards. We loaded separate magazines of Remington Golden Saber and Hornady Critical Defense ammunition and fired them. Then we alternately skip loaded an equal number of rounds of each ammunition, and then randomly skip loaded magazines mixing equal numbers of rounds of both ammunition.

All testers stated felt recoil was less with the Hornady ammunition than with the Golden Saber. This would be expected due to the lighter bullet (90 grains vs. 102 grains). It makes this

ammunition very comfortable to shoot.

Accuracy was very similar - in fact no difference was distinguishable between the two manufacturer's rounds of ammunition. This test was not done using a bench rest or other precision devices - so we cannot give a precise "so many shots within a so many inch circle". We were simply trying to replicate what a member shooter or family member would do.

All rounds of both ammunition were inspected and there were no visible manufacturing defects. It appears that the Hornady Critical Defense round is manufactured with high quality components, such as nickel cases. All rounds loaded and fed well and easily. There were no rounds in either ammunition which failed to fire or caused any kind of malfunction -what would be expected of a good quality factory round.

In other respects (e.g. durability, convenience, etc.) this ammunition matched any other good ammunition.

The special feature of this Hornady ammunition is the ability to go through clothing without its ability to penetrate or expand being affected - as can happen with other hollow point ammunition. This is accomplished with a plastic plug in the cavity of the nose of the bullet.

Unfortunately, our limited resources did not permit us to test this feature. This would be a definite advantage, particularly in cold weather climates.

In summary - good ammunition, worthy of consideration.

TESTER

Tested by a police officer from Florida

Design 5

Performance 5

Ease of Use

Size

Quality 5

Durability

Storage 4

Versatility

Convenience

Application 4

Comfort

Accuracy 5

Cleaning & Maintenance

Individual Score 4.67

I received two 25 round boxes of Hornady's Critical Defense ammunition. The ammunition was .380 AUTO, 90 grain FTX. Hornady's website states that the FTX round is designed to eliminate clogging of the tip of a hollow point round when passing through clothing. Hornady also states that the FTX bullet is also designed to have reliable expansion after it enters the body. Initial inspection showed that the ammunition was high quality. The casings are nickel and the bullet itself contains a small polymer insert in the "hollow point" cavity. All bullets were seated properly in the casings and were defect free.

I tested the ammunition through a Beretta Model 70. This pistol is semi-automatic with a 3 ½

inch barrel. I did not have access to a chronograph or ballistic gelatin. I initially tested the round for reliability and accuracy. I fired 20 of the rounds rapid fire to test function. Even in an older weapon there were no malfunctions. Another shooter and I fired another 20 rounds (10 each) from 10 yards. All rounds were easily placed within the same 3 inch circle by both of us. I tested the last 10 rounds by firing them from a distance of 7 yards, through a pair of blue jeans. The jeans were placed in front of a sand bag filled with loosely compacted sand. All bullets passed through two layers of denim and into the sandbag. All bullets were recovered approx. 3-4 inches into the bag. All of the bullets had expanded and showed no signs of clogging with denim. I did not note and pieces of denim clinging to the "petals" of the expanded bullet either. Expansion of the bullets was not perfect due to the medium that they were fired into. However, all bullets did expand to just over $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch. I am sure results would be excellent in gelatin or a body.

Based on my observations and best available testing methods, the ammunition performed great. It was well made, accurate and performed as stated by not clogging up with fabric and hindering expansion. I would definitely recommend this ammunition for personal defense.