



## Steel, Wool

According to *The Strasbourg Tests*, bigger is not necessarily better, at least as far as ammunition is concerned. In the 1991 privately funded study, live French Alpine goats fell almost twice as quickly when shot in the lung with a 125-grain .357 Magnum jacketed hollowpoint as they did when struck in the same spot by a 230-grain .45 ACP FMJ “hardball,” a much larger bullet.

Ammunition tests on lambs (whether alive or dead) have, until now, been unavailable to the public. Here, for the first time, SPY plays the most dangerous game with its food.



### HANDGUN

**Type:** double-action revolver

**Manufacturer:** Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc., Southport, Connecticut

**Caliber:** .357 Magnum

**Barrel length:** 2¼ inches

**Weight:** 25 ounces (unloaded)

**Capacity:** 5 shots

### AMMUNITION

**1)** Winchester Black Talon .357 Magnum 180-grain SXT (Supreme Expansion Talon)

**2)** Federal .357 Magnum 158-grain Hydra-Shok jacketed hollowpoint

**3)** .357 Magnum 158-grain lead semi-wadcutter (generic reload)

**4)** Remington .357 Magnum Golden Saber HPJ 125-grain high-performance brass-jacketed hollowpoint

**5)** Federal .38 Special 147-grain +P+ Hydra-Shok jacketed hollowpoint (FBI load, for law-enforcement use only)

**6)** Winchester Super-X .38 Special 125-grain +P jacketed hollowpoint



Baa-listics report: selected ammo, before and after

### TARGETS

**Cut:** USDA Choice legs of lamb

**Average weight:** 6.82 pounds

**Price:** \$3.49/pound

**Brand:** Supreme American

**Source:** Safeway

### METHODOLOGY

Ammunition was fired into freestanding thawed legs of lamb at point-blank range. Targets were buttressed by two water-soaked Bay Area Yellow Pages to aid in bullet recovery.

### RESULTS

As expected, all the rounds passed completely through the lamb without difficulty. The Magnum bullets, however, left holes that proved much too large for shish kebabs, unless a broomstick were used as a skewer. (Fifty-grain .25 FMJ would seem a better choice.)

**1)** Weighed more coming out of the lamb than it did going in—nearly half an ounce heavier when we finally found it, in the “Yarn” section of the second telephone directory, its claws fully expanded and clutching scraps of lamb meat and yellow paper.

The Black Talon resembles a tiny, six-pointed Ninja throwing star when

fully expanded—a Magen David traveling at more than 1,100 feet per second. After Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) cited the Black Talon when calling for a 10,000 percent tax on bullets that perform like video-game ammunition, Winchester halted distribution of the bullet.

**2)** Jumped clean out of its jacket at the opportunity to penetrate meat. It pierced not only the leg of lamb and both telephone directories but also an inch and a quarter of redwood siding. The bullet retained little of its original weight, however, leaving so many nasty-looking bits of shrapnel in the lamb that we'd be embarrassed to serve it to company.

**3)** The only round to strike bone

(which it reduced to slivers), the semi-wadcutter rendered the lamb unsuitable even for dog food. With more than 500 foot-pounds of energy behind it, this bullet has armor-piercing capability, meaning we could have conducted the test right through a refrigerator door.

**4)** Left a football-shaped wound you could fit your fist in, or stuff with goat cheese and basil. Its brass jacket is stiffer than the 95 percent copper alloy in most hollowpoints. This rigidity causes the bullet's six blunt “petals” to blossom more slowly, which results in a larger and longer cavity.

**5)** The FBI's superhot load emerged from the lamb badly battered, its jacket in shreds around its ankles, its body deformed and ugly.

**6)** Packs only half the energy of the semi-wadcutter. A reliable bullet, but more stopping power would have been required had the lamb been alive.

—Don Rubin