

6mmX

[a champion's choice]

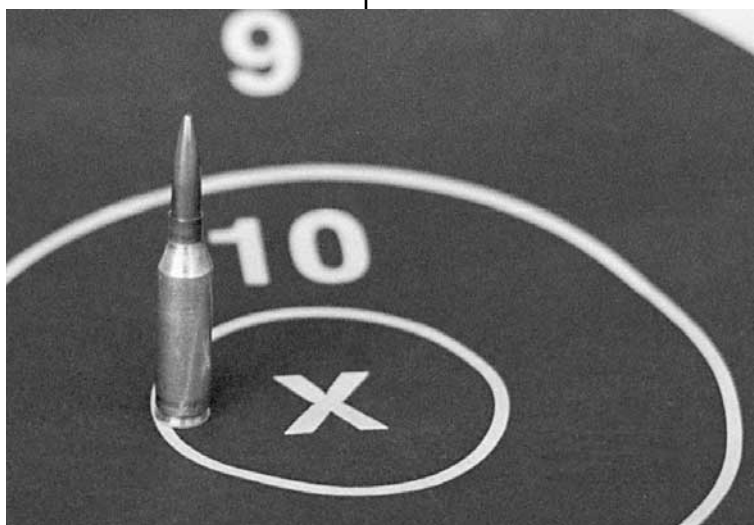
David Tubb, 9-time National High Power Rifle Champion

This little round, I think, is truly amazing. It does 99-percent of what a .243 Winchester can do, but using a significant amount less powder. It's also easy, as far as "wild-cats" go. All that's necessary to make it work is a .243 chamber reamer, some .22-250 cases, and a set of .243 W. dies with 0.140 ground off their bottoms.

[David won Camp Perry this year (2001) shooting a cartridge many people are excited about. There were some questions that David's win answered, and we're seeing it become more and more popular. For much more detailed information, check our book, Handloading for Competition.]

In my first High Power matches in 1969, I started competing with a .30-06. My father helped me load 125 grain bullets with a lighter charge for 200 yard shooting (he understood recoil was a factor -- especially with a beginning shooter). The balance of my ammunition was loaded with a 168gr Sierra®.

The .308 Winchester cartridge was relatively new on the scene at that time and a lot of people were rebarreling for not only recoil but also accuracy. It did better in both areas compared to the prevalent .30-06. I made the switch to .308 and continued with it from 1970 until 1986, when, after shooting High Power Silhouette Rifle for several years with a .308, I switched to 7mm-08. My scores immediately went up, and I attributed this to two reasons. First, I had to order a new 7mm barrel instead of taking the worn out .308 barrel off my across the course rifle, and turning it down and shortening it (also rechambering) to fit Silhouette rules. Second, I noticed with a .308 that I would occasionally flinch a shot during the 40 round match (one animal missed was normally not catastrophic). When I shot the 7mm-08 my flinched shot went away. It is amazing what reducing bullet weight about 20 grains at 2600 fps feels like (190gr .308 vs 168gr 7mm-08). This immediately transferred to my across the course shooting.



Obviously, more is better! So the next move was to .243 Winchester, and it worked. The Sierra® 107 grain bullet at 2850-plus fps was excellent in the recoil department, only it didn't knock down the rams at 500 meters consistently for me in Silhouette. Barrel life with a .243 is also considerably shorter than with either .308 (the best) or 7mm-08. That's a lot of powder burning down a small hole.

Fire form load is 33.0 grains of Viht. N150. 600 yard load is 35.0 grains of the same. That's with a Sierra® 107 moly-coated MatchKing™. These loads may be changing because we're working with different powders, but these "work." My current favorite is VARGET™.

I spent a short time back with 7mm-08 because I was still shooting Silhouette and only wanted to load ammunition for one caliber, but my next move was to the 6.5mm-08 [260 Remington]. I had retired from Silhouette and wanted to focus only on across the course events. Bullet selection came about seemingly overnight with several manufacturers entering the market with outstanding .264 bullets (of course the Europeans have used 6.5mm in several chamberings for years).

After watching the AR15/M16 rifles do so well in the past few years, it became fur-

The TUBB 2000 offers 6X as a standard chambering. Far as I know it's the first and only set to go for this new round. Loaded to magazine length, the longest bullet is not seated below the neck/shoulder junction on the case. This means avoidance of the "doughnut" for the life of the case, and that, as anyone who's dealt with this accuracy and pressure menace, is no small thing. The TUBB 2000 also makes excellent use of the flexibility potential in seating depths by virtue of its chambering method. David designed reamers that provide no straight section ahead of the case mouth. This means that any bullet can be snugged up to the lands for better accuracy and still fit the magazine (and still be adjusted outward as the throat lengthens). Shoots better now, shoots better later.

ther evident that even less recoil will help. We need to keep in mind that we still want maximum performance out of a cartridge (accuracy and downrange ballistics). The 80gr bullets in .223 Remington do okay, but they are not in the same league as the next caliber up -- 6mm (.243). The 6mm bullets that weigh around 107gr offer a lot more downrange performance at around a 20-percent increase in recoil compared to the .223.

So the 64-dollar question -- how to get the 6mm 107 downrange at 2850-plus fps and yet retain more barrel life.

The 6mm X was conceived.

I am by no means the originator of this idea. Several others have tried similar avenues like the 6mm International. All were based on a 250 Savage case, which is 0.130 shorter than the .308 Winchester. That provides a good deal of reduction in powder capacity compared to .243 Winchester but doesn't materially affect potential velocities. I prefer the 6mmX since it is ultimately easier to work with than 6mm International, has greater case capacity, and retains the body dimension and shoulder angle of the .308 family for reliable feeding from our magazines.

Having won Camp Perry with a .308 Winchester, 7mm-08, .243 Winchester, and 6.5mm-08, I think that the 6mmX may be my best pick yet.

More

Experience after Camp Perry this year with slower burning powders has shown truly amazing ballistics capabilities from this round. I've found that it can easily attain 2950 feet per second, and it's certainly possible to get more than that, if wanted.