

# **A History of the United States National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championships 1919-2013**

By  
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## Acknowledgement

This history is an attempt to capture the events and personalities that make the National Rifle Association's National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championship such a powerful and interesting story. Covering the years 1919 through 2002 was done under the auspices of the NRA's publications division, as source material for *The National Matches: 1903-2003 The First 100 Years*. The reports of the years 2003-2010 were written for, and published by, *Precision Shooting Magazine* until that publication's demise and thereafter they were specifically written for this history.

This is not a formal history in the sense that bibliography is not appended nor are sources cited. However, much of this story was collected from the rich store of information archived in the written reports found in the shooting journals *Arms and the Man*, *The American Rifleman*, *Tournament News*, *Shooting Sports USA*, and *Precision Shooting Magazine* as well as the programs and bulletins of The National Matches and *NRA Shooting Trophies*. To these writers, the many anonymous NRA staff writers who reported on the events at Camp Perry without a byline, Kendrick Scofield, Edward C. Crossman, Walter Stokes, C.S. Landis, Stephen Trask, David North, Jack Rohan, L.J. Hathaway, F.C. Ness, C.B. Lister, Robert D. Hatcher, John Schofield, Ron Stann, Paul Cardinal, Frank J. "Al Blanco" Kahrs, Paul Pierpoint, Alan C. Webber, Ronald W. Musselwhite, William F. Parkerson, III, Robert W. Hunnicutt, J. Scott Rupp, Michael R. Irwin, Tom Fulgham, Ron Keysor, John Zent, Karen Davey, Joseph B. Roberts, Jr., John Grubar, Hap Rocketto, Michael E. McLean, Michael O. Humphries, Joe Kerper, and Daniel McElrath I owe a debt of gratitude.

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This work is, essentially, a rewriting of the many years of reports that I have collected. I do not present this as totally original composition in any way. Too much is owed to those mentioned above for me to take credit. My role was simply to order it into a continuous flow, weaving the individual strands into whole cloth. Where possible I added color commentary in an attempt to make the tale as interesting and enjoyable to read as possible. I owe its success to all who helped me and accept responsibility for any errors or inaccuracies that might appear. Any flaws are not from any lack of effort to attain perfection.

The author reserves the moral right to be recognized as the creator of this work.



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Crossman's Dream Comes True...**

**1919**

The National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championship has its antecedents in 1845 when noted French gun maker Nicolas Flobert developed the 22-caliber rimfire cartridge. Flobert experimented with percussion caps to create a quiet, low-powered short-range cartridge. The Gallic inventor formed the soft copper caps to give them a rim and placed a lead ball in the recess as a projectile. The priming mixture in the cap was sufficient enough propellant to allow Parisians to shoot at targets indoors during soirées in the more fashionable upper class salons. The cartridges used in the predecessor of our modern day gallery shooting came to be known as Bulleted Breech Caps, or BB caps.

The next step in the development of the classic rimfire was combining four grains of black powder, in a longer case, with a 29-grain conical bullet. This, the 22-caliber short, created in 1857, has remained virtually the same to this day, only the type of powder has changed. The short has been in continuous commercial production for over a century and a half, making it the oldest self-contained cartridge in existence.

A larger cartridge of the same design, the 22-caliber Long, came into existence in 1871 which was followed in 1887 by the 22-caliber Long Rifle, the end of the evolutionary line of the most popular caliber cartridge in history. Flobert's rimfire cartridge has come a long way. Likewise, smallbore rifle shooting has also progressed since the early days in Paris. Through the first two decades of the Twentieth Century

smallbore rifles were the poor cousin to military rifles for competition. However, World War I would play a major role in promoting the rimfire sport.

Interest in marksmanship grew in direct proportion to the United States' involvement in world affairs, particularly in the great buildup of the military that surrounded the entry of the United States into the World War. The National Matches, which had been conducted in concert by the Federal Government and the National Rifle Association since 1903, was cancelled while the boys were "over there" in 1917. When the fighting in Europe ended the National Matches again resumed in 1918 at Camp Perry, Ohio with renewed interest and support.

As the armed forces expanded to meet the needs of the war effort so did their need for training facilities. Lieutenant Colonel Charles Grant, US Army Ordnance Corps, scouted out range locations on the east coast and brought the possibilities of a rather swampy area in northern New Jersey near Caldwell, just 20 miles or so west of New York City, to the attention of Colonel William "Bo" Harllee, USMC. Harllee, the Director of Naval Marksmanship, had developed the first Marine Corps rifle range at Stump Neck near Quantico, Virginia in 1910, and was one of the most experienced range constructors available. When the Navy was given the task of conducting the 1919 National Matches Harllee, was in the thick of it. Under the direction of Captain William D. Leahy, USN, the Director of Gunnery Exercises, and one of only four naval officers to reach the rank of Fleet Admiral, the Navy elected to use the new Caldwell Range at Great Piece Meadows and began to expand the drained swamp area to meet the anticipated need. Soldiers from Governor's Island New York, sailors off of the *USS New Mexico*, and 200 marines all toiled away side by side on range construction.

The job seemed well in hand when it began to rain, a deluge that continued for seven straight days. The continuous rainstorm refilled Great Piece Meadow. When at last the sky cleared the soldiers, sailors, and Marines again drained the swamp, restored the butts, and began construction of firing points and walkways of sufficient height to clear another flood. As the troops beavered away the water from the storm ran off, filling a large nearby lake but the earthen dam that formed the lake was unable to contain the rush of additional water and it soon burst under the increased pressure. Water again swept through the range area, washing away anything within its reach. In the little time remaining after the second flood, the range crew was able to restore a semblance of order, just in time for the next series of rain storms that bedeviled the matches. Along with the constant damp the range staff and competitors had to put up with swarms of particularly hungry mosquitoes that bred in the countless pools of standing water dotting the besotted camp.

The weather nearly ruined the matches and the matches nearly ruined Harllee. His supervisors certainly understood that he had struggled manfully against the elements and he did all he could to prepare the range and its facilities, and for this he was praised. What was to be his darkest moment, and the brightest for the 1,000 or so competitors, was when the civilian riflemen learned that there were over 1,000,000 rounds of National Match ammunition stored, unguarded, at the range. When the word got out, the most of the ammunition stock disappeared over night. The man who had signed for it now had to answer for its loss. The lucky lieutenant colonel narrowly escaped a court martial.

As Harlee was putting the range back together the NRA appointed Captain Edward Cathcart Crossman, United States Army, as Chief Range Officer and Assistant Executive Officer of the 1919 matches. He did not come to this position by chance as he was both an outstanding rifleman and arguably the most popular and widely read shooting sports writer of the time. Through the efforts of Colonel Smith W. Brookhart, the president of the NRA, Crossman had been commissioned a captain in 1918 and sent directly to Camp Perry where he helped organize the small arms firing school whose role was to teach a cadre of small arms instructors the art and science of shooting so that they might go forth into the various Army camps to improve the shooting skills of the newly minted soldiers.

As a director of the NRA he had been campaigning to establish a smallbore shooting program as a feeder for the, as he saw it, more important service rifle competitions. As the probability of a smallbore competition to coincide with the “big shoot” at Caldwell became more of a reality Crossman, now stationed at the Infantry School of Arms at Camp Benning, Georgia, immediately took to the pages of *Arms and the Man* to both solicit ideas from the smallbore community about the form of a national smallbore match and to raise the consciousness of the shooting community to the smallbore game. One should be careful of what one wishes for as it may be granted for on June 7, 1919 the NRA announced that Crossman had been selected to conduct a smallbore rifle tournament to coincide with the 1919 National Matches at Caldwell, just a matter the of a short month and a half away.

Faced with the daunting task of creating a tournament out of nothing Crossman immediately enlisted the aid of a fellow member of the Los Angeles Rifle Club, Captain



Grosvenor Liebenau Wotkyns who was detached from his post in California and sent east. Crossman quickly added Captain W.H. "Cap" Richard of Winchester and Fred Kahrs of Remington to his staff. Both were well known smallbore shooters with Kahrs quite often contributing to various shooting publications under the *nom de plume* of Al Blanco. Crossman's ace in the hole was Captain E.J.D. Nesbitt, a British citizen and an officer of that nation's Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs. Nesbitt had extensive experience in organizing the British smallbore championships at Bisley and would lend his expertise to the fledgling efforts in the United States.

There was added impetus for Crossman to create a smooth and successful national tournament, for, on May 27, 1919, A.E. Codrington, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs, posted a letter challenging the National Rifle Association of America to once again compete for the Sir Thomas Dewar Challenge Cup, last contested in 1914. Competition for the Dewar Cup had been suspended during World War I and, with the end of hostilities, the British were anxious to reestablish the match. Although various courses of fire had been used indoors in the pre-war years the two shooting national associations negotiated a set of rules. Teams of 20 competitors would fire 40 record shots, 20 at 50 yards and 100 yards with metallic sights, a three pound trigger pull, and a time limit of one minute per shot, rules that have remained virtually unchanged to this day.

Working with great speed Crossman was able to publish the program and the conditions for the first smallbore national match in the June 28, 1919 *Arms and The Man*. He announced that the course of fire would be divided between prone events at 50 and 100 yards, in the British style, some long range shooting at 200 yards to

simulate the 30 caliber matches, some matches open only to boys or ladies, and some novelty matches requiring the breaking of frangible discs at various distances. Some of the matches would be re-entry while others would be squadded. Crossman was making a conscious attempt to create a match program that would have wide appeal. He wished to draw in as many shooters as possible because he wanted to build up the pool from which he might select Dewar team members.

While Crossman and his minions were toiling away in New Jersey the prospect of a renaissance in smallbore prone shooting through a smallbore national championship sparked a flurry of correspondence to and from the Winchester Repeating Arms Company in New Haven, Connecticut. The War Department had cancelled contracts for the old 22-caliber Winchester Model 1885 Musket and was not entertaining further purchases of this type of firearm. Future purchases would probably focus on a bolt-action rifle to better simulate the service rifles of the time, the Springfield 1903 and the Enfield 1917. Sensing the sea change Henry Brewer, Winchester vice president, directed product engineer Thomas Crosley Johnson and Frank F. Burton to move independently forward on the development of just such a rifle, known as Experimental Design Number 111.

By the end of April 1919 a prototype of the rifle had been shown to Lieutenant Colonel Townsend Whelen, US Army General Staff, Major Richard D. La Garde, Director of Civilian Marksmanship, General Fred Phillips, NRA President, and *Arms and the Man* Editor Kendrick Schofield all of whom gave it rave reviews. Under the direction of Edwin Pugsley Winchester rushed ahead and prepared six of the rifles for use at

Caldwell, designated G22R, five chambered in 22 caliber long rifle and one in 22 caliber short.

Winchester's chief representative at Caldwell, Albert F. Laudensack, wielded the new rifle with such success that he was named to the Dewar Team, "Cap" Richards won the won the 50 yard sweeps with the rifle, firing a perfect score. A.M. Morgan and Donald Price teamed up and used the new Winchester rifle to take both the Field and Stream and Smallbore Marine Corps Cup Matches. During the matches the rifles' performance far surpassed the new Savage bolt action Model 19 NRA Match Rifle. On September 11, 1919 the G22R was officially designated the Model 52 and the rest, as they say, is history.

The rain was a bother and even though the 200-yard matches were cancelled because the smallbore long-range butts were washed away it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the competitors, With 20 firing points at both 50 and 100 yards, there was plenty of room to accommodate those wishing to try their hand at smallbore shooting in between high power relays. All a competitor had to do was show up, purchase a gummed squadding ticket, saunter out to the line, have the range officer assign a firing point, and pick up a complimentary loading block-marked with an advertisement from the benefactor. While waiting for the previous relay to end, usually no more than a few minutes, the competitor would fill the loading block with the correct number of record shots-there were no sighters allowed, lick the gummed squadding ticket, affix to the target, and set up. When the firing point cleared, he would then shoot the match. The first match was a far cry from the more formal and tightly choreographed smallbore national matches of later years.

Starting on August 4<sup>th</sup>, the smallbore shooters potted away and the events proved popular enough to remind high power coaches of the New Testament parable of the shepherd and the ninety and nine sheep. It was not uncommon for coaches to have to stop by the smallbore range to gather up missing team members for the center fire shooting. The prize schedule was rich, considering the short time in which Crossman had to arrange things. While 50% of the entry fees would be returned to the winners in cash and the other half in medals and pennants from the NRA there were also merchandise prizes such as a BSA Number 12 Martini Rifle, a \$50 gold watch, and various cups and trophies donated by vendors and munitions companies. The first National Smallbore Rifle Championship was contested over a single Dewar course of fire and Captain Wotkyns outshot "Cap" Richards 392 to 390 to earn the inaugural event. Wotkyns' haul was the gold watch, a gold medal, and \$6.30 in cash. Richards pocketed a whopping \$4.70 and a bronze medal.

With his eye on the Dewar Team match Crossman carefully watched all of the major players in the tournament. He selected the top 40 finishers in the Small Bore Individual Match, a Dewar, to participate in an elimination match over the same course of fire. When the scores from the two matches were totaled "Cap" Richard was on top with Wotkyns in second place, an exact reversal of their finish in the National Championship. Rounding out the first United States Dewar Trophy team of the modern era was A.E. Hart, Albert F. Laudensack, W.C. Andrews, E.B. Rice, James A. Wade, Commander W.W. Stewart, Lieutenant Colonel J.K. Bowles, James E. Miller, Captain Donald A. Preussner, J.L. Renew, Captain Paul A. Raymond, Commander Willis Lee, Captain G.W. Chesley, George Schnerring, Walter Stokes, D.W. Price, A.M. Morgan,

and tied for 20<sup>th</sup> place Commander H.D. Denny and the Match Director's wife, Mrs. Blanche Crossman.

A shoot-off was scheduled to determine if Commander Denny or Mrs. Crossman would occupy the final place, but it was called off when it was realized that Price, a shooter of no mean skill, had but one arm and used a forked prosthesis when shooting. The device was determined to be artificial support, barred under the rules, and Price withdrew, forestalling the showdown. Thus Mrs. Crossman entered into the shooting history books as the first woman to shoot on a United States international team.

On Sunday morning, the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, the team assembled on the firing line and in three relays started shooting under almost ideal conditions. At their disposal were selected lots of ammunition from the various manufacturers and the new rifles from Winchester. The 20 shooters used the new Winchester rifles, along with a Savage bolt action Model 19 NRA Match Rifle, a Winchester 1885 Musket, two Stevens Model 414s, and a pair of rifles built on old Ballard actions mounting Andrews barrels. An hour after noon the match was over and the scores were announced. The United States had posted a 7,617 to Great Britain's 7,523. Newett, as the official representative of the British, was most effusive in his congratulatory comments.

With his mission seen to a triumphant conclusion Crossman took great pleasure in both the team results and his wife's success. More importantly this international win would serve to fan the spark of the smoldering smallbore movement. Within days the National Rifle Association, at its annual meeting held a Caldwell at the end of the matches, named a blue ribbon committee of Whelen, Crossman, Wotkyns, La Garde, Captain Thomas Samworth, Marine Major Jack J. Dooley, and Kellogg Kennon

Venerable Casey to standardize smallbore competition. What was just a dream in the early spring was now a growing reality in the late summer. Although the growing season for most agriculture crops was coming to an end it was just beginning for organized smallbore rifle shooting.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Roaring Twenties

#### 1920

The Thompson Submachine Gun was “the gun that made the Twenties roar.” That may have been true on the Streets of Chicago but in competition circles it was the 22-caliber rifle that was making the noise. As a new decade, rife with a promise of prosperity, burst on the scene, the smallbore rifle, no longer confined to boardwalk shooting galleries escaped indoor confines and grew by leaps and bounds. From its humble competitive beginnings, in a drained swamp in New Jersey, it was on its way to becoming a major sporting activity for the shooting fraternity.

Using the 1919 matches as a springboard the NRA began promoting the sport in a big way. Based on his demonstrated expertise in 1919 Edward Crossman was appointed to conduct the 1920 smallbore matches that would again run concurrent with the National Matches which were scheduled for Camp Perry in August. The culminating smallbore event would again be the Dewar Trophy match which would be shot following a schedule of matches that was built on the successful events of the previous year. The program, which incidentally advertised that ladies could enter all matches, basically followed the earlier arrangement of re-entry and single entry matches. No sighting shots were allowed, save for five at 200 yards, and the prospective competitor was reminded that those wishing to sight in could do so by entering any of the several re-entry matches.

In the weeks leading up to the matches *Arms and The Man* printed the match program that carefully laid out the conditions; match name, date, course of fire,

equipment, fees, targets, and prizes were all described in exquisite detail. Crossman told the competitors of the many improvements made to the range to accommodate them. The smallbore range would be located at the far left of the 1,000-yard range hard on the western boundary of the camp proper and the Erie Proving Grounds. The firing points would be hard packed dirt under the shelter of a wooden cover, over 100 feet long. All of this was being done to boost the smallbore game at Perry and, more importantly, at local clubs nationwide.

Competitors would still have to fit the smallbore events in between the centerfire schedule but the range was to be open at all times, making it a moot point. The smallbore matches would consist of eight reentry, or sweepstakes, matches in which one might fire as often as one liked. Four squadded, or single entry matches, would make up a Grand Aggregate similar to the inaugural matches of 1919. Oddly enough the national championship would again be determined by a single sub aggregate match rather than the aggregate, the Smallbore National Individual, a metallic sights Dewar course of fire.

Despite the fact that the range was tucked out of the way, smallbore attracted some 200 individuals who entered the various matches accounting for more than 2,700 entries. Taking advantage of the reentry phase was Marjorie Kinder, a veteran of Caldwell, who fired an average of 500 rounds per day in the sweepstakes matches. In the end she bested 238 entries in the ten shot 50 yard standing match with a score of 93. Her win was made all that more impressive because she used iron sights in the any sight match. Although the \$12.00 total winnings she garnered for her first place in



standing and tenth place finish in the junior reentry match could not have covered her entry fees and ammunition she was well compensated by the experience.

The improvement in smallbore rifle and ammunition performance could not be emphasized any more than by the fact that perfect scores, possibles, were now being shot at 100 yards, while none had been recorded at Caldwell. The total of three possibles fired at 50 yards the previous year was increased eight fold to 24. In the Grand Aggregate, winner L.E. Wilson, of the US Marine Corps, fired a 690X700 and edged out W.H. "Cap" Richards' 687. On his way to the win he, poetically, won the Marine Corps Match, a half Dewar course shot with any sights, with a perfect 200X200. Both Wilson and Richards used Winchester 52 rifles and Winchester Precision ammunition. Two Connecticut riflemen, P.E. Littlehale and J.F. Rivers, finished first and second in the Smallbore Wimbledon, 20 shots at 200 yards on the C5 target, with scores of 100 and 99 respectively. The national individual title ended with Wilson and Richards tied with 394s but "Cap" Richards' higher score at 100 yards won him the title.

The smallbore shooters now prepared to take on the British in an attempt to retain the Dewar Trophy, which had been in the United States' possession since 1913. Returning to competition after a four year hiatus caused by the Great War the trophy was again up for grabs on an annual basis and there was no desire on the part of the National Rifle Association to build a shipping crate. Almost as soon as the 1919 matches had ended there was a tremendous build up for the upcoming tryst. In the first year of the new decade Great Britain would come up short against the best the new world had to offer. In August the riflemen of the United States gathered at Camp Perry and put together a team score that kept the Dewar Trophy on its stand in the Office of

the War Department in Washington. A few months later the most sporting of English gentleman, Sir Thomas Lipton, saw his yacht *Shamrock IV* go down to defeat to the *Resolute* in the America's Cup contest. In both cases, shooting and sailing, the defeated sportsmen would be back as soon as possible, determined to capture the prize.

## 1921

The growing interest in smallbore shooting competition on the national level was seen as a natural culmination of local indoor and outdoor seasons. The matches of 1921 would see great expansion and with it a more formal approach to the competition. The program for the National Matches would have to be expanded by nine pages to cover the details now demanded by a more formal approach to the smallbore contest.

The 1921 matches would follow the pattern set in the past with reentry and single entry matches offered up to range capacity. The prizes offered would certainly be an incentive to compete with Colt, Remington, Savage, and Winchester donated firearms, Peters and Western ammunition, and Lyman sights. P.J. O'Hare provided a leather shooting bag while F.W. King Optical Company offered several sets of its shooting glasses as prizes. England's Birmingham Small Arms presented the winner of a special air gun match one of its 17-caliber air rifle and 1,000 pellets. There was much in the way of merchandise for the winners to take home as well as the traditional medals and cash. The emphasis on prizes was a demonstration of just how much in importance the matches had grown.

Rules for handling targets were laid out, scoring procedures were outlined, and methods for breaking ties were established. Crossfires were dealt with by deducting the

value of the shot and fining the miscreant, if identified, 50 cents, which had to be paid before firing could be resumed. The use of slings was optional but a loading block was required as only the exact number of record rounds could be brought to the firing line. British rules permitted 30 seconds a shot but a more liberal, but strictly enforced time limit, of one minute per shot was allowed for this match.

The nine reentry matches included the usual events: a junior match; a standing event, and 50 and 100 yard prone matches. A timed fire match, 10 shots in one minute for repeating rifles and two minutes for single loaders, shot from either sitting or kneeling was introduced as well as one in which the shooter had to match an unknown prone 100 yard score, between 70 and 100 points. Two hundred yard events included the Smallbore Swiss Match, where a shooter tried to rack up the longest run of shots in the five ring, and the Egg Pool where a competitor had five shots to hit a one inch diameter white paster called a "carton."

In almost a repeat of the previous year Russ Wiles, T.H. Rider, and Marjorie Kinder topped the junior reentry match, with Wiles and Rider cleaning the target and Kinder dropping just one point. Kinder also duplicated her feat of winning the standing match, showing that she was no flash in the pan. Walter Stokes, soon to develop an international reputation with the free rifle in Olympic competition was tied with her at 93 but lost on a tie-breaking rule. Virgil Richard, the first United States rifleman to shoot a perfect score of 100X100 at 100 yards, dominated the egg pool, Long Range Reentry Match, and the Swiss Match. Frank Kahrs, of Remington, took the air rifle match.

The single entry matches remained the same as the previous year with the individual title again going to the winner of the any sight Dewar match. Milo D. Snyder,

an officer in the Indiana National Guard placed in the Smallbore Marine Cup, won the Smallbore Individual Match, and went on to take the Grand Aggregate by a two point margin over his nearest rival. This was the first time that the National Smallbore Champion had won both the title match and the aggregate. However, it was no walk over. The victory went to Snyder because his long range score was higher than that of George E. Parker who also fired a 393.

With the individual matches in the books the United States Dewar team mustered for and again retained the trophy, although they would not learn until December that they had defeated the British by a score of 7735 to 7602, with the Canadians coming in third with a 7308. In a carefully thought out retrospective letter to his fellow British Shooters the official witness, Captain E. Newitt, revealed that the British were not at a disadvantage because of skill, equipment, or ammunition. As a matter of fact there were more British miniature rifle, as smallbore was called in those days, shooters in those days on the "Sceptered Isle" than in the United States. What gave the advantage to the Americans, Newitt believed, were their intense nationalism and their ability to subjugate self to a common goal. He further commented on the fact that in order to get to Camp Perry the teams went through multiple selection matches that brought the best to the National Matches. Furthermore, the British eschewed line coaching which was observed to be worth five points per man between individual and team scores. Not a small part in the selection process was the fact that the matches in the United States enjoyed government support while those in Great Britain did not.

**1922**

Now in its fourth year since gaining national status in 1919, smallbore shooting was growing to record levels. The value and standing of the Perry veteran in the local shooting community was likened to that of a missionary who, imbued with the spirit, would proselytize among those remaining at home. It was his responsibility, when returning from Perry, to promote shooting in general, teach others what was learned at the Small Arms Firing School and the big shoot, and foster more interest in the sport. The match procedures adopted in 1921 were found to be satisfactory and the same match schedule was retained with one small change. In the Smallbore National Individual the word metallic was added in the notation on allowable sights.

Unfortunately this year a parsimonious Congress cut military appropriations to the bone eliminating support for both National Guard and civilian state teams. At the urging of the National Rifle Association, Adjutant Generals of 30 states agreed to fund teams and the Militia

Bureau found enough money to finance one civilian team from each Army area. Some civilians came at their own expense to fire in the smallbore matches. The smallbore rifle events had begun to attract military shooters because the shooting provided competition in its own right as well as a way to stay sharp during the long winter months. Loren M. Felt, a civilian who came out at his own expense, drove the value of 22-caliber training home in no uncertain terms. Felt, a man experienced with the '03 Springfield rifle-fittingly so as that is also the name of the capitol of his state-was unable to practice to any extent before coming to Perry.

With the matches in full swing practice time and space was so limited on the highpower range he repaired to the smallbore facility and purchased a handful of tickets

for various reentry matches, even placing in the 100 yards sweepstakes with a score of 98. He picked up his winnings and his service rifle and took up his position for the Leech Cup. Once snuggled down into position he proceeded to shoot 21 consecutive fives at 600, 900, and 1,000 yards to post a perfect score of 105 with 10Vs, a feat that made him the first civilian to win the coveted long range trophy since 1913. Felt's success in winning the most venerable of United States shooting trophies was no coincidence and his performance convinced many a centerfire shooter to rethink his attitude towards smallbore competition.

Perhaps the introduction of the Springfield Model of 1922 Caliber 22 Rifle was the biggest news of the matches. Major Julian Hatcher began preliminary work on the new rifle as early as 1919 to provide an accurate rifle for schools, colleges, and civilian clubs. The rifle was developed in cooperation with the NRA to such a degree that it's stock, similar to that of the new Winchester 52 but without the grasping grooves that was found on the service model, was informally known as the "National Rifle Association sports stock." The NRA model carried Lyman 48B receiver half minute sights and a regulation blade front sight. It was also drilled and tapped for scope blocks. During the first year 2,020 of them were manufactured with the first production run being released through the NRA on June 1, 1922 for \$39.12 each, plus packing and shipping charges. The new rifle got into enough hands quickly about 15 of them were at Perry, with six being used by Dewar Team members.

Sighting shots were still not allowed and Captain J.F. Hauck, of the Indiana National Guard, warmed up by shooting in several reentry matches. He won the single

entry Smallbore Marine Corps match with a 199 and used that as a springboard to capture the Individual Championship with a Dewar score of 395.

Seventy four riflemen started out to earn a position on the Dewar Team. The pool for selection was rather smaller than in the past because Congressional budget cuts reduced civilian participation and forced the team captain Cavalry Colonel Charles E. Stodter, The Director of Civilian Marksmanship, to beat the bushes for all interested men. The top 25 scores were selected for a final tryout with the cutoff man being Indiana National Guard Captain George R. Gawehn, a teammate of the national champion. In the shoot off Gawehn barely made the team, being the 20th man in the final tryout match. However, on team day he pulled out all of the stops and bested such smallbore sharks as past national champions Wotkyns and Snyder to place at the top of the score sheet with a 390. It must be noted that ten of the 20 men on the 1922 Dewar team were civilians who, in the face of a tightfisted Congress, paid for the privilege of being on the team out of their own purses.

The match was not without its trials. On match day such a powerful wind was sweeping off Lake Erie that there was serious discussion about postponing the firing. Rather than delay it was agreed to have two hard holders fire a few strings to determine the effects of the wind on the tiny bullet. Accordingly the trail targets were fired and while the results were not encouraging team officials eventually decided to go ahead. Coaches were appointed; among them was Felt of Leech Cup fame. Coaching and hard holding paid off as the total score after the 50 yard stage was about the same as fired on the calm day of the final tryout. In fact, there was one more possible shot than in the tryout. The real test came at 100 yards and the scores began to show the effects

of the strong winds. In the end the United States team total stood at 7,685, a full 50 points less than the winning score of 1921 but 83 points above the British score of the previous year. It was with great relief that several days later the it was learned from the official witness, Colonel John Caswell that the British score was a 7,645 and the trophy was remained in the United States.

### **1923**

The NRA expanded its smallbore program to be more inclusive during 1923. By casting a wider net it was hoped to attract those who had an interest, but not the specialized equipment, to the growing ranks of 22 caliber rifle competitors. In recognition of the growing importance of the smallbore game the arms and munitions companies donated a series of trophies of a quality and magnificence equal to the venerated bronzes and plaques awarded in highpower competition.

The Peters Cartridge Company Trophy was a large silver cup mounted on a circular base for long range prone competition. The Remington Trophy was the first to recognize team events, in this case four men shooting at 150 yards. A bronze miniature of an Indian astride a horse named "The Scout" was presented by The United States Cartridge Company for the individual metallic sight Dewar and bears that company's name. The Marksman Trophy was given by the Western Cartridge Company, to be awarded to teams representing the regions east and west of the Mississippi River shooting a smallbore Palma Course, 15 shots per man at 150, 175, and 200 yards with any sights,. Winchester Repeating Arms donated a bronze statue, "The Plainsman," to honor the winner of the Smallbore Wimbledon Match, 20 shots at 200 yards.



Colonel John Caswell, sportsman, author, and soldier, presented the National Rifle Association with a bronze miniature of the Greek marble statue “Winged Victory of Samothrace” for award to the victors in a team match. The National Rifle Association also took this occasion to reassign the Hercules Trophy to smallbore competition. These trophies infused the smallbore matches with a dignity equaling that of the service rifle competition. It would take a few years but these trophies, new in 1923, would become venerated icons within the smallbore community where they are, to this day, presented to winners of the most prestigious individual and team matches.

By 1923 smallbore was no longer viewed as a sideshow to the military matches and the smallbore shooters were delighted to be greeted by a new centrally located shooting ground. For the past three years it took a hike of about a mile to reach the smallbore facility then located at the extreme western reaches of Camp Perry. Competitors found an innovative target carrier system instead of the traditional wooden frames upon which targets had been tacked. They were replaced by six small gauge railway type tracks that ran down range. Upon these were fixed wheeled trucks holding the target frames that were moved to the required distance by a rope and pulley arrangement similar to that found at indoor shooting galleries. It soon became apparent that the new facilities would be inadequate for the unexpected large number of contestants so Captain G.L. Wotkyns, smallbore range director, doubled the range capacity by adding six more sets of target carriers to meet demand. It might have been that the greater number of entries was because NRA membership was not required to participate although a non-member had to pay an entry fee double that of the \$1.00 required of a member.

Fifteen matches made up the total program and competitors could pick and choose what combination of matches they wished to enter. Reflecting the increasing numbers of participants the program decreed that reentry matches would be limited to ten targets per shooter, a serendipitous change that would provide unexpected relief because, with 11 of the matches allowing any sights, the statistical office soon faced a scoring crisis. Simply put, the improved skill of the shooter made for such small groups that it was often impossible to determine the number of shots fired. To alleviate this problem it was decided to fire five record shots at a bulls-eye at 50 yards instead of the traditional ten. While this speeded up the scoring it slowed down the shooting because the target frames could not hold the required number of targets. All agreed that it was more important to have an exact score as opposed to a swift match. After all marksmanship is a contest of accuracy not speed.

There was much excitement concerning whose name would occupy the first plate on the many new trophies. Junior rifleman Russell Wiles, Jr. was the first to take a new trophy when he won the Individual Long Range Match and was awarded possession of the Peters Cartridge Company Trophy. Taking possession was a literal term for, in the early days of the smallbore matches, the winner actually got to take the trophy home for a year. Because winners did not always return to Perry the following year or forgot to bring the trophy with them, trophies went astray. For a while winners were required to post bond on the valuable works of art to insure their return, but the practice was eventually abandoned and small “keeper” trophies were presented.

F.C. Payne captured the Winchester Trophy while fellow Californian W.T. Hansen took home the United States Cartridge Company Trophy. The District of

Columbia Civilians won the first team competition and were awarded the Caswell Trophy while the Remington Trophy went to the Frankford Arsenal Rifle Club of Philadelphia. In the inaugural East and West Match for Western Cartridge Company's Marksman Trophy the team from the West was victorious. Ralph H. McGarity, of Washington, D.C., gathered in the 1923 National Individual Smallbore Championship by beating the field in a new course of fire for this event. Previously the contest had been an any sight Dewar course of fire but was replaced by ten shots at 50, 100, and 200 yards any sight match.

The seed corn of competitive shooting was not ignored during the National Matches. The NRA and the Winchester Junior Rifle Corps conducted a weeklong school of instruction leading to a junior match series. The attendees were divided into two classes based on elimination matches and practiced the four shooting positions at 50 feet. The juniors lead an active life during the school. Each day was filled with serious competitive shooting leavened by special novelty matches. In addition the youth, whose tightly scheduled day ran from 6AM until 10PM, engaged in waterfront activities, calisthenics, and supervised sports.

During the week there were two days set aside for Dewar Team tryouts. Those interested in being on the team were required to contact the captain directly and register with him. The top 25 shooters were taken from this open competition and they trained still further until the final 20 shooters were selected. The process was successful as the United States ran its string of consecutive Dewar victories to five since the match had been revived after the end of the war.

## **1924**

Through the good offices of Major General George C. Rickards, of the Militia Bureau, funding to send civilian teams to the National Matches had been restored. This insured that there would be a full contingent of smallbore shooters on the shores of Lake Erie and bode well for the conduct of that most important of all smallbore team matches, the Dewar. Much was done to encourage more shooters to attend the smallbore matches including publicity in various publications and the addition of a special Small Bore Expert Rifle Marksmanship Medal Match. By shooting a minimum qualifying score at one or more selected distances, 50, 100, or 200 yards, with metallic sights, the competitor could earn a medal indicating the demonstrated level of proficiency.

No matter what one's skill level might be all were exhorted to attend. The National Rifle Association went to great pains to show the neophyte that there were many advantages to attending the matches and they should not sell themselves short. One might earn a qualification medal; meet some of the greats of the game and, possibly, win something in a match. The healthy lifestyle was touted, as was the thought that no rifleman's shooting education was to be considered complete until Camp Perry had been experienced.

The rivalry was keen and the new team matches helped foster the competitive spirit. More importantly it helped better prepare competitors for the Dewar by exposing them to more coaching and extra strings of fire that served to make them more acclimated to the range as it honed their skills. So fine was the shooting that the issue of 'doubles' and very tight groups that arose during the previous year's shooting popped up again. There was great discussion on the matter as was the British double target

system, a method by which a blank target was placed a few inches behind the target, was entertained as it seemed like a positive method of identifying doubles and crossfires. Before that step would be considered a special committee established to examine the results of tests that G.L. Wotkyns was directed to conduct from a bench rest over the winter. While the problem was acknowledged it was generally viewed as more as a nuisance than a serious threat to accurate scoring.

The committee also reviewed the issue of single entry matches not being squadded. The opinion was that, with the anticipated expansion of the smallbore participation over the next year, consideration should be given to assigning relay times and targets in the same fashion that the service rifle matches were conducted. By this avenue they hoped to keep the range fully operational and avoid crowds. It would also make for a more level playing field because it would make it impossible for shooters to bide their time seeking the best conditions.

In a closely fought match with 1LT A. M. Siler of the Infantry, Francis W. Parker of Illinois emerged as winner of the National Individual Small Bore Championship with a score of 247X250. Both men had the same score but Siler's higher long range score was the tiebreaker. Four days later, in a driving rainstorm, team captain Wotkyns, assembled the Dewar Team to do battle. The rain quickly filled the aperture sights soaking the shooters and their gear. It was decided that with several more days left until the match had to be fired it would be a smart thing to delay firing. The championships were fired much later in the September than normal and it was close to October, September 29<sup>th</sup> to be exact, when the Dewar was eventually fired. The rain had

stopped but the temperature had dropped precipitously and, with a stiff cold wind blowing in from Lake Erie, there was the real threat of snow.

The match could not be put off any longer and Wotkyns knew that the key to success under these circumstances would be good coaching. With only ten selected coaches on hand he opted to divide the team into two relays so that each shooter would have his own coach. The 15 to 20 mile per hour winds that shifted from 12 to 2 o'clock gave coaches, shooters, sights, and rifles a real workout. The official witness Captain Tottenham, of the Royal Navy, felt compelled to make copious notes of the action. Wotkyns' confidence in his team paid off. The team used 100% United States equipment for the first time, eleven Winchester 52s, seven Springfield rifles, and two custom rifles built on Ballard and United States Martini actions to post a score of 7779, 23 points better than the British. The Dewar Trophy would stay in the United States one more year. Worthy of note was that Sergeant Ollie M. Schriver, USMC topped all of the competitors from both teams with an outstanding 397, a good score under any circumstances, but a truly momentous one this year. The good score should have come as no surprise as Schriver had earlier won the National Trophy Match. Schriver, as Felt had before him, demonstrated that success in both smallbore and high power could go hand-in hand.

## **1925**

The 1925 National Match Program opened the section on the Smallbore Matches by exhorting all smallbore shooters to make an extra effort to attend the matches. The opportunity for a pleasant family vacation over the Labor Day weekend on the shores of Lake Erie was touted, as was the opportunity to enjoy the shooting, exchange ideas,

and observe new equipment. Economy minded potential participants were advised that this all might be accomplished at a special discount fare offered by the railroads, train being the preferred method of long distance travel in those days.

Smallbore prone shooting was continuing to attract a growing following of competitors who came to the National matches solely to vie for honors in that discipline alone. Some effort was being made to coordinate the shooting events so that members of supported military and civilian teams who came to shoot the service rifle might have an opportunity to try their hand at the smaller caliber rifle competition if they wished. The trophies offered to them were as impressive as the older high power awards and beginning to accumulate a patina of their own historical significance. In all, smallbore was coming into its own as both an individual sport and team event with all eyes being focused on the big prize of the Dewar Trophy. It might be fairly stated that this was the start of the era when all of the smallbore events lead up to, and were subordinate to, efforts to maintain possession of this most important trophy.

There were the usual selection of pick and choose matches fired but the NRA National Individual Small Bore Championship, considered to be the national individual championship, was actually a sub aggregate of the Smallbore Grand Aggregate. For an entry fee of one dollar, two if you were not a member of the National Rifle Association, the winner could take home a gold medal, a per centage of the entry fees from the match in cash, and of course bragging rights. All one had to do was to shoot the highest score across a three stage course of fire, ten shots each at 50, 100, and 200 yards with any 22 caliber rim fire rifle mounting either metallic or telescopic sights.

Facing a 15-mile an hour wind from nine o'clock, 104 competitors started shooting for the individual title at 7:30 in the morning on Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Competition would be stiff. Among the entries were Fred Johansen who had won the Small Bore Wimbledon Match a few days earlier with a 99-12V, Virgil Richards the Individual Short Range Match and the 100 yard Metallic Sight Match victor, Ralph H. McGarity winner of the Small Bore Swiss match with 19 straight Vs at 200 yards, just nine Vs ahead of the second place finisher, and J. E. Miller whose 100-16Vs bested all at 175 yards in the Individual Long range Match.

The National Small Bore Champion turned out to be Sergeant Thomas J. Imler of the Arizona with a 248. Imler, a member of his state's National Guard team, only placed in one of the other smallbore matches he entered and that was an 11<sup>th</sup> place spot in the 50 yard any sight event. He dethroned the reigning champion, Virgil Richards, who settled for third, and narrowly edged out by the 1922 Leech Cup winner Loren Felt by a one-point margin, 248-247.

Captain G.L. Wotkyns and Head Coach Frank Kahrs had selected the Dewar Team. Those interested in trying for a position on the-20 man team had made their intentions known in advance to the two officials who were using the Individual Short Range Match as the preliminary tryout. During the next week Wotkyns and Kahrs kept a sharp eye on the scores being turned in at the smallbore range. Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of September was devoted to final trials, team selection, and training in preparation for the match to be fired the following day. The twenty men who made up the team, 19 civilians and Army First Lieutenant A.M. Siler, assembled under an overcast sky at daybreak. It was a cool day but the hot shooting of E.F. Shearer, Homer H. Jacobs,



and Richards, three possibles, got the team off to a good start. Shearer, who would eventually lead the team with a 398, also shot the highest score at the 100-yard line. The team total was a 7791 and all that was left, after this record setting performance, was to wait and see how the British team might fare. Six days later, and some 1500 miles further east, a gusty wind blew a hard rain across the range as the British team managed to equal their previous year's score with another 7753 under the most adverse conditions. The Dewar Trophy would remain in the United States for yet another year as the team stretched its string of consecutive victories to nine. With another Dewar Trophy safely in hand the 1925 smallbore championships came to a successful conclusion.

## **1926**

It would seem an odd contradiction. At the height of the most booming economic era in living memory the Federal Government was engaged in belt tightening. A particular area given attention was the military. In the aftermath of the successful conclusion of "The War to End All Wars" the military forces of the United States quickly demobilized to pre-war strength. With no foreign threat on the horizon and a rising isolationist movement preaching that the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans were enough for defense the Army and the Navy were being starved of funds. Having to make hard economic decisions the War Department elected to suddenly cut funding for the National Matches in order to meet other pressing needs.

To fill the void the NRA rallied, under the direction of Brigadier General Bird W. Spencer, and hosted a reduced National Match program at the New Jersey State Rifle Association range at Sea Girt. Shooters were no strangers to the range that sits on the

Atlantic seashore; it had been the location of the first National Matches and many other major shooting tournaments. The most important of the National Match trophies would be up for grabs to the highpower crowd. An assortment of smallbore matches was scheduled to help select the team whose goal would be to retain the all-important Dewar Trophy. By the mid 1920s the Dewar had taken on its well-deserved aura, challenging the Palma and the many high power trophies for honor, resulting in smallbore competition being geared towards winning the trophy.

Beginning on September 5<sup>th</sup> with the Short Range Match, smallbore shooters would find the weather somewhat challenging as wind and rain swept in from the broad ocean. The riflemen struggled through the week shooting a mixed bag of matches. J.M. Sorenson won the 50-yard any sight match, dropping just two out of 300 points for the victory. The long-range event went to Russ Wiles, Junior. Three matches, not ordinarily found on the Camp Perry schedule, were fired and William E. Tull won the Sea Girt Smallbore Championship, Frank L. Frohm won a match named after the highpower Dryden Match as well as the Smallbore One Hundred Yard Eisner match. There was quite a bit of excitement here as he was tied with J.A. Wilnres, each tallying a 98-3V. In the shoot-off Frohm managed a 97-3V to Wilnes' 97-2V allowing him to take away a \$5 first prize and a special award of an official National Rifle Association shooting uniform. The shooting togs included a natty olive drab coat with a roll collar and voluminous patch pockets, breeches, leggings, shirt, and belt.

Because of the regional nature of the Sea Girt match, and since that it did not include a complete Camp Perry type program it was agreed that there would be no

national individual smallbore title awarded. As a result all attention was directed toward the Dewar Match.

Poor weather conditions were marked by 20 mile per hour winds and disruptions caused because the smallbore range was superimposed upon the high power range forced the site of shooting to be changed on several occasions, and this conspired to keep the performance of the 22 caliber riflemen at a much lower level than normally experienced at Camp Perry. In the end it came as no surprise that United States would have to give up the Dewar Cup to the British for the first time since 1913. The British turned in a fine score and the United States shooters would have to be at their best to win anyway. It was on this unhappy note that 'the national championship that wasn't' closed its record books.

## **1927**

The loss of the Dewar in 1926 was a wakeup call to the United States smallbore community. While there was recognition of difficult conditions there was also the understanding that the British had been making a concerted effort to win back the trophy. Complacency, it seemed, had taken the competitive edge from the United States. The soul searching began soon after the final scores were tabulated in 1926 and eventually found voice in an almost 40 column inch long point by point critique of the United States failure in the May 1927 issue of the American Rifleman. Charles S. Landis examined the failings of the United States Dewar effort and proposed a plan to take back the trophy. Chief among his suggestions for improving the team score, and returning to the winner's circle, was casting the widest possible net for shooters, a

shorter and more intense tryout system, and shooting the match later in the day- perhaps after 5:30 PM. His arguments were supported by hard facts and were, with the exception of starting time, adopted for the 1927 campaign.

The single entry matches for the 1927 Championships, The Preliminary Dewar, Individual Long Range Match, The Smallbore Wimbledon, The Camp Perry Individual and several two man team matches, were tightly scheduled between September 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The Dewar was scheduled for the Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup>. This gave Dewar Captain Doctor M.E. McManes and Coach Colonel William A. Tewes a long look at the 175 candidates. Each day during the week they required all candidates to report to them and to shoot a Dewar course until they whittled the group down to 20 men for the team plus five alternates.

Several more innovations were introduced by G.L. Wotkyns, of Frankford Arsenal, and Al Woodworth, of Springfield, who set up a test range close by at the Erie Proving Grounds and tested each rifle in a machine rest, mating it with the brand and lot of ammunition that gave the best performance over both distances. To help avoid problems identifying “doubles” and tight groups the British method of hanging a “backer” behind the target was adopted. To speed up target changes the tracked target carrier system was abandoned for this match with a target crew organized to retrieve shot targets and replace them with fresh cards.

The match was shot in the early morning, not the evening as Landis suggested, to take advantage of the calmest conditions without fear of running out of light, a situation that might arise from a late afternoon start. The team was on its toes as the British had shot their score a few weeks earlier and, even though their score was a

secret, range gossip had it that it was in excess of the record of 7,791. During the 50 yard stage the team held up well and, shooting in three relays, delivered an excellent short-range score, even though some of the team was still using post front sights. The long-range stage was bedeviled by light changes and a rising wind. In the end the team posted a score of 7,807 despite the fact that, even with backers, there was a disputed double. Harry Brill had placed two shots through a single hole so tightly that it was ruled that he had only fired nine shots on one bull. The targets were signed and sent off to the Miniature Rifle Club of Great Britain Headquarters for official scoring. Even with a miss the team's unofficial score was believed high enough to return the trophy to the United States. Some weeks later word arrived that the scorers in England had awarded Brill the double and the official team score was posted as a 7,817.

Earlier in the day, prior to the Dewar Trophy match, another 20 men went to the line to shoot a Dewar course against an English team. Through the hard work of E.M. Farris and the good offices of the Pennsylvania Railroad, an invitation was tendered to the railroad workers of Great Britain to compete in a Dewar like match. Open only to railroad employees the trophy was a tall silver plinth mounted on a wooden base. Topping the trophy was a winged figure of victory with the keystone logo of the sponsor, the Pennsylvania Railroad prominently displayed. On the cylindrical bottom was a bas-relief depiction of a firing line with shooters in the prone position. The match got off to a fine start for the United States as they recorded the first victory in the match series.

The individual championship, suspended in 1926, was again contested and Ralph H. McGarity, a civilian from Washington D.C. narrowly defeated Harry Brill, of Dewar double fame, for the championship. Both were tied with scores of 248. In the

three stage match, ten shots at 50, 100, and 200 yards McGarity had recorded the higher score at long range and won on the tiebreaker. McGarity also entered the history books as the first and only person to win the smallbore title twice, a distinction he would hold onto for ten years. In all it was a happy return to Camp Perry for the United States had won two international matches and again crowned an individual champion in smallbore shooting after a year's hiatus.

## **1928**

"Youth must served" might well have been the motto of the 1928 smallbore national championship matches. Two 16 year old juniors, Lawrence Wilkens and Douglas S. McDougal, Jr., carried over a battle royal from the Junior Rifle Matches of the National Rifle Association Junior Rifle Corps into the adult world of center and rimfire competition. After facing off in the junior division, with McDougal nosing out Wilkens for the championship, the young McDougal took up an '03 and placed third out of 1,291 competitors in the President's Match with a score of 144, two points off the lead. He would also lead the civilian contingent in the United Service Match, an aggregate of the rapid-fire aggregate and the President's Match. He went on to place second in the first half of the Preliminary Dewar and first in the second half and earn a berth on the Dewar Trophy Team. He would place 7<sup>th</sup> in the individual championship. Perhaps this should be no surprise as young McDougal's father was none other than Marine Colonel Douglas S. McDougal. The older McDougal had been involved in Marine marksmanship since he was a young lieutenant in 1905, when officers were a rarity on a Marine team.

Wilkens, for whom these matches would be a springboard to a distinguished shooting career, earned money in the smallbore Wimbledon, was second in the Camp Perry Individual Small Bore Match-coincidentally designated as the Ohio State Championship Match which gave him the state title as high Ohio resident, and third overall in the National Smallbore Championship. He teamed with McDougal in the Hercules Trophy Match. The two youngsters combined for 742x800 in the 20 shot 100 and 200-yard match. Wilkens lead the Ohio Civilian Team to victory in the Caswell Cup match in which he fired a 400 across the Dewar Course, the first person to ever do so, thereby establishing a world's record. He capped his participation by earning a spot as a member of the Dewar Team.

During the squadded matches Virgil Z. Canfield, a civilian rifleman from Ohio, kept a low profile. His name barely showed up in the money in any of the sub-aggregate matches but his consistent performance earned him the national title. Canfield's name would appear on a regular basis on Dewar Team rosters just as he featured prominently in individual match results for many years to come.

All of the individual successes were glorious but still sides show to the main event in the center ring, the Dewar Match. Under the direction of veteran Dewar Captain Lieutenant Colonel William A. Tewes and Coach Colonel Basil Middleton of the Indiana National Guard and Culver Military Academy, the team assembled for an 8 AM start. It was a near perfect day with just a steady gentle zephyr of wind from 11 o'clock. Each man went to the line with a confidence springing from that fact that each rifle and ammunition combination had been tested by L.P. Castaldi of Springfield Armory. The team used 12 Winchester 52s, four Springfield M1s, and a scattering of Ballards and

BSA rifles while the ammunition of choice was Remington's Palma Match or Winchester Precision.

In a radical move seven experienced riflemen were selected to act as line coaches, one to each firing point. A large gallery, some armed with spotting scopes, assembled behind the firing line as the team went forward in a businesslike manner to shoot their way to victory with a new record score of 7,881 to Britain's solid 7,865. National Champion Virgil Z. Canfield was high man with a 398 with Wilkens hot on his heels with a 397, both men shooting perfect scores at 50 yards. McDougal and Homer Jacobs also had 200s at short range. Among the alternates was young Mary Ward who came within a cat's whisker of being the second woman to appear on a United States Dewar Team roster since Blanche Crossman in 1919.

The second year of the United States International Railwaymen's Smallbore Match saw the team represent eleven different rail companies, with the sponsoring Pennsylvania Rail Road having the largest number of participants. The match grew in popularity with Canada joining the list of participants. The Railwaymen's Match was enthusiastically supported and viewed as a perfect feeder for Dewar competition. E.M. Farris, who founded the match, again both captained and shot. He was ably assisted by veteran Dewar competitors Frank Kahrs, Ralph McGarity, James E. Miller, and National Champion Canfield. The match was conducted under Dewar rules early in the afternoon of the Dewar Match and F.J. Paffe shot a 395 to top the 20-man roster. The match also served as a warm up as for him as he later took to the line in the Dewar and shot a 394. His efforts, however, were not enough to lift the Dear Team's score above that of the British who tallied a 7,728 to the United States' 7,709.



The 1928 matches were blessed with good weather and tough competition. The strong showing by juniors, most of whom were alumni of the Junior Rifle Corps, showed that the sport was generating a healthy crop of new shooters. Men and women left Camp Perry and the 1928 National Matches for all corners of the country to spread the word and infuse their home clubs with the competitive spirit.

## **1929**

It was with some satisfaction that the smallbore community could look back on the past decade. From its humble beginning as a mere sideshow of the high power National Matches and a training and selection session for the Dewar Trophy match of 1919, the smallbore phase had grown into a mature and independent championship that had year by year built a worthy tradition and heritage. Captain Crossman's dream had become a reality and was now a permanent part of the program.

The final smallbore championship of the "Roaring Twenties" had developed a program that was fine-tuned. The engraved names on the many trophies began filling the expanse of blank space set aside for the purpose. It met the needs of both the serious international competitor with its squadded matches leading up to the Dewar and International Railwaymen's Matches. Both the serious shooter, who was seeking additional practice, and the more casual competitors drifted over from the center fire matches to try the reentry matches. The Junior Camp helped prepare youngsters to enter the more demanding match schedule facing the adults, even though some of the juniors had already made their presence felt in a way that had the adults thinking twice, and provided an unofficial junior championship. The smallbore phase of the National Matches had it all.

The program had changed slightly for 1929; the National Smallbore Individual Championship would no longer be a single 300-point aggregate match of three stages with any sights. To be considered the champion one would have to demonstrate a sustained level of excellence over all the single entry matches, Preliminary Dewar excluded. The extended program would reduce the chance of a shooter winning or losing by a fluke performance. The new format would force an emphasis on consistent performance with both metallic and any sights. It replaced the Camp Perry Individual Match that had served as the National Championship Match for many years while doubling as the Ohio State Championship.

The match week opened with the Preliminary Dewar, the first chance the Dewar Team officials got to see the raw material they will have to work with over the next week. After the double Dewar was fired the names that followed winner Frank W. Roger's was a veritable Hall of Fame of former Dewar members giving Colonel Tewes a good feeling about how the match might end up.

The day following the Preliminary Dewar saw young Larry Wilkens continue his winning ways from 1928. He won the short-range match on a tiebreaker with Eric Johnson, both men shooting a 399. The leader board changed a bit with the long-range match as Fred Johansen took the 20 shots at 200 yards any sights match with a 196. Henry Gussman, who hailed from the Nutmeg State, showed his mettle with a 199X200 in the Smallbore Wimbledon, full five points ahead of his nearest competitor. In the last match of the aggregate Dr. M.E. McManes made a run on the title with a 296 in the 50, 100, and 200 yard any sight event.

The individual champion was crowned on September 5<sup>th</sup>, when the last individual match was fired and scores posted. Keeping just below eyelevel for the whole week was famed barrel maker Eric Johnson of Connecticut who had managed to amass the exact same score, 1,070 as Wilkens. Johnson was not as flashy as Wilkens, his name appeared in the money just once, but his highs and lows were not as wide and, as in so many earlier championships, a tie breaking rule gave the winner the crown. With this part of the match behind them the competitors focused on the Railwaymen's Match two days later and the Dewar on the final day. The next few days of re-entry matches would serve as unofficial practice and the shooters could be sure that Colonels Tewes and Middleton would have them under close scrutiny.

The Railway men looked toward regaining the Pennsylvania Railroad Trophy and set to the goal with a passion. Team Captain F.J. Paffe, founder of the match, was again wielding a rifle. He had Frank Kahrs and J.C. Jensen as coaches and they served him well. The 20 men posted a match record score of 7,799 and would soon have the pleasure of prying open the wooden shipping crate when the trophy arrived back on United States soil. In a poetic turn Paffe was high man on the team with a 399.

For the first three hours and 25 minutes the Dewar team enjoyed a near perfect day. Having learned that the British had faced hard conditions and shot a respectable, but weak, 7,771, the United States Team was champing at the bit to take advantage of the overcast conditions that made it easy on eyes staring through metallic sights. With a slight fishtailing wind the first relay got underway. The first seven riflemen, Johnson, Johansen, Henry Jacobs, Emmett Swanson, Wilkens, Thurman Randle, and Frank Rogers, were hard holders; it was perhaps the coaches' idea to set a high standard

early. After a five minute sighting in period the practice target were replaced with record cards and the match was underway. The first relay comported itself well with Wilkens and Johnson turning in 199s.

The second relay seemed determined to adopt as its motto "Second to None." Brad Wiles, son and grandson of veteran Dewar Team members Russell Sr., and Jr., joined old hands Virgil Z. Canfield, Vere Hamer, E. Stimson, and Ed Doyle. In doing so the fourteen year old Wiles became the youngest ever to make the team, and the first third generation member of a Dewar Team. Rounding out the relay was an alternate from the 1928 team who, through determination and hard work, gained a coveted spot on the international team. Mary Ward, a 19 year old schoolgirl, followed in the tradition of Blanche Crossman in becoming the second woman to earn a place on the Dewar team. She was also the only person to shoot a perfect score at 50 yards.

The third relay which had among its members H.E. "Chief" Keotah, a Native American from Oklahoma, Walter Stokes, of international 300 meter fame, and former smallbore champion Thomas Imler, as well as John Beedle, M. Solomon, and G.M. Upshaw. This relay shot the best short range score dropping only 11 points. Conditions did not stay as perfect as all would have liked but Upshaw managed to get into a rhythm that gave him a pair of 199s and the high score on the team. Miss Ward held on for a 395 and finished eighth despite of the fact that her sight had too coarse an adjustment for 100 yard shooting, a single 'click' moved her shots from just inside the ten ring at 12 o'clock to just inside the ten ring at 6 o'clock.

The Dewar Team score was a 7,877 and it handily beat the British. Perhaps the only disappointment was the rather poor showing by Eric Johnson. After winning the

individual title and opening the Dewar with a 199 at 50 yards he unexpectedly and uncharacteristically dropped nine points at 100 yards. However, the team had won the biggest match of the year, the competitor list had increased over the previous year, and the weather had been near perfect. On such a satisfactory note the 1929 National Smallbore Championships, and the shooting decade, came to its end.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Surviving the Great Depression...

1930

In the full euphoria of the victorious end of the “War to End All Wars,” and the optimistic prospect of full prosperity promised by the start of a new decade, the smallbore matches were introduced at the National Matches in 1919. Ten years later the rimfire events had proven to be popular enough to become a permanent fixture of the program. However, the glitter of “Roaring Twenties” turned into ashes in the aftermath of “Black Thursday.” On October 29, 1929, less than two months after Connecticut rifleman and barrel maker Eric Johnson captured the national smallbore title, the stock market collapsed and the nation’s economy went from boom to bust. The fiscal turmoil would affect the National Matches and the adolescent smallbore championship, to degrees large and small.

The NRA’s F.C. Ness acknowledged the nation’s downward economic spiral in a muted manner through his report on the matches in the October 1930 *American Rifleman*. Ness was upbeat as he spoke about the many competitors and the high quality of the shooting. It would take a sharp eye to make note of his reference to “a pair of college youths, with very little cash but great ambition” or a civilian rifleman who had taken on an extra job at night to finance his trip. Ironically, he also mentioned a large and successful team from the New York Stock Exchange. The full impact of the economic disaster had yet to be fully felt but there were ominous signs in these few simple but prophetic lines.

Federal support for the National Matches continued and many of the 1930 smallbore competitors had come to Perry attached to state teams, drifting over to the smallbore rifle range as time and scheduled permitted. Henry Adams, an 18 year-old Ohio native, was just such a supported shooter. He would hopscotch from range to range swapping off his Springfield for his smallbore rifle. The junior won the Peters Trophy, representing the individual smallbore long-range championship, with a score of 198X200. After firing 20 shots at 200 yards he found himself tied with Connecticut residents Fred Kuhn, of Remington, and Edward Doyle, of Winchester, only to best the older and more experienced rifleman on center shots. A few days later he teamed up with Homer Jacobs and the pair won the two-man long-range team match and the Hercules Trophy. In between winning the two smallbore long range matches he picked up his Springfield and posted a score that earned him high civilian honors in the President's Match and with it, the Clarke Trophy. P.A. Ronfor creedmoored the wily smallbore ace Texan Thurman Randle in the 50-yard short-range match for the United States Cartridge Company Trophy. The next day Ronfor, his appetite seemingly whetted from the earlier win, lay down at 1,000 yards and placed second in the Wimbledon Match thereby giving some credence to the thought that prone is prone, be is smallbore or centerfire.

There was the usual array of prone matches but all rimfire shooters seemed, as usual, focused on the Dewar Match. Following the style of the day the majority of the rifles were being fitted with heavier barrels than in the past and the new Winchester speed lock actions and Laudensack pattern stocks were seen in greater numbers. Each of the 216 hopeful competitors in the preliminary double Dewar Course Match

sought out every legitimate advantage to make a score that would see them on the Dewar Team. After completing one Dewar course in the morning and a second one after lunch the top 30 scores were separated by 12 points with Thurman Randle leading with a 795 and James Noxon closing out the top 30 with a 783. Over the next week the Dewar officials would monitor their scores and name the final team at the last moment. The competition for one of the 20 spots was tough. Besides Randle there were Dewar veterans aplenty such as Mary Ward, Walter Stokes, Eric Johnson, and Kuhn, all looking to represent the United States.

Before the Dewar would be shot there would be some serious competition in the various matches that made up the National Smallbore Championship. To earn the overall crown the champion would have to roll up the best aggregate score from the Individual Short Range Match, an iron sight Dewar, The Individual Long Range Match and the Smallbore Wimbledon Match, each of which was 20 shots with any sights at 200 yards, and the Camp Perry Individual Match, 10 shots each at 50, 100, and 200 yards with any sights.

After 110 shots the match came down to a tiebreaker between the defending Champion Eric Johnson and Vere Hamer of Iowa. Hamer placed eighth in the short-range match with Johnson out of the money. In the long-range match their positions switched with Johnson in eighth place and Hamer's name absent from the top of the results bulletin. Hamer came back strong, winning the Wimbledon on a tiebreaker, a harbinger of things to come, while Johnson's name was conspicuous by its absence. In one of the many reversals that marked the duel between the two, Johnson won the Camp Perry Individual Match while Hamer did not break into the top 12. In the end the



National Championship went to Hamer on a tiebreaker, with Johnson in second, three points behind the tied duo was Thurman Randle. Worthy of note was the sixth place finish of young Lawrence Wilkens. He also won the separately fired Junior Rifle Corps Championship, essentially the national junior championship, placed fifth in the Preliminary Dewar Match, and would post a eventually 390 in the International Dewar Match.

Early on the morning of September 7 a caravan of automobiles carrying shooters, officials, and spectators for the International Dewar Match snaked its way westward from Camp Perry proper to the adjacent Erie Proving Grounds. To reduce the effects of the wind a range had been set up between two of the many long warehouses that, in orderly rows, filled the test site. The space between the buildings was just wide enough to allow for seven firing points so there would be, of necessity, three relays. All short range firing would be completed before the target frames were moved out to 100 yards for the final stage. Through rising conditions the team hammered away doggedly but were dropping more points than they had in the previous year, no one shot any better than a 199 at short range. At long range the changing wind and light conditions began to take its toll and the best score turned in was an excellent 199 by A. F. Goldsborough. This duplicated his 50 yard score and gave him team honors with a 398. In the end the United States won the match by ten points, 7,849 to 7,839.

While the Dewar was the jewel in the crown of postal matches there were several other prominent postal matches to be contested and they were scheduled prior to the Dewar to give Team Captain and Coach Lieutenant Colonels W.A. Tewes and Basil Middleton, an additional yardstick against which to measure the prospective team

members. The Pennsylvania Railroad Trophy was the prize in the International Railwaymen's Match and was open to a 20 man team, firing under Dewar conditions, made up solely of employees of railroads from invited countries. The United States won for the third time since the match's introduction in 1927.

The Interallied Small-Bore Rifle Team Match was introduced in 1930, known more familiarly as the FIDAC Match, from the acronym of the match sponsor's name-the *Fédération Interallies des Anciens Combattants*. Open to former servicemen of the World War the team was selected by the American Legion National Headquarters, from Legionnaires competing at Camp Perry, the ten-man team shot 20 shots prone on the international target at 50 meters. The United States captured the title in the inaugural event with a score of 1,948 X 2,000.

The East and West Team Match, a 30 shot match fired at 200 yards by eight man teams, representing states east and west of the Mississippi, gave the Dewar officials still another opportunity to check the mettle of the competitors. The West team won, as it had done almost regularly since 1923. In a departure from the almost wholly prone nature of the smallbore program there was smallbore free rifle championship, which drew 28 entries. These stalwarts shot prone, kneeling, and standing at 100 yards. Russell Seitzinger won the match with a 275. Young Larry Wilkens placed third in this match and was followed in turn by Emmett Swanson and Walter Stokes, two men destined to make their mark in national and international competition in the years to come.

Well aware that the techniques used in forestry and game management to maintain a constant supply of trees and wild life, the National Rifle Association applied

them to its Junior Rifle Corps through the Junior Rifle Matches of the National Rifle Association Junior Rifle Corps. For a nominal fee of one dollar a junior member of the Association could participate in the six-day course of instruction and competition. To encourage participation previous match winners were ineligible for awards, which were given daily by age groups. The popular program drew more than 100 participants.

### **1931**

In spite of the increasingly grim economic situation several thousand shooters arrived at Camp Perry in 1931. They came by car, bus, and the special trains that pulled right up the spur line from La Carne to the baggage depot just south of the mess hall. The major issue that arose in the Annual NRA meeting held during the matches was the effect of the financial crisis. National Match funding fell short by \$50,000 and the manning levels were 200 men below requirements. In order to meet this crisis several matches were dropped, others were shortened and some trophies were reassigned. In the end enough time and money was saved to allow the matches to successfully continue.

Smallbore shooters were pleased with a new range house that gave them their own permanent facility for registration, squadding, scoring, and all of the other myriad tasks associated with the running of the matches. As in the past the high power competition was the central feature of the matches with the smallbore matches scheduled around them in order that all might wish could participate. The range had been modified and a wall of target cloth backed the target frames to reflect sunlight back through the bullet holes to make it easier to spot shots.

Earlier that year a team from the United States had traveled to Great Britain to unsuccessfully compete for the Pershing Trophy, but the exposure to the established Bisley Range brought some changes to Camp Perry, most notably the introduction of backer targets. The backer target, a blank sheet of target tag board, placed ten inches behind the target and made possible the source of crossfires and the identification of all shots in tight groups. No sooner had the system been adopted than it was put to use when Ray Loudon entered the history books as the first United States shooter to have a confirmed crossfire when he shot into the target of Lewis McLeod of Long island, New York. The errant shot at 100 yards was easily identified and appropriate penalties applied.

Focus of all of the smallbore shooting was the Dewar Match. The race for a spot on the Dewar Team began with the Preliminary Dewar Match and continued over the next week until the Dewar was shot. In between Thurman Randle, the Dewar Team Captain, assisted by coach Basil Middleton and adjutant Tom Davis, carefully watched the scoreboards. With two days to go they required the Dewar candidates to fire an elimination match, the results of which proved too close to call so another was scheduled for the Saturday evening before the match. After this second elimination match the officials had recorded six scores across the Dewar course for each shooter and, on the basis of this data, selected the final 20 who then gathered to discuss tactics and strategy and to have triggers weighted.

The sky was overcast, as had been during a great deal of Perry '31, as the Dewar team took the line. The team fired in two relays and soon tallied up a score of 7,878. The British had fired the match on July 12 with Julian Hatcher, in England with

the Pershing Team, acting as the United States witness. Hatcher reported that the conditions on the Ham and Petersham Range were unfavorable and the British Team totaled but 7,722, allowing the United States to retain the Dewar Trophy. It is of some interest to note that six of the Dewar Team members managed to get over to the high power range in time to shoot and place in the President's Hundred!

The match schedule in between the preliminary Dewar and the actual match was quite full and Fred Kuhn, of Stratford, Connecticut, who had not placed in the Preliminary Dewar, won the Individual Short Range Match, placed sixth in the Individual Long Range Match, fourth in the Smallbore Wimbledon, and fifth in the Camp Perry Individual Match. His aggregate score of 1,086 gave him a one-point lead over fellow New Englander Harold Allyn, of Springfield, Massachusetts, for the 1931 National Smallbore Championship.

The Junior School proved more popular than in the past and almost 200 youngsters participated. Grover A. Hughes, of Ohio, donated a matched pair of trophies depicting a small boy, sugarloaf hat perched on the back of his head, arms akimbo, and lips pursed in a whistle to be presented to the match winner in the 12 to 14 year old age group and to the 15 to 18 year olds. To take home one of these statuettes one would have to top the list in a 70 shot match, 40 sitting, 20 kneeling, and ten standing. In an ending straight out of Hollywood two brothers won the new trophies, Robert Hughes, 17, and Roger Hughes, 11, sons of the man who had just gifted them to the NRA. If that weren't enough history for the boys they would both enroll at Ohio State University and become the first siblings to earn the NRA Silver Bullet awarded to those who attain All-American Rifle Team honors.

## 1932

The National Matches were Federally funded while the smallbore events were sponsored and supported by the National Rifle Association were traditionally held in unison in the late summer. This allowed the twenty-two matches to continue while the centerfire shooting was curtailed during the decade of the Depression. The stalwarts returned to Camp Perry to participate in a full schedule of prone shooting with the Dewar, as always, the centerpiece of the action. The United States had held a tight grip on the trophy since 1919, the only break being when Great Britain wrestled it away in 1926. Riding a five year winning streak the defending champions were not likely to let go, even in the face of a crippled economy. Some of the best belly shooters in the nation scrapped up the necessary funds and vacation time for the annual trip to Perry. Following tradition the Dewar was fired at the end of the matches and there was little disappointment on the part of the competitors. There were three perfect sub aggregate scores, Bradford Wiles and J.A. Wade at 50 yards and the third by William Schweitzer at the 100-yard line.

Be-speckled Bradford Wiles managed a 1,079 to tally a six point victory over the experienced and older New Jersey native William Schweitzer for the National Championship. Wiles placed in the money in only two of the four sub-aggregate matches, a second in the short range match and a second in the Smallbore Wimbledon, which made up the championship course of fire, while Schweitzer medaled in three of the events. Wiles was a Chicago native and scion of the manufacturers of the shooters' favorite lubricant and metal preservative "RIG"-Rust Inhibiting Grease-and scoring plugs. He would later join together with Russell Wiles Senior and Junior and a dozen or

so other stalwarts from the University of Chicago Shooting Club to form the Black Hawk Rifle Club in 1938.

Wielding Winchester 52s and shooting Precision Five-Star ammunition, perhaps the first match ammunition packed in the individual trays so common today, three riflemen placed one, two, and three in the Smallbore Palma. E.V. Menefee posted a perfect 225X225 while W.J. Summerall and Schweitzer tied at 224. It was an outstanding performance.

### 1933

The October 1933 *American Rifleman* reported that there “was just a touch of loneliness” at Camp Perry this year. The usual hustle and bustle associated with the National Matches was missing. In the fourth year of the Great Depression the Federal financial cupboard was at last bare and there was little money to be had for The National Matches. What support that was offered by the Army was through the direct intercession of Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur. Smallbore matches are less expensive and labor intensive to mount than centerfire events. By carefully husbanding its funds the NRA was able to sponsor the first exclusively smallbore National Championship in the face of daunting odds.

The shooting program was identical to earlier years and, run without the diversion of the high power schedule, was successfully squadded from start to finish. There could be no grouching from the competitors that conditions favored one relay or another. The opening match was the Camp Perry Individual Match, first of the four matches that would make up the National Individual Championship, and was a dogfight through the 50 and 100-yard stages. As the targets were set up for the 200-yard stage

seven shooters had yet to drop a point, each shooting ten tens at each yard line. A seemingly benign, yet devilish six o'clock wind began to slowly rise as the shooters took the line and when the 200 yard stage ended only Therkild "Turk" Samsoe, Henry Gould, and R.A. Swigart had succeeded in reading the wind well enough to shoot 99s

The tournament had opened with the Camp Perry Individual Match and former national champions, Vere Hamer and Eric Johnson, fought it out for the laurels, each shooting a 299X300. With 18Xs the match went to Hamer. Johnson had 17X and nipping at his heels was Samsoe with 15Xs, which outpaced R.E. Louden's 11xs. That afternoon, in a 100-yard individual match, Samsoe hung up a 299 for 30 shots indicating that the morning was no fluke.

Two events made the Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association sponsored Individual Short Range Match noteworthy. The first was that Samsoe did not medal. The second was that Thurman Randle cleaned the any sight Dewar match. The next morning the Texas smallbore shark won the NRA Individual Short Range Match with an iron sight 400X400 over the Dewar course. Randle's tour de force was historical. It was the second time he cleaned the Dewar with irons, making him the first person to shoot two of perfect scores with irons as well as the first to shoot two consecutively.

That afternoon Samsoe shot a 194 in the Individual Long Range Match, which placed him low in the money. The Smallbore Wimbledon was the final match in the individual championship and Samsoe finished almost as he begun. He had the points to win the match but lost to fellow New Jersey shooter Walter R. Walsh by three Xs. However, for Samsoe it was points that counted in the long run, not Xs, as he won the national smallbore title with a 1083, four points over perennial threat Thurman Randle.



The team matches lead up to the Dewar with a revival of the East West Team Match when it was discovered that there were enough riflemen present from West of the Mississippi to form a team. The Easterners took advantage of the weakened state of their traditional rivals beating them by ten points. The United States Team for the International Railwaymen's Match set a new record while the FIDAC Team did the same.

The last day of the matches began with excellent conditions as, in a departure from past practice, all twenty Dewar shooters took the line at the same time. The score at the end of the 50-yard stage had the team on its way to record score. As the targets were moved to long range the wind began to become troublesome but the challenge was met and, despite a few close shots, the unofficial score broke the 7,900 barrier for the first time. With the British score reported as having a 7,829 the United States Dewar Team rejoiced as it held onto the giant silver loving cup for another year.

Before they had a chance to catch their breaths and enjoy the fruit of their labors, ten of the Dewar Team had to refill their loading blocks and get ready to compete for a challenge trophy named for its donor. The *Rheinische-Westfalischen-Sprengstoff Aktiengesellschaft*, a German arms corporation, presented a sterling silver challenge cup to encourage friendly competition between the major belligerents of the Great War. The inaugural 40 shot 50-meter prone postal match between Germany, Great Britain, and the United States was won by the United States Team's 3935 and, by virtue of it being the first match, a record score.

To recognize exceptional performance in the preeminent match in prone shooting, the Camp Perry "400 Club" was organized. Membership in this organization

only required that the candidate shoot a perfect score with metallic sights over the Dewar course at Camp Perry. Inducted in the inaugural class were John Adams, Virgil Z. Canfield, M. Coleman, Russell Gardner, A.E. Hart, Thomas J. Imier, Fred Kuhn, Thurman Randle, Virgil Richard, James Wade, and Lawrence Wilkens.

While there were many records set during the 1933 matches the lasting legacy of the event was that it proved Ned Crossman right. He had believed as he worked so hard to establish a smallbore tournament at the 1919 National Matches that a National Smallbore Rifle Championship was feasible and this match was the manifestation of his dream. Out from under the shadow of the centerfire matches the smallbore community proved that it could sustain a national event that was both independent and exciting.

### **1934**

The National Smallbore Matches of 1934 were given greater standing than those proceeding when 66 officers and men of the Ohio National Guard's 148<sup>th</sup> Infantry were detailed to operate the range, much as the high power ranges were manned. This may have been due to the fact that there was like the year previous, again, no centerfire matches. No matter the reason the support was appreciated. This first was just in time for the 202 riflemen who entered the opening match in the championship aggregate, the Camp Perry Individual Match. Camp Perry had been touched up this year with new tents and a fresh coat of paint. Likewise, the matches would also undergo renovation. The championship was extended from the traditional four matches to five with the addition of a 50-meter individual match shot under *RWS* Match conditions. For the first time sighters were allowed. A sighting target would be hung before a match and time would be allowed to insure a solid zero at the distance concerned. This popular

innovation cut down on the number of participants in the reentry matches and signaled the eventual demise of the reentry match schedule.

The tournament opened with the Camp Perry Individual Match that had been expanded to 20 record shots at 50 and 100-yards and ten at 200. The match was also assigned its own trophy with the Western Marksman Trophy reassigned from the old East Verses West Team Match. Ray Loudon, noted for being the first to shoot a confirmed crossfire when backers were introduced in 1931, staged a come from behind victory with a strong 200-yard stage. He tied Fred Kuhn for overall score but won the trophy with his 96.

The second day of shooting would be busy as three of the sub aggregate matches included in the overall championship would be conducted. The Individual Long Range Match underwent a transformation when the rules for its firing changed the any sight match to a metallic sight event. The NRA's belief that competitors would welcome the challenge of a 20 shot match at 200-yards with iron sights was justified when 184 people lined up to shoot. Bill Schweitzer, one of the many hard holding smallbore sharks that cruised with the likes of Randle, Samsoe, and Johnson, fought his way through the tricky conditions for a score of 193 and the Peters Trophy.

The third match in the championship aggregate, The Individual Short Range Match, was also the first of the Dewar Team tryout events. The United States Cartridge Company Trophy was the prize for which over 200 shooters vied. Sam Bond, along with six others, got off to a solid start with perfect 50-yard cards. While the others faltered Bond plunked 18 shots in the ten ring and came up a winner with a 398 and the lead for a spot on the Dewar. With three of the five matches for the championship

completed Mess Hall gossip centered about Fred Kuhn, Randle, and Bill Woodring who were separated by just two points, with Kuhn on the top with a 1075.

Scopes, if desired, were bolted onto rifles for the 200 yard Smallbore Wimbledon Match. Even with the aid of the telescopes no shooter could guarantee that the little 40-grain bullet might find its way to the center over such a long distance beset with the swirling winds of Camp Perry's wide-open greensward. Elgin L. Lord swept into the winners circle with a 196 and a slim single point margin over the three men tied with 195s, one being Randle. However Fred Kuhn, with a 187, and Bill Woodring, who shot a 185, were not to be found in the top ten.

The National Championship would be decided by a newly introduced match, 40 shots at 50 meters. The course of fire was familiar but the unfamiliar international targets required different apertures to accommodate the larger aiming black as well as harder holding to deal with the smaller ten ring. At the conclusion of the 50-Meter Individual Match not one of the top four contenders for the national crown found themselves in the top ten of the match! Lord, in 12<sup>th</sup> place, finished better than Randle by seven points, Woodring by two, and was one behind Kuhn. It was not the best showing but in the end Lord denied Kuhn the opportunity to become the first to repeat as National Champion by two points, 1655 to 1653. Lord would, by virtue of this victory, be the first person awarded the Critchfield Trophy.

The national smallbore prone championship would now be represented by a trophy for the first time. The Critchfield Trophy, a bronze plaque mounted vertically on a wooden base was presented to the NRA by riflemen from the Rifleman of Ohio. It bears a prominent bas-relief likeness of Brigadier General Ammon B. Critchfield, the man

responsible for the founding and development of Camp Perry. In the background are 50, 100, and 200 yards targets and the NRA Eagle and monogram are located in the lower right hand corner. A map of Ohio showing the location of Camp Perry fills the lower left. The trophy, which has always been presented to the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Champion, was designed by Washington D.C. artist Fred M. Hakenjos who later became president of the NRA in the mid 1970s.

Position shooting, which had appeared sporadically in different forms throughout the championships since 1919, took on a more formal appearance with the addition of a three-position match in which thirty-three men competed for the honor of winning the Harry M. Pope Appreciation Match, named in honor of the famous barrel maker and practitioner of the arcane art of *Schützen* shooting. The sixty shot match was divided into three stages of 20 shots in prone, kneeling, and, standing at 50 meters. Frank T. Parsons, Jr., came in from Washington, DC to shoot this one match, which he won on the strength of his kneeling scores. The ever game Bill Schweitzer, known more for his skills in prone, was second. A young Dentist from Minneapolis, of whom much would be heard later, Dr. Emmet O. Swanson, was third. Twenty five years later the Parsons family would donate the Frank Parsons Memorial Trophy, an elaborate sterling silver chased bowl, to be presented annually to the winner of the smallbore position championship.

With the individual titles settled the shooters pulled together for the various team matches leading to the Dewar Match. The United States fielded teams in the *RWS* International Team Match, the International Railwaymen's Match, and the *FIDAC*. The *RWS* International Team Match was a resounding success for the United States team

established a record of 3971X4000. Sam Bond used all of his wiles and luck in an effort that produced a 400, the first perfect score registered on this international target. All that being said it is easy to see why this international experience was a satisfying to the team.

There was two historical firsts in the International Railwaymen's Match. Mrs. E. A. Holcomb followed in the footsteps of Blanche Crossman, first woman named to the Dewar Team, when she became the first woman to earn a spot on the Railwaymen's team. Her sixth place overall finish, with a score of 398, was three points ahead of her husband's eleventh place 395. Their appearance together also marked the first time that a husband and wife appeared together on a team match results bulletin.

The ten member *FIDAC* Team held up its end with a score of 1624, a total that was viewed to be high enough to retain the trophy. The team was selected by a tryout match among shooters drawn from the highest scores fired during the regular championship. Webb Stump shot a possible score of 200X200 on the international target as part of the United States effort.

The Dewar Match was the culmination of the week and the officials, shooters, and coaches were up before the sun, shooting in the still air before 6 AM. Within an hour they were done and had posted a record score of 7,950. Sam Bond, still glowing from his *RWS* success, rang up another 400X400 in the Dewar, making him the first shooter from the United States to accomplish that feat. No sooner had his score been posted than Bill Woodring turned in his targets. Woodring had two very close shots on his last card at 100-yards that would have to be decided by the British scorer. When the official results came back from England they were posted in the October *American*

*Rifleman* and Woodring found he had gotten his possible and the United States was continued its domination of the event. Within a short time of completing the Dewar, with both individual and team records under their belts, the riflemen were packing bags and car trunks and leaving Perry to the caretakers for another winter.

The drop off in Federal funding that so deeply cut into the high power matches proved a boon to smallbore. The reduced cost of smallbore competition during the lean years of the Depression was a powerful incentive for many to shoot more smallbore. As a result smallbore activity, within the NRA and at Camp Perry, grew to the point that it was the main stay during the 1932-35 period.

### **1935**

The Camp Perry of old was back in 1935 with a full program of service rifle, pistol, and smallbore events. For the first time since 1932 all of the ranges would be buzzing with activity as funding was restored to the National Matches. During absence of the service rifle matches the high level of the smallbore competition was more clearly seen and its international success had raised the consciousness of the shooting community to the potential of the discipline. No longer was smallbore relegated to the job of potting small animals for the pot or backing up service rifle training during the winter months. It had become a serious competitive firearm.

As usual the international postal matches were the focus of the tournament with membership on the Dewar being the goal. The selection process for places on the Dewar Team began at the beginning of the week as usual with the Preliminary Dewar Match in which 375 entries were registered. The quality of the shooting was so high during the tryouts that the average score for a ten shot string fired by the final twenty,

across the entire trial period, was a phenomenal 99.95. All of that skill would be needed for when match day came conditions went from fair to worse. The saving grace was that the team had elected to shoot the 100-yard stage first so that the winds that kicked up to bring trouble the shooters at 50-yards did less damage than had it been at long range. The 1935 team score was a good deal less than the record set by the 1934 team but it was good enough, by 18 points, to hang on to the Dewar for another year.

The United States also captured the Railwaymen's Match as well as the *RWS* Match in which William Patriquin shot a possible. "Turk" Samsoe backed him up in the *RWS* with a 399, a strong score, but that was not the high point of his Camp Perry experience. Samsoe, the 1933 National Champion, regained the title after missing out in 1934. In doing so the New Jersey rifleman became the second person to repeat the feat in the 16-year history of the championships.

It looked as if the National Matches were regaining its momentum after the lean years in the first half of the decade. The October 1934 number of the *American Rifleman*, the issue traditionally devoted to reporting on 'The Big Shoot', dedicated no less than 17 pages to the events at Camp Perry. The smallbore range had been upgraded with 150 points capable of handling 50 and 100-yard matches and an additional 80 points for 200-yard contests. A staggering 699 individuals registered for the various smallbore events and over half of them entered the Preliminary Dewar Match. With a comparable number of 30 caliber shooters registered those that were firing in both rifle disciplines had to carefully keep track of time to fit smallbore shooting in between the squadded centerfire matches.



Much was improved at Camp Perry between the matches of 1935 and 1936. The Federal Government, through the Work Projects Administration, provided for improvements throughout the post. While not as grand or expansive as the WPA's massive Tennessee Valley Authority projects, the money spent on Camp Perry provided for improvements in the infrastructure including better lighting, roads, and drainage. The crown jewel was the quasi-Georgian style red brick Commercial Center, more familiarly known to generations of competitors as "The Arcade." The WPA would continue major building construction projects on the post, providing employment and an infusion of sorely needed cash to the lakefront region. Construction of the camp administration building was completed the next year, 1937, while the theater was completed in June of 1938, just two years after the Arcade opened.

### **1936**

The 1936 National Matches reflected a more optimistic United States that was beginning to emerge from the economic and social trauma of the first years of the Depression. Camp Perry was packed with the largest number of entries in its history and many of them attended the ceremonies on September 1st to witness the dedication of a plinth and plaque in honor of Brigadier General Ammon Critchfield on the mall in front of the Arcade. The 73 year-old former Ohio Adjutant General, who created one of the world's finest rifle ranges from a lakeside marsh, was deeply moved by the honor.

There were so many new things at Perry this year. N.M. Austin of Seattle, Washington placed the Austin Trophy in competition for the winner of the 40 shot 50-meter match. The matches attendance also grew with more new shooters than ever before, a smallbore school for adults was introduced, and Remington chose the

occasion to introduce its challenger to the Winchester 52, the Remington Model 37 “Rangemaster”. For the gourmets and lovers of the grape there was the newly opened Mon Ami Winery and Restaurant that has provided a venue for shooters celebrations and commiserations to the present day.

The Remington Model 37 made a grand debut mated with Remington VEEZ 73 ammunition. In the capable hands of A.F. Goldsborough the combination produced a clean score and 14 Xs at 200 yards in, ironically enough, the Winchester Trophy Match. The rifle was sold as an “as is” package, sights and sling included. The few used at Perry were pre-production models introduced in the same manner as the Winchester 52 had been at Caldwell in 1919. The rifle would not be available to the general shooting public until after January 1, 1937, hence popular myth has it that the model number was a reflection of its first year of production.

However, the smallbore crown would go to Bill Woodring who wielded a heavy barreled Winchester and used Western Super Match ammunition. This came as no surprise as the hard holder was a Western Cartridge Company employee. The battle for the possession of the Critchfield Trophy was a close one, pitting Woodring against Winchester’s Dave Carlson and Bill Schweitzer. Throughout the week these three names scores would seesaw back and forth on the leader board. All three made the Dewar team and Woodring’s 400 in the match was indicative of his overall performance, a 2076, as he bested Schweitzer by two and Carlson by four in the aggregate. Woodring beat two-time winner “Turk” Samsoe to become the new champion.

As good a year as it was for Woodring, it was not such a good one for the United States Dewar Team who had lost the trophy to the match sponsor, Great Britain.

Minnie McCoy, marking the first appearance of a woman on the Dewar since 1929, gave the men the best boost she could, but to no avail. The American Legionnaires, who formed the FIDAC Team, also went down to Great Britain. On a happier note The United States was successful in keeping the RWS Trophy as were the Railway men in their match.

### **1937**

Harry Pope, who first came to Camp Perry in 1907 the year after his shop was destroyed in the Great San Francisco Earthquake, strolled the line in 1937 taking in how much the place had changed and how much it remained the same since his last visit in 1924. For some years there had been a position match named in his honor but this year, of all years, it was not in the program. But, position shooting at Perry was not what smallbore was about, it was all about prone and 143 competitors were all aiming a knocking off reigning champion Woodring. With just a little more than a year of competitive shooting under her belt, Young Flossie Anson made a play for top honors, becoming the first woman to earn membership in the exclusive "400 Club."

Defending champion Woodring was in control of his game and, coached by his wife Kay, a fine smallbore shooter in her own right, shot a 395 in the Dewar. His East Alton Rifle Club won the 50 Meter Interclub match anchored by his 198 while he fired the highest score, a 399, of all of the 18 members of the three top teams in the Caswell Trophy Match.

Woodring and Vere Hamer were in a tight race for the championship. There was no quarter given and none asked as the two national champions, one current and one past, went into the final match neck and neck, and there both men shot identical scores.

The Critchfield Trophy preliminary bulletin gave the championship to Hamer on Xs, each man being credited with a 1992. Hamer then stunned all when he strolled to the smallbore statistical office and paid the challenge fee declaring that he had been credited for a double by the scorers when, in fact, he had run out of time and saved a round, losing ten points and dropping him into fifth place. His sportsmanship insured that Woodring's final score of 1992, now a wide five point margin over Doctor Russ Gardner's second place 1987, locked up a second consecutive victory and the first back to back victories in match history.

International postal team matches filled in the schedule during the last two days of the competition. The International Railwaymen's Match came first and the United States team did well, its 7791 total coming within five points of the previous year's winning score of 7796. The Railway men usually turned out a good score and they did not disappoint. Their unbroken winning streak despite the fact that none of the big guns from the Dewar, who quite often served as coaches, worked on the railroad. After the preliminary and tryout matches teams were selected for the Dewar and RWS to be fired on the same day. With five members of the Dewar shooting making up half of the RWS complement it was no surprise that a 3961 was well in advance of second place Great Britain's 3930. For the Dewar there seemed to be a dilution of the score for the United States Team was only able to muster a score of 7854 to the 7896 of the British. For the first time in many years the Dewar Cup was crated up and returned to its native shores. The firing of the FIDAC match closed out the 1937 competitive season with another loss to Britain, 1969 to 1935.

## **1938**

Just three days into the smallbore matches it was clear that Bill Woodring was intent on holding on to his championship. In the second match of the Critchfield aggregate, the US Cartridge Trophy, he tied the Dewar course record with a 400-36X while his wife Kay did the same with the women's record of 399-27X. Woodring's name would appear twice more as a match winner, a 399 giving him the 50 meter Remington Trophy and an aggregate score of 1593 allowing him to hold on to the national champion title for one more year. Perhaps it was the splendid weather or, a good rifle and ammunition combination, or the momentum built up over the previous two years helped him. No matter what the reason, Woodring became the first to earn the title for three consecutive years, a record that unmatched to this day.

Camp Perry smallbore ended with the firing of the four international postal events, the United States Dewar Team established a new record score of 7953 on its way to victory and recovered the trophy it had lost the year before. The team was drawn from 551 individuals competing for the 22 positions. The Railway men had a score of 7883, 37 points better than 1937, but fell to the 7857 of Great Britain. The FIDAC men, shooting 20 shots prone at 50 meters, posted a 1964 to regain possession of the trophy. The United States, selecting its team from 400 candidates, also retained its hold on the RWS Trophy, running its string of victories to six straight.

### **1939**

The smallbore championships prepared to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a climate much different from that in 1919 at Caldwell. The first matches were conducted

in a world breathing a sigh of relief at the end of the greatest war known to man. Now, competitors arrived at Camp Perry to begin the championships with a world on the brink of another major conflict.

The United States Pershing Team, fresh from its first victory, had returned from England reporting that the match had to be fired on the shooting grounds of the private Ham and Petersham Club rather than the traditional site, Bisley. The ranges at Bisley had been recently commandeered by the Ministry of Defense to meet the training needs of a rapidly expanding army.

The last smallbore matches of the tumultuous decade of the thirties began on Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup> with an expanded eight match 3200 point course of fire for the Critchfield Trophy. Each of the two sub-aggregate matches for the championship were squadded in such a way as to avoid conflict with the 30 caliber matches fired on the same day. Many of the smallbore shooters were members of their state service rifle teams and enjoyed great success in that venue. As a matter of fact many of them chided the conformed big bore shooters that when they grew too old to hold hard enough to be competitive with the .22 they still could hold their own with the Springfield. The boast was not without merit, as a casual look at the high power result bulletins would reveal that smallbore rifleman such as the Lacey brothers of Connecticut, Woodring, and Johansen, among others, took home medals.

The first two days of firing during the 1939 smallbore championship provided warm up matches and the preliminary events for the selection of the RWS and Dewar Teams. The first match of the championship aggregate, the Western Trophy Match, with 488 entries, saw A.O. Franz tie the match record with a 400-32X while Woodring

made his move for an unprecedented fourth title with a winning score of 399-27X in the 100 yard Metallic Sight All Comers Match. Floridian Ken Recker took the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy with a Dewar score of 400-27 followed by Woodring's record setting 300-39X in the 50 yard Metallic Sight All Comers Match.

With two matches to go to complete the aggregate Peters Cartridge Company representative Jim McCubbin's 400-26X won the 100 yard Any Sight All Comers Match. In the final match Vere Hamer tied the record for 40 shots at 50 meters in the Remington Trophy Match and with it sewed up the title. It was a particularly popular victory considering his display of sportsmanship displayed in the odd turn of events that had taken place the year earlier. Hamer's 3192 beat Woodring's by two points.

While all waited for the scores to be tabulated and results posted radios around camp were crackling dreaded news from Europe. General Walther von Brauchitsch unleashed 60 divisions of his troops in a predawn attack across the flat plains of Poland. Within days all of Europe would be at war as France and England, tied by treaty obligations, were drawn into the fray. The October *American Rifleman* dutifully reported the scores of the postal matches along with the sad notation in the column for the RWS Match, "Germany Not Reported" for the second time. The RWS Team Match would disappear from the National Match Bulletin after 1939, a victim of World War II, but the trophy would live on through much iteration, today being awarded to the National Intermediate Smallbore Position Champion.

With the individual matches completed competitors put the thoughts of the situation in Europe out their minds for a few hours to concentrate on the team matches. In many respects this was the high point of the competition and all shooting to this point

was simply preparation for these big matches. Today, while the competition is still strong to earn a position on the Dewar Team membership is more a function of one's tournament ranking after two days of metallic sight matches than a strong desire to make a team.

Contemporary attention to the Dewar Team does not come close to reaching the peak it did in the years between the two World Wars. The match program of the time allowed competitors to pick and choose what they wished to shoot. Some did not even opt to enter the matches required for Critchfield competition. The Dewar held such a grip on the shooter's imagination that it was not uncommon to see the number of entries in the Dewar Preliminary events be twice that of those seeking the national individual title. The *American Rifleman* went so far as to print the names of each pair, shooter and coach, next to their score in the match results.

So important was the Dewar to the smallbore community that gaining membership was a major goal for all. Sixteen-year-old Washington, DC native Guy Drewry, for example, was no different than the adults when he set his eye on winning a Dewar berth in 1935. Four years later, after extensive practice, the determined young man did so with élan. In his first appearance on the Dewar he was just one of six to clean the match keeping company with such notables as Ransford Triggs, Bill Woodring, Frank Worthen, Milton Klotz, and E.W. Pade. Adelaide McCord also appeared on the Dewar score sheet, shooting a fine 397 in one of the few appearances by a member of the distaff side on a United States Dewar Team. With a team total of 7954, one point better than the record score fired in 1938, they handily held on to the trophy.



The Railway men put together a stellar score of 7894 to nail down their match and the Pennsylvania Railroad Trophy once again. Merle Israelson won the RWS Trophy, now offered to the winner of an individual match in the RWS format, with a perfect 400. The thought that the turmoil in Europe would be short and without lasting rancor gave hope that the match might someday be resumed under its old conditions. But, as they packed their gear for their journey home the more realistic question in the minds of many was, "Given conditions on the continent, would there be any of these international matches in the foreseeable future?"

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Great Diaspora...

1940

Competitors arrived at Camp Perry in August for a full program of shooting in all disciplines. The expanding war in Europe and Asia was a prevalent topic of conversation among all. The Selective Service Act of 1940, which would be signed into law during the matches, was of particular interest to the younger men. The Battle of Britain was reaching its peak. London was under incessant bombing by the *Luftwaffe*, and the United States had just concluded an agreement with beleaguered Britain to swap 50 obsolete mothballed World War I four stack flush deck destroyers for leases to naval and air bases in British Western Hemisphere possessions.

In the smaller and transitory world of the National Matches, the more global concerns were pushed into the background for three weeks. Questions about the U.S. Rifle, Caliber .30, M-1 and how the new semi-automatic would compare to the tried and true Springfield '03 would come to the fore. For smallbore shooters the debate was even more circumscribed. Who among the many former champions and hot Regional winners present would take the Critchfield Trophy home?

The race got underway with the Western Cartridge Company Trophy Match won by E.M. Kell with one of three 400-35X scores posted. In the top five places were two possible repeat champions, Vere Hamer, with a 35X possible, and Bill Woodring just an X behind the 1939 Champion. That afternoon the 100 Yard Metallic Sight All Comers saw Fred Kuhn, of Stratford, Connecticut, fire a 399-31X to top the field. There was no great change on the Leader Board, but it was still early in the tournament. The most

significant aspect of the match was that a shooter from Connecticut won it. The Nutmeg State was a stronghold of smallbore expertise that was built around The Bridgeport Rifle Club, which fed off of the Remington Arms factory in the same town and, a dozen miles to the east, the Quinnipiac Rifle Club populated by Winchester employees working in New Haven.

The second day of shooting opened with Byron Putman winning the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy with a 399-21X. In second place was Kell, one point behind, who was trying to solidify his claim to the national title. John Miller won the 50 Yard Any Sight All Comers' Match with a 400-36X when he edged out several other 400s, two being shot by Connecticut's Lacy brothers, Jim and Jack, from Quinnipiac. Doctor Russell Gardner, a long time Perry veteran, struck gold with a 400-33X in the 50 Yard Metallic Sight All Comers' Match, three Xs better than a pair of New Jersey shooters, W.C. Kennedy and Ransford Triggs. Three time champion Bill Woodring out pointed Dave Carlson, a Connecticut resident who worked for Winchester, by one with iron sights at 50 meters for possession of the Austin Trophy.

Only one match of the championship aggregate was scheduled for the fourth day. In the 100 Yard Any Sight All Comers' Match, Willet Kuhn, a Texan and no relation to Fred Kuhn of Connecticut, completed firing with 40 tens and 29 Xs, and narrow one X margin over Albert Freely.

Individual matches were put aside for a time as the serious task of selecting the Dewar Trophy Team. Always the main event this year's Dewar took on a more somber tone. Europe had been at war for a bit over a year and, as was expected, Great Britain did not participate. Canada was also involved in the conflict as a member of the

Commonwealth but, being as far from the tumult as the United States they were able to scratch up a team.

The United States tryout would be twice across the Dewar Course with metallic sights. Among the top 25 finalists, 50 scores, there would be just seven 400s recorded. In a record setting performance Arthur C. Jackson, of Brooklyn, New York, would fire two of them for a perfect 800-49X. In second place, with a 799-47X was C.L. Jackson, no relation, of Atlanta. This was the 21-year-old Jackson's second trip to Perry; he had come in 1939 as member of the New York Civilian Team to compete in the service rifle matches. Over the years he would make the trip to the Nationals periodically, as work allowed, until 2000 when he made a nostalgic last trip to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his Dewar triumph. In his early 80s Jackson began to think the 700-mile trip a bit wearing and opined that he just might last a little longer in the game by shooting in local events in New England.

Irene Barney would become the third woman to earn a place on the US Dewar Team. The number nine must have had some magical significance for the distaff side. Blanche Crossman shot on the team in 1919, Mary Ward in 1929, and now Barney, who placed 19<sup>th</sup> in the trials, would shoot a 399 in the match. Barneys' 399-24X was the second highest score of the match with Fred Kuhn's 400-27 the best. When the official targets were fired, the day after the individuals had ended, the United States would find itself in possession of the Dewar Trophy.

With just one match to go in the race for the individual title, 40 shots at 50 meters, the Remington Trophy, the pack at the top of the results bulletin had not thinned out enough to see any clear leader. On Sunday, the ominously numbered 13<sup>th</sup> of

September, the final match was fired. W.T. White, a Texan like Thurman Randle and Kuhn won the match but there were two Connecticut shooters lurking in the top five, Jack Lacy in third and Dave Carlson in fifth. Carlson had appeared in the top five but once before but it was his consistent performance that counted.

When the scores were tallied and posted it was Dave Carlson had bested the field and was named the 1940 National Smallbore Champion. Carlson's 3187-177X was two points better than that of John Moschkau, a man whose star was on the rise. Notes New Jersey smallbore shark William P. Schweitzer was in third and the Kuhn's, Fred from Connecticut and Willet from Texas, filled out the list in fourth and fifth place respectively. Fellow Winchester employee Major Jack Hession, a man with no small name in the shooting community for some two decades, had been grooming the 26 year old Carlson for several years. Carlson was a 1937 Pershing Team veteran and had medaled at the World Championships in Finland the same year. During the spring and summer leading up to Camp Perry Carlson campaigned throughout the northeast, racking up an impressive seven consecutive grand aggregate wins. Although the eyes were not on Carlson to win in the early days of the Nationals, in hindsight, his victory was no real surprise.

Tucked away in the official 1940 results bulletin were two historical firsts. Competing over the same course with the open competitors, and certainly in pursuit of the Critchfield Trophy, were Pennsylvanian Adelaide McCord and a young Georgian, John C. Symmes. McCord shot a 3174-132 aggregate and became the first woman officially designated as the Women Champion. Likewise, until 1940 the junior champion was an unofficial title awarded from those who participated in the NRA's Junior School.

Symmes, who totaled a 3171-136X, shooting alongside all of the rest of the field earned the distinction of becoming the first National Junior Champion.

The 1940 National Matches have become enshrined in shooting legend as the quintessential Camp Perry experience. It was circumscribed by two great wars and has taken on a special aura because of its place in time. For service rifle competitors 1940 was the last hurrah of the much beloved bolt-action service rifle, the .30-06 Springfield, and the first full taste of the generations of semiautomatic service rifles to come. Smallbore rifle came into its own during the two decades since Ned Crossman kicked off the sport in 1919. The 1940 matches saw a record, yet to be surpassed, of 754 entries, showing that smallbore could stand on its own and be equal to its older brother high power. For this, and many other nostalgic reasons, the 1940 National matches are considered the golden twilight of a golden era of marksmanship.

### **1941**

The effects of the world crisis were readily apparent to those 700 or so smallbore competitors who trekked to Camp Perry in September of 1941. For the first time since the early days of the Great Depression there would be no service rifle competition. The expansion of the national defense establishment placed a higher priority on men, materials, and the output of munitions plants than the conduct of the National Matches. As a result only the smallbore and pistol matches program would be held so as to little burden as possible on the military requirements of the post. Never-the-less, even with the shorter program Small Arms Firing Schools were conducted for service rifle, smallbore rifle, and pistol.

There were a few innovations in 1941. For the first time there would be two new sub-aggregate matches making up the championship. A metallic sight aggregate of 1600 points would be combined with a duplicate any sight match. The Frank A. Hoppe Company, manufacturers of that most ubiquitous of all cleaning agents-Hoppe's No. 9 Solvent, had donated a silver cup in memory of the founder to be awarded to the winner of the metallic sight sub-aggregate of the prone championships. And, despite not yet having a designated trophy, the NRA built on the success of naming a Women Champion in 1940 by establishing a special category that allowed the ladies to simultaneously compete in the open category and a dedicated championship of their own.

During a week of clear windy days, only marred by a single rainstorm, defending champion Dave Carlson worked hard to retain his crown, making it clear to all that he was not going to be easy to dethrone. He did not win the opening match, the 50-yard any sight All Comers' Match. That went to Charlie Hamby whose 400-37X was the best of many possibles shot. Carlson also had shot a perfect score but with a lower X count in the first match, won the second, the metallic sight All Comers' Match, with a 400-34X. After the first day the scoreboard showed only Carlson, Jack Lacy and Carl Frank clean.

Day two was marked by surprise winning finishes by two relative unknowns. Expert Kyle Snowhill won the metallic 100 yard All Comers' Match with a record 400-33X. Later that day Frank James posted the only 400 in a metallic Dewar that gave him the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy. However, the leader board did not change as Carlson, Lacy, and Frank battled out at the top. There would be no easing in pressure on the leaders as the third day opened with Doris Dean, the only person to shot 40 tens

at 50 meters with a scope, tied the match record in the process. Two other women placed in the top five of the match, May Kell in second and the lyrically named Anna Lou Ballew, fifth. William Kennedy shot the only 400, in the 100 Yard All Comers' Match.

With two matches to go the leaders were beginning to fall by the wayside. None showed up in the money in the Western Trophy Match, an any sight Dewar, that was won by Ray Loudon's 400-30X. As a matter of fact all of the favored leaders were now out of the top ten. In the final event at 100 yards, a last gasp effort by Carlson tied with R.O. Willman, Hamby, and Triggs, all with 400-32X, with Willman winning.

Carlson lunged for the tape in the final event but it would not be a photo finish for the championship. The statistical staff punched keys, pulled handles, and yanked paper tape from their adding machines. The small numbers printed at the end of the long strip of paper showed that Ransford Triggs of Madison, New Jersey, had deposed Carlson with a score of 3189-222X. In second place was Jack Lacy who shot a 3187-220X. Carlson, who fired a 2186-232X, was in third. Hamby finished fourth and Fred Kuhn filled the fifth place position. Connecticut had placed three in the top five but the Critchfield Trophy would be sitting on a mantel piece in New Jersey.

Mrs. J.W. Cole and Mrs. Hugh Price battled it out all week in a closely contested battle for the women's title. In the end one point separated the two ladies with Cole's 3177 the winning score allowing her to take possession of a 10 Karat gold medal for her efforts.

Though it was known that the British would not be entering the Dewar, being otherwise occupied with campaigns in Egypt and Libya the United States would shoot a for the trophy but with no separate Dewar Tea, tryouts. The 22 competitors with highest



aggregate scores in the metallic sight 50 Yard Match, the 100 Yard All Comers' matches, and the American Dewar Trophy Match would represent the United States. Former women's champion Adelaide McCord fired on the Dewar Team while Kay Woodring coached her husband Bill. Triggs and Lacey, seemingly still in head to head competition, again placed first and second as members of the Dewar Team, posting a 400-31X and 400-30X respectively. The 20 United States shooters posted a 7948-500X.

The 1941 smallbore matches ended and, as the traffic rolled south from the ranges to Ohio Route 2 and then east or west to home, there was a certain wistfulness in the atmosphere. War had enveloped Europe, Africa, and Asia and the hope that the United States might avoid entering into the fray was waning as the United States Navy began escorting convoys across the Atlantic. It was becoming a case of not if, but when, the nation would be at war. If the National Matches of 1940 was a golden sunset then the Camp Perry of 1941 was the quiet twilight just before the fall of darkness.

The last shots of the 1941 National Pistol and Smallbore Matches were fired on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Three months later, on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, the first shots of the United States participation in World War II were fired at Pearl Harbor in the Territory of Hawaii. The National Rifle Association and its members immediately offered support for the war effort. A year earlier the members of the NRA had answered an appeal from the American Committee for the Defense of British Homes published in *The American Rifleman* asking for "anything that shoots." NRA members helped to arm a British Home Guard left defenseless by oppressive British firearms restrictions and donated more than 7,000 firearms. NRA members famous and not so famous answered the call

to arms. NRA Executive Vice President Milton Reckord returned to active duty to command the Twenty-Ninth Division; Thurman Randle accepted a commission in the Navy and took over small arms training at the Newport Rhode Island Naval Training Station where Warrant Officer Jim Lacy assisted him. Eleanor Dunn, as a civilian, supervised small arms training for at Hunter College in New York City for woman Naval officer candidates.

Art Jackson and long time friend Tom Lewis, who was his line coach in the 1940 Dewar, would find themselves in the Army Air Force. Lewis would be killed in a training accident while Jackson went on to serve in the Far East as a bombardier in a A-26 Invader attack bomber. Janet Lewis, sister of Tom, joined the WAVES. Bill Schweitzer joined the Army as the two smallbore shooting dentists Erwin "Doc" Tekulsky and Emmitt O. Swanson joined the Navy and Marine Corps respectively along with countless anonymous NRA members. Almost half of the NRA's headquarters staff was in uniform. It would be a long four years until the world would be at peace again and marksmanship could return to being recreation and not a life or death skill.

## **1946**

Camp Perry had changed during the course of the war but it was largely the same. Hundreds of tarpaper hutments now covered the grounds in neat rows; constructed to house Italian prisoners of war. When Italy capitulated it became our newest allies 101<sup>st</sup> Italian Engineer Base. Later German prisoners of war would fill the huts. A brick chapel had been built at the southwest corner of the intersection of Lawrence and Niagara in 1943, neatly constructed to match the older headquarters building, theater, and arcade. Murals depicting local historical events, including the

battle of Lake Erie, had appeared on the walls of the theater, hand painted by the theater' stage manager Sergeant Wilson R. Price during his tour of duty the post from April of 1942 through February of 1945.

It was a grand family reunion for the smallbore community as it returned to Camp Perry for Perry is more than a physical location for shooters; it is a state of mind. Old friends separated by the demands of war met and renewed ties while remembering those who would never return. New faces crowded the firing line and soon became old faces for the more Camp Perry changes the more it stays the same. Old rivalries would be fanned back to life while new challengers enlivened the contest.

Only smallbore and pistol shooters gathered at Perry to settle to determine the 1946 champions. There were a series of matches that one could enter on a pick and choose basis and registrations ran from a low of five entered in the Tyro Class Match to a high of 556 competing in the 50 Yard Any Sight All Comers' Match. A total of 388 competitors entered all eight matches that made up the Critchfield Trophy grand aggregate, 21 of them women. Juniors only shot the iron sight portion of the grand aggregate for their honors.

After such a long layoff, and with so many new faces, there were few who would dare predict who might win the tournament for things did not follow the usual pattern. Veteran Charlie Hamby started off the proceedings with a 400 in the 50 Yard Any Sight All Comers' Match. He had company as there were 400s aplenty. Perfect scores again were numerous in the metallic sight 50 Yard All Comers' Match with Ervin Brehm having the best score. Fred Kuhn, another old timer, led the field in the 100 Yard iron sight All

Comers' Match. His 397 bested four 396s with junior John Kelly of Texas being in fifth place.

Sam Burkhalter, then just a marksman, surprised the more seasoned shooters by shooting a possible with more than enough Xs to win the any sight 100 Yard All Comers' Match. Garret Wayne Moore, who hailed from a hot bed of smallbore shooting in western Pennsylvania, edged out veteran Bill Schweitzer and three other 399s to win the metallic Dewar giving him the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy.

Larry Wilkens, once the 17 year old *wunderkind* of smallbore showed that time and age had not slowed him. He euchred the rest of the 399s fired by no less a top five crowd than Jack Lacy, Earl Saunders, Al Sharpnack, and Ervin Brehm in a metallic Dewar to win the Western Cartridge Company Trophy. Rans Triggs, the defending champion, found himself in the same situation in the metallic sight American Dewar Trophy Match where the 400s were as plentiful as expended brass. In the Austin Trophy Match Robert Moore, another member of the Pennsylvania shooting clan, lead Triggs and cousin to G. Wayne Moore in a 398, 397, 396 finish. However, when the aggregate scores were added up Triggs, who had held the title since 1941-the longest tenure of any prone champion, if only on a technicality, was unseated by G. Wayne Moore.

Moore was virtually a new comer to Perry. Although he lived but a few hundred miles from Perry he had only one short stay in 1939. In truth, during the summer of 1946, Moore had had a good summer of shooting and took a short vacation in Canada to fish, skipping the major regional competitions in the process. In part Moore's victory might be titled "The Tale of the Guns." During the summer competition leading up to

Perry he had not been quite satisfied with his rifle's performance. He mentioned it to a friend who was just as unhappy about his rifle. Moore tried the other rifle and liked it well enough to take it to Perry. Meanwhile Bill Schweitzer, making another of his many unsuccessful runs on the national title became dissatisfied with his rifle and switched to his back up rifle halfway through the Nationals. Moore's choice was right for him but Schweitzer's switch may have cost him the elusive goal.

Moore took the metallic sight aggregate with a 1590, just two points ahead of Triggs. The Hoppe Trophy would reside in Pennsylvania, home state of the Hoppe Company, for the next year. While Schweitzer did not crack the top five in the iron sight matches the New Jersey rifleman shot a 1596 and won the any sight sub-aggregate on the strength of a tiebreaker beating Jack Lacy. Moore, in fifth place in that match, was just one point back of the winning score giving him enough of an edge to take the championship.

As a young man Moore injured his knee playing football and infection soon set in. In the days before the arsenal of penicillin, sulfa drugs and antibiotics, infection was a very serious matter, indeed, and Moore ended up losing his leg but was not slowed down. He continued to lead an active life that included his love of hunting. First on crutches, and later on an artificial limb, he roamed the hills surrounding his hometown of Washington, Pennsylvania. Prone rifle competition is an equal opportunity sport, blind to gender, age, and most physical handicaps, a fact proved conclusively by G. Wayne Moore during that sunny week on the shore of Lake Erie.

While the senior title was being decided there was a tight battle between Art Cook and Texan John Kelly for junior honors. The diminutive Cook suffered from an

assortment of allergies and developed a rapid fire shooting technique to reduce the effect of his itching watering eyes and running nose on his scores. He could rattle off 20 record shots from his standard weight Winchester 52 in from three to five minutes with an accuracy that earned him membership in the exclusive 400 Club, the honorary organization of those who had shot perfect score over the Dewar Course with iron sights at Camp Perry. Cook went on, despite his affliction, to shoot a 399 in the Dewar Trophy Match. Meanwhile, Kelly was doing quite well, helped by his class winning 1580 in the Metallic sight aggregate. Even though he was bested for the junior title by Cook Kelly parlayed his any sight aggregate score of 1588 into a 3168 that made him the top Expert over all.

The women were shooting up a storm and, early on, developed into a head on head battle between defending champion Adelaide McCord and Kay Woodring. McCord had the Perry experience to help her along while Woodring could call upon her participation in international competition before the war to bolster her performance. In the end McCord's momentum was too much for the others and she retained her title with a 3166 to Woodring's 3160.

The intensity for membership on the Dewar team was a good deal lower keyed then it had been before the war interrupted the flow of the match as the United States won. However, for most who attended it wasn't so much the shooting, or the winning, but rather the restoration of the sport after a four year hiatus that brought the greatest satisfaction..

## 1947

The smallbore range at Camp Perry stretched east and west far enough for the 370 firing points needed to accommodate the near record number of 735 competitors who would vie for the various national titles. During a week of near perfect weather the temperature would be as hot as the shooting for, even though the attendance record would not fall, old long standing records would.

The reigning junior champion, Art Cook, had turned 19 and made his first foray into the open class one to be remembered. Shooting a Remington 37, equipped with a Pete Brain three point electric bedding device, in his trademark rapid fire manner he won the opening match of the tournament in convincing style with a 400-36X over the 50-yard iron sight course. In doing so he edged out national champions, Dave Carlson and G. Wayne Moore, for the win. Veteran John Crowley, one of the many Connecticut riflemen competing, was first in the 100 yard metallic sight match with a perfect score and 31Xs. After faltering at 100 yards Carlson, the 1940 champion, made a strong effort to regain his lost title with a match record setting score in the U.S. Cartridge Company Match. His 400-33X with metallic sights over the Dewar course handily beat the record 400-30X established by Bill Woodring in 1938.

At the end of the first day the leaders were all packed in within a one point range, not much in a prone match. Robert Perkins, the first West Coast shooter to make a run on the title in living memory, was knotted up with Walt Tomsen, of Flushing, New York, each with a 1599. Three Pennsylvania shooters, Grant Bomgardner and Dwight Kleist, with 1598s, followed them while the defending champion Moore who, after cleaning the 50-yard match had dropped had dropped three points.

The cousins Moore, Bob and Wayne, teamed up to successfully capture the Lyman Trophy Doubles Match. The pair of silver Sheffield Wine Coolers and gold filled medals went to the pair who bested all other comers in the 20 shot per man 100 yard iron sight match. The Moores hung up a score of 399-27X, just missing a perfect score when Wayne let slip a nine on his final shot. It was a neighborly competition as the second place team of Elzie Courtwright and Walter Fowler hailed from Washington, Pennsylvania, Wayne's hometown.

The second day, split between iron and scope matches, opened with the fourth iron sight match that would decide the winner of the Hoppe Memorial Trophy emblematic of the metallic sight championship. Perkins dropped only his second point of the four day tournament but his X count, 112Xs, for the iron sight matches was strong enough to keep Kleist at bay by 15Xs. The first half of the championship was in his possession and Perkins was perched in the catbird's seat. But, with only a small X count and point advantage and the any sight events to go, he could not afford to let down his guard.

The end of the iron sight aggregate marked the end of the contest for the junior title. With Cook in the senior category the field was clear for a whole class of upcoming shooters to show their mettle. Audrey Bockman, a 16 year old from Ridgefield, New Jersey, had placed 5<sup>th</sup> in the category in 1946. With another year of experience Bockmann hammered away at the target with a Ballard rifle and, in the end, nailed down the junior title with a solid record setting performance of 1590X1600, a full eight points ahead of the previous high set by Cook a year earlier. Bockmann, the first woman to earn the junior title, was two points ahead of runner up Paul Kromann.



By winning the Remington Trophy Match Sam Yasho, of East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania kept up the pressure on Perkins by posting a new record score of 400-32X. There were still two more matches to fire that day but neither was included in the aggregate. Those “hawking the board” were quickly tallying up scores and word quickly spread that Perkins was clinging to a one point lead over second place Moore and two points ahead of third place Carlson.

Connecticut’s Jack Lacy, who posted the best of the three possibles, won the American Dewar Match. Al Freeland, noted rifleman and purveyor of shooting paraphernalia was second with L.C. McCord, husband of defending women’s champion Adelaide, in third. Pennsylvania flexed its muscle again as Charlie Whipple and LaRue Pollum both shot 20 tens to scoop up the Randle Trophy Doubles Team Match. Their anysight score at 50 meters tied the record set a year earlier by Fred Kuhn and his son and Roy.

The final day of individual competition turned into a real dogfight with national champion Moore battling to retain his title. It was a contest between a reigning champ trying to maintain his title against a newcomer trying his best to hold on to his tenuous grip on the lead. The day would be shot with scopes and there was simply no room for error on the part of Perkins, Moore, or Carlson, for any error would be costly. Walt Tomsen, still a contender, made a hard run at making up ground by winning the 50 yard any sight match with a 400-36X. Moore and Perkins did not appear in the top five, although they had cleaned their targets with lower X counts, and held on to their relative positions while Carlson lost a point and slipped further behind.

No one, including, the match winner Paul Frey, shot a 400 in the 100 yard any sight match. Moore and Carlson tied with 398 while Perkins had a disaster, losing five points. With one match to go the lead had changed with Perkins dropping to third and Moore and Carlson taking over first and second place. At this point the possibility of a repeat national championship, the first since Bill Woodring's 1938 "three-peat," became Moore's to lose. Moore went to the line for the final match with a two point lead and an anysight Dewar to get through, a task easier said than done. Proving that his 1946 win was not a flash in the pan, Moore coolly drilled 31 Xs and nine tens into his targets. Perkins and Carlson, not giving Moore any quarter, also fired possibles, but were unable to gain any ground and finished in second and third place.

While most of the attention had been focused on the open match there was a similar struggle going on in the women's category. Defending champion Adelaide McCord, like Moore from Pennsylvania, was running nip and tuck with challengers Elinor Bell, a Californian like Perkins, while playing the role of Carlson was Bockmann. The women battled it out for three days with the McCord retaining her title with a score of 3179, with Bell and Bockmann each posting a 3176 for second and third.

With the individual matches now history the final day of the championships was dedicated to team matches. Pennsylvania teams jumped out in front when the Bear Rock Rifle Club won the NRA Affiliated Club Team Metallic Sight Match. The Frazier-Simplex Team, of Wayne, Charlie, Bob, and Bertie Moore, more Moores than one could shake a stick at, did the same in the NRA Affiliated Club Team Any Sight Match. The featured event on the final day was the Caswell Cup. A see saw battle for supremacy between the Nutmeg and Keystone state's shooters that had marked the 1947

smallbore individual championships saw Connecticut head home with the team victory. Dave Carlson, Jack Lacy, Fred and Roy Kuhn, John Crowley, and Fred Spencer teamed up in the metallic sight Dewar course match where they averaged a 398 per shooter for a 2388-145X. The Pennsylvania Team came up short by just six points, an average of one point per shooter, for second place. Pennsylvania won the Caswell in 1940 and held possession through 1946, not because of their well established shooting skill but rather because World War II prevented any competition for the trophy. Connecticut would hold now on to it through 1951 under similar circumstances and so ended the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Smallbore Rifle Championships.

### **1948**

The National Smallbore Matches of 1948 would be the first in a period of wandering for the championship. For the next five years circumstances would conspire to preclude a return to its traditional and spiritual home, Camp Perry. The 1948 smallbore matches were much reduced in numbers, but not in quality, as just 29 competitors assembled on the firing line at the Marine Corps Base Quantico. The lack of Federal funding meant that Camp Perry was impossible to hold and so the top three competitors from each of the Regionals were brought to the match at the NRA's expense making it an invitation only tournament. Hard on the heels of the 1948 Olympics it would be the smallest field of competitors in the match's history. The championships were being held just a short drive south of Washington, D.C., where the very first NRA convention was being conducted at the Shoreham Hotel. As the riflemen readied themselves, just a few days short of Halloween, a raw October wind gusted across the range making them think they were being more tricked and less treated by

rough conditions that would make the two day tournament a tiring and stressful test of skill and will.

While the field boasted some of the great names in smallbore shooting, such as Bill Schweitzer, Dave Carlson, John Moschkau, and Larry Moore most eyes were focused on the top trio from the previous year, the defending two time National Champion Wayne Moore, Robert Perkins who dominated the west coast circuit, and Dave Carlson, the 1940 champ. A fourth musketeer, young Art Cook, deserved watching as he was fresh from his gold medal Olympic win in London just ten weeks earlier. Of all the competitors Cook, a student at the University of Maryland, was the most experience at Quantico because it has served as the site of the United States Olympic trials. Because of the limited competitor list no women or junior titles were up for grabs this year.

Although the riflemen were tightly strapped into slings and lying as close to the ground as the rules would allow the wind buffeted them about as if they were shooting standing. Under such conditions the shooters prematch thoughts moved from setting new records to more realistically thinking about how to keep all of the shots in the aiming black. It was not defeatist, just grim reality in the face of the 30 mile per hour gusts.

The match got underway and Cook made his mark early in the 50 yard iron sight match by managing to shoot a 392 to Moore's 388. In the face of unmerciful winds Moore turned the tables in the 50 meter match with a 392 while Cook took a 15 point loss for a 385. From a five point lead to a two point deficit in one match would usually take its toll on a shooter's psyche; not so this day. With so many equally skilled riflemen

on the line it was clear that luck was bound to play a part in the results, for scores in the low 390s were not the usual fare of national championship shooting. Sometimes it was just a case of squeezing off a shot at the right moment, a fraction of a second either way spelled success or disaster.

Cook regained a point on Moore in the Dewar match, 391 to 390. Going into 100 yards, where the wind could make strong men cry, the two leaders fought it out to a draw, each posting a 386. Perhaps the only positive aspect of the day for Cook was that the combination of temperature and the wind eliminated the threat of airborne pollen and spores bringing on the many allergies from which he suffered. It may, in fact, been helpful to him. He was used to shooting through watering eyes and running nose, a physical condition not often faced by his competition but brought on by this wintry weather. At the end of the first day Moore was in control by a whisker, the new metallic sight champion, by the margin of just one point.

Conditions changed radically on the second day for overnight the winds disappeared, seeming having exhausted themselves from toying with the shooters on metallic sight day. The final competition of the match, any sights, would no doubt be a close contest. Cook jumped off to a quick start. Just as he did the day before he put his stamp on the match by shooting the first 400 of the tournament. Moore dropped two points in the any sight 50 yard match, giving definition to Henry David Thoreau's comment about living a "life of quiet desperation." Moore was now behind by one point, but there were still 120 record shots to go. It was no time for Cook to get cocky or Moore morose.

Moore experienced serious difficulties in the 50 meter match; an event which often times becomes a stumbling block because of its small ten ring. Shooters often try so hard on this target that the focus drifts from the target to concentration, and when one is concentrating on concentration one is not concentrating on the task at hand. As a result there are wide shots that would not normally occur, whether or not this was the case with Moore remains unknown. What is known is that he slid further back by shooting a 395 to Cook's 398. The duo tied in the Dewar match. With 40 shots at 100 yards left in the championship it was still not in the bag for Cook. A four point lead could easily evaporate a long range. Moore won the match but his one point margin was simply not enough to erase Cook's lead. It was a hard fought match and Cook's winning score of 3150 shows just how trying the conditions were. Moore totaled a 3147 and Perkins settled for third with a 3146.

The duel between Cook and Moore pitted two Washington residents against each other; Moore was from Washington, Pennsylvania and Cook from Washington, D.C. The 1948 National Smallbore Rifle Championship was the smallest ever held and it was won by the youngest rifleman to hold the title. Cook, who also became the first NRA All American to win a national outdoor championship, was just 20 years with a long and fruitful shooting career in his future.

### **1949**

The NRA was able to secure the Iowa National Guard facility at Camp Dodge, just outside of Des Moines, Iowa, for the 1949 National Smallbore Championships. The facility was named after Iowa Civil War hero Major General Grenville Dodge, a railroad magnate who also gave his name to Dodge City, Kansas. The camp had sufficient

firing points capable of supporting the expected 200 competitors and was more centrally located than the previous site at Quantico, Virginia.

The 1949 National Smallbore Matches were scheduled for the Saturday and Sunday of the long Labor Day weekend and participants began arriving in plenty of time to check out the range. Veteran smallbore rifleman, and former NRA President, Thurman Randle even took to the airways over the local radio station to comment on the upcoming shooting event. This grand old gentleman of the sport had visited the range, checked out the weather reports, and predicted that the winner would be fighting tough conditions and a score in the mid 3170s would be good enough for the title. The wily Randle should have known better.

The matches were shot under windy conditions that brought occasional rain squalls and hail storms to try the shooters' skill and patience. Thurman's fellow Texan, Robert Eric McMains won the opening 50 yard iron sight match with a 400-35X event and, until the next match was finished, was in the lead. After the meter match had been completed Adelaide McCord, the defending women's champion, took the lead briefly as McMains began his methodical and measured march toward unseating the reigning champion Cook. Aiding McMains in his efforts was the wind. Not only was it vexing his opponents but it also was blowing about the pollen from the huge expanse of late summer grass. Cook's Achilles Heel was hay fever and he quickly succumbed to the effects of the golden dust and was laid low.

McMains was not going to walk away with the title easily as he was pressed every step of the way by Dave Rosenberg. Rosenberg, a 17-year-old junior from nearby Cedar Rapids, matched the Dallas banker shot for shot. In the end McMains

edged out Rosenberg by two points for the title, leaving Rosenberg holding the junior title as a consolation prize. Mrs. McCord, who had briefly had the lead, again took the women's title. Randle's earlier prognostication ended up with the some accuracy. Cook did shoot a 3172, but it was only good for 29<sup>th</sup> place. Even Old Man Randle, along with such notables as former national champions Dave Carlson and Rans Triggs, as well as Olympian Art Jackson, exceeded that score but none topped McMains' 3189.

The competitors, who perhaps unknowingly, had celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the outdoor smallbore game scattered back to their homes as if driven by the winds that bathed Cook in pollen and bothered so many other shooters.

The NRA staff was soon hopefully engaged in correspondence with the Ohio National Guard to see if Perry might possibly be available in the late summer of 1950. Plans were also being made for other sites in case a return to Ohio was impossible. However, half a world away other men were making plans which would make the NRA's efforts moot.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **The Golden Age...**

#### **1950**

It had been a decade since the last full scale National Match program had been conducted at Camp Perry and it seemed unlikely that there would be another such National Match program at one site, let alone Perry, for the foreseeable future. The NRA and DCM had kept the matches alive with the competitions being held at any convenient location that could support it. Smallbore and pistol shooters had returned to Perry for a short time after the war but they were again on the road.

The location of the 1950 matches became irrelevant early on the morning of Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. Under the leadership of Marshall Choe Yong Gun, a Platonically named military leader if there ever was one, four columns of battle hardened North Korean troops, supported by a brigade of Russian built T-34 medium tanks, crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel into South Korea. The Sunday morning surprise attack was painfully evocative of Pearl Harbor to the American public and in a matter of days the United Nations and the United States called for immediate intervention. As it was in 1942, all thought of the National Matches was swept away in the nation's hurried preparation for war.

#### **1951**

For a year the war in Korea had taken center stage back and forth but the crisis had passed and it was again time to plan for a resumption of the big shoot. Opting to reintroduce a full schedule, the NRA and DCM settled on conducting the tournament in

closely connected venues on the west coast. The Marine Corps ranges as Camp Matthews, California hosted the center fire events, pistol shooters competed at the San Francisco Police Department's range complex, and the small bore contingent would have their contest at the 125 point Sharp Park Range, a municipal shooting facility also located in the "City by the Bay." The morning fog and the damp, common to the city, were not in evidence during the unusually sunny four days of shooting. A strong sea breeze, although pleasant to the tourists sightseeing in the city in the early autumn heat, became a devilish fishtailing wind to those lying on the firing points at Sharp Park.

It may have been the home court advantage that virtually shut out the east coast shooters who for so long had dominated the sport. Whatever the reason, the easterners faded fast and furiously before the scores posted by the west coast crowd. Defending champion Robert McMains and 1948 winner Art Cook finished well out of the awards as dark horse Mason E. Kline, Jr., a native San Franciscan, wowed the home crowd from start to finish. The 23-year-old University of California student jumped to a quick lead, which would be a life saver by the end of the matches.

Just three years removed from his first registered tournament, Kline posted a 1587 in the iron sight aggregate to lead a trio of fellow west coast riflemen, C.R. Cater, L.E. Rentlinger and Charles Cornish, by six points. Kline would need every point he had managed to earn in order to stave off the threat posed by easterners during the second half of the shooting: any sights. Bill Schweitzer and Larry Moore turned the tables on the Californians, taking the top two positions in the any sight aggregate; three western shooters followed two points back. Cornish was the only top five iron sight shooter to finish in the top five of the any sight aggregate. Kline only managed an

eighth place finish with the scope. His good fortune was the points he had salted away in the metallic sight aggregate gave him the edge to come out on top in the grand aggregate with a score of 3178. He was followed by Cornish' 3174, Cater with a 3173, and Rentlinger's score of 3171. As he had been so many times in the past Schweitzer, one of the nation's premier riflemen, was a member of the bridal party but not the bride.

Olympians Cook and Art Jackson would take advantage of the match to wind down and sneak in a little smallbore practice. A few days earlier, at Camp Matthews, Cook had stood up on his hind legs, with a brand new .30-06 Winchester Model 70, to win the prestigious Navy Cup with a record score of 99-13Vs. Jackson followed him with a 148-15V score in the President's Match to win the prestigious match and receive gold medal and the coveted traditional letter signed by the President of the United States.

## **1952**

The Pacific coast had seen a local rifleman become the National Smallbore Rifle Champion in 1951 and so it was with some anticipation that those along the Atlantic seaboard greeted the news that the city of Jacksonville, Florida would host the 1952 smallbore matches. They hoped that, like in real estate, location would be everything. The fact that the reigning champion, Mason Kline, would not be defending his crown was also heartening to the easterners. Upon graduating from college Kline had been commissioned an Ensign in the United States Navy and would be standing watch aboard a ship cruising the broad Pacific rather while they were shooting in Florida.

In conjunction with the Annual Meeting and Convention of the NRA the two-day tournament took place at the Jacksonville Police Pistol and Rifle Club, a range scooped

out of a sand pit, next to the Jacksonville Airport. Al Freeland recalled that the reflected sun of Florida's late August made the range almost unbearably bright and hot. The mirage was heavy and the tough conditions were exacerbated by the prop wash of arriving and departing aircraft at the nearby airport. The sponsors, familiar with the local conditions, set up an awning over the firing line and spotted the assembly area with colorful beach umbrellas in an attempt to provide some comfort and protection to the participants. It was a foreshadowing of the Camp Perry firing line of a later era.

The iron sight stage got off to a fast start with a young shooter taking center stage. John Skeadas jumped out in front of the more seasoned competitors with a 1595 on the first day, making a play to be the youngest champion since Art Cook. His nearest competition was the 1941 champion, Rans Triggs who trailed by two points. A score of 1591 relegated C.R. Cater to third place, one spot further back than he was at the same time in 1951. Packed right in behind the top three, at 1590, was Helen Van Gaston-making a strong play for the Women's title and hard holders Robert Perkins and John Moschkau.

Perkins had finished second or third in previous National Championships on more than one occasion and came out of the gate at a full gallop on the any sight day. He maintained control throughout the four individual matches while capitalizing on small, but critical point losses, made by the competition. In the end his efforts paid off with the national title. Skeadas faded on the second day, dropping 12 points, and the only competitors to remain in the top five from metallic sight day were Perkins and Cater. Perkins did not simply walk off with the title. Lieutenant John Kelly, from the U.S. Air Force Rifle Team, pressed him all day. Kelly tied Perkins on points but lost on Xs in

the any sight aggregate. Had he been able to pick up two more points he would have beaten Perkins' aggregate score of 3187 by one point, instead of coming in second by one. The Air Force's Art Jackson shot a 3185 and took third place on a tiebreaker with Cater.

Mrs. Van Gaston had held a two-point lead over Betty Ingleright after the first day for the women's title but she ran into trouble on scope day and fell far back into the pack. She opened the door for Ingleright, who now battled it out with Gwen Rossman, of Hollywood, Florida, for first place. But, in the end Ingleright emerged triumphant.

The Apache Junior Rifle Club of Phoenix, AZ won the Any Sight Team Championship, fired over the Dewar course, the first time a junior team had taken a national smallbore championship. They defeated a U. S. Air Force team of Art Cook, Art Jackson, Allen Luke and John Kelley, as formidable a group of smallbore shooters that could be assembled in those days, which won the metallic sight championship.

The women competing in the 1952 matches gathered together as a team to accept a challenge by the women shooters of England. Brokered by Muriel Bryant, of England, and Eleanor Dunn, of the United States, the two nations would each field a team of ten women to shoot a postal match over the Dewar course on U.S. targets. To enhance the status of the match Thurman Randle, former NRA president, donated a large sterling cup, with appropriate engraving, to be awarded to the winning team. The inaugural match, organized along lines similar to the Dewar Match, would soon evolve into the prestigious Randle Trophy International Women's Rifle Team Match. Former United States women champion Elinor Bell, as well as Margaret Davis, Ruth Morgan, Olga Patterson, Neva Seagly, Judy Thompson, Emilie Wenner, and Vera Renftl joined

Ingleright, Rossman, and Van Gaston to form the first Randle Team. The official witness was Art Jackson, then an Air Force captain, fresh from a European tour with the United States Shooting Team. Jackson had won the gold in the World Championships, with a perfect score, and, just one point shy of perfection, the bronze in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics.

George Whittington, a well-known rifleman, from Amarillo, Texas, joined Randle in presenting another new trophy. The Whittington Trophy, as it would come to be known, was to be awarded to the National Junior Smallbore Rifle Prone Champion. With a score of 3177, 17-year-old Charles Rogers, of Phoenix, Arizona, was the first to accept the new trophy, adding to the historical highlight of the 1952 matches. Rogers left Jacksonville and traveled the breadth of Georgia to Fort Benning to compete in the first full schedule high power matches since 1940. There he displayed a versatility rarely seen as he captured the junior title in that discipline. It would be over 50 years until another junior, Thomas P. Rider, would duplicate Rogers' feat.

Whittington, who, at one time or another held the state championships of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and New Mexico, captained the 1952 Dewar Team. He was assisted by Jack Renftl another first class smallbore shooter and husband of Randle Team star Vera Renftl. The largest Dewar to date was a six-way event with teams from the United States, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and Ceylon all falling to Great Britain.

## 1953

The fiftieth anniversary of the National Matches was once again celebrated at Camp Perry, Ohio. While the matches had been held in various locations though out its history, Camp Perry was the venue that seemed to occupy a special place in the hearts of shooters. There were 27 vendors filling Commercial Row. Each NRA standing committee involved in competition held a meeting for those competitors present, and the NRA Collector's Committee hosted a magnificent display of over 200 historic firearms at this, the first full scale match schedule held since the classic event in 1940. The daily booming of artillery pieces being tested at the adjacent Erie Ordnance Proving Ground seemed to punctuate the importance of the gathering.

The smallbore matches were shot under almost ideal conditions as witnessed by the fact that in the first 50 yard any sight match 243<sup>rd</sup> place was taken by a score of 400X400! Under such conditions it was no surprise that the competition at the top was a dog eat dog contest pitting the nation's best. After seven 40 shot matches four men went into the last match tied. John Crowley, of Connecticut, John Moschkau, no stranger to the pressure of being in the final hunt, veteran Charlie Whipple, and former champion Art Cook. All started the any sight Dewar knowing that only perfection would bring success. Cook was the first to fall as he dribbled away two points. The others hung on and all came off of the line with perfect scores. The National Championship came down to three identical 3197 scores, separated only by Xs. Each man had shot a fantastic percentage of 0.999, with all breaking the national championship record score. With 255 Xs Crowley established a new record and became the first Connecticut Shooter to hold the title since Dave Carlson had won it in 1940, ironically the last year

that all three disciplines were held at Perry. Whipple was in second, shooting 253Xs, and Moschkau closed the top three with 252Xs. The three men all exceeded the previous national match record in the closest finish in match history, the difference between first and second being as thin as a hair, an X count per centage of 0.001. Competition does not get any closer or better and, while one had to win, it seems a shame that they all couldn't.

The women also were battling it out in another hotly contested race. As the final match began Neva Seagly appeared to have a good handle on conditions and a slight lead on Viola Pollum. Both women were clean after the 50-yard stage of the any sight Dewar. After 17 shots at 100 yards Mrs. Seagly dropped her first point of the match and, perhaps taken aback by the nine, or not believing a wind condition change had occurred, dribbled away two more nines for a total of 397. Mrs. Pollum, a product of western Pennsylvania's shooting hothouse, also saw a shot drift out of the ten ring, but just one. Seagly had given up her lead to Pollum and they were tied at 3185, however, Pollum had a nine X advantage which gave her the championship.

Charles Rogers, in his last year as a junior, repeated as the junior champion, retaining possession of the Whittington Trophy, which Whittington presented to him personally. Smallbore wasn't the only junior title Rogers retained; he stayed over for highpower and nailed down that honor. Two years and four national junior titles in two disciplines added up to an accomplishment that was not matched until 2001 by Thomas P. Ryder.

There was a lot of action in the international arena. The Randle Team, a lucky thirteen women, gathered in the early morning light of August 24th to shoot and



successfully defend its control of the silver cup with match founder and team captain Eleanor Dunn making her only appearance on a team roster.

The next morning the Dewar Team took to the line and smashed the match record with a 7,984. In the process Ransford Triggs shot a 200-20X at the 50-yard line, the first to do so since the match took on its present format in 1919. The British, who had had shot the match earlier that summer, had also beaten the previous record with an outstanding 7,977. Believing that score so high that it was untouchable the British contingent at Perry to shoot the Pershing Match had not bothered to bring the Dewar Trophy with them, much to their chagrin embarrassment.

The Pershing Team Match was fired in the afternoon following the Dewar. General of the Armies John Pershing, a strong supporter of marksmanship, had presented a trophy to the NRA in 1931 for shoulder-to-shoulder international competition. The ten man team match was first held that year in England with the host country winning. The world financial crisis precluded any competition until 1937 when a US team sailed to England to unsuccessfully try to bring the trophy home. The third time was the charm and the United States Team brought the trophy home in 1939. In the intervening years World War II broke up the cycle of competition. It was with great excitement that the NRA hosted the renewal of the match. England was still suffering severe privation brought on by six years of war. A very generous and sporting contribution by noted rifleman and Pershing Team veteran William Schweitzer helped finance the English team's trip. Canada, England, and the United States faced off shoulder to shoulder over a Dewar course using the American target and iron sights. The home team retained the trophy with a score of 3990.

With the tournament coming to an end there was considerable discussion about the following year's Camp Perry program with serious moves being made to revise the junior camp, renovate some of the housing, and conduct final tryouts for 1954's international teams.

## **1954**

The program for the 1954 smallbore championships followed the pattern set in the recent past, twice across the a 1600 point, four match, aggregate-once with metallic sights followed by any sights to determine the individual champion. There were a few special individual matches scheduled, such as a 200-yard "Swiss" match where the shooters tried to rack up the longest consecutive string of 10s and Xs as well as a few team matches. Additionally there were the two international prone postal matches, the Dewar and the Randle, to be conducted.

The Camp Perry experience encompassed more than just the competition. It serves as an opportunity for new shooters to gain seasoning and learn from others. The trip to Perry gives a local shooter experience that does much to bolster self-confidence as well as provide an opportunity to spread new ideas and techniques to those that did not make the trip to the lakeside range complex. The prospect of wandering through the displays and shops on Commercial Row was only icing on the cake. Only one person could win the national championship, but all might be enriched by the experience.

Back in the familiar and comfortable confines of Camp Perry the smallbore shooters set about their work. The matches worked their way through the comfortable routine of setting up, hanging targets, shooting, clearing the line, and rehashing the

match shot by shot with neighbors until it was time to start again. The Critchfield Trophy and a specially selected rifle was awarded to Alonzo Wood for his winning score of 3193-239X. Elinor Bell, with a 3186-210X, regained the women's title she last held in 1951, becoming only the second lady to win two or more titles since Adelaide McCord performed the feat. Presley Kendall took the Whittington Trophy as the high junior with a score of 3189-223X that even had, from time to time, challenged the open winner. The new junior champion went on to earn a spot on the Dewar Team and posted the 7<sup>th</sup> highest score on the team and more would be heard from him in the future

Along with the shooting matches Perry offered its usual diversions, the chance to meet and greet old friends, a pleasant vacation for families accompanying the shooters, the Junior and Tyro school, and an NRA Hunter Safety School all helped make the 1954 matches more than just a rifle match.

## **1955**

Camp Perry in 1955 would be noted for what appeared, and what did not appear, in the match bulletin. After listening to the competitors and with much discussion on the point the NRA Smallbore Committee decided that the course of fire for the national championship would be expanded. The course of fire would be doubled from the 3200 point course of fire, a 1600 iron sight match paired with a 1600 any sight match, which was then referred to as a Critchfield course, to a "double-Critchfield" 6400 point match shot over five days. The longer course of fire was thought to be a greater test of skill and endurance and would, therefore, eliminate the chance of a few lucky strings earning a shooter a national championship.

The inaugural 6400 championship would also mark several other firsts. In a superb demonstration of hard holding and wind doping Viola Pollum would establish a record of 6390-491X. In doing so she performed the first ever “hat trick” at the national level. Her score earned her the National Open Championship, the first women ever to top the smallbore field. Mrs. Pollum also gathered in the National Civilian Championship and the National Women’s Championship. Winning these three titles was a feat that would go unmatched for 22 years. William J. Grater and Vic Auer would share junior honors because a change in the NRA Rules redefined the age span for juniors midyear.

The United States Randle and Dewar Teams both proved victorious in the international postal matches. The Randle Team shot a 3891, establishing a new record. These were all of the high points that appeared in the bulletin.

What didn’t appear in the bulletin was reminiscent of an incident from Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes tale entitled “Silver Blaze”, in which the following conversation takes place between Holmes and his amanuensis, and friend, Doctor John Watson.

“Is there any point to which you would like to draw my attention?”  
‘To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.’  
‘The dog did nothing in the night-time.’  
‘That was the curious incident.’ remarked Sherlock Holmes.”

Tucked away in the bulletin’s registration section was the name, address, and classification, the sole mention of a young junior shooter who had traveled down from Montana to compete as an expert. The unnoticed young lad didn’t win anything in 1955, and that was the “curious incident” that marked the first appearance at Camp Perry of Lones Wesley Wigger, Junior.

## 1956

The five-day 6400-point aggregate opened with might well have been titled "The Battle of Champions." The 1941 National Champion Ransford Triggs set the pace with a metallic sight 400-38X at 50 yards. Coming back strong in the second match was the 1948 National Champion Art Cook who blasted out a 400-33X with irons in the meter match. The day closed with a 100-yard match won by Ray Steele, the 1953 Service Champion, 400-23X. Cook was leading at the end of the day with 1199, two points ahead of the pack.

During the next day Cook managed to hold on to his lead as he worked towards his second national title. J. Kenneth Johnson picked up the win in the 50-yard event and repeated with a 50-meter victory while an expert, P.K. Parsons, won the Dewar. Cook's two point lead held but the names of those who were chasing him were shuffled, Johnson had caught up and was in second while Triggs had dropped back to third.

The iron sight aggregate closed out with wins by Marine Lieutenant James F. Rice, who shot a 400-29X in the 100-yard match, and Allan L. Luke III's winning score of 400-32X in the Dewar. Cook, while not in any of the individual match winners' circle on the last day, turned in a final score of 3195-237X for the metallic sight championship and control of the match. The last match on day three was the any sight 50 yard event won by 1954 Junior Champion Presley Kendall with an excellent 400-38X.

After three days of careful shooting the bottom fell out of Cook's grocery bag when his wind doping talent slipped out of synchronization on day four. In a matter of two matches he squandered his lead, dropping 14 points, and slipped so far back that he was virtually eliminated from competition. Oliver Lauderman moved up to replace

Cook with a one point lead over Triggs and Johnson. After the 100-yard match, won with a 400-37X by W.J. Gorman of Chicago, the leader board stayed the same. In the last 40 shots of the championship the lead changed once more when Lauderman dropped a point as Johnson went clean. While Californian C.L. Wood took the any sight aggregate his iron sight scores were too weak to help him win overall. The aggregate scores ended in another photo finish for the national championship. Both Johnson and Triggs had tallied scores of 6385 but Johnson's huge lead in X count, 478 to 455, insured that his name would be engraved upon the Critchfield Trophy as the 1956 champion.

Position matches had been occasionally shot during the smallbore prone matches and for many years the Harry Pope Match was a popular standing event. This year a four position match was scheduled as a trial horse for future matches. The match was fired twice, once with metallic sights and once with any sight over a 40 shot course of fire, ten shots prone, sitting, kneeling, and standing. They were popularly received, 122 entries were recorded, and hotly contested.

Army's Master Sergeant Francis B. Conway won the metallic sight match with a 389-15X. Frank Conway was no stranger to holding and squeezing. During World War II he was involved in sniping in Europe. In the late 1940s he worked at developing a 50-caliber rifle that met with some success at ranges from 1,400 to 2,800 yards and Conway had won the Holy Grail of long range shooting, the Wimbledon Cup, in 1955. A week or so after the smallbore program ended he would, in a rare feat of arms, repeat the Wimbledon win. Cook came in second with a 388-15X. In the any sight match Cook won it going away with a 396-23X with Roy Oster, of Pennsylvania, two points behind

him. In third place was a young Army Reservist with a bright future, Private First Class John Foster.

The 1956 matches centered about stabilization of the prone course of fire and experimenting with a position match. As a matter of fact, a precursor to the position matches that would begin in 1957 the outdoor retail firm of Abercrombie and Fitch presented a large sterling silver Revere bowl in memory of Chairman of the Board James S. Cobb, which was awarded to John L. Aker for topping all other juniors in a 40 shot four position match.

### **1957**

Major changes, considered in 1956, were underway for the 1957 smallbore matches. Among them was a new, but now familiar, target frame designed by Watt Redfield of the Redfield Sight Corporation and fabricated by B&W Welding of Fremont, Ohio. The solid looking frame incorporated a flat masonite surface with abrasive strips to keep the target firmly in place. No longer would rubber bands be used to hold targets to the frames. Six or eight clamp type paper clips would fit neatly into the slots routed into the leading edge of the frames' uprights, the recommended model was the Size #1 manufactured by the Hunt Pen Company who also manufactured the ubiquitous Boston pencil sharpener-know to students worldwide. Number were alternating black and white with three digits numbers only used at firing points 100, 200, 300, and 400. The system must have been a success as the reported number of cross fires was reported to be way down and the design is still in use today.

After the popularly successful trail in 1956 the NRA established a position championship to accompany the prone matches. Since 1919 the thrust of almost all

smallbore shooting in the United States had been prone. There were occasional Schützenfests, standing matches rich in Teutonic traditions, which seemed to have the props kicked out from under them by the patriotic fervor of World War I. But by and large the shooters in the United States looked with some suspicion on the habits of their brethren on the continent. With the reorganization of the International Shooting Union following World War II the United States re-entered the wider world of free rifle position shooting in 1947. No longer able to hold its own in three position shooting on the international level, as it did in the days of Morris Fisher, Calvin Lloyd, and Sidney Hinds, the United States had to do something or face the real possibility of the United States becoming irrelevant in the shooting world.

President Eisenhower took the first big step when he authorized, via executive order, the establishment of the United States Army Marksmanship Training Unit on March 1, 1956,. The mission of the new organization was three fold with the first being of main interest to the shooting community, to compete and win from local matches up through the international level. The Marines and the Air Force soon followed suit, with the Navy and the Coast Guard developing marksmanship programs to a lesser degree. This emphasis by the military would have a distinct and lasting effect on competitive shooting in the United States.

The first National Smallbore Position Championship, pioneered the year earlier consisted of a pair of 40 shot matches, ten shots in the four basic positions using metallic and then any sights. Art Cook, shooting for the Air Force Reserve, took the very first iron sight championship with a score of 390-19X. The any sight match, oddly enough produced lower scores. The winner was the Air Force's Virgil Hamlin with a



388-22X. Cook was right behind him with a 377. Finishing first in iron and second in any sights insured the diminutive rifleman of another footnote in shooting history: the first person the national position championship as well as the first to win both a prone and position outdoor smallbore national championship.

Marine Staff Sergeant Emmett D. Duncan placed first among regular service shooters while William C. Roos was the junior champion. Barry R. Trew took home collegiate honors while Marilee Hohman was the ladies champ. By all accounts the first position championship was a smashing success, not particularly overshadowed by its more established prone brother.

With 551 entries the prone matches were well attended and the excellence of the competitors showed. Of the 16 individual matches 15 were won with perfect scores. The sole winning score that was not perfect was a 399X400 in the always psychologically tough 50 meter match. Earl Saunders opened the ball with a 400-36X with iron sights at 50 yards. Ollie Lauderan began a play on the iron sight title with a pair of wins, a 400-35X in the meter match followed by another perfect score in the Dewar, this time with 35 Xs. Art Cook showed his long range skills by putting up a 400-21X in the first 100-yard match and a 34X clean in the second. New Jersey's John O'Hare, son of the legendary Paddy, ran two straight victories on day two of the iron sight aggregate when he cleaned the yard match and won the 50 meter match with a 399. Rans Triggs showed that time had not affected him with a 400-36X in the final iron sight Dewar. As well as each man did individually John Moschkau did just a little better collectively, his 3193-236X earned him the Hoppe Trophy as the Metallic Sight National Champion. Inez Sargent was the recipient of the Peters Trophy as the high woman.

The any sight aggregate awards were spread about more freely and no one who had won a match in the metallic phase did so in the second half. Veteran Charlie Whipple's 37 X possible won the first 50-yard match and Bror Swanson grouped 38 shots inside the X for the win in the second yard match. Former Junior Champion Pres Kendall and Robert K. Moore, cousin of the former two time champion Wayne Moore, split the 50 meter matches with 35X and 37X possibles respectively. Cliff Pierson and Bertie Moore, another member of the Moore shooting clan, were long range winners with a 23X and a 37X at 100 yards. The Dewar went to Alonzo Wood and Robert Rarick with near perfect 400-37Xs. The Western Cartridge Company Trophy went to Moschkau, who didn't win any matches on the second two days, but only dropped one point. He dominated the shoot with a record setting 6392-488X, two points above the existing record score established the year before by Viola Pollum. Bertie Moore overtook Sargent on the basis of her category winning any sight score. Jimmy J. Williams topped the juniors while Victor Auer was the high collegiate shooter. Lieutenant Virgil Hamlin, Jr., of the Air Force, was the best active duty military rifleman.

Two 1953 champions, John Crowley the open winner and Ray Steele the service category champions, guided the Dewar Team to a 7975-581X win. The influence of the military's move into the world of smallbore was becoming more evident as there were three service shooters on the team. The Randle Ladies knocked off another win with a 3968. The Cooks showed that the family that shoots together stays together, at least in score. Mrs. Cook, Mary, shot a team high 400-22x as a member of the Randle Team while Art cranked out a 400-34X for the top US score in the Dewar.

## 1958

The National Match schedule ran near a full month in 1958. With the 37<sup>th</sup> World Championship's being held in Moscow, a full contingent of the nation's best marksman were absent from the shores of Lake Erie. This did not dilute the quality of the competition, as there was a plentiful supply of hard holders at home. The absence of the up and coming military shooters and a few veterans who were shooting in Moscow simply made for a new mix.

Old hands seemed to dominate the prone matches, where almost every victory required a 400 with a high X count. Rans Triggs made his presence known by taking the first match. Charlie Whipple took up where he left off the previous year in his search for the ever-elusive prone title by winning both the meter and Dewar match on the first day. Janet Friddell broke into the winner's circle with a 399 in the 100-yard match. A whole new cast of characters emerged on the second day of irons. John Miller and John O'Hara lead off with wins in the yard and meter match. Alonzo Wood took a stab at repeating his 1954 championship with a win at 100 yards and Air Force Reserve Lieutenant Virgil Hamlin closed out the iron sight aggregate with a win in the Dewar. However, none of the individual match winners did well enough to surpass Herb Hollister 's 3192-217X. Friddell lead the pack in the distaff division at the end of the first half of the championship.

Al Freeland, using a BSA Mark II with a three point bedding system mounted in the fore end and a Hart barrel, shot two tens and 38Xs for the first win of the any sight aggregate. Henry Benson and John Crowley split the meter matches. Crowley's Connecticut teammate, Kermit Montross won the second yard match. Robert Moore

and Triggs lead all in the 100-yard matches as newcomer Joe Higgins and metallic sight champion Hollister gathered in the laurels for the Dewar matches. Moore added a brace of national championship shooting trophies to the extended Moore family mantle piece. It turned out that when his winning aggregate score in the any sight phase, a 3197-253X, was combined with his solid iron sight match total he had placed first in the grand aggregate with a 6385-476X and the 1958 Critchfield Trophy was his to keep.

Barbara Winton, who first came to prominence in 1955 as an expert when she earned a spot on the Randle Team, out pointed all of the women to take home the Western Cartridge Company Trophy. Her come from behind attack on the women's title fell short and Friddell was able to capture both the woman and junior titles with a 6373-440X. William Madden was high collegiate while Presley Kendall, now a lieutenant in the US Army, earned his second national title as the service champion. The awards class had been expanded to recognize the elder statesmen of the sport with a new category, senior, and Herb Hollister's 6384-472X gave him the bragging rights as the first to hold the title.

The position matches were quickly staked out by the military as their private domain. The 40 shot four position matches were divided in half by sights, metallic required for one half and any sights allowed for the second. Additionally, a second set of -matches shot at 50 meters was added to the 50-yard contest. The Air Force's Hamlin took the 50-yard metallic sight match with a 383-16X and civilian Barry R. Trew won the any sight portion with a 394-24X. Lieutenant Tommy Pool, based at the USAMTU at Fort Benning, won the iron sight 50 meter stage. Art Cook fired a 391-19X to take the any sight meter match. Cook, the defending position champion, held on to

his title and added another historical footnote to his shooting career as the first to win back-to-back position titles. Quixotically the rules of the time discounted his reserve status and also awarded the civilian title while Lieutenant John R. Edwin, USA, was named regular service champion. Trew hauled in the collegiate honors, Jilann Brunett earned the woman's title, and William C. Roos took home the junior trophy.

The senior champion was Chris Westergaard who began his shooting career with a double set trigger Ballard at the turn of the century in Iowa, long before any of those who stood with as champions at the awards ceremony were born. Westergaard would compete into the 1970s. He was tragically killed, along with his wife, in an auto accident a few miles from his home as they returned from a party celebrating his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

It was a most successful and well-run competition. The match staff would enjoy a short break but quickly returned to lay plans for next year's matches. They would review what had worked and what had not, establish a schedule of events based upon projected entries, prepare and mail the bulletin for the current matches, write and proof read the program for the next match, and insure that all Ts were crossed and the Is dotted.

## **1959**

The Smallbore National Rifle Championship, started as a simple 30 shot sideshow to the National Matches to prepare for the 1919 Dewar Trophy Match, now celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a fully independent tournament. The match program had developed into a rigorous test of marksmanship that was respectful of the traditions of the past while it adapted to the constantly evolving nature of the sport. This was best illustrated in the revival of venerable trophies and the introduction of new ones to honor

the victorious competitors. The family of Frank Parsons, Jr., an early proponent of position shooting, a first class rifleman in his own right, a collegiate coach, and a leader of many successful United States international teams, donated a trophy in his memory to be awarded to the national smallbore rifle position champion. The American Dewar Cup, out of competition since 1949, was brought back as the prize for the winner of the prone metallic sight team match. The Officers' Reserve Trophy was now awarded to the to team in the prone any sight match while the Hercules Trophy, around since 1921, was designated for the metallic sight team match.

The military's efforts towards becoming a force in shooting were beginning to show. Army Lieutenant Presley Kendall won the metallic sight aggregate and his teammate Lieutenant Milton Friend wrapped up the Dewar Match. Air Force Reservists Art Cook and Virgil Hamlin claimed individual matches. A relatively unknown regular Marine came out of California to make a real splash. Corporal Walter Kamila was learning the prone game and had won a few local matches in the area surrounding Camp Pendleton. Lieutenant Colonel Walter Walsh, undoubtedly one of the two best all around marksman ever to wear Marine Green, was in charge of the Marine effort at Camp Perry and had heard about Kamila. Before long the 22 year old was training hard in a discipline that had been the dominated by civilians since 1923. When all the scores had been tabulated Kamila's 6383-443X bested all comers in a field of 650 shooters. Kamila became the first service shooter to win the national prone championship since 1922 when Indiana National Guard Captain J. F. Hauck reigned supreme. The new prone champions was photographed perched upon a shooting kit box together with comely 18 year old Lenore Jensen, the national women and collegiate champion, the

couple immediately became the poster children for all that was good and wholesome about the shooting sports. Kamila's victory would mark the beginning of dominance of position shooting by military marksman that would run unchallenged for 16 years.

Jensen's mother, Marianne Driver, had earlier won the second 100-yard metallic sight match showing that all competitors, regardless of gender, are equal before the target. Serge Federoff, one point behind Kamilia, was the civilian champion; J. Eric Sundstrom, Jr. won the junior title while Herb Hollister racked up his second senior win. The United States Army won the Hercules Trophy and a civilian team representing Colorado took home the American Dewar Trophy.

Lieutenant Jack Foster of the Army's Marksmanship Training Unit at Fort Benning snapped Air Force Reserve Captain Art Cook's streak of position championship wins. Foster won the Parson's Trophy on the strength of his any sight score marking the third consecutive position win for the military. Service shooters would maintain a strangle hold on this particular title, running virtually unchecked for almost 30 years. Jilann Brunett repeated as woman champion, the first to do so. James E. O'Brien was top civilian, and Harry Malik and James Kreder were junior and collegiate champions. Paul C. Frey showed that age was no roadblock to a national championship when he won the senior category.

As the 1950s came to a close it was more than apparent that smallbore rifle shooting had grown in stature and come of age at last.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **A Decade Of Transitions...**

#### **1960s**

The United States went through a period of trial and transformation during the decade of the sixties. No thread of the fabric of the nation's society was immune from the effects of social unrest and change and the National Rifle and Pistol Championships were no exception and were transformed during this turbulent decade.

#### **1960**

There was no hint of what was to transpire when smallbore competitors arrived at Camp Perry to vie for the many historic trophies representative of the various championships, 629 would enter the prone matches and there would be 389 entries in the position phase. The matches, a reflection of the nation at large, had settled into a comfortable routine during the years of the Eisenhower administration. There was change and progress and prosperity, but it all happened at a slow and measured pace.

The targets had remained the same for many years and the 6400-point course of fire was now five years old. Many of the old faces from the days of pre World War II Camp Perry were still to be seen while a new generation of shooters was beginning to make its mark. Nowhere was that more apparent then when Frank Briggs, a young lieutenant of Marines, and Art Cook, a captain in the Air Force Reserve, swapped individual victories back and forth during the prone phase's metallic sight aggregate.

Briggs won the first 50-yard metallic sight match with a near perfect 400-36X. Civilian Henry Benson snuck in with a clean score for a win in the meter match. Cook then nailed down the final two matches of the aggregate with a pair of possibles. Briggs came back hard and took the next two matches with perfect scores. Cook took the 100-



yard match while Army Specialist 4<sup>th</sup> Class Paul Berman won the last match of the iron sight aggregate. Of the eight iron sight matches Cook and Briggs each took three, with Cook slipping by for the Hoppe Trophy and the metallic sight championship. The two time national champion was in a good position to earn a third title and bring him even with Bill Woodring on the all time winners list while Marianne M. Jensen, a junior, won the women's championship.

Youth may have been served when Cook and Briggs dominated the opening matches, but experience would not stand still for such an impertinent demonstration by those downy cheeked young men. When the scopes were put on the rifles the apparent advantage young eyes was pretty much eliminated and all shooters were on a more level playing field, optically speaking. Ollie Lauderman and Larry Wilkens, shooters who had cut their teeth on the winds at Camp Perry in the 1930s, when Cooks and Briggs were just cutting teeth, each hammered out scores of 400-39X in the first any sight 50-yard match. They went right to the line with both X count and shot placement resulting in an unusual unbreakable tie.

Air Force Captain Donald Lockstrom won the next two matches while 1941 National Champion Rans Triggs countered the youth movement by posting a 400-38X to win the any sight Dewar. Not wanting to let the old timers get too much a lead William Grater slammed out a pair of consecutive possibles to claim the second 50-yard and Dewar any sight matches. Triggs turned right around and showed the kid just how it was done by winning the final two matches of the any sight aggregate. However, Lockstrom only dropped two points in eight matches and became the any sight champion and the possessor of the Western Cartridge Company Trophy.

In a fine twist of fate Marianne Driver, mother of the women's metallic sight champion Marianne Jenson, took the women's any sight title. Jenson also collected the junior title while her sister Lenore gathered in the Remington Trophy as the women's national champion. All three shot on the Randle Team with the sisters also earning membership on the Dewar team. Lenore's score of 392 was the same score Rans Triggs fired and both stood at the top the score sheet. The three wins completed a hat trick for a trio of ladies who would become a shooting force to be reckoned with right into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

While he did little of note in the any sight aggregate Cook protected his lead, dropping only four points in the second half to give him a grand total of 6390-508Xs and his third national title. Cook took both open and service titles while his team mate Aircraftsman Third Class Victor Auer won the collegiate title. Robert Boydston was high civilian, 11 points behind Cook and Herb Hollister won his third consecutive senior crown.

The position matches were pretty much the province of the military teams, which were now coming into their own and the Army, in particular, seemed to have a tight hold. Marksmanship Training Unit riflemen, Lieutenants Milton Friend and Tommy Pool, sewed up both the 40 shot 50 yard and 50 meter metallic sight matches with respective scores of 394-18X and 387-17X. The only bump in the road for the Army juggernaut was when Alan Dapp, a Marine Corps Reserve sergeant, pushed the Army aside for a match win. Charles Davis, another sergeant, but from the Army this time, gathered up the last of the four position matches. In the end a consistent Dapp was high enough in the standings of all of the individual matches to win the aggregate and the Frank

Parsons Trophy. Robert K. Moore was the high civilian and McCloud “Mack” B. Hodges III was the junior champion, Jilann Brunett picked up her third consecutive women’s title and added the collegiate to her expanding list of accomplishments. Virgil Corbin was the senior champion. Watching from the sidelines, and anxious to join the chase for the national titles, were the 605 students enrolled in the junior school. All in all the first smallbore championship of the 1960s was certainly a success by any standard.

### **1961**

When smallbore shooters arrived at Camp Perry in the second week of August they saw a facility that had been much improved. The huts were undergoing refurbishment, roads were widened and resurfaced, and sidewalks had been installed for safety and convenience. The competitors were most grateful for an all weather parking area that was prepared for them immediately behind the ranges.

Just as there were changes in the camp there were also changes in match format. Prone competition was reduced to a 4,800 point aggregate, while the position championship would be decided entirely at 50 yards. The level of excitement was also raised by the anticipation of the renewal of the Pershing Trophy series. First began in 1931 with a shoulder-to-shoulder match in England. World War II interrupted the competition until 1953, when it was placed on an eight-year cycle. The ten British riflemen and supporting officials arrived at Camp Perry eager to shoot the United States Championship and regain the trophy from a team that was just as eager to retain it.

Smallbore opened with a series of warm up matches, reminiscent of the reentry matches of the pre war years, allowing the competitors to get used to the range and shake of the effects of travel. Unlike past years the contest for the national

championship had no clear-cut leader. No one person won any more than one match and the winners of the metallic sight championship, Joseph E. Steffy, and the any sight championship 1957 champion John Moschkau, did not win any of the sub-aggregate matches. After the two 1600 point aggregates, one metallic sight and the other any sight, were completed the new national championship course of fire required an addition four matches under the general title of the "Prone Team Fund Aggregate", twice across the Dewar course and two 100 yard matches-once with irons and once with any sights. John J. Crowley, like Moschkau a former national champion, took the series. Coming to the fore was the defending national collegiate champion Victor Auer. Shooting as member of the US Air Force Team the airman third class dropped 16 points over the 4800 point grand aggregate to become both the new open and service category national champion. Janet Friddell captured the woman's title on her way to a tremendous display of skill in the various international team matches. Steffey had to settle for the civilian crown while Lenore Jensen regained her collegiate title lost to Auer the year previous. J. Eric Sundstrom took the junior title while Commander Theodore Charlton of the Naval Reserve was on the other end of the age spectrum as senior champion.

Friddell has a busy team day. She had been shooting well and been named to the Randle, Dewar, and Pershing Teams! This trifecta was unheard of up to this time and Friddell met the challenge. She opened the day with a team high score of 400-29X in the Randle. Shifting her equipment to her point for the Dewar Match she lay down and shot a 388 on the tougher British target, just one point shy of the team high score. After the lunch break she reloaded her block and proceeded to shoot the only perfect

score on the Pershing Team, a 400-27X. Her efforts helped the United States to a win two of the major international matches prone matches, the Randle and the Pershing..

The United States Pershing Team was lead to victory by two national champions, Captain Rans Triggs and Coach Art Cook. Herb Hollister aided them as team adjutant. Along with Friddell was James Morris, William Grater, Perry veterans Lawrence Wilkens and Ollie Lauderman, three Air Force riflemen Captain Donald Lockstrom, Technical Sergeant Edward Cagle, and freshly minted national champion Auer. Steffey and George Snellgrove, Jr. rounded out the victorious team. Roy Oster and J. Eric Sundstrom stood in reserve.

Lieutenant Tommy Pool, of the Army Marksmanship Training Unit, took the position warm-up match and never relinquished the lead. Despite his best efforts Corporal Gary Anderson, who set a new metallic sight position National Match record of 395-21X in the attempt, was unable to pull ahead of his teammate from Fort Benning. Pool, no slacker, also established a new national position record of 397-22X with any sights to wrap up the title. Mack B. Hodges III tied up both civilian and junior honors with a score just ten points behind Pool. Carl Gunther denied Jilann Brunett a second collegiate championship but she was able to pick up the women's title. Fred Johanson who had been competing at Perry since the early 1920s, and had more than a few Dewar Team brassards sewn to his shooting coat, took the senior title.

There were 715 entries in the 1961 smallbore championships. There was a dramatic increase in the number of juniors in the matches, 41 more than the previous year. The junior and Tyro school saw an enrollment of 823 students spread over three sections covering CO<sub>2</sub> and air rifle, smallbore at 50 feet, and smallbore at 50 yards.

Eighty four instructors directed the 42 tyro adults and the 781 juniors through the five day school. With such an influx of new blood the future of the game looked bright.

## **1962**

Emerging technology, in the form of weather radar, arrived at Camp Perry to help in the smooth conduct of the matches. Electronic beams sent out to detect squall lines and thunder cells now augmented shooters' weather eyes, old aching war wounds, and lumbago in predicting rain. The radar might be able to give warning of impending storm but was of no help to the shooters in dealing with the ever-present Camp Perry wind.

The match program of 1961 was again the course of fire. It was a close run match between Lieutenant Presley Kendall, Army Marksmanship Training Unit, who first broke into the ranks of the champions in 1954 when he captured the junior title and Lawrence Wilkens, a wily old Camp Perry veteran who first earned a spot on the Dewar Team in 1928.

Kendall made his move for the championship late in the metallic sight aggregate, which was won by W.E. Summer with a 1599-111X, just one point ahead of the women iron sight champion Janet Friddel's 1598-116X. Rans Triggs, Marianne Jensen, and Ollie Lauderman had taken the first three matches when Kendall burst on the scene with a match winning 400-35X in the metallic Dewar. He quickly put his mark on the any sight matches when he posted a 400-40X with an additional 35Xs in the opening match at 50 yards. Triggs dropped but one X at 50 meters and managed to keep him at bay to keep until the youngster blasted out a 400-32 at 100 yards. At the end of the day Wilkens showed that experience could be an advantage over youth when he carded a 400-36X in the Dewar and slipped into first place in the any sight aggregate. Kendall

went dry in the Prone Team Fund Aggregate, not winning a single match, but still placing high enough in each match to win the final 1600 point aggregate, and with it the national championship by a one point margin over William E. Summers, 4793-377X to 4792-343X. Kendall was named both national and service champions while Summers earned civilian honors. J. Eric Sundstrom picked up both collegiate and junior titles while Friddell topped the women's category and H.W. Benson was the new senior champion.

The contest for the Frank Parson's Trophy got off to a quick start with Army Captain Daniel Puckel sweeping the two metallic sight matches with a total score of 787-34X. Lieutenant Barry True, a teammate of Puckel's, and junior Phil Bahrman spilt the any sight matches. Trew's impressive 398-26X raised eyebrows, but as one swallow does not make a summer neither does one great score make a champion. In the end, the slow and steady performance of Tommy Pool put him at the top of the results bulletin.

Phil Bahrman became the national junior champion while All American McCloud "Mack" Hodges, III, won the civilian title after back-to-back wins in the junior category in 1960 and 61. The 1960 national position champion, Allan Dapp, had left active duty with the Marine Corps and was a student at Oregon State University. He had just been named to the first of four All American teams and to celebrate the accomplishment tacked the outdoor national collegiate title to his impressive resume. Jean Linton and P.C. Frey rounded out the trophy winners as women and senior champions.

## 1963

If there is one uncertainty in the regular routine of the national smallbore matches it is the weather. The wind and the rain, always a threat, swept over the 600 smallbore prone shooter's relays time after time. If wet gear and soggy targets were not enough to take the bright edge from the competitor's lives the conditions saw to it that there would not be a single 400 fired during the any sight meter match. However, every rain cloud had its silver lining and, for the first time, smallbore shooters could "Hawk the Board" in relative comfort. Building 1002, now so familiar, made its debut. The long white shed ran parallel to the south side of Lawrence Road and, equipped with Plexiglas scoreboards, bright fluorescent lighting, and a tile floor, was often crowded with shooters anxious to see the fruits of their labors as well as shelter themselves from the rain. Each competitor's name was neatly printed next to a grid that represented the various matches with a colorful grease pencil circle surrounding the winning scores of match, class, and category. The cruising school of smallbore sharks would circle about the scoreboard eagerly awaiting the posting of new scores to the background hiss of shooters rehashing the day in a low whisper.

Among the other improvements to Camp Perry were a range expansion that increased the number of smallbore firing points from 350 to 425, sixteen motel units that sprang up adjacent to the Club House where Squaw Camp had once stood, a refurbished Mess Hall and the roads and parking lots had been resurfaced.

Art Cook, shooting for the Air Force Reserve, and the Army's Tommy Pool, defending position champion, battled it out for the metallic sight prone crown. Cook took two of the four matches, Pool one, and W.T. Weldon one. Cook's 1600-127X put



him in the lead and in a good position to win his third prone title. The terrible conditions took its toll and both Cook and Pool gave way to Rans Triggs who managed to wring a 1592-107X out of the rain soaked day to take the any sight aggregate. Five points behind him was woman champion, Marianne Driver. The four matches of the final 1600 were spread among Triggs, Eric Sundstrom, Lenore Lemanski, and Warrant Officer Jim Hill of the Marines. In the end the winner was Lieutenant Lones W. Wigger, Jr., of the Army, with a 1597-116X. Wigger was further able to parlay that score with two earlier scores to win the Critchfield Trophy, a Winchester 52D rifle, a Lyman Super-Targetspot telescope, and the National Championship brassard.

With his first Camp Perry championship under his belt Wigger drew a deep breath and prepared for the position matches. While Wigger won the open and service championship, Dean W. DeLaMater was the civilian champion, J.M. Garrison the collegiate champion, and P.C. Frey, the senior champ. In a finish reminiscent of 1960 Marianne Driver, who again had won the women's any sight title, saw her two daughters earn titles, oldest daughter Lenore Lemanski wore the women's laurels while her youngest daughter Marianne Jensen was the junior champion.

The position championship was a tossup with four riflemen each winning one of the four stages. Captain Verle Wright, USA, a member of the 1956 Olympic Team, took the first iron sight match with a 394-21X. Conditions wreaked havoc as the shooters worked their way through the second match. Army Lieutenant Don Adams came up with a winning score of 364-10X, an indication of the effects of Mother Nature's wrath. Wigger's 389-22X in the first any sight match reflected that the fact that winds and rain were still a force with which to contend. Sergeant David I. Boyd, II, a left-handed

Marine based at Quantico, closed out the championship with an excellent 396-19X. Yet, despite everyone's best efforts the position title went to the prone champion, Lones Wigger. With this pair of wins Wigger followed Cook into the record book as only the second person to win both a prone and position championship at Perry. He was also the first to do it on the same year.

The Cobb Trophy went to a junior shooter from Illinois with a bright future, John Writer. Jack would eventually become an Army and Olympic teammate of Wigger's helping to anchor the United States shooting powerhouse of the 1970s. Jilann Brunett, who had bagged four women's titles stood aside for Elizabeth Espointour but managed to salvage the collegiate title. Espointour would parlay her smallbore skills with an M1 rifle and become the fifth woman to earn Distinguished just three years later. Clint Fowler was the civilian champions while V.M. Corbin led the seniors.

### **1964**

Shooters streamed into Camp Perry ten weeks before the XVIII Olympiad. The games were to be held half a world away in Tokyo, where they had been originally scheduled in 1940. The United States was beginning to make itself felt on the international shooting scene and Olympic hopefuls would be at Perry. The hometown crowd would have a chance to see some of the best as it prepared to head west.

Perhaps, because it was an Olympic year, Warrant Officer Jim Hill led off the tournament with a 400-39X metallic sight score in the yard match. Hill had shot just one point off of the gold medal score in Rome in 1960 coming away with the silver medal about his neck. Ken Johnson, the 1956 champion, won the meter match. Jack Foster, a 1960 Olympic Team member, took the 100 yard match while Dewar veteran Henry

Benson's 400-34X in the Dewar was good for first place. Foster shot a 1598-122X to take possession of the Hoppe Trophy. Inez Sergeant, just a point behind, was high women and in striking distance of the aggregate. Back in the pack, down by five points, was Jim Hill.

Perfection is demanded in scope shooting and near perfection is what Hill delivered across the next four matches. Hill dropped one point in the 100-yard match, just Xs behind the winning score posted by Captain J.T. Bertva, USAF, who had shot on the United States team at the 1962 World Championships in Cairo. It was the only point he was to lose and he won the any sight aggregate with a 1599-121X. Marianne Driver occupied her traditional position as the women's any sight victor. The matches that made up the Prone Team Fund Aggregate were all won with perfect scores and again Hill was not perfect, but more perfect than any other shooter. His 1599-126X sewed up the national championship and he added a national championship gold medal to his international Olympic silver, not to mention the Winchester 52 rifle, and Lyman scope that went along with the Critchfield Trophy. Hill was a man of many facets, his victory marked the first time that a National Service Rifle Champion, he had taken possession of that title in 1956, had crossed disciplines and earned a national title in smallbore.

Rans Triggs made a strong run on recovering the title he once held in 1941 but fell short, having to settle for the civilian title. Inez Sargent managed to pass Driver in the third 1600 aggregate and was declared women's champion. Herb Hollister lead the seniors, R.F. Perkins, Jr., the juniors, and R.K. Emerson was the collegiate standout.

Pres Kendall was an aggressive young rifleman who had notched up several impressive titles at camp Perry. The Army captain had won the junior title in 1954 and the prone title in 1962. He was an experienced international competitor, having shot at the Pan American Games. He was as skilled at position shooting as he was at prone and was ready to make his move to enter the record books.

For a while it appeared that Kendall would have to put his dream on hold. National Guard Lieutenant Gary Anderson, as talented a position shooter as ever existed in the United States, won the first metallic sight match. The Army's Don Adams blocked Kendall in the second match. Thurston Banks shut him out of the first any sight match and Bertva's stupendous 397 blocked a win in the last position match. Without winning a single match Kendall still managed to pull off an aggregate score that bested the field and opened a page in the record books to him, the third rifleman to win both prone and position championships at Perry.

Jack Writer moved up from junior champion to collegiate champion while J.J. McHugh, a point behind, was the civilian medalist. Junior Phil Bahrman won the Cobb Trophy. Jilann Brunett, who had won the collegiate title the previous year, moved up to women's champion as Richard Durian took the senior title.

## **1965**

There was just a little more excitement than usual on the line at Camp Perry in 1965. Echoing the cry of patriot messenger Paul Revere the prone shooters were warned, "The British are coming." Armed and ready, just as in 1775, United States prone shooters prepared to defend the Pershing Trophy against a pair of determined

teams from Great Britain and Canada. The sixth meeting of the teams promised to be a hard fought competition.

The full potential of the military marksmanship units was being felt for the first time in smallbore at Camp Perry. Air Force Major M.G. Winstead opened the tournament with a near perfect 400-39X iron sight score at 50 yards. Randle Team veteran Lenore Lemanski posted a fine 400-33X in the meter match while a Marine sergeant, Roy Green, fired a 399-30X to win the 100-yard match. Larry Moore, a civil servant working at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland, closed out the iron sight aggregate with a Dewar victory, 400-23X. The winner of the Hoppe Trophy and a Winchester 52D rifle was a seasoned competitor from Fort Benning, Master Sergeant William Krilling. "Bill" Krilling earned his spurs in the frozen hills of Korea where he sniped with an M1D. On his left breast pocket flap, under his Combat Infantryman's Badge, was pinned the circular International Distinguished Rifleman's Badge and to its left was the acorn of the Army's Distinguished Rifleman's Badge. Krilling's 1597-111X lead the field, perhaps no surprise from the first person to shoot a 3200 across the old Critchfield course in the days of the three pound trigger pull. Lenore Lemanski upheld family honor with the lady's title.

Junior rifleman Tom Whitaker won the any sight 50-yard match with a clean score and 37 Xs. Richard Hanson, one of the original three members of the Air Force team, shot a 400-35Xswin the meter match. Air Force Technical Sergeant A. H. Hannon was four Xs shy of perfection in his winning effort in the 100 yard match while Joe Steffey duplicated that score for a win in the Dewar Match. In the end it was the precision shooting of Larry Wilkens that won the any sight aggregate. His 1599-126X

led the field while Connecticut's A. Virginia Williams changed the complexion of the race for the women's title with her score of 1596-104Xs.

Larry Wilkens was on a roll, pulling out all stops, quickly setting his sights on the title with a 100-yard win, 400-35X. William E. Summers, a member of the Stinknik Rifle Club and teammate of Wilkens, scooped up the Dewar Match While Captain Dennis Dingman of the Army, fired a 400 with 30 Xs to win the 100-yard match. Inez Sargent made it clear that the women were made of stern stuff when she captured first place in the final match with a 400-31X in the Dewar.

Krilling had managed to hold his own over the second two 1600 aggregates and triumphed in the end. His 4788-337X gave him an outstanding lead of seven points over second place Wilkens, the Critchfield Trophy, another Winchester 52 rifle, a Lyman scope, a championship brassard, and bragging rights as both the Open and Service Champion. Wilkens had to settle for the civilian title while Rans Triggs became the senior champion. Marianne Jensen bested the iron sight champion, her sister Lenore Lemanski, and A. Virginia Williams to become the 1965 women's champion. D.B. Wood and L.Y. Anderson captured junior and collegiate titles respectively.

The international team matches again displayed the growing power of the military in the shooting disciplines. Of the 20 members of the Dewar Team there were 11 servicemen and eight of the ten shooters on the US Pershing Team were members of the Army, Air Force, or Marines.

The Pershing Team was built around Army marksmen Captain John Foster, Lones W. Wigger, Jr., Lieutenant Don Adams, and Specialist fifth Class Doug A. Knoop of the reserves. Marine Reserve Captain Frank Briggs and regulars Staff Sergeant

Donice “Dumpy” Bartlett and Sergeant Roy Green represented the sea services. Staff Sergeant Charles L. Madden was the sole Air Force shooter. Civilians Kermit Montross and Dean DeLaMater rounded out the team. Krilling and Technical sergeant Ted McMillion, USAF, were the alternates. Team Captain George Whittington, Coach Herb Hollister and Adjutant Larry Wilkens offered well-seasoned leadership.

The United States retained possession of the Pershing Trophy by defeating Great Britain by 16 points, 3945-194X to 3929-180X. The Canadians came in third with a 3886-149X. Wigger shared the highest score with British rifleman Adam Gordon, each putting together Dewar scores of 399-24X.

The position matches shaped up to be a gold medal affair shared by Collegiate Champion John Writer who won two of the four matches, one iron sight and one any sight, leaving a single victory each to Olympic champions Lieutenant Gary Anderson of the Nebraska National Guard and Wigger of the Army. In time Writer would join this elite group when he nailed down his Olympic gold at Munich in 1972.

In spite of Writer’s outstanding performance Wigger bested him. Wigger now had tied Art Cook and Jack Foster with two position wins. Phil Bahrman was declared the civilian champion; Tom Whitaker the junior winner, and Richard Dorian retained his senior crown.

A new comer to the Army shooting program was Margaret Thompson. A recent graduate of Kansas State University, where she had earned All American First Team honors, she was competing in her first major tournament as a member of the Army team. Thompson won the women’s position crown and was high shooter on the Randle Team. With time on her hands she remained and shot the high power program where,

in her first attempt, she unseated the four time national women's champion and Army team mate Specialist Fifth Class Barbara Hile. On the way to that major accomplishment she shot a perfect score in the premier high power standing event, The Navy Cup, to become the only women ever to win the prestigious trophy.

The matches could close on a good note. The future and health of smallbore shooting was not in doubt. There were over 1,000 entries in the two phases, 661 in prone and 355 in position. The Instructor-Junior School's enrollment pointed to a healthy seedbed of young shooters, 670 juniors took part in the instructional program while 121 adults learned the finer points of leading and teaching juniors.

## **1966**

There was a certain familiarity about the 1966 national smallbore championship, yet there was change. The venue was the same, many of the names were the same but the prone course of fire had reverted to the 'Double Critchfield' course last fired in 1960. The restoration of a fourth 1600 aggregate made the match more challenging and gave it a more familiar feel as most shooters were used to a daily 1600 schedule. The position championship course of fire was doubled to a 3200 point aggregate but most of the names on the awards bulletin stayed the same from the previous year.

The winner's circle was filled with a fairly even distribution of civilian and military shooters. Donna Hanson, obviously the recipient of her father's shooting genes, dropped but one X as she racked up a 400-39X in the opening iron sight 50-yard match of the longer format. Walt Tomsen, silver medalist in the English Match at the 1948 London Olympics won the first iron sight Dewar-just four Xs short of perfection, His first place finish was neatly sandwiched between a pair of victories by Barry Trew, a



member of the AMTU. Trew captured first in both the meter and the 100-yard match with a pair of 400s with solid X counts. Specialist Fourth Class Dave Kimes, USA, was at the top of the bulletin with a 1600-131X after the first day's shooting.

Wally Lyman, eldest son of Charles Lyman, III, a member of the NRA Board of Directors and President of The Lyman Gun Sight Corporation, took the lead early in the second metallic 1600 with a 400-33X. Karl Kenyon's 400-35X won the Dewar match while Joseph W. Barnes, a New Jersey rifleman, extended his run of consecutive possibles to seven with a 400-33X in the meter match. The final match, which Barnes also cleaned, was won by William E. Summers, a name often found next to the number one on Camp Perry match bulletins. The clatter of the adding machines and typewriters in the statistical shack died away as the masters of the second day's bulletins were slipped into mimeograph machines. As soon as the ink dried they were hung up for the anxious crowds to see. There was probably no one more anxious than the chain smoking Joe Barnes who was waiting to see if he had accomplished a feat never accomplished. In short order Barnes learned that he had just run 320 consecutive 10s and 245Xs for the first ever Perry 3200 iron sight possible. Inez Sargent still held sway over the women shooters and was in the lead with a score of 3193-249Xs after the first half.

Fort Benning's Captain Don Adams, three points behind Barnes, built on the momentum he had from his gold medal performance in the recent World Championships. Adams put together a 400-40 with 25 additional Xs to win the first match of the any sight aggregate. The meter match belonged to J.W. Paskey, II while Sargent continued to pad her lead with a 400-36X in the Dewar. Adam's team mate,

Lones Wigger, captured the 100 yard match but by the end of the day no one was better than Adams who ended the first day of scope with a 1600-141X. The last 160 shots saw two old veterans, Dick Hanson and Herb Hollister win matches while Air Force Airman Second Class Steve Clendenen and Adams split the remaining events. Adams lost a point over the final two days but his 3199-237X gave him the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy as the any sight champion and it carried him through to the national championship and service laurels with a new national match record of 6396-510X. Summers repeat his 1962 civilian championship victory. Sargent edged out the scope victor and defending champion Marianne Jensen for the women's title. Herb Hollister recaptured his senior title from Rans Triggs. Dan Wood earned his second consecutive junior title and with it an unusual distinction as he was the last to win the Whittington Trophy under the 480 shot course of fire, in 1965, and the first to win it shooting the restored 6400 point aggregate. The high collegiate shooter was Cliff Davis.

There was little doubt that Wigger was going to repeat his 1965 win. The expanded course of fire only gave him that much more opportunity to flex his muscles. He dominated the metallic sight matches, winning both. Wigger was levered out a clean sweep by Gary Anderson. In the any sight matches Anderson won the first with a 794-55X to Wigger's 793. Wigger, perhaps taking umbrage at Anderson's victory, came back strong, leaving no doubt as to his desire to win. He posted a 799-57X out of a possible 800-80X to nail down his second consecutive position title giving him a record setting three.

With the exception of Jack Schweitzer's win in the junior category all of the 1965 champions repeated. Wigger took open and service titles, Jack Writer earned his third

and final collegiate championship. Margaret Thompson and Phil Bahrman each retained women and junior titles. Richard Dorian locked up his third consecutive win as a senior.

## **1967**

The statistical crew had a daunting task as it sharpened pencils, checked plugs and overlays, and polished up its magnifying glasses prior to the start of the 1967 smallbore matches. Between the prone and position phases they would score close to 600,000 record shots fired in individual and team competition, an unsung job made for those possessed with great patience, good eye sight, and attention to detail. Their skills would be well appreciated, especially by Captain Bruce Meredith, USA, who went nip and tuck with Army Reserve Captain Dave Ross to turn in a score of 6396-539X to trim Ross by two points and push the national match record up by 29Xs. Meredith lost his four points in the metallic sight aggregate and his any sight score of 3200-281X set a new standard of excellence. Oddly enough his single sub aggregate win was a 100 yard any sight match where is 400-33X bested the field.

Approximately one in six of the prone competitors were from the military, but they accounted for almost half of the individual victories. In addition to Meredith CWO Dave Boyd and Lieutenant Ray Green of the Marines, Airman Second Class George "Spike" Hadley, USAF, and Army Captains Jack Foster, Lones Wigger, and Army Reservist Dave Ross accounted for the rest. Noted gunsmith Karl Kenyon, Kim Rickert, Robert Wempe, Douglas Knoop, National Senior Champion Herb Hollister, and Metallic Sight Prone Champion Kenneth Leasure held up the honor of the civilians. Hollister was the

only competitor to shoot a perfect 400-40X in any match, and he did it twice, once in the any sight 50 yard and any sight 50 meter match.

Meredith was named Open, Service, and Any Sight Champion. John Garrison was the civilian champion. In a real dogfight Mary Parris and Barbara Hampson clawed it out for the collegiate title with Parris edging out Hampson by just two points. Daniel Wood headed the junior category while Inez Sargent made her way to the podium to accept the Remington Trophy as National Women's Champion for the third time in four years.

With three time national champion Lones Wigger, an infantry officer, in Viet Nam; the position match was viewed as an open contest. However, Wigger's commitment to shooting and winning might have been underestimated. He was about half way through his tour of duty and scheduled for two weeks of Rest and Recreation leave. As a matter of course single soldiers tended to head to the fleshpots of Hong Kong or Singapore, while those of a more sedate nature flew to Australia or even Hawaii, if married, to meet their families. Wigger, being Wigger, cadged a series of flights east and ended up at Camp Perry in time to compete. You may get Wigger out of Camp Perry but you just can't get Camp Perry out of Wigger. Firing line rumors of his possible entry notwithstanding, the competition was truly taken by surprise when he arrived. His presence was felt despite his reduced training opportunities.

Wigger won a prone match, earned a spot on the Dewar Team, and then fought it out with present and former Army teammates Gary Anderson, Jack Writer, Jack Foster, and Dave Kimes for the position title. It was a heroic effort but his lack of training and the skilled competition he faced blocked him from his fourth win. Kimes took the iron

sight aggregate, splitting the two matches with Anderson. It took a pair of Jacks, Foster and Writer, to open the any sight aggregate. Foster won one a match and the aggregate while the young Writer took the other sub aggregate. They both had outstanding scores in victory, each shooting a 798 with the scope.

In the end Anderson prevailed and emerged as the Open and Service Champion in position aggregate. Cliff Davis, the prone collegiate champion in 1966, garnered the 1967 position honors for the scholars. Margaret Thompson, now a captain, ran her string of women titles to three while Christopher Bowles won his first civilian trophy. William P. Schweitzer succeeded his brother Jack as the junior champion and Robert White snapped Richard Dorian's three year win streak in the senior class.

The 1967 National Matches would be a watershed. Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor played a Halloween trick on the competitive shooters of the nation when he announced, on October 31, 1967, that the Army would not conduct or support the National Matches in 1968. While the official reason given was economic, the expenditures involved in fighting the war in Viet Nam were rising, it was not a totally realistic claim when one considered the miniscule per centage of the Army's budget devoted to the National Matches. It was the strongly held belief among the shooting community that anti-gun forces in Congress had, under the subterfuge of economics, brought their weight to bear to end the 65 year old program. The NRA would not stand for a cancellation of the program and proceeded with plans to conduct the matches on its own.

## 1968

An *ad hoc* committee of NRA Board of Directors members struggled throughout the winter of 1967 and into the spring of 1968 with the awesome task of mounting a full scale National Match series without the accustomed financial and logistical support of the Army. They were able to coordinate the effort and resources of the NRA staff, the Ohio National Guard, numerous businesses and citizens of Ottawa County, Ohio, several hundred volunteers, and competitive shooters to hold a successful championship. Of course the numbers were down dramatically. From a high of 1118 smallbore entries in 1962, the best year ever, the 1968 field dropped by about a third, to a mere 722. Although there were fewer competitors on the firing line the level of competition had not diminished.

The 1965 junior champ Tom Whitaker, now a sergeant in the Air Force, dominated the first day's shooting with victories in the 50 yard, 50 meter, and 100 yard match. Captain Donald Adams, the 1966 national prone champion recently returned from a tour of duty in Viet Nam, kept Whitaker from a clean sweep when he won the Dewar Match. The wins were widely distributed over the next four matches of the metallic sight aggregate, Adams picked up another first in the Dewar while his teammate Major Presley Kendall won the 50 yard match. Perry veterans Dick Hanson and Marianne Jensen emerged at the head of the pack in the 100 yard and meter matches. There was little that anyone could do to slow down Whitaker who won the metallic sight championship with a 3198-274X, nipping at this heels was Adams with a 3198-242X and Kendall's 3194-262X.

Olympic, Pershing, and Dewar veteran Walt Tomsen shot a perfect 400-40X to win the first any sight 50 yard match. Not to be outdone Edgar O'Neal fired the exact same score in the tough 50 meter match. George Stidworthy picked up wins in the Dewar and 100 yard matches. Rand Triggs, 1941 champ, Robert Young and Pres Kendall showed that Tomsen and O'Neal had no monopoly on perfection when they shot possibles with 40Xs in the final 100 yard, Dewar, and 50 yard matches. John Garrison, the reigning civilian champion took the meter match with a 400-39X. At the end of the day Stidworthy, known as the "1600 King" showed why he held that title. A 3200-288X gave the Arizona rifleman a slim one point lead over Wigger and William Summers in the race for the U.S. Cartridge Corporation Trophy.

Whitaker won the metallic sight and service championship and Stidworthy won the any sight title but Adams, who enjoyed a three point lead over Kendall and Joseph Barnes, regained the big prize; the prone national championship. Marianne Jensen, former women and two time junior champion, returned to the winner's circle to again pick up the Remington Trophy. William Summers would make it three civilian titles in six years with his 1968 victory. Sue Lausten and Barbara Hampson went head on head for four days for the junior title with Lausten eventually building up a two point lead to win.

It was a close run match in the position championship. It seemed as though one could not win a metallic sight match unless your first initial was a J as Jack Schweitzer and J. Watkins showed. Gary Anderson made a run at retaining his title with a win in the first any sight match while two time prone champion Don Adams'; hoping to add a position title to his resume, took off with a triumph in the last match. When the smoke

had cleared it seemed that no one was looking at Lones Wigger, Pres Kendall, and D.I. Boyd who finished one, two, and three with scores of 1560-84X, 1559-77X, and 1557-77X. It was Wigger's fourth title since his first in 1963 and something like a trend was developing. Even though the course was reduced by half to deal with the realities of the withdrawal of military support the excitement was still there.

Former Air Force Team member Henry Yoos was declared the civilian winner as Captain Margaret Thompson added a fourth title, tying her with Jilann Brunett. William Schweitzer repeated as the junior champion keeping the title in the family for the third year in a row.

Perhaps the real winners of the 1968 championships were all of the shooters of the United States. Through their efforts the matches had been kept alive in a hostile political environment. Certainly it was at a lower level of participation than in the past, but not competitive energy. The NRA volunteer program, which has become so much of a vital part of the Camp Perry experience, got its start as did a spirit of cooperation between the various constituencies that make the National Matches a reflection of America at its best.

## **1969**

The National Matches had weathered the storm of the previous year and began the slow climb upwards. With a year of experience under their belts the volunteers had the situation in hand and the matches ran smoothly. Entries increased and the traditional course for team events, reduced for the emergency, was brought back. The position matches returned to the 3200 point aggregate and the issues surrounding the



1968 matches were viewed in the light of “what doesn’t kill you only serves to make you stronger.”

After a great start during the 1968 championships Tom Whitaker faltered and was overtaken. That would not be the case for the Air Force Staff Sergeant his year. Despite determined challenges from Marine Captain Ray Green and Dick Hanson Whitaker managed to pull ahead by a two point margin to capture the title that had eluded him the previous year. On his way to both open and service titles he had four individual match victories and took the metallic sight championship. Hanson would settle for civilian honors just five Xs behind Green’s silver medal performance.

Margaret Thompson, recently married to Marine shooter Gil Murdock, won her first woman’s prone title to add to four position crowns. The prone title did not come easy as she ran neck and neck with Debbie Davis. In a photo finish Murdock and Davis went down to Xs to determine the winner with the Army captain’s 6384-493X just three Xs better than the junior from Dallas. They had shot as teammates on the Randle Team, where the both cleaned the iron sight Dewar course but Murdock’s X count of 38 was a Randle record, three ahead of Davis.

New Jersey juniors did well when Linda Ritchie established a new national record in the metallic sight 50-yard match with a 400-40X and Doug Charity copped the junior title. Ray Carter and Phil Bahrman followed in Ritchie’s footsteps when each posted a record equaling score of 400-37X in the metallic meter match.

The Army swept the position matches. Wigger, now back at the AMTU, lead the charge with a record fifth win based on his score of 3166-158X. Fellow AMTU soldiers Lieutenant Phil Bahram and Master Sergeant Bill Krilling rounded out the top three.

Margaret Murdock, fresh from her prone triumph, established her preeminence with a record fifth consecutive win as women's champion. She also became the first to win both a woman's prone and position championship, doing it in the same year, another first. The civilian winner was Charles L. Peterson and Stephen Brooks and Colonel Maurice Kaiser were the junior and senior champions.

It was a decade of transition from the traditional Perry of the past to a more streamlined and independent Perry of the future. Military support, seemingly essential, was not the vital element it was thought to be. The reduction in Federal support of 1968 would be a precursor of things to come, just as the NRA's answer, volunteers, would help keep the program alive and well. So ended the tumultuous sixties, and with the final championship of the decade Captain Crossman's smallbore experiment celebrated its fiftieth anniversary; with strong resolve to see another successful fifty years.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **The Wind Blows and Wigger Wins-Again and Again and Again...**

#### **1970s**

The second half century of national outdoor smallbore competition opened under somewhat different circumstances than faced at Caldwell in 1919. When Crossman instituted the smallbore program the world was at peace, the War to End Wars was a year old memory and the full force of the Federal government was behind the National Matches. Fifty years later the nation was entangled in a land war in Southeast Asia that was tearing at the fabric of society while a somewhat beleaguered NRA was mounting the National Matches with minimal Federal financial and moral support. Despite the circumstances the NRA had stepped up and met the challenge with a small cadre of staff from headquarters and a hardy and happy crew of volunteers who filled the gap left by the departing military.

#### **1970**

The team matches opened the prone phase of competition and much to the surprise and delight of the competitors a foursome of juniors from the east, Linda and Todd Ritchie of New Jersey and Ronald and Robert Coleman from Decatur, Georgia, showed all how it was done with iron sights by taking the American Dewar Trophy. Perhaps stung by the effrontery of youth, or the dominance of the eastern shooters, elder statesmen of the sport from the far west took the matters into their own hands. Californians Bob Adler and Bill Holstead captained and coached while Arizonians Herb Hollister and George Stidworthy anchored the Officer's Trophy winners. Any sight matches tend to level the playing field between the eyes of youth and those of the

graybeards, or so it seems. The experienced hard holders from the desert made good use of decades of experience learned on some of the toughest ranges in the country to win.

The first 1600 aggregate, shot with iron sights, opened with Ron Coleman making it clear that his team win the previous day was no fluke. He quickly put another stamp on the tournament by winning the opening Dewar match with a 400-33Xs. The Marines dominated the middle of the day competition. Reserve Major Jim Hinkle and Regular Warrant Officer Greg Connor captured the 50 yard and 100-yard matches.

Hinkle would not be satisfied with the win. His score of 400-40X had tied a jointly held National Match record at 50 yards. Linda Ritchie had established it in 1965, Donna Hanson tied it the following year, and in the third consecutive year Kim Rickert matched the two others. Ritchie would again clean it with 40 in 1969.

Early on the morning of the second day of iron sights Hinkle was set up on the line determined to make the record his. In short order he sighted in and then banged 15 rounds of Eley Tenex ammunition through the center of the four bulls on the A21 100-yard target before a shot escaped the X ring. His 400-40X-15X established the long range record iron sight score for Camp Perry, a performance that stands to this day.

Civilians made a play for recognition when Joe Steffey closed out the day with a 36X clean in the 50 meter match. Even the seasoned defending Woman Champion, Margaret Murdock, was being hard pressed by Linda Ritchie and Mary Lou Adler, civilians, and juniors at that.

After Hinkle completed his successful assault on the National Match Record the line filled for the second day of metallic sight competition. Linda Ritchie tightened the

noose a bit tighter on Murdock when she won the 50-yard match with a 400-39X. Bill Rigby, an Army Reserve lieutenant, shot a 35X clean in the 50 meter match for the only military win in sub-aggregate matches of the day. Wayne Wood and Ken Stannard closed out the day with wins in the Dewar and 100-yard match respectively. The iron sight championship was a tight contest. Captain Dave Ross, USAR, Ronald West, and Ron Coleman were bunched up in a three way tie, each down four points. Tied at 3196 the championship went to Ross, who had an X count of 265 to West's 248 and Coleman's 245.

Greg Tomsen, who had been a stand out rifleman at New York's Saint John's University, was one of a pack of ten who fired perfect scores of 400-40X with any sights at 50-yards. To declare a winner in a match with an unbreakable tie the competitors square off in a shoulder-to-shoulder sudden death shoot-off. Whereas Hinkle had a quiet morning to make his assault on a record these shooters would have to contend with the late afternoon conditions after firing had been completed. This situation was dictated because the challenge period for the yard match ended earlier than that of the meter match allowing Hinkle to shoot the first thing next day, while this group had to shoot through a mirage and wind that had a day to build and strengthen.

A small crowd of supporters, shooting aficionados, and kibitzers gathered behind the line and set up spotting scopes as targets were posted. In rapid succession Tomsen filled the four record bulls of his target with Xs. The range crew confirmed his 20X clean as well as one for Ron West and Pres Kendall. The three survivors of the first string posted a second card and got back into position. Fighting through wind, murky mirage, and a darkening sky they shot another 20 shots. The range crew

anxious to get to the volunteers' party scored the targets on the frames giving West 17Xs, Kendall 18Xs, and Tomsen 19Xs. Tomsen wished to challenge his target as he felt he had 20Xs, but that would have to wait until the next day. While the volunteers closed down the range and hustled off to the merrymaking, Tomsen packed up his gear and accepted the congratulations of the gallery.

Tomsen never got a satisfactory answer to his challenge, although he did get his dollar back indicating he had won it. His target apparently evaporated into the ether, never to be seen again, denying him a chance to examine it at close range. On top of that little mystery the record eroded over the next few years, dropping from 39Xs to 35Xs, by a rule change that declared records in excess of 40Xs had to be broken in groups of five Xs. To consign Tomsen's record to history a challenger must shoot back-to-back 400-40X targets, an impressive task under any circumstances but a near impossible one on a late Camp Perry afternoon.

Whether it was heredity, Tomsen's father was the silver medalist in the English Match at the 1948 London Olympics, or environment, he had been trained by the likes of Art Cook, Art Jackson, Frank Briggs, and Tito Balesterie, will never be known. What is known is that the 400-40X-35X Camp Perry record shot that day has survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century unchallenged.

At the end of the metallic sight aggregate three shooters were clumped together at the top, each with a score of 3196. Just heartbeats separated metallic sight champion Army Captain David Ross III from the second and third place finishes of Ron West and Ron Coleman. Ross held the lead on the strength of his X count of 265. The two Rons had "only" managed to amass 248 and 245Xs each. Ross led the pack but

perfection is demanded to win in prone shooting. The old prone saying that a 400 with no Xs beats a 399-39X could not be far from Ross' thoughts as the any sight stages began.

Over the third day Ross would display both a rock steady hold and nerves made of steel. He would keep the lead with a perfect 1600. Coleman faded but Olympian and former prone champion Vic Auer moved up with West and kept within a point. On the distaff side Marianne Vitito overtook Murdock on the third day while Ritchie tenaciously held on to second.

On the final day there was another flurry of record setting performances. Carl Evans posted a 400-40X in the 50 yard match and was forced into a shoot-off, and a chance to break Tomsen's brand new record, when Herb Hollister's grandson Jack posted the same score. Young Hollister punched out 20 consecutive Xs for the match and a new junior Camp Perry record. Three riflemen tied in the Dewar with 400-37Xs and Ron Silber's 200-20X at 100 yards gave him the win as his long range score was the best of the lot. The aggregate score, a perfect 3200 with 297 Xs, was shot twice, once by Auer and once by Marine Gunner D.I. Boyd. The rules books came out and after comparing 100 yard X counts Auer took it 107 to 105.

West held on for third overall while Vitito kept Ritchie at bay to take her third woman's title. Ron Coleman's efforts were not wasted as he garnered the junior laurels while the 1941 champion, Rans Triggs, once again took home honors as high senior. It was, both literally and figuratively, a record year for smallbore prone.

It was an unusual distribution of winners in the four position sub-aggregates as the scores rose throughout in a tournament that would become somewhat of a family

affair. Jack Schweitzer won the first iron sight match with a 794-45X while D.I. Boyd took the second with a Camp Perry record setting 795-57X. When the scopes went on CWO Ray Green, USMC put 55 shots into the X ring, 20 into the ten ring, and two slipped out wide enough to be nines for a 798-55X match winning score. Not at all impressed by Green's performance Tricia Foster closed out the two day match with a 798-56X!

Having kept below the radar for the two days Lieutenant Jack Writer, of the Army Reserve, popped above the horizon with a 3175-216X for the national title. Major Jack Foster was an X ahead of the young officer but two points behind him in score. Boyd closed out the top three. Jack's wife, Tricia, claimed the women's title, perhaps making them the best competitive shooting married couple in the nation. Maintaining the family theme were Jack and Bill Schweitzer who returned home with Jack's civilian title and Bill's junior crown. Fred Roeding won senior honors as the 1970 smallbore championships came to an end.

While the best of the game were battling it out the next 278 juniors of the next generation were being carefully groomed at the Instructor-Junior Camp. After an intensive three day school, under the direction of NRA staff, 48 freshly minted instructors took the youngsters under their wing for several days of live fire instruction and competition.

## **1971**

It was a fine turn out to celebrate the National Rifle Association's Centennial. The Association had had its ups and downs since George Wingate and a group of Union officers created the NRA in the aftermath of the Civil War and it was successfully



rising, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the military pull out in 1967. The entries continued to rise since the NRA had taken over the running of the competitive program at Camp Perry, and the military began to show some renewed interest in the conduct of the matches, as evidenced by the visits of seven general officers from both active and reserve components of Army and the Marine Corps as well as the National Guard. When the 355 prone competitors took to the line they stretched nearly a half of a mile from the first firing point to last. And while the shooters had plenty of room to spread out, a firing point being six feet wide, they were tightly packed at the top of the scoreboard. Prone is a demanding discipline and in most cases it was just a few Xs that separated the winners from the also rans.

Tom Wasson, just off his first indoor season with East Tennessee State and All American First Team honors, won the first match of the tournament with a 400-39X metallic sight 50 yard score but the statistical office had to go to the rulebook to break a three-way tie for his win, setting the tone of the week at the start. It would be a battle of Xs and shoot-offs. Army Captain Bob Bach won the 50 meter match with a 400-35X while Edward Caygle, Jr., dominated the Dewar with his 400-33X. The defending woman's position champion, Tricia Foster, made her mark in the 100-yard match with a 400-30X.

On the second day of metallic sight matches there was a rare smallbore showing by a shooter representing the U.S. Navy when Petty Officer First Class Thomas Treinen duplicated Tom Wasson's 50 yard iron sight score for a win. Treinen was no stranger to prone competition, albeit of a slightly different kind. A year earlier Treinen had won the

premier of long range shooting trophy, the Wimbledon Cup, with a record setting perfect score of 100-20V-12V.

Civilians would sweep the rest of the day's events with perfect scores. Ryland Murden and Tricia Foster were running neck and neck for the aggregate and split the Dewar and Meter matches while Texan Edgar O'Neal took the 100-yard win.

When all was said and done Tricia Foster had held the best and was awarded the Hoppe Memorial Trophy as the 1971 Metallic Sight Prone Champion, an honor she richly deserved for she decisively out Xed runner up Murden, who had shot an identical 3194, by 14Xs. During the mid week break for Team Day all would have a chance to rest and recoup for the final two-day any sight effort, a 3200-point aggregate where no quarter would be asked or given.

Just as in 1970 the first 50 yard any sight match would go to a shoot-off. Bob Hickey, a former Collegiate All American, was pitted against Janet Hays, a future All American, in a contest that saw Hickey emerge victorious by a single X. Carl Guenther wrapped up the 50 Meter match with a near perfect 400-39X. Marine Reserve Sergeant John Comley began making a play in the any sight phase with a 400-36X match winning score in the Dewar. Former prone champion Bill Krilling closed out the day with a win in the 100-yard match.

The final day opened with Ray Carter's victory in the 50 yard match, a 400-40X but an attempt at Tomsen's Perry record fell far short with only 5Xs tallied. George Tolson III's 400-36X was good for a first place in the Dewar while Edgar O'Neal notched up another 100 yard victory in the last match of the long tournament.

While he hadn't won a single match George Stidworthy emerged as the any sight champion by the substantial margin of four points over second and third place finishers John Comley and Major Bruce Meredith's who were tied with a score of 3194. Junior Janet Hays took the woman's trophy.

Sergeant Comley had slowly crept up in the standings, a third place finish in the iron sight championship followed up by a second place any sights led to a first place finish in the grand aggregate. The National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championship shot the service rifle when on active duty but, living on the GI Bill and a small retainer from his school for teaching physical education classes in rifle shooting he found smallbore more favorable to his student sized budget. Meredith claimed second place on the strength of his any sight scores. Stidworthy, "The 1600 King", used his scope scores to help him to a third place finish and civilian honors. Iron sight champion Tricia Foster, whose husband Jack was in Viet Nam, held on to claim the woman's crown. J. Kenneth Johnson, the 1956 prone champion, found himself on the stage as the high scoring senior while David Ashe was named junior champion.

Team championships were closely fought with teams winning by razor thin margins. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association foursome of Kermit Montross, Lloyd Norton, and Walt and Greg Tomsen fired a metallic sight score of 1593-108X to skin a ROTC Team of hot shooting college students by a point for the American Dewar Trophy. The home team, the Ohio State Blue Team shot a perfect 1600 with any sights to best the Stinknik Dudes by the same margin for The Officers' Reserve Trophy.

In the words of Yogi Berra, the 1971 position championships were "*Déjà Vu* all over again." Two of the powerhouses of United States rifle shooting were serving in

Southeast Asia, Jack Foster and Lones Wigger. Jack's wife Tricia was upholding the Foster family's shooting honor, but the Wigger children were not old enough to compete and his wife Mary Kay was not a shooter. Earlier that year Wigger had, just as he had done in 1967, used his precious Rest and Recreation leave to fly home to participate in the Pan American Games tryouts in Phoenix. He immediately returned to Viet Nam but was ordered back home, at the behest of the NRA, to represent the United States at the Pan Am Games in Cali, Columbia which were shot a week earlier in Cali, Columbia..

After winning a silver medal in the 50 meter position match Wigger packed, pulled out his wallet, bought a ticket on a commercial flight to the States, leaving Pan Am teammates Lanny Bassham and Jack Writer waiting for the team flight. In Miami he joined his wife Mary Kay, borrowed a car from a friend, Stu Watkins, and headed north for Perry. Driving through the long night they pulled up in front of the entry office at five AM. Wigger took a nap, awoke in time to pick up his match entry packet, and reported to the line to try to regain his lost position crown. Bassham and Writer, somewhere enroute, were nowhere to be seen.

By the end of day the sleep deprived, but fiercely competitive, Wigger was relaxing in the glow of a 797-63X shot in the morning. The score had broken the old metallic sight Perry record by two points and it looked as if he would win that match while ceding the afternoon match to Marine Staff Sergeant Jerry Boswell's 792-44X. Shortly thereafter Wigger was astonished to learn that his record had stood but just a few minutes. Mary Keys, a petite 17-year-old schoolgirl from Virginia, had topped him by a point.

Shooting a standard rifle, the junior had cleaned the three lower positions and closed with a 198 standing for an aggregate of 798-51X and a new National Match record! The story, perhaps apocryphal, grew that the bone tired Wigger was holding a box of ammunition in his hand when he heard the news. He chuckled and, tapping the pasteboard with his trigger finger to draw attention to the printing, suggested that young Mary's parents should have paid attention to the message, "Keep out of the reach of children."

After a good night's sleep Wigger awoke well rested and proceeded to win both any sight matches with scores of 797-63X and 794-49. His two-day aggregate was just one point below the National Championship record he had set in 1966 and, although he didn't set a match record he now had won a record setting sixth national position championship. Unaware that Wigger would be shooting the Army, which swept the team matches, had not entered him on any of their teams.

Joining Wigger on the stage for the awards ceremony was Ron Plumb who had placed third overall and took home the Cobb Trophy representing the junior championship. Keys, to no one's surprise, became the woman champion while Ray Carter earned civilian honors and Fred Roeding was senior champion.

In short order the huts emptied as the smallbore shooters headed home. Wigger drove home to Montana, boarded a plane, and returned to Viet Nam. It was an eventful two tours in the combat zone for Wigger, highlighted by R&Rs that included Two National Championships with one title and one Pan Am Games silver medal. In his own words Wigger summed it up as, "Not too bad."

## 1972

Section A-9 of the National Match program is entitled "Weather Conditions." It states "Weather at Camp Perry is quite variable. Clothing for hot, cool, and wet conditions should be brought." Certainly even Wigger and Foster, recently returned from Viet Nam, did not expect that the monsoons would follow them to the shores of Lake Erie, but follow them it did. The prone matches opened under sunny skies which quickly filled with clouds which soon opened up. The rain fell and collected in the low-lying hollows of the drained swamp that is Camp Perry. For the rest of the championships shooters would wade through the standing water as they went about setting up equipment and changing targets.

One of the closest run prone championships on record began when Major Presley Kendall of the USAMU made it clear he was not going to roll over to anyone. His 400-40X in the first match of the tournament threw down the gauntlet to the rest of the 477 competitors who would endure the rain and chill of the next four days. David Avril was not intimidated and took the 50 meter match with a 400-37X. Army Reserve Major Bruce Meredith took up the challenge and won the final two matches of the day, the Dewar and the 100-yard match, with a pair of 400s, 37Xs in the Dewar and 32Xs at 100 yards.

On the second day of shooting Ray Carter's 50 yard 400-39X lead the pack in the first match. Tom Whitaker would not be denied his share of honor posted a winning 400-31X in the 50 meter match. Kendall won, with a 400-34X, the Dewar just as Dennis Ghiselli did in the final 100-yard iron sight match with a 400-26X. Much to everyone's surprise the metallic sight champion was Private First Class Steven Kern, USA who had

only placed second in the first Dewar. However, he was very consistent and ended the first two days with a metallic sight score of 3197-247X. Right behind him was Ron Coleman, who had cut a huge swath in 1971, and the hungry and circling prone shark Kendall. Captain Margaret Murdock, USAR, no stranger to the winner's circle, was the woman's champion.

The second half of the championship got underway, it being so wet that the nautical term for a ship sailing from harbor was more than appropriate. Dave Ross, the 1970 prone champion, struck first in the any sight aggregate with a 400-40X in the 50 yard match that got him into a shoot-off with Carleton DeHart and fellow Army shooter Captain Dennis Dingman. Dehart had 16 Xs while the two captains tied with 18Xs each. As Ross' last bull's-eye was a 50-5X clean and Dingman had dropped an X the match went to Ross.

The foul weather seemed to have a limited effect on the shooting as demonstrated by David Koenig's 400-39 in the meter match and the fact that the Dewar went to a shoot-off after several shooters knotted up at a score of 400-38X, Robert Ralston emerged victorious with a 200-15X in the match deciding 20 shot shoot off. Murdock closed out the day with a 400-37X at 100 yards.

The match wound through the final day with high scores needed to win every match. The weather may have been an irritant but it was not hampering the competitors as they continued to turn in first class performances. All four matches were won with perfect scores and high X counts. Doug Knoop won the yard match with a 38X clean, Dave Ross's 400-37X was the winner in the meter match, Dean De La Meter shot a

400-37X to win the Dewar, and Alan Knowles closed out the 1972 prone championship with a near perfect 400-39X at 100 yards.

Ross, in a valiant attempt to regain his prone crown, topped the 1962 prone champ, Kendall, by a wide margin of Xs for the any sight title. Both men carded 3199s but Ross amassed 289Xs to Kendall's 277Xs. Mary Lou Adler, a junior from California, was the new women's champion with a 3196-103X.

In the end Ross needed absolute perfection to repeat as national champion but he fell short by a single point. The national title went to Kendall, who firing a 6394-536X, made his second trip to the top step on the winner's podium. Meredith, a scant two Xs behind Kendall, won the silver leaving Ross with the bronze.

Rans Triggs once again took home another senior title while Murdock, the high woman, added another Remington trophy to her collection. Adler emerged as junior champion. Tom Whitaker, now a civilian, became the first recipient of the William P. Schweitzer Award. Schweitzer's widow, noted artist Gertrude Schweitzer, memorialized the renowned prone competitor of the years between the World Wars, by providing a supply of 14-karat medallions suspended from a two tone blue ribbon to be awarded to the National Civilian Prone Champion. The front of the medal bears a representation of Schweitzer in shooting coat, rifle in hand, while the obverse shows a prone shooter and bears the inscription, "NRA Small Bore Rifle Civilian Prone Champion."

The position matches took place under different weather conditions than prone, the clouds blew away, and the position matches were blessed with typical August Camp Perry weather. Mary Keys, fresh from a summer school session, got off to a grand start by winning the first metallic sight match with a 795-45X. It was a bit short of the match



record she set the previous year but it was better than any other score on the line. In the afternoon Jack Foster put up a 794-48X to bring him into contention.

On the following day left handed Marine Gunner D.I. Boyd burst out of the pack during the first match of any sights with a new record score of 799-58X, one X better than the record set by Wigger back in 1966. Although over all scores was close, Boyd was down 23 points, Keys and Murdock 24, with Wigger and Foster nipping at their heels, momentum was now on Boyd's side. With a full head of steam Boyd won the second match of the day with a 795-49X slamming the door on those that trailed him. The new National Position and Service Champion had shot a 3173-193X. Seven points behind was the defending champion Wigger and, trailing him by one, was Foster. Keys, just two Xs behind Foster held onto both junior and woman's title and became the first to be awarded the new Mary C. Camp Trophy. Given in memory of his wife by William Camp, the silver loving cup mounted atop a wooden base would symbolize excellence for female position shooters. Ed Etzel swept up the civilian title while Robert Kline, a Pennsylvanian, won senior honors.

The summer shooting season was winding down for those who left Perry bound for home. But for a quintet of Perry champions and veterans things were just heating up. Jack Writer, Lones Wigger, Vic Auer, and Lanny Bassham were soon packing for the Munich Olympic Games. Writer struck gold first with a world record performance in smallbore three position with Bassham taking the silver in the same event. Wigger won the 300-meter position title on a tiebreaker while Auer took the silver in the 60 shot prone English Match.

## 1973

The usual excitement that surrounds the anticipation of participating in the National Championship was heightened by the fact that 1973 would again be a Pershing Trophy Match Year. The United States, Canada, and Great Britain had shot for the Pershing Trophy since it was placed in competition by General of the Armies John J. "Black Jack" Pershing in the early 1930s. Great Britain held the trophy from the inaugural match in 1931 until the Americans finally pried it from their grasp in 1939. Since that time the trophy resided in the United States despite British challenges in 1953 and 1965. The ten shooters to represent the United States would be selected from scores fired in the 1973 metallic sight aggregate.

Fittingly enough, the first day of shooting ended with a 1599 three way tie, the trio being David Brickles, the British National Champion, Lones Wigger, and Perry veteran William Summers. Competition would be stiff over the next three days with records falling almost every turn as past champions fought hard to regain the prone crown.

The 1967 champion, Bruce Meredith, now a major with the Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, won the opening 50-yard metallic sight match with a 400-39X. Tom Whitaker, the 1969 champion, set a new Camp Perry record when he took the 50 meter match with a 400-38X, an X better than the old record. Wigger, who was prone champ in 1963, grabbed the Dewar with a 400-33X. The day closed with the current prone champion, Pres Kendall, shooting a 34X clean to win the 100-yard match.

On the second day the battle of reigning champions continued to evolve when CWO D.I. Boyd, the Marine who won the 1972 position championship, knocked out a 400-40X to push Kendall into second place by a single X after the second 50-yard

match. Bill Schweitzer, who had racked up a number of junior titles but was no relation to great smallbore shooter of an earlier era with the same name, put up a 400-38X in the Meter match to top the field of 570. Kendall, who was working hard to repeat his win of the previous year, won the Dewar with a 400-37X. A relative unknown junior, the 18-year-old Kevin Richards, had the best score in the final iron sight match at 100 yards to close out the iron sight aggregate. The final standings for the first two days indicated two things. The first was that competition over the next two days for the national title would be tough. The second was that the winning the Pershing Trophy was not a sure thing for the hosts as Brickles had finished the metallic championship in second place, neatly sandwiched between Wigger and Whitaker. Schuyler Helbing, a fourteen-year-old expert from Texas, led the women with a 3191-234X to win the Peters Cartridge Company Trophy.

The riflemen on the United States Pershing Team were Wigger and Kendall of the Army, Steve Kern of the Army Reserves, civilians Whitaker, Richards, Allan Knowles, Ron West, and Dave Weaver, and a pair of Marines: Jerry Boswell and John Akemon. William Summers and Eric Sundstrom were alternates while Adjutant C.J. Schaeffer and Coach Bill Krilling assisted Captain Harry Hoy. The course of fire for the Pershing is a Dewar on the host nation's targets. The United States Team left the 50-yard line with a perfect score, 2000X2000 and a four-point lead over the visitors. Long range is a great leveler and the US Team, even with a small lead, could not rest easy as the British are known for their ability at 100 yards, a skill honed on the notoriously difficult ranges at Bisley. The home range advantage held and seven of the US belly shooters cleaned the final stage and the United States held onto the Pershing Trophy.

There was an unusual numerical flip flop as the US had eight clean scores and two shooters who dropped points while the British had two perfect scores and eight under 400.

With the team matches in the books the last two days of the championships got underway with no let up in intensity. George Stidworthy shot a 40X clean in the 50-yard match and was forced into a five-way shoot off with Wigger, Whitaker, Kendall, and Brickles. The crafty old "1600 King" won when he shot 20 more Xs. Frank Boyd, a protégé of the New Jersey shooting legend Francis O'Hare, blew the centers out of his meter targets for a match winning 400-39X. Lieutenant Robert Mitchell, USAR, shot a winning 400-38X in the Dewar while Edward P. Watson ended the day with a match winning 400-37X at 100 yards.

Helbing won the second 50 yard match with a 200-20X score in a shoot-off required by an unbreakable 400-40X tie in the match. Mitchell began a charge to lock up the any sight championship with a 400-39 at the 50-meter line. Whitaker, still full of fight and not letting up, shot a 400-38X in the Dewar for the win. Meredith made a last lunge at the title with a 400-37X at 100 yards but it was too little too late.

While the any sight championship was being decided in Mitchell's favor three previous champions, Wigger, Whitaker, and Kendall, were battling shot for shot for the grand aggregate. After 639 record shots it all came down to the last cartridge in Wigger's loading block. Whitaker and Kendall were finished and tied in score, 6395s each, but Whitaker enjoyed a four X lead. Wigger's score to that point was 6386 but his X count of 545 was higher than either Kendall or Whitaker. After four days the whole tournament was reduced to a one shot match: a nine or better would earn Wigger the

championship, anything less, and he was an also ran. Fighting a strong pulse that had him all over the ten ring the Olympic medalist concentrated on the basics and squeezed off his final shot. Less than a quarter of a second later Wigger watched a bullet hole blossom at five o'clock. Pride demanded an X or ten and this was no time to be sloppy even with the nine ring to play with. It was a wide shot, a pretty shabby shot by his standards, but it cut the ten line. The new champion breathed a heavy sigh of relief as he admitted to less than a rock steady hold on the last shot.

Wigger had wrapped up both the national and service titles. Whitaker repeated as the Schweitzer medal winner and Helbing took woman honors. Stidworthy bested all seniors while Richards had the leading score in the junior category. Kendall had to settle for a third place finish over all.

Soon after the first position match began a boat sailed into the impact area and shooting was suspended for almost four hours until the errant vessel could be removed. When the command to commence fire was given after lunch D.I. Boyd continued where he left off in 1972. The position champ shot through the windy conditions and posted a 788-38X with irons to jump into the lead finishing just as the second ceasefire of the day was ordered as thunder rumbled, lightning sparked, and rain fell. So much time had been lost that the second iron sight match was postponed until the following day.

Wigger won the second metallic sight match setting up a head on head contest between the two champions. Rhode Island Air Guard Staff Sergeant George "Spike" Hadley won the first any sight match with a 794-39X, just ahead of Boyd and Wigger, with the highest score posted in any of the four sub-aggregate matches. Boyd managed to pick up a point on Wigger but he was still behind by one going into the final

match. The two men swapped the lead back and forth throughout the last match and, just as it had done prone, it came down to the last shot. In this case it was Boyd who had to make the critical last shot. Wigger had closed out the eighty shot string with a 790-49X for a grand total of 3154-179X.

Boyd was standing on a 3145-178X with one round in the chamber. The Marine needed a ten to sew up back-to-back wins but it was not to be his day. As Boyd delivered his final shot his right arm slipped on his shooting coat just, dropping it into the seven ring. Wigger had won a record seventh National Smallbore Position Championship. Ron Plumb took civilian honors and Janet Hayes was both high woman and junior while E. Arrell Pearsol was senior champion.

The day was getting late and time was getting short, as the many interruptions to fire had eaten up much time. The match officials were in a quandary, they could either scratch the team event or shoot “paper” matches. They opted for the latter and designated matches were chosen at random from which the first ten shots of the named team members were selected and entered onto scorecards. The Army swept the matches and most suspected that would have been the probably outcome had the matches actually been fired.

Wigger had made history in 1963 when, as a young lieutenant, he became the first to double up on the smallbore championships. His performance in 1973 was just as historic when linked with his second double with his seventh position individual title. He was making a habit of winning at Perry.

## 1974

It was a familiar scene on the shores of Lake Erie. The wind was from all points of the compass at varying speeds, the weather ranged from rainy, cool and damp to bright, hot and sticky, and the competition was tougher than a woodpecker's lips. The established names in the sport were flexing their muscle and experience counted as the 515 prone and 420 position competitors soon found out as they pumped nearly a half of a million 22 caliber bullets down range during the match.

Light showers greeted the shooters on the first day of the prone championship. There was just enough wind and rain to make life interesting and no one escaped the day unscathed. Major Pres Kendall, of the USAMU, was in the lead after the first day but even this two time national champion was down two points, Tom Whitaker had won both the 50 and 100 yard matches. Day two opened with D.I. Boyd cleaning the 50-yard match with a 400-38X in the last few moments of quiet air conditions that would be seen for some time. The wind picked up for the 50 Meter match and targets with all shots inside of the ten ring would become a rarity for the rest of the day. Among the leaders, Kendall, known for his ability to read wind and an incredibly low, yet legal, position that helped reduced the buffeting effect of the wind went for three points at the 50-meter line.

By hard holding, patience, and a touch of luck, junior Robert De Hart emerged from the Dewar with the only 400 on the line. By the end of the day John Chapman was pleased that he only dropped one point in the 100-yard match and pleasantly surprised that he had won with a 399-27X, a score that would usually be found on the results bulletin near that of the Match Director's signature block.

Consistency, not flash, is the key to good performance. Kendall did not win a match in the first two days but finished high enough in each event so that his aggregate score of 3191-234X, an indication of the tough conditions, was good enough to garner him the metallic sight championship. Trailing by Kendall by two points was Allan Knowles and Major Dennis Dingman of the Army Reserve. Wake Forest University student Edie Plimpton was leading the women at the halfway point.

The wind seemed to blow itself out and the any sight matches gave all a breather from the constant tension of wind doping that had nearly exhausted everyone. Scores of 400 became more common and the yard match was notable as it developed into "The Battle of the Georges." George Tolson IV, a junior from Florida, put up 40Xs to climb over George Stidworthy, the man who had raised telescopic prone shooting to an art form, by a single X. The first match made it clear to the cognoscenti that, should wind conditions hold, it would be a battle of Xs. The conditions remained stable and Whitaker took advantage so that he was leading the pack at the end of the day with a 1600-144X. Kendall had but 135Xs to accompany his perfect score but Knowles and Dingman fell behind as they had dropped points.

On the final day Kendall and Dingman, who by then was his only serious competition, dueled it out. Dingman was three points behind Kendall but a prone match can easily turn on an unexpected puff of wind or cloud slipping in front of the sun. Each man kept everything in the ten ring throughout the short range stages. Now, with 30 shots to go, the 100-yard stage of the Dewar and the 40 shot 100-yard match, the heat and wind conspired to create a shimmering mirage that was not a very dependable wind



gauge and was so soupy that it made spotting shot holes near impossible. Kendall let a shot escape the ten ring allowing Dingman to move within two points.

With the last 40 shots to go Dingman was not going to give Kendall any respite as he mechanically fired ten and Xs into his target at 100 yards for a 400. Kendall let loose another nine, but held on to best Dingman by a single point in the grand aggregate, 6389-500X to 6388-548X and he regained the title he had lost to rival Lones Wigger the previous year. Whitaker came in third on the strength of a 3200-291X any sight score that also gave him the any sight title and his third consecutive civilian title. George Stidworthy and Dave Ross finished second and third with like scores but lower X counts in the any sight aggregate.

For Kendall it was a momentous victory. Bill Woodring had won three straight prone titles from 1936 to 1938 and the closest anyone had come to matching that feat was G. Wayne Moore's back-to-back wins in 1946 and 1947. Although Kendall had not done it in consecutive years he was still only the second person to win three national smallbore prone titles. With his talent and youth there was the real possibility of a few more such wins in store for him.

Schuler Helbing managed to outdistance both iron sight champion Edie Plimpton and the any sight winner Mary Stidworthy for the woman's title, a trophy she took home just a few days before her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. Robert De Hart, who had made such a splash with his solo 400 on the second day of competition, showed he was not a flash in the pan by claiming the Whittington Trophy as high junior. John Moschkau, the senior champion, returned to the stage had last claimed a national title in 1957 when he won it all.

The next day the sea services secured the first three places in the first metallic sight position match. Sergeant John Akemon, USMC, Lieutenant Norm Harris, USNR, and CWO2 Greg Connor, USMC finished with descending consecutive scores of 790, 789, and 788. The wind rose during the lunch break, whipping the lake into a white-capped froth and buffeting all of the shooters as they took up position. Jack Foster was able to withstand the gusts and let offs better physically and mentally than anyone that afternoon but even one of the AMU's best could only post a 763-34X match winning score. It looked like a poor score on paper and it was a far cry from the morning's performances, but it was a real show of skill under adverse conditions. Foster moved into the lead but would face a determined crowd the next day in the any sight matches.

Connor nibbled away at Foster's lead in the first any sight match but both were so intent on each other that that they somehow failed to notice that Lones Wigger was moving up from the middle of the pack to second place, just eight points behind the leader. Foster and Wigger, two firing points apart on the firing line, faced off in the final match. They were even in prone but Wigger made up six points with an outstanding 197 standing. They matched each other with a pair of 200-14Xs sitting.

Two points separated the teammates as they settled into the kneeling position for the final showdown. Foster finished first with a disappointing 193-6X. After straightening out his cramped right leg he stood ready to congratulate Wigger as he finished running up a score of 199-9Xs. Wigger had retained his title and added a record eighth position title to his accomplishments. Foster finished second as D.I. Boyd quietly slipped into third place.

Bill Schweitzer, a former junior champion and four time All American, was declared the civilian champion. Juniors Dale Cox and Gloria Parmentier were named junior and woman's champion while Robert Makielski accepted the senior title.

A mountain of brass had been policed up and nearly a ton and a half of lead lay buried under the grass midway between the firing line and the high power butts. The sacrifice offered up to the shooting gods had paid off for all. Some brought home trophies or medals but no one went home entirely empty handed as all brought home the fruits of laboring for excellence.

### **1975**

It was a year of contrasts, near perfect shooting up against imperfect weather. Camp Perry is always subject to variety of weather conditions and it is an unusual year in which the conditions are consistently good, this year would prove no exception.

Perfection is demanded at the National Championship and it is a rare match that is not won with a perfect score when 527 of the nation's best competitive rifle shooters gather. The prone championship got off to a fast start as Lones Wigger demonstrated a level excellence seldom seen even at Camp Perry. Over the first two days of metallic sight competition Major Wigger showed why he was a major player in the smallbore game. His first 319 record shots were Xs and tens at an astounding ratio of four to one. At 100 yards, on the final shot of the final bull's-eye in the final iron sight match he let loose a shot that fell a bit more than two inches from the center for a nine, perhaps he was a bit tired or nervous or just maybe it was a bad round. No matter what the reason it was not a perfect score but better than everyone else's and Wigger now wore the metallic sight crown. He was challenged by Dave Weaver, who trailed by three points

at 3196, and Tom Whitaker's 3195. Sharon Ehrhardt led the list of Randle Trophy candidates with a 3193-208X, insuring her possession of the woman's title.

While some might concede the championship to the leader going into the scope phase, Weaver and Whitaker certainly would not, it still would be a long haul to overtake a three or four point edge unless disaster struck, but this was Perry and stranger things have happened. Throughout the next two days 400s, 1600s, and 3200s popped up like mushrooms after a rainfall. The first any sight match at 50 yards was an unbreakable tie that went to a shoot off between Whitaker, George Stidworthy, and Dave Ross. The Meter match had an unbreakable tie for second with Ron West and Schuyler Helbing knotted up with 39Xs. Whitaker, Ellen Ross, and Wigger all cleaned the Dewar with 37Xs. Whitaker was wrapped up, still another time in a tie at 100 yards with John Snipes from Connecticut when both shot 37X cleans.

The second day was hardly less stressful. Wigger and Whitaker went to the line for a shoot-off when both tied at 400-40Xs at 50 yards. Edgar O'Neal and George Stidworthy had to fight it out for second in the second Dewar when both posted 400-38X scores. Doug Knoop and Mary Stidworthy had to go to the rulebook to see who would be second and third in the final 100-yard match. Just when there seemed to be an end to the tight battles the any sight aggregate scores for Whitaker and Helbing were added up. Each had shot one of the six 3200s, and they were tied with 286Xs, scores at the longest range so it went down to Xs at long range. Whitaker slid by Helbing, by a five X margin, for second any sight.

Wigger, Weaver, and Whitaker would match each other shot for shot and so would not change positions and ended up on the final score sheet in almost perfect

inverse alphabetical order. Wigger posted a 3200-298X, just 22 Xs short of perfection for a record setting any sight title. When combined with his iron sight score the new prone champion had amassed another Perry record, a 6399-556X, to eclipse the 6396-554X mark set by Dave Ross in 1970. Wigger also joined Bill Woodring and Presley Kendall as the only winners of three prone titles.

Weaver's second place finish ended Whitaker's three year reign as civilian champion and made him the second recipient of the Schweitzer Medallion. Schuyler Helbing, topped the ladies with a 3200-286X in the any sight match, and had fired a 3190-237X irons. Her aggregate score of 6390-523X allowed her to retain the National Woman Prone Championship title she had won in the previous year as well as the Whittington Trophy as high junior. George Stidworthy returned to the stage for what seemed to be his annual trek. The crafty old scope shooter added two more 1600s to his copious collection in a successful come from behind bid to regain the senior title and with it the brand new Sam Bond Memorial Trophy, given in honor of the long time Perry competitor.

The United States Randle Trophy International Match Team would, like Wigger's individual performance, set a new standard of excellence on August 12, 1975. On that bright Tuesday morning, under the watchful eye of the official witness veteran British Randle Team member Veronica Tidmarsh, the ten women of the US Randle Team took up position on the firing line and proceeded to shoot 400 record shots inside the ten ring for a perfect 4000X4000! Oddly enough the X count of 303 was the same as the caliber of Britain's standard military bolt rifle: the Short Magazine Lee Enfield. Under the guidance of Captain Winnifred Carr and Coach Ellen Ross, the team of Sharon

Ehrhardt, Schuyler Helbing, Mary Stidworthy, Sherri Lewellen, Janet Spohn, Diana Zimmerman, Barbara Hampson, Deborah Hicks, Karen Monez, Sue Floer, and alternates Inez Sargent and Chandler Chapman had accomplished a seemingly impossible feat.

With the end of the prone phase there was a shuffling of firing points on the range as some shooters departed and others arrived. Those prone shooters who departed for home seemed to take the good weather with them. The first day of position was windy and scores reflected the abuse that wind gusts and let offs heaped upon the shooters. Civilian Lance Peters, a reformed pistol shooter, won the first match when he out Xed the AMU's Jack Foster. Junior Sherri Lewellen finished third over all, out Xing fellow civilian master George E. Tolson IV. In the afternoon matches Army First Lieutenant Robert Gustin jumped out in front with a 783-33X. Peters was nine points behind him and Lewellen faded out of the picture. Don Wise, who hailed from the western Pennsylvania stronghold of smallbore rifle shooting around the town of Washington, and Bill Rigby were close on Gustin's heels with scores of 781 and 780 respectively. At the end of the day Gustin had wrapped up the ironsight title with a score of 1557-71X, Wise was second with a 1556-65X and Peters rounded out the winners with a 1554-70X. The iron sight aggregate finish would become more important than anyone might have imagined.

The final day of the position tournament dawned dark and brooding. Moments after the command to commence fire was given it began to rain. By the time the standing stage had ended the rain had become a steady downpour and the match was put on hold in hopes that the rain would let up. The delay was not for the benefit of the

competitors as they could always dry off, but the targets were so sodden that they were becoming unscorable. It was hoped that the rain would let up and allow the match to continue but, after a three hour delay, the Match Director reluctantly cancelled the remainder of the program. With that administrative call Gustin became the 1975 position champion and Wise was declared the civilian champion. Sherri Lewellen in the position, much like Helbing in the prone match, took home both woman and junior honors while Robert Makielski retained his senior title.

It was a year of extremes that would provide a great deal of grist for the shooting story mills over the winter.

## **1976**

There are few sporting events more American events than a shooting match. Starting with the early colonists in Massachusetts Bay Colony holidays were commonly punctuated by the sound of musketry as men measured themselves against each other by their prowess with the firearm. With that thought in mind what better way to celebrate the Bicentennial of the United States than with a traditional shooting match?

Pennsylvania has contributed much to our nation's greatness and to shooting sports in particular. The famed Kentucky rifle that helped tame the west and defeat the British at New Orleans was actually developed in Pennsylvania. Some of the greatest names of the smallbore game came from the ranges that ringed the Pittsburgh area in the far western end of the state. G. Wayne Moore, who had won back-to-back titles in 1946 and 1947, hailed from that area. The first women to win the National Prone Championship, Viola Pollum, and the 1956 champion who succeeded her, J. Kenneth Johnson, were both Keystone State natives. The irrepressible Charlie Whipple, not to

mention the other members of the Moore family, Bob, the last civilian to hold the prone title in 1958, and the 1957 woman's champion, Bertie had all cut a wide swath in smallbore shooting during the years following the Second World War. That tradition would rear its head in 1976.

Marine Corporal Walter Kamila's prone win in 1959 marked a watershed. It had been almost four decades since a service shooter had dominated the prone tournament and the young corporal's victory marked the ascendancy of the military marksmanship training units. It seemed all together fitting and proper that a young rifleman who was heir to the tradition of Keystone marksmanship should break the long civilian drought. Dave Weaver, of Oil City, Pennsylvania, was a home grown shooter of remarkable ability who had gone head on head with the formidable Lones Wigger in 1975, only to come out second best.

A field of 529 of the best prone practitioners made it clear that the eventual winner would have to have the best possible ammunition and rifle combination, nerves and a hold of steel, plus a touch of luck to outsmart the Camp Perry winds. The first day of metallic sight competition would be shot through constant light changes as moving clouds blocked the sun and dropped a few drops of rain on the line. Despite quick starts by many old hands the two day eight match iron sight aggregate played out pretty much as it had the previous year. In the lead was Wigger who, with a 3198-244X, was looking over his shoulder at Weaver's 3198-243X. In third place was a dark horse from Colorado. Neil Koozer, a gallery position shooter from his college days, had recently taken up prone shooting. He had borrowed a BSA Martini Mark I, earned a sharpshooter card, and proceeded to Perry where he now sat just one point behind



Weaver. Also in contention, and the new woman's metallic sight champion, was Private First Class Mary Stidworthy of the Arizona National Guard, no stranger to the winner's circle.

The second two days, any sight competition, would develop into an X shooting contest. In prone scope shooting dropped points usually spell disaster, as Stidworthy was soon to learn. Two military shooters bagged double wins. Marine Reservist Major Jim Hinkle showed his prowess at long range when he scooped up both the first day Dewar and last 100 yard match. The AMU's Captain Ernie Vande Zande shot a pair of perfect 400-40Xs but was forced into shoot-offs on both occasions. It took 30 extra center shots to fend off Ron West in the first match while only 25 were needed to keep Stidworthy and Clark Harris at bay the second time around. Vande Zande demonstrating an amazing display of consistency made a run on the Perry record but his best efforts were still five Xs short of Greg Tomson's Camp Perry record.

In the meantime Herb Hollister was getting his money's following recent eye surgery. The old hard holder's experience and equipment aided by his ophthalmologist's skill, combined for a 400-40X in the 50 Meter match. With a Camp Perry record within his reach he lay down and calmly punched out an additional 20Xs for a 400-40-10X final tally. The record on the tough target would stand into the next century as tribute to this fine rifleman.

Things were still tight at the top of the scoreboard as Stidworthy made her play. On the fourth day, the second of any sights, Koozer wilted as Vande Zande gained. Going into the final match, a 100 yard contest, the scrambling had not ceased.

Stidworthy and Frank Boyd were both clean, Wigger and Weaver were down three each with Wigger enjoying a slim five X lead.

As it had so often happened in the past the last 40 nerve wracking shots would decide the champion. The first to stumble were Stidworthy and Wigger when nines slammed the door on them and opened it for Frank Boyd who had yet to place in the top three all week. Suddenly Boyd had the only perfect scope score and with it the title and the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy.

The final targets were hung and the firing began. Weaver watched the crosshairs of his 15X Lyman Superspot dance a wild fandango around the ten ring scattering a wide pattern of tens and Xs. His first shot in the last bull printed higher than he would have liked, it was the only nine he had shot at 100 yards all week, and Wigger was now in the lead. Chasing the negative thoughts from his mind Weaver delivered nine more Xs and then peered through his scope at Wigger's target, just a few points away.

The canny veteran Wigger was having his problems. Fourteen minutes into the final stage of the final match he had fired only two record shots. With just six minutes left he began piling up Xs but a moment's inattention as he rushed to beat the clock cost him a nine and the lead switched for the final time. As fast as that the role were suddenly reversed and last year's runner up, Weaver, became this year's champion.

It had been a very good year for Weaver who was riding a string of six major match victories leading up to Perry. He was well prepared with an excellent rifle and ammunition combination and his training had him peak at the absolutely perfect moment. Never the less the modest young man gave most of the credit for his victory to

his close relationship with his father Oren who acted as his coach, gunsmith, and confidant.

Wigger had to settle for a close second and service champion while Vande Zande held on for third. Stidworthy, despite losing the any sight aggregate, finally captured her first woman's crown. Joe Steffey, a Camp Perry fixture, earned high senior honors in an X count decision over with Joseph W. Barnes, Jr. Texan Tracy Hill had his hands full as he knocked off defending champion Schuyler Helbing, by one point, à la Weaver and Wigger, on the strength of his perfect 400-30X score in the final 100 yard match.

Wigger had been edged out of the Montreal Olympics and deposed as prone champion but the next match was position and he was unlikely to let another national title slip through his fingers. Most of the action would happen on the extreme right side of the firing line where Gold Medal Olympians Wigger and Lanny Bassham were squadded side by side. Two four position matches of eighty shots each with iron sights were scheduled for the first day and Wigger wasted no time in asserting his primacy. In short order he won a tight contest with Bill Beard of the Army Reserve, besting the young captain by five Xs, with a 792-50X. Bassham was well down the list with a 787. After lunch the two titans squared off again, this time it was Bassham who reigned supreme and earned the ovation of the people. His 791-38X out pointed Thurston Banks by one and Wigger by three. Still, at the end of the day Wigger was the iron sight champion sitting atop a slim two point lead.

They say that confidence breeds success and no one would ever say that Wigger was not a confident man. After the first scope match where his position groups

resembled most people's prone targets, 78 of his 80 record shots were inside the ten ring, Wigger extended his lead to seven over second place Bassham. To beat Wigger now would either require a performance of Herculean proportions by the challenger or a major catastrophe on the part of the leader, the former being more likely than the latter. Match officials eyed the near perfect conditions and, perhaps remembering the rain shortened match of the previous year, cancelled the lunch break.

Wigger did not win the final match. That honor went to Lieutenant Ed Etzel, of the Army Reserve, with a 797-47X. Wigger was second with a 796. Bassham needed eight points to beat Wigger in the final match to win, but even the newly crowned Olympic Champion could not score 804 points with 80 shots. With this win Wigger claimed the position title for an amazing nine times in 14 years. Joining him on stage for the awards presentation was Sherri Lewellen who had successfully defended both her junior and woman's crowns while Robert Makielski stepped up as senior champion for the third straight year. Pennsylvania, already flushed with Weaver's prone win, cheered on the new civilian champion Calvin Roberts who hailed from Beavers Fall, Shawn McDonnell, a product of the formidable Connecticut junior program and a member of the Tennessee Tech rifle team brought home the collegiate title.

Bernard De Voto, one of this nation's finest historians, served as a musketry instructor at Camp Perry, during World War I and wrote, "No manifestation of American life is trivial to the critic of culture." How nicely that dovetails with a short line from one of his many seminal historical works that tells us that, "Dinner finished, the men smoked fraternally then went out to celebrate the day by shooting at a mark." Wigger and

Weaver do not smoke but that they could shoot at a mark, of this there is no doubt. What better way to celebrate the nations 200<sup>th</sup> birthday?

### **1977**

Colonel Thomas Sutton, a member of the first British Pershing Trophy in 1931, donated The Lord Roberts Trophy in 1969. The match schedule was established with the Roberts and Pershing Trophy Matches on an eight year alternating basis so that every four years one of these prestigious trophies would be in competition.. The Roberts was shot at the British National Meeting at Bisley and, in 1977, it coincided with Camp Perry. With many of the top contenders in England, including the 1976 champion, it was anybody's guess as to who might take over from Weaver.

Lones Wigger was enjoying the congratulations being heaped upon him for his imminent promotion to lieutenant colonel and for the fact that he had recently joined Tom Whitaker in that most exclusive of all prone fraternities-the 6400 club. Wigger had three prone titles, and as many second place finishes, to his credit making him an odds on favorite. Even so, all knew it would be a hard fought contest before anyone conceded victory.

The competition and weather was fast and furious during the prone matches. Soon after Olympic medalist Vic Auer emerged the victor in the first match, with the best of six 400-38Xs shot, a violent rain storm broke across the range that did much to upset the timing of the matches and the nerves of the competitors. By the end of the first sodden day Texan John Chapman was leading the field with a score of 1598-129X, just six Xs ahead of reigning Woman Champion Mary Stidworthy. Filling out the top three places was Wigger with a 1596-124X. Originally posted as a 1597, Wigger had

challenged what he believed to be an error in scoring. He was rewarded for his good sportsmanship by the return of his challenge fee and a score reduction of one point which did nothing to change his third place standing.

By end of the second day the top trio remained the same. Wigger picked up a point on Chapman and Stidworthy by shooting the day's only 1600 while the other two contenders each dropped a point each but the overall standings had not changed. Chapman's two day total was a 3197-267X giving him the metallic sight championship. Stidworthy followed with a 3197-250X for the woman's title, while Wigger remained mired in third with a 3196-262X.

The following morning, with scopes affixed to their rifles, the three leaders knew that there was simply no room for error. Stidworthy and Wigger produced near flawless performances, each posting perfect 1600s with Stidworthy leading 142Xs to 136. Chapman had a catastrophic day, losing three points at the 100-yard line of the Dewar and dropping out of contention. At the end of the third day Stidworthy was in the lead by one point and six Xs.

The fourth and final day dawned with good weather forecast and conventional wisdom saying that it was Stidworthy's championship to lose. Wigger's only hope was that the hard holding Arizonian might drop a point and he could pick up enough Xs to make the difference, both possible occurrences. Throughout the day the pair ran neck and neck. Going into the final stage of the final match at 100 yards Stidworthy had denied Wigger any opportunity to catch up, picking up an additional six Xs on him along the way. All that separated her from a national championship were 20 shots at 100 yards. Wigger, never one to give up, knew he needed a possible with as many Xs as

he could muster to have a prayer of winning. In the end they both produced. Wigger made up the X count deficit by posting a 1600-144X. Stidworthy did not collect as many Xs as Wigger on the last stage but cleaned it and had an identical aggregate as Wigger. Stidworthy was the national prone champion and Wigger, the all time position champion, was fast approaching the same status in regard to second place finishes in prone.

The nation had a new smallbore prone champion, Mary Stidworthy, the first woman to win the open title since Viola Pollum broke the gender barrier in 1955. In addition to the national title she made a near clean sweep of the rest of the shooting match as she picked up additional trophies as the Woman metallic sight, Women any sight, Woman Champion, and Service Champion. Seven is usually considered to be a lucky number and it seemed to be for Stidworthy as this was her seventh trip to Perry. Paradoxically, it was the first time she had made the Perry trip without her mentor, coach and gunsmith, father George.

The metallic sight and civilian champion was none other than Chapman who hung on, despite being largely ignored in the excitement of the Stidworthy-Wigger duel. After placing second in the senior category in 1976 Joe Barnes came back to win the senior championship. Oscar Hernandez took the junior crown while Kevin B. Richards was the high collegiate competitor.

Wigger made it clear that a second place finish in prone was not going to affect his performance in, what many were considering to be his personal fiefdom, the position matches. In a tussle with Captain William Beard, of the Army Reserve, Wigger emerged on top in the first of the four matches that made up the aggregate by a slim

eight X margin. They were both just one point ahead of Elaine Proffitt, an 18 year old Floridian who was heading for Tennessee Tech in the fall.

Beard continued to harry Wigger with a 796-47X win in the second iron sight match of the day. Beard now had a three point lead over the perennial position champion at the half way mark. Beard's teammate, Specialist Karen Monez, was making a play for the woman's title and pulled ahead of Proffitt when she placed third overall in the last iron sight match with a 792-44X.

Wigger's 798-60X in the first any sight match gave him a little breathing room, but not much, as Monez came close to matching him with her 797-48X. On a roll, the diminutive Monez continued to press Wigger and Beard by winning the final match of the tournament with an outstanding 798-53X. Wigger simply relied on his successful practice of producing consistent results. In the end the rabbit explosiveness of the younger competitors, who would break through with a high 790 from time to time, could not overcome his turtle-like ability to produce scores in the mid 790s all the time. The old bull had a combined score of 3181-221X and his tenth position title as he broke the match record he had set in 1966. Beard ended up second and Monez third.

Meanwhile Proffitt, out of contention for the ladies' title, was trying to hold on to her lead in the junior category. Sherri Lewellen was not about to give up her crown without a fight. It looked as if the duo would go down to Xs as Lewellen ate away at Proffitt's lead. In the end a challenge fell Proffitt's way and she won the junior championship by a single point. The same scenario was being played out at the other end of the age spectrum as Robert Makielski unsuccessfully tried to fend off Fred Cole's attempt to unseat the three time champion. The two veterans were not making it easy



on themselves, what with internal and external crossfires. In the end Cole emerged the triumphant survivor. Matt Stark, of Tennessee Tech held off Bob Vangere and long time friend Gloria Parmentier to take both the civilian and collegiate honors.

The Army Reserve team of Major Jack Foster, and Captains Bill Beard, Bob Gustin, and Boyd Goldsby established a new team record in four position National Match competition with an any sight score of 1583-92X. This would be the last record set in four position competition at Camp Perry. A movement was afoot to change the course of fire so as to align United States shooting more with that of the rest of the world and the four position outdoor national championships would be consigned to the history books after a twenty year run to be replaced by NRA Three Position.

## **1978**

The National Outdoor Smallbore Championships of 1978 were historic for rarely had so many things changed and so many things remained the same. There was a new course of fire and target for position shooters, opening up a whole new vista in record setting for the 423 competitors in the inaugural event. The unpredictable, and always demanding, weather conditions for which Perry is known reached a new level of difficulty. Category definitions changed giving new life to seniors.

While Lones Wigger had kept the position title fairly tightly in his grasp since 1963 it had been over 30 years since G. Wayne Moore had successfully defended the prone championship in 1947. Arizona Army National Guard Specialist Fourth Class Mary Stidworthy, the 21-year-old defending champion, was soon to change things in a most dramatic manner.

Camp Perry veterans were pleasantly surprised when the first relays of the prone metallic sight matches were shot in almost perfect conditions. Less experienced competitors reveled in the tranquil morning while the more experienced, some would say jaded, knew that the serene conditions were more likely the calm before the storm.

Dave Weaver, the 1976 champ, jumped right out front with a 400-40X in the yard match. Unfortunately, he and 418 others were unable to sustain that level of performance and only four shooters ended the first day with 1600s. Tom Whitaker, who had made his name as a member of the Air Force Rifle Team, returned to uniform with the Army Reserves and was leading the parade after the first day with a 1600-140X by just a single X over Ernie Vande Zande. Ron West topped one of the oldest of Perry iron sight record's, Bill Woodring's Dewar match score of 400-37X set in 1939, with a 400-38X on his way to a third place 1600-131X. East Tennessee State Rifle Team captain Marsha Beasley's 1600-128X placed her fourth on the road to women and collegiate honors after the first day.

The second day of irons saw Wigger come to the fore in an attempt to break his string of second place finishes with a 1600-128X. Behind him were three other perfect scores posted by David Avril, William Summers, and Edie Reynolds. It being Camp Perry it only seemed fair that two Ohio rifleman, West and Summers, should find themselves in contention for the metallic sight championship with the Hoppe Trophy going to West by the margin of seven Xs. Edie Reynolds had overcome Beasley's lead and was the woman metallic sight champion.

Winds rose and scores dropped during the third day of competition. Even with the advantage of scoped rifles the condition proved tricky enough to keep all but two

riflemen, match winner Gunnery Sergeant John Comley of the Marine Reserve Team and Sergeant Kay Anderson, a mainstay of the All National Guard program, from perfection. Keeping them close company was Beasley with a 1599. At the end of the first three quarters of the tournament Comley was four points down and in the lead. Whitaker, Pres Kendall, and Don Peterson were knotted at 4795, with Beasley and Wigger a point behind them. Stidworthy, the defending champion, was seven points down behind four riflemen who had eight prone titles between them and two other incredibly talented contenders. With one day of scope left there was little reason to be optimistic except for the old prone shooter's mantra of, "Where there is scope, there is hope."

The final day opened with gusty winds blowing in from the west. At 50 yards there seemed to be little effect but then the frames were moved out to 50 meters. The shooting distance increases by just a few yards while the target grows smaller so that there is often a subtle change in the mind of the shooter as the Meter match casts its psychological shadow. In a matter of 40 shots the lead had changed dramatically as Anderson lost enough points to take them out of the running leaving Wigger and Stidworthy still clean with Wigger in the lead and Stidworthy just two points behind. During the Dewar the bottom fell out of Wigger and Comley's grocery bags as they both let two precious points slip away allowing Stidworthy to move into the lead.

For Stidworthy it suddenly was 1977 all over again! Setting up for the last match of the last day and she was leading by Xs. Just 40 tens would land her a second title. Instead of having to hold for the X Ring, an area of just 0.78 square inches, she had essentially a football field, the 3.14 square inch ten ring, for an aiming point. She had

not placed in the money all week but she took the final match in grand style with a score of 400-31X, and with it the national open and service title, her third consecutive women's title and the woman's any sight aggregate. Wigger was second for the third consecutive year and Comley came in third.

The any sight aggregate champion was Lieutenant Dick Floyd of Fort Benning. Douglas Knoop received the Schweitzer medallion as high civilian. Beasley was the collegiate winner and became the first of that category to pick up the Austin Trophy, which had been reintroduced into competition after being withdrawn in 1968. Dick Hanson, the 1969 civilian champion, was high senior as John Rost, an Ohio native, took junior laurels.

The curtain rose on the new three position format in winds that only had increased in fury from the final day of prone. The first match of the new international style position championships went to Connecticut National Guard Staff Sergeant William Lange, who, defying the ferocious winds shot a 399. In second place was sharpshooter Andrew Donato with a 398, and then Wigger with a 397. To shoot standing on the unprotected range in the face of the unrelenting gale was such a trial that many thought themselves lucky simply to get all 40 record shots on the paper. In the end only five scores were in excess of 300 in match where 400 was a perfect score. Specialist Fifth Class Karen Monez, of the Army, was first with a 315. Perhaps the petite soldier was less effected by the wind that blew taller and bulkier shooters to distraction, but she also was skilled and mentally tough. Wigger remained in third place.

Strapping himself into kneeling Wigger hunched forward and shot a phenomenal 381 in the buffeting winds, 15 points ahead of his nearest competitor. Wigger had won

the first in a long string of three position championships at Perry. With the decisive kneeling victory he moved into uncontested first with a 1084, a score that set two diametrically opposed Camp Perry records. For a year it was the National Championship record for metallic sights and since then it has remained the lowest score ever to win an iron sight championship, another sort of record.

The final day saw calmer conditions and telescopic scopes and with the appearance of both came better scores. There was a three way shoot-off between Susan Avril, Whitaker, and Beasley after shot 400s prone. Avril, from nearby Toledo, emerged the winner. Wigger and Monez tied with 381 standing with the match going to Wigger on tie breaking rules. Wigger nailed the kneeling match with a 394, sealing up any sight victory with a convincing win, 15 points ahead of his nearest competition, Monez. In the grand aggregate the second place winner would be another woman shooter, Gloria Parmentier, daughter of Wigger's commanding officer at the Army Marksmanship Unit. Parmentier had spent the summer training at Fort Benning and her hard work paid off as she hauled away three trophies representing the civilian, woman, and collegiate champion.

John Rost, who had just won the prone junior title, also picked up the position championship. The senior award went to Kenneth Atkinson as the defending champion Fred Cole was unable to defend the title as the minimum age for senior competition had been changed over the winter from 55 to 60. It was a Perry for the record books in both prone and position.

## 1979

In a year bereft of typical Camp Perry winds Dave Weaver was able to take advantage of conditions similar to his home range to return to the winner's circle. Three matches into the first day Weaver grabbed hold of the lead and was only forced to relinquish it once, for about 40 minutes, on the first day of scope shooting. Sergeant First Class John Comley, formerly of the Marine Reserves and now of the Texas National Guard may have switched uniforms but was still a prone shooter to be with which to be reckoned. He pushed Weaver out of first place during the Dewar match but the Pennsylvania rifleman snatched it right back and refused to relinquish the lead again.

This is not to say the victory was a cakewalk for Weaver. It was rather like a battle of champions. At the end of the metallic sight aggregate Weaver was ahead of Comley by just four Xs with a 3197-261X to 3197-257X. Marsha Beasley was in third place with a 3196-253X.

Army Reserve Captain Bob Mitchell had an excellent day with the best of the seven 1600's shot on the first scope day. On the other hand Weaver had his time of trial giving up two points to the field when he shot a nine at 50 meters and another in the Dewar match. Mitchell was only behind Weaver on X count moving into the second day. The remainder of the match would be nip and tuck and Mitchell could only hope that Weaver might make a misstep and open the door for him. Like so many national championships this one boiled down to the last match. Weaver was perfect as Mitchell lost a point at 100 yards, conceding the match to Weaver, and with it the national championship to the Pennsylvania rifleman. Weaver would collect his second

Schweitzer Medallion while the any sight aggregate and the service championship went to Mitchell for his 3199-270X.

Mary Stidworthy lost her bid for a third national title but picked up the woman's trophy for a record fourth consecutive year as she came from behind and pushed aside Marsha Beasley. Don Wallace made his mark on history by winning the first sub-junior national title on his very first trip to Camp Perry. Junior Brad Mundell of Des Moines, Iowa was the junior champion. Shooters from The Sunshine State also did well, Mark Marinoff leading the collegiate shooters while Bob Hanson retained the senior crown.

Just as Wallace was the first to take a sub-junior title Stidworthy was the first to receive the Eleanor Dunn Trophy. Gifted by Miss Dunn to annually recognize the high scoring member of the US Randle Trophy Team she presented the trophy to Stidworthy at the awards ceremony. In the early 1950s Dunn was responsible for the organization and conduct of the first of the Randle Matches, serving as captain in 1953. Dunn, a noted competitor in the 1940s, stayed interested and informed of the activities in the smallbore community until her death at age 97 on Veteran's Day 2002. Fittingly enough the United States team, after losing to the English in 1978, regained the Randle Trophy on Miss Dunn's last visit to Camp Perry.

In the prone team competition a prone team record, of eleven years, vintage fell when the National Guard "White" team shot a 1600-115X on the strength of the performances of Major Richard Domey, Specialists Greg Tomsen and Barbara Hampson-Keller, and Captain Paul Collins. In any sight competition four California juniors of the Brea Juniors "Gold" shot a 1599-127X to establish a new National Match record for juniors.

The second year of three-position competition was a veritable bacchanalia of record breaking. While the scores fired were of quality, the fact that each match record broken was really a function of the tempestuous winds that left the previous year's competitors whipping about like reeds. The first record to fall was the prone iron sight match and National Guard Lieutenant Brad Baumeister did it up right with a 400. Next Lieutenant Ron Plumb took the second record, going head on head with teammate Wigger, in standing. Both shot a 367 but Plum Creedmoored his superior officer on the last bull in which Plum shot a 47 while Wigger only managed a 45. Bill Beard, a captain in the Army Reserve, was the kneeling match winner with a new record of 387. The metallic sight aggregate, another tight match, saw Fort Benning's Captain Ernie Vande Zande and Kurt Fitz-Randolph of Tennessee Technological College tying at 1145. The statistical office determined that Fitz-Randolph had won on the strength of his higher standing score.

Hardnosed international shooters to the core, Vande Zande and Fitz-Randolph stayed with iron sights during the any sight phase. It was a strategic error for both. The immediate effect was that Fitz-Randolph dropped four points prone while Vande Zande was embroiled in an eight way shoot-off for the prone match honors that eventually were won by Carl Jooss. With just two matches to go Wigger set a record for standing, 383, and moved into the lead. Jooss won the kneeling match and collected that record with a 388. Wigger was good for only a 380, but that was enough to give him an 1162 for the day and the any sight aggregate match and record.

Wigger's grand aggregate score of 2304 gave him a fourth straight position title. Robert Makielski matched the champ in the consecutive win department. A dentist, just



like famed shooters Emmett Swanson and “Doc” Tekulsky who had preceded him, he collected his fourth consecutive senior title. Jooss became the new civilian champion and specialist Fifth Class Karen Monez took the woman’s title. Fitz-Randolph took double titles as high collegiate and junior shooter.

Records are meant to be broken. Eventually, and inevitably, the records set in this match would fall. Skills and equipment improved to meet the more demanding style of competition of NRA Three Position. In a short time the skill level of the shooters would improve so dramatically that scores began to approach perfection in all positions. To meet the challenge the target sizes and scoring rings would be reduced and the efforts put out by competitors would increase. Crossman would have been pleased.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **Wigger Wins-Still Again...**

#### **1980s**

The new decade opened with several major changes for the seed corn of the competitive shooting program-juniors. For many years there had been a junior school that ran concurrent with the smallbore matches. It was designed to provide basic smallbore rifle instruction to juniors in both prone and position shooting. Over the years it went through many iterations and titles, eventually winding up using the NRA junior qualification course as its base. It also provided a laboratory experience to the many adults who participated in the three day National Rifle Instructor School. The enrollment often topped 200 participants and introduced many a youth the wonders of the shooting sports. Seeking to refine shooting skills and develop a broader base of competitive marksman for both national and international competition the NRA introduced a new concept when it launched the National Junior Smallbore Camp School. This new four and half day program was designed to, "...improve the skill level of beginning and intermediate level shooters and introduce junior shooters to smallbore competition." The staff consisted of an experienced adult coaching staff ably assisted by a cadre of top level collegiate shooters.

Hand in hand with the new junior camp program came a new match that drew many of its participants from the school. A year earlier the highpower community established a junior two-man team match that is sponsored by the Director of Civilian Marksmanship and conducted by the NRA. The winners of this new event were

awarded plaques bearing a photographic replica of one of the pair of Hughes Trophies, commonly known as The Whistler Boy Trophies.

The Whistler Boy Trophies were donated by Grover Hughes to be awarded to the winners of the Division A and B matches at the 1931 NRA Instructor-Junior School at Camp Perry. The original match was a 70 shot aggregate, the course of fire being 40 rounds sitting, 20 kneeling, and the final ten standing. As fortune would have it the first two to win were the donor's sons Robert, Division A, and Roger, Division B. The boys were excellent shots and both went on to star on the Ohio State Rifle Team where they became the first pair of brothers to be named to the NRA's All American Rifle Team.

The identical bronze statuettes portray a young boy standing with left hand tucked into his waistband while his right is spaded into his hip pocket. With slung hips and arms akimbo it is a casual pose portraying carefree youth. The young lad has a cap perched on the back of his head and his lips are pursed and cheeks puffed out as he whistles a tune; giving the trophy it's title.

The Whistler Boy Trophies have always been awarded to juniors but had been removed from competition in 1964. The smallbore community followed the trail blazed by highpower when the mouse gunners snatched up the second trophy of the pair and created the Whistler Boy smallbore match in 1980. A two man team would shoot a 2000 point aggregate consisting of a Dewar course of fire and a half course NRA Three Position Match. It was with pleasant symmetry that one of the teams in the first revitalized match was made up of a pair of brothers. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery then Matt and Will Suggs, 12-year-old identical twins, fully honored the spirit of the Groves brothers. The Suggs would team up again to win the Whistler Boy in 1982

and then each went on to earn NRA All American honors, four years each in both air rifle and smallbore rifle.

## **1980**

Flowers often grow best and most efficiently in a greenhouse and the same might be said for shooting champions. The United States Army Marksmanship Unit, the nation's premier "greenhouse" for competitive rifle shooters, provides Army shooters a controlled atmosphere to train and develop. This was made abundantly clear in both the prone and position national championships of 1980.

The first day of prone competition opened with Captain Ernie Vande Zande, Dick Hanson, and Carl Jooss in a closely fought contest. All fired perfect 1600s and both Vande Zande and Hanson broke the existing single day national championship metallic sight record. There can be only one winner and Vande Zande's 143Xs earned him the lead. However the 32-year-old Army captain's edge was virtually nonexistent for Hanson, who at 64 was twice his age, followed by just one X. Jooss was right behind the pair with 138Xs.

During the second day all three fell victim to the notoriously fickle Camp Perry winds. A gusty wind that fishtailed from one to 11 o'clock cost all but three of the 498 competitors points. The winner of the day, Gunnery Sergeant Gary Andrade, a converted high power shooter from the Marine Corps Weapons Training Battalion at Quantico, cleaned the day with a rifle he had built himself. Over the two days of metallic sight matches he had dropped but one point for a 3199-263X. Tying him for points were Hanson and Jooss who fell into second and third place with Xs counts of 262 and 257. Vande Zande had dropped out of the lead into fourth place when two shots ended up in

the nine ring in the final match of the second day at 100 yards. Edie Reynolds and Marsha Beasley were involved in a hot race of their own for the woman's title that was won in the end by a single point by Reynolds' 3197-154X.

After a break for team events the championships took on a decidedly new tone during the any sight phase. Two time national champion Mary Stidworthy strutted her stuff in grand style when she smashed the any sight national championship record by six Xs with a 1600-154X! She could not overcome a metallic sight deficit and would not play into the final day's drama. At the end of the third day there was a tight knot at the top of the leader board with Vande Zande, who had dropped a single point with the scope, surging to the fore by a seven X margin.

Weather conditions on the morning of the final day promised a day ripe for 1600s, a steady zephyr of easily read wind promised no trouble but it also meant that any mistake on the part of the leaders would prove fatal. Vande Zande's heart dropped when his seventh shot of the day blossomed in the nine ring of the 50-yard "bucket bull." Realizing that it probably was all over for him, but not giving up, he held as hard as he could and shot 153 more tens and Xs before the day was out. The gentle wind of the morning changed in the afternoon kicking up and switched left and right during the long range stages. There was no room for error and tiny ones sorted out the field.

When the scores were tallied up Vande Zande had managed to hang on to his lead against both tough competition and challenging conditions. In one of Perry's tightest finishes to date he produced a championship score of 6396-571X, one of four 6396s shot that week. Pres Kendall, a three time champion, slid into second place with 555Xs. All National Guard Sergeant First Class John Comley, the 1971 champion, was

third with an X an count 533. Jooss, who had been in contention all week, was first master and the Schweitzer medallion winner as high civilian.

Hanson, who had dropped out of the race on the last day when he lost two points, garnered a small place in history as the first person to win the intermediate senior prone title, one of several new National Match categories added in 1980. Hanson's new title was slightly unusual as he was the defending senior title holder, awards he won in 1978 and 1979. The tough competitor, who had also won the civilian title in 1969, commented as he accepted his award that he had come to win the National Championship, not a category award, and was already looking forward to the next Nationals.

Reynolds, Beasley, and Stidworthy had been trading tens and Xs for four days in a close match up. In the end Stidworthy, a pharmacy student, took the collegiate title on her way to chalking up her fifth consecutive woman's title with an X count win.

Three generations of the Wigger family were in attendance at the awards ceremony to see one member of the third generation step up to pick up the Whittington Trophy, emblematic of the national junior prone championship. Ron Wigger had nearly won the any sight aggregate as a junior, posting a 3200-260X to place second behind Army Reserve Major Dave Cramer, and just ahead of perennial any sight contender Joe Barnes who posted a 3200-240X. Having dropped ten points in the first two days Ron persevered to top the juniors with a remarkable 6390-495X. In the audience watching him accept the trophy were his grandfather, Lones Wigger, Sr., father, Lones Wigger, Jr., mother Mary Kay, brother Danny, and sister Deena. Three generations of shooters showing the lineage of the sport in all of its glory.

Bradley Carnes shot his way to the top of the intermediate junior class to be the first to win that new category while Jeff Fell captured sub-junior honors. The combined ages of the two youngest title winners, Carnes and Fell, did not even come close to the total of the number of years since the new senior champion, Rans Triggs, had won the national title in 1941.

Lones Wigger, Jr., was absent from the last two days of the prone championship. He had been called to the White House, with the other members of the ill-fated 1980 Olympic Team, to be honored by President Carter. His presence was missed during prone but it would be felt, as usual, for he returned in time to shoot position. Wigger worked off his frustration at not being able to travel to Moscow to compete in the Olympics by quickly and decisively taking control of the metallic sight aggregate with a National Match standing record of 376. Building on that momentum he followed up with a solid 381 kneeling for his second National match record of the day, a match winning 1155. Trailing far behind were Vande Zande and Sergeant Lance Peters, of the Minnesota National Guard.

The position any sight day offered special challenges, particularly for the match director. Faced with a prolonged early morning torrential rainstorm the course of fire was reduced by 50% in order to be able to have any chance at an anysight aggregate. Starting at midday the competitors would shoot 20 shots in each position. A short course of fire does not always favor the better shooter as there is a greater premium on luck, as opposed to consistency. Anyone can get lucky and shoot a good 20 shot string. Wigger put that thought to rest as he pounded out a 199 prone, 195 standing,

and a 196 kneeling to walk away with the any sight title and his fifth consecutive position title and lucky thirteenth career win.

Peters was silver medalist, 36 points behind Wigger while Vande Zande was third. Lieutenant Denise Cannella, shooting for the USAMU, took the woman's championship. Former Army shooter Jack Foster, who had won the first Parson's Trophy in 1959, was high civilian. Kurt Fitz-Randolph, a student at Tennessee Tech, doubled up and repeated as both collegiate and junior champion. Bobby Broughton was the first intermediate junior position champion and Theresa Leone took sub-junior honors.

Dentist Robert Makielski, having won four earlier senior titles, drilled enough shots into the ten ring to, à la Dick Hanson, to win the new intermediate senior title. The new senior champion was Donald Burtis, of Levittown, Pennsylvania.

In a year of new records and new categories, 29 two-man junior teams representing state associations shot the newest team match, The Whistler Boy. The match was a cooperative venture between the NRA and the DCM and was fired with the basic training rifle issued by the DCM. The match was analogous to a stock car race as the unmodified Winchester 52s, Remington 513Ts, and such type rifles mounted metallic sights and were fed issued ammunition issued on the line. The shooting clothing options were wide open but the required use of issue rifles proved to level the playing field. The Texas State Association fielded Ben Potter and John Pence who went on win the inaugural event which was a combined Dewar course of fire shot on NRA targets and a 60 shot three position match fired on international targets.



The 61<sup>st</sup> smallbore championships came to a close but like others before it there were firsts, records, and tradition. Over 900 men, women, and children had participated, with most going home without a trophy or medal. But trophies and medals are not the totality of the Perry experience. The richness of the sport, woven into a tapestry by generations of shooters passing on the skills and traditions of the sport to newer generations, is the true prize that all take home with them.

### 1981

T.S. Eliot wrote that William Butler Yeats was "the greatest poet of our times." That he may well have been, but he may also have been a prophet, for in his poem "In Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen" he wrote of those who,

"Toiled so hard and late  
To leave some monument behind  
Nor thought of the leveling wind."

Nothing better describes the 1981 smallbore championships. There were just a few days of relative calm in a week filled with winds capable of whisking Dorothy off to Oz or, worse still, 40 grain bullets from the X ring to the edges of the target card and beyond. The conditions were bad enough for home grown shooters, familiar with the wild swings and variations of the Camp Perry winds, but this was a Pershing Team Match year and Aeolus, the minor Greek deity who is Custodian of the Four Winds, treated our guests from over the seas harshly.

For the first time the three position matches were scheduled to precede the prone matches. This was done to arrange the shooting schedule to better fit vacation and travel plans and to use fewer work days for those with limited vacation time. Position shooters could now arrive on Thursday, shoot on Friday, Saturday, and

after the matches on Sunday, return home. The Prone phase now occupied a full week from Monday to Friday, with Wednesday given over to team matches. Even though scheduling had changed the position matches seemed to repeat bits and pieces of past national championships. The most obvious repetition was the presence of Lones Wigger standing on the highest step of the victor's podium at the awards ceremony. The second repetition was the foul weather that again forced a reduction in the course of fire for the second year in a row and the third time in seven years. Although Wigger was his dominant self, such windy conditions favored the solidly built soldier; the individual match winners were spread around. Wigger won the first two iron sight matches, the prone and standing, but after that he would not win another fired match. New York English teacher Fred Cole, in the midst of beginning an unmatched reign of intermediate senior and senior titles, pushed Wigger aside by one point to take the kneeling match which gave him the senior metallic sight championship. Despite Cole's efforts Wigger ruled supreme with iron sights. His 1152 easily outdistanced his nearest challenger, Jim Meredith, by 12 points. Dena Orth lead the ladies at the halfway point in position.

Weather forced the any sight prone match to be reduced by half and Steve Gombocz took advantage to shot a perfect 200 for the win. The weather improved remarkably after prone and the regulation 40 shot matches were resumed. Richard Hawkins, an MTU comrade of Wigger's, won the standing match with a 360. D.I. Boyd, the 1972 position champion, ran a final victory lap in the position matches before he retired from the Marines as he shot the best score of all in the last position smallbore match he would shoot for the Marine Corps, a 384 kneeling. Gloria Parmentier worked

hard in each stage and was rewarded with the any sight aggregate allowing her to overtake Orth for the ladies' title.

Wigger continued to plug away in his practiced and efficient manner, finishing near the top in every match he did not win, building an overwhelming 25 point lead over silver and bronze medalists Bob Mitchell and Hawkins who tied at 2961. It was Wigger's sixth straight position win and the 14<sup>th</sup> since he won his first in 1963. Two Connecticut riflemen from Blue Trail Range picked up trophies. David Lyman, a sharpshooter, was declared the civilian champion and Jesse Johnston earned both the junior and intermediate junior crowns. Don Burtis retained the senior title. Lones would not be the only Wigger to tote home prizes as son Danny led the collegiate category. Sub-junior William Suggs triumphed over all those aged 14 years and below.

Those who lie on the firing line at Camp Perry toward the end of July are usually concerned with insuring that they drink plenty of water, staying in the shade when possible, and the capricious nature of the winds. This was not the case during the opening days of the prone phase when the weather was a cold, wet, and windy as an early spring lambing season.

Vande Zande had opened the match with a 400-40X metallic 50-yard match score indicating he had not lost any of his edge over the winter. Mary Stidworthy came back with a 400-40X to set a new Camp Perry record in the meter match to challenge the champ. Kendall then made a decisive move with a 400-29X to win the Dewar while Hubert Snyder closed out the day with a 400-29X win in the 100 yard match. Kendall led at that point with a 1599-124X. Captain Ernie Vande Zande, the defending champion was engaged in a close match with two very skilled riflemen: Pres

Kendall and Stidworthy-both former prone champions. Rough conditions were evident as Vande Zande finished as the metallic sight winner with a score of 3193-236X, down three points more than he dropped through the four days of 1980. One X behind him was Pres Kendall who was being chased by Stidworthy, a point behind but nine ahead on X count.

Big names dominated the second day with the Marines and Army sharing match honors. Marine Gary Andrade shot a 400-35X win in the yard match. Next Wigger, dropping a point, won the Meter match with a 399-29X. Marine Gunner D.I. Boyd captured the Dewar with a 400-32X. Wigger won the day with a 1597-120X but Vande Zande closed the door on the competition with a 100 yard score of 400-32X, which assured him the metallic sight title. Edward Zamborik was the high intermediate senior and veteran Dick Hanson was top senior.

Weather conditions moderated for the mid week team events and the change was readily apparent when the All National Guard quartet of Kay Anderson, Bill Lange, Greg Tomsen, and Rich Tabor put together a metallic sight winning score of 1598-107X to win the first team match. The Black Hawk Rifle Club foursome of former prone champions Dave Weaver and Art Cook teamed up with Mark Humphreville and Hubert Snyder for a 1600-142X any sight win. Finishing in third place is generally a bit of a letdown but for the Stinknik Ladies a third place score of 1600-142X shot by Edie Reynolds, Ellen Ross, and sisters Lenore Lemanski and Bobbi Vitito established a new National Women's Team Record.

The Dewar and the Randle teams conducted themselves well but the major event of the day was the eighth Pershing Trophy Match. Teams of ten from the United

States, Great Britain, and Canada faced off in a shoulder-to-shoulder iron sight Dewar. The United States ten man team, drawn from the top ten eligible shooters in the metallic sight aggregate, featured most prominent names in prone shooting for the past several decades. The United States sent six national champions to the line, Pres Kendall, Dave Weaver, Mary Stidworthy, Lones Wigger, Dave Ross, and Ernie Vande Zande. The 1977 Civilian champion John Chapman joined Bob Mitchell, the service titlist from 1979. The ninth and tenth shooters were Aaron Hupman, who had made his mark earlier in the match with a 100-yard win and young Jesse Johnston, a product of the Blue Trail Range shooting incubator. The Connecticut teenager, the youngest rifleman to ever compete on a United States Pershing Team, was somewhat of an unknown quantity in the rarefied atmosphere populated by national champions. The team was lead by Captain Robert Smith, Adjutant Harry Hoy, and coaches William Summers and Herb Hollister

In the past the Pershing was between the United States and Great Britain with Canada the inevitable third place finisher, but this match would be different. Six United States shooters cleaned the Dewar course and the other four shooters dropped just five points between them for a match winning score of 3995-331X. The British and the Canadians battled it down to the last target with each team coming up with a 3992. In the end both teams from North America would beat the Mother Country when the Canadians pulled ahead of Great Britain by six Xs.

The second half of the prone championships opened on weather that favored sunburn as opposed to the frostbite of the first two days. The quality of the scores reflected the fine weather. Black Hawk Rifle Club member John Reynolds, winner of

the yard match, with a 400-39x, was the only fired match winner on the second day who had not won a national championship. Stidworthy came across with an important 400-39X win in the meter match, John Comley took the Dewar with a 400-37X and Art Cook closed the day with a 400-35X. Jay Sonneborn, a Blue Trail Team mate of Johnson, won the day with a 1600-143X.

The final day of competition also saw a host of familiar names at the top of the results bulletins. Bob Mitchell took the yard match with a 400-40X, a 400-40X gave Stidworthy her second meter match in as many days, D.I. Boyd bested all in the Dewar with a 400-37X, and Weaver won the final match of the tournament with a 400-39X at 100 yards. Hanson, still gamely trying to win his first national title, won the fourth day with a 1600-149X.

As was so often the case in the past there was high drama surrounding the final target of the final match. Vande Zande and Stidworthy were close to a photo finish going into the last 20 shots. Stidworthy, no stranger to this situation, had previously won and lost national crowns in the last stage. Vande Zande held a one point lead while Stidworthy had the higher X count. Behind the firing line scopes focused on Vande Zande's target revealed a close shot on the ten line at ten o'clock. Any close shot at 100 yards is a real heart stopper and debate raged in the assembly area and on the ready line whether or not the shot was in or out. After ceasefire was called Vande Zande walked downrange and the closer he got to his target the further out the shot looked. Arriving at the target it was clear that he had shot a nine and he was now a former champion as Stidworthy won her third title with a 6391-530X to his 6391-516X. Wigger finished third.

It was poetic justice for D.I. Boyd. He won the any sight aggregate with a score of 3200-279X. The first person to earn all five Distinguished Badges was shooting his last Perry prone as a service shooter and, having won the last position match he was to shoot as a Marine, won the last prone match he would shoot in uniform. Within a few weeks he would win the National High Power Championship shooting a service rifle. The left handed Leatherneck would join a fellow southpaw, Gary Anderson, as only the second person to win both a smallbore and high power national title. The Gunner certainly said "Good Bye!" in grand style.

Stidworthy won just about all the trophies displayed on the stage. She was national champion, service champion, women's champion, and collegiate champion. Dave Ross, Olympian and national champion in 1970, was the Schweitzer medallion winner as high civilian. Bert Parnell was the best sub junior shooting prone at Perry in 1981. Junior Bartley Smith took both junior and intermediate junior categories. Retired General Bruce Johnson, of the Iowa National Guard, who had lead that state's marksmanship program and been an integral part of the All National Guard shooting program won the intermediate senior title. Dick Hanson returned to the stage to reclaim his senior title lost the previous year, not to superior competitor, but to a rule change that introduced new age limits to the awards categories. Hanson became the first of only a very few elder statesmen of the sport to win a senior title, followed by an intermediate senior championship, and then a return to the stage as the senior champion.

Ohio Route Two filled with vehicles as the departing smallbore shooters left the camp to the high power crowd. Some, like Boyd, would remain to shoot in the NRA and

DCM matches but most would return home to, perhaps, encourage others to accompany them in the future. They would tell of the horrible winds, the rain, the good shooting, and the friendships renewed or struck up. And they would look forward to driving back up Route Two in just 50 weeks.

## **1982**

The old expression that ‘There is no substitute for experience’ might well have been the official motto of the 1982 national smallbore championship, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Matches. Very few names that had not already been engraved upon the many celebrated trophies associated with the smallbore championship would be found on them after the matches had concluded. Throughout the eight days the weather was a typical Camp Perry mix of hot and humid with plenty of sunshine and an occasional cloud to threaten, but not deliver, rain.

The position matches were nothing more or less than a Brobdingnagian performance by the giant of position shooting, Lones Wigger. On his way to a 15<sup>th</sup> national position championship Wigger won five of six fired matches. He gave up the prone any sight match in which he equaled the Perry record, to Carl Jooss on a tiebreaker, so that Jooss denied Wigger a clean sweep. With one record tying performance behind him Wigger stood up and shot a new record standing, a 390X400. He finished the day with a 390 kneeling, four points below his own record score of 394. The day’s aggregate score of 1180 eclipsed his record of 1174 established in 1978. Lance Peters, the All Guard standout who finished in second place by a staggering 23 points, could only shake his head in disbelief. When he last placed second to the champion it had been by 36 points in rain shortened 1980 matches.



Dave Lyman, youngest scion of the Lyman Gunsite family, repeated as civilian position champion. Army Reserve Staff Sergeant Karen Monez picked up her second woman's position crown. Kenneth Atkinson, shooting partner Bob Makielski, outscored all other senior shooters. Fred Cole made still another trip to the stage to receive the intermediate senior plaque after splitting the sub-aggregate matches with Bob Vangene who took the metallic half. Mike Anti, son of Marine Highpower team mainstay Ray Anti, led all junior shooters and was awarded the Byron E. Putnam Trophy. Given in memory of Putnam, a former NRA Director, the trophy had been recently designated to be awarded to the high junior. Kirsten Pasch was the top intermediate junior. Matt Suggs succeeded his twin brother Bill as the sub-junior champion and Shannon Cherry took collegiate honors.

It had been 20 years since Pres Kendall had won his first national prone title and, from the first day, there was little doubt that he had set his eye on returning to the winner's circle. His match winning 1600 on the first day of metallic sights put him out in front and on his way. From that point on he never even glanced back over his shoulder to watch the pack recede behind him. Kendall ceded all individual matches but one to others but his consistent performance built a buffer against any challenger. A 400-30X on the final 100-yard metallic sight match was the only individual match he won. It was a fine way to end the day and it sewed up the second aggregate for him with a final score of 1598-119X. Winning both days gave him the metallic sight title with a comfortable six point lead over second place Dave Weaver who out Xed third place Ron West.

Kendall would also prove to be a team player. He placed high in the Dewar standings with a 395 on the tough English target. During the NRA team matches he anchored the Champion Shooting Club as it won both the metallic and any sight prone team championship. Shooting 320 record shots the foursome of Kendall, West, Carl Jooss, and Jim Hinkle shot only two nines, and both of them were in the metallic sight match. Kendall cleaned both matches, only allowing 11 shots to escape from the X ring for a personal total of 800-69X. The extra practice certainly didn't hurt him in the days to come.

During the any sight matches all Kendall had to do was to simply hold his own. Mary Stidworthy lead a trio of any sight 3198s, her X count of 285 was almost 20 a head of second place finisher Ron West. Dave Ross was in third place. Kendall had dropped two points on the first day of any sights and went for one in the last match on day four. In the end, the lead he built with iron sights gave him all of the advantage he needed. Weaver kept pace with him during scope but the six point differential remained the same between them, Kendall's 6395-528X to second place Weaver and third place West's 6389s in the grand aggregate.

Marine Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli's service championship was his swan song as he closed out a four year tour with the Weapons Training Battalion before returning to duty in Okinawa. Stidworthy was denied another national championship but collected her seventh consecutive women's title, as well as her third collegiate title in as many years. Dick Hanson showed that age is no barrier to hard work and with a winning attitude he collected his fourth senior crown in five years. Closing in on Hanson in both age and score was Frank Boyd who picked up the intermediate senior win.

David Passmore, Ben D. Smith, and Eric Enhoffer who respectively won the junior, intermediate junior, and sub-junior titles demonstrated that the youth movement is alive and well.

The matches had ended; most shooters packed up and headed home, content to slow down for a while, but not so Wigger. Perhaps he was not happy with his prone performance, or maybe he was just seeking a new challenge, but a few weeks later he would be back on the line at Perry. Shooting a scoped centerfire rifle at 1,000 yards he shot a 200-12X to win his relay in the Wimbledon Cup Match. In the shoot off he managed a 99-4X, which garnered him a second place silver medal in this most prestigious long range shooting match.

### **1983**

The timeless nature of the shooting sports as a bridge between the generations was eloquently stated on the cover of the October *American Rifleman*, the issue that traditionally reports on the National Matches. Eleven year old Nicole Panko, of the Stratford Connecticut Police Athletic League Rifle Club, stood tall and proud next to 83 year old Herb Hollister at the National Smallbore Outdoor Rifle Championships at Camp Perry. The grinning Panko's head was level with that of the smiling Hollister, who was kneeling.

It is symbolic of the shooting sports for, while they were the Biblical life span of three score and ten apart in years, they stood as happy equals on the firing line. Within a few years the pint sized sub-junior would win the sub-junior and intermediate junior title in position, earn a spot on the Randle Team, anchor several of the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association's long line of junior National Championship

winning teams, be named a collegiate All American, and then assume leadership of the PAL rifle club, closing the circle.

There was a pleasant esthetic change found by all in the large manila competitors' packet. Amid the squadding information, year tab to accompany the Camp Perry brassard, the Match Director's Bulletin, emergency evacuation information sheet, pencil, feedback form, and various pieces of advertisements was the annual Camp Perry sticker. For as long as anyone could remember they were of a simple circular design with lettering in either red or blue on a white background stating the year followed by National Championships on the top half with Camp Perry, Ohio in a semi circle on the bottom. There would now be a new artistic design each year based upon Camp Perry scenes or shooting themes. Furthermore the logo would be found on clothing and other merchandise, including cloisonné pins, on sale at the NRA Memorabilia Shop.

The prevailing wind made the position matches a real trial for all; it seemed, but Lones Wigger who is no stranger to holding and squeezing in the Perry gales. In a dog fight of a tournament the mentally tough Wigger won, with his trademark tenacity, but the kneeling matches that have become a sort of fiefdom for him. While the buffeting winds took its toll on all, and even Wigger admitted to being exhausted by the end of the match, it did not stop the reigning champion from notching up his eighth straight victory in a string of 16 that went back to 1963. His mastery of the game was emphasized by the 36 point advantage he held over second place finisher Steve Gombocz.

Tom Tamas collected a junior title during the position matches. Kirsten Pasch and Debbie Lyman battled it out for the women's title, splitting the metallic and any sight

championships, with the Pasch emerging triumphant. In the grand aggregate Dave Passmore expanded his shooting resume by adding the 1983 collegiate position title to his 1982 junior prone win. One half of the Suggs brothers one-two punch combination, Matt, took the intermediate junior crown and Peter Kang captured the sub-junior title.

Don Burtis, senior champion in 1980 and 1981, fought it out with Kenneth Atkinson, who was defending the title. In a close decision of just seven points, Burtis dethroned Atkinson to regain his title. The intermediate senior contest was a mirror image of the senior category as Fred Cole and Bob Vangene went round and round until Vangene came out on top.

The prone shooters always claim that the position shooters get the best of Ohio's weather and the conditions that prevailed this year would certainly give credence to that theory. Dave Weaver, on the other hand, might have thought otherwise. When it rained hard enough on the final day of the tournament to force a cancellation of the yard and meter matches it did not rain on Dave Weaver's parade. After going toe to toe with junior Tommy Tamas on the first day, both shot match high 1599s, Weaver took off like a rocket going clean for the next ten matches and amassing 494Xs in the process. Had it not rained he might have had an excellent chance of breaking the 6399-556X record set by Wigger in 1975. For Weaver to collect 62 Xs out of 80 shots at short range on a scope day was not out of the question for the two time national champion.

The service champion was Jim Meredith, of the USAMU. He had hung onto Weaver like a limpet, matching him shot for shot, for the final three days. Unfortunately, for him, he had dropped two points on opening day and simply was unable to capitalize on any of Weaver's errors, as he made none. Tamas, son of All Army Rifle Team

shooter and coach Arpad Tamas, was in third place earning the junior title, a nice high school graduation present for the Fort Benning Junior Rifle Club member. Carolyn Millard, who had won parts of the women's title in the past, took complete possession of the ladies championship for the first time.

Dick Hanson, a familiar sight on the Perry firing line as the water tower, wielded a Winchester 52 he had purchased from former NRA President George Whittington in the late 60s. The sleeved action rifle carried a 1953 serial number and the stock was modified with enough wood putty to insure that the company's stock prices would not drop soon. The rifle's unusual modifications and the effort put into it to make it shoot are reminiscent of Fred Cole's rifle, "Darwin's Delight"-named so because it just evolved. The 69 year old Hanson had been plagued with medical problems over the winter. Being a tough competitor he still managed to fend off a determined effort by 83 year old Hollister to win his fifth consecutive senior title.

Bruce Johnson and Carl Evans fought it out for the intermediate senior title. Johnson prevailed on the strength of his any sight aggregate and reclaimed the title he had lost to Frank Boyd the previous year. As always the familiar name of Wigger was called out summoning to the stage, not Lones this time, but his daughter the new intermediate junior champion Deena Wigger. The audience that crowded Hough Auditorium was amused to see Wigger the father, so familiar with being on the stage himself, scramble about like any other proud parent, camera in hand, for a good vantage point to snap a picture. Eliza Bishop, the thirteen year old eighth grader daughter of Ty Bishop, became the sub-junior champion in her second trip to Perry. Bishop was presented with the Joseph P. Glabb Trophy presented to the NRA by David

and Ellen Ross in honor of Glabb, who was a progressive rifle coach in his area taking shooters younger than 12. The award was given retroactively to all sub juniors who had won the title since the title was inaugurated in 1979, starting with Donald Wallace, the first sub junior national champion.

While the 1983 Perry results certainly featured a host of familiar names in familiar places there were emerging future champions. The intense competition in trying conditions tempered the shooters, making them harder to beat in the future.

### **1984**

There is something positive to be said about being built close to the ground when you have to withstand the winds that whip in off of the surface of Lake Erie to torment position rifle shooters. Lieutenant Colonel Lones Wigger, of the rock solid position and hold, withstood both the winds and best efforts of the preeminent position shooters to earn his 17<sup>th</sup> position title in 22 years. His closest competitors, Captain Richard Hawkins; a tall lanky West Point graduate assigned to the USAMU, and National Guard Sergeant Lance Peters, a gentle giant of a man, were far behind him.

While Wigger was able to tighten up his position and get below the roughest of the winds the two towering rifleman were just too tall to avoid the abuse heaped upon the rest of the field by the 25 mile per hour gusts. Wigger's extraordinary lead of 45 points over a skilled rifleman such as Hawkins clearly displayed his extraordinary prowess at the game. At the same time Peters may have established a record of sorts in the "always a bridesmaid and never the bride" department. This third place finish was his third, when added to a pair of seconds it gave him five top three finishes, all in the shadow of Wigger.

Wigger usually and wisely leaves a little spare space in his trunk to hold his armful of awards on the trip home. This year he was forced to squeeze a bit more into the planned space as daughter Deena win a handful of trophies. The father accounted for the national open position championship; the service championship, the metallic sight championship, the any sight championship, and a majority of the individual matches while the daughter claimed the civilian position championship, the women's championship, the junior championship, and the women's any sight championship.

In keeping with the family theme the Mitchells, Suzanne and Bob, were the only folks to break the Wigger's strangle hold on the major awards. Suzanne Mitchell who, despite losing training time when she gave birth to her son Jeffery in April, placed third in the iron sight aggregate and won the woman's iron sight championship while Bob was second to Wigger in the any sight aggregate.

Other Perry veterans were still at the top of their game. Don Burtis took his fourth senior title in five years while Bob Vangene held on to the intermediate senior title he had wrested from Fred Cole. Matt Suggs repeated as the intermediate junior winner. West Virginia University's Collegiate All American Michael Anti earned his second Perry title, this time the collegiate championship, to add to a junior crown from 1982. Sandra Worman, who had dominated the sub-junior category at the national indoor championships, the Junior Olympic Rifle Championships, and the US International Shooting Championships, rounded out her year with the sub junior title at Perry. If one had to write a synopsis of the position matches it would simply be that the wind blew and the Wiggers won.



Perseverance is often rewarded. The ability to work hard, to establish a goal, and to stick to it, often has surprising pleasant results. Such was the case for 55-year-old Ron West who had recorded 27 trips to Perry in his shooting diary. West's goal this year was simple: earn a spot on the 1985 Roberts Team. After all there would only be one national champion but with 12 positions open on the team going to Bisley the odds were distinctly in his favor. Roberts selection would be based on the results of the iron sight aggregate and West had been training hard. After two days of shooting under fine conditions the one time any sight champion found himself well ahead of the competition with a 3198-248X. His closest competitors were two Army shooters, Wigger three points back, and Dave Chesser who was six down.

The any sight championship began in excellent conditions as evidenced when Baron Whateley broke the Perry any sight Dewar record of 400-40X set in 1980 by Robert F. Young. Whateley added an extra 10 Xs to the old score and under any circumstances 30 consecutive Xs at 100 yards is a feat worthy of mention.

For two days West tenaciously held on to his lead as he was pressed on all sides. Try as he might Wigger could only hold his own against the hard holding West as they matched each other almost shot for shot. Not to be out done Ray Wheeler, a relative unknown, added more tension as he kept up with the two front runners. In the face of West's three point lead Wigger and the rest were virtually helpless in the race for the championship as West demonstrated perfection with the scope. West kept the door tightly closed and, even though Wigger won the any sight aggregate with a 3200-293X, there was no way the rules would allow him 321 shots, which is what he would have needed to overcome West's lead. Ron West's successful quest for a spot on the

Roberts Team yielded some interesting residue; the national championship, civilian, and metallic championships as well as three intermediate senior titles, a spot on the Dewar Team, and membership on the winning any sight team, The Champion Shooting Club, as they won their third consecutive title. It was a good week by anybody's accounting.

Wigger settled for second overall and the service title while Jim Meredith of the AMU was third. Marsha Beasley was the new woman's champion. Joe Barnes, the 1977 senior champion returned to the stage to reclaim that title. The younger set, Eric Kugler, Gary D. Stephens, Web Wright, Jr., and Eliza Bishop, carried away the collegiate, junior, intermediate junior, and sub-junior titles, respectively.

## **1985**

On occasion people sometimes have the unique experience of being part of similar events in history. Robert Lincoln, eldest son of the martyred president, was at his father's when he died. In later years he was witness to the assassinations of fellow Civil War veterans Presidents James Garfield and William McKinley, making him, as he stated a bit self-conscious about "a certain fatality about the presidential function when I am present." While not on the same general historical level Carl Bernosky found himself in much the same situation.

Bernosky became the youngest high power champion in 1977 at the age of eighteen years. He was to reign for four consecutive years, tying the longest consecutive string of victories record held by Ronald G. Troyer. Seeking a challenge Bernosky abandoned high power for smallbore position and after just two years the

custom upholsterer from Pennsylvania made his second trip to Perry to compete in smallbore and broke Wigger's consecutive win record at nine. The feat set up Bernosky for two footnotes in shooting history, he became the first civilian to win the position title and the third person, along with Gary Anderson and D.I. Boyd, person to win both a high power and smallbore outdoor position titles.

Bernosky's struggle through the first stage, metallic sights prone, gave little indication of the future, a 393 is not an auspicious beginning. However, he quickly pulled himself together and won the standing and kneeling matches. At the end of the day he had a score of 1142-15X, a 13 point lead over second place Eun Chul Lee. Earlier Lee, a member of the 1984 Korean Olympic Rifle Team who had studied under Lanny Bassham, amused those about him by boldly stating that he had, "...come here to beat Mr. Wigger." It was no hollow boast; he outdistanced the perennial champion by a single point.

Wigger came out strong on the second day but fell into the shadow cast by Suzanne Mitchell's prone match winning score of 400. In offhand he had no equals, posting a 370. Wigger's kneeling is legendary but this year he placed second to George Metz. In the end his very consistent performance saw him top the any sight field with a score of 1151-22X. Hovering just behind was Bernosky with an 1147-15X. Wigger's best effort wasn't good enough to win the open title but it did provide him with his tenth consecutive service championship, a cup of bitter tea to the tough competitor, and a strongly stated rebuttal to Lee.

While Pennsylvania had reason to be proud of Bernosky, and the legions of Perry champions that preceded him, the tiny state of Connecticut refused to take a back

row seat. Four national prone champions called the Nutmeg State home and they would be proud to see a trio of position shooters dominate the special categories in position. Hailing from the Middlefield Rifle Club and Blue Trail Range, Debbie Lyman, who had begun her shooting career at the University of Alaska, won the women's title. Tennessee Tech's Jesse Johnston was the collegiate winner and Robert Mercadante took home the intermediate junior trophy. Fritz Borke and David Edgar gathered up junior and sub-junior honors. Retracing steps they had taken many times before Robert Makielski and Fred Cole returned to the stage to pick of trophies for the senior and intermediate senior wins.

Although the NRA may not seem sentimental, it has its moments. Harlon Carter, former NRA Executive Vice President, had participated in all three shooting disciplines in his long life. He shot pistol with the celebrated Charles Askins when they were fellow members of the United States Border Patrol before World War II and later engaged in high power and prone championships. For some years he was a match official and was celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his first National Match by competing in the prone championship. In celebration of the milestone the statistical office assigned him to point number 50.

When prone began, the day after the position awards ceremony, Wigger was not a reigning champion in an outdoor national smallbore championship for the first time in 12 years. Usually Wigger had his annual quota of championships wrapped up by the end of the position matches making a prone win just icing on the cake; such was not the case this year. Reaching deep inside Wigger marshaled his extraordinary skill, formidable mental focus, and exceptional competitive spirit. Within an hour after the

first “Commence Fire” was announced the 401 shooters were witness to the full force of Wigger’s unleashed commitment to victory. He posted a match winning 400-36X in the 50 yard match followed by another a win in the meter match. A point slipped away in the Dewar and the day ended with a second at 100 yards but with Wigger was in the lead.

When rain wasn’t lashing the line on the second day there was fog and mist. Wigger erected a mental umbrella over himself and shot as if he were in the gallery. Certainly Wigger had to be bothered by the cold and damp but his resolve was reminiscent of a scene from David Lean’s film *Lawrence of Arabia*. Lawrence, played by Peter O’Toole, slowly snuffs out a burning match with his bare fingers as a parlor trick. When asked if it hurt Lawrence replies, “Yes.” “But what is the trick?” he is asked. Lawrence replies, “The trick is not minding that it hurts.” Wigger didn’t seem to mind the conditions that bothered others and as a result posted a perfect 1600 for the day and a metallic sight championship score of 3199-256X. The only competitor who came close to matching him was his traditional rival Pres Kendall, who could only draw within four points.

After the team day break, where Wigger kept sharp by shooting on the Dewar Team, and helping the Army win the metallic sight team championship, shooting resumed. As each match result was posted Wigger’s name was curiously missing from the top three on the first day of any sight. Only an imprudent person “hawking the board” might conclude that the lieutenant colonel had succumbed and was fading away. He did not win a single match, but he only dropped one point, so he won the day with a

1599, just an X ahead of Marine Gary Andrade. Wigger was still in the lead with one day to go.

On the final day Andrade shot a 1600 locking up the any sight championship while Wigger dropped one more point. Initially Wigger held a four point lead over Kendall but the score narrowed on the second and third day. On the fourth day the lead was back to four points, but Kendall had fallen out and the challenge was from Army Team member Brad Carnes. Wigger held on to the lead and would go home with his record tying fourth national prone title. In third place was Kendall, the civilian champion, who now shared the record for Perry prone wins with the new champion.

Marsha Beasley repeated as the women's champion as did Joe Barnes and Ron West in the senior and the intermediate senior categories. Jesse Johnston became the first collegiate champion to double up both position and prone in the same year, as did Dave Edgar for sub-juniors. Web Wright III captured junior prone honors and Gina Schoenenberger did the same for intermediate juniors.

It was quite a year for smallbore, with historical events almost common place. Whateley, Bernosky, Wigger, Johnston, and Edgar displayed the competitive fire and skill that makes marksmanship a unique test of the individual against both fixed standards and men and women of a like spirit.

## **1986**

It is reported that the noted sports columnist Ring Lardner, Sr., once said "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that is the smart way to bet." The natural extension of Lardner's comment, for a betting man wishing to place a

safe wager on two things at Camp Perry, one would be the weather would be unpredictable and the second would be for Wigger to win one or more championships..

After being unseated from the three position throne that he had occupied for nine straight years by Carl Bernosky Wigger came to the 1986 Nationals with an eye on victory. The matches had a particular urgency, for his competitive life would be changing dramatically in the fall. He had filed his retirement papers and would be leaving the Army in the fall after which he would assume of the reins of the United States National Shooting Team. He was effectively removing himself from active competition in the international arena and this would be his last hurrah as a member of the USAMU.

The fact that 1985 had not been the competitive year he would have liked because of the loss of his three position crown and a less than stellar performance at US International Shooting Championships, he was focused on the position matches at Perry. Very much at home on the broad grass plain he got off to a poor start in the metallic match with a shaky prone stage, his name did not even appear in the money in the service master class which was won by Marine Gunner Ken Cooper with a 398-18X. However, only a rookie would count Wigger out and by the end of the standing match he was back in control with a 378-3X a score that was only challenged by Bernosky's 370-1X. As the day wore on Wigger only got tougher in the position that he quite often dominated, kneeling. He shot a fine 389, edging out William Patzke by a single point while Bernosky only managed a 381-6X. When the scores were tallied Wigger had put together an 1162-18X for a new Perry record that exceeds the old one by seven points.

Bernosky and Sergeant Marvin Spinks, from the USAMU, were knotted up in second and third place with 1147s, Bernosky two Xs ahead of Spinks with 14.

The any sight matches began much the same as the metallic matches with Wigger's name was nowhere to be seen on the results bulletin as Staff Sergeant Hap Rocketto, a journeyman rifleman with the All National Guard Rifle Team, won the prone match with a 399-11X. After prone Wigger, with his Lyman Superspot bolted on, took up his rock solid standing position and held the crosshairs inside of the ten ring enough to end with a 371-2X. Bernosky could only muster a 357 and Spinks was good for 360. Wigger continued his march forward with a 15 point lead going into the final kneeling match. Knowing that they would probably need at least a perfect 400 to overtake Wigger must have played on the minds of the leaders. Surprisingly, Wigger and everyone else, was thrashed in kneeling by Bill Beard, a major with the Army Reserves and an alternate rifleman of the 1984 Olympic Team, who manufactured an outstanding 390-6X. Wigger had an 1151-16X for the day and wrapped up the position championship in the face of Beard's 1144-23X challenge. On the strength of his any sight performance Beard moved in to second in the aggregate while Spinks held on to third place. Bernosky slipped out of the top three but held on to win the civilian championship for the second time in as many years.

Captain Joyce Meyers, assigned to the USAMU, led the women. Jesse Johnston held on to his collegiate title while Robin Bardenhagen scooped up junior and intermediate junior titles. Nicole Panko, a sub-junior coached by Patti Clark of the Stratford PAL, won her first title on the way to a distinguished shooting career. Robert



Makielski and Fred Cole returned and again dominated the senior and intermediate senior classes.

In team competition Wigger anchored both the iron sight and any sight teams to victory. Wigger, Patzke, Myers, and Mark Kauder teamed up for irons while Patzke stepped aside, in deference to Wigger's son Ron, for the any sight victory. The combination of national championship wins in individual and team events, accompanied by his oldest son, certainly put the cap on Wigger's outstanding military marksmanship career.

While Wigger was no slouch at prone, he had a silver Olympic medal and four national championships under his belt, his true métier was position competition, and he seemed to fade a bit as the prone matches begun. In the shadow of their father's impending retirement young Ron and Deena Wigger boldly picked up where their father had left off.

As the first day of prone progressed familiar names kept cropping up as match winners. Bruce Meredith won the yard match with a 400-40X and Dave Weaver did likewise in the meter match with a 400-38. Randle Team icon Lenore Lemanski and John Reynolds went to a tiebreaker when each carded a 400-34X in the Dewar with Lemanski emerging the victor. In the only match to go for less than a perfect score Steve Dember edged out Lemanski with a 399-27X at 100 yards. Lemanski won the day with her 1599-126X but was being pursued closely by Gary Andrade of the Marines, and former champion Pres Kendall. High Master Junior was Deena Wigger with a 1596-110X, one point ahead of Lones.

Pres Kendall was cruising on the momentum of his first day scores when he put a 400-37X on the board for the yard match at the start of the second day. Deena Wigger out Xed two of the stars of the senior class, Dick Hanson and Larry Moore, with a 400-35X in the meter match. The Dewar match saw the young Wigger girl squeak out a victory over Marine Staff Sergeant Robbie Franker on the strength of her X count at 100 yards. Each had put up 400-33Xs but Wigger had one more X at long range. Ron Wigger also showed up on the result bulletin with a 400-29X. Just as he had opened the day with a match win so Kendall would close it with the only 400 at 100 yards. When the metallic sights scores were posted Eric Klumker was the winner of the second daily 1600 with a 1598-111X. Ron Wigger was one X behind and in third place was Deena Wigger's 1597-124X. Lemanski earned the metallic sight championship with a 3195-231X, Kendal was a few Xs behind, and in third was Andrade with a 3193-248X. Ron West was high intermediate senior and Larry Moore was the senior champion. High Junior was Deena Wigger with a 3193-234X. Second Service Master was Ron Wigger, who has shot a 3191-221X over the first two days, right behind him was Lones Wigger's 3189-227X.

The any sight matches began with an incredible three way 400-40X tie between Janice Schuler, Samuel Thoman, and Steve Roach that was only broken by Xs of higher value according to NRA Rule 15.7k. They finished in the order indicated but not one of them elected to make a run on Greg Tomsen's 1970 record. Lones Wigger was first in class while Deena lead the juniors. More ties showed up in the meter match, which was won cleanly by Shawn McDonnell, of the Stratford Connecticut PAL, with a

400-40X. Paul Benneche and CWO3 Ken Cooper, USMC, both shot 400-39Xs with 20 Xs on the second card and were both were awarded second place prizes.

Civilians Charles Sentner and Joe Johnson, Jr. had to go to a Xs at 100 yards to decide who would win the Dewar when each shot a 400-35X. In third place with a 400-24X was All Guardsman Hap Rocketto. Mark Marinoff won the 100 yard match with a 400-32X, leaving Frank Boyd and Carolyn Millard, tied at 400-30Xs and making the stat office pull out the rule book one more time before shutting down for the night. Millard, Johnson and Lisa Smith all compiled the only 1600s of the day, and finished in that order. At the close of the third day the match was still up in the air, with no clear-cut leader. As is often the case the prone winner would not be decided until the last day, and perhaps the last 20 shot string.

Perfect scores and tiebreakers were again the order of the day for the final yard match. Cooper and McDonnell went down to 10Xs of higher value and Cooper had ten to McDonnell's eight. Jeff Follin, Mark Marinoff, McDonnell, and Dember kept the scorers attending to the slightest detail. Each had a 400-36X and the final order was only arrived at after Xs were counted in the last bull in stage two, according to NRA Rule 15.7h. Dember, one out of the top three had to settle for first in class. Marinoff and Dean Oakes did nothing to ease the workload in the scoring shed. Each posted a 400-32X in the Dewar and out came the rulebooks for the third time in as many matches. If the scoring crew thought they were going to get a break they had neglected to speak to George Williams and Andrew Giles, each owners of 100-yard 400-29Xs. Williams won with a 100-8X final bull. Despite the number of 400 ties there were no 1600s on the final day, Marinoff won with a 1598-128X, McDonnell was in second place

with a 1597-135X, just ahead of Oakes, 1597-127X. The any sight crown went to Carolyn Millard who bested the Dick Hanson, the cagy senior veteran who would not give in to age or infirmity, by 13 Xs. McDonnell was third. High intermediate senior was Boyd. Ron Wigger was first service shooter.

After all of the fine shooting was completed it was still unclear how the final standings would sort out. Andrade summed it up elegantly when he had simply stated the obvious, "One day, all the targets will be shot, and when they're scored, we'll find out who won." He was prophetic as he turned out to be the winner, but not without a challenge that resulted in one of the closest finishes in Perry prone history. Andrade had quietly collected 6384 points, the same as Ron Wigger. After all of the ties the stat crew must have been relieved to find that Andrade had a five X lead on Wigger and they would not have to delve into the least used and most obscure sections of NRA Rule 15 to find out who won the national open and service championship. Pres Kendall was in third and took home the Schweitzer medallion as high civilian. Edie Reynolds became the woman's champion while Web Wright III earned both collegiate and junior honors. Frank Boyd was intermediate senior, a title he had owned in 1980, and Laurence Moore was named senior champion. Erin Gestl was the intermediate junior champion and Chuck Schiff took sub-junior honors.

This was not the end of an era by a long shot, for all of the Wiggers, Lones, Ron, Dan, and Deena would be back on the line and wife Mary Kay would continue to toil in the scoring shed. In the future each would carve out a little history of their own in the shooting sports.

## 1987

Ever changing, ever the same might be one way to sum up Camp Perry. The smallbore matches of 1987 would certainly bear out the truth of the statement. The long grass firing line that had greeted hundreds of competitors each year was now dressed up with a light blue canopy, a half mile long, ten feet high, and six feet wide, giving the smallbore crowd a modicum of protection from the blazing Northern Ohio summer sun and the traditional Perry rain showers. Taking advantage of the new shelter was Sergeant First Class Karen Monez of the Army Reserves. The elfin Monez was no stranger to Perry and took advantage of the pleasant conditions, warm, dry, and windy to make a historical mark in the annals of Perry. Monez had first come to Perry in 1973 and her progress up the ladder of shooting and military success could easily be observed. Specialist Fourth Class Monez was the 1977 women's position champion, in 1979 Specialist Fifth Class Monez again was high woman, Staff Sergeant Monez captured the ladies title for a third time in 1982. Five years later, in 1987, Sergeant First Class Monez was again the women's champion but she did it by capturing the service championship, which was automatic when she won the open title.

Monez's road to the top was winding. On the first day of position she shot her personal Perry best with iron sights. An 1145-17X left her feeling good about her performance level but trailing match winner David Canella of the AMU and Pat Spurgin of the Olympic Training Center. Knowing that a good scope score was the key to success she drew upon her gallery shooting success. She had won the NRA Four Position Indoor Championship in 1980 and 1986 with the Three Position Indoor Championship sandwiched in between in 1984 so there was a solid reserve of

experience. Her efforts and experience gave her a score of 1158-19X and would have seen her through to the any sight championship had not fellow Reservist Bob Mitchell not edged her out of first by a six X margin. Although a sub aggregate win would have been nice her quiet and solid performance did add up to a 2303-36X that was worthy of the national position title and her place in the record books as the first female to win it all in position. Cannella placed second with a 2300-36X while a new comer to the civilian ranks, Lones Wigger, managed to tie up third with a 2297-19X.

Robert Makielski, the senior champion, paid a gracious compliment to his friendly rival Fred Cole when he told all that would listen that the only reason that he had won was that Fred was not in attendance. Makielski modestly did not mention that this was his third straight position victory. Cole, home recuperating from a close encounter with an electric hedge that had almost cost him the middle finger of his left hand, was not far from the thoughts of his many friends and admirers.

The Green Mountain state's Charlie Langmaid showed just how tough he could be in a pinch. Trailing Richard Brock, Sr., by eleven points in his quest for the intermediate senior crown he bore down on scope day to overcome the deficit and surge ahead. The retired Vermont National Guard officer closed the 11 point gap and then sealed his victory by picking up an additional 14 points for a 2156-26X win.

Army Reserve Second Lieutenant Mike Anti had given freely of his scarce summer vacation time during the past few summers as a coach at the National Junior Smallbore Camp held on Petrarca Range, just a few hundred yards from the championship action. In his last year of collegiate eligibility the All American could no longer resist the siren call and entered and won the collegiate category.

Erin Gestl brought home the Cobb Trophy as the junior champion. Intermediate junior champion Gina Schoenenberger and sub-junior champion Chad Meetre joined him on stage.

In his 25 years as a competitor at the National Matches Lones Wigger, Jr., or a member of his family, has seemed to win just about every trophy on the stage. Wigger's new civilian status expanded the award vistas a bit and the man quite often referred to as "The Big Guy" was now positioned to win the Schweitzer Medal, the 14 karat symbol of civilian supremacy in smallbore prone shooting, long denied him as an active duty military marksman. The only thing standing between him and the medal was a competitor list some 340 people long populated with a host of national champions, talented shooters, and hungry youngsters.

With conditions about as good as they get on the south shore of Lake Erie in late August the prone championship was to be a festival of 400s. Major Ray Carter, USAR, lead off with a 400-38X in the metallic sight yard match. Herb Pasch's 36X possible took the meter match and Steve Dember followed by winning the Dewar with a 400-37X. Ron Wigger, of the AMU, who had such a great year in 1986, closed the day with a 400-35X at 100-yards. Two 1600s emerged from the first day. Web Wright III had 133Xs, Dave Weaver followed with 124Xs, and Deena Wigger rounded out the top three with a 1599-136X.

Day two started on the same note with Captain Richard Hawkins Creedmooring Web Wright III when both produced a 400-38X each at 50 yards. Attempting to retain his championship title Gunnery Sergeant Gary Andrade wrung out a win in the Meter match from fellow Marine Dennis Ghiselli and Lones Wigger who all shot scores of 400-

37Xs. All National Guard Private First Class Gurrie Fandozzi and Marine Sergeant Robbie Franker went down to the wire in the Dewar with 400-31Xs with Fandozzi coming out first. It was much the same in the 100 yard match between Pat Spurgin's and Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel Dave Cramer's identical 400-25X score, with the Olympic champion winning the match from the reservist.

With the match wins so evenly split over the first two days there was some excitement to see just how the metallic sight championship would play out. When the score sheets were taped to the Plexiglas scoreboard Marine Robbie Franker was on top for the Hoppe Trophy. His 3197-252X was one point ahead of fellow teammate Ghiselli and Web Wright III. Dick Hanson took up his accustomed place in the senior class while newcomer Ralph Leary was the new intermediate senior winner. Worth noting was the fact that Lones Wigger and Dave Weaver appeared in that order in the civilian master class, separated by just eight Xs. Deena Wigger was woman champion and Ron Wigger led the service masters.

When the individual matches resumed after Team Day the All National Guard Team made its presence felt again when Staff Sergeant Kay Anderson won a three way 400-40X tie for first place between himself, Dember and Ron Wigger in the any sight yard match. It was surprising that not one of the winners made an attempt on Greg Tomsen's 1970 Perry record of 400-40X-35X. Major Bill Beard, an Olympian on the Army Reserve team, captured the Meter match in a tie breaker with Andrade, both men shooting a 400-36. A pair of 400-37Xs between Staff Sergeant Phillip Rucks, USMC, and Dave Weaver pushed the statistical office into a rulebook reading to determine who might win the Dewar with Rucks being declared the winner. Any 400 with 40Xs is



indeed a rare score indeed so a 100 yard 40X possible is certainly worthy of merit and Ghiselli certainly deserved to win the 100 yard match after shooting a perfect score. Punching out the “possible-possible” gave Ghiselli a spot in the record books next to Rans Triggs who, until that time, had been sole owner of the Perry record he set in 1968.

Gwendolyn Fox had the best of the 1600s produced that day, even if it was a narrow tiebreaker over Steve Dember. In third place was Joe Barnes whose 1600-131X was just three Xs behind the two tied at the top. Glancing further down the score sheet a discerning eye would note that Wigger and Weaver were tied at 1599-141X, still tied in overall score but with Wigger holding onto an eight X lead.

The final day started with eight 400-39s scattered about the range after the 50 yard match was completed. Bobbi Vitito emerged the victor in a race that must have been as exciting in the scoring room as on the line. Weaver made a play to pull away from Wigger in the Meter match that he won with a 400-39X, by reducing Wigger’s X count lead by half. Eric Klumker and Staff Sergeant Bill Lange, the Non Commissioned Officer in Charge of the All National Guard Team, both posted 400-38Xs in the Dewar with the win going to the civilian.

As the last targets were being hung the match had come down to three riflemen, all whose last name began with W. Barring a major disaster, such as a crossfire, either former prone champions Weaver or Wigger, or newcomer Web Wright III would have his name engraved upon the Critchfield Trophy. Weaver was in the lead by one point, Wigger had the most Xs, and Wright, nine Xs behind, was poised to take advantage of any error on the part of the older men.

Few scores produce more stories filled with horror, or humor, than a 199-19X. In Weaver's case, with a national championship on the line, it was the former. After dropping the point he bore down as he closed out his last 20 shots with a 200-18X for a 399-37X total. Meanwhile, things were not going all together that well for Wigger. Although he was able to collect all of the points his X count was so low that he switched brands of ammunition in an attempt to build up some sort of cushion against Weaver. Wright had no choice but to simply shoot as best he could, his winning rested solely on the possibility of the others making mistakes.

Weaver left the line firing and consulted with his identical twin brother Donald. Confusion between the brothers has often provided a measure of amusement on the line and breaks lifts tension. To keep things light Donald, the non-shooting Weaver, sometimes dons one of Dave's Dewar Team shirts and answers as if he were Dave when addressed as such. "Team Weaver" is a tight group and where one finds Dave there one also finds Donald and the boys' father Oren. The conversation centered about points and Xs with Dave arriving at the conclusion that his run at the championship had come up dry.

Wigger and Weaver met and in the ensuing discussion, to the surprise of both, they figured out that they had tied. Wigger was astonished that Weaver had been able to close the X gap. Both men knew the rules and unless Weaver could pick up an X from one of the earlier matches whose challenge period had not closed Wigger would win on 100 yard score. Weaver challenged his Dewar, where he thought he might extract an X from the scoring crew. The targets were checked and Weaver lost an X while Perry history lost the closest finish in the chronicles of the smallbore National

Matches. The 1987 prone match was the second tightest finish on record, only exceeded by the three way score tie in 1953 between J.J. Crowley, John Moschkau, and Charlie Whipple, which was also decided by X count.

Lost in all of this drama was the equally tense battle to see who would be winner of the fourth day. With 14 1600s shot Xs counted. When all scores sorted out there remained three 1600-138Xs. After reviewing the rules the winners were declared to be, in order, Hawkins, McDonnell, and Marinoff.

Joe Barnes, without drawing much attention to himself, had quietly worked his way through two days of any sight competition without dropping a point, the only person to compile a perfect 3200, to which he added 260Xs. The final day seemed to sum up the great quality of the competitors and conditions. It was a championship to savor and one that would only grow in the retelling.

Wigger now had five prone titles to his credit and he took home the Schweitzer medal for the first time. The less lucky Weaver settled for second. The third place Web Wright III was close to glory but even though it evaded him he went home with his collegiate and junior titles intact. Gwendolyn Fox picked up her first women's and intermediate junior tile while Dick Hanson, who proved again that age has nothing to do with great performance, was again at the top of the senior list while Frank Boyd repeated as intermediate senior champ. Robbie Franker was the service champion and Nick Myers accompanied him to the stage to pick up the trophy as sub-junior champ.

## **1988**

The number 25 seemed to be significant at the blustery smallbore rifle position championships. In the two and half decades since a young 14 year old Suzanne Gerstl

first spread her shooting mat on the firing line much had changed in both shooting and her life. Now married to Bob Mitchell, National Rifle Team coach, and the mother of an active four-year-old son, the Army Reserve shooter had her eye set on winning.

The same year that Sue Mitchell first shot at Perry, 1963, she sat in the auditorium and watched a 25 year old Army Lieutenant take two trips to the stage to claim the first of his many prone and position titles. Lones Wigger, Jr., had made history when he became the first to ever capture both the prone and position titles in one year. Since then he had rolled up 19 position championships and four prone crowns, duplicating the double victory in as a major a decade later in 1973.

Wigger began the matches with solid, if not brilliant, performances that totaled up to a seven point margin of victory in the position metallic sight championship. He won the prone match with a rare perfect 400 and, while not winning; he was first master in the standing and kneeling matches. His lead set the stage for, what seemed like, his almost inevitable victory. He had a comfortable lead on Marine Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli and fellow AMU shooter Brad Carnes. Mitchell began her run on the women's title with a win in the metallic sight championship. Veteran campaigners Fred Cole, looking for his first senior crown since his accident a year earlier, and defending intermediate senior champion Charlie Langmaid were half way to their respective goals.

Throughout the first two matches of the any sight championship Wigger's lead eroded. A young Army private named Tom Tamas, trained by Wigger, took the prone match in a three way 400 tie with Richard Williams and teammate Sergeant Brad Carnes. Sergeant Lance Peters, of the All National Guard Rifle Team, narrowly edged out Ghiselli in a magnificent display of standing shooting. Peters and Ghiselli went back

and forth until Peters closed out with a 380-3X to Ghiselli's 379-3X. Wigger was in third place with a 371. It was an ironic finish as Peters had finished third three times to Wigger in the position championships over the years and his standing win vaulted him into third place over all. He had little hope of overtaking the lead that both Ghiselli and Wigger over him.

Going into the final match, any sight kneeling, Ghiselli had erased Wigger's lead and was sitting a few points ahead. Then, just as if Wigger has whistled up the wind on command, it began to blow harder. If there ever was a shooter who feasted on windblown kneeling matches it was Wigger, he had won enough of them at Perry. Built low to the ground, with a generously proportioned physique, he could tighten up his sling, roll into the position, and offer a small aerodynamic shape that almost defied the wind to shove him around. However, he didn't win the kneeling match, Earl Hauf did that, but Wigger placed second. The winds tore points away from the thin angular Ghiselli and the tall blacksmith Peters, leaving them far behind. In the end Wigger came out on top with an 1141-19X, following by 16 points was the hard holding Hauf who lead, who else but third place Peters by one.

The two day tally had Wigger an astonishing 30 points ahead of second place service champion Ghiselli. As strange as it might seem his 19<sup>th</sup> position title was a new and unique experience for Wigger for he had never won the civilian position championship title before. Peters, for the fourth time, finished third to Wigger's first. The high woman was Mitchell who, winning both metallic and any sight titles on the way, achieved a goal that was 25 years coming, but certainly worth the wait. Cole and Langmaid tied up the senior and intermediate senior honors with wins in any sights. All

American Gary Stephens, a student at Murray State, College wrapped up the collegiate title. Erin Gestl, last year's junior champ, sewed up junior honors for the second time in as many years. Jeffery Martin and Shannon Lancaster were the intermediate and sub-junior winners.

The winds that had troubled the position shooters seemed to be an equal opportunity complication and would pop up from time to time to plague the prone shooters. With the wind up and running the matches would be not be dominated by any one shooter. It would take close attention to the scoreboard to see who had the lead at any given moment. The first yard match, won by John Reynolds' 400-38X, showed only seven of the 52 shooters in the money not shooting a possible score. Frank Boyd, the reigning intermediate champ, took an early lead with a second place finish in the 50 yard match and was the 400-36X match winner in the Meter match. Erin Gestl's 400-37X won the Dewar as Tom Tamas wound up the day with a match winning 400-37X at 100 yards giving him the first daily aggregate with a 1600-137X. With three more 1600s on the board Dick Hanson, who at 71 had six senior crowns to his credit, still had his eye on the open championship and posted the second place score with 128Xs. Gestl was in third with 127Xs while Jack Foster's possible gave him high master.

Tamas tried to solidify his lead with a second day opening yard match score of 400-37X but was challenged by Ghiselli who tied him on Xs but came in second on a Creedmoor. Reynolds was still alive and kicking pushing Tamas into second place in the Meter match with a 400-36X. Gary Stephens won the Dewar, a match in which Dave Weaver first appeared in the top three. Ron Wigger and Shawn McDonnell scores went to the rulebook to determine whose 400-23X would win the 100 yard

match. Wigger came out on top as one of only three 400 shot in that match as the winds rose. The second day's aggregate went to Ron Wigger, who fired a 1599-116X, with Tamas and the senior Wigger a point back for second and third.

The metallic sight champion was Tamas who had a 3198-267X to his credit. Hanson, still in search of his first national open title, held on tenaciously with a 3198-251X for second and the senior crown, while third place Ron Wigger was down three points and 80 Xs. Gwendolyn Fox earned the first leg on the women's title and Frank Boyd had half of his battle won to retain his intermediate senior championship.

Steve Hogan, a fireman shooting with the Blue Trail Range team, scuffled with Weaver for the win in the first 50 yard match of the any sight championship. Hogan's 400-40X was ruled better than Weaver's. Carolyn Millard and Harry Jacobs, each with a 400-39X, had a rare unbreakable tie for third. Staff Sergeant Bill Lange, of All Guard, punched out 40Xs in the Meter match for a one X win over Earl Hauf and Tamas. Kay Anderson, Lange's All Guard teammate, and Gestl both had 400-38Xs in the Dewar with Anderson's coming out on top. Edie Reynolds cleanly won the 100 yard match with a 400-38X. Reynolds' win at 100 was her fourth possible of the day and her X count was better than all others, on this on a day when over a dozen 1600s littered the results bulletin, Reynolds was the winner. Weaver was in second place with Neal Patrizio right behind.

Hanson was still full of energy as day four began. The determined Floridian fought it out with Mitchell when both hung up 400-40Xs on the final day. Hanson prevailed and his hope for a long sought after open victory was very much alive. Tamas took the Meter match after a three way tie with Stephens and Dean Oakes broke his

way. Lones Wigger made it to the top of a prone match at last with a 400-38 win in the Dewar. Going into the last match there was still was no clear cut leader and the win at 100 yards by Dave Cramer over Ron West and Jack Foster only muddied the waters more. Within a few minutes it became clear that Pres Kendall had won the any sight championship with a pair of 1600s. Andrew Giles and Jim Koch III also shot perfect scores on the last day but did not back them up as had Kendall. Steve Dember had a 3199 that was three Xs ahead of Patrizio in the any sight aggregate. Edie Reynolds was the woman's champion while Ron West was the first intermediate senior. Dick Hanson easily won the senior title.

As the last relay was packing its gear the contenders were comparing notes to see if they could determine who had won. Had Hanson finally grabbed the gold ring? Was Ghiselli going to win prone after a second place finish in position? Just how hot was Tamas? Would Wigger, Weaver, or Kendall thread another prone win on their stringers? Tamas reported that he had gone for two and was six down, likewise was Hanson. Weaver and Ghiselli figured that they had dropped five each with Weaver's X count higher, but Ghiselli had a challenge in for a close shot in the meter match. In short order the Ghiselli's targets were checked and there was no change. Weaver had won his fourth prone title, tying him with Wigger and Kendall on the all time winner's list. This year he had won by Xs-just as he had lost by Xs the year before.

Ghiselli owned the service title and, with his two second place finishes, perhaps the best performance of all. Tamas settled for third. Fox rang up both the women's title and the intermediate junior while Gestl added the prone junior championship to his position title. He is only the third junior to double up on championships in the history of



the tournament. Joe Gaydos, a Connecticut sub-junior, turned 14 on the last day of the tournament, the same day he closed the door on the sub-junior title. Frank Boyd captured his last intermediate senior prone title as Father Time promoted him to the senior category. He bemoaned the fact that now he will have to face Dick Hanson.

Hanson, whose resolve to attain his goal, stands as a model to young and old alike. The veteran of 40 trips to the National Championships suffers from arthritis and the dimness of vision that accompanies aging but his spirit was as vibrant as it was when he first came to Perry and saw the huge trees that back the firing line as saplings. His seventh senior crown might fall short of his goal but he certainly displayed the spirit of a national champion.

### **1989**

As much as the National Matches at Camp Perry stay the same they also change in a way to make them more interesting. While the prone events and targets have remained the same for the living memory of most current participants the relatively new position matches have undergone several major changes. In the international arena scores had been improving to the point that the International Shooting Union, the governing body for worldwide competition, reduced the size of the 50 meter targets to present a greater challenge. With the change in targets all position records at Perry became obsolete, a situation that had arisen only once before when the matches changed from four to three position in 1978.

Wasting no time Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli, USMC fired a 397-27X on the new A-51 six bulls eye target to establish the first new National Record in the prone metallic sight match. Ghiselli had finished second last over all in position the previous

year and seemed intent on moving up one place in the standings in 1989. When the competitors rose to shoot standing Ghiselli had lost none of his momentum capturing the second event, and his second championship record in as many matches, with a 365-7X by Creedmooring Tom Tamas of the AMU by three Xs. It wasn't until the kneeling stage that the Marine's vice like grip on first place broke. Army Reserve Second Lieutenant Kirsten Pasch put together a record 369-7X kneeling to win that match four points head of her nearest competitor. However, Ghiselli would not be denied and won the metallic championship with another record of 1124-41X. In second place by four points was Tamas with Pasch closing out the top three with a 1111-29X and counting herself lucky. In Europe, a score of 1111 is known as a 'picket fence' and the shooter is obliged to treat the rest of the competitors to libations. Perry, hot and humid, made most throats dry and a freshly minted lieutenant's paycheck probably wouldn't have not stretched too far had the European tradition been widely know. To no one's surprise two veterans, Fred Cole and Charlie Langmaid, claimed senior and intermediate senior honors.

On the second day Gwendolyn Fox, the two time defending women's prone champion, strutted her stuff with a 399-26X match record in the any sight prone match. It was a battle royal in standing when the All Guard's Sergeant Lance Peters took on Lones Wigger and Tamas. Peters eventually topped the field with his new record, 371-12X. Tamas was sandwiched between the towering Peters and the shorter Wigger with a 369-10X, five Xs better than his former commanding officer. For Peters it must have been a sweet turnabout to have Wigger finish third to his first, as Peters had finished third four times to Wigger in the position grand aggregate.

Tamas, who had kept himself in a strong position for two days, finally got his match record when he won the kneeling match, trimming Wigger by four points and Pasch by five. There was extra pressure on the young soldier as he was shooting next to Wigger, the undisputed master of kneeling.

The kneeling win gave Tamas the any sight championship with a 1151-50X. Wigger was close behind with an 1146-43X while Peters, as seemed to be his lot in his shooting life, was third. Pasch, who had opted to use metallic sight throughout the two days, posted an 1129-38X to earn both any sight and national honors in the women's category. Cole and Langmaid doubled up again and took the whole shooting match in the senior and intermediate category.

Tamas didn't commit any serious error over the two days of the grand aggregate and won in a commanding style with a 16 point advantage over Wigger, the civilian champion. Pasch came in third a handy five points ahead of Peters and Ghiselli who were fourth and fifth overall and locked up a 2235 each, only separated by Peter's 13 Xs. Erin Gestl pulled off a pair of wins by capturing both collegiate and junior titles. A pair of young junior shooters from Connecticut, Nicole Panko, of the Stratford PAL, and Tom Schady, of the Quaker Hill Rod and Gun Club, topped the intermediate and sub-junior category.

The prone matches opened with typical Perry conditions and Dick Hansom, who always came to Perry to win it all, not just his particular fiefdom of senior champion, opened the ball with a stupendous 400-40X with metallic sights at 50 yards. Second place Steve Goff's 400-35X was the best of three posted by himself and the new position champion Tamas and the old position champion Wigger.

Tames looked as if he had his eye on becoming the second person to win both position and prone titles in one year as he won his second match of the day, the Dewar, with a 400-36X. Defending champion Dave Weaver was not to be denied a win and closed out the day with a 400-35X at 100 yards, won on a tiebreaker with Connecticut's Tom Daniel. There were two 1600-132s posted by Wigger and Ghiselli and a third, with 119Xs by young David Johnson.

The second day began much as the first, as in so far as score was concerned. Weaver had the 400-40X with Hanson hanging in with a 400-38X to keep him in over all contention. Bill Dodd's 400-36X and Carolyn Millard-Sparks' 400-37 took the Meter and the Dewar matches. Hanson gave no ground to the field with his second iron sight win of the tournament, a 400-34X in the 100 yard match. Usually a considerate man to guests he outclassed visiting British Pershing Team member Phil Scanlon in the event. There were several 1600s but Ghiselli's 1600-136X was the best. Ghiselli won the Hoppe Trophy with the only 3200 shot. However, the metallic sight championship went to Boyd Metz, Jr., who only dropped two points for a 3198-249X. Weaver was in second place, two points back but with a four X cushion. Tom Tamas, trying to win both titles held the third place spot with a 3198-269X while Millard-Sparks was high woman. Dick Hanson was, again, the senior champ. The 1984 national champion Ron West was the intermediate senior winner.

An extra day had been added to the schedule to accommodate the Pershing Match, which is shot every eight years between the host United States, and visiting teams from Great Britain and Canada. The United States has never lost control of the trophy, named for its patron General of the Armies John J. "Blackjack" Pershing, since it

wrested it from the hands of the British in 1939 The United States team was selected from the top scores posted in the metallic sight aggregate and Ghiselli, Weaver, Wigger, Tamas, Dave Johnson, Boyd Goldsby, Hanson, Robert Hill, Bill Dodd, and Steve Goff got the nod. Captain Art Cook and Coach Ed Summers held John Black and Tom Daniel in reserve. George Harris acted as adjutant. .

The ten man Pershing Teams formed up on the range early and drew for firing points. Although there was a threat of rain, it was just that, and the match was shot in good quality conditions. The United States won the match shooting a perfect score of 4000-301X across the Dewar course on American targets. England posted a 3995-310X thirteen points ahead of Canada. Goldsby's 35Xs lead the United States.

Randle Team veterans wryly congratulated the Pershing Team, reminding them they, The Randle Ladies, were the first to shoot a ten person team possible on the US Dewar course, and their X count was higher. The dry humor of the women did nothing to take the gilt from the Pershing men's gingerbread.

Pres Kendall, a recognized force in the sport of prone shooting, took this match as the perfect occasion to recognize long time friend and fellow Pershing Alumni, the late William J. Grater. A large silver loving cup was donated in memory of Grater, a member of the 1961 Pershing Team, to be awarded to the high scoring British shooter. Cliff Ogle's name would be engraved upon the trophy's base that would remain in NRA custody and he would take home a keeper trophy for his excellent match high score of 400-36X.

An interesting technological innovation took center stage when Bill Dodd earned a spot on the Pershing Team. Dodd's rifle sported a barrel extension tube that

increased his sight radius an astonishingly long distance. The extension made it easier, according to Dodd, to center up the bull within the aperture while making the sight adjustments less coarse. Certainly his bona fides as a four time two discipline All American, membership on both the Pershing and Dewar Teams, as well as a 3197 in the metallic championship added respectability to the device, which was quickly given the nickname of “bloop tube” because of its shape and the peculiar sound of the rifle’s report.

When firing resumed on the fourth day the traditional prone Dewar team matches began but with a new twist, metric targets. After much debate, some heated, it was decided, to adopt the smaller target for the team matches. The experiment would also test the possibility of changing the prone match program from conventional to international targets. The major argument for those advocating change was that the younger shooters were in the hunt for international success and exposure to metric targets would eliminate the shock of meeting a smaller target in major international matches. Those feeling that no change was needed argued that the smaller target would place a higher premium on expense to the shooter, because of the need for the absolute best ammunition and equipment to attain winning scores. As in most cases the truth lay somewhere in between.

The Black Hawk Rifle Club won the first metric team match, The American Dewar Trophy, with a score of 1555-70X. In the past this match would go to a team with a score in the area of 1597 to 1600. The record on the conventional target was 1600-128X, set by the USAMU in 1984. The any sight conventional match record of 1600-149X was the property of the Stinknik Gentlemen and had stood since 1974. The

Officers Reserve Trophy, awarded to the any sight team champion, went to the Champion Shooting Club for a 1579-100X.

The Champion Shooting Club offers the best comparison of the difference between the old and new target, for they had a proven track record having taken the title for many years leading up the target change with the same team make-up. The previous year Carl Jooss, Ron West, Aaron Hupman, and Pres Kendall, had put together a 1600-132X.

The one inch ten ring on the 100 meter metric target was the same size as the X ring on the conventional target. Presuming that a shooter with a solid 400-35X on the old target had shot a 200-20X at 50 yards and a 200-15X a 100 yards the resultant change meant the shooter was now looking at a 395-25X on the new. It was evident that the long range scores could easily account for the 21 point difference. However, while there was a noticeable change in the scores there was little discernible difference in the standings, those that stood high with the conventional target also did so with the metric target.

With the Pershing Match over Perry conditions showed its darker face. It was no longer necessary to be polite to the visitors and the winds, which had been mild now roared in at a consistent 25 miles per hour with an occasional heavier gust. The leveling nature of such high winds changed the complexion of the shooting. All bets were off and it was a whole new shooting match.

The scope savvy hard holders managed to hang on with Harry Jacobs using all of his wiles to produce a 400-38X in the yard match. Pershing Team member Tom Daniel labored to bring in a match winning 400-37X at 50 Meters as Weaver dropped

three points. Ghiselli managed a 400-33X in the Dewar and Weaver, trying to make up lost ground, pounded out a 400-28X at 100 yards. However, none of the match winners showed up in the top three in the first any sight daily aggregate, won by Boyd Metz's 1599-115X. Lieutenant Colonel Don Durban, a Kentucky Air Guardsman and member of the 1984 Olympic Team, was in second by two Xs. Baron Whateley, holder of the Camp Perry Dewar course record, was in third with a 1598-119X. Weaver and Ray Carter were holding on with 1597s.

On the final day the harsher conditions had abated and Ghiselli, who was tied with Weaver and Durbin for first after three days, was first out of the gate at 50 yards with a 400-39X. Not to be outdone Kendall cleaned the Meter match with 40Xs. Carolyn Millard-Sparks was just two Xs from perfection in the Dewar while Ty Bishop put up 36Xs against his 400. Millard Sparks won the final day with a 1600-145X followed by Kendall's 1600-142X, and Mark Marinoff with a 1600-140X.

None of the frontrunners had scored real big on the final day but some had built up a sufficient lead to help them as they sought to win the championship. Ghiselli dribbled away three points on the last day dropping him from contention. Durbin had lost a point in both the Meter and Dewar matches but hung on with a 6393-454X for third. Dark horse Ray Carter managed to keep points while others were losing them. His 6393-489X gave him the silver medal and service championship. Weaver just kept plugging along and went into his last shot two points up on his closest competitors. Competition often magnifies things and, in a funny way it magnified the bull on the final target for Weaver. Needing only an eight to win the tournament his point of aim leapt from the one inch X ring to the six inch eight ring. Taking a moment to settle down he



squeezed of his final shot which cut the ten line neatly at 11 o'clock. It was not his most elegant shot but it was good enough for the repeat win, making him the fourth competitor to earn consecutive titles and joining Wigger as a five time prone champion.

Millard-Sparks claimed her second women's title while senior Dick Hanson battled his old friend Larry Moore down to the wire to win his tenth national title. Ron West broke Frank Boyd's string of three intermediate senior wins when he regained the title he last held in 1985. Dodd earned collegiate honors in his last year of eligibility. Connecticut shooters reeled in the remaining crowns when Stratford PAL's Cory Brunetti copped the junior title. Tom Schady, who had earlier won in sub-junior position scored a rare double by winning the prone crown in the same year. He was only the second sub-junior to do so following David Edgar's double in 1985.

The seventh decade of the smallbore championships saw more changes than any other ten year cycle. In the 70 years of match history, encompassing 64 tournaments, more changes to courses of fire occurred, more international matches were fired, and more records were established or broken than in the past. It was great ten year run for a competition that started as a sideline

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **The Wigger Era Closes, Sort Of...**

#### **1990s**

Seventy one years after the first smallbore championship the firing line at Camp Perry was filling with shooters looking to win a title at the 65th National Smallbore Championships. The numbers did not match because a cancellation in 1926, the Second World War, and a sharp hard fought “police action” in Korea in 1950 brought about five matches that were stillborn. The final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century looked to be a much different one for competitive marksman than the first.

#### **1990**

Like the storied gunslinger in the Saturday morning movie cowboy serials of our youth a lot of young guns had come to Perry to take on Wigger. One of them, Army Major Jim Meredith, was a bit younger and quicker and in a final shot showdown denied the position crown to, it seems, the perennial winner.

Erin Gestl, who had won one or more smallbore titles each year since 1986, jumped to the front of the pack when he won the metallic sight prone match by a nine point margin over Larry Putnam who had also knocked off a 396. Gestl dropped back when First Lieutenant Mike Anti, USA, and Wigger dueled to a 367 standing tie. The match went to Anti whose X count of seven was one more than Wigger’s. Mark Rash’s 372-9X was the high kneeling score. Gestl slid in for a class award in the match but Anti, Meredith, and Wigger were conspicuous by their absence on the awards bulletin. Consistent shooting saw Gestl win the metallic sight championship with an 1123-40X. The AMU, represented by Meredith and Major Boyd Goldsby were within point of one

another while Rhonda Barush, a West Point All American, lead the women. To no one's surprise Fred Cole was top senior while John McClay was high intermediate senior. Wigger was first civilian master six points behind the leader.

Mark Nourse won the any sight prone match with a perfect 400-28X, establishing a National Championship record. Wigger came through with a match winning 371-9X standing and began to make up the deficient he had in the metallic sight aggregate. Meredith and Anti were hot on his heels with a 361 and 364 respectively. The championship was coming down the final match, kneeling. The uncomfortable position was Wigger's forte and everyone knew the match would not be decided until the loading blocks were empty. Wigger seemed in full control of his game, but let slip a seven on his 40th shot. So infrequent were his shots outside of the nine ring that he later, when asked about the wide shot, humorously cracked that he didn't even know they printed rings out that far.

Skip Myer, who posted a 377-8X, won the kneeling match. Wigger, in spite of the seven, still managed to finish ahead of Meredith and win the any sight championship with an 1142-42X. But Meredith had built up enough of a lead to earn early on to insure himself the Parson's Trophy, along with service honors, as the 1990 NRA National Outdoor Three Position Championship. Meredith's gold medal win in position was a match for his older brother Jim's national title in prone in 1967. The two siblings become the only brother combination to ever win Camp Perry titles. Wigger accepted his second silver position medal and civilian championship in as many years. Dave Chesser, a captain and AMU teammate of Meredith's, quietly soldiered along to place third.

Barush had not loosened her grip on the women's title and held just as tight to the Mary C. Camp Trophy when she came to the stage to accept it. Fred "Old King" Cole continued his winning ways, threatening to become the Wigger of the geriatric set, with his seventh position title. McClay knocked three time intermediate senior Charlie Langmaid from his perch. Gestl picked up the collegiate honors he had relinquished to Billy Dodd the previous year. The Cobb Trophy went to a young Pennsylvania junior rifleman named Kenneth Benyo. Stratford Connecticut Police Athletic League's Cory Brunetti was the intermediate junior champion while Iryt Chance took sub-junior honors.

The USAMU's "Blue" team of Meredith, Barush, Anti, Chesser, and Troy Baker swept both team matches without any serious competition. The All National Guard "Red" team of Specialist Gurrie Fandozzi, First Lieutenant Ron Wigger, Staff Sergeant Bill Lange, Staff Sergeant Scotty Huntington, and Sergeant Lance Peters placed second in both matches but was overpowered by the active duty team.

The Junior team title went to the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association "West" team of Brunetti, Beth Herzman, Nicole Panko, and Chuck Schiff, who almost placed third overall twice, by a few points, on their way to the combined junior titles. This was the second year in a row that the quartet combined to take both halves of the junior team championship.

After the position team matches were completed the line filled with prone shooters who were awaiting their turn to get in a touch of practice to insure that they had all their gear, firm up zeros, and to loosen the kinks put in their bones and muscles by travel.

On the first day of prone shooting 384 shooters lay out their gear for the first metallic sight 50-yard match. When they were done 400s filled the match bulletin with a newcomer, Lance Corporal Mike Kovalski of the Marines, at the top with 38Xs. By the end of the second match it looked as if Kovalski had read his shooting history and was trying to follow in the steps of a fellow Corporal whose last name also began with K, Walter Kamila, the first Marine to win a prone championship. Kovalski had topped the Meter match with another perfect score, this time with 37 Xs.

In the afternoon the civilians came to the fore Robert Couch won the first Dewar with a score of 400-35X, a scant X ahead of Marty Washington. When the 100 yard shooting was complete James Elkins' 400-30X emerged the winner with three 400-29Xs close behind. Tie breaking rules declared Steve Dember 2<sup>nd</sup>, Steve Hogan third, and Jack Foster first master. He only got into the money once but Air Force Second Lieutenant Doug Clark had only dropped one point and shot more Xs than Peter Durbin, Staff Sergeant Tom Whittaker of the All Guard Team, and Bruce Riegel to win the first daily aggregate. Durbin and Whittaker were second and third on the day and Riegel was first civilian master.

Clark had on a full head of steam at the start of the second day and took the first match, a 50-yard match, with a 400-38X. Hot on his trail were Wigger and Gestl who needed a tiebreaker to determine whose 400-37 was better. It went to Wigger. There were only five cleans shot in the meter match, the three that took the medals by Ty Bishop, junior Beth Herzman, and Jim Elkins. Shawn Wells and Nicole Panko, expert juniors, had the balance of the 400s. The conditions were getting a bit tougher. Alyssa Cosmo, a junior Expert, Creedmoored Wigger when both had 31Xs in the Dewar. The

100 yard match went to Wigger, but not the father. First Lieutenant Ron Wigger took the match with a commanding nine X lead over fellow USAMU member Michael Rabenstein. Third place went to Everett Arnold who shot the last of the 400s in the match. Consistency was the key to a win on the second day for over the four matches junior Beth Herzman dropped but two points, second place Lones Wigger went for four, and Ron Wigger, in third place, lost five points. Throughout the course of the first two days the two juniors were making it pretty clear that would not be taking a backseat to their elders.

1990 saw an innovation that was on the opposite end of the age spectrum of those hard charging juniors. A special category for “visually impaired competitors” allowed those whose eyesight was showing the effects of their years to use a telescopic sight for the entire four day tournament. The competitors entering in this category were not eligible for awards in the metallic sight matches or the aggregate, but were for any sight matches and their own category.

The metallic sight championship, the Hoppe Trophy, was awarded to Lones Wigger who led the field with a 3193-229X. Wigger, who had just missed the position title, was now looking to take home the prone crown and had a two point edge on Gestl and Bishop. The Peters Trophy winner, Edie Reynolds, was high lady and within striking distance of Wigger with a 3191. Dick Hanson was sitting in his accustomed place; the senior throne while former champion Ron West was the metallic sight intermediate senior champion.

The first day of anysights was almost totally a civilian day. Carolyn Millard-Sparks, who owned a brace of women’s titles, won the 50 yard match with a 400-39X,

while Thomas Suswal and John Chatham, along with nine others who had 38Xs, fought it out for second and third place. As for the Meter Match the rule book decided a three way 400-37 X tie between Anthony Gangone, West, and Chessser. Suswal, forced to take second in the yard match got his win in the Dewar with a 400-36X. All Guard rifleman Tom Whittaker was victorious with a 400-33X in the 100 yard match. He was one X ahead of Larry Parker, of the Cheshire New Hampshire Rod Fish and Game Club, and Kent Lacey, of Connecticut's Corporal Digby Hand Schützenverein, who were tied with 32Xs for second and third place. The first day of the any sight championship ended with Chessser leading a pack of five 1600s for the win. His 138Xs outdistanced West's 129Xs. William Beaton had 128Xs for third place, leaving Shawn McDonnell and Hardin Hagins fighting it out in the civilian master class.

It doesn't get any better than the way the final 50-yard any sight match ended. Long time Perry veterans Jack Foster, Dick Hanson, and Lones Wigger all reached perfection with each shooting a 400-40X. The rulebook declared that they would finish in the order listed. There were an additional seven 400-39Xs indicating both a high level of skill and pretty good conditions. Jim Meredith, the position champion, won the Meter match with a 400-38X, just ahead of Paul Benneche and Chessser's matching 400-37Xs.

Foster out Xed Millard-Sparks and John Chatham to win the Dewar, his second match of the day. As the tournament came to its end with the 100 yard match Wigger put up a 400-35X and out Xed a pair of shooters from the Stratford Connecticut PAL, Cory Brunetti and Shawn McDonnell. Brunetti, a junior, had been holding hard all day and it paid off as he won the aggregate with a 1600-132X. Steve Schady, yet another

Connecticut junior shooter representing the Quaker Hill Rod and Gun Club, finished second with a 1600-128X. George Williams managed 123 Xs for the third place.

The winning score in the any sight aggregate was a 3199-245X posted by Ron West, which also gave him the intermediate senior title. Chesser was in second with a 3198-272X and Thomas Suswal came in third shooting a 3198-261X. High woman, Millard-Sparks, won the Western Cartridge Company Trophy and Joe Steffy took the senior title.

When the metallic sight and any sight aggregates were totaled Ty Bishop, a surveyor from North Carolina, had the highest total and possession of the Critchfield Trophy. As the civilian champion he also was awarded the last of the original Schweitzer Medals. Up until this time his greatest claim to fame at Camp Perry was that he was the father of 1984 sub-junior champion Liza Bishop. His 6388-483X bettered Wigger and Clark who followed him by one and two points respectively. Bishop's Black Hawk Rifle Club teammate Edie Reynolds collected her second Remington Trophy as woman champion. Hanson was still senior champ, his fourth consecutive win. Ron West held onto the intermediate title while Gestl gathered in his second collegiate title for 1990 and extended his prone reign one more year. Doug Clark was the high service shooter. Connecticut continued to hit it big as Herzman and Brunetti took junior and intermediate junior trophies home. Dace Murphy was the junior champion.

It was Camp Perry where there were a lot of old faces and a lot of new faces and the year that the new faces seemed to dominate the matches. Was it a passing of the torch or was it an anomaly?



## 1991

The smallbore championship of 1990 saw many of the old timers begin to fade into the background and new faces come to the fore. There was some thought that a new era was dawning as the hard holders of past years were aging and perhaps it was time for the next generation to assume its mantle. As much as the young Turks would like to see that scenario come to fruition the old fire horses were not quite ready to remain in their stalls munching hay when the bell, or in this case cannon, sounded to start the thirty fifth smallbore position championship.

Heat and humidity are synonymous with Camp Perry but in July of 1991 was about as severe as conditions get. The temperature and humidity soared to new heights, both often on the verge of breaking triple digits. Water was consumed at a prodigious rate and trashcans overflowed with discarded plastic water bottles. Shooters could wring water from soaked sweatshirts and squished about as sweat ran down their legs into their socks. Normally when shooting clothing is this wet at Perry it is because of rain, but not so this year.

In the relative cool of the first morning Army Reserve Major Bill Beard shot a new Camp Perry record score of 398 in the metallic sight prone match to begin the position championship with style. The quiet biologist from Indiana also won the final match of the championship with an anysight 383 kneeling. In between his two victories four other shooters struggled through the terrible heat to win. Second Lieutenant Matt Suggs, with a 366 in irons, and Lones Wigger's 369 with scope, won the two standing matches. Ken Benyo shot a winning 376 in the metallic sight kneeling and Richard Sarver took the any sight prone with a 398.

At the end of the first day the youngsters had to simply stand in awe of Wigger's record setting iron sight 1131-38X that garnered him the metallic sight position championship. Suggs and Benyo were knotted up with 1119s but Suggs had 35 Xs to Benyo's 31Xs. AMU shooter Kristin Peterson was the high woman. Fred Cole was working toward his fourth senior title with a win in the first half. In an unusual turn of event All Guard Sergeant First Class Kay Anderson was made a successful run on the intermediate senior title. A service shooter in this race was most unusual because, at 55, most soldiers have retired. The National Guard is less wasteful of experience and husbands the older troopers, it not being unusual to see some hang on to the ripe old age of 60, the mandatory retirement age.

Beards any sight scores put him on the stage as the champion of the second day. His 1142-48X was just four points ahead of Brad Carnes, an enlisted man from Fort Benning, and civilian Troy Baker. Karen Monez put up a great fight and pushed Peterson to the background, at least temporarily. Cole and Anderson repeated in the gray beard category. There were hardly any new faces in the winner's circle in the position sub aggregates.

When all was said and done though, Wigger had quietly won. He combined a very large margin of victory with irons and a solid civilian master class winning any sight score for an 11 point margin of victory over Carnes, the service champion, and 13 in front of Suggs. The 1991 title was the 35<sup>th</sup> position championship and Wigger had now won 20 of them. He now had won the greatest number of position championships by anyone, by a military shooter, and by virtue of his latest win, the greatest number won by a civilian, quite a trifecta.

He had established a standard that defied challenge for he had won 20 of the 28 position championships since his first win in 1963, a rate of victory a bit over 70%. The old pro had done fairly well last year but fell short of the title and so had set his cap on recovering his position title. As Director of the US Shooting Team his training time had been severely limited so he had to concentrate on making the most of his limited training time. He parlayed a lifetime of experience and intense training to attain his goal.

Peterson withstood Monez's challenge to earn her first woman's title. Cole and Anderson, a pair of Empire State shooters, won their respective categories going away. Erin Gestl repeated as collegiate champion and Ken Benyo repeated as junior champ. About the only new faces on the stage were young newcomers Charlie Mannella and Jenna Rich, intermediate and sub-junior champs.

Returning to the stage for the second consecutive year to again pick up both team position trophies were Cory Brunetti, Nicole Panko, Beth Herzman, and Chuck Schiff shooting as the Connecticut State Association "West" team. Over the past two years the Nutmeg State powerhouse had won six of a possible eight junior crowns at Perry: four in position and two prone titles.

The young bucks found out just how tough the old stags were during position, but the best was yet to come.

While the temperature on the firing line dropped to more comfortable levels for prone the heat of competition did not abate. Service shooters dominated the first day of the metallic sight aggregate with Captain Steve Goff of the AMU winning the yard match with a 400-38X. The Meter match went to Army Reserve Major Bill Beard, Fort

Benning's Major Jim Meredith took the Dewar with a score of 400-32X, and closing out the first half of the championship was Staff Sergeant Greg Tomsen 's 400-29X at 100 yards. Even though all matches went for cleans the first daily aggregate went to Lieutenant Ron Wigger who had put up a 1598-130X.

The youngsters made a play to take control in the yard match of the second day when Steve Schady, a junior from Connecticut's Quaker Hill Rod and Gun Club, won with a 400-39X followed by North Carolina junior Eliza Bishop, daughter of the defending prone champion Ty Bishop. Ron West began to build up a head of competitive steam with a Meter Match winning score of a 400-31X. Dave Chessser, an AMU captain, grabbed the Dewar on the strength of his 400-30X. Lones Wigger hit pay dirt with the only 400 shot in the last metallic 100-yard match. Just like the first day the name Ron and the name Wigger filled the top of the score sheet for the daily aggregate. In this case it was Ron West's 1598-116X that won and Lones Wigger's 1598-106X that came in second.

After two days the metallic sight aggregate ended and the champions were named. Lones Wigger was making a strong run on his third attempt with a 3194 to win concurrent position and prone titles, a feat he accomplished last in 1973. Ron West, another former prone champion trailed Wigger by 2Xs. Chessser was a distant third with a 3188. Lenore Lemanski was enjoying a return trip to the winners' circle as the woman's metallic sight champion while Larry Moore; the senior champion was toe-to-toe with long time friend. Perry roommate, and friendly rival Dick Hanson.

While the Marines took the metallic sight American Dewar Trophy in the team matches the civilian Champion Shooting Club had the honors in the any sight

competition. Champion Shooting Club had a long history of excellence and in this match the team had a new member, Marsha Beasley, to help them maintain their high standards. Connecticut junior shooters simply steamrolled the opposition in the prone team matches, much as they did in the position matches. Just as in the open category Champions Shooter's Club, there was a roster change with the juniors, Steve Schady replaced Panko on the line, and the new foursome captured both matches.

After the Team Day break the closely contested individual matches resumed with another former champion setting the pace. Dave Weaver shot 39Xs and one ten to win the any sight 50 yard match in what would become almost a perfect day for civilians. Mark Marinoff had a 400-36X at 50 Meters, which was followed by J. Eric Sundstrom's 400-33X win in the Dewar. Three decades earlier Sundstrom had been a dominant force in the collegiate and junior categories. At last the military broke through when Second Lieutenant Web Wright shot a 400-30X to win the 100-yard match. Wright was to carry that momentum into the aggregate, which he won with a 1599-124X. During the third day Wigger managed to build up a tiny edge over West when the former dropped three points. With a single point advantage going into the final day Wigger had a tenuous advantage that could turn on an errant puff of air.

Dave Ashbolt, a British rifleman on a shooting holiday to the United States, won the first match of the final day with a 400-39X. Fred Scielzo was the Meter match winner when he pushed a slew of 400-33Xs out of the way with his 400-34X. Civilian John Reynolds, Marine Rudy Hernandez, and Major Jim Meredith all found themselves with perfect scores and 32Xs in the Dewar, with Reynolds reigning supreme with Hernandez second and Meredith third..

In the last match of the day West came through with a 400-32X at 100 yards to give him a 1599-128X on the day. However, Hernandez had an identical score but a stronger long range total to take both the day and the any sight championship with a 3194-233X to second place West's 231Xs. Carolyn Millard-Sparks climbed back, overtaking Lemanski and grabbing the ladies scope championship. Larry Moore, shooting a rare custom made left handed Morgan rifle, hung in to deny Hanson his fifth straight senior title and regain the national crown he had lost to Hanson in 1987.

West, the new national champion, bested Wigger by a single point, 6390-475X to a 6389-472X. His success was a result of steadily shooting high, if not individual match winning, scores. His hard work also gained him the civilian and intermediate senior titles along with his second national championship. Millard-Sparks, with her third Remington trophy to put on the mantle, earned back the title she had relinquished to Edie Reynolds the year before. Herzman and Brunetti, who had done so much to bring the Connecticut junior program to recent prominence, took home the collegiate and junior championships. Dace Murphy repeated as the sub-junior champion as Erik Anderson made his first trip to the stage to pick up the gold medallion.

The 1991 smallbore championships proved that there was still starch in the collars of the older shooters and the youngsters trifled with them at their peril, while a hard holding group of Connecticut juniors also made it clear that old pros could come in any age group.

## 1992

Competitors at Camp Perry shoot north but most of the smallbore shooters thoughts were eastwards to learn the results of another rifle match being held in Barcelona, Spain. Many were thinking of their friends Bob Foth, Launi Meili, Dave Johnson, and Mike Anti, shooting for the US in 1992 Olympics. The weather on the shores of Lake Erie was reminiscent the elocution doggerel, "The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain." For while the United States Shooting Team was enjoying the sun of the Catalonia home of the International Olympic Committee's President Juan Antonio Samaranch, back home rain dogged the smallbore championships.

Conspicuous by his absence in Barcelona, and his presence at Camp Perry, was US Shooting Team Executive Director Lones Wigger. Having done all that was possible to bring them to a peak of performance Wigger had to let them go off on their own. He kept himself busy during the anxious days of waiting for results by doing what he did best, defending his position title. Son Ron, shooting with the All Guard Team, and daughter Deena, a resident athlete at the Olympic Training Center, served him as stalking horses, occasionally beating him.

Cory Brunetti, a Connecticut junior who had won five Perry titles in the past three years, won the prone metallic sight match of the three position championship by out Xing Matt Suggs, a second lieutenant with the AMU, 399-31X to 399-30X. It was only the first match of the tournament already a new National Match record had been set. Suggs, however, wasted no time in setting himself up for championship contention by winning the second match of the day, standing, with a 377-12X just ahead of Deena Wigger's 376-10X. Suggs' win also established a new record for that course of fire at

the nationals. Wigger, the father, was second in the civilian master class with a 372-6X. Ken Benyo, a student at Widner University who had just picked up All American honors, hung up a fine 377-14X to win the kneeling match. Wigger was seven points behind with a 370 finish, placing second in class. There was no shame to losing to Benyo this day as his score set the second Camp Perry record of the day, breaking the record of 376 he set in 1991, with his winning score,.

As is often the case in an aggregate the winner just rambles on with solid scores that do not win, place, or show in the individual matches. When the final bulletin was posted for match 31, the Metallic sight championship, four competitors had broken Wigger's record of 1131, set just the previous year. Bill Dodd's 1132-38X was only good for first master civilian. Suggs came in third overall with an 1133-48X. Sitting in second was the Olympic Training Center's Michelle Scarborough, with an 1135-35X. Who was the match winner? It was the record setting match winner Lones Wigger, who had bested Scarborough by a single X. Scarborough settled for the woman's title. Much to no one's surprise, Fred Cole and Kay Anderson were well on their way to defending their senior and intermediate senior crowns. Four matches: four new records, it was shaping up to be quite a tournament.

Brunetti seemed to feel that three position prone stages were his sole property and proved it by winning the any sight prone match with a 398-29, a three X margin over Major Boyd Goldsby of Fort Benning. The 1987 champion, Sergeant First Class Karen Monez, put the pressure on the rest of the field with a 375-9X standing score that bested her nearest competitor by five points and Wigger by nine, setting the fifth Perry record in six matches. Old rivals All Guard rifleman Staff Sergeant Lance Peters and



Lones Wigger went hammer and tongs in the kneeling match with Peters besting his friendly nemesis by a point, 387-14X to 386-16X, for another new National Championship Record.

Peters used the kneeling win to vault into first place in the any sight aggregate. It was a bit of sweet irony that the third place finisher in the any sight aggregate was Wigger for Peters held the Camp Perry record for second and third place finishes to Wigger in the overall position aggregate. Sandwiched in between for the silver was Jim Meredith, of Fort Benning, who would eventually win the overall service championship. Monez sealed up a woman's championship title with the any sight 1139-41X win. Fred Cole waltzed home to the senior national title when he took the back half of the match. Charlie Langmaid gave Kay Anderson a battle by winning any sights but the New York Army Guardsman beat the retired Vermont Guardsman for the overall intermediate senior title in the grand aggregate.

Brunetti, a sophomore at the University of Alaska, joined fellow Connecticut shooters Jamie Caruso and Ken Capozzi on the stage where he was presented the collegiate and junior trophies, Caruso took home the intermediate junior medallion, and Capozzi was crowned sub-junior champion.

And what of Wigger? Four hundred and thirty seven competitors stood below him in order of merit and he took home his 21<sup>st</sup> Frank Parsons Memorial Trophy as the national champion and along with it a gold plated medallion as civilian position champion. Wigger had quietly amassed 2281 points with 83Xs to set the final record in the 1992 edition of the position championships.

The Army swept the team matches but the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association's junior "Blue" team set another record of sorts. In the past three years the team, with essentially the same four shooters, had won five of the six titles open to them. The single loss was to another CSRRA team. So ended the position phase where records dropped like ripe apples in October.

The spotty weather that harassed the position matches remained to remind the 431 prone shooters that the weather was an equal opportunity nuisance. However, the conditions were not bad enough to keep Tom Daniel, of Connecticut, a Pershing Team veteran, and former national champion Pres Kendall, from tying up in the yard match with a pair of 400-37Xs, Daniel emerged the winner. An old familiar name was found at the top of the Meter match bulletin. Three time National Champion Mary Stidworthy Sparling returned to Perry after a decade's absence and picked up as if she had never left, her 400-37X giving a lift in her pursuit of a fourth crown. Ohio's John Black and Steve Hogan of Connecticut, both had perfect scores and X counts of 34 in the Dewar match but Black had more Xs in the 100-yard stage for the win. The first day saw Matthew Suggs win the 100-yard match with a 400-32X, and the daily aggregate with his near perfect 1599-124X.

On the first day the yard match had been decided by a tiebreaker when two 400-37Xs were shot and it would be the same score and situation on the second day. Master Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli of the Marine Weapon Training Battalion at Quantico slipped past Air Force First Lieutenant Doug Clark. The 50 Meter match produced another tie with Army Reserve Sergeant Trot Baker's X count coming out on top of Ken Benyo's as both posted 400-35X scores. Kay Anderson, fresh from his position win,

cleanly won the Dewar match with a 400-33X, even though second and third place were 400-32X tie scores. Lenore Lemanski fired the best of many 400s shot at 100 yards to win the match with 29Xs. Captain Dave Chesser had the only 1600 of the day to out distance Suggs and Ron Wigger by a single point for the second daily aggregate. The iron sight championship was at an end and all that remained was to total the scores and announce the winners of the first half.

The Hoppe Trophy went to Suggs who fired a 3198-232X to enjoy a two point lead over Chesser and a five point advantage over third place Lones Wigger. Sparling won the Peters Trophy, down seven points, while Laurence Moore was making a run on the senior title. Kendall was high intermediate senior.

On team day the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Juniors "West" Team, under the tutelage of Patti Clark, continued to win. Clark's charges, Beth Herzman, Cory Brunetti, Nicole Panko, and Chuck Schiff, took both junior team prone titles. In the three years the quartet had been shooting together they had the opportunity to win 12 national titles at Camp Perry. A slight adjustment to the team saw Steve Schady and Jamie Caruso shoot with them on occasion and together they accounted for 11 of the junior wins, ceding it sole Camp Perry loss to another Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Junior Team. It was a tremendous run for the team and Connecticut.

The third day and the any sight aggregate began under lowering skies that prophesized unhappiness in general. With a host of 400s shot during the first relay of the 50 yard match it seemed at first that the dark gray light and light drizzle only served to keep the glare down and act as a fine wind indicator. As the relays swapped places

the deluge began making it impossible to continue and causing the match to be scrubbed. The Fates were setting the stage for one of the worst competitive disasters in championship history. In haste, and some confusion, the line was cleared as shooters madly scrambled to keep equipment and self, in that order, dry.

After a long delay the decision was made to cancel the yard match and the line was called for Match 54, the Meter match. Targets were hung and range commands given to begin the preparation period. As some shooters squinted down range through their scopes their eyes widened in horror as they realized in the rush they had hung the second stage 50 Yard target instead of the correct Meter target that had been in their kits prior to the first match being called. The change over period had ended and there was no way that the unlucky competitors were going to be allowed to make a change. All those who hung the wrong target took a 200-point penalty. Lones Wigger dropped out of competition in this spectacular fashion. The ill-fated match went to Owen Blakemore whose 400-37X bested a large field of 400s. Michelle Scarborough won the Dewar with a excellent 400-39X. Wigger, showing the stern stuff of which he is made, came back to win the last match of the day.

On the fourth and final day of the championship a three way tie developed for first in the yard match with Ray Carter, Sparling and Daniel all having 400-39Xs. Carter took the match after the scorers carefully checked the rule book for the winning formula. Wigger and Shawn McDonnell, of Connecticut, duked it out for the Meter match win with a 400-38X each. Wigger, who had the pins knocked out from him over the same course of fire the day before, would not give up and hung on to win the Meter match on the tie breaker. Carter returned to the winner's circle for the second time that day with a 400-

37X win in the Dewar. The 1992 National Smallbore Championship ended with Mark Marinoff shooting a 400-35X to win at 100 yards. Chesser won the day with a 1600-138X, one of seven. However, Chesser was to become the first among equals. His near perfect shooting over the two days tied him numerically with Goff and Carl Jooss but with eight more Xs and he won the US Cartridge Company Trophy. Sparling was top woman and took home another Western Cartridge Company trophy to add to her collection. Moore and Kendall continued their winning ways and locked up senior and intermediate senior honors.

Chesser mounted the podium as both the national and service champion at the awards ceremony. Billy Dodd had topped Web Wright's X count by 13 to take the silver medallion and the Schweitzer Medallion as civilian champion. Sparling picked up her record seventh Remington Trophy as woman champion. Moore was enjoying his second trip to the stage in as many years as the senior champion. Kendall added an intermediate senior title to his long list of national victories. Brunetti doubled up as the collegiate and junior title winner, making him the first shooter to win both titles in the same year in both position and prone. Charles R. Metz, Jr. and Jeffery Klotzbach took home a gold medal and the Glabb Trophy, respectively, as winners in the intermediate junior and sub junior class.

Sitting in the audience was Lones Wigger who would not make a single trip to pick up a prone award all night. Yet, among all of the shooters his performance was, in its own way, award winning. After finishing third in the metallic sight phase he met with calamity and, knowing it was impossible to win, did not give up. He won two matches after he hung the incorrect target and was one shot short of perfection on the final day.

Had his first any sight Meter match been a 400, a not unlikely happenstance, his two day total would have been 2799. Added to his iron sight score he would have had a 5994X6000, good for the silver medal. Had he even to unfortunate as to allow three points to escape him in the ill fated match he still would have been in second place on X count. The soaked and shortened smallbore matches ended with old and new champions crowned. The tale of the Match 54 would become the stuff of legend as years passed and, of course, Wigger would be back.

### **1993**

Since 1963 a Lones Wigger entry in the position matches pretty much heralded a Wigger win or as one wag put it, "Lones Wigger entered the position phase of the National Smallbore Rifle Championships at Camp Perry. That is to say that Lones Wigger won the National Championship for the first statement means pretty much the same as the second." It was a statement hard to deny for, in the 29 years since he won his first position title, he had won an additional 20 times. The denizens of the firing line this year were taken aback to learn that there would be no Wigger entry in the 1993 position matches. Most competitors agreed that an era had ended and, with the field wide open, it was any ones guess as to who would become the lead dog.

Wigger's decision to hang up his shooting boots and pants came as a result of a combination of events. The major influence was the deteriorating condition of his right knee. After a lifetime of crouching over and putting about 90% of his weight on that knee it had become terribly stiff. It often took upwards of ten minutes of stretching and bending to get into position and the time in position was becoming uncomfortably painful. It was not unusual to see him rise up slightly at the end of a kneeling stage and

slip his kneeling roll under his knee to rest and relieve the pain before he went through the painful task of standing.

Additionally, to remain competitive three position shooting required a great deal of training time, time which was no longer available to him as the manager of the United States Shooting Team. It was ironic for his office was in the very building that housed the finest 50-meter indoor range in the country. Lastly he simply had nothing more to prove as a position shooter having won just about everything there was to win both internationally and nationally, indoors or out.

The first day of the race to replace Wigger as national champ opened up with Bill Bear, a member of the 1984 Olympic team, shooting a winning score of 397-29X in the metallic sight prone match. In the standing match the AMU's First Lieutenant Web Wright pushed Beard aside with a record setting 379-14X standing. Major Jim Meredith and Eugene Opsasnick beat the old national championship record by two points but Ken Benyo, of New Tripoli, Pennsylvania, outdistanced them, breaking his own Camp Perry kneeling record for the third consecutive year. Because of his prowess kneeling, and a similar physical build to Wigger, his shooting companions occasionally referred to Benyo as "Little Wig."

By the end of the day it was clear that there was going to be a horse race to determine the new champion. Meredith was in the lead as he became the metallic sight champion, with an 1142-42X. Hot on his heels was Benyo who had posted 1140-43Xs. Two points back from Benyo was Army Specialist Ken Johnson with a 1138-48X out Xing the first service master Web Wright by two. Fort Benning's Captain Denise Loring

was declared the woman champions while, lo and behold, Fred Cole captured the senior class.

When the any sight aggregate began Bill Beard picked up where he had left off, winning the prone match with a 399-29X. Benyo was third overall with a 397-27X and Meredith and Wright were first and second in the service master class. Wright kept the pressure up in standing with a 362-7X win. Meredith was four points behind as Wright and Benyo struggled to keep up. It was coming down to the wire and both the any sight aggregate and the national championship rested on the outcome of the kneeling, a match that Benyo once again won with a 371-11X. However, just three points back with a 369 was Meredith who out pointed Johnson by two.

Meredith prevailed, as he had done in 1990. With an 1125-40X he swept the any sight aggregate as well as the open and service championship. Wright and Johnson finished second and third. Benyo picked up the civilian and collegiate titles. Jamie Caruso, a member of Patti Clark's Stratford PAL Rifle Team, took the woman's any sight day but Army First Lieutenant Kristin Peterson had gotten the best of Caruso and Loring for the overall woman's championship. Fred Cole won just about every senior category match and emerged the champion for his sixth straight year. All Guard Sergeant First Class Kay Anderson won five of the six sub-aggregate matches to return to the stage to pick up his second consecutive intermediate title.

Caruso was named the junior champion while intermediate junior David A. Martin, from Pennsylvania, and sub junior John Haffy, of Wayne, New Jersey took their categories.



In team competition the US Army "Blue", The All National Guard "Silver" and The North End Grizzly Bears went around and around but the results were the same in iron and any sights, Army, National Guard, and civilians, first second, and third. The Connecticut State Associations three year grip on the junior title came to an end when the Fort Benning Junior Rifle Club and the Massachusetts State Team took both iron and any sight honors.

In a year that was ripe for a newcomer it turned out that there was no substitute for experience at the top. Meredith's win in position put him second on the all time winner's list, tied with Art Cook and Tommy Pool at two each, just 19 wins behind Wigger.

As surprised as the line was not see Wigger enter position they were amazed not see him laying out his gear on the first day of prone. He would not miss Perry, but would have to see the Olympic Festival in San Antonio through to its finish, before he could shoot. It would be an unusual year in that Wigger would not even be in contention for a national title because of retirement and responsibilities.

Kay Anderson had received his accolades and medallion as the intermediate senior champion the night before at the position awards ceremony but that was yesterday and he seemed determined to not stop winning. In what became an All National Guard Team shoot-out he tied on score and X count, 400-37X, with his teammate Staff Sergeant Tony Leone but won on a Creedmoor. As the day wore on the conditions deteriorated and David A. Martin, an intermediate junior in the Expert class, was the only competitor of the 347 present to post a perfect score of 400 in the Meter match and it would be the last of the day for anyone.

All National Guard Staff Sergeant Greg Tomsen squeezed out a 399-26X in the Dewar and that would be the highest score posted for the rest of the day, the weather just got progressively worse. Captain Steve Goff, First Lieutenant Web Wright, and Marsha Beasley were the hard holders in the 100-yard match. Each posted identical 397s with Goff's 21Xs the best. The other two both had 17Xs, and silver and gold were determined by NRA rules. In his father's absence Captain Ron Wigger, of the All Guard Team, kept the family's name in the winner's column when he won the day with a 1590-99X. The score was a testament to Wigger's talent and the winds that whipped across the range.

The final day of the iron sight competition saw conditions abate and 400s flourish. Intermediate junior Richard Watson won a tiebreaker with Charles R. Metz, Jr. when both came up with 400-36Xs in the yard match. Lenore Lemanski kept all 40 shots in the ten ring, with 32 of them inside the X ring, for a Meter match win. Back from Texas Lones Wigger topped the results bulletin in the Dewar with a 400-33X. Carolyn Millard Sparks and Richard Sarver were tied with a 400-30x each with Millard-Sparks getting the win in the 100-yard match. For the second day in a row a Wigger won the aggregate. This time it was Lones with a 1599-117X.

The metallic sight championship ended and First Lieutenant Kristin Peterson won the Hoppe Trophy, the first woman to do so in some time. Joe Steffy was the senior category winner and Bob Holtzman, a United States Maccabiah Team veteran and medalist, was the senior winner.

Team day began well for Intermediate Junior Shane Barnhart. A native of Ohio, the 15 year old had earned himself a spot on the Dewar Team by placing in the top 20

in the iron sight aggregate. Following in the footsteps of teenage Pershing veteran Jesse Johnston, Barnhart also became the answer to a shooting trivia question, “Who was the youngest person ever to compete on a United States Dewar Team?”

It wasn't a bad day for the victorious All National Guard Team of Tomsen, Goff, Leone, Ron Wigger, and Coach Hap Rocketto in the metallic sight American Dewar Match. The previous year the same team was in first place in the same match and saw that the second and third place teams were challenging. Taking another look at their scores they thought they might have had a few more points and Coach and Captain Rocketto placed a preemptive challenge to protect their place. The metric targets are tough to judge when the groups are tight and the end result was a loss of a point and with it the loss of the championship. It was, however, a lesson learned, never challenge when you are in first place. It had been a long winter for the embarrassed Rocketto as he awaited a chance for redemption.

Rain began to fall during the change over from the metallic to the any sight match and by the time the first stage had been completed the rain had soaked the targets as well as the shooters. After what seemed like an endless rain delay match officials decided to scrub the second stage and declare the winner on the basis of the scores from the 50 yard stage of the Dewar Course of fire. Champion Shooting Club, Carl Jooss, Ron West, John Black, and Marsha Beasley, winners of many past titles, profited best and became the winners of six Officers Reserve Trophy Plaques and the 1993 any sight team champions.

Army Captain Dave Chesser managed a 37X clean to take the first match of the any sight aggregate at 50 yards. Richard Watson, who had won a yard match during

the iron sights, shot a 399-30X for the win in the first any sight Meter match. The Army's Ken Johnson took the Dewar with a 400-29X and Steve Dember was the only 400 on the line in the 100-yard match giving him that honor. Watson had a 1593-105X for the lead in the any sight aggregate after the first day.

While Paul Benneche was handily winning the last any sight yard match with a 400-37X a unique retirement was happening a bit further down the firing line. Marianne Driver, the 80 year old *Grande Dame* of prone shooting, had been speaking with Patti Clark and confided to her before the first stage of the any sight yard match that her next 20 record shots would be her last at Perry. In what can only be described as a storybook ending Mrs. Driver fired a 200, a nice high point on which to end a career, which stretched back to the 1930s.

She reminisced how she and her shooting friend Patricia Burkhalter, now long gone, had kidded each other that they would compete until they were 80. They even acted out how they might look on that far distant day, toothless and supported by canes, as they asked some young junior to help them hang their targets. Now, Mrs. Driver, accompanied by her two daughters Lenore Jensen Lemanski and Bobbi Jensen Vitito, had won her fair share of matches, been on numerous Randle Teams, and all too soon had reached that magical age of 80. True to her word, and keeping her promise to Pat Burkhalter, she unclipped and took down her last target.

As she was proffering her final target to the range official Clark intervened. The always persuasive Patti convinced the line officer that this was one target that need not be turned in. It was taken back to the line where a crowd of well wishers and long time friends affixed their signatures and appropriate good wishes to the tag board. Framed,

it hung in her home as a testament to over a half century of distinguished participation in the sport of prone smallbore rifle shooting and the good times and friends she had encountered along the way.

John Black won the Meter match when he posted a 400-35X. Lenore Lemanski composed herself after witnessing her mother's retirement and notched her second win of the week with a 400-32X in the Dewar match. Meredith and Millard-Sparks, who had posted identical scores, lost out on the basis of 100 yard scores and X count. Holtzman dropped one point and nine Xs at 100-yards for a 399-31X, a better performance than anyone else and he closed out the 1993 championships with a win. His strong showing also gave Holtzman the day, nine Xs ahead of Paul Villmer's 1597-107X.

It was an any sight championship for Expert class shooter Richard Watson who had been displaying his talent all week. His scope aggregate score of 3188-213 was one point ahead of woman champion Millard Sparks. Joe Diaz, Jr., a diminutive electrician from Bridgeport, Connecticut, won the senior class and John Black took the intermediate senior title.

After four days of tricky winds and frustration Carolyn Millard-Sparks emerged the national prone, civilian, and woman champion with a score of 6370-442X. She lead the AMU's Ken Johnson and Web Wright, who tied at 6366 with Johnson having 454Xs to Wright's 419X. Millard-Sparks victory made her only the third woman to win the national title and the first since Mary Stidworthy Sparling went three for five during the 1977 through 1981 era.

Joe Steffy had built up a substantial lead to prevent Diaz from knocking him out of the senior throne. Holtzman, who had been consistent all week, took the intermediate senior title.

The collegiate champion was Darren Campbell of All Guard. Richard Watson had a great Perry and ended up taking home the medals for both junior and intermediate junior categories in addition to his any sight crown. John Haffy, the position sub junior champ, repeated in prone and went home with a rare double championship.

The matches marked the retirement of two of the greats of the game. Mrs. Driver would continue to attend Perry and renew old friendships and make new ones in the coming years. Wigger, on the other hand, had only retired from position shooting and would be back with the same skill and determination now concentrated on just a single discipline, prone.

## **1994**

The weather during the position phase of the matches was illustrative of the event in many ways. For most of the three days it was outstanding, as was the shooting. The brief violent burst of wind and rain that tore down a section of the awning and upset several target carts during the afternoon of the first day was symbolic of all of the new records that swept away the old and introduced a new post Wigger era in position.

AMU Sergeant Kendall A. Goben, with a score of 394-23X, won the prone stage of the metallic sight championship. Captain Mike Anti took the lead in the standing match with a 372-8X giving him an edge that he would not relinquish even under the

combined assault of Sergeant Lance Peters of All Guard and civilian Ken Benyo. With a score of 383-17X kneeling Anti eclipsed Benyo's record established in 1993 and secured a win in the metallic sight championship. The kneeling victory also gave him a 14 point margin over the existing iron sight record set by Jim Meredith the year previous. The record now stood at 1156-50X. AMU teammate Ken Johnson was right behind with an 1141 while Peters was again mired in third place with an 1128-40X. Kristen Peterson Frazer, another AMU officer, successfully defended her woman's championship.

On the second day, the any sight match, Benyo continued to press Anti with a match winning 399 prone. Peters, looking for the national championship, which for so long had eluded him, struck hard with a record setting standing score of 374-11X. In the final kneeling match Benyo bounced back, missing breaking Peters' kneeling record by a single point. He posted a 386-20X to win an event in which he had always showed incredible strength. Even though he had been in the shadow of Peters and Benyo all day Anti had simply shot high scores that individually did not win a match but, when totaled, gave him a national any sight championship record score of 1156-50X. It is axiomatic that setting two new daily records in a two day match insures an aggregate record. In this case Anti smashed the record of 2281-83X set by Lones Wigger in 1992 with a 2303-91X. In a tournament that was comprised of six fired matches, two sub aggregates, and a grand aggregate Anti set an amazing four records in five wins.

Joining Anti, the new open and service champion on the stage for awards was Benyo, who took the civilian title. Frazer won the woman's aggregate for the second time and stood near Fred Cole who was making his seventh consecutive appearance as

senior champion. Harry Wilcoxson, a coach of the Stratford PAL Connecticut junior powerhouse, got his day in the sun with the win in intermediate senior category. Eve Gestl kept family tradition alive when she won the collegiate title, her brother Erin had worn the crown for three consecutive years. Jeffery Klotzbach walked away with both junior and intermediate junior awards. April A. Shea was building up a head of steam that would carry her through prone with her sub junior victory.

A very traditional order of matches had been followed at the national championship since the reinstitution of the 6400 point prone aggregate in 1966. This year was to be different. After some discussion the Smallbore Committee decided to alter the order of firing and begin the day with the Dewar, followed by the 100-yard match, the Meter match, and close with the 50 yard event. The reasoning was that the other major 6400 point matches, the Western Wildcat and the Los Angeles All American 6400, took the deteriorating effect of afternoon conditions into consideration, and fired the long range matches early. This reduced the effects of wind and mirage on these events as it enabled the shooters to better spot shot holes in the cooler and calmer early part of the day.

Fresh from her position wind Kristen Frazer made her presence felt with a 400-36X win in the Dewar. Not willing to give up any advantage to Frazer Lenore Lemanski took the 100 yard match with a 400-30X. Corporal Ken Johnson, who did so well in the position matches, demonstrated that he was no slouch at prone by winning the Meter match with a score of 400-32X. Cory Brunetti, always a threat, came out on top of the field in the yard match with a 400-37X. Frazer was making a determined effort to



succeed Millard-Sparks as both national and woman's champion with a first day aggregate win of 1599-125X.

Brunetti pick up where he left off on the second day when he won the Dewar with the same score he took the yard match, a 400-37X. Frazer came back with a 400-27X win at 100 yards while Johnson won the second Meter match as he did the first, this time with 400 and an X count of 33. Dave Cramer, recently retired from the Army Reserve, shot a match winning 400-36X in the final yard match of the metallic sight aggregate. Brunetti prevailed for the day with a 1599-118X.

Weather conditions were not that good, as noted by the fact that there were no 1600s. Johnson was able to keep Frazer, the new woman's metallic sight champion, at bay by two points winning the metallic championship with a score of 3197-244X.

After team day the individual matches resumed with any sights allowed. Anthony Chick, a junior from Connecticut, came up one X short of perfection with a 400-39X Dewar win. Former national champion Dave Weaver showed that he had lost none of his stuff when he shot a 400-35 X at 100 yards. A newcomer to smallbore was Nancy Tompkins-Gallagher, one of the nation's premier long range rifle shots, who showed that there is crossover in disciplines by winning the Meter match with a score of 400-37X. First Lieutenant Matt Suggs won the day's final match with a 400-38X at 50 yards. The day went to Anti, the new reigning position champ, by virtue of his 1599-144X.

The final day of the tournament was opened with a second win by Suggs, a 400-39 Dewar display. Carolyn Millard-Sparks, making an attempt at retaining her national title, won the 100 yard match with a 400-37X. Jack Foster, who had been shooting since before most of the current crop of winners were born, emerged from his Accuracy

International shop on Commercial Row to shoot a winning 400-39X in the Meter match. John B. Updike won the yard match with a 400-39X firing the last best 40 shots of the 1994 matches. Millard Sparks won the final day with a 1600-142X and with it the woman's any sight championship.

At the awards ceremony, after the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation were intoned, the winners began to fill the places behind the various trophies and plaques on the stage. April Shea came forward, the second time since she won the sub junior position title earlier that week, to pick up the Glabb Trophy. Anthony Chick was presented the Whittington Trophy as high junior and a gold medallion as high intermediate junior. Cory Brunetti accepted his second Austin Trophy as collegiate champion. The Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy was donated to the NRA by that club to be awarded to the intermediate senior champion. The first recipient was Lones Wigger, a man familiar with being first. The Sam Bond Trophy was handed to former national champion Ron West who had moved out of the intermediate senior class into the ranks of seniors.

Lenore Lemanski earned her fourth Remington Trophy as woman's champion breaking a tie with her sister Bobbi Vitito who had also won it three times. Lemanski had won her first Remington Trophy in 1959, 36 years earlier, showing that experience is a key to victory. Ty Bishop, the 1990 prone champion, was handed another Schweitzer Medal as civilian champion. Last, but certainly not least, came Johnson to claim a gold medal as the service champion and, on its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in competition, the Critchfield Trophy as national smallbore rifle prone champion. In an odd twist this would be the second time the trophy would be presented to a Kenneth Johnson for in

1956 the national champion was J. Kenneth Johnson. It is rare enough that a name appears twice on the trophy but that the same name belonged to two separate riflemen is worthy of note, or a card in a game of Trivial Pursuit.

Records fell and new champions were named, even as a smattering of near legendary names maintained their presence on the firing line and awards podium. Times were changing and with them the smallbore matches. It was a great Perry year.

### **1995**

Momentum is an important aspect to success in athletics. The more one wins the easier it becomes to win. Momentum in sport is really a combination of experience and success building up to eventual victory. Once the snowball of success has been released down the slope it will continue to roll, picking up mass and speed unless acted upon by an outside force. Momentum is a fragile thing and the thought that it might be building up over a year is not an easy concept to imagine, unless you are Ken Johnson.

Johnson, a corporal assigned to the United States Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, had closed out the season in 1994 with a second place finish in the three position championship and the national prone title five days later. He arrived at Camp Perry this year apparently still pumped up. Although his performance from match to match would not be spectacular it was marked by a consistent production of quality scores.

AMU rifleman Matt Suggs won the metallic sight prone match, the first of the three matches that make up the first half of the national championship with an eight X advantage over Ken Benyo, who also fired a 396. Johnson had a 394 for third. Captain Glenn Dubis, perhaps the most experienced international shooter at Fort Benning, and

Sergeant Lance Hopper both posted identical 374 standing scores but Dubis took the match by out Xing Hopper, 11X to 8X. Johnson had a 371. Benyo, a kneeling shooter of the first water, fell nine Xs short of breaking his own Camp Perry record set in 1994. Had he done it he would have upped the record three times in as many years. Johnson had a 372 for second.

John J. McClay was the senior champion, Herbert Pasch led the intermediate seniors, and Kimberly Howe was the woman's champion. Tom Tamas won the metallic sight championship with a score of 1146-41X, just a point shy of Mike Anti's record set the year before. Hopper was just five Xs behind Tamas in second while Dubis held third place with an 1141-44X. Johnson had an 1137.

On day two, with scopes, Tamas widened the gap just a tiny bit when he took the prone match with a 399. Johnson was right behind him after winning second on a Creedmoor decision with William Thomas who also shot a 398-28X. All the leaders were blown away when Captain Web Wright raised the national championship record standing up by two points to a 377, the old record had stood just a year. Johnson had a 374 which was good for second place. The deciding match, kneeling, was an all AMU final. And quite a final it was with Captain Steve Goff, First Lieutenant Gary Hardy and Johnson all tied up at 385, Goff had 17Xs for the win but the other two had 15Xs each and it took a long look at the rule book to place Hardy second and Johnson third. Hardy fired a new national match record of 1157-43X which stood until Johnson finished with his 1157-49Xs but was eclipsed by Johnson who became the new any sight position champion. Jean Foster was the high woman while McClay and Pasch hung on and won their categories again.

When both scores were added Johnson had won the Frank Parsons Trophy along with the service crown. Johnson now joined a select group of riflemen, Art Cook, Lones Wigger, Pres Kendall, and D.I. Boyd II who had won both the prone and position national outdoor titles. Benyo was the civilian champion for the third straight year while Foster earned her first Mary C. Camp Trophy. Pasch and McClay, having won both halves of the tournament easily coasted to victories in intermediate and senior categories. Pasch had achieved the near impossible in dethroning "Old King Cole" who was riding a seven year winning streak. College senior Cory Brunetti took back the collegiate trophy he had last won as a freshman. Ryan P. Meagher, son of All National Guard High Power Team standout Jim Meagher, brought home the Cobb Trophy as junior champion. Shane Barnhart made his first trip to the stage to pick up the medallion and plaque that showed him to be the intermediate junior champion. Robert J. Mahon, of Langhorne, Pennsylvania, was declared the sub-junior champ.

The Army cleaned up in the team matches taking first and second place in both the metallic and any sight match. In third place both times was the Black hawk Rifle Club. Connecticut juniors, who had been little seen in the past few years, were back with a vengeance under the experience coaching of Patti Clark to take both matches.

The position matches had been marked by cloudless skies that gave no relief from the sweltering heat and there would be no change for the prone matches. Johnson, the defending champion, was counted out of the prone running by the more superstitious because he had won the Sydney Regional the week before. It is an old wives' tale that the winner at Carl Evan's Sydney, Ohio conventional prone regional will

fare poorly at Perry and men who have been married a long time know that old wives are usually right.

The Camp Perry winds acted up for the first day and valuable points were lost by some but not Tom Tamas who began the day with a 400-33 win in the Dewar. Suggs was next to notch a victory with the only 400 shot at 100 yards as the winds played havoc with the rest of the shooters. Ginny Bergman, a Randle Team veteran from Connecticut, shot a 400-34X to take the Meter match. Bob Holtzman, who had a lot of experience with winds back home in Arizona, had a 400-37X win in the yard match. Tamas who had started with such high hopes had dropped seven points and Johnson, perhaps a victim of the Sydney Curse or just out of energy after his position win was down 11points. Sue Mitchell, an Army Reserve shooter with many Perrys under her belt, won the first day with a 1597-105, just one X a head of Arizonian Ronald Deradourian.

By the start of the second day Johnson seemed to have shaken off the after effects of Sydney and won the Dewar with a 39X clean. Suggs took the 100 yard match while Johnson was one X behind him. It seemed the defending champ was getting back on his feet early enough to recover from his disastrous first day. Web Wright slipped past Suggs and Holtzman for the Meter match win by a single X, 400-32X, and did the same in the yard match to push Ty Bishop and Barry Smith to the rear. The second day ended with Suggs, Wright, and Tamas shooting 1600s. Suggs had 137Xs, Wright 136Xs, and Tamas 127.

The Metallic sight championships went to Suggs who had compiled a 3194-263X; Edie Reynolds was the woman to beat, as was senior Ron West. Holtzman, who was

looking to repeat his 1993 intermediate senior victory, was half way there. On team day, after the Dewar, Randle, and Whistler Boy had completed the NRA matches got under way. The Army and Connecticut juniors picked up where they left off in position and swept the prone team matches.

The heat continued unabated as the tournament moved into its last two days, a 3200 point any sight aggregate. Just as he did on day one Tamas again got out of the starting blocks quickly, with a 400-38X win in the Dewar match. Brunetti won at 100 yards with a 400-35X and again in the Meter match with a 400-39X. Tamas circumscribed Brunetti's double victories by closing the day as he began, winning a match. This time it was the yard with a 400-39X. There were four 1600s posted for the day. Tamas had his second consecutive perfect score and it won with an X count of 144. Ron West, no stranger to perfect scores, had 131Xs, Captain Scotty Huntington, an Army Reservist, had 125Xs while intermediate senior Melvin Flint's perfect score came with 123 center shots.

With 160 shots left to go the field was tight. Suggs and Wright continued their drives with a 400-37X each in the final Dewar with Suggs getting the win. Tamas was second service master behind Dubis, a low X count of 34 but all of the points. In the 100 yard match Millard–Sparks reigned supreme with Suggs behind her by two Xs. Tamas was again second service master with a paltry 30Xs but all the points. Tamas finally got into the money in the Meter match, an X behind Hopper and Dubis, who had to fight it out on a tie breaker to see whose 37X clean would win, Hopper ending up as the happier of the two. The 1995 national smallbore championship hung on the last 40 shots at 50 yards. With such a relatively large target, so close, and a rifle mounting a

scope anything less than perfection is unacceptable. When Henry David Thoreau wrote that some men lead lives of quiet desperation he was speaking of those that have shot nines at 50 yards on scope day. Randy Schwartz, a Perry veteran from Florida would not be one of those desperate men as his 400-38 won the match. Tamas' score of 400-35X was so far down in class that his name did not even appear on the prize bulletin but he had all of the points for a 1600-136X and a one X advantage on Ron West's 135X. Johnson was third on the day with a 1600-127X.

Tamas had a 3200-280X to add to his metallic sight score. He won the any sight championship going away and took possession of the US Cartridge Company Trophy. Ron West, his nearest competition and high senior, also went clean but with just 266Xs. Ken Johnson was in third with a 3199-257X. Millard Sparks had custody of the Western Cartridge Company Trophy again and Andy Knez, an artist from Pittsburgh, was high intermediate senior.

Tamas had dropped all of his seven points on the first day and then run 480 tens and Xs to win both the national championship and service title. He joined Johnson in that elite group of double title winners, having been the position champion in 1989. Suggs and Wright filled out the top three spots making it an all Army show. Ty Bishop was the civilian title holder while fellow North Carolinian Edie Reynolds secured women honors. Ron West and Lones Wigger repeated as senior and intermediate senior winners. Brunetti doubled up championships adding the prone collegiate to his position victory. Michael Lewis was both junior and intermediate junior winner while fellow Texan Cole Ward picked up the Glabb trophy as sub junior champ.



For some years there had been a special any sight 6400 aggregate and this year awards were given. With a wry sense of humor the winner, Carl Jooss, was awarded, according to the bulletin, "a pair of glasses."

Johnson and Tamas made the matches memorable. They were young shooters with great potential who demonstrated all of the traits of true champions and became role models for many young shooters. Match Director George Harris, who took all of the blame and none of the credit for a well run match, had earned rave reviews for the many months of hard work he had put in to enhance the awards schedule through corporate donations. In all it was a satisfying set of matches for all concerned.

### **1996**

As the position shooters streamed into Camp Perry for the 1996 matches the line gossip centered about who had the best chance among the contestants to win. The general consensus of opinion was that one of the thoroughbreds out of Fort Benning or Ken Benyo of Pennsylvania would emerge the winner. The Army had sent the likes of Lance Hopper, Matt Suggs, Steve Goff, Tom Tamas, Troy Bassham, and Web Wright III. The Reserves and the Guard had former champion Karen Monez, Lance Peters, and Bill Lange along with a string of lesser lights. The civilians had Benyo, Vincent Pestilli, retired AMU rifleman and former champion Jim Meredith, The Lymans-David and Debbie, and a smattering of collegiate stars. It would be an open field and, unlike the days of the Wigger Era, the odds were pretty even, with a slight edge to the Army.

The multifarious Perry winds were there to keep everyone honest and hard working on the first day. It wasn't much surprise, with the windmills clattering and flags flapping in all directions that the iron sight scores were down. It was less of a surprise

to see the names next to the winning numbers in prone match. Benyo had won. A 393-12X gave him a four X lead over his closest competition, Tamas. A massive three points behind them was Matt Suggs. Benyo gave up the lead, and seemingly his hopes, when Wright won the standing match with a 341-9X. The score confirmed that the winds were going to insure that no one walked away with the match easily. Wright enjoyed a five point advantage over Shane Barnhart's second place 336-4X. Marc Monene was in third with a 333-6X. Benyo could only muster a 329-2X.

However, anyone thinking that Benyo was through did not know him very well. The stumpy hard holder knew the day would finish with his specialty, kneeling. There was no one on the line who had won more kneeling matches at Perry in the recent past than he. As a matter of fact he had owned the National Match record in the event for several year. The day finished as it had begun with Benyo a match winner. His kneeling score of 375-11X was a full 11 points ahead of Barnhart and 12 in front of Wright. In the 40 shot string Benyo had made up his standing deficit and pulled ahead of Wright for a metallic sight champion ship win. To be sure his 1097-36X was not as pretty as past scores but considering the conditions, it was fine shooting. Wright and Barnhart finished second and third with Wright posting a 1088-36X and the junior from Ohio a 1086-28X. They all enjoyed wide leads over the next group of scores in the civilian and service master classes which were in the 1075 range, at best. Emily Caruso, a product of the Stratford Connecticut PAL, was high woman while Herb Pasch and John McClay, the reigning champions in the intermediate senior and senior categories were staking out their claims to a repeat trip to pick up trophies.

After an exhausting day of iron sight shooting the relative calm, coupled with the change to telescopic sights, made the final day seem like a holiday to the wind whipped shooters. Major Steve Goff and Sergeant Tom Tamas went to the finish line neck and neck with 394s in the prone match. Goff had 25Xs to Tamas' 23 and, as quickly as that momentum shifted when As Benyo had failed to crack 390. Also having trouble was Wright who only managed a 392 prone. With a 365-7X Goff handily won the standing match. Specialist Troy Bassham, who was second standing with a 360 and kept moving up with a win the kneeling match with a 387-18X. Goff was six points behind as first service master, not a great finish but good enough to guarantee him an 1140-43X and the any sight championship. Teammates Tamas and Bassham were second and third by a whisker. Tamas scored an 1134-41X to Bassham's 1134-40X. Monez took the woman's title, a full 23 points ahead of metallic sight winner Caruso. Fred Cole came up with a 1069-26X as senior champion and Sergeant Lance Peters, a Minnesota National Guardsman, had an 1112-27X that set him up as the intermediate winner.

The final scores revealed that Wright had parlayed his iron sight and any sight scores into the Frank Parson Trophy to go along with the service championship. Bassham had made a strong play to move up and his 2209-64X gave him second place. Benyo was able to lean on his iron sights win to help prop up a less than spectacular any sight score for third place and the civilian championship, his fourth consecutive gold medallion. Caruso's irons were strong enough to stave off the on rushing Monez to capture the woman's trophy, the Mary C. Camp. Cole was able to regain the senior title, his eighth in nine years. Peters unseated McClay and earned a rare, a la Kay Anderson, intermediate senior title for a service shooter. Neil Wright, like

Benyo a Pennsylvanian, was the collegiate champion. Barnhart, the new junior champion, was fifth overall. The intermediate and sub junior champions hailed from the east coast, Taryn S. Lewis from New Jersey and Robin E. Burow from Massachusetts.

In the team matches the Army took first and second place in both events. The Black Hawk Rifle Club was the third place team in the metallic sight match while The Michigan State Rifle and Pistol Association junior team won. Any sight third place went to the Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association 'Gold' Team while a junior team representing Massachusetts won the junior division.

Prone competition tends to be more of an open contest than position shooting with favorites much harder to pick but the Army was on a roll and Wright kept on winning. His 400-35X was the best score turned in for the iron sight Dewar that now marked the start of the prone matches. At 100 yards a 400-33X brought a familiar name back to the top of the score sheet, Lones Wigger. The Meter match went to Barnhart who seemed to be on cruise control, as he placed high in just about every match he shot. A near Perfect 400-39 in the yard match marked Goff's final successful effort of the day to win a match. A 1599-126X earned Barnhart the first daily aggregate and a 12X lead.

As they did on day one the Army lead off with a win. This time Tamas Creedmoored fellow AMU shooter Matt Suggs when both posted 400-34Xs in the Dewar. Civilian Andy Knez, a talented artist from the Pittsburgh area, nailed a 400-32X for the 100-yard victory. Suggs would not take his slim loss in the Dewar easily and came back to win the Meter match. National Guard Captain Ron Wigger found himself on the winning end of a 400-36X Creedmoor situation with Wright in the final yard match

of the tournament. Tamas' early victory seemed to prophesize his day as he won the aggregate with a 1598-125, a two point lead on runners up Suggs and Barnhart. The lead had switched and Tamas, now the metallic sight champion with a two day score of 3195-256X, was in control moving into the any sight stage. Tamas has no breathing space as Barnhart was just seven Xs behind and Edie Reynolds, the new woman's iron sight champion, was sitting on a 3193-238X. Ron West repeated as senior winner while Lones Wigger was trying to run his string of intermediate senior wins to three. Joe Barnes who was shooting in the any sight championship lead that group and was awarded the traditional pair of glasses.

Tamas was loath to give up any part of his lead and opened the any sight match with a win in the Dewar by beating Dave Lyman, the manager of Blue trail Range in Wallingford, Connecticut, on a tiebreaker, his 400-36X being judged best. All Guardsman Darrin Campbell and Bobbi Vitito sent the statistical crew to the rulebooks for the second time in as many matches so that they might declare Campbell's 100 yard 400-31X the best. Tamas cleanly won both the meter and yard matches with possibles and good X counts. He was the only shooter to go clean for all matches but was being pressed by Vitito's 1599 and Lyman's 1598.

The final day looked as if was going to belong to either Goff or Army Reservist Scotty Huntington as they alternated match wins. Goff took home 100 NRA points for his 400-38 in the Dewar and a 400-37X in the Meter match. Huntington pocketed the same amount for besting all in the 100 yard and 50 yard matches with 400-37X and 400-39X scores. Huntington won the day with a 1600-142X. Brunetti's third place 130X perfect score in second, with a 131X clean, followed Tamas. Tamas had what no other

shooter had over the two days, back-to-back 1600s and he was awarded the US Cartridge Company Trophy for his perfection. Carolyn Millard Sparks was the lady champion. West continued his winning ways while John Black displaced Wigger.

Paired with his win in irons Tamas had a 6395-525X becoming the first to win two straight national titles prone since Dave Weaver had done so in 1988 and 1989, and only the fourth since the matches began in 1919. Barnhart, the silver medalist, civilian, and junior champion, was six points behind with a 6389-485X as he collected his second junior title to add to his position medal. Suggs' followed in third with a 6387-511X. Reynolds held on to take her second Remington plaque in two years as the woman's champion. Ron West ran his consecutive senior title to three as did intermediate senior Lones Wigger. Campbell, both a National Guardsman and an All American at Tennessee Tech, took collegiate honors. Youngsters from Connecticut picked up the remaining honors with Geoffrey Regan being declared intermediate junior champion and Sarah Paoletta was crowned sub-junior winner.

The 1996 championships would also see Tom Whitaker join Gary Anderson, D.I. Boyd II, and Carl Bernosky as a winner of both an outdoor smallbore and high power national championship. Whitaker, the 1969 smallbore prone champion, would stride to the stage a week or so after the smallbore competitors left to be handed the Lee O. Wright Trophy after having out shot all of the nation's best service and match rifle competitors.

Tom Tamas again made his place in shooting history. Since his days as a junior with the Fort Benning Junior Rifle Club his ability with both the smallbore and service rifle had marked him for a brilliant future in the shooting sports, a future that would now

focus on earning a spot on the 2000 US Olympic Team. After his past two years success at Perry there were few that thought he would be denied this goal.

### **1997**

It would be a “Three P” year at Camp Perry, position, prone, and Pershing. The usual competitor list during prone would expanded by the addition of the members of the British and Canadian teams who would be doing their best to wrest the Pershing Trophy from the hands of the hosts. But, before this contest could take place the home team would first hold its national position championships.

It had been a remarkable year for Major Steve Goff. The Arkansas National Guardsman had been assigned to active duty with the Army at the Marksmanship Training Unit. During the winter he had been the only person to medal in all three of the smallbore events in NRA National Indoor Rifle Championships. He opened with a second place, near perfect 799X800, finish in the four-position match. That was followed by a national championship in NRA Three position where he established a new national record of 1196X1200. In his first 200 record shots he dropped but five points. The international sectional saw him place third, just three points behind winner Glenn Dubis’ 1166.

In the prone match of the metallic sight position championship Goff had a respectable 394, out of the top three places but first service master. His standing score of 362-7X was good for a third behind AMU Specialist Jason Parker’s 366-7X and civilian Wes Robinson’s 363-7X. It was clear he was positioning himself for a stab at the position title. In kneeling he held off a challenge from Ken Benyo, a past master at kneeling, by a one point margin but losing by an X. The match, and the new national

championship record, went to Dubis who had a 387-15X. At the end of the day Goff was in the driver's seat winning the metallic sight championship. He had an 1143-41X, a slim lead over fellow soldier Parker's second place finish of 1142-43X. Robinson was in third with an 1137-38X. Lucinda Roddy, an expert junior, was in the new woman's metallic champ. Fred Cole returned to his usual perch in the senior class while Kay Anderson was making a bid to regain the intermediate senior title he had last held in 1992.

Goff wasted no time in staking out his claim in the any sight match with a 399 prone score. It was a bit of a dogfight in the standing match between Army shooters as Tom Tamas slipped by Lance Hopper and Goff for the match win. His 370-9X was just a hair better than the other two who were tied up a 369-6X with the tiebreaker going to Hopper. However, it was pretty apparent that it would take a major breakdown to derail Goff. Benyo demonstrated his proficiency in kneeling by again breaking the national match record score, this time by a margin of five points, upping it to 392-17X. Goff managed a service class win with a 384-8X, but fell behind the advancing Benyo in the any sight aggregate. The new national any sight champions was Benyo with an 1154-54X. Emily Caruso pushed Roddy aside to win the woman's title. Perennial Senior Champion Fred Cole took the second half of the matches to insure his title, perhaps in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his being named as a 1947 NRA First Team All American. Fifty years earlier Cole was a student at Columbia University, studying under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the "GI Bill of Rights." as a recently demobilized Marine. He was preparing for a career as an English teacher, from which he had since retired. Vitalis Seputa picked up the intermediate senior title.



Goff had a 20 point advantage over Benyo in iron sights so was able to easily outdistance him for the national three position championship. With a score of 2295-82X he was well ahead of Tamas, 2280-85X, who has won the title in 1989. In third place, with a 2277 that had a phenomenal X count of 108X was Benyo who claimed his fifth consecutive civilian championship. Not having made a big splash anywhere, but turning out consistently good scores that showed why she had earned All American honors, was the new woman's champion, Army Second Lieutenant Kimberly Howe who also picked up the collegiate title. Shane Barnhart, who had won both position and prone junior honors in 1996, repeated. The name Cole must have been some magical talisman for shooters that year, for in addition to Fred's win young Cole Ward, a Texan, was the intermediate junior champion while Christine McLemore was named sub junior winner and picked up the Stark Trophy.

No one had dominated both the indoor and outdoor smallbore championships like Goff since 1987 when Wigger won two of the indoor matches but had to settle for the civilian title at Perry. It certainly had to have been a satisfying year for the major from Manhattan, Kansas. Goff was no lightweight prone and was a good bet to take both titles.

The first of the four days began with excellent weather that would continue all week. Dave Creamer set the tone for the matches, fine weather, and better scores, when he equaled the metallic sight Dewar match record, 400-38X, held by Ron West and Pres Kendall. Connecticut Army National Guard Master Sergeant Bill Lange, who had won the very first prone match when the new metric target was adopted for the position matches, shot a 400-34X at 100 yards for the win. Lones Wigger made his

presence known when he won the Meter match with a 400-38X. British Pershing Team member Michael Babb showed that the Pershing Match would be a hard fought contest when he took the yard match with a 400-39X. Wigger, who had been keeping a low profile since his retirement from three position in 1993, had the highest X count of the six 1600s. With 134Xs he was four ahead of Barnhart, his closest competitor. Goff, first service master, had a 1600-127X printed next to his name.

The reigning champion, Tom Tamas, was still in the fight and kept close to the lead with a 400-35X in the second metallic Dewar. Jim Hinkle, who held the national championship record in the 50 yard metallic sight event, showed he was no piker at 100 yards with a 400-33X win. Young Barnhart worked his way in the winner's column with a 400-37X in the Meter match and continued on a roll with a back to back win in the yard match with a 400-38X. In eighty shots the talented Ohioan shot 75Xs and five tens, a good showing for anyone, but he had dropped a point earlier in the day and had to settle in behind several 1600s.

With the completion of the first 3200 shots the metallic sight champions could be named. Dubis had dropped a point on day one and Barnhart had done the same on day two. Wigger had stayed clean and, with a 3200-251X, had won the metallic sight championship along with the intermediate senior title showing that there was life in the old fox yet. Eliza Bishop, who had won the sub junior prone title in 1983, now earned her first adult trophy when she took the Peters Cartridge Company Trophy as high woman. Jim Hinkle, only a point off of the overall lead, was high senior.

Team Day broke like an autumn morning in New England. It might have been a beautiful cool windy day to view foliage in Vermont in October but not so to shoot prone

in Ohio in July. Many large puddles of water covered Lake Shore Drive as the wind drove the crashing surf completely across the two-lane blacktop road. Calls to the weather bureau, consultation between team officials, and a final meeting with range personnel, lead to a decision to postpone the firing of the Randle and the Dewar Matches. It was hoped that better shooting conditions would exist the following day after the Pershing Match had completed.

During the day conditions moderated somewhat but it was still quite windy when the team matches began shortly after noon. The Dewar Trophy was awarded to the Black Hawk Arrows, consisting of firing members Lones Wigger, Jr., Shane Barnhart, Jim Meredith, and Cory Brunetti who were coached and captained to a new National Championship record of 1566-53X by John Black and Dana Knezevich. The Perryman C Team, made up of visiting British shooters, was in second place followed by National Guard Gold. The Virginia State Shooting Association, Joshua Keys, Brian Jaquith, Christopher Huff and Sheryl Church were coached by Jim Morgan to a 1511-48X high junior honors.

The Black Hawk Arrows switched to telescopic sights and duplicated their metallic sight score and increased their X count by a third, for a second win with a 1566-74X. It is a rare that year the military is completely shut out of the winner's circle at Perry and even rarer that the exact same team combines for a double gold. In second place was the Florida State Association Gold. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Eagles were bronze medalists in the open class while their junior team, The Hotshots, consisting of coach Rick Capozzi, and shooters Ken Capozzi, Mike

Sapione, Sharon Paoletta, and John Hanowitz, shot a 1539-78X to top the field of junior scope shooters.

The Pershing Match was fired on Wednesday morning. By 7:30 all of the principals had assembled with Canada drawing the left side of the line, Great Britain the center, and the United States the right hand firing points. The international competitors set up their equipment waited until the sun fully illuminated the target faces. The United States Team of Shane Barnett, Glenn Dubis, James Hinkle, Lones Wigger, Jr., Steve Goff, Cory Brunetti, Jason Parker, Eliza Bishop, Kerry Spurgin, and Barry Smith fired a 3990-289X to Great Britain's 3987-273 and Canada's 3959-228. Tony Leone and Dave Cramer were team alternates. George Harris, Team Adjutant, ably assisted team captain Edie Reynolds, the first woman ever named as a U.S. Pershing Team captain, while Frank Boyd served as coach. Dubis was the high gun for the United States, and the match, with a 400-36 while Great Britain's Cliff Ogle's 400-33 was the best score on his team earning him the William Grater Trophy.

No sooner than the Pershing ended the shooters from the United States rearranged themselves on the line and were joined by Dan Makucevich, Geoff Reagan, Tom Jastermsky, Larry Parker, Sr., Thomas Tamas, David Dye, Douglas Clark, and Lance Hopper to make up the rest of the Dewar Team. This would be the second of three equipment set-ups for Eliza Bishop of North Carolina. Bishop would become only the second person to shoot on a Pershing, Dewar, and Randle Team in the same year since Janet Friddell had first done so in 1961. The alternates were William Lange and Carolyn Millard-Sparks. Joe Steffey and Bill Krilling filled the positions of team captain

and coach. Dubis repeated his Pershing performance as the United States Team's top gun with a 392X400 on the tough English target.

Dewar Team members quickly gathered up their equipment as the Randle Team began to spread their mats and arrange their gear. Millard-Sparks, Reynolds, Michelle Bohren, Dana Knezevich, Karen Jacobs, Sherri Volberg, Second Lieutenant Kimberly Howe, USAR, Nancy Tompkins-Gallagher, and Emily Caruso joined Bishop. Captain Irene Fisher and Coach Gloria Parmentier named Michelle Makucevich and Crystal Hamilton as alternates. The Randle Team shot a 3974-247X lead by Reynolds 400-27. Reynolds was awarded the Eleanor Dunn Trophy in recognition of her accomplishment.

The Randle had barely ended when the line was again filled. This time teams of senior and junior shooters competing in the NRA Smallbore Committee sponsored Randle Doubles/Mentor Match would occupy the points. This special match is only fired in Pershing years and it proved to be very popular. Thirty-six teams entered with Allen Elliot and Nathan Tracey combining for a perfect 800 with 61Xs to win. Breathing down their necks were Jim Meredith and John Danning III who duplicated the perfect 800 but had just 58 Xs. In third place were John O'Connor and Morgan Dietrich with a 799-51X.

The Smallbore Committee also came up with the idea of a "Made in America" Match that would require the shooters to use rifles, metallic sights, and ammunition made in this country. The idea was picked up and encouraged by NRA President Marion Hammer who showed up on the line to support and oversee the match. Forty three competitors showed up on the line with equipment that varied from custom target rifles built up on Winchester or Remington actions to a wide variety of stock Winchester 52s, Bs, Cs, Ds, and Es, Remington 37s, 540Xs, and 513Ts, Harrington and

Richardson 5200s, Kimbers, a Mossberg Model 42B, and a Springfield 1922. A prize was awarded to the most original rifle and there were two so good that a double award was made to George Stephen's Remington 37 and Norm Austen's Remington 513T.

The match was a Dewar Course, 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 more at 100 yards prone, with the first stage being the 100 yards. Dewar veteran Jim Miller won with a score of 400-27X shot with his custom Winchester 52E, Redfield Mark VIII sights, and Federal Ultra Match ammunition. Sheryl Church, a junior, used an out of the box Kimber to take second place with a 399-29X. Bruce Meredith used a stock Winchester 52D that he had never fired before to knock off a 399-23 for third, it was the trophy rifle awarded to him when he won the 1967 prone championship and had sat unused for 30 years. Connecticut high school rifle coach Steve Rocketto won special mention for the most period paraphernalia. He showed up on the line with his Winchester 52C, purchased in 1958, 10X coat and glove, 22 year old Camp Perry sweatshirt, a 1941 rule book, assorted Freeland items, and a couple of boxes of Western EZXS with which he proceeded to use in the match.

After the two day break for team matches everyone was eager to get back to the final half of the championship. Florida civilian Randy Schwartz counted first coup in the any sight matches with a 400-38X in the Dewar. Following on fellow British Pershing Teammate Babb's lead, Richard Fowke won the 100 yard match in which Babb placed third. Bruce Meredith only dropped an X to be top gun in the Meter match. Wigger and West had tied at 38Xs and went to the rulebook to determine that Wigger had the better score. Two Xs behind his brother was Jim Meredith, the first Civilian Master. Fowke again grabbed another match away from his hosts by Creedmooring Army Lieutenant

Colonel Boyd Goldsby when the both shot 400-39Xs. Perhaps looking for some more NRA points to spend on Commercial Row before heading home, Babb won the third daily aggregate with a 1600-141X on a tie breaker with the unlucky Goldsby. Lange, of the National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit, was in third by a single X.

The 6400 point aggregate entered its last day with Cory Brunetti wining the Dewar with his 400-39X. Dana Knezevich and Babb went head on head for second and third place, just one X back. Babb's luck seemed to have run out and he lost this tiebreaker. Carolyn Millard-Sparks out Xed all for a 400-35X win at 100 yards, just two Xs in front of Babb, and then went on to claim the Meter match over James Crawford when both posted a 400-35X. Mike Babb would have the last word when he won the yard match with a39X possible. Five 1600s were posted and Goldsby had the best with 136Xs. The first Master Civilian was Fowke with a possible and following him was Babb as second in class. The British had started slow but finished in style and there would be few who shot with them who would not soon forget their skill and good humor.

After a long four year dry spell Lones Wigger found himself back on the top step during a Perry awards ceremony. His competitive spirit had not been damped and, now able to devote more time to training, all the mechanics had been brought back to first class working order. Significantly Wigger's 6399-527X effort was built on a perfect iron sights score. It was only a lost point in the any sight phase that kept him from breaking his own national championship record of 6399-556X. When he picked up the Critchfield Trophy, The Schweitzer Medallion, and the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy he became the leader in national prone titles with a total of six, one better than Dave Weaver with whom he had been tied at five. He now was the most successful outdoor smallbore

competitor in the history of the national championship. Shane Barnhart, who was 42 years Wigger's junior, was the silver medalist by two points. Barnhart had now won both the position and prone junior championships for two consecutive years. Steve Goff, who was entering kindergarten the year Wigger won the first of his 21 position championships, was declared the service champion and had won or placed in the top three in five national championships.

Carolyn Millard-Sparks earned her fifth national woman's championship while Ron West was named senior champion for the fourth year in a row. Howe doubled up a pair of championships, adding the prone title to her position crown. Matt Emmons was the intermediate junior champion while Nathan Tracey topped the sub junior list. James Krilich, a student of Olympian Art Cook, won the 6400 any sight aggregate.

Records were set, the US held on the Pershing Trophy, and Liza Bishop and the indefatigable Wigger showed that if time does not diminish skills it can polish them.

### **1998**

The news that a tornado had ripped through North Central Ohio and had struck Camp Perry tore through the shooting community like, well, a tornado. Aided by the Internet and email the word, and rumors, moved about the country in June at the speed of light. However, when the matches opened it took an experienced eye to see the damage as one drove through the gate and up Niagara Road. In the far distance one could see that the old Essex flagpole was gone, replaced with a pencil like mast. On the left hand side of the road the Mess Hall showed roof damage and was closed, a catering service had been set up in the Bataan Armory to provide onsite meal service. The baggage station and a few other out buildings were missing. The Plaza in front of



the Arcade was strangely bare for the Critchfield Monument was gone. The base was materially the same and the range was in perfect condition for the matches but a little history and tradition had been lost to the rogue winds.

The position matches began without the usual fluky winds that usually bedevil the matches. It was as if the tornado had exhausted the local winds. Not concerned about the why of the situation the shooters rushed to take advantage of the calm. Dave Johnson, an AMU shooter, won the prone iron sight match with a 397-26X. The Army swept the top three places in the standing match, won by Mike Anti's 377-10X. Tim Manges and Troy Bassham both had 375s but Manges had three more Xs. Bassham had been first in the service master class in prone and seemed to be accumulating a few points more than most as the day moved into the final match. Bassham won the kneeling match with a 388-16X while Ken Benyo, a kneeling specialist, took second with a 384-14X. Fred Cole, the senior champion whose age was probably greater than Bassham and Benyo's added together, came in third with a 383-14X. Cole's lean hard physical condition, a result of many hours spent bicycling about his native Long Island, belied his age and gave him the stamina to best many shooters half his age. Bassham had put together the best total score of the day. His 1156 lead Barnhart and Benyo by 11 and 13 points respectively. The NCAA air rifle champion, Emily Caruso, of Norwich University, won the woman's iron sight title while schoolteacher Dave Cramer was the intermediate senior champion. To no one's surprise Cole was the best senior.

Johnson followed his metallic sight success in the prone match by winning the any sight prone match with a 397-23X. Bassham, with his eye on the grand aggregate, posted a 373-13X standing to beat that position's virtuoso Emily Caruso by a point.

Vincent Pestilli, a collegiate All American, edged out North Carolinian William Thomas by a single X when he shot a 386-15X in the kneeling match. Johnson, 1146-44X, won the any sight championship in a tightly run contest with Benyo, 1143-53X, and Barnhart, 1142-53X. Caruso and Cole kept up their winning ways while John McClay slowed Cramer's advance.

Bassham, who seemed to drop out of sight during the any sight match, reappeared as the national position champion. He had built up a considerable lead with iron sights and ended with an eight point cushion over Barnhart. His nine point advantage over Benyo condemned the Pennsylvanian to another bridesmaid appearance. With his win Bassham added something new to the already crowded Bassham family trophy case, the Parsons Trophy that had eluded his famous father.

The Mary C. Camp Trophy, emblematic of the women's championship was presented to Emily Caruso who tallied a 2261-68X. Fred Cole, 2224-55X, locked up his third straight senior championship and possession of the Meister Trophy. The high Intermediate Junior champion Mark Tortorella of Duxbury, Massachusetts, also ranked as high sharpshooter with a score of 2215-52X. Another New Englander, Heidi Magee, of Colchester, Vermont won the Sub Junior championship.

Pennsylvania's Frasier Simplex Rifle Team member Dave Cramer, a retired Army Reserve Rifle Team member with a distinguished career, stepped the stage to accept the RWS Trophy, which he earned with a score of 2226-60X. This was the first year that this category had a specific trophy. The RWS Trophy had an illustrious history stretching back to 1933 when it was the prize for an international prone match between Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, sponsored by the German munitions

firm of Rheinische-Westfalischen-Sprengstoff. It remained a team trophy until 1939 when the European situation caused the cessation of the international postal match. For the next two years it was given as a prize for individual competition over a 40 shot 50-meter course of fire.

The next 40 years saw it stored away until it was brought out of retirement to serve as the air pistol trophy at the NRA's US International Shooting Championships. From 1994 to 1997 it was withdrawn from competition and in 1998 it was returned to the rifle discipline.

The prone matches began with benign winds that seemed to lull the belly shooters with a promise of conditions such as the position matches enjoyed. During the day the wind gathered its strength and it was soon back in rare Perry form. Kay Anderson, now retired from the National Guard, was shooting as a civilian and shooting well. He won the first metallic sight Dewar with a 400-35X. Barnhart and Tony Leone, an All Guard rifleman, shot such a close 400-34X score that the results were declared an unbreakable tie and the both were awarded second place. There were 400 a plenty in the first match and a 400-33X shot by Mike Anti of the Army won the 100-yard match. An astute observer might have noticed that there were only about a half of a dozen 400 posted in the match, a paltry amount when compared to the Dewar. When the Meter match scores went up there were no 400s. The match winner was Wigger with a 399-30X. The honeymoon was over, at least temporarily, for a great many managed to squeak out 400s at 50 yards. The winner was Cory Brunetti's clean with a relatively weak X count of 33. At the end of the day the current champion, Wigger, was still in possession of the title but with a winning aggregate score of 1597-129X, unusually low

for Perry. Brunetti was hotly pursuing the champion; behind by five Xs, as was Jim Miller, eight Xs back.

Barry Smith, an intermediate senior from California, won the second metallic Dewar with a 36X clean. Only three perfect scores came out of the 100-yard match and they had shabby X counts indicating that conditions were deteriorating. Barnhart had 29Xs for the win while Hap Rocketto and Air Force Captain Doug Clark followed him with 26 and 22 respectively. No one went clean at 50 meters but Barnhart again showed how tough he was by coming out on top with a 399-31X. Just like mushrooms after a rainstorm 400s blossomed at 50 yards. Brunetti won with 34Xs while Dave Chesser, of the AMU who eventually came in second, and Barnhart had to go to tie breaking rules as each had 33Xs. Staying at, or near the top paid off for Barnhart as he won the second day with a 1598-121X.

Doug Clark, an Air Force meteorologist who was on the faculty at West Point and also served as the Black Knights rifle coach, came on strong and managed to push Barnhart aside to take home the Hoppe Trophy as the metallic sight champion. His 3193-211X was three points ahead of Barnhart and third place Brunetti. Carolyn Millard-Sparks was the woman's champion, Ron West again won senior honors, and Barry Smith had the intermediate title in his sights.

Team day saw civilians sweep the matches that for some years had been viewed as a private fiefdom by the Army. A Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association team manned by Captain Dave Cramer, Robert Gibilisco, Wes Robinson, and Wesley Schumaker won the American Dewar Match. The Ohio State Rifle and Pistol Association was second and the USAMU "Blue" team was third. In the any sight team

match John Black coached Lones Wigger, Ty Bishop, Brunetti, and Barnhart, the Black Hawk Rifle Club Chiefs, to a one point victory over the Army. By the end of the week the Black Hawk team would be able to boast that they had a total of nine national individual prone championships and three champions.

The fourth day began the any sight championships and Mike Anti's 39 Xs and one ten gave him the Dewar match. Wigger and West were knotted up at 38Xs with Wigger ending up second and West third. NRA Smallbore Committee Chair Edie Reynolds hammered out a 400 with 38Xs to pace the field at 100 yards. Ron Wigger, the Officer in Charge of the All National Guard Rifle Team, cleaned the meter match while Lieutenant Colonel Boyd Goldsby and Connecticut junior Geoffrey Reagan tied with 35Xs each. Boyd got the second place slot and Regan the third after the rulebook had been examined. A couple of intermediate seniors, Barry Smith and Harry Wilcoxson fought it out for the yard match honors with Smith emerging the victor with 40Xs to Wilcoxson's 39. A surprise winner of the daily aggregate was Leo Cebula, an accomplished high power shooter, who had the only 1600.

Fort Benning's Dave Johnson won the final Dewar with a 34X 400. Randle Team veteran Martha Kelley, a Florida based flight attendant, best all in the 100-yard contest. Goldsby and Steven Kern were tied with 400-36Xs in the Meter match. Another study of NRA Smallbore Rule 15.7 by the stat crew awarded the victory to Goldsby. In the last match Paul Villmer, of Illinois, and Tom Jastermsky, of Connecticut, found themselves in the same boat as Goldsby and Kern. Each had shot a 400-38X at 50 yards and the decision went to Villmer. It was not to be Kern's day as far as ties were

concerned, he had one of only two 1600s on the day but Guardsman Tony Leone had the other and it had five more Xs.

The any sight championship went to Goldsby for his 3198-259X. Bobbi Vitito, who had three woman's titles to her credit, gave Goldsby a run for his money with the same score and 229Xs. The silver in any sight was good for the woman's any sight crown. West seemed on autopilot as he steered himself to another victory in the senior class. Wigger easily won the intermediate title.

The national prone title was a nail biter that was only final after all of the Xs had been counted. Cory Brunetti, a Stratford Connecticut PAL junior who seven category titles and All American honors, reached the pinnacle of success by a nine X margin over Doug Clark, 6387-475X to 6387-466X. Barnhart, no slouch, was in third with a 6386-505X. With his phenomenal X count a single point, as it had for so many others in the past, had made all of the difference. Clark was the service champion. Barnhart's year was nearly unparallel. In addition to the bronze medal he had also won junior and collegiate titles in both prone and position, a feat only accomplished once before and that was by Brunetti in 1992. Millard-Sparks was awarded her sixth Remington Trophy and moved her into second place on the all time women's winner's list. Ron West made his fifth trip to the stage as senior champion while Barry Smith snapped Wigger's five year run as intermediate senior. Andre Morrison, of Essex Junction, Vermont, was the intermediate junior champion just as Matthew Rawlings, a young Texan, was the sub junior champ. Fred Scharpenberg bested all those competing in the 6400 any sight championship.

## 1999

Any year that ends in nine is symbolic to the smallbore championship as it records the passage of another decade of competition since the initial matches at Caldwell in 1919. This 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary year would also mark the end of a century in which Lones Wigger was the leading force in US shooting. The position matches, which he so dominated until his retirement, were marked by an event that had not been seen in over 40 years. Outside of Wigger Art Cook was the last person to have back-to-back position wins at Perry, a feat he accomplished in the first two years of position competition, 1957 and 1958. When Troy Bassham was born in June of 1970 Wigger had already won five position titles, a prone championship, and three Olympic medals.

Under a typical summer sky in Northern Ohio All American Eric Uptagrafft, now a sergeant at the AMU, fired a 396-26X with iron sights for the first win of the tournament. Trevor Gathman, like Uptagrafft a former All American and enlisted man at Fort Benning, came within a point of tying the standing record when he peered through his sights and shot a 377-14X. The final match of the day was won by Bassham who out Xed Fred Cole by four to win kneeling. Cole, the seemingly permanent winner of the position senior category at Perry, was not only second to Bassham in score but 46 years his senior in age. In a finish that mirrored the prone championship finish of 1953 when only Xs separated the top three scores. Bassham was hanging on to his title but by the slimmest of margins. His 1145-45X was just a two X lead over, Tim Manges another All American who had enlisted to join the AMU, and Trevor Gathman whose X count was 40. Jean Foster, daughter of Olympian Jack Foster, was the woman

champion with a score of 1142-42X. Fred Cole was half way to his 11<sup>th</sup> senior title in 12 years and Dave Cramer was in position to retain his title.

Major Mike Anti would win the scope prone match with a 398-26X. From then on both the shooting and the temperature became hot. It became apparent that Bassham would not be deterred by the heat and humidity for he won the standing match with a 380-9X, setting a new national championship record. In the day's last match he manufactured a 387-12X to win again. This time he won by a three point margin and none of his enlisted competitors from the day before were in sight. His 1156-38X outdistanced a pair of majors, Steve Goff and Anti.

Two days and two wins gave Bassham a score of 2301-83X and his second position title, as well as the service championship. To mirror his performance Foster swept up both the civilian and woman's titles with a 2286-90X. Cole and Cramer each won both halves of the senior and intermediate senior championship to retain their crowns. Shane Barnhart, who had been the man to beat in both junior and collegiate categories for the past several years continued to steamroll the opposition and took the collegiate title. A pair of young ladies from New Jersey, Nicole Allaire and Hannah Kerr, took home the junior and intermediate junior titles respectively. Kate Benjamin, from Colchester, Vermont, was the sub junior champ.

Things were hot in more ways than one during the prone championships. With a scorching temperature searing enough to bubble up the tar on Lawrence Road the always cool Lones Wigger, Jr. shot a blistering 6398 with 533 Xs to win a record breaking seventh national prone title. Wigger set the tone, and the pace, of the matches on the first day of the metallic sight stage with a perfect 1600-134X. His



nearest challenger was his son, National Guard Major Ron Wigger, who mustered a 1599-122X. Wigger Senior also won the 50-yard match with a 400-38X while Paul Nordquist won the Dewar with a 400-36X. Army Specialist Trevor Gathman, 400-33X, turned in a winning score in the 100-yard match and Norwich University's Geoff Regan who shot a 400-36X won the Meter match.

Carolyn Millard-Sparks won the second day's aggregate with a 1600-125X. Army riflemen captured the first two individual matches on the second day. Captain Dave Johnson and Sergeant Eric Uptagrafft shot 400-34X and 400-29X respectively to win the Dewar and 100-yard matches. National Guard Staff Sergeant Tony Leone and Sparks took the meter and yard matches with a 400-33X and a 400-37X. But, despite dropping two points, the patriarch of the Wigger shooting clan's name again stood at the top of the score board with a two day total of 3198-267X. For a short period it seemed as if Wigger was out of the running. The combination of Wigger's years of experience, rock steady hold, McMillian barreled Anschutz, and Federal Ultra Match ammunition resulted in groups so tight that the scorers actually thought one of his targets was shy a shot. It took a challenge and a reexamination of targets and backers to find the bullet hole. The Hoppe Memorial Trophy, awarded to the metallic sight champion, was again in his possession.

The shooting conditions, although extremely hot and humid, were conducive to good shooting; as attested by the large number of perfect 400s with high X counts shot in all classes and categories. In a prone match, particularly one where almost 300 of the nation's best are in attendance, no lead is a safe lead. After the metallic sight aggregate the competitors would get a short break from individual competition to

contest the various team matches which are fired on the third day of the championships. However, they all knew that over the two days of the any sight aggregate a Pico second of inattention to fundamentals or conditions could spell disaster. Those at the top of the leader board could afford to neither relax nor become complacent during the team day break.

Over the two days of any sight competition National Guard Staff Sergeant Tony Leone would dominate the field. During the metallic sight match he had won the second 50-meter match and was primed for victory. He fired a clean 1600-139X, ten Xs ahead of Wigger, on the first daily any sight aggregate. The individual matches went to some well-known shooters. Paul Benneche shot a 400-37 in the Dewar, Carl Joos, of Champions Shooters Supply captured the 100 yard match with a 400-35X, Millard-Sparks' 400-37X took the meter match while Edwin Borham's near perfect 400-39 was high in the yard match.

The final day was no cooler than the previous four and the quality of the shooting, like the heat and humidity, was not to let up either. John Dunning started the day with a 400-37X in the Dewar, George Williams score of 400-36X at 100 yards showed that there would be no place for errors. Millard-Sparks cleaned the meter match with 38Xs while Ashley Adams closed out the tournament, losing just one X, for a 400-39X at the yard line. Perhaps the heat and humidity helped Leone keep up a full head of steam for he came back on the second day and repeated his near flawless performance, this time with 137 Xs. Leone's two-day total of 3200-277X earned him the U S Cartridge Company Trophy emblematic of the national any sight title.

While Wigger hammered the iron sight aggregate and Leone did likewise to the any sight title Millard-Sparks was quietly shooting plenty of Xs, tens and just four nines. The former national prone champion won the second metallic 50-yard match, the second metallic sight aggregate, and the second 50-meter any sight match. Poetically, after all of those second day victories, she ended the four-day shoot in second place with a 6396-531X, just six Xs ahead of Leone's bronze medal finish. Jim Hinkle was awarded the Sam Bond Trophy as the senior champion. Barnhart took collegiate honors, an accomplishment that culminated a run that began in 1995 when he won the intermediate junior title prone. Each year after that Barnhart won both the position and prone titles as a junior in 1996, 1997, and 1997. In 1998 and 1999 he did the same for the collegiate category.

Two states with great shooting traditions were represented by youth as Mike Beyerle, of Pennsylvania, was crowned junior champion while Kevin Simon, of Connecticut, was the intermediate junior titlelist. Kate Benjamin, the sub junior position champion added the prone title to her list of accomplishments. Guardsman Leone was the service champion, breaking the regular Army's grip on the title. Frank Boyd, an elder statesman of the sport, was declared the winner of the 6400 any sight aggregate.

The tournament, which began in Caldwell, New Jersey as a side show to the National Matches, has survived, grown, and matured with the years. After four score years it is a major event in its own right. Over time many things have changed in the smallbore game but the one thing that has remained the same is the desire of all to shoot the tightest group possible as close to the center of the target as possible. The

target's rings may have changed but it is still round and the center is still in the same place.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **The Wigger Era Closes- Sort Of Again... 2000s**

#### **2000**

The shooting athletes of the United States Army Marksmanship Training Unit dominated the 2000 National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championships. The Three Position matches opened with a traditional Lake Eire wind buffeting the line as the Army's Private Shane Barnhart shot a 394-27X to win the prone match. Staff Sergeant Lance Hopper fought the gusty winds standing and fired a winning score of 366-8X. Michelle Bohren broke the Army's lock on the day with a 374-8X to top the field in kneeling, a score that helped her win the woman's metallic sight title. When the aggregate scores were tallied Hopper was in first place with an 1130-38X, a commanding lead over second place Wesley Robinson's 1110-30, and fellow teammate Captain David Johnson's third place score of 1109-33X.

With the Metallic Sight Championship safely in hand Hopper was in control, even after Steven Kern took the any sight prone match with a 396-26X. During the second day the conditions moderated and Hopper lost no time in taking advantage of the situation by winning both the standing match, with a score of 372-8X, and the kneeling with a 389-19X. Although he was challenged in the any sight aggregate by Barnhart's 1142-42X and Vincent Pistelli, who fired an 1132-32, Hopper's 1150-52X gave him the any sight championship.

Winning both the metallic and any sight championships insured Hopper the Frank Parsons Memorial Trophy as the 2000 National NRA Three Position Rifle Champion with a grand aggregate of 2280-90X. The silver medalist was U.S. Army Captain Dave Johnson with a 2239-39X followed by bronze medal winner Wesley Robinson with a score of 2232-66X. Robinson was also high civilian and was presented the Winchester Trophy in recognition of that honor.

Hopper is no stranger to Camp Perry having previously won the President's Hundred when a member of the AMU's service rifle team. Certainly his experience helped him deal with the winds and the tension of being in contention for a national title

The Beyerle family had a car filled with celebration and trophies during the ride home to Lebanon, Pennsylvania. Jamie Beyerle put together an aggregate score of 2217-60X and in the process earned the woman's title and with it the Mary C. Camp Memorial Trophy, the Cobb Trophy as junior champion, and the Putnam Trophy as intermediate junior champion. Her score of 1111-28 also earned her high iron sights woman honors. Michael Beyerle was the collegiate champion as well as the match's high expert with a score of 2185-54X.

Michelle Bauer earned the Stark Trophy, the sub junior championship trophy, with a score of 2146-35X. Fred Cole, a Camp Perry fixture, was the runaway winner of the Meister Trophy awarded to the senior champion. The retired English teacher has been a consistent winner in this class for as long as most people can remember. This year he put together an iron sight score of 1083-27X and a any sight total of 1113-36X for an aggregate of 2196-63X, a most respectable score for any competitor let alone one who is in his seventh decade.

Howard Moody and Vitalis Septua battled it out for the intermediate senior title with Moody taking the iron sight half with a 1067-23X and Septua's score of 1096-26X besting all comers in the any sight match. Moody's aggregate of 2149-57X gave him the title in the close run race.

The prone championships opened with fine weather and slightly tricky wind conditions that allowed for many perfect scores in individual matches but kept all but one shooter from shooting a 1600. Army National Guard Major Ron Wigger, who has just assumed the rifle coaching duties at West Point, won the opening iron sight Dewar with a 400-36X. Bruce Meredith, who represented the Virgin Islands in the Sydney Olympics, shot a 400-31X in the 100-yard match. Edie Reynolds, NRA Board member and Chairman of the Smallbore Committee, shot a 400-37X to win the Meter match. Captain Mike Anti USA, a member of the 2000 United States Olympic team, cleaned the 50- yard match with 37Xs. At the end of the day Sergeant First Class Tommy Tamas of the AMU had the winning score with a 1599-124X. Tamas, a former National Prone Champion, and Anti were using Perry to keep in trim for the Sydney Games.

The second day of iron sights was much like the first. Billy Grant, of Tennessee Tech, won the Dewar with a 400-34X. Tamas dropped eight Xs for a 400-32X in the 100-yard match while another former prone champion, Cory Brunetti, shot a perfect 400-35X to win the Meter match. The day closed with the 50-yard match, won by Paul Nordquist, a shooter of many years' experience, with a score of 400-37X. As it was with the first day Tamas won with a 1599 but increased his X count to 136. While Tamas took the metallic sight title's Hoppe Trophy with a 6399-260X, Brunetti was just a point behind him with a 6398, and Anti was close on his heels with a 6396. While it always

good to be in front, a one-point lead provided Tamas very little breathing room in the rarefied atmosphere of a national championship race.

Celeste Green, of Lufkin, Texas, was awarded the Peters Cartridge Company Trophy, her 3193-237 making her the woman's metallic sight champion. With a score of 3195-236X former All American Nordquist earned himself a spot on the Roberts and Dewar team as well as the title of metallic sight intermediate senior champion.

Oddly enough, while the race for the metallic sight title attracted much attention, the gallery was carefully watching Joe Barnes who, at 82 years of age, was competing in the 6400 any sight aggregate. Over the course of the first two days Barnes, a former any sight national champion, watched the foxy wind with care and ended up with a perfect 3200. His feat was recognized and warmly applauded by the appreciative gallery.

On team day, in a rare repeat, the 1999 victors, Kate Benjamin and Andrew Morrison, teamed up again as Vermont Platinum and notched their second consecutive Whistler Boy victory. Gary Anderson, Olympic Gold Medalist and Director of Civilian Marksmanship, presented the Whistler Boy awards to Vermont Platinum as well as the silver and bronze medal teams, the Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association of Jose Jay and Beau Goff and the Virginia Junior Team of Kristina Fehlings and Connie Hudson.

The third day of the individual matches began the any sight phase of the tournament. Defending National Prone Champion Lones Wigger started the proceedings with a near perfect 400-38X in the Dewar. Mike Anti began to creep up on the leader board with a 400-36X at 100 yards while Brunetti continued to apply pressure



at the top with a 400-35X in the Meter match. Carl Jooss closed the day, much as Wigger had begun it, with a near perfect score of 400-39X in the 50-yard match. In the end, Anti topped the pack with a 1600-137X for the first day and set the stage for a hard fought finale.

The final day was marked by 400s. Rich Williams captured the Dewar with a 400-38X and Army Captain Dave Johnson's 400-37X was high at 100 yards. Carolyn Millard-Sparks dropped just a single X in the difficult Meter match when she fired a 400-39X. It just seemed that the scores couldn't get any better until J.B. Throne cleaned the very last match of the very last day on the very last relay of the 2000 National Championships. Throne put together two 200-20Xs in the 50-yard match for a Perry rarity, a 400-40X.

When all shots were scored and the challenge period ended the 2000 National Prone Champion was Mike Anti with a 6395-544X. Anti used an Anschutz 2013 with a McMillan short barrel, Lapua ammunition, a Leupold scope and factory sights to win his first Critchfield Trophy and the any sight title with a 3199-276X. The contest was a tight one as Anti edged out former national champions Brunetti and Tamas by a paper-thin margin. Brunetti, 6395-506X, who won the William P. Schweitzer Trophy, emblematic of the civilian championship, was only 38Xs behind Anti. Tamas, 6394-532X, was just a point and 12 Xs behind the winner. Anti and Tamas finished off Perry in high style and the crowd assembled in the Hough Theater sent them off amid cheers and well wishes hoping that Camp Perry success would presage just as triumphant a performance in Sydney.

Carolyn Millard-Sparks, 6387-507X, repeated as the high woman, and took home another Remington Trophy plaque to add to her already crowded mantle. The Sam Bond Trophy went to winning senior Jim Hinkle who fired a score of 6382-437X. As usual Lones Wigger did not go home empty handed. His score of 6388-520X earned him the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy as intermediate senior champion.

Norwich University's Geoff Regan took home the collegiate championship and with it the Austin trophy with a score of 6379-429X. Junior Celeste Green's score of 6386-482X garnered her the Whittington Trophy, the Stark Trophy, and high expert honors. A 6346-362X by Sub junior and marksman class winner Catherine Leach brought her to the stage to collect the Joseph P. Glabb Trophy.

As one scanned the line it was hard not to be reminded that it was an Olympic year. Scattered throughout the firing line, shooting or officiating, were quite a number of past and current Olympians. Stretching back over a half century, from the first post World War II Olympic games in London in 1948 through the upcoming 2000 Olympiad, were Art Jackson, Lones Wigger, Jim Hill, Gary Anderson, Bruce Meredith, Tom Tamas, and Mike Anti. Eighty-two year Jackson, who fired his first smallbore match at Camp Perry in 1940, took a break from shooting to wish Tamas and Anti well. Jackson competed at the last Olympics held in Australia in 1956 while the two AMU shooters will make their Olympic debut down under this fall. Greg Tomsen, of the National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit, was shooting the custom stocked Winchester 52 action that his father Walter had used to win the silver medal in the English Match at the 1948 London Olympics. There was symmetry in this meeting of past and present Olympians,

just as there is each year as the torch of the Camp Perry experience is passed from veteran shooters to an enthusiastic band of new comers.

## **2001**

The usually well-oiled squadding procedures encountered a rare rust spot and the start of the position matches were delayed about a half of an hour until everyone was assured a point. The delay did not affect Sergeant Tim Manges, of the Army Marksmanship Unit, who was the first shooter to notch a victory when he won the prone stage of the metallic sight match with a 395-29X. The second stage of the match, 40 shots standing, was won with a near record-breaking score of 377-10X. Seventeen-year old Jamie Beyerle, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania was defending her Women's Three Position title in fine style, with an eye towards winning the overall title. After the shooters had collapsed their standing shooting stands and pulled out their kneeling rolls for the final stage of the day the wind had begun to pick up, a mixed blessing as it gave some relief to the 90 degree heat but began to buffet the shooters about. Troy Bassham seemed unaffected by the change in conditions and notched up a 378-11X in the sometimes-painful position. His score outdistanced his nearest rival by the huge margin of 15 points giving him the push he needed to capture the metallic sight title.

At the end of the first half of the tournament Bassham held a commanding lead of 21 points over the field. His closest competition came from former Army teammates Manges and Specialist Trevor Gathman who both shot a score nicknamed "the picket fence," an 1111. Had the pair done this in Europe local tradition would have demanded that they buy a round for the house! Never was the old real estate maxim about location being everything more true than for these two young soldiers whose wallets

might not have been able to survive standing drinks for the other 318 competitors. The intermediate senior champion of 1995, John McClay, of Redford Michigan, won the metallic sight senior championship while Jay Sonneborn earned Intermediate Senior honors. Beyerle captured women honors.

On the second day the scopes came out and scores showed it. Michigan shooter Steven Kern came out of the gate fast with a 398-27X winning score in the prone stage. Ominously Bassham's name did not appear in the money in this match while US Army Major Mike Anti, an Olympian who set the Three Position National Championship record of 2303-91X in 1994, topped the service masters with a 394-25X. Anti continued to make a strong play for the lead by winning the standing match with a new national championship record of 381-10X. Bassham fired a solid 366 but was seeing his lead slowly erode.

The day ended with a kneeling match victory for Vincent Pestilli with a 388-17X. When the scores were totaled Anti came out on top for the day, just one point short of the any sight record of 1157. His 1156-50X was ten points ahead of the New Jersey's Hannah Kerr who, as a junior and an expert, found herself in very heady company. Wes Robinson of West Lake, Ohio rounded out the top three with an 1138-37X. Bassham finished a disappointing 21 points behind Anti with an 1135.

When all of the statistical work had been completed Anti's Herculean effort with the scope, which gave him service honors, was just not enough to overcome the solid lead established by Bassham in the metallic sight match. Despite the fact he was unable to dedicate very much time to actually do any life fire training, just 200 rounds, the Frank Parson's Trophy went to Bassham for the third time in four years for his 2267-

81X. The quiet presence and influence of his father Lanny Bassham, Olympic gold medalist and mental management guru, may have had something to do with the younger Bassham's intense concentration.

This year Bassham also added the Winchester Trophy presented to the civilian champion to his trophy cabinet. Bassham's third position championship places him second on the all time leader board in national position titles, just 18 championships behind Lones Wigger, Jr. However, he is both young and talented with a bright future so we shall keep our eye on him for the next couple of decades. Anti was the silver medalist with a 2265-84X and Wes Robinson's 2244-62X gave him the right to stand on the third step of the winner's podium.

Jamie Beyerle, the woman metallic sight champion, was awarded the Mary Camp Trophy for her 2241-64X efforts that topped the distaff competitor list. Former All National Guard Team member Kay Anderson was the high senior and recipient of the Meister Trophy. Jay Sonneborn, the 2001 Dewar Team Captain, showed that he was, if nothing else, a man of many talents. He won the Intermediate any sight sub-aggregate on his way to the Intermediate Senior title and the RWS Trophy. Tennessee Tech's Billy Grant, of Buffalo Mills, Pennsylvania, will wear the collegiate crown for the next year. Hannah Kerr was the high woman with any sights while Charles Daniels took the any sight Intermediate Senior title.

An interesting sidelight to the position matches was the awarding of two new trophies. Bill Krilling, the long time coach of the Army team, retired last winter after a lifetime of service to country and shooting as both soldier and civilian. In honor of the man who was the 1965 national prone champion and the first to fire a perfect 3200

across the Critchfield Course of fire, friends presented to the National Rifle Association a fine bronze sculpture to be awarded annually, in his name, to the winner of the three position metallic sight championship. It was a proud moment for both when Troy Bassham accepted the trophy from the hands of the great coach himself.

One of the few riflemen ever to win both the smallbore position title, indoors and out, as well as the national high power crown was CWO4 D.I. Boyd II, USMC. Like Krilling, Boyd spent his life serving country and shooting. Sadly Boyd lost a long battle to cancer in May of 2000. In his honor the Black Hawk Rifle Club raised the funds necessary to endow a trophy in his name to be awarded to the winner of the any sight position championship. In a pleasant twist of fate Mike Anti was the first recipient of the Boyd Trophy. As a nine-year old Anti was just beginning to exhibit some shooting talent when his father Ray, a distinguished shooter in his own right, began casting about for a program that would help develop his son's skill. He turned for advice to a teammate on the Marine Corps Rifle Team, one David Ingram Boyd II, who directed Mike to a junior program that gave him the strong competitive atmosphere necessary for the development of a world-class shooter.

Team day opened with no break in the heat that dogged the first two days. The temperature, on this the third day of the tournament, was made a little more unbearable by the fact that some boats wandered into the impact area and caused several delays. There are few things more uncomfortable and frustrating than being forced to stay wrapped in a sweatshirt and leather shooting coat on a hot humid day when you want to get on with a match. It did not seem to distract the Army who totally dominated the team matches. Anti, Gathman, Manges, and 2000 three position champions Lance

Hopper put together a 2292-85X with metallic sights to hold off the 2272- 68X effort of the Everett Sportsman's Club team of Robinson, Grant, Pestilli, and Bassham. In third place, with a 2254-72X was the Palmyra Wrecking Crew. This team of juniors was captained by Josh Miller and made up of Jamie Beyerle, Mike Beyerle, Justin Sparks, and Vicki Goss. The any sight team championship was a carbon copy of the metallic. The Army combined for a 2272-65X; Everett Sportsmen had a 2252-67X, while the Palmyra Wrecking Crew put up a 2208-62X.

The prone matches got off to a hot start, Dewar scores and temperatures at near record levels. Eitan Barazani carded a 400-36X in the opening metallic sight Dewar match. It looked as if the weather might not play too great a role in the proceedings. With the targets left at the 100-yard stage of the Dewar for the 100-yard match the extent of the wind and mirage's effect on the shooting became clear. There was just a single 400 fired out of the 291 competitors on the line. Danny Wigger kept all 40 shots in the ten ring with a further 22 closer to the center in the X. The temperature was rising in the bright sun and a fast wind from two o'clock combined with heavy humidity made for a murky mirage that sometimes made it difficult to make out shot holes.

The Meter match is tricky in best of times, there seems to be a psychological issue that sometimes raises its head when shooting at this small target that is placed just a little further out than the 50-yard target. Kerry Spurgin, a member of the NRA Smallbore Committee, locked this match up with a 400-31X; one of only two cleans shot on the entire line. The first day ended with Jeff Doerschler, of Connecticut, pounding 37 shots into the X ring at 50 yards. As expected the yard match, with the biggest target at the shortest distance, had a great many people clean it. At the end of the day the

Army's SP4 Trevor Gathman was in the lead with a 1597-117X with Ken Benyo and Carolyn Millard-Sparks just a point and a few Xs behind. The scores began a steady decline from there and with a 1589 taking some money in the Master class it was clear that the conditions were taking their toll. It was hot, the temperature was tickling the triple digits, and the humidity was not far behind.

The second day of the metallic sight aggregate opened much the same as day one in all respects. The conditions had not changed and the scores were about the same. Benyo won the Dewar with a 400-33X. The old warhorse, Lones Wigger, had a close battle with the National Guard's MSG Bill Lange for the top spot in the 100-yard match. Wigger ended up on top with a 400-30X, besting Lange by a single X

The Meter match did some serious damage to the leader board. Junior Celeste Green, of Lufkin, Texas, and Major Mike Anti of the Army went to wire each firing a 399-29X with Green Creedmooring Anti for the win. Just as it was on the first day there were scads of 400s shot at 50 yards, but Vincent Pistelli's 36 Xs saw him to victory. After the trying day the scores were added and, just like the Meter match, Green topped the field with a 1597-117X, a scant X ahead of Anti.

Shooting along with the iron sight shooters was a group of competitors entered in the 6400 any sight aggregate. This folks were hard holders such as Carl Jooss and Joe Barnes. Barnes had fired a 3200 during the first two days with scope in last year, the only person to shoot a 3200 in 2000. They provided a yardstick by which to measure the metallic sight scores. On the whole the best of the scope shooters mirrored those of the iron sight competitors. Anti earned the Hoppe Trophy for winning the metallic sight aggregate with a score of 3192-243X. Benyo and Gathman were right behind him with



3191s. Jooss lead the scope shooters with a 3190. The top ten scores showed a spread of seven points, from Anti's 3192 to Wigger's 3185. Conditions were simply tougher then they looked. The temperature was still hot and water consumption was high. Everyone took a breather and prepared for the team events on Wednesday, a day that promised a break in the heat and humidity. A frontal passage was predicted and along with that came the high probability of some rain showers in the afternoon.

On team day there occurred a match of historical significance, the golden anniversary of The Randle Trophy International Women's Team Match. Teams of ten women from each of the various English-speaking nations, shooting the Dewar Course on US targets, vie for the coveted Randle Trophy. It is one of the most prestigious women's prone shooting events in the world. Team Captain Dana Knezevich, who coincidentally designed the 2001 Camp Perry logo, and Coach Martha Kelley had the honor of being the team officials for a match that began when Murial Bryant of England and Eleanor Dunn of the United States conceived of the idea in late 1951. NRA President Thurman Randle thought so much of the idea that he endowed a huge sterling silver loving cup as the prize. In 1952, the last time the United States Smallbore Rifle Prone Championship was contested at any location other than Camp Perry, the US team fired the first Randle at Jacksonville, Florida.

Then United States has held a tight grip on the trophy, rarely relinquishing it to either Great Britain, or one more rare occasion, to South Africa. It was hoped that the anniversary year would follow that course. Conditions had briefly improved after the Dewar but soon continued to deteriorate. The air was so clear as to make it difficult for the coaches to pick up the *Aeolian* whims. In the end the US team took a horrendous

beating at long range, dropping 14 points. However, Celeste Green, a card carrying Expert junior from Lufkin, Texas, held hard and in the end carded a 200-18X at 100 yards. When that was added to her perfect 200-20X at fifty yards she found herself the proud owner of both the Eleanor Dunn Trophy and the Randle Trophy individual record of 400-38X, tying the scores fired by Margaret Murdock in 1969 and Schuyler Helbing in 1973.

Sitting in the gallery during the Randle was a distinguished quartet of ladies. Mary Cook, Irene Read, Marianne Driver, and Veronica Tidmarsh have witnessed, shot, been alternates, coached, and captained Randle Teams on both sides of the Atlantic since the match first began. Cook is one of just a few husband and wife teams that have captained both the Randle and the Dewar. Her husband, Art, is a member of the International Shooters' Hall of Fame. Read was the official witness to both the Randle and the Dewar. Driver, who is considered the *Grande Dame* of the Randle, is the mother of two other Randle legends-Lenore Lemanski and Bobbi Vitito. She was in Jacksonville in 1952 and made the team at Perry in 1953. Since then she and her two daughters have accumulated an astonishing 63 Randle appearances between them. Tidmarsh, who has served as the official for many Randles-including the record setting match in 1975 when the US fired a perfect 4000-303X, came over on a sentimental journey to rekindle old acquaintances.

As targets were being prepared for the any sight team match tiny raindrops began to dapple the shooting mats. The rain slowly increased to storm intensity as the range commands began. Looking down range the sky changed from leaden to black as the storm swept in towards the line. In short order vision was obscured by darkness

and rain. A few minutes into the string the hard rain became a torrent as if one were lying under the stream of a fire hose, and the targets, illuminated by the lightning, were fast becoming the basic ingredient for *papier mâché*.

Suddenly lightning bolts flashed and thunder crashed over the range, just as quickly the PA crackled and ordered all of the shooters from the line. There was a school of thought that thanked the officials for saving them from rain and lightning when, in fact the more pragmatic of us knew that the match was being called because the targets would be so sodden as to be unscorable. The rain fell such ferocity that when cleaning and drying our rifles later shooters found rainwater inside of the bolts.

The first day of any sights dawned fair, dry, and windy. Although the wind made everyone feel as if the temperature had dropped it hadn't changed that much. The line responded to the moderating conditions and scopes on their rifles by opening the Dewar with a good deal more 400s than shot in the metallic sight aggregate. Melvin Flint, of Yucca valley, California, edged out Florida's Mark Marinoff and New York junior Jared Van Name by one X with a 400-33X to the 32X possibles the other shot. With the 100-yard match scores opened up a bit, but it still took a perfect score with 33Xs for Steve Goff to win. The Meter match seems to be a psychological event at times and Lawrence Kent, Cindy, Estep and Goff finished one, two three, by Xs, 33, 32, and 31 respectively. The day ended with Steve Kern winning the 50-yard match with a 400-34X. Prophetically Goff won the daily aggregate with a 1598-115X. He led Kent and Baron Whatley by a point and a few Xs and was nibbling away at Anti's lead.

Carl Joos won the first match with a 400-31X. Goff, first Service Master with a clean score but a weak X count of 28, was not giving ground. Not to be denied a

chance to see his name at the top of a match bulletin was Lones Wigger. He and Pennsylvania's Charlie Sentner both notched up a scores of 400-30X at 100 yards, with the tiebreaker rule giving the match to the wily Wigger. Marinoff finished in third place with an X count of 22 indicating that the conditions were worsening. Tor Thilert bested the field in the 50 Meter match with a 400-31X. The 50-yard match saw the second tie for match winner when Marinoff and Kern each cleaned the match with 35 center shots. In the end Marinoff's better second card gave him the victory. However, Kern had a stronger performance over all and won the daily aggregate with a 1595-117X. Hot on his heels was Wigger with a 1595-116X and Sentner's 1595-115X.

Once the scores from the two days of any sight competition were totaled the new national champions would be known. Kern fired a 3190-235X, a testament to his skill in the deceptive conditions, to earn the US Cartridge Company Trophy. Wigger followed him by ten Xs, and in third place was Goff with a 3189-222X. Estep's score of 3187-217X outdistanced all other women for the Western Cartridge Company Trophy.

In the end it would be Goff, Anti, Carolyn Millard-Sparks battling it out to almost the last shot to determine the national prone champion. Goff and Anti, both national position champs, were separated by just one point and three Xs over the four days with the Critchfield Trophy and the service championship going to Goff's 6378-445X. It was a valedictory victory for him as he was scheduled to return to Fort Benning to participate in one more match and then his retirement ceremony. Goff was one of the few shooters to have earned all five Distinguished badges as well to wear both the national outdoor crown in both prone and position.

Carolyn Millard-Sparks was in third with a 6375-466X earning the former national prone champion both the William Schweitzer Trophy as civilian champion as well as the Remington Trophy as national women champion. Millard Sparks was battling more than conditions in her pursuit of her second national prone title. Her father and coach, Bill Millard, had religiously accompanied her to Perry for more years than anyone can remember. Earlier this year Bill fell seriously ill yet still insisted on making the long journey from Atlanta to support his daughter. Upon arriving at Perry he took a turn for the worse and was admitted to the hospital. During the week Carolyn spent every moment she was not shooting at her father's bedside. She arrived at the range just prior to the match and left as soon as her last relay finished. Her friends quietly supported her, even to the extent of checking her scores and challenging them if necessary. Her bronze medal finish is a tribute to both Carolyn and Bill's spirit. Sadly, Bill, a gracious friend to all shooters, be they champion or tyro, passed away just a few weeks after returning home from Perry.

Wigger, just eleven Xs behind Millard Sparks, received the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy as intermediate senior champion for the last time. The living legend turned 60 a few weeks after Perry and would no longer be eligible to compete as an intermediate senior. The Sam Bond Trophy, emblematic of the senior championship, was firmly in the grip of Joe Steffy.

Mike Beyerle became the collegiate champion and was presented the Austin Trophy. Junior champion Celeste Greene came to the stage to collect the Whittington Trophy just as intermediate junior William Butler and sub junior Jillian Szymonifka

followed her to pick up the Stark Prone Trophy and the Joseph P. Glabb Memorial Trophy.

After the last trophy was presented and the stage cleared of winners Hough Auditorium emptied into the dark summer night. Amid handshakes, hugs, and waves the smallbore competitors bid each other goodbye as they prepared for the trip home. Some would meet again in a matter of weeks at local matches or, for the more fortunate, at Bisley where the Roberts Team and the Randle Goodwill team would win matches on foreign soil. For the rest of us the memories of the experiences and friends of Camp Perry would be carefully stored away in anticipation of the long winter to come. On dark gray days they would be carefully be taken out and unwrapped to brighten the days during the winter season when Perry only exists in anticipation or memory.

## **2002**

The Three Position Championship is, fittingly, three days long. The first two days are devoted to the individual matches while the last is team day. Each day of individual competition is 120 record shots, 40 each in prone, standing, and kneeling at a 10.4 millimeter ten ring, a circle about half the size of a dime. On the first day the course is fired with iron sights and either irons or a scope are allowed on the second.

The first day began overcast, hot, and humid. There was hardly a hint of breeze to move. Specialist Trevor Gathman of the Army won the prone match with a 397-27X, The standing winner was collegiate shooter Billy Grant's magnificent 375-10X, and Jeff Doerschler took kneeling with a 385-19X that would mark the beginning of an outstanding 24 hours for the PhD from Connecticut. The iron sight champion was junior Jaime Beyerle who earned the Bill Krilling Trophy with a score of 1144-41X. The

appearance of a junior in the lead after iron sights would prove prophetic for the prone matches. In almost a virtual tie with her, but in second and third place never-the-less, were Army teammates Gathman, 1143-45X, and Specialist Shane Barnhart, 1143-41X. Fred Cole continued his annual dominance of the senior class with a 1089-29X while intermediate senior Charlie Daniels, who had won the any sight intermediate title in 2001, took the category.

The any sight matches made Jeff Doerschler's day. Starting with the kneeling match in the iron sight aggregate he won four consecutive fired matches. In virtually unheard of clean sweep of the any sight aggregate he took prone with a 398-25X, standing with a 377-10X, and kneeling with a 386-19X. In the process he surpassed Ken Johnson's old National Championship Any Sight record of 1157-49X with an 1161-54X. His feat was one that even Wigger rarely accomplished. Barnhart was in second place with an 1147-42x while former position and prone national champion Steve Goff carded an 1142-45X for third. Hannah Kerr was high woman and Cole was, as usual, high senior. Jay Sonneborn, made a bid to defend his intermediate senior crown by winning the any sight aggregate.

Doerschler's virtuoso performance, shooting a 2285-95X, vaulted him into second place in the grand aggregate and possession of the Winchester Trophy. He was just five points behind the 2002 National and Service Champion Shane Barnhart, who won both the Parsons and D.I. Boyd Trophy with a score of 2290-83X. Barnhart's victory was made all the more impressive by the fact that he shot the entire match with iron sights

Jamie Beyerle, of the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, earned the bronze position medal, the Camp Trophy as women's champion, and the Cobb Trophy for junior honors with 2279-76X. She was the first woman to place in the top three in position since Kirsten Pasch placed in third 1989.

Fred Cole's lifetime accomplishments in the Intermediate Senior and Senior categories is equal to Wigger's in the open class. Cole, at the tender age of 80, took home the Meister Trophy as high senior. The win gave him his 18<sup>th</sup> national outdoor title since 1977. Hap Rocketto, despite the fact that he was second intermediate senior in five of the six fired matches, and both of the sub-aggregates, was second to none in the grand aggregate and happily took home the RWS Trophy. He taught all the lesson of consistency of performance.

Young Tom Santelli of Washington, Pennsylvania, learned that he was the new sub junior champion and would take possession of the Stark Trophy with his score of 2120-38X. Intermediate Junior champion Joshua Peters earned the Putnam Trophy with a score of 2214-63X while All American Honorable Mention Billy Grant, of Tennessee Tech, topped the collegiate set with a score of 2248-69X.

On team day the wind rose and the Army Team, perennial winners, was facing a strong challenge from a determined pair of teams from Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Gold and the Palmyra Wrecking Crew II had pulled out all stops to dethrone the reigning champs. In the first of the two contests the Army soundly thrashed the upstarts for possession of the Hercules Trophy. Under the guidance of team captain Karyn Manges shooters Barnhart, Gathman, Tim Manges, and Hattie Ponti put together an excellent score of 2282-86X leaving Pennsylvania in



the dust by 20 points and 20 Xs. The Palmyra Wrecking Crew II mustered a 2227-62X for third.

As the conditions grew windier, the any sight Caswell Trophy Match began. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Gold Team of Vincent Pestilli, Wes Robinson, Jamie Beyerle, and Billy Grant under coach Diana Emerick broke the Army's long time stranglehold on national titles in no uncertain terms. The Keystone State shooters put together a 2262-79X to crush the Army. Conditions had deteriorated severely and with scopes they were only just able to duplicate their iron sight score but it was enough to make them the first civilian team to win the match since 1985. The Fort Benning based Army suffered an unusual collapse and had to settle for second, shooting an any sight score that was 60 points below their match winning iron sight total. The Palmyra Wrecking Crew II also fell victim to the wind shooting but held on to third place.

As prone practice began after the end of the position team matches huge dust devils swirled out of the north reminding one of the cyclone scene from *The Wizard of Oz*. Certainly not as intense as the 1998 tornado these winds were never the less strong enough to cause the evacuation of the range, canceling the second half of the practice session, and bringing many a competitor's canvas shelter to the ground. This would become the *leit motif* of the prone championship.

The most significant damage was the toppling of the firing line awning. That evening, as people gathered for the position awards ceremony, the covering lay useless; like a gigantic molted snakeskin lying across the length of the firing line. The worn and torn canvas was rolled up and carried away, as if by elves sliding down on moonbeams, sometime between the end of the awards ceremony and dawn. For the

next five days the prone community would shoot out in the open for the first time in 18 years. In what would become billed as “The Nostalgia Prone Championships”, the competitors would battle sun, rain and, heavy buffeting winds in a setting that only a few of the gray beards on the line could remember.

The regular flow of the prone day starts with the Dewar Match, 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 at 100, a forty shot 100 yard match, which is followed by a 400 point match fired at 50 meters, and closes with the targets a mere 50 yards away for a final 40 shots which are all totaled for an unfired 1600 point daily aggregate. Like position the first half requires metallic sights, the final two days allow for any sights, while the middle day is set aside for team events.

Bright sun, high heat, and a wicked wind from two o'clock welcomed the competitors for the first match. The stiff wind brought to mind an anecdote that dates back to the 1930s. A young highpower shooter came up to the firing point to prepare as the previous tenant, a Marine, was policing up his brass. After looking at the wind flags for a bit he inquired of the Leatherneck in a squeaky voice, “Sarge, how much wind should I take?” Slinging his Springfield over his shoulder the old timer shifted the wad of tobacco that filled out his cheek and said, “Take all you want kid, there’s plenty there.”

Corey Brunetti, the 1998 prone champion, opened the ball by winning the Dewar with a perfect 400 and 28Xs, one of only three fired. Clean scores are expected for match wins; however, the small number of perfect scores and the accompanying low X counts was a tip off to the trying conditions.

Marcus Raab topped the field in the 100-yard match with a 399-21X indicating that the wind grew no less tricky as the day wore on. The targets were moved in for the 50-meter match but things were no easier on the shooters. Of the more than 300 shooters only Vincent Pestilli managed a perfect score. With the targets at the shortest range, 50 yards, 400s appeared in abundance with Barnhart's near perfect 400-39X leading the pack.

It was a tough day, made all the worse by a 20-minute cessation of fire in the middle of a relay while a jet-ski was chased from the shallow waters adjacent to the range. Only six scores exceeded 1590 and the high score, a 1594-94X, did not belong to any well-known hard holder but to a personable and modest Expert, Joshua Albright. The tall, handsome, and intelligent high school junior competes for the Stratford Connecticut Police Athletic League Junior Rifle Club.

Day two proved to be no easier than day one. Expert Jim Schwartz was one of only three who cleaned the Dewar, his 29Xs gave him the win over the 330 entries. Emily Caruso, a Resident Athlete at the Olympic Training Center, shot the only 400 in the 100-yard match. At 50 meters conditions were no kinder, only Barnhart managed to keep all 40 shots inside of the ten ring for a hard earned win. Edie Reynolds, Chair of the NRA Smallbore Committee, landed in the winner's circle when she fired a 400-31X, one of only a dozen or so that were squeezed out of the whipping winds. Jim Miller, a retired teacher from Onarga, Illinois, won the second day with a 1595-114X.

As the second stage of the second relay's Meter Match got under way a lightning storm sparked an evacuation of the range. With partially shot targets whipping around in the wind and rain, the shooters took shelter. Before the storm passed several were

blown from the frames before the line was called back. Match Director Harris correctly called a rare smallbore range alibi, new targets were hung, and the match was completed.

By coincidence this year was the tenth anniversary of a similar incident. There was confusion after a rainstorm in 1992 and several competitors, including Wigger, hung the wrong target for Match 54, at that time the first any sight meter match. Those that hung the wrong target lost 200 points. Since then many shooters proudly wear T Shirts that proclaimed "I Beat Wig in Match 54." With a new computer program Match 54 passed into history, much to Wigger's relief. Carolyn Sparks, in the spirit of Match 54, grabbed a rolled up target from her kit and went down range to hang it at 100 yards. After clipping it in place she began to walk back to the line when a ripple of laughter erupted around her. Always willing to share in a good joke Carolyn turned to a friend and asked what was so funny. A hand casually waved in the direction of her target frame brought her up short. The revelation that she had hung a 50-meter target at 100 yards narrowly averted a catastrophe, although not an appropriate amount of well deserved good natured abuse.

The first half of the championships came to an end and the metallic sight honors had been decided. The Good Book says that, "a little child shall lead them" and just as it was true in position when junior Jamie Beyerle led at the end of iron sights, so would it be in prone. The new Prone Metallic Sight Champion, junior Josh Albright, earned the Hoppe Memorial Trophy with a score of 3183-191Xs. Trailing him was Barnhart's 3180-225X and seven time prone champion Lones Wigger with a 3180-210X. The young lad

was in heady company but remained his modest self. Carolyn Sparks was high woman, within striking distance at 3178-179X.

Over the winter the Stratford Connecticut Police Athletic Rifle Club and the Bell City Rifle Club of Southington, Connecticut had endowed a trophy in honor of the late Walt Tomsen. Tomsen, a lovable curmudgeon of the first water, was the silver medalist in the English Match at the 1948 Olympics and a member of many Dewar Teams and a Pershing Team veteran. During the winter a club member was asked to build two bases for some trophies. Not asking why, just generously donating his time and wood from an old stock blank found laying in his father's workshop, the member worked away.

It wasn't until the member in question, Walt's son Greg, followed the directions on page three of the National Match program to make himself, "knowledgeable of all rules and regulations and contents of this program" that he discovered a new trophy, the Walter S. Tomsen Trophy, was to be awarded to the high senior in the metallic sight aggregate. Fortune would see the trophy awarded to Wigger, who was also the first person to win the Black Hawk Trophy awarded to intermediate seniors

Team Day offered no surcease from the awful winds of the previous days. Before the order to commence fire was even given to start the Dewar the line was made safe as a pair of Bald Eagles was seen strutting around some 600 yards down range. Scopes were quickly turned and refocused as we were treated to a regal view that was worth the delay. When it became apparent that the birds had settled in for the long haul, a truck was sent out to scare them off. After a lot of honking, hollering, and arm waving, they dutifully took off, circled, and perversely returned. The truck returned and tried again to scare them off with the same results. A car was sent out in the hopes that

its horn would be more shrill. As the auto proceeded out we watched through our scopes as the driver of the truck hopped out, donned rubber gloves and hoisted a large disemboweled ground hog into the pick-up's bed

The convoy began its journey back and then stopped. Another vehicle was sent out to investigate and soon a tractor appeared heading downrange toward the trio of vehicles. It seems the car had become mired in a hole and required a tow.

. This year commemorative pins were presented to the coaches. The pins were a cooperative effort of the NRA and the newly organized Dewar Shooters Association, organized by Dewar veteran Jim Miller, the new organization is dedicated to the enhancement of the Dewar Match.

The Randle Team was up next and the gallery was filled with enthusiastic Randle Alumnae representing every decade since the match was first shot in 1952. Later that evening there would be a special dinner, organized by Lenore Lemanski, which would honor Randle Ladies past and present

Winning the iron sight match and The American Dewar Course Trophy was the Army Team coached by Karyn Manges. Barnhart, Gathman, Tim Manges, and Hattie Ponti put together a 1527-49X to outpace the Black Hawk Chiefs by two points and two Xs, leaving the Florida Gold shooters in third place with a 1512-46X. The tables were turned in the Officer's Reserve Trophy match where John Reynolds coached the Black Hawk Chiefs, Goff, Boyd Goldsby, Brunetti, and Wigger to the win with a score of 1544-63X. The team made up of three former national prone champions outdistanced the second place Army by 20 points and the third place Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Gold Team by 22 points.

With a three point lead going into the second half, Albright stayed with his iron sights while the rest at the top switched to scopes. Conditions had not abated and the scope shooters were going to have a definite advantage; they would be able to see condition changes immediately and be able to shade with impunity. Steve Kern and Paul Nordquist both cleaned the Dewar with 35Xs with Kern Creedmooring for the win. Wigger popped into the win column for the first time with a 400-31X in the 100-yard match while Brunetti grabbed the meter match with a 400-33X. The day ended in a more traditional Perry style as Shawn McDonnell won the yard match with a 400-38X, leading over 70 other 400s! In the end the wily Wigger emerged victorious with a 1599-128X. When there are no 1600s at a match with over 300 competitors it is safe to conclude that conditions are tough.

After a week of wild winds the last day of the match began as a scope shooter's delight; no wind to speak off and comfortable temperatures. The first relay took quick advantage of the situation with Greg Tomsen racking up a 400-37X in the Dewar. The first 46 masters also had 400s with an additional 31 being shot by the other classes. It was going to be a hard fought day if the first match was any indication. Bruce Buell, of Orange Park, Florida put 38 shots in the X ring on his way to a 400 victory in the 100-yard match that saw half of the master shoot perfect scores, needing at least 33Xs to be in the money.

While all this fancy shooting was going on off to the west there was an ominous build up of black clouds lit internally by lightning. For the fifth time in six days the shooters were called from the line and ordered to evacuate in anticipation of a severe storm. At this point frustration was rising and many were losing interest and simply

hoped the matches would be cancelled. Others agreed but only because they were in the lead. For an hour and a half the competitors milled around in the parking lot awaiting clearance to return. The storm clouds rolled on by without so much as a raindrop or lightning bolt coming close to the range. It is better to be safe than sorry. In response to the delay the Awards Ceremony was moved back 30 minutes, as the last relay was not expected to complete firing until about 6:30 PM.

The competition resumed with the meter match won by John Reynolds' 400-35X, one of five such scores shot by himself, Steve Kern, J.M. O'Connor, Jim Miller, and Charlie Sentner. The better weather was making for smaller groups and the scorers had to work a lot harder on the last day than they had the first four. The day closed with Boyd Goldsby's 400-38X in the yard match. Daily aggregate scores were quickly tallied and the first 1600s of the week appeared. Kern edged out Barnhart, 1600-137X to 1600-136X, for first place for the day. Reynolds' 134Xs was good for third place.

Wigger pulled off a first of sorts when he became the any sight senior champion and was awarded the new Robert H. Plimpton Trophy to add to the new Tomsen Trophy he had won as senior metallic sight champion. The Black Hawk Rifle Club, in honor of Bob Plimpton who has done much to promote smallbore prone shooting, donated the Plimpton Trophy whose base was the second of the two built by Tomsen. Edie Reynolds, Bob Plimpton's daughter, was the recipient of the Western Cartridge Company Trophy as high woman.

Master of Ceremonies George Harris intoned his traditional line, "The Challenge period has ended" and the award winners were called up to be recognized. Sub-Junior Champion Jake Marasco, of Easton, Connecticut was presented the Joseph P. Glabb



Memorial Trophy while Daniel Ault, of Everett, Pennsylvania, picked up both the Whittington and Stark Trophies as junior and intermediate junior champion. The Austin Trophy, emblematic of the collegiate champion went to Lukas R. Bastur of Columbus, Georgia. Carolyn Sparks, who has dominated the distaff side like no other in recent years, received her seventh Remington Trophy as woman champion.

In a particularly pleasing happenstance Greg Tomsen won the Intermediate Senior title and the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy that goes with it. Tomsen and Rocketto, the intermediate senior position champion, were born a few hours apart in the same hospital in Brooklyn, New York, yet did not meet until the early 1970s when Rocketto recruited Tomsen into the Connecticut National Guard's shooting program. They spent almost 20 years together on both the Connecticut and All Guard Rifle Teams. With all the shooting they had been through together it seems fitting and proper that they should double up on the intermediate championship awards the first year they were eligible.

At last the awards podium was brought out and the top three places awarded. Daniel Ault was called to the third step, a junior had earned the bronze in position, and so it would be in prone. Barnhart, the service champion, also won the silver medal. Had he had but a single point more he would have won and doubled up as champion in both disciplines in one year. In first place was the only person who has ever accomplished the feat that Barnhart so narrowly missed. For a record eighth national prone title, the winner of the Sam Bond Trophy as senior champion, the William P. Schweitzer Trophy as civilian champion, and the Critchfield Trophy as national champion, was none other than Lones Wigger. Wigger narrowly edged out Barnhart

6377-468X to 6376-480X while Ault pounded out a 6373-434X. In winning prone Wigger was protecting one of his places in shooting history for had Barnhart picked up an extra point he would have become the second rifleman to capture both the position and prone title in the same year, a feat only accomplished twice before and only by Wigger. However he established a new record of sorts as he was just a few weeks short of his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday and as a result became the oldest competitor to ever win the prone championship.

Another National Smallbore Rifle Championship was entered into the books. Goals were set and met, hardships were overcome, and records established at both personal and national levels. Camp Perry saw its share of events that will enter both the history and folklore of the matches. It would be a Perry that all present would remember and spin yarns about in the future.

### **2003**

The position championship was shot under typical Camp Perry conditions, hot and humid. A taller and deeper aluminum frame and silver canvas cover that gave more room for standing replaced the old worn green canvas canopy, destroyed by the wind in 2002. Vincent Pestilli was the first to take advantage of the new cover and counted coup with a 394-24X in the prone stage. National Guard Captain Gary Hardy was in second place with a 393-24X. Third place went to Army Specialist Karen Manges with a 393-23X.

The standing match ended with an exciting photo finish. Army Major Mike Anti, the national championship record holder, posted an excellent 378-14X. He was hard pressed by teammate Specialist Trevor Gathman who was one point shy with a 377-

14X. Jamie Beyerle, University of Alaska-Fairbanks' standout, came in third with a 376-11X. With the only the one match remaining in the metallic sight championship the top shooters were knotted up. Beyerle lead with Anti trailing by a mere three points. Pestilli and Manges were seven points behind with Hardy, Gathman, and Steve Goff pressing hard.

Anti, looking for his second national position title, was not giving anyone any breathing space in kneeling. He won the match in a nail biter finish that was reminiscent, but even closer, than the kneeling match. Anti, Goff, national champ in 1997, and Dan Ault, the 2002 National Junior Prone Champion all posted 381s with Anti having 14Xs, Goff, 13Xs, and Ault 12Xs. It can hardly be cut any closer.

There is an old saying that position matches are won standing and lost prone. As proof Anti's extraordinary efforts standing and kneeling could not overcome a sub-par performance during prone and he finished one point behind Beyerle's winning score of 1147-39X. It was her second consecutive Three Position Metallic Sight Championship giving her both the Bill Krilling Trophy and woman honors. Anti, with a 1146-51X, had made up significant ground after spotting Beyerle five points in the prone match. In third was Gathman who had parlayed his three matches into an 1145-50X. With just a one point spread between them they were, for all intents and purposes, tied going into the anysight matches that would decide who would be the new champion.

Fred Cole, as much a feature at Perry during position as Commercial Row, took his familiar place at the top of the senior category. Charlie Daniels repeated as the Intermediate Senior Metallic Sight title winner while Ton Csenge, who was to go onto

greater fame later in the week, topped all Intermediate Juniors with an 1116-32X. Justin Pentz ruled the junior roost with a 1097-27X.

Good weather augured well and Anti made it clear that the poor prone of the day before was just a memory. He won the anysight prone with a 399-29X. Goff was right behind with a 397-29X and Celeste Green, of Lufkin, Texas, finished just five Xs behind Goff. The standings had switched: Anti now lead Gathman by three and Beyerle by four. Conditions began to deteriorate during standing, producing a result that was bordered on confusing to anyone who was comparing the standing scores for the two days. Gathman won the any sight standing match with a 378-15X, Anti was second with a 377-11X, and Beyerle closed out the top three with a 376-11X. The day before the scores were almost identical to the X count, with Anti and Gathman swapping order on day two. However, the standing stayed the same going into kneeling.

Having treated the position shooters to almost two days of good conditions the weather gods reverted to practice and whipped up a wind that would make the tournament's outcome just a little less predictable. Brian Anderson, a civilian Master, worked his way through the wind to shoot a match winning 380-14X. Hot on his heels was Michelle Bohren's 379-7X and a hard charging Goff with a 378-8X. Back in the pack was Beyerle and Anti with 375s and Gathman sitting, or kneeling in this case, on a 372.

Anti may have conceded the kneeling but his overall performance gave him a 1151-49X and the anysight title: a four point lead over Gathman and five over Goff. Beyerle earned high woman, collegiate, and junior honors with her 1145-43X. John Funk, a Pennsylvania rifleman from Murrysville, won the Intermediate Senior class with

a 1096-37X as fellow Keystone State rifleman Brian Kern took High Intermediate Junior honors. Fred Cole and Justin Pentz repeated in the senior and sub-junior classes.

Just as fast as the computer spit out the results for the National Three Position Championship they were taped to the Plexiglas wall in the Stat Shack. Anti's never say die attitude and hard worked paid off with an aggregate score of 2297-100X earning him his second national position championship and another Frank Parsons Trophy to go along with a second D.I. Boyd Memorial Trophy as the service champion. Gathman and Beyerle tied with 2292s but an 11X advantage gave the silver to the young soldier while Beyerle took away the high collegiate plaque as well as the Winchester, Camp, and Cobb Trophies emblematic of the civilian, women's, and junior championship. John Funk, whose family has run a series of excellent position matches in the Pittsburgh area for decades, picked up the RWS Trophy as the Intermediate Senior Champion with a score of 2175-61X. Jason Dardas, an Essexville, Michigan shooter, bested all in the Intermediate Junior class and was presented the Putnam Trophy. Sub-junior Justin Pentz, having won both ends of the match, took home the Stark Position Trophy. Likewise Fred Cole, 81, repeated as senior national champion with a 2150-48X.

When the shooters assembled on the line for team events they were met with a wind that pummeled them without mercy. When all was said and done a team with a long history of excellence topped the field. The Optimist-Acorns Junior Rifle Club of Kristina Fehlings, Thomas Knight, Emily Houston, Brian Watson, and Dan Peterson were coached and captained by Floyd Huston and Brian Watson to a score of 2206-50Xs, the Hercules Trophy, and the 2003 Three Position National Metallic Sight Team Championship. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association wrapped up second and

third when the Gold team came in with a 2187-48X and the PRPA Silver team hung up a 2159-48X. Pennsylvania has a tradition of smallbore excellence going back to the 1940s and they are currently undergoing a renaissance, as demonstrated by this year's results.

In the Caswell Trophy Any Sight Team Match, the Army fought back but fell short, and into an unaccustomed second place, by a margin of 21 points to the Optimist-Acorns. Pennsylvania Silver would not relinquish its grip on third. Conditions did a good deal to beat down the shooters. Scores in the anysight matches were lower, by as much as 22 points for the winners, than in the iron sight match.

Let it not be said that the Acorns backed into the championships because of the weather. They worked hard individually, and as a team, months toward this common goal and were well prepared to face the physical and mental challenge. The Acorns left their mark on the history of the sport, as the first civilian team to win both position team events in a single year as well as the first junior team to win any position championship outright.

The Acorns team sweep helped make for an unusual appearing awards ceremony. Usually the stage is chock-a-block with award winners. This year just six people stood on the top tier of the stage, as compared to the to the dozen of two usually found there. This, and the fact that there were so many multiple winners in the individual matches, left the stage looked positively deserted.

After position some folks went home other arrived and the matches began. Subject of much discussion among the prone shooters was the new range configuration. The Ohio National Guard had built a combat range to the extreme left of

Young Range that required a series berms parallel to the firing line at varying distances. The berms create banks of five or so competition targets, giving part of the target line a broken toothed Jack O' Lantern look, until the more familiar uninterrupted line of targets begins after four or five such banks. The new arrangement pushed the firing line left to the road that separates Rodriguez and Petrarca Ranges where another berm, about ten or fifteen feet high, had been thrown up parallel to the range road for about 100 yards.

There was much speculation as to how the various berms might affect wind flow and if there was any advantage from being squadded in any particular area. The unrelenting debates were so esoteric, so filled with minutia, and so convoluted that they bordered on Talmudic, in the words of *Fiddler on a Roof's* Tevya, the berms posed questions that "would cross a Rabbi's eyes."

The opening Dewar Match of the prone championship was a hotly contested match won when a 400-33X fired by Bruce Buell, a tall private investigator from Florida, won on a tiebreaker over Jamie Beyerle. Expert Danny Wigger topped the field of 400s in the 100 yard match with 30 Xs. Trevor Gathman, who posted a 400-36X, won the third match of the day, the 50 meter match. The day closed with Tony Lincoln, a visitor from Great Britain, winning the 50 yard match. Lincoln, following in the steps of fellow Briton Mike Babb who had won a daily aggregate a few years earlier, took the day with a 1599-117X followed by Jamie Beyerle's 1598-123X, just five Xs ahead of Kentucky's Michael Jarboe.

The second day of the iron sight aggregate began with a knot that the statistical folks would have to untie as three 400-33Xs were on the board for the Dewar. Trevor Gathman eventually won as Carolyn Sparks made her first appearance at the top of a

match bulletin with a second place finish while Larry Sawyer of Andover, Minnesota rounded out the top three. After the 100 yard targets were scored yet another three way tie occurred between Jake Marasco, defending sub junior champion, Mike Anti, reigning Three Position Champion, and Cory Brunetti, the 1998 prone champion. Young Marasco's 400-29X was judged better than those of the two older champions with Anti edging out Brunetti. The Meter match ended with Beyerle in first with a 400-35X, Anti second with a 400-34X, and Lincoln in third with a 400-33X. The iron sight aggregate closed with Celeste Green's 400-37X win in the Yard match. Robert Lynn, of Windham, New Hampshire, and Mike Jarboe tied right behind her, each with a 400-36X, but Lynn won the tie breaker for second.

Each individual match had been won with a 400 so it was fitting that a perfect score would be needed to win the day. Mike Anti, who seemed to be making a play to win both a position and prone championship in the same year, was most accommodating with a 1600-127X, but it was not going to be a walk in the woods for him. Second place Sparks went also went clean, with 124Xs, and third place Gathman's 1600 had 122Xs.

The end of the second day is significant because the iron sight championship is decided as well as the teams for the Dewar and the Randle Team. The NRA is a gracious host to its guests, but never more so this year when Great Britain's Tony Lincoln earned the Hoppe Memorial Trophy with a score of 3198-239X to become the first foreign person to win the National Metallic Sight Championship. Lincoln's performance, big time pay back for the American Revolution, put him in the unusual



position of shooting a qualifying score for a spot on the United States Dewar Team, an honor the rules require he decline.

Carolyn Millard Sparks was second and women's champion, matching Lincoln's score but with 233Xs. Hovering in third was position champion Anti with a 3197-253X. Paul Nordquist won the High Senior Walter S. Tomsen Trophy while Jim Miller became the first to win the Sam Gates Trophy awarded to the High Intermediate Senior in the Metallic Sight Championship. A metallic sight trophy in honor of Gates is appropriate as he made one of the finest custom metallic smallbore sights available, an original Gates being a prized possession of only a few hundred belly shooters.

When Captain Paul Benneche and Coach Joe Krein rounded up and instructed the team a rare event occurred when a shooter withdrew from the match. It was a stroke of good luck for the first alternate, Bruce Buell. Being a Dewar alternate is usually a sinecure as you are on the team, get a pin, T-shirt, doughnut, and a spot on the stage at the Awards Ceremony while never having to shoot the match or, better yet, get sweaty. Not so for the surprised Buell who didn't even have a coach lined up. Steve Goff put a 396 on the scoreboard for high on team honors. The United States, anchored by Goff, won the Dewar for the first time in several year.

The Randle followed the Dewar and the ladies posted a score of 3989-288X, under the leadership of Captain Sue Avril and Coach Kim Howe. Deena Wigger earned the Eleanor Dunn Trophy as high gun with a 400-33X. There was an underlying tone of sadness for it was remembered that Miss Dunn, donor of the trophy and one of the founders of the match, had passed away the past November at the age of 97.

While the postal shooters were blasting away the Whistler Boy Match was in full swing. Under the guidance of Larry Parker, Jr. John Nikiforakas and Tom Csenge cobbled together an 1833-40X in the Whistler Boy Match over a course of fire that included a Dewar and a half course three position match. Using Civilian Marksmanship Program style straight stocked rifles and issue ammunition the boys, representing the Cheshire New Hampshire Fish and Game Club, bettering their closest rivals, from the Nashua New Hampshire Fish and Game, by ten points. It was a great moment for them and New Hampshire, the top two places in a premier match.

The prone team matches produced some amazing results, outside of ours. The Black Hawk Ladies, Edie Reynolds, Michelle Bohren, Bobby Vitito, and Ginger McLemore won the iron sight match, The American Dewar Trophy. Coached by Carolyn Millard Sparks and captained by Lenore Lemanski their 1557-67X edged out the Army Blue Team by a single point while setting a national women's record. Imagine the confidence it takes to take one of the best shooters in the country off of the line and put her behind the scope in the national championship. In third place, with a 1537-53X, was the Stinkniks who were celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Perry. The junior champions were the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Gold Team of Jake Marasco, Josh Albright, Nick Hogberg, and Melissa Lussier with a 1527-53X.

The Officers Reserve Trophy Match, the any sight championship, yielded as amazing result as the iron sight match. The Army was again denied by a point, this time the Black Hawk Veterans' 1560-80X. Charlie Sentner, Ed Bohren, Dave Cramer, and Jim Hinkle under the leadership of "Walt" Walters and Dave Dye also set a senior national record. For the first time in memory the Army was locked out of all smallbore

team championships. In third place again was the Stinkniks while the Connecticut juniors swept their division. It may not have been a good day for the Army but the Bohrens went home happy with two championships and two national records, daughter on the iron sight team and dad on the any.

The any sight match began with me carefully taking by rifle and scope out of the case. Paul Gideon, who was first master in the metallic sight aggregate, slugged it out with Brunetti for the first match. Both men had taken advantage of the excellent conditions and posted 400-39Xs. Gideon prevailed over Brunetti and set the stage for the rest of the tournament. Team mate Jack Santo had his first 400 of the week and was taken aback when he had to run his finger way down the list to find that a 400-22X was good for 62<sup>nd</sup> place in the Master class. There was a four way tie in the 100 yard match between Lones Wigger Jim Hinkle, Dave Cramer, and Steve Kern, all with 400-35X. Once the rulebook had been consulted Wigger was declared winner, Kern second, and Hinkle third. Cramer had to settle for first master.

The Meter saw another tie, a three way contest between Carl Jooss, Jim Miller, and Bobbi Vitito, all who shot 400-38Xs. The final results were in the same order. Sparks won the first anysight Yard match, going clean with 39Xs. Right behind here was Gideon with 38Xs. The final tally showed 15 shooters with perfect scores of 1600. In a preview of things to come Gideon took the day with 144xs, Sparks was in second with 142Xs, and Anti third with 141Xs.

Wigger opened the final day with a 400-38X to win the Dewar under slightly trickier conditions than the previous day. Goff put together a 400-35X to wrap up the 100 Yards while Sentner fired a near perfect 400-39X to win the Meter match going

away. Kevin Nevius and Boyd Goldsby each shot a clean with 38Xs at 50 yards with Nevius the victor. Excitement began to mount as the result of the daily 1600 was posted and predictions were flying for the outcome of the championships. With four 1600s on the board Goff had the best with 138Xs, Wigger was second with 136Xs, and Gideon held onto third with 131Xs. Edie Reynolds was first master with a 1600-125X.

Paul Gideon, with a 3200-275X emerged triumphant. In second place, winning the Robert Plimpton Trophy as High Senior, was Wigger with a 3199-281X. Nevius, a local boy from Ohio, was in third place with a 3199-279X. Carl Jooss, of Champions Shooters Supply, topped the intermediate seniors and was awarded the new Frank Boyd Trophy by Boyd himself,

Shooting is a sport of cumulative tension and this year's championship was a demonstration of just how tense things can be in a sport that sometimes looks as exciting as watching paint dry. Coming out of iron sights there were four clear leaders packed within one point. The first day of any sights was a fine day for shooting as Sparks, Anti, Gideon and ten other proved by going clean. The leader board shifted slightly with Sparks moving into first, down two, and Anti, Gideon, and Lincoln knotted up at three down.

There was no change after the first match of the final day: all fired 400s. Disaster struck at 100 yards when Lincoln dropped three points and was effectively eliminated. However Sparks also went for one and now the leading trio was tied on points with Anti moving into first on the strength of center shots. At this point the frontrunners were well known and scopes everywhere were focused on their targets meaning that news of lost points and dropped Xs spread at light speed. With 80 record shots left, all at short

range, Anti was in the driver's seat and all that Sparks and Gideon could do was shoot Xs in defense.

The Meter match is a gold mine for anyone seeking subject matter for a doctoral thesis in psychology. Fortunes changed in a nanosecond at Meters, as Anti found out when a shot slipped outside of the ten ring instantly dropping him from first to third, four down. In that instant Anti had probably lost the prone championship and with it a golden opportunity, just as Shane Barnhart had the year before, to become the second person to win a position and prone championship in a single year.

The Yard match closed out the tournament. More liars have been created by a nine shot with a scope at this distance than by all the tax laws in history. It is fired on a target so big and so close as to almost be a "gimme," like a golf ball hanging on the lip of the cup that is conceded without a stroke being taken. But, neither Sparks nor Gideon, both well aware of the tight situation, were going to concede anything, other than the fact that they were trying to shoot 40Xs in the last match. Both cleaned it, Sparks with 30 Xs and Gideon with 36. A match of 640 record shots had come down to the last 20 and in the end it was just two center shots that separated the new champion from the former.

The 6400 point aggregate stretches over four days and in the end it may just be a touch of luck that bars one from the winner's circle and beckons another. Luck is often defined as the residue of good preparation and Gideon was well prepared. He began by testing some 30 lots of ammunition until he came across "a stray lot of R-50" that was clearly superior. His Anschutz 1811-L is equipped with a two stage trigger and a Hart stainless steel barrel with a T-2 adjustable 10 inch bloop tube. The action was

Devcon and pillar bedded by Kevin Nevius who, you will be reminded, won the final critical any sight yard match-two Xs ahead of fourth place master Gideon. Nevius might well have been the any sight champion, he finished third: a point behind but four Xs ahead of Gideon.

Gideon used an older 1/6<sup>th</sup> minute left handed Anschutz factory sight and an 18mm front tube, customized with a pair of bubble levels and a Centra iris and inserts. His scope, a Leupold BR-36X with crosshair, is rotated left 90 degrees so that the elevation knob becomes the windage knob, quickly turning a right handed scope in one that is southpaw friendly. In five training matches prior to Perry he shot five 1599s, a pair with irons and the balance with scope. Married shooters need spousal support and his wife Billie, a psychologist by profession, certainly practices her trade well. Their wedding anniversary falls during Camp Perry and her gracious and understanding tolerance for this conflict is both professionally and personally admirable.

In the end it takes more than good equipment and ammunition to win a championship, one must believe it can be done. Bernard Cornwell's fictional Richard Sharpe, an officer in the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles, told his troops that a good rifleman need to "fire three shots a minute and stand," meaning to be able to deliver quick accurate fire and believe in himself enough to get the job done under pressure that would make others cut and run. Paul Gideon is a rifleman for he can deliver rapid accurate rifle fire and stand, or in his case lie still, in the face of intense cumulative tension.

It was a clean win for Gideon and Anti and Sparks, champions to the core and true to the sport's best traditions, were among the first to congratulate the first left handed rifleman to win the prone championship. As the new Open and Civilian

Champion Gideon packed both the Critchfield and Schweitzer Trophies into his car's trunk. Women's champion Sparks left Perry with a record eleventh Remington Trophy, her seventh in a row. Anti, who had been the first recipient of the D.I. Boyd Trophy, repeated history as the first winner of the new service prone championship award, the John J. Grubar Trophy. Senior Lones Wigger made his inevitable appearance; the stage would seem deserted without him, to pick up a second consecutive Sam Bond Trophy while Jim Miller took home the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy for Intermediate Senior honors. Jamie Beyerle topped the collegiate category in prone, as she had done in position, and received the Austin Trophy.

Dave Jacobs, of South Plainfield, New Jersey, was high junior and recipient of the Whittington Trophy, Tom Csenge, half of the Whistler Boy Championship team, was presented the Stark Trophy as Intermediate Junior Champion. Mike Jarboe was awarded the Charlie Rogers Plaque as high Expert and Ashley Jackson was the high Marksman plaque recipient.

Thomas P. Rider II, of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, took home the Glabb Trophy as sub-junior champion and also the high Sharpshooter plaque. He used the week of intense prone competition as the springboard to the sub-junior title in high power just a few weeks later. Wielding a service rifle he became the first subbie to double up these two championships.

It was a Camp Perry that those who were there will talk about for many years to come. It had good weather, excellent shooting, record breaking performances, and civilian teams had beaten back the seemingly unstoppable Army juggernaut.

## 2004

The 2004 National Three Position Championships was a trial for those who struggled through the three days of high winds and gray sky. The day before the matches began a terrific windstorm, reminiscent of the one that struck the 2002 prone matches, tore down the stout aluminum and canvas awning that protects the smallbore shooters from the late July sun, leaving them exposed to the elements. It was a case of turnabout is fair play for the prone shooters were left exposed in '02. For the next three days the winds whipped, swirled, and churned as 343 competitors vied for the title. The Three Position championships is a 2400 point aggregate of two 1200 point matches, one fired with metallic sights and the other with "any" sights-usually meaning telescopic sights, but allowing for continued use of the irons. Each day three 40 shot matches, one each in prone, standing, and kneeling, are fired at 50 meters.

The first day opened with Army Sergeant First Class Tom Tamas taking the first prone match with a 397-23X. Tamas, an Olympian, one time position champion, and twice national prone champion, got off to a good start in pursuit of his second position title. The buffeting winds pushed the shooters around so much that only five scores broke the 390 mark, a very bad omen. A pair from Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Vincent Pestilli and Jamie Beyerle came in second and third with 393s, Nebraska's Charlie Daniels, on the hunt for the Intermediate Senior title, posted a 391, and Expert class junior Nathaniel Holcomb managed a 390.

Things changed, as they often do, from bad to worse in the standing match. The wind made it difficult to even keep the front sight on the paper, let alone centered on the bull's eye. Beyerle was quickest on the trigger and emerged on top with a 358-2X. Not



to be outdone Pestilli hung in there with a 351-5X, just two Xs ahead of the third place score fired by Michelle Bauer, of Blackwood, New Jersey. To put things in perspective the 2003 winning score was a 378-14X fired by the USAMU's Major Mike Anti, who was passing on Camp Perry in preparation for competing in the Olympics.

The day closed with the kneeling match, which gave the competitors some feeling of stability after being whip sawed by the wind for 80 minutes of standing. When all was said and done there was a photo finish between the 2002 Position Champion, Army Specialist Shane Barnhart, and collegian Sarah Kramer. Both managed a 371-8X, with Barnhart getting the win on the tiebreaker. Tamas, who had not given up on the day despite a 340 standing, was third with a 368-12X.

With the metallic sight phase of the championship in the books Beyerle emerged victorious as the winner of the Bill Krilling Trophy and the ladies title, placing a formidable claim on the overall junior title, with a score of 1118-25X. In second, by 11 points, was Pestilli and Tamas hung onto third place, two points further back. Topping the lists in their respective categories, Fred Cole was making a strong play to retain his senior title, as was John Funk in the intermediate senior category. Jaymi Collar led the collegiate crew while Justin Pentz, last year's sub junior champion, was trying to make his mark as an intermediate junior. Mike Kubacki was top dog among sub juniors. Just off of the radar screen was first master, Jeff Doerschler, the 2002 civilian champion.

Hope that conditions might change for the better for the any sight match died quickly as winds as unrelenting, or even worse, than that of the day before greeted the competitors on the second day. Many shooters elected to stay with metallic sights, some to avoid the apparent extra motion seen through a scope, others to reduce the

“sail” effect brought on by the wind blowing against a rifle scope, and some just thought it best, Beyerle was among them. Holcomb, one of the few to break 390 in the metallic prone match, topped the field in the any sight prone match with a 389-19X, Barnhart held in with a 387-16, just an X ahead of Beyerle. No one was looking forward to standing as the winds only continued to rage. Doerschler’s 317-2X, a score that would usually bring tears to the eyes and a knot to the stomach, was a keeper. It was 13 points ahead of Christina Dutra, a sub junior from Grampian, Pennsylvania, who notched the only other score above 300! Pestilli was still a contender with his 299-1X. Beyerle suffered a serious setback, coming up with only a 284-2X that dropped her back in the pack.

The winds slowly dropped off as the day progressed and by the late afternoon, and the final kneeling match, shooting conditions had improved remarkably. Doerschler took advantage of the situation and racked up a 378-12X to ice his cake. Barnhart was right behind him with a 377-13X. Howard Moody, looking to regain the intermediate senior title he held in 2000, came through with a third place 375-11X.

The second day would decide two championships, the any sight and the national title. It was just a matter of waiting until the computer spit out the preliminary bulletins and the challenge period ended. With a pair of wins, standing and kneeling, and a decent enough prone score Doerschler found himself the Any Sight Champion for the second time since 2002 with a total score of 1070-26X. An indication of the wretched conditions on the second day was that his score with any sights was 13 points less than the metallic sight score he had posted. Pestilli was a distant second with a 1040-26X as Barnhart earned third with his 1035-30X. Beyerle was high woman and junior with her

1032-21X. Jay Sonneborn, the 2001 Intermediate Senior Champion, took high senior while Moody was the top intermediate senior. Douglas McAllister III and Dutra topped the intermediate and sub junior categories. Jimmie Perrin was the leader among the collegiate shooters.

When scores from both days were combined Doerschler tallied a 2153-51X and was, in the words of George Harris, Match Director and Master of Ceremonies of the Awards Ceremony, the proud possessor of, "The Parson's Trophy, a gold plated medallion, 55 NRA award points, a Ruger 10/22 rifle, and assorted donated merchandise." He also picked up his second Winchester Trophy as civilian champion. Beyerle, who had never given up, ended up with a score of 2150-46X, picking up second place, the Mary Camp Trophy as woman's champion and the Cobb Trophy as high junior. Pestilli was third with a 2147-56X.

Sonneborn staged a palace coup, of sorts, dethroning senior champion "Old King Cole" and wresting the Meister Trophy from the perennial champ's grip. Moody returned to the stage to pick up his second RWS trophy while Sarah Kramer wore the collegiate champion's gold medallion about her neck. Pentz held on for the intermediate junior title as did sub junior Kulbacki. Barnhart was the high service shooter and was awarded the D.I. Boyd Trophy. Rod Frisby, of Salisbury, Australia, was the any sight only champion.

Doerschler is the Clark Kent of shooting. He is slightly built, mild mannered, wears glasses, and this year, when he put on his shooting clothes, he became Superman. The Wethersfield, Connecticut native is no stranger to success at Perry. Just two years ago he earned civilian three position champion honors on the strength of

winning the last four matches of the tournament. Doerschler applied the same patience and powers of concentration he developed while earning his doctorate in software engineering to the task of shooting in the wind. When asked about his performance he said, "I shoot regularly, almost a match a week, and that schedule has built up my mental and physical conditioning to peak at Perry." He added that his tactic for these most difficult match conditions was to "Just establish the most solid position I could, hold the rifle tight, focus on the target, and wait till the wind dropped off to break my shot."

Being a notoriously slow shooter meant that all of that waiting was pretty much Doerschler's style and no real handicap. As a matter of fact there are those among his shooting friends who say his style set him up perfectly for a situation where patience would be a key contributor to a win. He shot Eley Tenex ammunition out of his wooden stocked Anschutz 2013, which was equipped with factory sights and a Leupold Vari-X III scope. He also favors an international style shooting jacket, pants, and shoes.

The new champion, who also won the 2004 NRA Open Conventional Four Position Championship, overcame a recent injury that might well have eliminated him from contention. In late May he was returning home from the Black Hawk Match in Ashville when he stopped to do a little hiking, he is in the process of climbing to the top of the tallest points in all the lower 48 states. While trying to add another peak to his collection he twisted his knee and was unable to train kneeling until just a few weeks before the start of the Nationals. Years of experience helped him overcome the layoff and return to form quickly. With the championship in hand he celebrated victory in his

typical modest style by gathering a few of his friends for dinner and painting Port Clinton beige.

At the Awards Ceremony the Army was conspicuous by its absence. This prompted the old warhorse, Lieutenant Colonel Lones W. Wigger Jr., USA (Ret), who has probably been on the stage more times than all of this year's recipients combined, to chide his old team. His gravely growl of "Nothing but civilians on the stage? The Army better get practicing!" was heard by all. Strong words about his old team from arguably the best shooter in the world in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Difficult conditions can mean many things. For many it was the winds and rain of the previous two days. For the riflemen from Fort Benning it was the long shadow of the 2003 matches. They had been swept by a talented team of juniors from Virginia in position and never even got to march up to collect team awards during the prone phase where they had again fallen to civilians, a team of seniors and another of talented women. The Army went home empty handed in team competition, something that had not happened in living memory. Despite the fact that the talent pool was somewhat thinned by those going to Athens the remaining soldiers were determined not to see a repeat of last year's shutout.

In Three Position Team competition a four person team shoots 20 shots in prone, standing, and kneeling for a team aggregate of 2400 points. The first match requires metallic sights and the other is open to any sights.

The Army ignored the inhospitable conditions, as good infantrymen must, and, under the direction of Captain David Cloft and Staff Sergeant Michael Moore, posted a score that almost 27 points better than the next team. There would be no team drought

this year. Tamas and Barnhart teamed up with Specialist Trevor Gathman and Specialist Grant Mecozzi for a 2205-65X. The Black Hawk Rifle Club team of Pestilli, Doerschler, Beyerle, and Wes Robinson, coached by former AMU standout and National Champion Steve Goff put up a 2131-46X for second place. Joel Dutra coached the DuBois Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Club's "Junior Storm" of Dutra, Kulbacki, Pentz, and Kyle Smith to the third place position and the junior title.

In the any sight competition the top two positions stayed in the same hands. The Army and the Black Hawks managed to keep the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia's Team Australia at bay. Proving that the whole is sometimes greater than the sum of its parts the Army Team edged out the Black Hawks by two points, 2150-67X to 2148-52X. The second place team included Doerschler, Beyerle, and Pestilli-the top three in the individual championship, supported by Wes Robinson and again coached by Goff. Pennsylvania again struck pay dirt when The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Team Yellow of Tommy Santelli, Jacob Savitts, Brian Launer, and Justin Sparks under coach and captain Patrick Miller took junior honors.

With the team matches complete it would normally be time for the unsquadded prone practice but this year would be different. A crew of professionals from the company that provides the Smallbore awning, NRA volunteers, and Reserve and National Guard troops, who gave up an afternoon off, pitched in to raise the repaired awning in a matter of hours. The prone shooters were more than happy to give up the practice to have the awning back in place.

This is not to say there was no shooting that afternoon. Ten juniors had been selected from among the highest scores posted during prone phase of the position

matches for a special team match. They assembled on the Viale Range to make the first United States entry into the William Drew Cup Trophy Match. On the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dewar Trophy Cup Match, the British National Small-bore Rifle Association inaugurated the Drew Cup, the junior equivalent of the venerable postal match. Firing an English Match, 60 shots at 50 meters on the demanding international metric target, the match pits the youth of Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States for possession of an 18 inch, 45 ounce sterling silver trophy, presented in honor of prominent British rifleman William Drew.

Wind whipped raindrops and drizzle around the assembled team as they lay on the newly built up Viale firing line. Parents and interested onlookers, swathed in rain gear, huddled over spotting scopes watching the team struggle with the conditions.

There were ten competitors on the line contesting three matches. The “big” team match of ten competitors and two others; a three man team and a three woman team were fired concurrently. Nathaniel Holcomb, 577-22X; Alexander Karacsonyi, 573-20X; and Brian Launer 565-25X, combined for a men’s total of 1715-67X while Jamie Beyerle, 586-33X; Melissa Lussier, 574-16X; and Jaymi Collar, 579-24X put together a women's score of 1739-73X. With the addition of scores from Thomas Rider, 572-21; Justin Pentz, 571-15X; Jason Dardas, 5701-15X; and Andy Lamson, 545-10X; the ten person team, including alternates William Butler and David Specher, carded a score of 5712-201X. The US team acquitted itself well under the circumstances.

Team Coach H.J. “Walt” Walters, Team Captain Paul Benneche, and Team Adjutant Paul Vilmer, presented them with commemorative visors as mementos of the occasion. Despite the gray clouds, raw wind, and rain the match was a bright spot in a

tough week of competition for the youthful team, it was, for most, their first taste of international competition.

Overcast skies marked the first day of prone competition. The carryover from position was, perhaps, a portent of things to come, but it didn't seem to keep the scores down too much in the first match of the five day grind. The real tip of future events was that juniors took two out of the three top places. Jaymi Collar won the first match, the Dewar- 20 shots at 50 yards and another 20 shot string at 100 yards, with a perfect 400 and 33Xs. Intermediate junior Ryan McSheeey, a scion of the Massachusetts shooting family, was in third with a 400-31X, Creedmoored by Jim Miller, with an identical score but a higher X count at 100 yards. As the match moved to long range the Army took up Wigger's challenge from the position awards ceremony and topped the field. Sergeant First Class Tom Tamas' 400-26X was bit better than team mate Captain David Cloft's clean with 15X. In third place was Collar whose 399-33X, indicated that conditions were starting to change for the worse.

Moving the targets in to 50 meters mitigated some of the effects of the deteriorating conditions and Tamas again won, this time with a 400-34X. Sarah Kramer, the collegiate position champion, and Paul Nevis, who built defending champion Paul Gideon's rifle, ended up on the wrong side of a tie breaking rule for third place. The targets were moved 14 feet closer and fresh targets were hung for the 50-yard match where the number of perfect scores jumped into the dozens but the leader board showed that Tamas was not giving any ground as he again won, this time with a 400-37X. Richard Williams, of Pearson, Georgia, and Collar, another Georgia native, both posted 400-35Xs finishing in second and third place. After 160 shots Tamas was



in the lead with a perfect 1600 and 127 Xs. Hot on his heels was Collar with a 1599-124X and Nevius, who had spilled just two points for a 1598-118X.

The rain, which had been teasing the shooters, returned early on Tuesday and would be a constant fixture of the day's events. Vincent Pestilli, bronze medalist in the position championship, made his play with a 400-30X in the Dewar. Like so many matches on the first day the second and third place finishers were tied and the scorers had to resort to the rule book to break yet another tie. This time intermediate junior Alex Karacsonyi and Jamie Beyerle were locked up with a pair of 400-29Xs, second going to the Connecticut rifleman and third to the position runner up.

Relays flip flop each day to day to keep things even for all competitors so as the second relay, now shooting first, was getting ready to start at 100 yards the rain began to increase markedly and the wind started to bluster in from 12 o'clock, driving the rain right into the faces of the shooters and objectives lenses of the spotting scopes. Visibility was dropping and spotting shots was near impossible. It only got worse for the first relay. Somehow Olympian Glen Dubis, now the rifle coach at University of Alaska-Fairbanks, managed to keep 39 of his shots in the ten and X ring for a 399-26X. Edie Reynolds, Chair of the NRA Smallbore Committee, was just one X behind Dubis. In third place was Army Specialist Trevor Gathman who dropped one point and tallied 22Xs.

The targets, as well as the shooters, had been harshly treated by the wind a rain and required exceptional care in transportation and scoring. The conditions were so bad that some shooters withdrew from the 100-yard match. A range delay was called to try to wait out the whims of the increasingly foul weather. It became apparent that

conditions would not moderate and the match director declared that the final two matches of the day would be cancelled. It was rare event indeed. Lest you think it was out of concern for the shooters, the real reason was that water soaked targets are extremely fragile and near impossible to score effectively.

The radical change in the program made for a truncated metallic sight and over all championship. The second day went to Gathman who dropped a point in each match for a 798-49X aggregate. Reynolds was a point behind with 56Xs while Beyerle closed out the top three with a 797-52X. Tamas' 2395-184X for the two days won the Metallic Sight Championship, giving him possession of the Hoppe Memorial Trophy and a slight leg up on the field as he pursued his third prone title. Sitting in second was Beyerle; just two points back at 2393-171X, holding the Peters Trophy as high woman. Dubis' 2393-168X gave him third place. Dave Cramer, a former Intermediate Senior Position Champion, was presented the Walter Tomsen Trophy as high senior while Lusty Cebula, more known for his Palma shooting skills than his considerable smallbore talents, picked up the Sam Gatz Trophy as high Intermediate Senior. The first half of the championships had come to an abrupt and early end as everyone repaired to huts, modules, and condominiums to clean and dry equipment, warm up, and to brace themselves for whatever surprises that the weather might have in store for them.

Barely visible the golden disc of the sun, turned to dull pewter by a thin cloud cover, broke over the horizon on team day. Much to everyone's relief and joy the weather was predicted to moderate and the temperature to rise past the high 60s. The first order of business was to get the Dewar, Randle, and Whistler Boy matches started.

A few dozen shooters assembled on the far western side of Viale Range for the Dewar while a hoard of juniors took up position on the opposite side.

The Dewar Team, under the direction of Captain Joe Krein and Coach Jim Hinkle, fought the remnants of the previous days' winds that conspired to keep the scores down. Off to an average start on point six NRA Director Edie Reynolds blasted out a 199 at 100 yards to lead the team with a 395. Shooting on point 16 was a young collegian, Bill Reynolds, whose presence added a small footnote to the 95 year history of the Dewar as they became the first mother and son combination to shoot on the same team.

When the Dewar Team had vacated the line the ladies took up position to shoot the Randle Cup. Captain Kim Howe and Coach Elizabeth Espointour elected to shoot at 100 yards first to save time and energy moving the frames back to 50 yards as well as take advantage of the, hopefully, more quiet conditions. In the end the wily old veteran Carolyn Millard-Sparks shot a 400-30X to earn another Eleanor Dunn Trophy as high gun in team.

Further to the east on the firing line the Whistler Boy Match was underway. The boys had been working with CMP type rifles for a while and were doing well enough. This was their first run at this game but Steve had his eye on the long haul, as the boys will be able to shoot as a team for another five years. The competition is always tough in this match. A smart coach starts with good shooters who work with basic equipment that has been brought to the highest level of performance. As an example, in the top ten teams this year were Tom Csenge, who was on the winning team last year, USA Shooting national record holder Jason Dardas, and Tom Rider II who is the reigning sub

junior smallbore prone and high power national champion. The CMP rifles used in these matches usually resemble the out of the rack type as much as an Army or Marine match grade M-14 or M-16 resembles the same firearm carried by a basic trainee.

The Whistler Boy course of fire is a Dewar followed by a half course international. This year the Gun Owners of New Hampshire repeated as winners with a slightly different team than last year. Veteran Tom Csenge returned and Craig Bridge was the new shooter for the Larry Parker coached team that shot an 1833-36X.

The USAMU took the metallic sight prone team championship, the American Dewar Match, perhaps egged on by Wigger's exhortation at the position awards ceremony. Coached by Grant Mecozzi, Tamas, Barnhart, Trevor Gathman, and Moore put together a 1547-69X to best the second place Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association Sidney Masters' 1531-61X who just out Xed the defending champion Black Hawk Veterans by seven center shots. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Juniors team of Steve Bendel, Melissa Lussier, Alex Karacsonyi, and Chris Kemp mounted the stage as the junior champions.

In any sight competition Michael O'Connor, Michael Jarboe, Danny Wigger, and David Cloft teamed up to take the Officers Reserve Trophy while Two Black Hawk Rifle Club Teams, The Black Hawk Ladies and the Black Hawk Veterans rounded out second and third place. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Juniors returned to the stage as the only team to double up titles in prone.

The Mentor Match, in which a senior teams up with a junior, followed with the winning team being Peter Revi and Harry Gauthier's 799-59X. Glen Dubis won it with the only clean shot from his Winchester 52C. Jim Wood wielded a Winchester 69 to

take the most unique rifle award. With the final shots of this match team day came to a close and all began to ready themselves for the last two days.

The first day of any sight competition broke clear, bright, and dead calm. The first relay took no time in taking advantage of conditions that had not been seen since the previous year. Tamas quickly established that his previous two days might just a springboard to greater glory as he won the Dewar with a 400-39X. Former champions Cory Brunetti and Steve Goff finished second and third with a pair of 400-38Xs, letting Tamas know that he would be challenged at every shot. Greg Tomsen, the sole National Guardsman left shooting smallbore from that formidable program, celebrated his recent promotion to Sergeant First Class by winning the 100-yard match with a perfect score and 36Xs. Jamie Beyerle and Kevin Nevius were knotted up at 400-35X each and had to go to the rulebook, which gave second to the All American from Alaska while gunsmith Nevius settled for third.

Targets were returned to the 50-meter line where Bruce Buell showed the stuff that earned him a slot on the Dewar team in 2003 by blasting out a 400-37X to win a tiebreaker with Carolyn Millard Sparks. Third place went to Steve Kern who posted a 400-36X. A little further down the line Tamas leaked out two points putting him a tie with Beyerle in the aggregate. A real horse race was developing that might end in a photo finish for points are not easily lost when shooting prone with a scope at the National Championship level. The final match of the day provided a good deal of excitement for those hawking the board and prognosticating on the championship's final outcome. Nevius posted a near perfect winning score of 400-39X followed by two Connecticut shooters; Doerschler with a 400-38X and intermediate junior Melissa

Lussier, both with 38X cleans. Beyerle, shooting irons, posted a belly shooter's nightmare-a 399-39X at 50 yards. However, Tamas, using a scope had a chance to open his tenuous lead but let slip one shot and ended up with 399-35X to keep them just one point and eight Xs apart, the advantage still to Tamas.

The first day of scope shooting ended in an improbable four way tie for first that involved four national champions. Goff, one of the few riflemen to have won both prone and position titles, Paul Gideon, defending prone champion, Sparks, the 1993 prone champion, and Doerschler, reigning three position champion all posted 1600-139Xs! The rulebook was again opened to the well thumbed page 34 and section "15. Decision of Ties." After some checking of scores at long range and X counts it was determined that Goff had won with Gideon in second and Sparks in third. Doerschler had to settle for first civilian master. It might be noted that for a single X Nevius might well have been in the mix.

The final day would see the sun play hide and seek behind the clouds from relay to relay. Goff and Gideon continued to duel in the Dewar with Goff taking a slight edge with a 400-38X to Gideon's 37X possible. Gideon was matched by third place finisher Brooks Harris, of Nashville, Tennessee. Both Tamas and Beyerle shot perfect scores with Tamas gaining three Xs. With the targets at 100 yards Dave Cramer, an NRA Smallbore Committee member, put together a match winning 400-35X score. Nevius and Dubis each shot 34Xs with Nevius getting the rulebook nod for second place. Meanwhile Tamas gave up another point, his 399-29X to Beyerle's 400-20X. The two were now tied up with Tamas clinging to a slim 12 X lead and 80 shots at short range left.

With the psychologically challenging meter targets hung Sparks and Boyd Goldsby made a match out of it with both shooting 400-37Xs with the win going to Sparks. Barnhart, of the USAMU, came in third with a 400-35X. Meanwhile Tamas let fly another nine and the lead shifted to Beyerle by a point on the strength of a clean meter match. With Tamas shooting scope, and having an X count advantage, and Beyerle using iron sights there was no one who would dare bet on this nail biter.

Shooting 40 shots at 50 yards the reigning prone champion, Gideon, made his final statement in the match by winning the last match with a 400-39X, a victory he had to wrest from Buell on a tie breaker, but a victory none the less. Rounding out the top three was German Salazar, an attorney from Miami. His 400-38X assured him his final leg on Distinguished Prone, an award he can now add to his Distinguished Rifleman and Pistol Shot Badge. Tamas and Beyerle were going head to head and Beyerle would not be denied a championship this year, shooting a 400-36X to Tamas' 35X clean. After four days of wretched conditions and excellent shooting performances, the championship came down to a single point out of a possible 5600.

Attention was so focused on the Tamas/Beyerle battle that not much notice was being taken of another great match up, Sparks and Brunetti. The two former national prone champions were involved in a closely fought battle for the any sight title. Both had gone clean for two days and it came down to Sparks' nine X advantage to determine who would take home the U.S. Cartridge Company Trophy. Sparks also earned high woman honors. In third place was Nevius with a 3199-279X. Paul Nordquist dropped only four points and picked up the Robert H. Plimpton Trophy as

high senior while Gideon grabbed The Frank Boyd Trophy as high intermediate senior in any sights.

Beyerle stood atop the winner's stand at the awards ceremony as the first junior to win the national prone championship, the first champion to do it with iron sights all the way, and the youngest person ever to win the title. She staggered out of Hough Auditorium under the weight of the Critchfield, Schweitzer, Remington, and Whittington Trophies, symbolic of the four championships, national, civilian, woman, and junior, she now held. Tamas was awarded the John J. Grubar Trophy as high service shooter while Brunetti had the bronze medal suspended from his neck.

Frederick "Fast Freddy" Scielzo, of Palm City, Florida, so often one of the top shooters the Made in America Match, was awarded the Sam Bond Memorial Trophy as the senior champion. The Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy was presented to the intermediate senior champion Dave Cramer who is, incidentally, a former intermediate senior position champion. Jaymi Collar, from the University of Tennessee-Martin, brought home the collegiate title and the Austin Trophy. Alex Karacsonyi, an intermediate junior from North Haven, Connecticut, accepted the Stark Prone Trophy while Pennsylvania's Thomas P. Rider II would earn his second consecutive Joseph P. Glabb Trophy as the sub junior champion. Just as he did last year Rider would stay on for high power and would again win that sub junior title, the first sub junior to complete a repeat back-to-back victories. Carl Jooss, a Camp Perry fixture, for more years than most can, or care to, remember-his son was actually born here and given the name Perry in commemoration-won the any sight only championship.



The record books are now closed on a most interesting and exciting smallbore championship. It was a trying tournament where the weather played a significant role. The low scores, in truth, only masked the extraordinary performance and tenacity on the part of the competitors to do as well as they did under such trying circumstances. History had been made in prone and all went home with an ample store of memories and tales to stoke the fire of shooting stories told at the indoor matches and practice sessions until next summer when we return to Perry to do it all over again.

## **2005**

The National Smallbore Three Position Championships opened to typical Perry weather, hot and humid. It was a trial for the competitors to keep hydrated and the canvas awning covering the firing line offered scant, but welcome relief from the scorching sun. Auguring well for the future Thomas Tamas, of the Army Marksmanship Unit, scored the first victory with a 397-29X out of 400 in the prone stage of the metallic sight championship. He was a full three points ahead of AMU alum Steve Goff and John Hogle of Billerica, Massachusetts, who were knotted up second and third with 394-21Xs. Jaime Beyerle, University of Alaska standout, had a weak 384 prone but made a strong play for the championship by posting a 376-11X in the standing stage. Andrew Leydig, a junior from Pennsylvania, was second with a 371-10X. In third place was Mike Anti, silver medalist at the 2004 Athens Olympics, with a 369-9X.

The last match of the day was kneeling and Olympian Emily Caruso notched a narrow one point win over Shane Barnhart, of Fort Benning, 381-15X to 380-15X. Colorado's Taylor Beard was third with a 379-14X.

Beyerle overcame her slow start, and repeated as the metallic sight champion with an 1138-41X. Armando Ayala, an AMU rifleman from Phenix City, Alabama, was second with an 1137-29X, while Anti was third with an 1136-37X. The close three way finish left no room for error going into the any sight phase. Lurking in the back ground with scores in the low 1130s were Barnhart, Tamas, and Jason Parker. Fred Cole, perennial senior champ, added another victory to his resume while Mandy Otero, of New Jersey, earned intermediate senior honors.

The heat and humidity that greeted the competitors on the second day seemed not to bother Michael McPhail, of the AMU, who tied Mark Norse's 15 year old record when he ran 40 tens for a perfect 400. Close on his heels was Tamas with a 398-27X and a 396-24X by Chris Simmons, of Marion, North Carolina rounded out the top three.

Vincent Pestilli, from Pennsylvania's hotbed of smallbore shooting, took the any sight standing match with a 375-10X. Parker hung up a 369-7X while Barnhart's 366-9X was good for third.

With one match left to determine both the any sight and overall position championship the shooters pulled out all of the stops. Pittsburgh's Jonathan Long hunkered down and shot a 387-12X for the kneeling match win. Right behind him were Barnhart and Parker with a 385-13X and 384-19X. Pestilli emerged the any sight king with an 1149-42X; Parker was second with an 1147-49X while Barnhart was just two Xs behind him for third.

Barnhart's 2282-88X brought him the Frank Parsons Trophy as national champion and he retained possession of the service champion's D.I. Boyd Memorial Trophy. Silver medalist was Parker with a 2278-84X while Pestilli's 2276-78X garnered

him third place overall, and the Winchester Trophy as civilian champion. Beyerle's 2266-75X secured for her the Mary C. Camp Trophy as woman's champion and the collegiate title.

The Frazier-Simplex Rifle Club honored Robert K. Moore, the first US Indoor Smallbore Position Champion and the 1958 National Prone Champion, by gifting the Robert K. Moore Trophy, to be awarded to the senior three position champion. Moore returned to Perry to present the award to its first winner, Fred Cole.

Steve Kern, of West Bloomfield, Michigan, took possession of the RWS Trophy, symbolic of the Intermediate Senior Position Championship. Junior champion Daniel Belluzzo, from Chisholm, Minnesota, was presented the Cobb Trophy, Palmyra Pennsylvania native Cody Rutter received the Putnam trophy as the intermediate junior champion while sub junior champion Emily Holsopple was brought to the stage to accept the Stark Position Trophy.

The Army exerted its well-exercised shooting muscle and retained the team titles it had won a year earlier. The USAMU Blue team of Anti, Parker, Tamas, and Barnhart, captained by Joshua Olsen, shot a 2278-81X in the metallic sight match followed by a 2280-88X with any sights. The Black Hawk Rifle Club's foursome of Pestilli, Beyerle, Caruso, and Trevor Gathman, led by Wes Robinson, fired a 2275-89X with irons and a 2275-89X with any sights to take the silver in both events. The Black Hawks were the filling in an Army sandwich as USAMU Red, Ayala, McPhail, Robert Harbison, and Henry Gray, won both bronze medals with a 2239-84X irons and a 2253-54X any.

The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Gold wrapped up both junior titles under the watchful eye of coach Dave Cramer. The Keystone State juniors, Santelli,

Leydig, Dan Ault, and Elizabeth Leckie posted scores of 2214-55X and 2196-58X to dominate the category.

After the position team matches ended prone shooters practiced while a group of juniors, selected from scores shot during three position, assembled at the western end of Viale Range. The youngsters were representing the US in the second annual Drew Cup Trophy Match, an international prone postal sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of England in honor of NSRA member William Drew, a noted smallbore shooter of the interwar years.

The bright sun and light wind were a far cry from the wind driven rain of the previous year and the veterans of the match looked forward to improving on the score fired in the inaugural match. Captain Walt Walters, Coach Paul Vilmer, and Adjutant Paul Bennecke assigned firing points, reviewed the rules, and had them shooting away. The men's team of Ault, Rutter, and Bill Reynolds, posted a score of 1741-74X while the ladies team of Jennifer Payson, Cassandra Rauch, and Jaymi Collar, shot a 1733-72X. The rest of the team, Jason Dardas, Derek Letts, Chris Kemp, Thomas Knight, Nathaniel Holcomb, Andrew Leydeg, and Tom Csenge posted a 5759-221X. Scores have been sent to the NSRA and results will be known later this year.

The metallic sight prone championship opened under cloudy skies that soon turned into sporadic showers. As he had in position Tamas took the opening prone match. His score of 400-35X in the Dewar, 20 shots at 50 and 100 yards, bested the reigning champion, Beyerle, by an X and Anti by two. Despite the rain the conditions were good and the first match was a precursor. Beyerle quickly gained a slim lead in

the 100 yard match with a 400-34X, picking up three Xs on Tamas. Goff and Barnhart both posted 400-33Xs for second and third place.

At 50 meters Goff went head on head with Parker and squeaked out a win on a tie breaker when both scored 400-36Xs. Robinson, an X behind, settled for third. In the mentally trying meter match Beyerle went for a point while Tamas managed to stay clean. The day closed out with a win in the 50 yard match for Phillip Lawrence, a member of the visiting British Pershing Team, with a 400-37X. Barnhart and Boyd Goldsby, both shooting perfect scores with 36Xs, battled it out for second and third on the seemingly inevitable tie breaker.

Tamas was the only competitor who had stayed within the ten ring all day and won the first daily aggregate with a 1600-133X. Well within striking distance were Beyerle, Goff and Robinson, all with 1599s. There were a large number of 1598s and 1597s that also threatened the leaders, for in a prone match no lead is safe.

The day ended with a reception for the British Pershing Team hosted by the American Dewar Shooter's Club. Club President Jim Miller arranged for a cold collation after the final match so that visitors and hosts might get to know each other better. The five foot long submarine sandwich, unfamiliar fare to the visitors from the land of Toad in the Hole and Bangers and Mash, did not seem to curb their curiosity, adventurous spirit, or appetite as they tucked into the spread with great gusto. The plentiful victuals and warm comradeship did a great deal to chase away the gloom of a damp day.

Humility is only one shot away as Tamas quickly found out when he dropped a point in the second Dewar to drop into a tie with Beyerle. Match winner Joe Hein, currently training at Colorado Springs after a stellar career at the University of Alaska,

shot a 400-35X, Barnhart a 34X clean, and Edie Reynolds carded a perfect score with 31Xs. Tamas rebounded when he, Barnhart and Anti, all carded 400-33Xs at 100 yards. Luck was with Tamas, the rulebook declared him the winner and the others second and third respectively. Beyerle also cleaned the match.

Our British guests led by Lawrence, 400-34X, followed by Nick Phillips' 400-33X nearly swept the Meter Match. Kentuckian Mike Jarboe, who works for Remington in research and development, protected the honor of the US by placing third with a 400-31X. Meanwhile Tamas and Beyerle were encountering problems, Beyerle dumped two points and Tamas went for three. Beyerle now had a one point lead with the 50 Yard Match remaining. While no one in their right mind would concede the match to Beyerle she certainly was in a commanding position.

Tony Lincoln, of Britain, took the final iron sight individual match with a near perfect 400-39X. Hein and Beyerle both shot 400-38Xs with Beyerle in third. Beyerle's perfect score maintained her one point advantage over Tamas who was also clean.

Britain's Lawrence ended up winning the second day's aggregate with an outstanding 1599-127X. The visitor's individual and collective success was not unnoticed by the home team and it appeared a real battle was in the offing for the Pershing Trophy. Beyerle finished in second for the day with a 1598-126X. Anti grabbed third, five Xs behind.

With the metallic sight matches over Beyerle had retained possession of both the Hoppe and Peters Trophies as Metallic Sight and Woman's Champion with a 3197-253X. Tamas was second, a point behind but with an eight X advantage, and Anti had a 3196-237X. Our guest Lawrence won the Walter Tomsen Trophy as high senior, a

nice touch as Tomsen had won the silver medal during the '48 London Olympics while a guest of the British. Paul Gideon was awarded the Sam Gates Trophy as high intermediate senior with metallic sights. Nathaniel Holcomb and Rutter took junior and intermediate junior titles while Craig Bridge was the sub-junior champion.

The Dewar, Randle, and NRA Team matches would be fired on the first team day while the Pershing, the Made In America, and the Mentor Match would be shot on the second. The high scorer on the US Dewar Team receives a plaque and at the instigation of Paul Nordquist and me the NRA Smallbore Committee voted to name the award after the man that may be considered the father of smallbore shooting, as we know it, in the United States. The first recipient of the Edward C. Crossman Trophy was Tamas with a score of 396.

The Randle went off right after the Dewar and the ladies began at 100 yards to take advantage of the conditions. Kim Chrostowski, a University of Nebraska Rifle Team member, was the high shooter with a 400-25X earning the Eleanor Dunn Trophy.

Pennsylvania's Frazier Simplex Gold won the Whistler Boy when Santelli and Leckie, coached by Ed Borham, put together an 1842-35X.

The Army Blue Team of Anti, Tamas, Parker, and Barnhart, coached by Olsen, won both matches with scores of 1554-69X and 1555-75X. In the metallic sight match the USAMU Red was in second with a 1536-69X with Great Britain I in third with a score of 1535-67X. Great Britain's strong finish caught the attention of the gallery and augured well for them in the upcoming Pershing. In any sights the second and third place teams represented the Black Hawk Rifle Club, Black Hawk Ladies were second with a 1521-58X while the Black hawk Veterans' score of 1516-53X placed them third.

Juniors Jillian Szymonica, Casey Gabriel, Jennifer Pason, and Monica Naxera represented the New Jersey State Association well, winning both junior titles.

Eighteen months before the match Joshua Olsen, the Army coach, was patrolling in Iraq when an exploding rocket propelled grenade cost him his right leg above the knee. Not wanting to leave the service he took advantage of an Army initiative that allows amputees to remain on active duty if they can find a job that they can successfully perform.

Olsen hooked up with the AMU to serve as an instructor in Train the Trainer small arms instruction programs. He soon took an interest in competitive shooting and was making such good progress that he was brought to Perry for the competitive experience. His participation forcefully displayed that a severe handicap does not bar one from head on head competition in the shooting sports. While it was a new experience for many, some of the shooters on the line remembered the late Bill Basta, a rifleman from Connecticut who had lost a leg, as well as G. Wayne Moore from Pennsylvania who did not let the loss of his leg stand in the way of winning back to back national prone titles in 1946 and 1947.

Olsen wants to stay in the Army at least long enough to see the present conflict resolved and hopes that his experience and skills will help him teach others how to keep safe from harm. A role model without peer the young soldier is well on his way to helping the AMU fulfill its three missions which are to compete and win in Interservice, national, international and Olympic Competitions, promote the Army, and enhance combat readiness.



An early morning rain beat a monotonous drum roll on the firing line awning while anxious match officials huddled under the canvas awaiting word on the weather. They breathed a sigh of relief as the torrent slowed to a shower to a drizzle to a mist which soon melted away under a strong sun. After drawing for points ten shooters from Canada, Great Britain, and the US Teams took to the line grouped in five pairs of two, each with a coach.

An easel stood behind each pair where sat a register keeper whose duty it was to keep an unofficial score for the gallery that wandered from team to team trying to keep abreast of the action. The twelve shooters from the metallic sight aggregate were selected for the US team with the ten best firing the match under the watchful eye of Captain Edie Reynolds, Adjutant George Harris, and Head Coach Dave Cramer. Beyerle, Tamas, Anti, Barnhart, Hein, Parker, Goff, Robinson, and Paul Gideon, shot while Goldsby and Holcomb acted as alternates.

The competition and the wet weather were a challenge to the US because conditions were like those found at the Bisley and more comforting to the British than the traditional hot and humid Perry weather favored by the home team. Firing across the Dewar Course on US targets the match began at 50 yards and when the relay had come to an end the United States enjoyed a small edge over Great Britain, 1997-152X to 1994-131X, while Team Canada was in third with a 1965-126X.

With the long range skills of the visiting teams the US could ill afford to ease up. Knowing the match would be very close Reynolds took the position that if the team shot for Xs the tens would take care of themselves. She was clairvoyant: the British nibbled away at the US lead until it disappeared, the British shooting 1996-139X at 100 yards to

the US score of 1993-143X. In the end it came down to Xs and, in the closest finish in the history of the match, the US managed a win by a margin of just 25Xs. Canada, a team of great sportsman, came in third with a 3929-221X. In a game where the winner is often decided by fractions of an inch it was a close shave. Keith Ridgeway shot a 400-33X for the high score of the match and, as high rifle on the British Team, was awarded the William Grater Trophy. The book on the eleventh Pershing Match was closed and the British and the US will next face off at Bisley in 2009 for the Roberts Match.

After the Pershing ended fun matches sponsored by the NRA Smallbore Committee soon got underway. In the Randle Doubles/Mentor Match a junior and a senior pair off in an any sight Dewar. This year NRA Board member Walt Walters and Jaymi Collar won the match with a 798-52X, besting 37 other teams. Junior Bill Reynolds and Hap Rocketto were awarded special medals as Class A winners with a score of 797-59X while Robert and Chris Loughridge and topped the Class B competitors with a 790-41X.

The Made In America Match is restricted to equipment that is made in America. There are two categories, factory and modified, as well as awards for the most original gun as well as historically significant rifle.

Bob Vangene, who displayed and used a one of a kind rifle built for shooting legend Emmett Swanson by Con Schmitt, won the award for historical significance. Geoff Hornseth used a stock Remington 40x and won the most original rifle prize. The match was won by Terry Glenn who used a Harrington and Richardson 5200 to shoot a 400-24X, the only perfect score shot.

The NRA sponsored a Pershing Match banquet that evening and after an excellent buffet each team captain commented upon the match and all participants were recognized. There followed an exchange of mementos and socializing among the teams as they relived the match and anticipated the next meeting. It was a pleasant evening that gave all a chance to mingle and swap tales in a relaxed atmosphere before individual competition resumed.

The third day of the individual championship is the first day of the any sight aggregate. The weather was near perfect, the best of the tournament, mid 70s, low humidity, and relatively constant winds. Tamas, for the third time in as many opportunities, opened a phase with a win. His 400-39X showed that he was giving no quarter. Miller was in second with a 400-36X beating out Charlie Sentner who fired the same score but lost out on the long range tie breaking rule. Beyerle had a perfect score as did Carpenter. Tamas poured on more heat at 100 yards and racked up a 400-37X win while Carpenter was in second place by two Xs. Barnhart dropped six Xs and had to settle for third. Beyerle lost a point allowing Tamas to draw even in score with a small X count advantage.

The forty shots at 50 meters went to Martha Kelley who went clean with 38Xs. The relentless Tamas was holding hard and came in second with 37Xs, an X ahead of Anti. First Master was Carpenter with a 400-36X.

Gideon won the match with a perfect 400-40X, the only 40X clean of the tournament. Parker was in second with 39Xs, pushing Kelley's 39X into third because his ten was earlier in the string. The first any sight aggregate saw Tamas on top of the five 1600s on the basis of his sterling X count of 152-only eight shots out of the X ring

and just two Xs off of the National Championship record set by Mary Stidworthy Sparling in 1980. Kelly, a retired airline stewardess, taxied into second with 139Xs while Anti was in third with 138 center shots. Barnhart's 1600 helped him make up some ground lost in metallic sights and put him in contention for the national title. Glen Hewitt was the fifth 1600 but his iron sight aggregate score, like Carpenter's who fired the other 1600 of the day, was not high enough to make him a threat for the grand aggregate.

Weather on the last day of the tournament was as perfect as the third. It was now Tamas' match to lose and he knew that Beyerle was not going to give up her title without a fight. That Barnhart wasn't conceding was readily apparent by the scores fired in the first Dewar; Beyerle Tamas, and Barnhart all posted 400-39Xs, finishing in that order. At 100 yards Beyerle shot 27X clean but Barnhart won the match with an X count of 35, Tamas was second with 34Xs and Randy Schwartz, a veteran rifleman from Florida, was third with 33Xs. Beyerle and Barnhart were in the unenviable position of having to shoot a pair of 400s with high X counts in the final two matches in order to win and that effort would only pay off if Tamas dropped two points at short range. A pretty forlorn hope, but still a hope

The Meter Match does strange things to shooters' minds and so when Tamas dropped the point that opened the door a bit for Beyerle and Barnhart the news quickly spread. Word echoed back to Tamas that Beyerle and Barnhart had both done exactly same thing and the standings had not changed. At the top of the match bulletin stood Dave Jacobs, of New Jersey, first with a 400-36X, edging out Anti's 36X clean while Goff's 35X gave him third.

With the match coming down to the wire Tamas was in a commanding position, if such a thing can ever be said about a prone match. He was in the lead by one point and 24 Xs. Forty shots with a scope at 50 yards is usually a slam dunk, but with a national championship on the line nothing is guaranteed. Great Britain's Richard Fowke counted a final coup for the visitors when he won the 50 Yard Match with a 400-39X, Barnhart was second on a tie breaker and Beyerle was third with 38Xs. And what of Tamas? Tamas had to settle for first Service Master with a 400-38X. He didn't win the match but he had regained the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Champion. Gaining two points in two days to overcome a one point deficit to was quite a feat.

Lones Wigger says that Tamas is the best international prone shooter in the world at this time, and perhaps ever, based on what he has won. The old lion, arguably the finest rifleman of the 20th century, has known Tamas since he was a young cub with the Fort Benning Junior Rifle Club. Wigger believes that if Tamas earns four or five more US National Championships and an Olympic medal he could easily be the best prone shooter ever. When one considers the source these are mighty tall words.

Competitors and spectators alike filed into Hough Auditorium to honor the victors. Tamas' 6395-559X brought him the Critchfield Trophy as open champion and the Grubar Trophy as service champion. Barnhart was in second with a 6394-538X. Beyerle's 6394-513X earned her the Schweitzer Trophy as Civilian Champion, The Remington Trophy as woman's champion and the Austin Trophy for high collegiate honors.

Dewar Captain Jim Hinkle's score of 6384-481X earned him the Sam Bond Trophy as high senior. The Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy went to the new intermediate

senior champion Gideon. Junior Thomas Holcomb picked up the Whittington Trophy for topping his category while Santelli was the Intermediate Junior Champion.

On her first trip to Perry Claudia Duksa, a sub junior from Southington Connecticut's Bell City Rifle Club, topped her category. Claudia reported that she really didn't pay much attention to the scoreboard, other than to check her scores to see they coincided with her estimates and had no idea how she was doing over all. She was very surprised to find herself called to the stage to pick up the Glabb Trophy and relieved that she had elected to wear a dress to the awards ceremony and not the T shirt and shorts she had considered donning.

Fred Scharpenberg, of Sunset Beach, NC, took the 6400 any sight only aggregate while Keith Ridgeway, of Great Britain, was presented the inaugural Dick Danik Trophy as High Scoring Visitor.

## **2006**

The 2006 National Smallbore Rifle Three Position Championship opened with typical Camp Perry weather, bright sky, the temperature in the mid 70s, and variable winds. Major Mike Anti, of the Army Marksmanship Unit, started out with a winning score of 396-25X in the iron sight prone match. Close behind was team mate Private First Class David Specher with a 395-23X while Vinnie Pestilli closed out the top three with a 393-25X.

Matches may be lost prone, but they are won standing and Anti made a strong statement at reclaiming the position title he last held in 2003 with a 372-7X shot, in the words of Harry Pope, on his hind legs. Army Sergeant Shane Barnhart, reigning position champion, made it clear that he had no intent of conceding his title by posting a 370-7X.

Kim Chrostowski, a University of Nebraska All American, was hot on the Army's heels with a 369-8X.

Kneeling was final match of the day and while Anti was in control he still had to fire 40 shots. The Olympic silver medalist was on a roll and made it a clean sweep of the metallic sight matches with a 384-14X, three points ahead of West Babylon, New York's Matthew Rorke's 381-16X that was just a whisker in front of Michelle Bohren's 381-15X.

Anti had his first Krilling Trophy as iron sight champ with an 1152-46X. Within striking distance of retaining his title was Barnhart with an 1142-38X while Chrostowski held third with an 1138-41X. Steven Kern, West Bloomfield, Indiana, was high intermediate senior while Redford Michigan resident John J. McClay earned the Meister Trophy as high senior. Conspicuous by his absence was octogenarian Fred Cole, perennial senior champion, who announced his retirement from national competition earlier this year. Cole may have been absent from Perry but not from shooting as he was competing in the Empire State Games in his native New York.

The second day of position opened with the same weather as the first. Most shooters exchanged metallic sights for telescopic sights with the notable exception of Anti who kept the factory sights on his Eley Tenex fed Anschutz 2000. The any sight prone match featured three national champions finishing win, place, and show. Barnhart put up a 399-30X-closing the gap with Anti by two points, Anti had a 397-26X, and Jeff Doerschler shot a 394-16X.

Barnhart continued to make up ground on Anti by posting a 375-8X standing to Anti's 370-10X, the same score shot by second place finisher Pestilli. By coincidence

Anti hold's the Perry record in this match, 381-10X, while Pestilli won it in 2005 with a 375-10X.

Barnhart needed to pick up four points on Anti over the last 40 shots to keep from being deposed. It was nip and tuck the whole way during kneeling but Anti posted a 392-14X, just three Xs shy of Ken Benyo's 1997 record score,. Barnhart was in second with a 388-17X as Garald Wise, of Wooster, Ohio, posted a 385-13X.

Barnhart took the any sight title with an 1162-55X by three points and five Xs over Anti. The 2005 Any Sight Champion, Pestilli, found himself in second place with an 1135-39X. Bohren was high woman with an 1130-26X. McClay again topped the seniors with a 1083-28X. Olympian and former Army Reserve shooter Bill Beard returned to Perry after a long hiatus and won the any sight intermediate category with an 1106-32X.

In earning his third Frank Parsons Trophy Anti established a new position championship record score of 2311-96X, upping the record he set in 1994 by seven points. The third victory moved Anti into a tie for the second highest number of Perry position victories with Troy Bassham. They are now just 18 victories behind Lones Wigger's 21 wins. Anti, the first recipient of the D.I. Boyd Trophy as the service champion, picked up his second. The trophy is unique in that Boyd is the only person to have memorial trophies in two National Championship disciplines-smallbore position and high power rifle. Barnhart targets tallied a 2304-93 for second place.

Chrostowski was in third place with a 2263-71X marking a stellar year for the Rhode Island shooter that started when she won the Eleanor Dunn Trophy during the 2005 Randle Trophy Match. Since then has she earned a gold medal and an Olympic



quota spot of the US at the Championship of the Americas, All American status, and the 2006 women's championship Camp Trophy, the junior championship Cobb Trophy, and the collegiate title.

Pestilli was the Winchester Trophy as high civilian with a 2262-81X, McClay's two day tour de force gave him high senior honors and the Robert K. Moore Trophy, Kern repeated as Intermediate Senior Championship, the first to win the RWS Trophy back-to-back since Dave Cramer did so in 1998-99. The Putnam Trophy went to Andy Lamson, of Colchester, VT, the 2006 Intermediate Junior Champion while Emily Holsopple from Wilcox, PA was the winner of the Stark Trophy as high sub junior. Joel Dutra, Grampian, PA, was presented a Camp Perry trophy plaque as the any sight only champion.

Three position ends with the team matches. Four shooters fire a half course with metallic and any sights. In the face of whipping winds the Black Hawk Rifle Club fielded Trevor Gathman, Erin Gestl, Pestilli, and Doerschler who, under the watchful eye of Coach Manny Goodman combined for a score of 2091-39X to take the Hercules Trophy. The United States Army team of Coach Nicole Allaire, Captain Armando Ayala and firing members Anti, Barnhart, Specher, and Henry Gray fired a 2078-46X for the silver while the Burlington Rifle and Pistol Juniors, Sarah Benjamin, Amy Roderer, Tom Csenge, and Lamson put together a 2056-34 to take both third place overall and the junior title in metallic sights.

During the any sight matches The Black Hawk Rifle Club again took first place with a 2124-45X. Joel Dutra coached the Dubois Storm quintet of Kyle Smith, Justin Pentz, Christina Dutra, and Aaron Holsopple to a 2103-49X which was good for both

silver medals and the junior any sight championship. The Army Marksmanship Unit placed third with a 2064-51X.

As the position shooters packed away their gear and policed up the brass the prone shooters moved in for practice. The US Drew cup Team assembled on Viale Range to contest for that trophy for the third time. For the second time in three years the US team had to deal with tough conditions. In the first year of the new match it was overcast, raining, and gusty. This year it was winds rising as high as 20 mph.

The prone championships began with a mild fishtailing wind, three or four miles per hour, which was not a factor if the large number of cleans with high X counts shot in the first Dewar is any indication. The 2003 prone champion Paul Gideon, in a portent of things to come, won with a 400-34X. Second went to Remington engineer Brent Jarboe, of Kentucky, with a 400-32X while Cory Brunetti, 1998 prone champion, put up a 400-31X for third. Anti, sitting on the Three Position championship, was in the hunt for the rare double smallbore rifle championship got off to a rough start by dropping a point.

By the time targets were hung for the 100 yard match the wind was up to ten to 12 miles per hour and switching. Anti took no mind of the conditions as he blasted out a match winning 400-32X. Army team mate Gray was in second with a perfect score and 30 Xs while University of Akron's Melissa Lussier, sporting a brand new international shooting symbol tattoo on her right instep, came in third with a 400-27X.

Soon after the command to fire was given for the Meter Match a cease fire was called. Shooters have grown accustomed to cessations for boats in the impact area and, of late, eagles have interrupted the action. This year's surprise fauna interloper was a deer who was eventually herded from the range by a pickup truck. With

conditions getting tougher Ayala, who was sharing his point with me, connected for a 400-34X. Frank Linkowsky, of Jamestown, NY, was in second with a 400-25X. This year's Dewar Team captain, Dan Makucevich, of Portsmouth, RI, was third with a 399-33X.

The first day, made frustrating by the squirrely winds, came to a close with the 50 yard match, which was won by former Army Reserve shooters and current NRA Smallbore Committee member Dave Cramer. The Pennsylvania rifleman cranked out a near perfect 400-37X. Jarboe and Brunetti came in second and third with cleans and 36 and 35 Xs respectively. With the first day in the books Ayala was in the lead with a 1599-118X. Brunetti trailed by just four Xs while University of Alaska-Fairbanks alum Joe Hein closed out the top three with a 1598-109X. Conditions were not easy and the match was a long way from over so Gideon, Jarboe, and Ron Wigger, at 1597, were still in the running as was Anti, a point behind them.

The second day started much like the first with a mild breeze of about five miles per hour. Cramer took advantage of the situation, carding a 400-36X. Kevin Nevius, who won the 2005 Sierra Trophy at the NRA Long Range Championships was second, on a tie breaker, his 400-34X nudging out Anti's. Jarboe, Brunetti, and Gideon were also clean. The clips on the halyards on the main flag pole began to beat out a loud and metallic tattoo as the winds rose. Gusts in the 20 to 25 mph range made the flags snap straight out in the southerly wind and vibrated the target framed at 100 yards.

The wind didn't appear to bother Gideon as he put all 40 shots in the ten ring with 29 of them being Xs. The rest of the line was not as lucky with Anti managing the next

highest score, a 399-25X, to keep him in the hunt. Intermediate junior Jason Chowaniec of Middletown, CT shot 39 tens, one nine, and 22Xs to place third.

Conditions at 50 meters made perfection hard to find. Andrew Roland, a rifleman from Lake Oswego, OR, took the match with a 400-32X while Boyd Goldsby, an alumnus of the Army team and veteran of many Perrys, squeaked out a 400-24X. Ayala had a 399-31X for the third place finish. Most of the leaders had dribbled away a few points but the rest of the field had bigger problems and the standings stayed the same.

The 50 Yard match is generally considered a “give me” but with the high winds and metallic sights no one would be so bold as to presume a clean score. Never the less West Point Rifle Team coach Ron Wigger managed a 400-34X, Brunetti, aggressively trying to regain his prone title, put up a 400-32X while Jarboe placed third on a tie breaker.

The second daily aggregate went to Gideon who managed a 1598-111X on a difficult day. Anti was right behind and still in good position to win double titles with a 1596-116X. Roland was in third with a 1595-115X.

The iron sight championship was over with a trio of former prone champions at the top. Gideon, with a 3195-237X took home both the Hoppe Trophy as Iron Sight Champ and the Gates Trophy for high intermediate senior honors. Brunetti was in second place with a 3193-222X and Anti in third on the basis of his 3192-234X. Virginia McLemore won the Peters Trophy as high woman while the Tomsen Trophy for high senior went to Lones Wigger. At the half way point the shooters took a break to shoot

the various international and domestic team matches and gather their strength for the final push.

For the past several years the US Dewar Team has not been blessed with good shooting conditions and this year was no different. To hobble the team further Makucevich had finished in the top 20 but, as team captain, he could not fire. He was aided by this year's coach Bill Lange who will ascend to the captaincy next year, as is the custom, and carefully took mental notes in preparation. The ten Randle Ladies and coaches took to the line with a team that was composed, astonishingly enough, of five Randle Team novices-two of which were making their first trip to Perry. Experience paid off for Kim Chrostowski, 400-XX, who repeated as high gun and earned her second consecutive Dunn Trophy.

The Whistler Boy Match was winding down and Terry Glenn had coached his team into the gold

The metallic sight team match and the American Dewar Trophy went to the USAMU Blue team coached by Kelly Dove and captained by Josh Olsen. Sprecher, Gray, Anti and Ayala had combined for a 1536-54X. In second place was the Black Hawk Rifle Club Red with a 1533-48X while the Black Hawk Ladies were third, shooting a 1530-45X. The Connecticut Rifle and Revolver Association Gold team of Lussier, Stephanie Petrescu, Ryan Lavoie, and Matt Tomasko posted a 1500-40X to win the junior championship.

The Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association took home the Officers Reserve Trophy when Wise, Nevius, Gideon, and Rich Sarver teamed up to shoot a 1555-67X. The Black Hawk Red Team was in second just four points behind while the Stinknik

Gentlemen were in third with a 1549-60X. The Connecticut Rifle and Revolver Association Gold team juniors again took junior honors with a 1525-43X.

The Mentor Match, sponsored by the Smallbore Committee, was next on the agenda and a record number of teams participated. This match pits two man teams of an experienced shooter and a novice across the Dewar Course.

The individual matches started up again with the first day of the any sight aggregate. Gideon, Brunetti, and Anti were locked in a pretty tight pack separated by only two points. The next group of serious contenders, Jarboe, Hein, and Nevius were even further back and faced a very tough uphill battle as scope competition at this level allows for no errors. The first Dewar opened under good conditions; almost two dozen 400s were recorded. The old lion, Lones Wigger, showed that he still has a lot of competitive juice left by winning the first match with a 400-36X. Anti was not letting up on the competition and hung up a 400-34X for second Bill Neff, of Parsippany, NJ, was third with a 400-33X. Meanwhile Brunetti went clean while Nevius and Gideon each went for one.

As the targets were being hung at 100 yards the clouds began to darken and the winds started to rise. Nevius kept up his momentum by winning the match with a 400-35X with Wigger hanging tough with a 33X clean. Paul Benneche, a long time Perry veteran and smallbore Distinguished rifleman, was third with a 400-31X. There were precious few other perfect scores, three to be exact and none of them belonged to the earlier leaders. Brunetti and Jarboe leaked away two points while Gideon had a near disaster with the loss of three.

Things were seemed easier during the Meter match. There were 23 cleans with Ayala stunning all with a perfect 400-40X, but declined a run on the Camp Perry record to conserve his energy for the rest of the tournament. Anti held on to his position with a 400-36X while Goldsby closed out the top three with a 35X clean. Nevius and Gideon stopped hemorrhaging points with clean scores but Brunetti went for two.

Increasing rain accompanied by fairly consistent conditions from seven o'clock marked the end of the long day ended at short range. One out of every three competitors took advantage of the situation and fired a 400. Gray won with a near perfect 39X clean. Randle veteran Martha Kelley was just an X behind for second while Nevius solidified his position with a third place finish with the same score as Kelley. Anti, Brunetti, Gideon, and Jarboe, all were hanging in with cleans.

At the end of the day Wigger had the only 1600 of the day. Nevius continued his slow move upward with a second place finish score of 1599-141X and Ayala held his own with 1599-134X. The battle for the Critchfield Trophy had only one day left and the standings showed Gideon down nine, Brunetti 11, and Anti12. Pressing the leaders were Jarboe and Nevius who were each down 13.

The heat and rain from the previous days was gone when the shooters were called to the line for the first time on the final day. When the Dewar had finished intermediate Junior Ryan Lavoie, from Connecticut, had topped the field with a 400-38X. Scorers had to go to the rule book to see if Cramer and Jarboe's 400-36X was best and Cramer won the decision. Meanwhile Anti, Jarboe, and Nevius held their own with 400s while Brunetti and Gideon each dropped a point. Gideon now held a two point lead over Brunetti and Anti while Nevius and Jarboe were three off the pace.

One can never get too complacent in a rifle match. The wind treated the second relay pretty well but was roaring for the first and all 100 yard winners came from the second relay. New Yorker Don Gawlowicz posted a 400-30X for the win. Rich Duksa, whose daughter Claudia was defending her sub junior championship, was second with a 400-24X while Forrest Klein, of Columbus, Georgia, was third with a 399-30X. The bottom had dropped out of the grocery bag for those on the leader board but, oddly enough, there was little change in the standings. Gideon had a 399 which put him 11 down. Brunetti and Anti both had 397s dropping them to 15. Nevius had his momentum slowed by a 397 while Jarboe began to slide out of possible contention with a 395.

Tension rose as the targets were moved in. With scopes and short distance conventional wisdom would be that the leader board would hold firm. However, in unconventional situations conventional wisdom is not valid. The Meter Match went to David Jacobs, a New Jersey Resident, with a 400-35X while Jarboe, fighting tooth and nail to move up, shot a 400-24X for second. Marianne Vitito, one of the *Grande Dames* of the prone game, placed third with a 400-30X. Gideon and Anti both lost a point while Nevius and Brunetti each dropped a pair. Approaching the yard match Gideon had a four point lead over Anti who was a point ahead of Brunetti and two in front of Jarboe and Nevius. In all likelihood the top two places would not change, but the race for the bronze would be determined by the yard match. In shooting nothing is a sure thing. No matter how it looked on paper the final standing would be decided on the firing line.

The end of the nail biting championship would come with biggest target, at the shortest range, with telescopic sights. It has been said that a nine shot at 50 yards with



a scope will produced more lies than all of the tax laws in the history of man. Mike Anti showed the stern stuff that stood by him through three Olympics and he took the last match with a 400-38X. Wigger was creedmoored into second as Glenn Sulser, of Phenix City, Alabama took third with 37Xs. Gideon held on to his lead by carding a 400. Brunetti and Jarboe dropped a point each and Nevius went clean. The standings in the final daily aggregate were almost a reply of the 100 yard match. Gawlowicz won with a 1597-128, Gideon's 1597-111X was second, and Duksa, also posting a 1597-111X, was third by the rule book.

After two days of any sight competition Wigger reigned supreme, his 1596-254X topped Kelley's 1595-242X for possession of the US Cartridge Corporation Trophy and the Robert Plimpton Trophy as high senior. Ayala was third, just two Xs behind Kelley who earned both the Western Cartridge Company Trophy as high woman and the Frank Boyd Trophy as high intermediate senior.

In the battle for the championship Gideon proved that his win in 2003 was no fluke. In difficult conditions he bested Anti by four points, 6388-464X to 6384-490X. Gideon now owned his second Critchfield Trophy and picked up another Schweitzer Trophy as civilian champions as well as the Black Hawk Trophy as intermediate senior champion. Anti was presented the John J. Grubar Trophy as service champion. Locked up at 6382-478X were Nevius and Wigger with the Ohio gunsmith prevailing on the tie breaker to win the bronze. Wigger took home the Sam Bond Trophy as senior champion. Showing that he is not a one trick pony Nevius returned to Perry two weeks later for long range to retain the Sierra Trophy and added the Aitkin Trophy to his resume. Brunetti and Jarboe ended up second and third masters, behind Wigger.

Edie Reynolds, who so often is on the stage presenting trophies, had the tables turned on her when she was called to accept the Remington Trophy as woman champion. At this juncture she took advantage of her position as an NRA Director and Smallbore Committee Chair to halt the awards ceremony for a special presentation. To a standing ovation the soon to be retiring George Harris, head of NRA Rifle Competitions and long time smallbore match director, and NRA Director of Shooting Competitions M.S. "Gil" Gilchrist were recognized for their long years of service to competitive shooting. Gil will be retiring in the fall and was presented an Andy Knez original painting while Harris, who leaves in the spring, was given a supply of match ammunition from Bert's Garage. Harris will return to Perry in 2007 in the unfamiliar role of competitor and be in the hunt for the final step he needs to earn the NRA Distinguished Prone Rifle Award.

Roland topped both the collegiate and junior categories and took to the stage to be awarded the Austin and Whittington trophies. John Manzano, of Syracuse, New York was Stark Trophy winner as high intermediate junior and as high expert earned the Charlie Rogers Trophy. In her last year of eligibility Claudia Duksa repeated as sub junior champion and, as she stood behind the Glabb trophy, it was noted that she was giving the Stark Trophy a hard look. The any sight only champion was Robert E. Clark, Jr., of Charleston, South Carolina. Lamson was high sharpshooter while Chowaniec took top marksman honors.

In retrospect perhaps it was no surprise that Gideon won. In his run up to Perry Gideon shot, starting in May, Carl Jooss' 1600 Warm-Up, the Louisville Prone

Regional, the Black Hawk 3200, the Ohio Outdoor Prone 3200, the Scottish Match in Caithness Scotland, and finally, the Sidney Prone Regional.

He used virtually the same equipment that won him his first championship. His 1800 series left handed barreled action is fitted to a Hart stainless barrel contoured identically to a factory barrel is mounted in a 1978 vintage left hand Anschutz stock. Kevin Nevius pillar and glass bedded the rifle and redid the job in March to correct residual damage from the 2004 Monsoon Matches at Camp Perry. The rifle is stock with an Anschutz handstop and a Champion Shooters Supply stabilizer. He uses an older T-2 ten inch extension tube with integrated tuner is attached with a titanium collar machined by Garald Wise.

His sights system consisted of a 1/8th minute left handed Centra Long Range rear sight with a Centra Twin iris/color filter set. The front sight featured a custom-offset 22 mm tube that can be turned 180 degrees, like a Womack tube sight, to change elevation from 50 to 100 yards. The front sight had an external spirit level to complement the Gehmann spirit level attached to the receiver on Centra Track Sight bases. The front sight bases were custom made for him by gunsmith Bill Earnest. Gideon used a Leupold 36X scope rotated 90 degrees to the left mounted on Neil Johnson bases with B-Square rings. The left rotation of the scope gave him a left handed windage knob. The ammunition of choice was RWS R-50 ammunition, lot number 576WW298, the same ammunition he used in his successful championship bid in 2003. His competitors were interested to find out that he had enough left to shoot three or four more Camp Perrys.

Anti used the same gear he had in the position matches. With top flight gear and such a close finish in prone one cannot help but wonder if the physical and mental effort put into winning the position championship effected him during the five day marathon grind of the prone matches. Gideon and Nevius did not shoot position.

Nevius' equipment was self built, a 2000 Anschutz action with a Benchmark 24 inch, 17.75, twist two groove barrel in a Robertson H&H prone fiberglass stock. His sighting system consisted of a Warner #1 rear and a Centra glass front and a BR24X scope. His ammunition was Eley EPS.

The 2006 smallbore matches had some of the toughest conditions in recent memory, only one 1600 was recorded by 235 shooters over four days. Just as leaves change to mark the end of summer, the first of the high power shooters had begun to arrive; marking the end of another of the yearly shooting cycle.

## **2007**

A cold rain swept over seven men who, on the Ides of March 1907, stood looking across swampy hummocks and cattails toward the white capped surface of Lake Erie. The group's leader, Ammon B. Critchfield, had surveyed all of northern Ohio's lakefront searching for a new training camp to replace the Ohio National Guard's facility at Newark, Ohio settling on this spot near the small town of Port Clinton. And while the 15<sup>th</sup> of March may have been a bad day for Gaius Julius Caesar but it was a good one for generations of United States shooters.

Four years earlier Congress enacted Title 10 of the United States Code which, in part, stated that, "An annual competition called the 'National Matches' and consisting of rifle and pistol matches for a National Trophy, medals, and other prizes shall be held..."

They were first fired at Sea Girt, New Jersey under the direction of the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice, but, in 1907, at Critchfield 's urging, they were moved to the recently constructed ranges at Camp Perry, Ohio, in August and September of 1907. To this day they continue to be held there, having only been interrupted by two cataclysmic wars, the Great Depression, and the Police Action in Korea.

Some 323 competitors, about 10% of all three position classification card holders, opened equipment bags and readied their gear for the metallic sight aggregate. Forty shots prone at 50 meters would open the tournament and points given up here would be hard to make up in the higher positions for the wind soon began to rise. The Army made its presence known early with a 395-22 posted by 2LT Lucas Leinberger. Tarl Kempley, of Minden, Nevada was second with a 393-23X while Norwich University alumni and Athletic Hall of Fame member Erik Hoskins rounded out the top three with a 392-20X.

The standing stage is a make or break event and none of the earlier winners appeared at the top of the results bulletin. Junior Taylor Beard, her hair styled in two golden braids, led the field with a strong 376-9X. Former AMU rifleman Trevor Gathman was right on her heels with a 373-10X. Intermediate Junior Michael Kulbacki, from the Pennsylvania hot bed of smallbore shooting, was just a point and an X behind Gathman.

Beard, on a roll, took her second match of the day with a 385-14X kneeling. The AMU flexed its collective muscle with LTC Rob Harbison's second place 384-9X and Leinberger's 380-10X. Beard's two wins would prove decisive; her 1146-34X gave her

the Metallic Sight Championship and the Bill Krilling Trophy. Leinberger, placing in two of the matches, was second with a score of 1140-38X, keeping him in contention for the overall championship. New York City's Abby Fong showed that consistent performance pays off as she rose from the pack to grab third with an 1139-38X. Kempley, with an 1133-39X, Kubackli's 1132-27X, and an Army trio of Harbison, MAJ Mike Anti, and SGT Shane Barnhart all hovered within striking distance with 1131s.

Former Intermediate Senior Champion Jay Sonneborn captured the Meister Trophy as the high senior while New Jersey's Mandy Otero earned intermediate senior class honors.

Wind rushed in rain clouds as the any sight aggregate kicked off. Anti, fighting to retain his position title, lead off with a match winning 394-22X prone. A pair of Pennsylvanians pressed him closely with Justin Pentz carding a 393-24X while Steven Knight posted a 393-15X. Beard gave up the lead by dropping 13 points prone.

Anti's lead was short lived as the wind began to become a factor causing the leader board to change dramatically after standing. Army SPC Nicole Allaire Cooper posted the only standing score above 370, a 371-7X. Following was Tom Santelli, no stranger to the leveling effects of Camp Perry winds, with a 364-11X while Barnhart managed to muster a 358-5X for third.

Although Barnhart's standing score looked weak it was a good performance under the circumstances and he focused on a good kneeling, posting a 387-16X: five points and six Xs better than Kempley as Michelle Bohren burst out of the field with a 381-11X for third place. Placing in the final two matches gave Barnhart the anysight championship with a score of 1136-42X. Santelli was second with an 1122-33X while

Cooper's 1121-29X took both third and high woman honors. Charlie Daniels, a regular fixture at Perry, was high senior while John Funk earned the intermediate senior title. With the anysight match completed it was only an exercise in simple addition to determine the position national champions.

Barnhart's two day total of 2267-74X brought him to the top step of the victor's podium to accept his third Frank Parsons Memorial Trophy as well as the D.I. Boyd Trophy as high service shooter. In his still young career Barnhart has won the intermediate junior, junior, collegiate, service, and open championships in the three position discipline. With his extraordinary skill and longevity he has the very real opportunity of winning the position championship in all categories but woman and sub junior.

All American Abby Fong posted a 2252-71X for second place, high civilian, high woman, and junior honors. The diminutive Princeton sophomore staggered from the stage under the weight of the Winchester, Mary Camp, and Cobb Trophy plaques.

Harbison, edged out by a single point by Fong, placed third. The Robert K. Moore Trophy for high senior went to Leonard Remaly, of Monson, MA. The mild mannered retired engineer and amateur brewmeister, is a long time Perry veteran. John Funk returned to the stage to pick up yet another RWS Trophy as the Intermediate Senior Champion.

Erin Lorenzen, a college student from Fort Wayne, IN, became both a footnote in shooting history and the answer to a shooting trivia game by virtue of winning the collegiate title. For several years Mary McGuire, a 35 year Camp Perry volunteer, has been spearheading a drive to create a trophy to honor those many anonymous

individuals who give so freely of their time to see that the National Championships run efficiently. A bronzed sculpture, mounted on a wooden base, showing Perry's ship *Niagara* in relief was crafted by McGuire and named The Volunteer Trophy. It is unusual because the names of all of the contributors who made the trophy possible are engraved on its back. It is awarded during all three phases of the National Championships with the high woman receiving it in pistol, the collegiate champion in smallbore position, and the high woman in the service rifle championship

The new intermediate junior champion, Mike Kulbacki, was presented the Putnam Trophy just as Elijah Ellis accepted the Stark Position Trophy for his efforts in winning the sub-junior championship.

William Godward took the longest route to reach the stage on awards night. The winner of the Any Sight Only Championship started his trip in his home town of Adelaide, South Australia. He joined his fellow members of Team Australia bound for the journey to Perry which was broken by a training session at Blue Trail Range in Wallingford, CT and the metric prone regional at Bell City Rifle Club in Southington, Ct before the last 700 mile leg. The Australians, small in number but great in enthusiasm, were clad in bright green and white uniforms with gold trim which added an additional feeling of gaiety and fellowship to the position matches

The wind, that had flogged the line for the last two days, showed no sign of letting up as teams assembled for the last day of position competition swept the NRA International, Four Position, and Three Position, National Indoor Championships.

The US Army Black Team of Harbison, Barnhart, Anti, and Leinberger topped the field with a 2209-62X, just beating out the Pennsylvania Rifle and Revolver



Association foursome of Emily Holsopple, Michael Kubacki, Justin Penz, and Tom Santelli who, under the watchful eye of coach Dave Cramer, pounded out the same numerical score as the Army, but six Xs less. Not bad as the score also took the junior title which allowed the Army to escape the fate it suffered in 2003 when both position titles went to the Optimist-Acorns Junior Rifle Club. In third Place was the Army Gold team of Cooper, CPL Henry Gray, Sprecher, and SSG Armando Ayala.

Army Gold won the any sight team championship with a 2223-72X, a point and six Xs ahead of Army Black. Blue Steel a hard holding quartet of young junior ladies, Taylor Beard, Megan English, and the Fong sisters-Abby and Sandy, coached by Kim English came in third and took junior honors.

By noon the three position championship was in the books, and a small band of juniors gathered on the far eastern edge of the firing line to compete in the Drew Cup Match is a recent addition to the panoply of prone postal matches and, like its big brother the Dewar, is sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain. Eleven juniors were selected from scores fired in the position championships for three teams, one composed of three ladies, another of three young men, and a third consisting of ten members. Shooting the "English Match ", 60 shots prone with metallic sights at 50 meters, the team would compete against a field of teams from other English speaking nations. Michael Kulbacki, Justin Pentz, and Kyle Smith formed the three man team, Taylor Beard, Abby Fong, and Sandy Fong made up the ladies squad. These shooters were joined by Melissa Lussier, Megan English, Emily Holsopple, Caitlin Morrissey and Erin Lorenzen for the junior team of ten. Paul Vilmer was Team Captain assisted by Hap Rocketto who served as Head Coach.

Much to the relief of the belly shooters the wind, which had harried the position shooters for three days, blew itself out leaving just a few gentle zephyrs. Over two dozen perfect scores were posted in the first metallic sight Dewar Match and it took 38Xs for Harbison to win, 36Xs to insure Anti of second place, and a tie breaker between former champion-and brand new father-Cory Brunetti to give third place to Kevin Nevius with 34Xs. There was more than one shooter with a 400 who looked out at the unusually benign conditions thinking that with skill, and a touch of luck, there was a 1600 in the offing. After 100 yards the possible field of 1600s had narrowed considerably, only six shooters who cleaned the Dewar were still perfect. Match winner Keith Ridgway, a visiting rifleman from Great Britain, cleaned it with 33xs; Brunetti had 32 center shots, while Gray was third with 31. Anti, Harbison, and Barnhart rounded out those with 400s.

The Meter match further separated the shooters. While the Army's Sprecher won the match with a 400-33X, and New York's Don Gawlowicz posted a 32X prefect score which creedmoored Ken Benyo into third. Harbison and Barnhart were all that were left of those hopeful for a 1600 after the first match.

The race for gold in the first day's aggregate remained close throughout the final match at 50 yards. Carl Jooss, proprietor of Champions Shooters Supply-the successor to Al Freeland in the shooter supply business, was fresh off of what is apparently successful eye surgery, notched up one of three 400-33Xs and the rule books declared him winner with Ridgway in second and old Perry warhorse Boyd Goldsby third. The last match was at the shortest distance with the biggest target and, like the Dewar, over two dozen cleans were fired. Harbison held tight throughout and was the only one who

carded four perfect scores, on a day when so many hopes had ridden high on gentle winds and blue skies. Harbison may have been clean but chock-a-block behind him was a pack of hungry prone sharks. Barnhart, Nevius and Ridgway were down by one. Within a few points of the lead were Brunetti and Anti down two, Reya Kempley and Larry Parker, Sr., down three and nearly a dozen hardholders just four down.

While the day was about as nice as a Perry day can be the big buzz was not the weather but the new score reporting format. After scoring the targets they are posted to cards which transported to the computer center where they are entered and compiled. In the past one had to wait until all scores were entered and the preliminary bulletin was printed and posted to check your estimate against the official score. Just like the old scoreboard with its grease penciled entries waiting for the preliminary bulletin is a thing of the past.

The NRA had fully entered the computer age with electronic posting of scores. As a score was entered into the data base it could be read by anyone who had access to a computer, cellular telephone, or Blackberry. Screens flashed the preliminary scores to anxious competitors lounging in the assembly area, picking up a six pack of soda at the PX, grabbing a bite back in the hut, or doing anyone of the myriad things shooters do between relays. With scores available through the ether the only down side was the loss of what little exercise prone shooters might have gotten traipsing back and forth from firing line to score board.

The second day closes the metallic sight championship and determines the members of the Dewar and Randle Teams so competition resumed without a letup in intensity. The opening Dewar was an Army sweep with Sprecher, Anti, and Harbison

finishing with perfect scores and descending X counts of 37, 36, and 35 respectively. The Army was denied a sweep at 100 yards when Shawn Carpenter racked up a 400-36X. Work obligations had kept Carpenter away from his customary practice schedule making this victory particularly sweet. Anti, Harbison, and Cramer all finished with X counts of 34. Anti got the tie breaker for second, Harbison was third, and Cramer was pushed into first master.

There were still a large number of competitors who had not dropped a point going into the Meter Match, won by Catherine Kauffelt, a junior expert, with a score of 400-31X. Ridgway was second by an X and third place Erin Gestl, of Pennsylvania, was two Xs behind Kauffelt. After the third match Ridgway was the only competitor who was still clean. Harbison went for one at meters tying him with Ridgway for the overall lead going to the last match.

It looked as if the metallic sight championship would come down to Xs. In the final match of the day 55 400s were posted. Anti had a near perfect 400-39X for the win followed by Tarl Kempley's second place score of 400-38X, and Rick Curtis' 400-36X. Ridgway managed a more than respectable 400-35X. Harbison, who had a lead of 13 Xs over the British rifleman going to 50 yards, uncharacteristically dropped a point at short range and with it his grasp on the metallic sight championship.

The Hoppe Memorial Trophy, emblematic of the US Metallic Sight Championship, was awarded to Ridgway, making him the second foreign national to win the metallic sight championship. He joined fellow Britain Tony Lincoln, the 2003 winner, in a most exclusive club. Ridgway's 3199-248X gave him a tissue thin lead over

Harbison, who finished with a 3198-261X a point ahead and ten Xs behind team mate Anti. Hovering in the background was Barnhart with a 3197 and Brunetti's 3196.

Reya Kempley, fresh off of a highly success introduction to international shooting, was the Peters Cartridge Company Trophy winner as high lady with a 3195-238X. Two wily old Perry veterans, senior Jim Hinkle and intermediate senior Paul Gideon, took home the Walter S. Tomsen Trophy and the Sam Gates Trophy respectively.

As the final match began, the public address system rasped out the names of those who were in contention for membership on the Dewar and Randle Teams. Candidates met at the center of the line at the conclusion of firing to hear Dewar Team Captain Bill Lange and Randle Team Captain Janet Friddell instruct them as to time and location of the match. They also advised all to make any necessary challenges in a timely fashion and secure both a coach and a good night's sleep.

The Dewar Team assembled on the line, got a quick briefing from Lange, and then began the annual tournament. Conditions were pretty quiet but the Sun was low and the targets dark, the dim light hampering the ability to get a clear sight picture. As the match moved to 100 yards the sun rose higher and brighter light helped all. With a 394, the Army's Henry Gray was high gun and won the E.C. Crossman trophy.

The Randle Ladies moved onto the vacated line and began shooting at 100 yards to save time and moving targets. The seraphically named Leslie Grace Angeli shot a 200-14X which she paired with a 200-15X at 50 yards to lead the team and earn the Eleanor Dunn Trophy.

The Made In America Match was next, moved from its traditional time after the team matches, Allen Elliot-399-20X, and Rod Severns-393-22X, who were shooting their regular Perry rifles finished first and second. Hap Rocketto, using a classic Remington Model 37 with an Eric Johnson barrel and a John Crowley stock. It should be noted that both Johnson and Crowley, who hailed from Connecticut, were United States National Prone champions

The most unique rifle on the line was another 37. Except for the barrel, action, and sights, Howard Pitts had machined the entire rifle and its accessories from aluminum. It worked out so well he built another for his son. It is an amazing bit of artificer's skill.

At the completion of the Randle Lones Wigger called all of the assembled to gather about him for a special presentation. The Old Lion put on his spectacles and read the orders awarding International Distinguished Badge number 473 to Reya Kempley. She had been one third of the winning women's team in the prone event at the World Championships in 2006. The presentation of the Distinguished Badge to one of its newest recipients by one who has held the Badge since its inception was symbolic of the passing of traditions from one generation to another.

Speaking of traditions the CMP and NRA did a nice job at making the Perry Centennial special with a historical scavenger hunt. Armed with a questionnaire a competitor was directed about the camp to large posters that were filled with Perry and shooting trivia which provided the answers. Along the way one had to visit the Club House where the NRA Firearms Museum had set up a splendid display of historically significant firearms used at Perry from the first matches to the present. The path

eventually lead to the NRA Trophy Room where the form was turned in and graded, a high enough score earning a Camp Perry centennial pin.

The Whistler Boy Match was won by the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver association Team with a score of 1861-45X fired by Jake Costa and Ryan Lavoie who were coached by Dave Lyman. Two teams from the Texas State Rifle Association finished second and third with scores of 1853-52X and 1853-44X.

The score reporting was very quick and it was reported that the Army had won, *Precision Shooting Magazine* Team Brennan was in second place overall in the metallic sight match, some 15 points behind the Army and 11 ahead of the third place Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Juniors.

The anysight scores came up on the internet and The Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association, fielding a team of Rich Sarver, Carl Jooss, Kevin Nevius, and Paul Gideon won the team event with a score of 1562-27X. The Army placed second and third overall while the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Junior Gold Team lead its category.

With the end of the team matches the Randle Doubles Mentor Match began. Sponsored by the NRA Smallbore Committee it teams an experienced shooter with one less practiced in the art of prone shooting. Sometimes the mentor is a senior and the one being mentored is a junior and sometimes it is just the opposite.

Some consider it an opportunity to get a practice run over the Dewar Course with a scope the day before the anysight championship begins but most recognize it as a great opportunity to pass both the arts and traditions of the prone game from one generation to another. This year Harbison teamed up with Nicole Harpster and they

posted a near record score of 800-59X, with Harpster out shooting her mentor by three Xs!

With the last match of team day completed the line emptied of shooters who returned to huts, modules, and condos to prepare mind, body, spirit, and equipment for the last two days of the individual tournament.

The last half of the National Prone Championship opened with Ridgeway, Harbison, Anti, and Barnhart all within two points of each other. Based on past experience, and barring any major disasters or wild weather conditions, these four would be battling it out for the Critchfield Trophy. It would be a long two days; the execution of each shot a major decision, for any sight competition levies a harsh penalty for the slightest lapse in judgment.

With the conditions the best they had been all week the Dewar Match results indicated that any sights would be a contest that paid a premium on hard holding. Melissa Lussier set the pace for the day with a perfect 400-40X, following close on her tattooed ankle was Hoskins who lost a single X while Steve Kern, dropping just two Xs, placed third. With 80 more 400s shot one out of every three shooters reached some degree of perfection in the first 40 shot string.

Kenny Benyo, a great position shooter, had found that business and family pressure so deeply cut into his available training time that he had to make the tough decision to cut back on position and devote his limited time to prone. Things paid off for him as he topped the match bulletin in the 100 yard match with a 400-36X. The Army's Armando Ayala, a former running target shooter who converted to smallbore when his



discipline was dropped from Olympic competition, and Hoskins each racked up 35Xs with Ayala getting second place.

The Meter Match is quite often the deciding match in a smallbore tournament. The target seems to have an almost a mystical power to confound even the best shooters causing shots to stray almost unbelievable distances from the center. The target is a bit further away than the yard target and a bit smaller and therein resides its eerie power. Tarl Kempley, Brunetti, Hoskins, Jooss, Gideon and Jaymi Collar were unimpressed, all shot 400-38Xs with Kempley, Brunetti, and Hoskins finishing as the top three.

Almost two dozen shooters took to the line for the 50 yard match with the possibility of a perfect day just 40 shots away. One hundred and eleven perfect scores were posted and, of them, 14 of them would be the final score needed to gain membership in the 1600 club. J.M. Connor, of Jackson Michigan, Anti, Cooper, and Mike Jarboe all posted 400s with 39Xs, finishing in that order. Jarboe would be odd man out and settled for first master.

For the first time that day Hoskins did not place in the money, but his effort paid off with his first 1600, with 149Xs, it was the score that won the day. However, he had arrived at his victory by a path few would choose to follow at Perry.

After Three Position practice Hoskins strolled down Commercial Row, ending up in Champions Choice. He noticed a test target on the wall with the smallest group he had ever seen accompanying an Anschutz 2013 on display. He didn't need a rifle as he liked his stock but had been thinking of updating his 1984 vintage Model 1813 action when opportunity was right, which seemed to be right then. After a bit of haggling with

Homer Pearson, as the top salesman of Bay State Truck and Trailer it is a skill at which he holds a Master card, he was sold the action.

It sat in his Mod until prone practice day. He dropped it into his Grunig & Elmiger stock and bore sighted it. Shooting it at 50 yards he was pleased enough with its performance after just 40 shots to give it a try in the matches, a bold move by anyone's definition. The only problem he had was that it was much lighter rig than the full length Stainless Hart barrel with a long extension tube which he had been using. This proved to be his downfall on the first day of irons. The unaccustomed muzzle jump at shot release cost him four points. He soon adapted to the new combination to do well enough to shoot a 1598 on the second day, earning him a spot on the Dewar Team. Along the way he also shot his first ever 200-20X target. After hearing of Hoskins course to victory twice national prone champion Paul Gideon opined that, "there was a lot of Voodoo going on."

The story of his ammunition selection is just as extraordinary. He shot a lot of Eley Tenex EPS that he had tested in his old action. After having purchased a case of the "knot lot" the week before Perry he knew it would not arrive at his home before his departure. He therefore arranged to have it sent to a friend in Syracuse, New York, where he stopped en route to Perry pick it up.

Harbison finished second in the third aggregate with a 1600-142X, while Benyo's 1600-141X was good for third. Ridgway still held a one point lead as he, along with ten others, also posted 1600s.

The weather on the final day of the individual championship was a continuation of the fine days that preceded it. There would be no room for error as the mild conditions were unlikely to play a part in the eventual outcome.

Bill Beard shot one of three 400-38X in the Dewar to set a hot pace with Harbison and Kern following him. They may have been missing from the top three but Ridgway, Anti, and Barnhart did not drop any points.

The wind kicked up a bit during the 100 yard match and, while there were about four dozen 400s in the Dewar, the number of perfect scores dropped to an even dozen at long range. Gideon topped the pack with a 400-37X, closely followed by Anti's 36X effort, and four Xs of the lead was Jarboe. Harbison and Barnhart dropped a point each while Ridgway went for two. The men at the top were now separated by Xs and the Meter Match now loomed large.

Cooper won the Meter on a tie breaker with team mate Gray each carding a 400-37X. In third place was Harbison with a 400-35X allowing him to leap in front of Ridgway who lost two points. However, Anti and Barnhart were both clean and the overall championship was far from being decided.

When a four day prone tournament comes down to the final scope match at 50 yards there might be a tendency to consider things wrapped up. However, in baseball no game is over until there are 27 outs and no match is done until the last shot is fired and the challenge period ends. There would be more than a few tense shooters marking targets for Match 346.

Not unexpectedly 400s popped up on the scoreboard like mushrooms after a rain following the final 50 yard scope match. Edie Reynolds, chair of the NRA Smallbore

Committee, was match winner with 37 Xs. Kern showed up in the winner's circle again, Creedmoored into second place with a score identical to Reynolds. In third place was Harbison, only four Xs from perfection. Anti and Barnhart went clean while Ridgway lost a chance to be the first British shooter to win the US National Championship when he dropped another point. The day ended with Anti hanging up the only 1600, Harbison was second with a 1599-139X and Jarboe followed with 132 center shots. These three would be the main players in the anysight aggregate.

Scores became final when the challenge period ended and that official data sorted out the four riflemen who had battled it out for the past week. Harbison's 3199-281Xs made him the anysight champion and possessor of the US Cartridge Company Trophy. Martha Kelly, no stranger to accepting National Championship Trophies, again found herself mounting the steps to the stage to accept the Western Cartridge Company Trophy as high woman. Judge Jim Hinkle was high senior and walked away with the Robert H. Plimpton Trophy. Paul Gideon was awarded the Frank Boyd Trophy as high intermediate senior.

Leading an Army sweep of the top three positions in the grand aggregate was Rob Harbison, who emerged as the 2007 prone champion with a score of 6397-542X, buoyed up by a pair of 1600s, to take the Critchfield Trophy as well as the Grubar Trophy as service champion. Olympic medalist and team mate Mike Anti was in second with a 6396-544X. The margin of victory was very thin as a point more for Anti, or one less for Harbison, would have switched the final standing based on a two Xs difference over four days. Barnhart, who had been bidding to become both the position and prone champion in the same year, settled for third with a 6394-510X.

Keith Ridgway, who came within a whisker of mounting the podium in place of Barnhart, was presented the Dick Danik Memorial Trophy as high visitor. His spirited campaign, which resulted in a 6393-496X and first master honors, was closely watched and loudly applauded by the field.

The William P. Schweitzer Trophy Plaque is awarded to the civilian national champion, this year Ken Benyo who punched out a 6392-515X, and has an interesting history. The Schweitzer family had a number of gold medallions struck in memory Schweitzer to be presented annually in honor of one of the premier prone shooters of the 30s and 40s. The original medallions were quite valuable and, as such, were only awarded twice: a plaque being awarded to a previous winner who repeated for the third time. A record search indicates that the last medallion was presented to the 1993 National Champion Carolyn Millard Sparks.

Reya Kempley's 6387-474X was the top score shot by a woman and garnered the Remington Trophy while senior champion Jim Hinkle copped the Sam Bond Trophy with a 6386-438X. Two time national champion Paul Gideon was the intermediate senior champion picking up his third Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy in as many years.

Former Florida prone champion, Curtis Gagne, a sophomore engineering major and member of the Tennessee Tech rifle team, captured the Austin Trophy as collegiate champion with a 6376-400X. Melissa Lussier is in her last year as a junior and went out in style, adding the national junior title and the Whittington Trophy to her shooting resume.

Intermediate junior Sharpshooter Heather Greathouse, a mainstay of New Hampshire's Cheshire County Fish and Game program, put up a 6372-422X to capture

the Stark Prone Trophy plaque as well as high sharpshooter honors while Elijah Ellis, of Kingsport, Tennessee, won the Glabb Trophy as sub junior champion.

Larry Hoffman's 6365-424X earned him the any sight only championship. Camp Perry veteran Bill Beard returned to competitive shooting after a long hiatus and captured expert class honors with a 6383-477X. Laszlo Bogar, another Cheshire County Fish and Game shooter, duplicated team mate Greathouse's class win as he took marksman class honors.

The vacuum created by the departure of the smallbore community was quickly filled as highpower shooters packed modules and huts to bursting. After Perry the smallbore shooting cycle resumed its predictable move through the last few outdoor matches of the year and into the gallery for the short days and long nights of winter. The memories from this past Perry will feed endless conversations that will be sure to keep the glowing embers of outdoor shooting, banked for the winter, glowing brightly. Speculation and anticipation will help pass the time in the off season as we watch the leaves change and fall, the snow pile up against fence posts and, at long last, the birds returning as the harbinger of the next outdoor season.

## **2008**

As the 2008 Three Position Championship opened the atmosphere was electric with the anticipation of new championship records to be set. During the winter the position match program had undergone its first remodeling since the 1978 switch over from four positions to three positions. The three position format would remain but the target was changed from the international A-50 to the NRA Conventional A-26 "Bucket Bull." Some thought it a regressive move but the hope was that it would bring out

shooters who were intimidated by the tight international rings. A new target meant that all Camp Perry position records were vacated and this year's match winners would find their names in the 2009 match program. There may have been a slight dilution of the competitive pool as the likes of Mike Anti, Jamie Beyerle, Emily Caruso, Sandra Fong, Jason Parker, and Stephen Scherer were busy preparing for the Olympics in Beijing just as several of the Army shooters were tuning up for the upcoming International Military Sports Council (CISM) championships but there still was a full field of seasoned hardnosed rifleman.

International Distinguished shooter Reya Kempley became the first new record holder, on a hot windy day, as she punched out a near perfect 400-39X prone with iron sights, the best of the 40 possible scores posted in the first match. Army Specialist Michael McPhail and Brent Brooks, a junior from Pennsylvania, each posted a 400-37 were second and third.

For several years the United States has been participating in the British National Smallbore Rifle Shooting Association Drew Cup Postal Match. Based on scores fired in the prone match Brent Brooks, Michael Liuzza, Michael Burzynski, Jocelyn Libretore, Sarah Benjamin, Hannah Muegge, Amanda Luoma, William Zander, Forrest Klein, Emily Hopsopple, Kyle Smith, and Brandi Eskew were selected to fire the 60 shot metallic sight prone match upon completion of the position team matches.

Shooting stands were set in place as the competitors prepared for the standing match. While it was expected that scores would be high Keystone State junior Justin Pentz set a high standard with a 392-14Xs. Another junior from Pennsylvania, Kyle Smith, was right behind him with a 391-10X. The Kempley name popped up again for

third, but this time it was Tarl Kempley who shot a 390-17X. With two thirds of the match done the leaders began to emerge with Pentz and Smith tied for the lead, not bad for junior Experts, the two Kempleys, Specialist George Norton, of the AMU, and Michelle Bohren were knotted just a point behind the leader.

The position matches were now taking on the flavor of a prone match, where each point lost is almost major catastrophe, as the metallic sight championship moved into its final stage. Kneeling is a position where scores are almost as good as prone and the larger target would severely punish any error.

As expected near perfect scores would be needed to win the rubber match. Pentz and Bohren went head to head and shot for shot with Pentz emerging the victor by a scant three X margin as both shooters fired 398s with Pentz having 25 Xs. In third place was Michigan's Steven Kern with a 397-20X.

The tournament had reached its midpoint with the end of the metallic sight matches and Justin Pentz emerged the victor with an 1198-66X and possession of the Bill Krilling Trophy. Making the win a bit sweeter was the fact the Krilling had returned to Perry after a hiatus and was a witness to the win. In addition to the Krilling Trophy Pentz also picked up the brand new George Alves Memorial Trophy as high junior in the metallic sight aggregate. The trophy was presented in memory of Alves by the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association in recognition of Mr. Alves' lifetime dedication to the shooting sports as a coach and mentor to hundreds of junior shooters and teams. Mr. Alves was also long-time volunteer at the National Matches at Camp Perry, and was named an NRA Volunteer of the Year. It was presented to the young champion by Mrs. Alves and her daughter Ethel Ann, a fine shooter in her own right.



Bohren, gave Pentz a run for his money, and was hovering just a point back at 1189-70X. In third, with an 1186-68X, was Norton. Jay Sonneborn, of Connecticut, earned the Meister Trophy as high senior with metallic sights.

The second half of the position championships is an anysight event and, with the new target, there would be precious little room for error. The day was as hot as the first but the wind seemed to be calmer than the previous day. Taking advantage of the condition change Specialist David Sprecher, from Fort Benning, shot a perfect 400-40X to win the prone match. His team mate Norton was second with 38Xs while Michael Aeberhard, a Wisconsin rifleman took third with a possible with 37Xs, Creedmooring Reya Kempley and Army Sergeant Henry Gray who became first master in their respective categories. As all at the top of the leader board went clean the standings did not change as they competitors moved into the standing match.

The top three standing scores were lead by Reya Kempley's 397-22X. In quick order behind her were Sprecher with a 396-18X and Norton's 395-24X and this would be the standings of the top three moving into the kneeling stage which would decide the anysight championship. In the grand aggregate, with the other leaders giving up points there was a slight shifting as Norton moved ahead of Pentz by three points and Bohren slipping into third.

There was some extraordinary shooting in the kneeling match with Smith shooting a 400-25X. Sprecher was a point behind with a 399 but had 28Xs. Steve Goff, a former indoor and outdoor national champion, made his mark with a 399-23X. The final match turned things around and none of the metallic sight winners made the cut for the top three on the second day. Sprecher posted an 1195-86X for the

championship while Goff and Reya Kempley had a close contest with Goff taking second with an 1191-70X to Kempley's 1190-77X.

A nail biter of a contest had developed between Norton, Smith, and Bohren for the overall championship when Pentz dropped out of contention after standing. The soldier had built up 1,181 points to the junior's 1,974 as they moved into kneeling. A comfortable but not insurmountable lead as Norton found out when Smith all but erased it with his perfect score kneeling. The match went down to Xs to determine the 2008 national position champion and it was here that a hoard of Xs, 151 to be exact, built up over two days stood Norton in good stead for Smith was only able to muster 122. The key to Smith's silver medal lay in his perfect kneeling as he was just a single point ahead of Bohren who had him by 18Xs. The first conventional national three position championship was the closest by score and Xs in the history of the position matches. A point or a few Xs either way would have made Smith the first junior to win the title or Bohren the second woman to stand on the top step of the podium.

As it was Norton picked up the Parsons and Boyd Trophies along with a \$500 gift card and a Walther KK Match rifle while Bohren took home the Mary Camp Trophy as high woman. Smith was the recipient of the Winchester Trophy as high civilian and Cobb Trophy as top junior.

Moore Trophy winner Len Remaly repeated as the senior champion while Steven Kern took home his third RWS Trophy in four years as the intermediate senior champion. All American Erin Lorenzen, who will be entering her junior year at Texas Christian University and is coached by Karen Monez-the only woman ever to win the

national outdoor position title, made a return visit to the stage to accept her second Volunteer Trophy as the collegiate champion.

Katie Fretts, one of three Pennsylvania shooters to win a position title this year, was the intermediate junior champion and was awarded the Putnam Trophy while Jennifer Smith-no relation to Kyle-of Mentor, Ohio picked up the Stark trophy as the sub junior champion. Joel Dutra, of the Dubois Pennsylvania Rifle Club was the anysight champion.

The day ended with a reception sponsored by the NRA at the Camp Perry Club House honoring Lones Wigger on his selection to the United States Olympic Hall of Fame. There was plenty of free finger food and a goodly crowd of well wishers. Both NRA President John Seigler and Wigger spoke about the honor and its meaning to the shooting sports. Wigger was in fine spirits, thanked all that supported his nomination, and took the time to meet and speak with all who wished to speak with him.

It had rained over night but the relief was short lived as the sun began to raise a mirage from the damp grass as fifty-one teams took to the line in the first of the two team matches, shot on metric targets, to contest for the metallic sight Hercules Trophy. When all was said and done it was nearly a clean sweep by Pennsylvania teams. The Army mounted a strong attack and the team of four Specialists came away with the victory with a score of 2262-78X shot by McPhail, Sprecher, Norton, and Nicole Cooper under direction of Sergeant First Class Michael Moore and Staff Sergeant Joshua Olsen. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Dubois team made up of juniors Pentz, Fretts, Kyle Smith, and Aaron Holsopple posted a 2230-62X under Captain Dave Cramer and Coach Joel Dutra was second overall and high junior team. The juniors

fended off a 2226-54X challenge by the Pennsylvania Ridgeway team forcing them into third.

After a change over period the team events resumed as 48 teams took to the line in pursuit of the any sight Caswell Trophy. The Army swept the team matches ending up on top with the scope but with a slightly different team as Specialist Henry Gray replaced McPhail to help the team post a 2291-91X. The Corporal Digby Hand Schützenverein, based at the Quaker Hill Rod and Gun Club in Oakdale, Connecticut, was in second with a 2245-70X shot by Lisette Grunwell, Jeff Doerschler, Erik Hoskins and Kim Chrostowski who were captained and coached by senior champions Sonneborn and Remaly. Having finished fourth overall in the metallic sight match this was some vindication for their skills. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Dubois was in third place and also copped its second junior title. With the end of the final position match the prone shooters moved onto the line to begin practice while the Drew Team reported to Viale Range to shoot its match while others returned to huts, modules, and condominiums to both prepare for the awards ceremony and pack for the trip home.

In the aftermath of the first three days the shooters expressed great delight in the new transparent challenge procedure. Until this year challenges had to be made in the blind, you looked at the target in the brief time it took to effect a target change, wrote down the score, and challenged if it did not agree with either your memory or written record. After a wait, which always seemed like days, you approached the challenge window and learned the news. Now all targets were displayed for public viewing, although you needed a competitors badge to gain entrance. Competitors were allowed

to view, but not touch, their targets while a volunteer held it for you as you decided whether to challenge. If the choice was to challenge than one just filled out a form, paid two bucks, and stood in line awaiting the challenge staff who would rescore you're the target right there and then. Competitors were able to discuss the final result and plead their case.

Scores were up quickly electronically as they were posted as soon as they were scored. With the proliferation of electronic gadgets, and the ample Wi-Fi coverage available, few had to wait long to confirm their results. The printed bulletins were just as quick in appearing. This combination gave ample opportunity to take care of any challenges between relays or before leaving the line for the day, greatly reducing competitor stress. In addition to the score reporting many were entertained by the Championship blog on the NRA website that was continually updated passing on scores, match results, and interesting back ground stories.

At the start if the position awards ceremony Match Director Howard Moody recognized all NRA position and prone Distinguished shooters present. NRA President Seigler then spoke about the virtues of competition and the sponsorships that the NRA was soliciting in order to build a competition endowment fund to insure a high quality awards program. The Drew team was called to the stage and presented pins and brassards by Team Captain Dr. Paul Villmer, Coach Hap Rocketto, and Adjutant Walt Walters. In his closing remarks Moody reminded all to pick up awards before departing and also thanked the various sponsors whose donations did much to fatten and expand this year's prize purse. As the winners were congratulated on the stage others headed

to either the awards window or their beds to prepare for next day, be it travel of competition.

For the three days of position it had been hot, breezy, and clear but prone began with an overcast that promised, and delivered, some rain during the early morning. After a soaking shower it remained overcast but the temperature rose making for an uncomfortably humid day. The metallic sight matches this year had added importance because they would not only set the stage for the championship but would be used to select the 12 shooters who will represent the United States in the 2009 Roberts Trophy Match in England next September.

After the opening shots of the Dewar match Dan McCabe, a relative unknown from Massachusetts who was shooting as an unclassified Master in his first trip to Perry, Cory Brunetti, former prone champion, and noted position shooter Ken Benyo of Pennsylvania were knotted in a three way 400-35X tie which McCabe won with Brunetti and Benyo finishing two and three. Ties continued as Mark Nation, a junior from North Carolina with some high power skills, and McPhail each shot a 400 31X at 100 yards. Nation was determined to be the winner while New Jersey's Alexander Rivera was third with a 29X possible.

The targets were brought in for the 50 meter match and Tarl Kempley won it with a 300-36X. McPhail was in second with 33Xs, while Rick Curtis, an Arizona rifleman slid into third on a tie breaker over Paul Parker from New Hampshire. With the targets at 50 yards some previous winners again appeared in the top three. The solidly built Glenn Dubis, four time Olympian and world record holder, won with a 400-39X. McPhail and Kempley finished second and third with 400-37X and 400-36X respectively.

Even though each individual match was won with a 400 the first 160 shots saw no 1600s. McPhail won the day with a 1599-136X as Kempley shadowed him with a 1600-130X and Justin Tracy, who opened the 2008 season by winning the Pennsylvania Metric Prone Regional in May, was third with a 1599-121X.

The second day of metallic sights opened with clear weather, a slight haze, and a promise of rain which would bring about some unusual happenings. Rick Curtis got off to a fast start by winning the Dewar with a 400-36X while Norton, Mark Trew, another of the many Pennsylvania hard holders, Perry veteran Boyd Goldsby, Dubis, Gray, and McPhail all shot 35Xs. A quick look at the rule book placed Norton and Trew in second and third while the rest were relegated to their various categories. Almost as soon as the targets were hung at 100 yards the wind began to kick up and Expert Robert Sedlacek was the only one of the 301 shooters to keep all shots inside of the ten ring. As Sedlacek had dropped two points in the 100 yard stage there would be no 1600 this day. Each carding a 399-27Xs Nations and Dan Holmes, of the Hopkinton Massachusetts Sportsmen's Association, finished second and third overall while Ginger McLemore's identical score being only good enough for first master.

The sky began to darken and the temperature started to drop as the 50 meter targets were being hung by the second relay but the rain held off until the last card of the first relay. The rain began to drum on the tops of tents and canopies as the second stage of the first relay began to fire but firing continued until lightning began to flash in the immediate vicinity. Firing was halted and the range was evacuated until the storm moved off. Only a few shooters had not completed firing before the Meter Match was interrupted and it was decided that the 50 yard match would be fired and those few who

needed a continuation of fire would be given that time at the end of the day. With the Meters in limbo the yard match was shot and in the calm after the storm long time Judge Jim Hinkle, a senior from Grayson, Georgia, cleaned it with 39Xs. There were three 400-38X and McPhail and Dubis finished two and three while Reya Kempley was creedmoored out and settled for first master.

As the rest of the line was packing up the unlucky two or three shooters who had yet to complete the Meter Match were called to the line to finish up. When all was said and done Tarl Kempley won with a 400-29 followed by Craig 'Daniel with 28X and Kern with 27X and, like the Yard match, a tie breaker sent former prone champion Paul Gideon to the top of the Master class.

Tarl Kempley won the day with a 1598-115X, a definite comment upon the conditions. Gideon was second with a 1598-108X while Dubis closed out the top three with a 1587-128X, 17 Xs ahead of first master McCabe.

The public address system called candidates to the center tower for both the Dewar and the Randle Team briefings. Many shooters called to the meeting were more than familiar with the information that was being distributed as they were veterans of one or both of the important international postal matches, making them all the more impatient because they were distracted by thoughts of the Roberts Team selection. The announcement of the top 12 awaited nothing more complex than the computer adding some numbers and spitting them out. Once this was done challenges might change the roster so it would be some time before all was settled.

The final results of the metallic sight aggregate settled the Roberts question. Tarl Kempley was the newest winner of the Hoppe Trophy based on his 3197-245X tally.



Within striking distance were silver medalist McPhail who put together a 3195-270X, just eight Xs up on third place finisher Dubis. There were two other 3195s posted by Tracy and Gideon indicating that the Critchfield Trophy would be not be won easily. The Peter's Cartridge Company Plaque went to high woman Ginger McLemore while senior champion Dave Cramer won the Tomsen Trophy and Gideon took home the Gates Trophy as the intermediate senior champ.

The Dewar Team roster, which was the de facto Roberts team list, was posted and Tarl Kempley, McPhail, Dubis, Justin Tracy, Gideon, McCabe, Mark DelCotto, Curtis, Kevin Nevius, Sprecher, Gray, and McLemore could begin to think about England in 2009. Cramer, who had finished 12<sup>th</sup>, had already been named Roberts Coach, allowing McLemore to move into the vacant shooting position. NRA Smallbore Committee Chair Edie Reynolds was once again appointed Captain, Hap Rocketto was selected to be Adjutant while H. Q. Moody will be Team Leader.

On Team Day seven matches are scheduled for the same time period that is normally filled by four, making it the most hectic and action filled day in the entire championship. . The Dewar and the Whistler Boy are the first two out of the chute at about 8AM. The Whistler Boy is a two man team match that is an aggregate a 60 shot three position match and a 40 shot Dewar course and runs until about noon. While the juniors plug away the Dewar, Randle, and Made in America Match are conducted on Viale Range. At about 12:30 the two prone team matches kick off and last until about 3 PM when the Mentor Match starts.

It was a fine morning to shoot and the field couldn't help but notice that Tarl Kempley was squadded on point one and his sister Reya on point 16. From a historical

perspective it was noteworthy as it was only the third time that a brother and sister appeared together on a Dewar roster, the last was in 1986 and 87 when Ron and Deena Wigger were team mates.

Watching conditions was a made a great deal easier this year because Bill Lange and Rick Duksa, of the Southington, Connecticut Bell City Rifle Club teamed up to make and donate a forest of wind flags. Lange, the 2007 Dewar Captain, was dismayed at the inadequate number wind flags and enlisted Duksa to help remedy the situation. They fabricated some five dozen bright orange wind flags that easily swiveled in the wind registering both direction and speed. Three wind flags were located between each firing point at about ten, 30, and 75 yards. Dubis shot a 395-10X for high score and had won the Crossman Trophy as a consequence

The Army Team of McPhail, Norton, Sprecher, Gray and team officials Moore and Olson, posted a 1565-73X for the win. They were followed by the Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association and the Black Hawk Ladies. The junior title was wrapped up by the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association who fielded Claudia Duksa, Mike Burzynski, Jake Costa, and Remington Lyman.

Digby Hand Precision Shooting Team Woble turned in a solid score of 1560-68X, averaging 390, with Hoskins turning in a phenomenal 395-27X, the second highest individual score in the entire match and captured third place over all behind the second place Army and the champions, The Ohio Rifle and Pistol Association's 1575-90X. There was no dishonor here as Ohio, with Nevius, Gideon, Carl Jooss, and Garald Wise shooting under the scope of Rick Sarver, has won the any sight match for the last several years all the time taking a lot of good natured, but baseless, ribbing about a

home range advantage. The Somerset New Jersey Rifle Clun Juniors, Alexander Rivera, Kiersten Frenchu, Joseph Todaro, and Jordan Turiano took the junior crown.

Terry Lightner's Alexandria Junior Rifle Team had won a very close Whistler Boy Match against Don Benson's Texas State Rifle Association team. Pennsylvanians David Sloan and Tom Santelli just slid by Samuel Muegge and Josh Hartwick by a slim 12 X margin as each team had an 1871. The Ferry Brook New Hampshire team, always a threat to win, was third.

The Randle Doubles/Mentor Team match filled 102 points. The match, which takes its doubled barreled name from the trophy awarded and its intent, has been steadily growing in popularity since it was introduced by the NRA Smallbore Committee several years ago. Rick Curtis and Amana McMullin teamed up to win the Randle Doubles/Mentor in a close run contest with George Norton and Caitlin Morrissey and Charles Kemp and Michael Liuzza. All three teams went clean and Curtis' outstanding 400-40X nailed down the victory for his team Norton and Morrissey both shot 400-32Xs for both consistency and second while Kemp and Liuzza were and X behind them. Pat O'Brien and Colleen Tillson were first class B while Curtis Gagne and Kathleen Mulligan were second in class.

As a rule the winner of the metallic sight championship is in a position to control the match because few points are surrendered with a scope-it is theirs to lose. This year things would be quite different because of a wild and gusty wind that tore in from the northeast. The windmills screamed and bucked as the first relay headed down range to hang their targets. Wedges were pounded into the ground in an attempt to minimize frame movement. Extra clips appeared to insure that the targets would not

blow loose, and it seemed that the competitors would need all of the skill of a foretop man on a China Clipper doubling Cape Horn to secure the wildly blowing targets.

The wind was buffeting the shooters from one edge of the ten ring to the other at 50 yards and it would be no better at 100 during the Dewar match. This was, in the words of the West Point Rifle Coach Ron Wigger, "A leader's worst nightmare." It was borne out as Kempley dropped two points but managed to hang on to the lead because all those behind him dropped points except for Cramer went clean with 26Xs to win the match. Brunetti and Nevius placed second and third with identical 400-24X but there were only two other possible scores, both 400-20x fired by James Johnson and Olsen of the Army.

At 100 yards the shooters tried to get a low a legally possible while taking up extra notches on their slings: all ready pulled tight the shooting aids were beginning to take on a likeness to the most exquisite torture devices of the Spanish Inquisition. The wind, gusting over 25 miles per hour, did not abate and took its toll on Kempley, as well as most everyone else, and he lost seven points giving up the lead to Gideon, who placed third in the match with a 399-21X. Gideon was followed by Tracey and Nevius two points behind him, and then Kempley and Cramer, three back. Goff took the match with a 399-26X with Erik Hoskins in second with 22Xs.

The wind's effects were somewhat negated when the targets were moved back for the Meter Match, but the ten ring is still small. Mark Nations held hard enough to shoot a 400-31X for the win with Sprecher on his heels with 30Xs. Dewar veteran Larry Parker, Sr., was third with a 400-24X. Meters saw Tracy creep into first when Gideon

lost five points, Kempley held his own at second while Nevius crept up to match Kempley.

Things quieted down a bit, although the wind switched to eleven o'clock, for the 50 yard match. Reflecting the change there were 400s aplenty with four of them having 39Xs, match winner Samuel Muegge , of Texas, Pennsylvania's Erin Gestl, and Gray finished one two three. Tracy had the fourth 400-39X and was first master. It was a terrible day and Erik Hoskins emerged battered but victorious with a 1595-115X. Nevius was in second with the same score and 111Xs while Steve Kern rounded out the top three with 107Xs and the last of the 1595s. At the end of three days the leader board showed Tracy at the top with 4788 points, Kempley and Nevius with 4787s were second with Gideon and Cramer holding close with 4786 and 4785 respectively.

As the somewhat shell shocked shooters brought their gear to the line it was apparent to many that the last day was blessed with "1600 weather", if it held. It was pretty apparent that the prediction was well founded when two 400-37s didn't even make into the top three. Army Major Dave Croft, who was out on his own and not assigned to the AMU, won, Tracy was second and hung onto his one point lead as a result, and Wily old Boyd Goldsby showed that he still remembered at thing or two about prone shooting. Kempley, Nevius, Gideon, and Cramer all went clean so the leader board did not change.

If there was to be any change in position at the top it was more than likely to happen at either 100 yards or in the Meter Match. Cramer won the 100 yards with a 400-35X while Dubis and Gideon's 400-33X left them tied and at the mercy of the rule book which gave second to Dubis. Tracy gave up two precious points allowing Kempley

and Nevius to move back into first. Tracy and Gideon were tied up in second while Cramer stood alone in third.

Goldsby won his second match of the day when he took the Meter Match with a 400-36X. Dewar veteran Shawn Carpenter, who had coached Nevius the last two years in the Dewar was second with a 400-34X just two Xs ahead of-who else-Nevius. Kempley and Cramer stayed clean but disaster struck Gideon who went for two points and Tracy who lost three.

The fifty yard any sight match would determine the 2008 prone champion. Nevius had a six X edge on Kempley and could only win if he was perfect and Nevius was not. Cramer's only chance was to shoot his best and see if the chips might fall in his favor and he did his best, finishing second in the match one X behind Michael Jarboe's 400-38X. Kim Chrostowski was the third place shooter with a 400-37X Creedmooring first master Rick Curtis.

Nevius posted a 400 with 33xs to Kempley's 400-32X effort to win the championship by seven Xs. The match ranks as the third closest finish in National Championship history, right behind the Wigger-Weaver tie of 1987 and the 1953 three way point tie between John J. Crowley who had 255Xs, Charlie Whipple with 253Xs, and John Moschkau 252 X count.

The unassuming Nevius seemed to glow with his victory. An accomplished rifleman in two disciplines he placed third in the 2006 smallbore championship, a year after winning the Sierra Trophy in long range centerfire competition. He then returned to Perry after smallbore in 2006 to win the Sierra again along with the Herb "Doc" Aitken Trophy. He is quick to give credit to his shooting partners, Rick Sarver and multiple

national prone champion Paul Gideon, for helping with the mental game on the last day. He admits to “chasing the spotter” and shooting each one of his 100 yard targets in less than five minutes each. In the end he said that he never gave in to the darker angel of self doubt but confessed that, “Those 50 yard targets were the most difficult I have ever shot-those scoring rings don’t look so generous at all in that situation.”

Nevius is multifaceted for he built the rifle Gideon used to win his championship and also the one he used. He fit his Anschütz 2000 action with a Hart 1/17 twist 24 inch barrel and an Anschütz long bloop tube that was fed with Eley EPS with a speed of 1054 feet per second. He used a Robertson H&H fiberglass stock and is, perhaps, the first prone champion not use a wood or metal stock. His metallic rear sight was a Werner #1 with ½ minute windage and ¼ minute elevation with a Gehmann rear aperture with a Centra front sight. During any sights he mounted a BR24X.

In the end Nevius carted off the Critchfield and Schweitzer Trophies and National and civilian champion. Dave Cramer was the senior champion and winner of the Sam Bond Trophy while Reya Kempley was Remington Trophy recipient as woman champion. Paul Gideon again won the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy for being high intermediate senior what Mark nations, who would stay on and did very well in high power, carried away the junior champion’s Whittington Trophy.

Kim Chrostowski was in her last year of collegiate eligibility and finished off nicely by winning the category and the Austin Trophy. Two youngsters from Connecticut did well as Claudia Duksa, two time national sub junior smallbore champ, added the intermediate junior title to her resume and the Stark Trophy to her mantle. Remington Perry Lyman, youngest scion of the famous shooting family, received the Glabb Trophy

as the sub junior champ. The Grubar Trophy went Specialist David Sprecher as the service champion and Jim Ward was presented the Dick Danik Trophy as high visitor.

Martha Kelley became the first recipient of the Marianne Jensen Driver Memorial Trophy. Donated by her daughters, Lenore Lemanski and Bobbi Vitito, it recognizes their mother's many accomplishments in Smallbore Rifle shooting. Mrs. Driver participated on the Randle International Smallbore Prone Team as firing member, team captain, team coach and other positions over a 40 year span end at the age of 80 when she fired in her last National Smallbore Prone Match, firing a clean target of 200X 200. It was particularly poignant as the trophy was presented to Kelly, who was a long time friend who was mentored by Mrs. Driver, by Lemanski and Vitito.

It was a year of change and excitement at Perry that will spawn many discussions, debates, and tall tales. New targets, new records, and tight finishes will spark discussions that will keep the gray of the winter at bay and light the damp darkness of the gallery until shooters are able to get outside in the spring and begin training for the 2009 smallbore championships.

## **2009**

The National Rifle Association's Smallbore Rifle 2009 Championships marked its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary . Since Captain Edward "Ned" Crossman first conceived and brought it into being in 1919 his original vision has evolved and this year would be no exception. As young as I think I am I had witnessed a lot of change since 1975.

The position championships had changed targets in 2008 and, as a result, new championship national records were set in every event. This year would see if those marks would be eclipsed. The first day of the tournament opened with strong winds



challenging all of the competitors. Nevada's Tarl Kempley won the opening round: the metallic sight prone match with a 400-35X while Larry Sawyer, from Minnesota, and Army Sergeant Hank Gray battled it out in a close race for second. Sawyer finishing ahead of Gray 400-33X to 400-32X.

Specialist Matt Rawlings, of the Army, posted a National Championship Record of 395-20X standing in difficult conditions to best Kempley's 393-18X. Close on Kempley's heels was last year's position champion, AMU Sergeant George Norton with a 392-13X for third place. Two thirds through the first day Kempley had a small lead over Specialist Joe Hein, competing in his maiden year with the Army, who was sitting two points behind.

Kneeling is the final match in the daily aggregate and Kempley came through with a 398-23X, besting his sister Reya who placed second with a 396-18X. Bill Reynolds, of Raleigh, NC, was third with a 395-23X. On the strength of a solid National Championship Record setting performance Kempley's score of 1191-76X made him the metallic sight champion. Hein was second with an 1186-64X with Rawlings' 1180-59X good for third. High woman and junior was Kansan Caitlin Morrissey, and Bay State resident Len Remaly topped the seniors.

Wind was not much of a factor on the second day of the tournament but it was replaced by rain as the discomfort factor *de jour* for all of the shooters but one. Shooting scopes on any sight day Hein and teammate Dave Sprecher would go neck and neck, each posting a perfect 400-40x in the prone match. Sprecher had fired the same score last year for the win but this year Hein won on a tie breaker. Staff Sergeant

Shane Barnhart was in third with a 400-39X while there were 37 other 400s of lesser value posted. Kempley with a 400 held onto his overall lead.

A close battle developed in the standing match where Greg Drown, a local boy from Fremont Ohio, shot a 396-21X to best Norton and Rawlings who both dropped only five points. Norton was second with 20Xs to Rawlings' 19X in a razor edge finish. Kempley lost 11 points allowing Hein to move ahead of him by a single point in the grand aggregate as Rawlings held onto third place.

Michelle Bohren, of Taylor, Michigan, won the final match of the tournament with a 400-31X kneeling and, with it, set another National Championship Record. Sawyer placed second in the final match, as he had done in the first, with another 400, only this time with 21Xs. In third was Sprecher's 400-29X.

When the scores were totaled Drown had taken the any sight championship with a score of 1195-73Xs. Drown suffers from Muscular Sclerosis, which inhibits his body's ability to deal with heat. Last year he was laid low by the heat but this year the cool rain helped a cool shooter become the first disabled shooter to win a major smallbore rifle championship since G. Wayne Moore won back to back prone titles in 1947 and 1948. Rawlings was second with an 1193-82X just a single point ahead of Barnhart's 1192-88X Bohren took high woman honors.

The Frank Parsons Trophy went to Hein whose 2378-141X bested 331 competitors and gave him his first outdoor position title and the service championship as well. Tarl Kempley was second, and the civilian champion, with a 2376-142X and Rawlings took the bronze with a 2373-141X. Reya Kempley earned the high woman title. Len Remaly, who seems to have an eye on the great Fred Cole's string of senior

successes, took home his third senior title. Steve Kern added his fourth intermediate senior title to his resume as Brandi Eskew took home the collegiate crown.

Morrissey was the junior champion while Arielle Mouhout and Kevin Sui were intermediates and sub junior champions respectively. Aaron Holsopple was winner of the any sight only championship.

In team competition the Army swept both matches with Gray, Sprecher, Hein, Rawlings and Norton shooting while Sergeants Mike Moore and Josh Olsen coached and captained the team. In metallic competition Pennsylvania fielded the second and third place team. The Hudson New Hampshire Junior Rifle Team Gold of Adam Auclair, Jessica Levine, Brian Jylkka, and Brad Driscoll took junior juniors under Coach Keith Jylkka. The Sporting Shooters of Australia was the silver medal winning team in the any sight match while a junior team from the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association of Elizabeth Tallberg, Josie Burzynski, Andrew Marzec, and Kimberlee Grohocki coached and captained by Patti Clark and Kent Lacy took both the bronze medal and the high junior trophy.

Perhaps the only thing that dimmed the three days of shooting was a power failure early in the awards ceremony. The facilities staff was unable to correct the problem, but, fortunately, it was midsummer in the northern latitudes near the extreme western edge of the Eastern Time Zone so the wide side doors to Hough Auditorium were swung open and the ceremony proceeded in natural light, hardly missing a beat.

No sooner had the position shooters completed firing than the prone rifleman moved onto the line. The first match was shot on practice day: the Drew Cup, a junior postal sponsored by Great Britain. Brad Driscoll, Joshua Hartwick, Michael Liuzza,

Maryann Banks, Alex Silvas, Michael Seery, Sarah Beard, Cody Enders, Brian Johnson, Emily Quiner, and team reserves Kevin Sui, Ryan Stein, and Elijah Ellis shot an English Match, 60 shots prone with metallic sights, under the supervision of Team Captain Hap Rocketto, Coach Erik Hoskins, and Adjutant Howard 'Walt' Walters. Dan Holmes served as official witness and the match returns were forwarded to the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain for tabulation.

Individual matches began under less than ideal wind conditions but Texan Katie Bridges prevailed and won the opening metallic sight Dewar with a 400-27X. Senior Jim Hinkle, a magistrate from Georgia, was second with a 400-23X while Kent Reeve, noted long range centerfire rifleman, was third with a 400-23X.

While this trio met with success a catastrophic drama that would have far reaching consequences played out on the far right hand side of the firing line. Fighting the conditions as he sought perfection Shane Barnhart lost track of time. Controversy swirls around the question of whether the battery in Barnhart's timer had gone flat, he forgot his timer, or if he even owns a timer. No matter what the case he shot 35 sighters and only 12 record shots, eating eight record rounds on one target as time was called. He posted a disastrous Dewar score of 320-22Xs, ending all hopes of winning the Critchfield Trophy. Events would prove that the veteran championship rifleman was not the type to let this hitch in his plans get in the way of his will to win.

Arizona rifleman Rick Curtis won the 100 yard match with the only 400 posted of the 327 competitors on the line. Edie Fleeman, a member of the NRA board, was second with a 399-21X while Sarah Beard, a junior from Indiana, was third with a 399-19X. Civilian continued to dominate as Forrest Klein, a junior from Georgia, posting the

only perfect score, won the Meter match with a 400-24X while George Pantazelos, coach of Wentworth College's Rifle Team, placed second on a tiebreaker with Bart Parnell, of Charleston, SC, both shooting scores of 399-24X.

The first day went to Curtis, 1193-75X, who out Xed the recently crowned position champion Hein by one. Hein, in turn, had a one X advantage over Briton Richard Fowke, shooting a rifle of his own design.

The line did not empty at the end of the Meter match and the day's individual matches. Perhaps because of the reduced course of fire this year the Randle Doubles/Mentor Match saw a record number of 81 teams entered. Alex Zadrozny and George Pantazelos won, Mike Seery and Paul Gideon were second, and Forrest Klein and Hank Gray were third. B Class winners were Magdaleni Mical and Ed Hess, David Brummond and Justin Tracy, and Amada Luoma and Gerald Wise while Peter Croteau and Larry Parker Sr., bested Brad Driscoll and Larry Parker, Jr., and Jordan McNally and Dennis McNally for Class C honors.

The second day began with Parnell jumping out in front by beating Barnhart, who lost none of his competitive drive after the Dewar disaster of the day before, on a tie breaker in the Dewar, both men posting a 400-35X, while defending champion Kevin Nevius shot a 400-24X for third. Hein and Tarl Kempley continued the battle they had begun in the position matches on the 100 yard line. Hein took first with a 400-33X while Kempley carded a 400-32X. Barnhart's 400-27X was good for third. The day ended with Hein taking the Meter match with a 400-32X, just an X ahead of Kempley-this time though it was Reya- and Hank Gray placing third with a 400-29X.

The daily aggregate went to Hein's 1200-96X, the silver to Gray who fired a 1200-87X and Reya Kempley was third with an 1199-99X.

With a head of steam from position, Hein won the metallic sight aggregate with a score of 2393-170X. He was followed by team mate Gray who accumulated 2391 points and 162Xs while Fowke was in third with a 2390-149X. Reya Kempley was high woman, Dave Cramer took home high senior honors and Richard Watchorn, a visitor from Great Britain, was named the intermediate senior champion.

Activity did not slow down at the end of firing on day two. The American Dewar Shooters Club hosted an informal get together for all Dewar Alumni on the range soon after firing ceased. Some 72 Dewar alumni and hangers on, including few British veterans, shared pizza, soft drinks, and shooting memories going back nearly four decades. Lones Wigger was recognized for his record setting 29 appearances on Dewar rosters.

Pizza and soda were still being digested as many of the participants adjourned to Hough Auditorium to meet up with other competitors for a long awaited *Ad Hoc* Smallbore Committee meeting. The October 2008 Smallbore Committee meeting had, among other things, trimmed the 50 yard match from the 2009 prone championship. The action set off a firestorm of internet debate, which accomplished nothing. However the general consensus was that competitors had better start coming to the previously sparsely attended meetings in order that their voices be heard. A good crowd filled the front of the auditorium as Bill Carter, the newly appointed chair of the Smallbore Committee and the rest of the committee took questions about the course of fire change and other matters rankling the attendees. Carter, who had been at Perry from the start

of smallbore, becoming familiar with his new constituency, showed that he was a quick study. Debate was heartfelt, suggestions presented, and grievances aired. What had promised to be, according to dire internet predictions, an event rivaling the pitchfork wielding and torch waving frenzied mass of villagers descending upon Dr. Henry Frankenstein, was actually a well conducted and serious debate-not without some heat-on a broad spectrum of smallbore issues concerning the sport in general and the matches at Camp Perry in particular.

No sooner than the meeting ended than most participants headed across the road and down the street to the Camp Perry Clubhouse where a Match Director's Reception was being held to introduce and honor the 2009 United States Roberts Team. The team, dressed in blue blazers, circulated throughout the crowd shaking hands, answering questions, and accepting the good wishes of their fellow shooters. The finger food was plentiful and tasty.

The third day of the championships is dedicated to team matches. The first to be fired was the Dewar Trophy. This postal sponsored by The National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain, pits teams from various English speaking nations against each other. This was special year as the match was celebrating its centennial. The NSRA had special medals struck to commemorate the event featuring a duplicate of the original medal pendent awarded in 1909. They were hand carried to Perry by Richard Watchorn, who acted as official witness to the Dewar. Members of the team, shooters, officials, and line coaches were presented with special T shirts marking the event.

Representing the United States were the top 22 shooters from the metallic sight aggregate, Hein, Gray, Reya Kempley, Curtis, Beard, Rawlings, Cramer, Kenneth

Benyo, Tarl Kempley, Sprecher, Parnell, Liuzza, Nevius, Lusty Cebula, Douglass Clark, Reeve, Lones Wigger, Jr., Deena McDorman, Paul Gideon, Allen Elliott, and alternates Edie Fleeman and Remington Lyman under the direction of Team Captain David Kimes and Coach Paul Nordquist. The Ned Crossman Trophy, awarded the top scorer on the United States Team went to Reya Kempley.

Following quickly on the heels of the Dewar is the Randle Trophy Match which is sponsored by the United States and is only open to women. In this event the top 12 women in the metallic sight aggregate shoot. This year Kempley, Beard, McDorman, Fleeman, Morrissey Catherine Kauffelt, Bohren, Any Bock, Marianne Vitito, and Claudia Duksa shot with Sharon Barazani and Alyssa Gestl acting as alternates. The team was captained by Martha Kelley and coached by Karen Monez while Richard Watchorn again acted as official witness. Duksa posted a 400-30X, the same as Kempley, but her higher score at 100 yards saw her awarded the Eleanor Dunn Trophy as top gun on the team

The team match was not without its surprise. The program called for the match to be fired on the A-50 and A-33 metric targets. A last minute Match Director's Bulletin switched targets after many teams had drawn and marked metric targets and backers. There was a flurry as the tough ISSF targets were exchanged for the fatter home grown variety. The Army swept the team matches with Gray, Hein Barnhart, and Rawlings forming the team. The Ohio Rifle and Pistol Masters were second in both matches while The Kentucky State Rifle and Revolve Association was third in metallic sights with the Association of New Jersey Rifle and Pistol Clubs third in any sights. The Texas State Rifle Association team of Samuel Muegge, Hannah Muegge, Katie Bridges, and



Josh Hartwick topped all juniors in metallic sight competition while the California Rifle and Pistol Association Juniors of Sharon Barazani, Amada McMullin, Matthew Koehler, and Kevin Sui took junior any sight honors.

Thirty five teams entered the smallbore Whistler Boy Match and the victors were a repeat of last year as the Alexandria Junior Rifle Club of David Sloan and Ed Ryznar under the coaching of Terry Lightner won. The Made In America Match saw Alan Elliott and Doug Clark going to the wire with identical 399-30X scores with Elliott winning. To rub salt into the wound Elliott pulled off a first in the MIA match, he also won "Most Unique" firearm. In third through fifth place were George Pantazelos, Kent Reeve and George Stephens.

The individual matches resumed with the first day of any sight competition under excellent conditions. Barnhart, still stinging from his lapse in the first Dewar of the week, shot a perfect 400-40X to win, Paul Gideon was second with 38Xs and Dan Holmes, of pronematch.com, was third with 37Xs. As proof of just how tough the competition was made by the favorable light and wind nearly a third of the competitors, 91 out of 323, went clean. Every class and category, but three, was won by a 400.

Andrew Marzec, a junior from Berlin, CT, won the 100 yard match with a 400-39X, Reya Kempley was second scoring a 400-36X. Barnhart took third on a tie breaker and hung onto his lead for the day and the anysight aggregate. On the Meter line Justin Tracy shot a clean with 38 Xs. Barnhart lost another tie breaker placing him second while leaving third to Pennsylvanian Ken Benyo. In the long run Barnhart's incredibly consistent performance saw him shoot a 1200-114X for the win, second was

William Neff IV, shooting what he likes to call his “steam driven” Winchester 52, with 107Xs and Tarl Kempley was in third with another perfect score and 106Xs.

The final day of the 2009 championship opened with Barnhart shooting yet another 400-40X in the Dewar-it was now three cleans out four for him in Dewar matches. Curtis and Nevius were second and third with 39 and 38Xs respectively. Curtis bounced back and took the 100 yard match with a 400-36X while Reynolds and Duksa tied in score at 400-33X with Reynolds placing second and Duksa third. Barnhart was one X out of the top three for the match but holding on to the lead in the anysight aggregate with one match to go, Nevius closed out the tournament with a win at Meters posting a 400-38X. Parnell and Barnhart knotted at 400-37X. This time Barnhart was not as lucky as in the past and settled for third to Parnell's second. However, Barnhart did win the day with a 1200-110X, an X ahead of second place Curtis and nine Xs in front of Reya Kempley.

While most all of the shooters were packing up Barnhart returned to the 100 yard line to make a run on Baron Whatley's 1984 National Championship Dewar Record of 400-40X plus ten additional Xs and Mary Stidworthy Sparling's 1987 National Record of 400-40X plus 40 additional Xs. Perhaps caught by a stray gust, perhaps a misread wiggle in mirage, of just perhaps exhausted by his two days of perfection a shot wandered into the ten ring after several Xs and the record attempt ended in front of an enthusiastic and appreciative gallery.

The anysight aggregate's top three mirrored the last day of completion, Barnhart won with a 2400-224X, Curtis a 2400-208X, and Reya Kempley's 2400-207X was good for third as well as high woman, Carl Joos; of Champions Shooters' Supply, was high

senior and Greg Tomsen, a retired All Guard rifleman, earned high intermediate senior honors. Michael Seery was both high collegiate and junior while Duksa and Sui were intermediate junior and sub junior champions.

With the highest score in the tournament, a 4790-355X, the grand aggregate winner was British rifleman Richard Fowke with an impossibly close finish over Joe Hein's 4790-354X. However, Fowke was unable to claim the United States title as it can only be won by a United States citizen, the same conditions that exist in his home country where British citizenship is required to even enter their national championship. As a result Hein took home the Critchfield Trophy as well as the service title. Hein also became only the second person to win both outdoor smallbore rifle titles in the same year, a feat accomplished only twice before by the legendary Lones Wigger. Fowke did not go home empty handed as he was declared second overall, civilian champion, and high visitor. Reya Kempley was the woman champion for the third year in a row, Dave Cramer repeated as senior champion, and Paul Gideon picked up his fifth consecutive intermediate senior championship.

Mike Seery was the collegiate winner while Sarah Beard topped all juniors, Morrissey was high expert and Michael Boudren was the high anysight only competitor. Michael Liuzza and Kevin Sui were intermediate and sub junior champions.

In all it was an anniversary championship year like no other, marked by great performances, individual high points, and unusual happenings. One can only wonder what might have been had Barnhart gotten all of his shots off in the first Dewar. Had they been tens, a likely possibility, although not a given, he would have tied Hein and Fowke. His 385Xs would have then given him his first prone championship to add to his

three position titles. It would have also saved the match personnel time and distress as they worked out how to deal with the Fowke situation. All this speculation will provide grist for the winter as shooters rehash Camp Perry over hot coffee and a wedge of pie at the local diner after league gallery matches. The matches themselves will leave bright memories for the dark days of winter and serve as a spring board for the next outdoor season.

## **The Two Thousand Teens-A New Era**

**2010**

There are certain constants at the National Smallbore Rifle Championships; good fellowship, hard holding competition, and heat and humidity. This year was no exception when nearly 300 competitors renewed old friendships and began making new ones.

1LT Chris Abalo, an All American at West Point, posted a 400-36X prone to quickly jump into the lead in the metallic sight championship of the Three Position Championship. Unfazed by the competition Garrett Rabel, an intermediate junior sharpshooter from Livernia, Texas, stepped up and shot a 395-17X standing to replace Abalo on the leader board. In the final match of the day Hudson, New Hampshire's Brian Jylkka and the Army's SSG Shane Barnhart battled it out to a 396 kneeling tie that was broken in Jylkka's favor by his higher X count.

In the aggregate a trio of shooters who had been traveling below the radar all day emerged as the top three in the Metallic Sight Championship. Tied in score, and only separated by a few Xs, Abigail Fong, carried along by the momentum she had built up a few days earlier in winning the inaugural NRA Metric Position Championship, emerged as champion with as score of 1184-68X. Junior Caitlin Morrissey, a member of the 2010 NCAA Championship Texas Christian University Rifle Team, was second with an 1184-67X. Taking third place was the silver medalist at the Metric Position Championship former National Champion Jeffrey Doerschler. Barnhart was in fourth place with an 1183-65X.

The any sight championship would be a hot day, both in scores and temperature. Barnhart moved into the front of the pack with a 400-37X prone as nearly all of his close competition dropped points in the wind.

Lisette Grunwell-Lacey, of the Niantic Connecticut Sportsmen's Club, bested the field in standing with a 386-10X. Three 383s were in the mix for the next two places and Remington Lyman, making a play for any sight laurels, had a 383-16X. Denver, Colorado rifleman Max Burkhardt was third with a 383-13X. Barnhart posted a 383-12X to maintain his grip on the lead.

Douglas C. McAllister III, of Hagerstown, Maryland, won kneeling with a 393-14X. Joe Graf, a mainstay of Rhode Island shooting was second with a 392-14X, edging out third place Barnhart by two Xs, but Barnhart was not to be denied and his 1175-61X handily earned him the any sight title while Lyman, at 1168-60X, was second just a point ahead of Amanda Luoma's 1167-54X third place finish.

When the two day's scores were totaled it was no surprise that Barnhart emerged as the champion, picking up his fourth Frank Parsons Trophy, with a score of 2358-126X and another D.I. Boyd Trophy as the service champion. Louma shot a 2349-113X and left Perry loaded down with a silver medal as runner up, the Winchester Trophy as high civilian, the Mary Camp Trophy as high woman, and the Cobb Trophy as junior champion. Earning the bronze medal and the Putnam Trophy was Megan M. Lee with a score of 2343-93X.

Ronald Durcholz, of Orchard Park, New York, was the Senior Champion and was awarded the Robert Moore Trophy. Steve Kern took home his third consecutive RWS Trophy as the Intermediate Senior Champion. Fong was named collegiate champion

and presented with the Volunteer Trophy. The Stark Trophy went to Sub Junior Champion Libby Tallberg, of the Bridgeport Connecticut Rifle Club, while Sarah Elzer shot her way to the any sight only championship.

After a hiatus Fred Cole, multiple Intermediate and Senior National Champion Fred Cole returned to Perry and was recognized at the awards ceremony with a standing ovation. By coincidence, or perhaps the subtle sense of humor of the statistical office, Cole was assigned firing point 88, his age. The retired English teacher, with an impish smile, commented that he hoped that would happen each year until he fired on point 100.

Team competition was a junior walk over. The Texas State Rifle Association Gold Team of Garret Sterns, Samuel Muegge, Garrett Rabel, and Katie Bridges under the watchful eye of Coach Don Benson and Captain Hannah Muegge beat out the Black Hawk 3P Chiefs by two points to capture both the national metallic sight open and junior titles. Juniors from the Pennsylvania State Association cruised to third. In the any sight championship the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association fielded juniors Remington Lyman, Jim Stanley, Kim Grohocki, and Lenny Smittner coached and captained by Lisette Grunwell-Lacy and Kent Lacy. Like Texas before them Connecticut took home both open and junior honors. The Hudson New Hampshire Junior Rifle Team Gold were in second place and it was again left to the Black Hawk 3P Chiefs to salvage what honor they might for the senior teams.

Upon the conclusion of the position team matches the United States William Drew Cup Team assembled on the far left of the range. San Muegge, Brian Jylkka, Caitlin Morrissey, Amanda Luoma, Mike Burzynski, Isaac Tucker, Margot Lee,

Remington Lyman, Lenny Smittner, and Dianna Binnie had been selected to fire the international postal sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain (NSRA) which is considered to be the junior equivalent of the Dewar Trophy Match. James R. Ward, of the NSRA, served as witness as the team fired under the leadership of Captain Hap Rocketto, Coach Erik Hoskins, and Adjutant Walt Walters.

The five days of prone opened under a gray sky that promised, and delivered, rain. Showers struck twice in the morning, both times on the unfortunate first relay. Roberts Team veteran Dave Cramer, of Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, struck first with a 400-36X victory in the first metallic sight Dewar. As conditions worsened Jim Ward of Great Britain, shot the better of only two perfect scores posted in the 100 yard match, a 400-28X. The other, produced by Jylkka, was a 400-24X. At the 50 meter line Barnhart and Justin Tracy were knotted up at 400-32X each but the rule book declared Barnhart winner.

Veterans of the recent Metric Championships topped the first day's results list with identical scores of 1198. Eitan Barazani, a west coast rifleman, with 95X, Mark Delcotto, a Kentucky shooter with a strong resume in long range shooting, was second with 87Xs. Charlie Kemp, reigning metric senior champion, was in third with 76Xs.

The popular Randle Doubles/Mentor Match, in which teams of one experienced and one inexperienced shooter against each other over the Dewar Course, ended the day. The match, run by the NRA Smallbore Committee was won by Rick Curtis and Amanda McMullin with a score of 799-59X, first in a field of 55 teams.

Day two saw Claudia Duksa, Bell City Connecticut Rifle Club; win a tie breaker when she and Abalo both shot 400-34xs in the second metallic sight Dewar. Like the



first day the conditions got tougher as the 100 yard targets were hung. Just three 400s appeared on the bulletin with the winning score of 400-29X belonging to Bart Parnell. Catherine Kauffelt, the 2009 Expert class champ, had a 24X clean while Paul Gideon, with a 400-15X was the final perfect score shot. Kemp closed the day by winning the Meter match with a 400-35X followed by Barnhart's 400-33X and Parnell's 400-31X.

Perry veteran Boyd Goldsby had shot consistently throughout the day and emerged the winner of the second daily aggregate with a near perfect 1199-89X. Parnell followed with a higher X count but a point shy of Goldsby as Kemp snapped up third with an 1198-87X.

Kemp's aggregate score of 2396-163X gained him the Hoppe Memorial Trophy as the metallic sight champion as well as the Walt Tomsen Trophy as senior champion. Peter Church came in second and Barnhart was third with scores of 2394-166X and 2393-176X respectively. Nancy Tompkins, whose daughter Sherri Gallagher would soon join her as one of only two women to win the national high power championship, was the Peters Trophy winner as high woman with a 2390-161X while intermediate senior Bill Burkert, of Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, 2392-163X, was the Gates Trophy winner.

With the end of the iron sight phase comes the excitement of team day. The United States Dewar Team assembled in the early morning of team day on Viale Range while the Whistler Boy Teams drew ammunition and set up on Rodriguez. Under the direction of Captain Paul Nordquist and Coach Mike Anti the Dewar Team laid out mats and focused spotting scope from points one to twenty in order of finish in the metallic sight matches with Kemp, Church, Barnhart, Abalo, Burkert, Rick Curtis, Barazani,

Goldsby, Larry Sawyer, Tracy, Tompkins, Dan Holmes, Kevin Nevius, Amanda McMullin, Frederick Scielzo, Shawn Wells, Delcotto, Cramer, Ron Wigger, and Dennis Lindenbaum. Alternates were Parnell and Michael O'Connor with Jim Ward as witness. Abalo won the Crossman Trophy emblematic of the top score on the Dewar Team with a score of 395.

Scielzo, known as "Fast Freddy" to his shooting cronies, and a Perry Veteran of a half of a century, was heard to say that he had often come close to making the Dewar but that this was his first appearance on the roster. With the Whistler Boys still shooting and the Dewar target frames at 100 yards it was time for the Randle Ladies to take to the line.

Team Captain Martha Kelley, with the assistance of Coach Lenore Lemanski, set to the task at hand with Tompkins, McMullin, Bobbi Vitito, Ginger McLemore, Duksa, Edie Fleeman, Kauffelt, Alyssa Gestl, Michelle Bower, and Amy Bock on the line while alternates Abigail Stanec and Nicole Allaire stood by in support. The Dunn Trophy, presented the highest scorer on the Randle Team, was a tossup between Tompkins and McMullin who tied with 400-31s, but an X count of 16 at 100 yards broke the tie in Tompkins favor.

As the Whistler Boy competition wound down and scores were posted the Texas contingent added to an impressive growing team trophy total as Benson again coached a longhorn team, Sam Muegge and Katie Bridges to the gold. The score of 1905-71X came from a combined 60 shot three position match and Dewar, all shot on metric targets.

The Black Hawk Chiefs squeaked out a seven X victory in the metallic sight team match over the United States Air Force, back after a long absence. Coach Jim Hinkle supervised Dennis Lindenbaum, Jim Miller, Shawn Wells, and Eitan Barazani to the winning score of 1596-104X. Texas State Rifle Association Junior Gold grabbed both the bronze medal and the junior title as Garrett Stearns, Sam Muegge, Nathaniel Molder, and Katie Bridges combined for a 1594-105X.

The 50th International Shooting Sports Federation World Championship coincided with Perry this year and, losing shooters to that event, the Army was so short-handed that it was not able to enter a team in the position matches and barely able to field one in prone. However, what they did have was pretty good-witness Barnhart's performance- and they took the any-sight team championship with the only 1600 of the day. With SGT Nicole Allaire as team captain Abalo and Barnhart teamed up with SFC Josh Olson and SFC Mike Moore to break the civilian hold on national team titles.

The Black Hawk Veterans were second and the Hudson Junior team, Adam Auclair, Brian Jylkka, Megan Polonsky, and Brad Driscoll who were captained by Keith Jylkka, took both third overall and the junior title.

The any-sight championship began on a blistering hot day with a two-way 400-34X tie between Delcotto and Erin Gestl in the Dewar Match. Delcotto won on the tie breaker. As has happened all week conditions took a quick downward turn at 100 yards and only one 400, fired by Doug Mentlik, of Glen Rock, Pennsylvania, was recorded. The day ended with yet another tie when Nevius and Bill Neff both shot 400-33x with Nevius the winner. Consistent, but not flashy, Barnhart emerged the winner of the day with an 1198-82X, just a point ahead of Delcotto and Brad Driscoll.

Twenty brave souls braved the sweltering afternoon heat and humidity and entered the Made In America Match. Scielzo who won the match some years ago, continued on his roll and took the match with a 397-24X, six Xs ahead of Drew Team veteran Elijah Ellis. Jordan Turiano, a young Massachusetts competitor, used a pre A Winchester 52, leaf sight and all, to win the most original rifle award.

The final, and deciding day, opened with Barnhart, Kemp, Abalo Nevius, and Burkert all within five points of each other. The temperature had dropped but the pleasant sunny day harbored some tricky wind. Even with a two point pad on Kemp it would not be a cake walk for Barnhart. One small error on Barnhart's part and Kemp might replace Lones Wigger as the oldest competitor to win the prone Championship.

Ross Ewert burst on the scene to take the second any sight Dewar match with a 400-34X. Barnhart, Nevius, Burkert, and Abalo stayed clean but Kemp went for a point. A photo finish at 100 yards saw Barnhart and Nevius finished first and second. Kemp also cleaned it while Abalo dropped two points. Burkert dropped out of contention after losing four. At the Meter line none of the heavy hitters were in the top three as Neff won the match with a 400-37X.

The last daily aggregate went to Nevius, 1199-97X, who lost a point in the Meter Match. Barnhart with the same score, right down to the X count, had dropped his point at 100 yards in the Dewar and was relegated to second. The daily win was bitter sweet for Nevius for, while the dropped point at Meters gave him the day on a tie breaker, it cost him third overall in the grand aggregate.

All that remained was for the computer to total up the numbers to determine the any sight and over all winners. Barnhart became the new any sight champion with a

2397-179X, Nevius was second with a 2395-195X with Abalo's 2394-172X worthy of third. Alyssa Gestl was high woman, Kemp, high senior, and Greg Tomsen repeated as the intermediate senior champion.

While others faltered Barnhart held on with a 4790-355X and won his second national championship in eight days. It was a sweet victory in light of the disaster he endured the previous year where he may well have won had he not lost track of time and failed to fire eight shots. He now joins Lones Wigger and Joe Hein as the only riflemen to ever double up. Barnhart also won the service category. Abalo was second with a 4786-344X and Kemp took the bronze and the civilian and senior titles with a 4786-338X. McMullin was high woman and intermediate junior champ, and Goldsby high intermediate senior. Driscoll was both collegiate champion and tops in the junior class. Alex Gestl, following in her family's footsteps, took home the sub junior crown while Martha Kelley closed out her competitive career with a second consecutive win of the Driver Trophy awarded to the any sight champion. Jim Ward won the Dick Danik Trophy as high visitor.

Certainly the enduring memory that one took away from this Camp Perry, over and above the fierce competition and genial fellowship, was the performances of 69 year old Charlie Kemp, a kid by comparison, to the trio of Octogenarians; a pair of Freds-Cole and Scielzo, 24<sup>th</sup> place, 81 year old Joe Farmer in 28<sup>th</sup>. This performance was matched by the domination of juniors and women in team matches and position shooting which unquestionably demonstrates that shooting is a gender neutral sport that lasts a life time.

## 2011

The 54<sup>th</sup> NRA Outdoor Smallbore Position Championships were fired under some of the roughest conditions in memory. The first day the thermometer climbed from 81° Fahrenheit to a recorded 105°. CPT Chris Abalo, of the US Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU), shot a 400-38X to take the lead. Just an X separated him from second place Tarl Kempley, of Nevada, while Caitlyn Morrissey, a mainstay of the Texas Christian University (TCU) Rifle Team was third with 36Xs.

Garrett Spurgeon, the 2010 Missouri Three Position Champion, topped the leader board with a 394-14X standing. SGT Joe Hein, of the USAMU, stayed close with a 391-19X with New Hampshire rifleman Brian Jylkka just three Xs back.

The kneeling match would decide the metallic sight championship and the match went to Hein, 397-23X. Kempley's 396-17X and a 394-17 fired by Deanna Binnie rounded out the top three.

Hein emerged as the metallic sight champion with a score of 1188-72X. Spurgeon was hot on his heels with an 1187-60X and Kempley was third, posting an 1183-74. Lisette Grunwell-Lacey was high woman while Ron Durcholz took senior honors. 1984 Olympian Bill Beard led the Intermediate Seniors.

After a brutally hot first day it looked as if the weather would mediate for the any sight matches. The prone match was won by the Army's SSG Shane Barnhart's outstanding 400-40X. Barnhart's teammate CPL Matt Rawlings, Roberts Team veteran Justin Tracy, and Michael O'Connor were knotted with 400-39Xs and it took the rule book to award second to Rawlings, third to Tracy, and high civilian Master to O'Connor.

The temperature and the shooters rose for the standing match won with a match record score of 399-23X by Sarah Beard of TCU. Second place Barnhart dropped three for a 397-12X while a 396-19X earned Brandi Eskew, a four year All American, third.

As the kneeling match began the temperature was in the mid 90s, towering cumulus clouds rolled in accompanied by thunder, lightning, and nearly 3/4s of an inch of rain fell causing four range evacuations and a lost relay, which had to be refired. In spite of this Abalo won the kneeling match by tying the Perry record of 400-31X set by Michelle Bohren, who fired a 399-30X for third place. Sandwiched in between was Barnhart's 400-28X.

Barnhart repeated his 2010 any sight victory with a match record score of 1197-80X. Hein edged out SSG Mike McPhail by six X, both scored an 1191. Sarah Beard was named any sight women champion. Rodney Frisby and Bill Burkert were senior and intermediate senior champions.

A challenge was needed to determine the grand aggregate winner. Hein's final target was scored as only having 19 shots but a review found 20 hits. Hein returned to the top step of the podium with a score of 2379-153X to accept open and military champion titles. Silver medalist Spurgeon, the civilian, junior, and intermediate junior champion, showed that juniors are a potent force in the three position game by posting a score of 2376-132X. Kempley was the bronze medalist, 2373-157X.

Grunwell-Lacey was high woman. Durcholtz and Bill Beard were senior and intermediate senior champions. Eskew took home collegiate honors and Eric Sloan, of Oakdale, CT, emerged the sub-junior champion.

Rain delayed the start of the team matches by 90 minutes. The Army's Strike Force Gold, captained and coached by SFC Josh Olsen, made a bold statement with a new metallic match record score of 2391-169X. Most impressive was the team's two top scores, a pair of 599-47Xs shot by Rawlings and Abalo. The balance of the score was made by SSG George Norton and Hein.

Coach Keith Jylkka and Captain Adam Auclair, of the Gun Owners of New Hampshire, lead Brian Jylkka, Brad Driscoll, Alex Martin, and Megan Polonsky to both the silver medal and the junior title with a score, 2361-119X. The bronze medal was taken by USAMU Strike Force Black, 2360-144X.

USAMU Strike Force Gold, this time made up of Norton, Barnhart, Hein, and SSG Henry Gray set another match record in any sights with a 2384-151X. USAMU Strike Force Black was second, 2369-143X, while the Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Junior Gold team of Binnie, Adam Wheland, Brent Brooks, and Bill Harvey put together a 2367-112X for both the bronze and the junior championship.

The Drew Cup, a junior international postal match sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain, closed out the position phase. Team Adjutant Walt Walter, Team Captain Erik Hoskins, and Team Coach Caitlyn Morrissey directed Brad Driscoll, Garrett Spurgeon, Leo Funk, Megan Lee, Margot Lee, Amanda Luoma, Daniel McCall, Katie Bridges, Richard Layton, and Megan Polonsky.

After the horrid weather conditions of position the weather report calling for temperatures in the mid 70s was looked on with relief by over 300 prone shooters. It would turn out that weather reports, like rifle match scores, are a bit unpredictable.



McPhail shot a 400-35X in the first metallic sight Dewar Match. Veteran long range prone shooter Nancy Tompkins and former national position champion Norton were hot on his heels with a pair of 400-34Xs.

McPhail's 400-34X score at 100 yards made a strong statement about his desire to win his first prone title. He had to wrestle the match away from 2009 Roberts Team member Mark DelCotto on a tie breaking rule, something which would bode for the future. In third was Bart Parnall, of Columbia, SC, with a 400-33X.

The day ended on the 50 meter line with DelCotto posting a 400-37X for the win. Rawlings and Abalo rounded out the top three with 35X and 34X cleans. McPhail posted a clean at 50 meters giving him the first day's aggregate with a perfect 1200-103X. International Distinguished Badge holder Reya Kempley and Olympic medalist Mike Anti also shot 1200s and were second and third with 88Xs and 81Xs.

The second half of the metallic sight championship opened with Keith Ridgeway, a British shooter, Expert Catherine Kauffelt, and Abalo knotted at 400-35X in the Dewar, finishing in that order. McPhail and DelCotto also posted cleans.

LTC Doug Clark, USAF, topped the field in the 100 yard match with a 400-32X with Anti and Kempley coming in second and third with 440-31Xs each. McPhail and DelCotto were still clean.

Clark posted his second win of the day with a 400-34X, Creedmooring Ben Hanley, of Loveland, OH, at 50 meters. Hein was back in the top three with a 400-33X while DelCotto dropped a point. Clark won the second daily aggregate with a 1200-99X, just five Xs ahead of the second place Kempley. In third was Hein with an 1199-94X. Lurking just out of the money was DelCotto who had an 1199-93X.

Kempley took the metallic sight and woman honors with a score of 2400-182X. DelCotto was second with a 2398-197X, a mere five Xs ahead of Hein. The stage was set for an interesting last two days of competition. Dave Cramer, who has had a long and storied competitive career, was high senior as Stephen Angeli, a fellow Keystone state rifleman of Cramer's, took the high intermediate senior title. Noted shooting historian Paul Nordquist shot a 2398-186X to earn any sight only honors.

The Dewar and Randle Teams are selected from the metallic sight aggregate. Representing the United States in the Dewar Match were Reya Kempley, DelCotto, McPhail, Hein, Abalo, SSG Hank Gray, USA, Norton, Justin Tracy, Sarah Beard, Rawlings, Clark, Bill Neff, Tarl Kempley, Tompkins, Peter Church, Cramer, MAJ Rhonda Bright, USA, Shawn Wells, Shane Barnhart, Joe Farmer, and alternates Kevin Nevius, George Pantazelos, and Parnall under the direction of Team Captain Anti and Coach Ron Wigger.

All but two had been members before. Neff and Farmer were the tyros. In the case of Farmer tyro might be a misnomer as he had was one of the first to earn the NRA Prone Distinguished award in 1966. After a hiatus he returned to prone shooting a few years ago. He was presented the Frederick J. Scielzo Award by the American Dewar Shooters Club as the oldest shooter on the team. McPhail earned the Ned Crossman Trophy as high gun on the US team with a near perfect score of 399X400.

Randle Team Captain Lenore Lemanski and Coach Roberta Gubbins supervised Reya Kempley, Sarah Beard, Tompkins, Bright, Amada McMullin, Katie Bridges, Bohren, Amada Luoma, Amy Bock, Kauffelt, Alternates Morrissey, and Michelle Bauer.

Kempley took home the Eleanor Dunn Trophy, emblematic of the high score on the US Team, with a 400-21X,

The Army took both of the team matches with, oddly enough, identical scores of 1597-108Xs, and two different line ups. USAMU Black of Barnhart, Rawlings, Bright and LTC Kristin Frazier won the metallic title while Barnhart, Rawlings, Norton, and Abalo took any sight honors.

In metallic sight competition USAMU Gold was second and the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Gold Team of Claudia Duksa, Tony Cuzzo, Remington Lyman, and Eric Petty, under Captain Dave Lyman and Coach Patti Clark took both third place and the junior crown.

The Ohio State Rifle and Pistol Association wrapped up both silver, ORPA Expert, and bronze, ORPA Master, in any sight team completion. Nathaniel Molder, Bridges, Garret Stearns, and Samuel Muegge, shooting as the Texas State Association Junior Gold were the junior champions.

The Mentor Match set a record number of entries, 80 teams, shooting a Dewar course. Bill Burkett and Douglas Mentik, who carded a score of 800-63Xs, won.

The Made In America Match, a metallic Dewar, requires that rifles, sights, and ammunition be made in the United States. Allen Elliott, wielding a rifle built by the late Karl Kenyon, won the shooting, a 399-26X, as well as the most unique rifle award. John Carter took home the most original award.

Any sights began with Kempley in the lead and DelCotto and McPhail two points behind. She was in front but, with scopes now on the rifles, she could not afford to make a single mistake.

In the first any sight Dewar Nevius and Kempley tied for first place with a 400-36X. Unfortunately for Reya the Kempley was her brother, Tarl, who was relegated to second by the rule book. Claudia Duksa, headed for TCU, was third with a 400-35X. Reya gave up two points while DelCotto and McPhail stayed clean. She was now tied in points and behind in Xs.

Tarl Kempley found himself tied for first again in the 100 yard match. This time he fared no better, finishing behind Tompkins, after both posting 400-24Xs. Charlie Kemp, the Silver Fox from Mobile AL, was third with a 400-32X. Reya Kempley and DelCotto both lost two points as McPhail dropped one.

The Meter Match revealed just how important experience is in shooting success. Cramer and Wigger each had 400-37Xs with Cramer getting the win. In third place was Farmer with a 400-36X. The average age of these top three riflemen is 74.

Day three closed out with Tarl Kempley in the lead, a 1200-104X, five Xs ahead of Nevius who was just a single X in front of Tompkins. McPhail and DelCotto held on in the grand aggregate race while Reya Kempley slipped out.

High heat and humidity marked the final day, the mercury topped out at 97 degrees and the humidity was near 70%. Conditions were benign as indicated by the fact that 101, just shy of 30% of all competitors, shot 400s in the Dewar. Tompkins dropped just two Xs to win the match while Ginger McLemore, a geologist from Arizona, and Hein were second and third, the best of the seven 400-37X scores recorded.

Conditions picked up during the 100 yard match and the number of 400s dropped off significantly. McPhail was match winner with a 400-38X as Rawlings took second with 36Xs. Garald Wise, of Wooster, OH, was third with 35Xs.

Abalo won the Meter match with a 400-37X while Parker and Beard's identical scores of 400-34X meant that the statistical people consulted the rules book to decide second in favor of Parker.

Tompkins' perfect two day score of 2400-200X won both the any sight and women's championship. Parker was second and high intermediate senior with a 2399-194X while Justin Tracy was third with a 2399-191X. High senior went to Nordquist who shot his second 2398 of the tournament, this time with 185X.

McPhail started the match with a win and ended it with the aggregate victory. He and DelCotto battled all week and ended with identical scores of 4796, but McPhail had 401Xs to Delcotto's 380Xs. Abalo was third on the back of his 4795-388X. The margin of victory was so small that had a puff of wind started or stopped just an instant sooner or later the results might have been different.

McPhail was open and service champion while DelCotto took civilian champion honors. Tompkins was the women's championship and Sarah Beard earned both collegiate and junior honors. Church and Parker won senior and intermediate senior categories respectively as Bridges and Sammy Richardson; intermediate and sub junior competitors took their age groups.

Nordquist's matched his first two day score of 2398-188X with almost identical 2398-185X was named the any sight only champion. Ridgeway was high visitor.

## **2012**

If a picture ever summed up why we shoot it would have to be one taken of the stage at the 2012 NRA National Smallbore Prone Championships Awards Ceremony.

Some sell shooting as a way to a college scholarship and the stage was full of NCAA scholarship students. Others entice new shooters to the sport with tales of Olympic glory, and there was more than one Olympic medalist standing on the stage.

But one could see the real reason we shoot starting at stage right. A bespectacled Peter Fiori stood bashfully next to the pedestal which held the Joseph P. Glabb Trophy which he had just been awarded as sub junior champion. Had the diminutive Fiori taken the traditional position behind the trophy he would have been hidden from the audience.

A few yards to Fiori's left stood Joe Farmer behind the Sam Bond Trophy just presented to him as the Senior Champion. Farmer earned his Smallbore Distinguished Smallbore Rifle Prone Award in 1968, likely before Fiori's parents were born. Separating them was more than several other National Champions; separating them was a span of some 70 years. And that is the real reason we shoot, because shooting is truly a sport that lasts a life time.

Eight days earlier 281 competitors opened the 2012 NRA National Smallbore Rifle Outdoor Championship with a 40 shot prone match won by Army Sergeant Hank Gray on a tie breaker with Tarl and Reya Kempley as all shot 400-37Xs.

The conditions were good and Staff Sergeant George Norton, the 2008 position champion, punched out a near perfect 399-22X for the win in the standing match. In descending order were Reya Kempley's 398-23X and Army Captain Chris Abalo with a 397-22X.

The top of the leader board was crowded as kneeling started. Norton was one point down, Reya Kempley had dropped two, Abalo had lost three, Tarl Kempley and

Hein were in the top five at four and five down. Hein won the kneeling match with a 399-28X and made up some important ground. Amanda Luoma, of Ohio State, and Garrett Spurgeon, West Virginia University, finished second and third with a 398-24X and a 397-24X.

The metallic sight aggregate results were posted and Hein found that his hard holding kneeling had earned him the Bill Krilling Trophy as the metallic sight champ with a score of 1194-81X. However, as sweet as the win was Hein was just a point ahead of Abalo and Norton who carded an 1193-76X and 1193-73X.

Reya Kempley was top woman while senior Len Remaly, a familiar face at Perry, won the Meister Trophy. Pennsylvania's Bill Burkert was the top intermediate senior and Luoma won the George Alves Trophy as high junior.

Shooters woke on any sight day to a leader's nightmare. Overnight the wind freshened and laid waste to the tents and shelters in the assembly area. Amid a tangle of bent aluminum tubing and shredded nylon, the competitors tried to shelter their gear as best they could. With little wiggle room at the top, the weather would become the deciding factor for both the any sight championship and the aggregate title.

The wind also played havoc with new targets that had been purchased for this year's matches. Made by the German firm of Kruger they are of a thicker paper than US targets with a very sharp bull's eye on buff yellow stock. The targets have a very smooth surface and are made from a short fiber material, making the shot holes very distinct, almost as if shot with wad cutter bullets. This allows for more accurate and easier scoring.

The targets, unfortunately, are very brittle and do not take well to being wet, not a recipe for success at Camp Perry. Competitors found that they would actually break, not tear, when caught by a gust of wind. This was not too bad at short range where tape was allowed to be applied to the edges of the targets to reinforce them and clips placed end on end the entire length of the target frame to prevent a gust from lifting a target and causing it to tear and break. However, it was not uncommon for targets being carried out to a 100 yards not to make it in one piece. While used throughout the matches at short range a special overnight order was made for old style 100 Yard target which arrived in time and replaced the newer ones, much to the competitors' relief.

The buffeting winds upset more than the targets and the shooters' shelters; it did the same to the standings. It is a rare any sight prone match at Perry when there are no 400s and this was one of them. Expert Edward Hahn, of Middlegrove, NY, posted the match winning score prone: a 399-24X. Sarah Nakata, Intermediate Junior Metric Champion, was second on a tiebreaker. Jordan DiPaola, NRA 2012 Junior Air Rifle Championship standout, was third with a 398-24X.

The rain and 25 mile per hour gusting wind upset off-hand stands, hopes, and exhausted the shooters' physical and mental resources. Kirsten Weiss, an All American at Nebraska, posted a 340-5X standing for the match win. Greg Drown, the 2009 any sight champion, held hard enough for a 337-5X while Joseph Barefoot, a Tennessee-Martin rifleman, was third with a 334-1X. About this point in the day there would be a lot of mental calculation as to who might be in a position to win. Such was not the case as everyone knew that the wild wind would make any such calculation an exercise in futility.



Drown continued outwitting the wind to win the kneeling match with a 386-16X. Empire State rifleman Benjamin Swanson shot the same score but just three Xs less for second. Deanna Binnie, representing Pennsylvania's Jerome Sportsmen's Association's junior rifle team, was third with a 381-12X.

As the competitors wearily packed their gear, the statistical crew began totaling up the scores to determine the winners of both the any sight and aggregate awards. Swanson, soon to enter his senior year at Jamestown, NY High School, emerged as the 2012 Any Sight Champion with an 1105-38X. Tarl Kempley shot an 1103-32X for second while Weiss was third and top woman with a 1097-29X. Don Holcroft, Yale, Michigan, was the high intermediate senior with a 1056-31X while Hap Rocketto posted a 1053-31X for senior honors.

With the any sight scores entered into the computer it took just a keystroke to tabulate the final results. Tarl Kempley amassed 2295 points and 108Xs to be crowned the 2012 Three Position National and Civilian Champion. Weiss was second and woman champion while Luoma took home third place as well as collegiate and junior titles. Samantha Peterson was the sub junior champion; Swanson handily won the intermediate junior title, while Abalo was the service champion. Joel Dutra, Grampian, Pennsylvania, shot the two days with any sights and earned an NRA plaque for his efforts while fellow Keystone state shooter Bill Burkert was the intermediate senior champion.

Hap Rocketto, adjutant of the 2009 Roberts Team, had last shot three position at Perry ten years ago when he first became eligible for the intermediate senior title which he won. In his first appearance since that win, his first as a senior, he emerged

victorious, winning 2012 Robert K. Moore Trophy emblematic of the senior championship. When asked if he would defend his title he replied, "I understand that Fred Cole has announced he will be returning and wants point 90 to coincide with his age. I know Fred Cole, I am friendly with Fred Cole, but I am no Fred Cole and could never match his legendary run of senior victories. I am retiring from Position competition at Perry."

In team competition a very small Army contingent, just five men, USAMU Gray, won both team matches with Abalo, Hein, Gray, and Norton shooting and Staff Sergeant Walter Craig coaching. The Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association Gold, William Harvey, Jack Anderson, Adam Wheland, and Amy Fister took directions from Captain Terry Lightner and Coach Bill Burkert for the second in irons and the junior title while Jerome Sportsman's Association Gold was third. The high junior team in the any sight competition was another Pennsylvania Rifle and Pistol Association team, Palmyra Green, Alex Gestl, Cullen Wargo, Kevin Brubaker, and Luke Johnson which also took second place. Third went to the Texas State Rifle Association Gold, another quartet of juniors.

As the prone shooters spread out gear for the practice session a dozen juniors assembled on the firing line at Viale Range to shoot the Drew Cup International Postal Match sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain.

Drew alumna Caitlyn Morrissey, of the NCAA Champion Texas Christian University rifle team, served as the team captain and coach. This was the first time that the team was directed by an official who had been a team member, a custom of the Dewar and Randle Teams which has been adopted for the Drew Cup. The top dozen

juniors in the metallic sight prone match were invited to be members of the team. Matthew Chezem, Garrett Spurgeon, and Nathan Brandenburg made up the three man team, Katie Bridges, Amy Fister, and McKenzie Martin represented the ladies. Alex Ponikvar, Deanna Binnie, Adam Wheland, and Eric Petty joined the first six to make up the ten man team while Lauren Phillips and Nathan Molder served as Alternates.

Having won the first prone match of the position phase, Hank Gray repeated the feat by winning the first match of prone, the metallic sight Dewar, with a 400-34X. Mike Anti, an Olympic silver medalist, and Captain Chris Abalo, both posted 400-32Xs with second place going to Anti. Army rifleman Joe Hein had a perfect 400-27X to best Zachary Connell, a promising junior from Massachusetts, 400-26X, while Steve Kern, 400-24X, took third. In the day's final contest, 40 shots at 50 meters, Palma Team member Kent Reeve won with a 400-31X. Randle Team veterans, Ginger McLemore and Katie Bridges, fought it out for second and third respectively with a pair of 400-30Xs. The first daily aggregate went to Reya Kempley who out Xed Kern, 1198-85X to 1198-69X. Ben Swanson, of the Jamestown, New York Junior Rifle Club, was third shooting an 1197-83X.

After the competition shooting ended it was time for a little serious fun as the NRA Smallbore Committee conducted the Randle Doubles Match. In the Randle Doubles Match a seasoned competitor paired with a less experienced one and they shoot a Dewar Course using either metallic or any sights. The idea is to enable the experienced shooter to share shooting knowledge with his partner. The teams are usually an adult and a junior, with the junior quite often being the more experienced shooter. From time to time a tyro adult is teamed with another adult.

The match, more commonly known as the Mentor Match, had 72 teams in competition with Bill Neff and Amy Fister posting a 799-55X to win. It might be noted that the mentor dropped the point on this team, not the mentee.

When shooting resumed for the second day of metallic sights Matthew Chezem, of Moorpark College, began making a bid for the collegiate title by winning the Dewar with a 400-34X. Air Force Second Lieutenant Mike Seery, just graduated from Colorado Springs, shot a 400-33X to best Alabama junior Sam Richardson, 400-31X, by two Xs for second. As the targets were moved to 100 yards conditions worsened and Stephen Angeli, from Pennsylvania, posted the day's only 400. Two Connecticut shooters, junior Eric Petty and Perry veteran Greg Tomsen finished second and third with a 399-27X and a 398-29X. Abalo posted the only clean in the Meter Match, a 400-27X. Bill Burkert, the reigning intermediate position champ, was second with a 399-29X, and the Army's Norton's 399-26X was good for third. Abalo won the second daily aggregate with an 1197-78X, J. Michael O'Connor, of Michigan, was second ahead of Angeli, 1195-69X to 1194-82X.

With two days of metallic sight competition over only simple addition would be required to determine the iron sight champions. Abalo put together a two day total of 2393-159X for the Hoppe Trophy and the metallic championship. A 2390-164X by Reya Kempley was second and Angeli pulled into third with a 2389-163X. Joe Farmer, shooting a BSA, totaled 2388-162X for the senior title and the Walt Tomsen Trophy.

The end of the metallic sight aggregate means that team day is next. The top 22 scores shot by competitors using British legal equipment are named to the Dewar Team. This year's Dewar was captain by West Point Coach Ron Wigger and coached

by Carolyn Millard Sparks, the first woman to be named to be an official of this team. Dewar team members were, in order of finish in the iron aggregate Abalo, Reya Kempley, Angeli, Anti, Farmer, Kevin Nevius, Swanson, Gray, Justin Tracy, Seery, Remington Lyman, Tarl Kempley, Mark Gould, Chezem, Peter Church, Hein, Reeve, Connell, Norton, and Garrett Spurgeon. Reserves were Sarah Kramer and Spencer Cap.

Matt Chezem shot a 396-21X and was awarded the Ned Crossman Trophy as high gun on the team. For the second year in a row 83 year old Joe Farmer took home the Fred Scielzo Trophy awarded to the team's oldest member.

The Dewar shooters cleared the line so that the Randle Ladies, the top dozen women in metallic sight competition, could prepare. Starting at 100 yards because the conditions were still quiet, Reya Kempley, Kramer, Nancy Tompkins, Bridges, Amanda McMullin, McLemore, Claudia Duksa, Amy Fister, Amanda Luoma, and Michelle Bohren spread out their gear. Roberta Gubbins and Maria Luisa Wells were captain and coach while Edie Fleeman and Michelle Bauer were reserves. Katie Bridges had the high score, 400-33X, and took home the Eleanor Dunn Trophy, named for the match's founder.

While the Dewar and the Randle shot, the Whistler Boy two member junior team matches were also being conducted. The winner of this match, which combines a Dewar prone course and a 60 shot three position match, is awarded the Hughes Trophy. The Hughes is more commonly known as the Whistler Boy because of the statuette is that of a young boy wearing a pork pie hat, arms akimbo, head back, and cheeks puffed up as he whistles.. Captain Erin Gestl and Coach Bill Burkert lead the

Palmyra, Pennsylvania Green team of Alex Gestl and Luke Johnson to the win. Brian Jylkka, in his last appearance as a junior and Alex Martin represented the Gun Owners of New Hampshire Gold for second place and Palmyra Gold, Kevin Brubaker and Nathan Brandeberg were coached to third by Gerold Johnson.

The team matches began soon after the Whistler Boy finished and the metallic sight match for the American Dewar Trophy was won by The Richards Associates Team Moore. Led by Scott Fulmer the four firing members, mostly converted Palma shooters, Marl DelCotto, Wayne Forshee, Kent Reeve, and Carlton Hardin put together a 1596-115X to edge out the second place Los Angeles Rifle and Revolver Club Juniors, 1595-97X who took second and junior honors. In third place was Stinknik Mixed firing a 1594-96X.

The Army, Abalo, Norton, Gray, and Hein coached by Walter Craig, made the best of their any sights, carding a perfect 1600-108X to win the Officers Reserve Trophy and push The Richard Associates, 1598-104X into second while Stinknik Mixed held their own for third. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Gold, Eric Petty, Remington Lyman, Tony Cuozzo, and Claudia Duksa were captained by Patti Clark and coached by David Lyman into the junior title.

The second half of the tournament began on day four with Abalo winning, with a 400-38X, the opening anysight Dewar. Hein and Garrett Spurgeon were right behind with a pair of 400-37Xs. Reya Kempley shot a 440-35X to stay in competition but Angeli dropped two points which dropped him back. Master Sergeant Matt Griffin, USAF, nudged out J. Michael O'Connor for the win at 100 yards. Both men had 400-35Xs but the rule broke in Griffin's favor. Hein went clean with 34Xs for third. Abalo dropped a

point and Reya Kempley helped her cause with a 400-29X. At 50 meters Swanson won with a 400-37X. Kern and Reya Kempley tied with 400-29xs and had to go to the rule book which gave second to Kern. Abalo did not drop a point and kept head of all comers in the aggregate. Hein won the first any sight aggregate with a 1200-107X followed by Reya Kempley and Kern who tied once again, each firing a 1200-100X, this time the decision fell to Kempley. Abalo ended the day with an 1199-99X and went into the final day sitting on a two point lead.

The Made In America Match, another fun event sponsored by the Smallbore Committee, was held after day one of any sights. The match requires that all equipment used in competition be domestic. Kent Reeve won the match with his Turbo action. George Pantazelos took the most unique award with his plumber's nightmare; a home built rifle on a Hall action, and Tom Bubolz's pristine Remington Model 37 was the most original.

The final day opened with a clear sky and calm conditions. Junior Nathan Molder of Santo, Texas, won the Dewar. He just got by New Hampshire's Larry Parker and Ross Ewart who were knotted up at 400-37X. Abalo stayed perfect as did Kempley. At 100 yards Mike Anti entered the winners' circle for the first time. Anti, a retired Army officer, was also in the running for the championship. Anti had the best of three 400-35Xs, pushing Carl Joos, of Champions' Shooters' Supply, into second and Swanson into third. Abalo and Kempley remained perfect with only 40 shots to go at 50 meters. Justin Tracy, an optical engineer from Rochester, New York won the final match with a 400-34X, Hein was second, a 400-33X, as O'Connor closed out things with a 400-32X.

The last daily aggregate went to Anti who posted a 1200-102X. Tracy was second on Xs, 1200-100X while Reya Kempley, 1200-99X, cruised into third.

The any sight aggregate belonged to Joe Hein who never missed the ten ring in two days and also put 204 into the X ring. Kempley, also perfect with 199Xs, was second place and the women's champ. Abalo, who dropped a single point, was third. Charlie Kemp took home senior honors while Kern was the intermediate senior champion.

The new prone champion, and winner of the Critchfield Trophy, was Chris Abalo who held onto his lead throughout the last two days, shooting a 4792-352X. The tournament marked the end of his tour with the Army Marksmanship Unit. The career Army officer leaves in the fall for advanced schooling and troop duty. There was also no question that Reya Kempley, civilian and women's champion, would stand next to him on the podium as the winner of the Remington and Schweitzer Trophies. Mike Anti emerged from the pack as the bronze medalist.

Senior champion Joe Farmer took home his first Bond Trophy and intermediate senior Steve Kern was awarded the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy. Matt Chezen was high collegiate shooter, and Garrett Spurgeon earned the Whittington Trophy as top junior. Noted shooting historian Paul Nordquist shot all four days with a scope and was rewarded with his second consecutive anysight only championship. Ben Swanson and Peter Fiore were the intermediate and sub junior champions.

In the blink of an eye the awards ceremony was over but the memories will last. Perhaps, even long enough for a day when a senior champion named Peter Fiore might hold the Sam Bond Trophy in his hands and look to his right to see a young sub junior



standing behind the Glabb Trophy, a trophy which he had won decades earlier. For, as we all know, shooting is a sport that lasts a lifetime.

## **2013**

Blistering heat and high humidity greeted some 307 competitors who filled the line at Camp Perry, Ohio in their quest for the 2013 Frank Parsons Memorial Trophy. Over the two days of individual competition nearly 100,000 rounds of ammunition, and uncounted gallons of water and sports drinks, would be consumed before a champion was named.

Even with the excessive heat and humidity shooting conditions were good as 43 perfect scores were fired in prone metallic sights, the first match of the tournament. Reya Kempley topped the field with a 400-38X while Katie Bridges, Tarl Kempley, and Bill Beard fired 400-37Xs forcing the stat office to the rule book early to determine that Bridges was second and Tarl Kempley third.

In the standing match Intermediate Junior Mark Matheny, a Marksman, representing Delaware's Queen Annes 4-H Marksmanship Club, posted a 393-14X. Matheny edged out the Army's Erin Lorenzen by two Xs who topped team mate Joe Hall, 392-16X, by a point. It was Matheny's third consecutive national championship win in standing as he had swept the standing matches a week earlier in the Metric National Championship

As the competitors set up for kneeling it was apparent that the final match would be the deciding factor for the metallic sight championship and would be hard fought. Matheny and Lorenzen were tied with Hall and Tarl Kempley one and two points back respectively. Oddly enough none of the leaders would play a part in kneeling. Olympian

Jason Parker took the match with a 399-30X slipping by Palmyra Intermediate Junior Alex Gestl by two Xs and Ontelaunee Pennsylvania Rod and Gun Club's Amy Fister by seven Xs.

Matheny slipped in his final 40 shots, giving up his thin lead to Hall whose 398-26X kneeling allowed him to tie Lorenzen on points, 1190, and then move ahead by a 13X margin ending up with an 1190-78X for the metallic sight championship and possession of the Bill Krilling Trophy. Lorenzen was silver medalist, 1190-65X, and high woman while Tarl Kempley, 1189-78X, earned the bronze. Matheny finish fourth and was high junior receiving the George Alves Trophy. The Meister Trophy, emblematic of the metallic senior championship, was presented to John Funk while Bill Burkert repeated as Intermediate senior metallic sight champion.

None of the top metallic sight finishers could relax as the second half of the championship is the any sight championship and all were well aware of the old shooters maxim, "Where there is scope there is hope." Never was it as evident as in the prone anysight match where 20% of the scores recorded were 400s with the top three, Army's Mike McPhail, Reya Kempley, and Hall knotted in an unbreakable 400-40X tie.

Hall would not let up and won the anysight standing match with a 396-22X while teammates Hank Gray and Parker each carded a 395, 21Xs for Gray and 13 for Parker. With the standing match in the books both the anysight and national title would come down to the final kneeling match.

Army's Joe Hein was the only clean score posted in kneeling. Hot on his heels were teammates McPhail and Parker with a 399-28X and a 399-22X. In spite of dropping a point kneeling Parker, who had hovered close to the top all day, pulled off a

win in the anysight aggregate with an 1194-73X. His point proved valuable as Hall's second place score of 1193 was 20 Xs more than Parker while third place Hein, another 1193, was up 16Xs on the winner. Fister's 1190-78X was the high woman score; Beard took senior honors with an 1164-64X while Thomas Byrne, 1161-59X shot eight more Xs than Bill Burkert for the intermediate title.

When all of the scores had been totaled it seemed as if you needed to be in the Army with a first name that started with the letter J to stand any chance at placing at the top. Joseph Hall's combined score winning of 2383-171X made him the winner of the Parsons Trophy as the overall champion. In second place Jason Parker was the D.I. Boyd Trophy winner as the service champ. Joe Hein was third.

The Winchester Trophy went to civilian champion Tarl Kempley. Erin Lorenzen earned the Mary Camp Trophy as high woman while John Funk took home the Robert Moore Trophy as high senior. Bill Burkert was once again intermediate senior champion. Remington Lyman, a rising sophomore at The Ohio State University, took home the Cobb Trophy as junior champion. The Putnam and Cobb Trophies were presented to intermediate junior Bernard Cheezum and sub junior Seth Leonard.

The top awards were spread wider this year as the old winner take all system was changed to a pass down arrangement. In the past if a junior woman who was in the military and enrolled in college won the national championship she also took the appropriate category awards. The new format insured that a national champion was awarded only that award and so the other categories were awarded to the next highest scorer in that category.

In team competition the US Army Blue Team of Hein, Hall, Lorenzen, and Parker easily captured both the metallic and any sights championships giving them possession of the newly created overall team championship. The Palmyra Junior Rifle Team Green and the Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Gold took home junior honors in the metallic and anysight matches.

The final event of the position matches is, paradoxically, a prone postal match, The Drew Cup, sponsored by the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain, in a junior only English Match. Caitlyn Morrissey captained the team assisted by Coach Mike Burzynski while Adjutant H.J. "Walt" Walter handled administrative matters. The juniors selected to the team were Deanna Binney, Lauren Phillips, Katie Bridges, Spencer Cap, Zachery Strohl, Mackenzie Martin, Amy Fister, Sarah Nakata, Samantha Peterson, Ethan Cook, Joseph Martin, and Peter Fiori.

During the Awards Ceremony the Ohio State Rifle and Pistol Association, led by Greg Drown, was being awarded its medals when the power in Hough Auditorium went out, causing folks to scurry to open the theater doors to let in light and air while a temporary public address system was rigged to allow the ceremonies to proceed. The blackout reminded many of the 2009 theater power outage when Drown was on the stage accepting his anysight championship laurels. The question of whether it was cause and effect or mere coincidence crossed many minds.

Settlers living along the Lake Erie coast between Sandusky and Toledo were startled by the barking clap of naval cannon fire emanating from Put In Bay a little after midday on September 10, 1813. A few weeks short of two hundred years later smallbore rifle shooters, anticipating the first day of the 2013 prone conventional

smallbore championship, were awakened in the middle of the night by the crash of thunder and flash of lightening. Arriving at the Camp Perry firing line they were greeted by rain and the sight of the twisted metal and torn canvas which had been the firing line awning: damage reminiscent of the shattered rigging of the sloops and brigs of the opposing naval forces of United States Navy and Royal Navy from that long ago naval battle.

A two hour delay saw the rain stop and the damaged awning cleared away to allow the metallic sight aggregate to begin. The competitors would shoot Perry as it had been shot before the advent of the awning in the early 1980s, out in the weather. The 50 meter match, as well as the whole week, would be as hard fought as the battle of Lake Erie. Hank Gray, of the Army, and Reya Kempley set the competitive tone right from the start, each shooting a 400-36X, making the statistical office pull out the rule book even before the smoke settled from the first match. Gray took first Kempley second and Mike McPhail, Gray's teammate, was third with a 400-35X. Olympian Erik Uptagrafft won the 100 yard match posting a 400-36X ahead of McPhail's 400-35X and Nancy Tompkins' 400-33X. The Dewar went to Stephen Angeli, 400-36X, followed by noted long range rifleman Bob Gustin's 400-33X, while Kempley kept perfect shooting a 400-32X. At the end of the day three competitors remained clean, Kempley with a 1200-100, McPhail had a 1200-97X, and Air Force 2LT Mike Seery holding at 1200-89X.

Perfection would be the key throughout the second day. Kempley opened by shooting a 400-38X for a win in the second Meter Match. Jason Parker, yet another Olympian in the mix, was tied with the 2013 Metric Prone Champion Katie Bridges each posting a 400-37X, Parker got the go ahead on the tie breaker. Jeremy Mangione, an

Army service rifle shooter who recently picked up the smallbore game, cleaned 100 yards with 35Xs, Kempley kept clean with a 400-34X while Joe Hein was third on the basis of his 400-32X. The metallic championship closed with a Dewar won by Parker's 400-35, with Seery, 400-34X, falling into second while Hein's 400-32X earned him third. Hein took the day with a 1200-103X, Kempley slid into second with a 1200-102X, and Parker closed out the top three with a 1200-100X.

The Hoppe Trophy, presented to the metallic sight champion, was Reya Kempley's who was perfect over the two days. Uptagrafft and Seery both dropped a point and ended up in second and third. McPhail, also down one, was the service champion. Bridges earned the Peters Cartridge Trophy as high woman. Angeli and Gustin lead the intermediate senior and senior categories taking home the Gates and Tomsen Trophies. University of Akron's Matthew Chezem was high collegiate. Junior Cody Manning, intermediate junior William Dixon, and sub junior Peter Fiori captured their categories.

After two days of intense individual competition the various international postal matches, NRA Team matches, and the eagerly anticipated shoulder to shoulder match with the British, the Pershing Trophy Match, was a welcome change of pace. Under the watchful eye of the British United States Dewar Team Captain Carolyn Sparks and Coach Paul Gideon led McPhail, Hein, Reya Kempley, Mangione, Uptagrafft, Bridges, Seery, Nancy Tompkins, Parker, Kevin Nevius, Glen Dubis, Angeli, Hall, Matt Chezem, Shawn Wells, Bohren, Mark DelCotto, Gray, Wayne Forshee, Gustin, Charlie Kemp, and Erin Gestl to score of 7838 for a second consecutive Dewar Win. The Crossman

Trophy Plaque, given to the high score on the United States Dewar Team, was presented to McPhail, 398, who out Xed Hein for the honor.

The Randle Team, Reya Kempley, Bridges, Tompkins, Bohren, Deena McDorman, Amanda McMullin, Katherine Harrington, Mackenzie Martin, Amy Fister, Lorenzen, and Ashley Tackson under the direction of Captain Marie Luisa “Wendy” Wells and Coach Diana LeFrancois posted a 3988-297X. Kempley received the Eleanor Dunn Trophy for her team best score of 400-37X.

The Whistler Boy Match, 60 shots in three positions and a Dewar, was an exciting event. Palmyra Rifle Club Junior Green riflemen Luke Johnson and Joshua Martin, coached by Erin Gestl, won with a score of 1984-133X, besting the Connecticut Rifle and Revolver Association Gold’s Anthony Cuozzo, Remington Lyman, and coach David Lyman by a margin of three Xs, the closest finish in memory.

The Metallic Sight Team Match went to the USAMU Gold with Gray, Uptagrafft, Parker, and McPhail coached by Walter Craig with a 1600-145X. The Black Hawk Sparrow Hawks were second, 1600-126X, with Richards Associates Gray in third shooting a 1600-113X. Springing back from the close loss in the Whistler Boy Coach David Lyman’s Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association team of Eric Sloan, Remington Lyman, Cuozzo, and Seth Leonard were onstage as the junior champions.

Almost a complete set of new players were at the top of the results bulletin for the Anysight Team match. The Black Hawk Sparrow Hawks, Bridges, Morgen Dietrich, Mike O’Connor, and Mike Anti were coached by Bill Beard to a 1600-138X. Team Wigger Stinkniks consisting of Lones, Ron, Deena and Danny Wigger, shot a 1600-133X with two Xs squeezed out by a challenge to best Coach Charlie Adams’ third

place Digby Hand Jackson Team of Erik Hoskins, George Pantazelos, Joe Graf, and Terry Glenn. The Connecticut State Rifle and Revolver Association Juniors repeated their metallic sight win.

There was just a bit more on the line than metallic sight titles for the shooters who spread their mats on their Camp Perry firing points on July 20<sup>th</sup>, for they also would also be vying one of 12 coveted spots on the 2013 United States John J. Pershing Trophy International Team.

The famed tournament began in 1931 with a challenge by the National Rifle Association to Great Britain's Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs for a shoulder to shoulder match to be shot at Bisley Camp over the Dewar Course. The challenge did not turn out well for the United States who lost the match by two points. The United States again challenged and lost the second match, again by two points, in 1938. The third time proved the charm for the United States as they, at long last, won the trophy in 1939, just a few weeks before the outbreak of World War II.

The British came to the United States to challenge for the Pershing in 1953, 1961, 1965, 1973, 1981, 1989, 1997, and 2005 and were defeated each time by the home team. The match went on an eight year rotation, alternating with the Roberts Trophy Match created when Sir Thomas Sutton, a member of the first British Pershing Team, donated the Roberts Trophy in 1965. Both matches are fired across a Dewar Course using the host country's targets and rules.

With a run of nine consecutive victories the 2013 United States team was under some pressure to keep the string going. It was especially tension filled as the 2005 match went down to Xs and would have been a loss for the United States if fired in



Britain where the tie breaker is not Xs, but score at long range. The United States, as always, expected a stiff challenge and was exceptionally wary after a crushing defeat at the hands of the British in the 2009 Roberts Match.

The British arrived five days in advance of the start of the metallic sight matches to acclimate and train. Pershing and Roberts veterans Captain Neil Gibbons, Coach John Leech, and Adjutant Phil Strong lead a contingent that sported just one Pershing Veteran Richard Fowke, a shooter well known to the smallbore community for winning the 2009 United States civilian prone championship. He was backed by David Binney, Kenneth Bowley, Sinclair Bruce, Nicholas Clark, Robert Dowling, Wendy Foith, Graham Shedden, Richard Simpson, Peter Stanley, Philip Martin, and William Yates.

After two days of metallic sight completion J. William "Bill" Carter, captain of the United States Team, selected his team based on score: Reya Kempley, Erik Uptagrafft, Michael Seery, Michael McPhail, Joseph Hein, Katie Bridges, Stephen Angeli, Henry Gray, Robert Gustin, Nancy Tompkins, Matthew Chezem, and Shawn Wells.

It was a particularly strong United States team, unusual also as three women earned a spot. Kempley is the reigning metallic sight champion, Uptagrafft and McPhail were members of the 2012 United States Olympic Rifle Team, Gray and Hein are Pershing and Roberts team veterans, Gustin and Tompkins are well know long range marksman with considerable Palma Match experience, Chezem is the 2013 NRA Intercollegiate individual champion and a world cup veteran, Wells and Angeli are NRA Distinguished Prone Rifleman, and Bridges is a young phenom who had been tearing up the outdoor circuit this summer and is the first to earn a spot on all of the

international prone matches in a single season; the Wakefield Trophy , the Drew Cup, the Randle, the Dewar, the Pershing and the Goodwill Randle.

Bridges, Tompkins, and Kempley's Perry experience was particularly memorable as they followed in the footsteps of three other great woman shooters, Janet Friddell, Eliza Bishop, and Jamie Beyerle as all three accomplished a very rare 'hat trick" being named to the Dewar, Randle, and Pershing Teams in the same year, They doubled the number of women accomplishing the feat in one fell swoop.

The teams flipped for firing points the night before, soon after the visitors heard of the birth of Prince George of Cambridge, with the United States winning and selecting the bank of targets to the left of the center tower, the British taking the right. Match day dawned bright and clear with a light wind fishtailing from seven to five o'clock. The home team shooters fired in pairs on either side of their wind coach. Carter coached Kempley and Uptagrafft, Chezem supervised Seery and McPhail, Wells scoped Hein and Bridges, Coach Lones Wigger read the wind for Angeli and Gray while Adjutant Hap Rocketto guided Gustin and Tompkins.

The match kicked off at 8AM at the 50 yard line. As the teams peppered the targets a gallery wandered behind the line kept informed of scores by ten register keepers, Eric Sloan, Anthony Couzzo, Chris Hoskins, Daniele Makucevich, Alex Muzzioli, Nicole Ladd, Rebecca Green, Mike Mazur, Blake Parker, and Perry Parker under the direction on Len Remaly.

As it had in 1973, 1981, 1989, and 1997, the United States cleaned the 50 yard line, Seery and McPhail having 200-20Xs. The British lost five points at short range but the 2005 Pershing was not far from the United States team's mind. The British are well

known for their skill at long range and that year saw the British make up the difference in points, to only lose the match on Xs. No lead is safe in a prone match but with a five point pad the team was directed by Coach Wigger to, "Shoot for tens, the Xs will take care of themselves."

The team followed Wigger's counsel and of the next 200 record shots 158 found the X ring, 40 were tens, and only two wandered outside of the two inch center circle. The British, in spite of a heroic effort, were unable to make up the point deficit and the United States won the match 3998-339X to 3987-298X.

The top gun on the British Pershing Team is awarded the William J. Grater Memorial Trophy, donated by former United States prone champion Presley W. Kendall, in 1987, in memory of William J. Grater, a former United States junior prone champion, Distinguished Smallbore Prone Rifleman, four time member of the United States Dewar Team, and member of the 1961 USA Pershing Team. Kenneth Bowley, 400-31X, received the Grater Trophy from National Rifle Association President James Porter at the United States Pershing Dinner the evening of the match.

As high scorer on the United States team Michael McPhail was presented the inaugural David Cramer plaque by President Porter and Cramer's daughter Janell. Cramer, who passed away at the apex of his career in 2012, was a member of the 2005 US Pershing Team, 2009 US Roberts Team, 15 US Dewar Teams, a national record holder and Distinguished with the service rifle and smallbore prone and position rifles. McPhail's 400-39X is the highest score ever fired in a Pershing Match.

A very popular accompaniment to the Pershing is the Randle Goodwill Match pitting United States and Great Britain Randle alumna in a friendly competition followed

the firing of the Pershing. Team size is determined by how many British ladies make the trip and this year teams of four faced off with the United States team of Kempley, Bridges, Tompkins, and Michelle Bohren facing off against Great Britain's Wendy Foith, Allison Leech, Wendy Hethenington, and Fiona Shedden. In a close run metallic sight match the United States narrowly defeated the British 1594-119X to 1592-101X.

The Pershing and its associated events are more than just a rifle match. It is a quadrennial celebration of Anglo-American shooting fellowship that is accompanied by a whirlwind of social events. Baseball legend Satchel Paige advised athletes to, "Go very light on the vices, such as carrying on in society— the social ramble ain't restful." Whether or not the Pershing teams listened to his sage wisdom is up in the air. The teams attended the Stinknik Rifle Club Dinner, a pizza party on the line sponsored by the American Dewar Shooters, the Black Hawk Rifle Club's annual dinner along with the British and United States Pershing dinners while shooting a full match schedule.

Tradition dictates the associations and participants exchanged mementoes; the British presented the US Team handsome engraved pewter mugs and a sterling silver demitasse spoon with the National Smallbore Rifle Association of Great Britain's emblem on the handle. In return they received personalized copies of the NRA's history of the National Matches and NRA knives from their United States counterparts. All competitors were presented embroidered soft rifle cases bearing the Pershing logo, team name, and date.

As it has been for 82 years, the 2013 Pershing was an event eagerly anticipated, well conducted, and hard fought. The great British statesman Winston Churchill always felt a strong bond existed between the United States and Great Britain. It existed on a

personal level; Churchill's mother, Jennie Jerome, was born in Brooklyn, New York and it so it was easy for him to make this association with Great Britain's strongest 20<sup>th</sup> Century ally. The connection was so close to him that on March 5, 1946, in his 'Sinews of Peace' address at Westminster College, where he coined the Cold War's most famous phrase "The Iron Curtain," he made a point to speak warmly in praise of, "...the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples ...a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States." The Empire may be gone but, like the Commonwealth, the special relationship lives on.

The Pershing Match is a manifestation of Churchill's thoughts. It is a fraternal association, a special relationship, in which the best shooters from each nation meet on the field of intense, but friendly, rivalry in which the heat of competition is like the fire in a forge. It tests and tempers the mettle of the shooters as it shapes stronger links between them and their countries.

The temperature had dropped over the two days of team competition and sweatshirts were seldom shed during the anysight phase. And, while the temperature cooled the shooting did not. Parker opened the any sight championship by carding a 400-31X in the Meter Match closely followed by Chezem's 400-30X, and a 400-27X put up by Tompkins. Joe Farmer, who had swapped his trusty BSA for a Blieker, was rewarded with a 400-31X winning score in the 100 yard match. Erin Gestl, scion of the famous Pennsylvania shooting family, cleaned it with 29Xs while McPhail came in third on a 400-29X. Uptagrafft, McPhail, and Hall finished one, two, three in the Dewar with 36X, 34X, and 33X cleans. While only finishing in the money once Chezem did not drop

a point and won the daily aggregate with 79Xs. Parker and McPhail trailed with 1199s sporting 91 and 90 Xs.

The first relay on the final day saw uncommonly quiet Perry conditions knotting six shooters up with 400-39Xs in the Meter Match. In the end Hein won, Kempley was second and Tompkins third, Dubis, McPhail, and Danny Wigger had to settle for the first three places in the Master class. Mangione showed that he was getting a feel for smallbore by winning the Dewar, but had to do it on a tie breaker as Tarl Kempley and McMullen also shot 400-34Xs. The final shots of the tournament were at 100 yards and Uptagrafft took the last smallbore match to be fired at Camp Perry until 2016 on a three way tie breaker between McPhail and Joe Graf, of the Smithfield Rhode Island Sportsmen's Club; they all shot 400-37Xs, leaving it to the stat office to sort out the winner. The top three places for the final daily aggregate were separated by Xs and, with about a dozen 1200s in the mix, McPhail's 1200-109X bested Parker and the legendary Lones Wigger whose 1200-97Xs moved them into second and third on a Rule 15.7.1 situation.

The anysight title, to no one's surprise, went down to Xs as McPhail, Parker, and Chezem all shot 2399s. McPhail was the US Cartridge Trophy winner with 199 Xs while Parker and Chezem posted 186Xs and 181Xs for second and third. Hein was the service champion, McMullen was handed the Western Cartridge Company Trophy as high woman, and Farmer's faith in his new rifle was amply rewarded with the Plimpton Trophy given to the senior champion. British Pershing Team members Richard Fowke came to the stage to accept the Frank Boyd Trophy as high intermediate senior and

Robert Dowling was named the collegiate champion. Bridges, Allison Villa, and Matthew Liao were junior, intermediate junior, and sub junior champions.

In a crowded theater Staff Sergeant Michael McPhail, USA hoisted a trophy firearm and the Critchfield Trophy in recognition of winning the 2013 United States Outdoor Smallbore Conventional Rifle Prone Championship with a score of 4798-385Xs. Flanking him were silver medalist Matthew Chezem and bronze medalist Sergeant First Class Eric Uptagrafft, USA. Civilian Champion Reya Kempley took home the Schweitzer Trophy. The John Grubar Trophy was presented to service champion Staff Sergeant Joseph Hein, USA. Katie Bridges, the woman champion, gathered up the Remington Trophy as Senior Bob Gustin picked up the Sam Bond Trophy.

Ginger McLemore, fittingly enough a member of the Black Hawk Rifle Club, was the recipient of the Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy presented to the intermediate senior champion. Cody Manning, of the University of Kentucky, is the 2013 collegiate champion and has possession of the Austin Trophy. Amanda McMullin was awarded the junior championship trophy, the Whittington Trophy. The Stark Trophy went to intermediate junior William Dixon, Matthew Liao picked up the Glaab Trophy as sub junior champion. Kenneth Bowley, a member of the British Pershing Team, was awarded the Dick Danik Trophy for being the high visitor. In a very poignant moment Bobbi Vitito held the Marianne Jensen Driver Memorial Trophy, presented to her for being the High Any Sight Only competitor in the Championship. The trophy is named in honor of her mother who many consider the *grande dame* of United States shooting

Soon after well wishers finished greeting the winners on the stage the lights went out in the auditorium and the crowd drifted over to the awards window to pick up

anything won on the last days of shooting. With the brass policed up, gear packed away, and the trophies distributed the departing smallbore shooters took a long last look at the Camp Perry firing line, storing up memories which will have to last them until they return from a two year Diaspora at Bristol, Indiana, a displacement caused by the United States hosting the 2014 World Championship of Long Range Rifle Shooting.



**TROPHIES AND AWARDS**  
**OF**  
**THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR SMALLBORE RIFLE CHAMPIONSHIP**  
**THE PRONE CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
**INDIVIDUAL TROPHIES AND AWRDS**  
**THE CRITCHFIELD TROPHY**

The Critchfield Trophy was presented to the National Rifle Association in honor of Brigadier General Ammon B. Critchfield, the “Father of Camp Perry.” Artist Fred M. Hakenjos who later served as the Association’s president in the mid 1970s designed the trophy. It has always been awarded to the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Champion.

**THE SCHWEITZER MEDAL**

The William P. Schweitzer Trophy Plaque is awarded to the civilian national champion and has an interesting history. The Schweitzer family had a number of gold medallions struck in memory of Schweitzer to be presented annually in honor of one of the premier prone shooters of the 30s and 40s. The original medallions were quite valuable and, as such, were only awarded twice: a plaque being awarded to a previous winner who repeated for the third time. A record search indicates that the last medallion was presented to the 1990 National Champion Ty Bishop. Schweitzer was a talented rifleman whose generosity enabled the British to participate in the first post War Pershing Match and his visage graces the award.

### **THE REMINGTON TROPHY**

A silver cup, donated by the Remington Arms Company, is awarded annually to the Woman Champion in the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championship.

### **THE SAM BOND MEMORIAL TROPHY**

Since 1975 the Sam Bond Trophy has awarded annually to the Senior Prone Champion in the National Smallbore Prone Championships. From 1979 through 1980 it was presented to those 55 years of age or older and after 1980 to those 65 years of age or older.

### **THE BLACK HAWK RIFLE CLUB TROPHY**

The Black Hawk Rifle Club Trophy was presented to the National Rifle Association, by that club, in 1993 to be awarded to the Intermediate Senior Prone Champion annually at the National Matches.

### **THE CHARLIE ROGERS MEMORIAL TROPHY**

The trophy was donated to the NRA by the Eastern Beavers Rifle Team and the Dayton Rifle and Revolver Club, in memory of long time prone shooter, Charlie Rogers, from Pennsylvania. It is awarded to the High Expert in the prone aggregate.

### **THE AUSTIN TROPHY**

N.M. Austin of Seattle, Washington donated the Austin Trophy to the National Rifle Association, in 1936. The silver globe with eagle perched in top is currently presented to the National Collegiate Prone Champion at the National Matches.

### **THE WHITTINGTON TROPHY**

The Junior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships is presented the Whittington Trophy. George R. Whittington, a prominent member of the National Rifle Association, presented the silver bowl in 1952 to recognize the Junior Champion. It has always been awarded for this purpose.

### **THE STARK MEMORIAL PRONE TROPHY**

An ornate antique pewter coffee bowl is a memorial to Robert S. Stark presented by his son Matthew. Stark was very supportive of junior shooting activities in the northern Virginia area. Presented to the National Rifle Association in 1979 it is now awarded annually to the Intermediate Junior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships.

### **THE JOSEPH P. GLABB MEMORIAL TROPHY**

David and Ellen Ross presented, in memory of Joseph P. Glabb, a celebrated junior coach, the silver plated Victorian pitcher. The trophy was first given to the National Sub Junior Champion in 1983; all winners of the title since it was introduced in 1979 were retroactively recognized.

### **THE MARIANNE JENSEN DRIVER MEMORIAL TROPHY**

The Marianne Jensen Driver Memorial Trophy was donated to the NRA by her daughters, Lenore and Bobbi. This trophy is in recognition of their mother's many accomplishments in Smallbore Rifle shooting. Besides firing in the National Matches, she participated on the Randle International Smallbore Prone Team as firing member, team captain, team coach and other positions over a 40 year span.

Mrs. Driver supported NRA Women's Issues, annual meetings, and was a coach, mentor and an inspiration to many shooters. At the age of 80, she fired in her last National Smallbore Prone Match, firing a clean target of 200 out of 200. She was inducted into the Allen Park Sports Hall of Fame and in 1999 was presented with the NRA Sybil Ludington Freedom Award. It is awarded to the High Any Sight Only competitor in the NRA National Smallbore Rifle Conventional Prone Championship.

### **THE HOPPE MEMORIAL TROPHY**

Frank A. Hoppe, the founder of the Hoppe's No. 9 Solvent Company, was memorialized by the company in 1940. The silver cup has always been awarded to the Metallic Sight Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships.

### **THE PETERS CARTRIDGE COMPANY TROPHY**

The Peters Cartridge Company donated the silver cup to the National Rifle Association in 1923. Presently it is awarded to the Woman's Metallic Sight Prone Champion.

### **THE ROBERT H. PLIMPTON TROPHY**

This trophy was first put into competition in 2001 to honor of Robert H. Plimpton. It recognizes his life time contribution to the shooting sports. It is presented to the Senior Champion in the National Metallic Sight Prone Championship.

### **THE SAM GATES TROPHY**

The Sam Gates Trophy is to honor the memory of the noted Pennsylvania smallbore competitor and sight manufacturer. The Intermediate Senior Champion in the National Metallic Sight Prone Championship will be awarded the Gates Trophy, which was presented to the National Rifle Association in 2003.

### **THE UNITED STATES CARTRIDGE COMPANY TROPHY**

Presented to the National Rifle Association in 1923 this miniature statue called “The Scout” is now presented to the Any Sight Champion at National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships.

### **THE WESTERN CARTRIDGE COMPANY TROPHY**

Often referred to as “The Marksman Trophy” this silver cup was presented to the National Rifle Association by the Western Cartridge Company in 1923, It is now awarded to the Woman Champion in the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Any Sight Championship.

### **THE WALTER S. TOMSEN TROPHY**

A gift of the Stratford Connecticut Police Athletic League Rifle Club and the Bell City Rifle Club of Southington Connecticut to the National Rifle Association, it was presented in 2001 to be awarded to the Senior Any Sight Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships. Walter S. Tomsen was the silver medalist in the English Match at the 1948 London Olympics, an International Distinguished Marksman, and a veteran of many Pershing and Dewar Teams.

### **THE FRANK BOYD TROPHY**

Presented by the friends and admirers in of Frank Boyd, this trophy honors a noted rifleman from New Jersey, who served as a shooter and official on many US Dewar, Pershing, and Roberts Teams. The trophy was first awarded in 2003 to the Intermediate Senior Champion in the National Smallbore Rifle Any Sight Prone Championships.

### **THE DICK DANIK TROPHY**

This trophy was presented to the NRA by friends of Dick Danik who was a frequent visitor to the U.S. and Camp Perry, where he competed in Smallbore rifle Prone. Born in Poland prior to WWII, he found a home in England after the war. He was educated in England and became a professor of Slavic languages at Trinity College in Ireland. The trophy is a 13 inch high polished pewter claret pitcher, mounted on a 4 inch base with a pewter engraving band. The trophy will be awarded to the High Visitor in the NRA National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Prone Championship. It was first awarded in 2005.

## **THE PRONE CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAM EVENTS AND SPECIAL TROPHIES**

### **THE AMERICAN DEWAR CUP**

The American Dewar Cup was placed into competition in 1930 when it was donated by a friend of the National Rifle Association for use in annual competition. It is presently presented to the winning team in the metallic sight prone championship.

### **THE OFFICERS' RESERVE CORPS TROPHY**

The Reserve Officers' Association of the United States donated the Officers' Reserve Corps Trophy in 1930. It is presented to the any sight prone team match winner at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships.

### **THE RANDLE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL TEAM TROPHY**

Thurman Randle, a President of the National Rifle Association, donated the Randle Cup in 1952 to be awarded to the winner of an international women's prone postal match sponsored by the National Rifle Association.

### **THE ELEANOR DUNN TROPHY**

The high scoring member of the United States Randle Team is presented the Eleanor Dunn Trophy. Miss Dunn was a prime force in the creation of this prestigious international prone postal match. Miss Dunn gifted the trophy to the National Rifle Association and traveled to Camp Perry to it the first winner, Mary Stidworthy, in 1979,

### **THE PERSHING TROPHY**

General of the Armies John J. Pershing presented the Pershing Trophy to the National Rifle Association in 1931. The trophy is presented to the winner of an international shoulder-to-shoulder smallbore prone match held every eight years at Camp Perry between the United States, Great Britain, and Canada.

### **THE WILLIAM J. GRATER MEMORIAL TROPHY**

Presley Kendall, four time national prone champion, presented the cup to the National Rifle Association to be awarded to the high scorer on the British Pershing Team in memory of William J. Grater, a member of the 1961 United States Pershing Team.

### **THE DAVID CRAMER MEMORIAL TROPHY**

In honor of David Cramer, the NRA created the David Cramer Memorial Trophy Plaque in 2013 to be awarded to the high scorer on the US Pershing Team. Cramer, who passed away at the apex of his shooting career in 2012, and who had, among his many shooting accomplishments, been a member of the 2005 US Pershing Team, 2009 US Roberts Team, 15 US Dewar Teams, a national record holder and Distinguished with the service rifle and smallbore prone and position rifles

### **THE WHISTLER BOY TROPHY**

One of a pair of identical trophies donated by Grover A. Hughes of Youngstown, Ohio, in 1931 to the National Rifle Association for junior competition. By chance the first winners were Hughes' sons, Robert and Roger. Since 1980 one has been awarded to



the victorious two person team in a special junior smallbore match held during the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships, the other to the winning team in a special junior service rifle match held during high power.

### **THE POSITION CHAMPIONSHIPS INDIVIDUAL TROPHIES**

#### **THE FRANK PARSONS MEMORIAL TROPHY**

The Frank Parsons Trophy has always been awarded to the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championship. The chased sterling silver bowl came from the estate of the noted position shooter Frank Parsons in 1959.

#### **THE WINCHESTER TROPHY**

The bronze statuette of the "Plainsman" was presented in 1923 by the Winchester Repeating Arms Company to be placed into annual competition at the National Smallbore Rifle Prone Championships. It is currently awarded to the Civilian Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships.

#### **MARY C. CAMP MEMORIAL TROPHY**

William F. Camp, an NRA Director, presented the Mary C. Camp Trophy to the National Rifle Association in 1972, in memory of his wife, Mary. It is presented to the Woman Champion at the National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Position Championship.

### **THE MEISTER TROPHY**

Roy Meister of Seattle, Washington, presented the Meisterschuetzen Trophy to the National Rifle Association in 1952. The Irish silver punch bowl was made in 1887 and is awarded to the National Senior Three Position Smallbore Rifle Champion.

### **THE RHEINISCHE-WESTFALISCHEN-SPREGSTOFF TROPHY**

More commonly known by initials, RWS, rather than its tongue twisting full name, the RWS Trophy was donated by the noted German munitions firm in 1933 as the prize in an international prone postal match between Germany, the United States, and Great Britain. After much iteration it is now presented to the Intermediate Senior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championship.

### **THE JAMES S. COBB MEMORIAL TROPHY**

The Board of Directors of Abercrombie and Fitch presented a large sterling Revere bowl to the NRA in 1956 in memory of James S. Cobb, the company's Chairman of the Board. It is awarded to the Junior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships.

### **THE VOLUNTEER TROPHY**

Donated by the NRA Volunteers, and other interested individuals, who have served during the annual National Rifle & Pistol Championships conducted at Camp Perry, Ohio. This is a bronze sculpture of the Niagara, a two masted ship used in the war of 1812, mounted on a wooden base, with plates all around for engraving. The sculpture was made by Mary Maguire, a 35 year Camp Perry volunteer. It is unique in that every

person who contributed to the presentation of this trophy is listed on a plate on its back and that is awarded in each of the three phases, Pistol, Smallbore Rifle, and High Power Rifle, during the National Rifle & Pistol Championships fired each year at Camp Perry, Ohio. It is awarded the collegiate champion in the NRA Three Position Championship.

#### **THE BYRON E. PUTNAM MEMORIAL TROPHY**

The Wheaton Illinois Rifle Club presented the NRA with a sterling loving cup in memory of Byron E. Putnam, a National Rifle Association Director who was much devoted to junior programs. It has been awarded, since 1974, to the Junior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships. It was re-designated in 1997 and is now awarded to the Intermediate Junior Champion.

#### **THE STARK MEMORIAL POSITION TROPHY**

An ornate antique pewter coffee pot is a memorial to Robert S. Stark presented by his son Matthew. Stark was very supportive of junior shooting activities in the northern Virginia area. Presented to the National Rifle Association in 1979 it is now awarded annually to the Sub Junior Champion at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships.

#### **THE GEORGE ALVES MEMORIAL TROPHY**

This trophy is a gift of the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association and the Alves family in memory of George Alves. This trophy is in recognition of Mr. Alves' lifetime dedication to the shooting sports. He was a coach and mentor to hundreds of Smallbore Rifle junior shooters and teams. Mr. Alves was a long-time volunteer at the National Matches

at Camp Perry once named NRA Volunteer of the Year. It is awarded to the High Junior in the NRA Position Metallic Sight Championship.

### **THE WILLIAM KRILLING TROPHY**

William Krilling was the National Prone Champion in 1965 and the first person to shoot a perfect score across the 3200 point Regional Course of Fire as well as one of the nation's most outstanding rifle coaches. Friends presented to the National Rifle Association a fine bronze sculpture to be awarded annually, in his name, to the winner of the three position metallic sight championship. Krilling presented the first award to Troy Bassham at the 2001 National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships.

### **THE D.I. BOYD II TROPHY**

To honor CWO D.I. Boyd II, USMC the Black Hawk Rifle Club endowed a trophy to be awarded to the Any Sight Position Championship at National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships starting in 2001 Boyd, a world champion, held all five Distinguished designations, was a National Champion in indoor and outdoor position rifle shooting, and was a National High Power Champion. He is further distinguished in that he is the only person to have a trophy awarded in his name at both Smallbore and Highpower National Championships.

### **THE ROBERT K. MOORE TROPHY**

The Robert K. Moore Trophy was presented to the NRA by the Frazier-Simplex Rifle Club in Washington, PA. Robert "Bobbie" Moore has been a main stay of the Frazier-

Simplex Rifle Club and won the 1958 Prone Championships at Camp Perry. He was also the first winner of the Lister Cup in 1952 as National Indoor 4-Position Sectional champion. The trophy is a polished pewter cup, with lid, that sits on a polished pewter base. The trophy will be awarded to the High Senior in the NRA National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Position Championship. It was first awarded in 2005.

## **THE POSITION CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **TEAM TROPHIES**

#### **THE CASWELL TROPHY**

The Caswell Trophy, a miniature reproduction of the ancient statue of Nike on ship's prow, known as the Winged Victory of Samothrace, is awarded to the winners of the any sight team match at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships. Famed sportsman, author, and soldier Colonel John Caswell presented it to the National Rifle Association in 1927.

#### **THE HERCULES TROPHY**

The Hercules Powder Company donated a bronze statuette of the mythological hero Hercules in 1921 for presentation in annual competition. The trophy is currently presented to the winner of the metallic sight position team match at the National Smallbore Rifle Position Championships.

## Appendix B

### National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championship Records As of August 1, 2012 Current Courses of Fire

#### National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle NRA 3-Position Championship A-26 Target 2008 to Present

Course of Fire	Competitor	Score
<b>Metallic Sights</b>		
<b>Prone</b>	Reya Kempley	400-39X
<b>Standing</b>	Specialist Matthew Rawlings, USA	395-20X
<b>Kneeling</b>	Justin D. Pentz	398-25X
<b>Championship</b>	Tarl Kempley	1191-76X
<b>Any Sights</b>		
<b>Prone</b>	Specialist David R. Sprecher, USA	400-40X
	Specialist Joseph Hein, USA	400-40X
	Staff Sergeant Shane Barnhart, USA	400-40X
<b>Standing</b>	Reya Kempley	397-22X
<b>Kneeling</b>	Michelle Bohren	400-31X
	Captain Christopher Abalo, USA	
<b>Championship</b>	Staff Sergeant Shane Barnhart, USA	1197-80X
<b>Grand Aggregate</b>	Specialist George K. Norton, USA	2374-151X

#### National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Conventional Position Team Championship A-23 Target

<b>Metallic Sights</b>	United States Army Strike Force Gold-Coach Sergeant First Class Josh Olsen, Specialist Matthew Rawlings, Captain Chris Abalo, Staff Sergeant George Norton, Specialist Joseph Hein.	2391-169X
<b>Any Sights</b>	United States Army Strike Force Gold-Coach Sergeant First Class Josh Olsen, Staff Sergeant George Norton, Staff Sergeant Shane Barnhart, Specialist Joseph Hein, and Staff Sergeant Henry Gray	2384-151X

#### National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle NRA Prone Championship

Course of Fire	Competitor	Score
<b>Metallic Sights</b>		
<b>50 Yards</b>	Major James A. Hinkle, United States Marine Corps Reserve	400-40X-15X
<b>50 Meters</b>	Specialist 5th Class Mary Stidworthy, Arizona National Guard	400-40X
<b>Dewar</b>	Reya Kempley	400-39X
<b>100 Yards</b>	Staff Sergeant Thomas J. Whitaker, United States Air Force	400-38X
<b>Daily Aggregate*</b>	Captain Ernest J. Vande Zande, United States Army	1600-143X
<b>Daily Aggregate</b>	Staff Sergeant Michael McPhail, United States Army	1200-12X
<b>Championship*</b>	Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli, United States Marines	3200-268X

<b>Championship Any Sights</b>	Reya Kempley	2400-182X
<b>50 Yards</b>	Gregory V. Tomsen	400-40X-35X
<b>50 Meters</b>	Herb Hollister	400-40X-20X
<b>Dewar</b>	Baron V. Whateley	400-40X-10X
<b>100 Yards</b>	Ransford Triggs	400-40X
	Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Ghiselli, United States Marines	400-40X
<b>Daily Aggregate*</b>	Specialist 5th Class Mary Stidworthy, Arizona National Guard	1600-154X
<b>Daily Aggregate</b>	Staff Sergeant Shane Barnhart, USA	1200-114X
<b>Championship*</b>	Major Lones W. Wigger, Jr., United States Army	3200-298X
<b>Championship Grand</b>	Staff Sergeant Shane Barnhart, USA	2400-224X
<b>Aggregate*</b>	Major Lones W. Wigger, Jr., United States Army	6399-556X
<b>Grand Aggregate</b>	Staff Sergeant Michael McPhail, USA	4796-401X

\*=Obsolete 1600/3200/6400 Course of Fire

#### **National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Conventional Prone Team Championship**

##### **Fired on A-23 and A-25 Target**

<b>Dewar</b>	<b>Competitor</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Metallic Sights</b>	United States Army Marksmanship Unit "Blue"-Major Lones Wigger, Major James Meredith, First Lieutenant Bill Kovaric, First Lieutenant David Chesser	1600-128X
<b>Any Sights</b>	Stinknik Gentlemen-Douglas Knoop, Joseph Steffey, William Summers, Lawrence Wilkins	1600-149X

#### **Obsolete Courses of Fire**

##### **National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle Championship Records**

#### **National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle NRA 3-Position Championship A-50 Target 1977-2007**

<b>Course of Fire</b>	<b>Competitor</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Metallic Sights</b>		
<b>Prone</b>	Cory T. Brunetti	399-31X
<b>Standing</b>	Lieutenant Webster Wright, United States Army Reserve Major Michael Anti, United States Army	378-14X
<b>Kneeling</b>	Sergeant Troy Bassham, United States Army	388-16X
<b>Aggregate</b>	Sergeant Troy Bassham, United States Army	1156-43X
<b>Any Sights</b>		
<b>Prone</b>	Mark Nourse	400
<b>Standing</b>	Captain Michael E. Anti, United States Army	381-10X
<b>Kneeling</b>	Kenneth M. Benyo	392-17X
<b>Aggregate</b>	Jeffrey Doerschler	1161-54X
<b>Grand Aggregate</b>	Captain Michael E. Anti, United States Army	2303-91X

	<b>Team</b>	
<b>Metallic Sights</b>	United States Army Marksmanship Unit "Blue" Captain Web Wright, Sergeant Thomas Tamas, Specialist Troy Bassham, Sergeant Lance Hopper	2305-103X
<b>Any Sights</b>	United States Army Marksmanship Unit "Blue"-Major Jim Meredith, Specialist Ken Johnson, First Lieutenant Web Wright, Captain David Chessier, Captain Denise Loring, Coach Sergeant First Class Mark Kauder	2313-103X

**National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle NRA 4-Position Championship A-26 Target 1957-1976**

<b>Course of Fire</b>	<b>Competitor</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Individual</b>		
<b>Metallic Sights</b>	Mary Keys	798-51X
<b>Any Sights</b>	CWO D.I. Boyd II, United States Marine Corps	799-58X
<b>Grand Aggregate</b>	Major Lones W. Wigger, Jr., United States Army	3181-221X
<b>Team</b>		
<b>Metallic Sights</b>	United States Army Marksmanship Unit "Blue"-Major Presley Kendall, Captain Jack Foster, First Lieutenant Jack Writer, First Lieutenant LT Gary Anderson, Coach First Lieutenant Wally Lyman	1580-140X
<b>Any Sights</b>	United States Army Reserve "Blue"-Major Jack Foster, Captain Bill Beard, Captain Bill Gustin, Captain Boyd Goldsby	1583-92X

**National Outdoor Smallbore Rifle NRA Prone Championship**

<b>Course of Fire</b>	<b>Competitor</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Team</b>		
	<b>Fired on A-50 and A-33 Target</b>	
<b>Metallic Sights</b>	Black Hawk Arrows- Jim Meredith, Cory Brunetti, Lones Wigger, Shane Barnhart, Captain Dana Knezevich, Coach John Black	1566-83X
<b>Any Sights</b>	United States Army Marksmanship Unit "Blue"-Major Steve Goff, Captain Matt Suggs, Sergeant Tom Tamas, Corporal Ken Johnson, Coach First Lieutenant Gary Hardy	1581-89X



# Outdoor Smallbore National Champions

Standard type indicates prone champion: **Bold type indicates Position Champion**

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
1919	CPT Grosvenor Liebenau Wotkyns USA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1920	CPT William H. Richards USA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1921	LTC Milo D. Snyder INNG	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1922	CPT J.F. Hauck INNG	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1923	Ralph H. McGarity	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1924	Francis W. Parker	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1925	Thomas J. Imier	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1926	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1927	Ralph H. McGarity	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1928	V.Z. Canfield	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1929	Eric Johnson	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1930	Vere F. Hamer	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1931	Fred Kuhn	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1932	Bradford Wiles	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1933	Thirkild P. Samsoe	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1934	Elgin L. Lord	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1935	Thirkild P. Samsoe	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1936	William B. Woodring	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1937	William B. Woodring	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1938	William B. Woodring	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1939	Vere F. Hamer	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1940	Dave Carlson	No Competition	No Competition	Adelaide McCord
1941	Ransford D. Triggs	No Competition	No Competition	J. W. Cole
1942	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1943	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1944	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1945	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1946	Garrett Wayne Moore	No Competition	No Competition	Adelaide McCord
1947	Garrett Wayne Moore	No Competition	No Competition	Adelaide McCord

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
1948	Arthur E. Cook	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1949	Robert McMains	No Competition	No Competition	Adelaide McCord
1950	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1951	Mason E. Kine Jr	Mason E. Kine Jr	No Competition	Elinor Bell
1952	Robert Perkins	Robert Perkins	LT John Kelley USAF	Betty Ingleright
1953	John Crowley	John Crowley	Ray H. Steele Colorado NG	Viola E. Pollum
1954	Alonzo B. Wood	Alonzo B. Wood	NA	Elinor Bell
1955	Viola E. Pollum	Viola E. Pollum	NA	Viola E. Pollum
1956	J. Kenneth Johnson	J. Kenneth Johnson	NA	NA
1957	John Moschkau	John Moschkau	Lt. Virgil L. Hamlin USAF	Bertie Moore
	<b>CPT Arthur E. Cook USAFR</b>	NA	<b>SSG E.D. Duncan USMC*</b>	<b>Marlee Hohman</b>
1958	Robert K. Moore	Robert K. Moore	LT Presley W. Kendall USA	Janet S. Friddell
	<b>CPT Arthur E. Cook USAFR</b>	Not Designated	<b>LT John R. Edwin USA*</b>	<b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>
1959	CPL Walter R. Kamila USMC	Serge M. Fedoroff	CPL Walter R. Kamila USMC	Lenore M. Jensen
	<b>LT John R. Foster USA</b>	<b>James E. O'Brien</b>	<b>LT John R. Foster USA</b>	<b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>
1960	CPT Arthur Cook USAFR	Robert E. Boydston	CPT Arthur Cook USAFR	Lenore M. Jensen
	<b>SGT Allan M. Dapp USMC</b>	<b>Robert K. Moore</b>	<b>SGT Allan M. Dapp USMC</b>	<b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>
1961	A/3C Victor L. Auer USAFR	Joseph E. Steffey	A/3C Victor L. Auer USAFR	Janet S. Friddell
	<b>LT Tommy G. Pool USA</b>	<b>McCloud "Mack" B. Hodges III</b>	<b>LT Tommy G. Pool USA</b>	<b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>
1962	LT Presley W. Kendall USA	William E. Summers	LT Presley W. Kendall USA	Janet S. Friddell
	<b>CPT Tommy G. Pool USA</b>	<b>McCloud "Mack" B. Hodges III</b>	<b>CPT Tommy G. Pool USA</b>	<b>Jean Linton</b>
1963	LT Lones W. Wigger Jr USAR	Dean DeLa Mater	LT Lones W. Wigger Jr USAR	Lenore M. Lemanski
	<b>LT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USAR</b>	<b>Clint O. Fowler</b>	<b>LT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USAR</b>	<b>Elizabeth Espointour</b>
1964	WO James E. Hill USMC	Ransford D. Triggs	WO James E. Hill USMC	Inez Sargent
	<b>CPT Presley W. Kendall, USA</b>	<b>Jim J. McHugh</b>	<b>CPT Presley W. Kendall, USA</b>	<b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>
1965	MSG William E. Krilling USA	Lawrence A. Wilkens	MSG William E. Krilling USA	Marianne M. Jensen
	<b>CPT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USA</b>	<b>Philip Dean Bahrman</b>	<b>CPT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USA</b>	<b>LT Margaret Thompson USA</b>
1966	CPT Donald W. Adams USA	William E. Summers	CPT Donald W. Adams USA	Inez Sargent
	<b>CPT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USA</b>	<b>Philip Dean Bahrman</b>	<b>CPT Lones W. Wigger Jr, USA</b>	<b>LT Margaret Thompson USA</b>

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
1967	CPT Bruce Meredith USA <b>LT Gary A. Anderson, NGUS</b>	John M. Garrison <b>Christopher E. Bowles</b>	CPT Bruce Meredith USA <b>LT Gary A. Anderson, NGUS</b>	Inez Sargent <b>CPT Margaret Thompson USA</b>
1968	CPT Donald W. Adams USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	William E. Summers <b>Henry Yoos</b>	CPT Donald W. Adams USA <b>CPT Donald Adams USA**</b>	Marianne Jensen <b>CPT Margaret Thompson USA</b>
1969	SSG Thomas Whitaker USAF <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Richard F. Hanson <b>Charles L. Peterson</b>	SSG Thomas Whitaker USAF <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	CPT Margaret T. Murdock USA <b>CPT Margaret T. Murdock USA</b>
1970	CPT David Ross III USAR <b>1LT John H. Writer USA</b>	Victor L. Auer <b>Jack C. Schweitzer</b>	CPT David Ross III USAR <b>1LT John H. Writer</b>	Marianne M. Vitito <b>Tricia Foster</b>
1971	SGT John E. Comley USMCR <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	George Stidworthy <b>Ray P. Carter</b>	SGT John E. Comley USMCR <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Tricia Foster <b>Mary M. Keys</b>
1972	MAJ Presley W. Kendall USA <b>CWO David I. Boyd II USMC</b>	Thomas Whitaker <b>Edward F. Etzel</b>	MAJ Presley W. Kendall USA <b>CWO David I. Boyd II USMC</b>	CPT Margaret T. Murdock USA <b>Mary M. Keys</b>
1973	MAJ Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Thomas Whitaker <b>Ronald N. Plumb</b>	MAJ Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Schuyler Helbing <b>Janet S. Hayes</b>
1974	MAJ Presley W. Kendall USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Thomas Whitaker <b>Bill Schweitzer</b>	MAJ Presley W. Kendall USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Schuyler Helbing <b>Gloria K. Parmetier</b>
1975	MAJ Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>1LT Robert A. Gustin USAR</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Donald Wise</b>	MAJ Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>1LT Robert A. Gustin USAR</b>	Schuyler Helbing <b>Sherri A. Lewellen</b>
1976	David P. Weaver <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Calvin Roberts</b>	MAJ Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Mary E. Stidworthy <b>Sherri A. Lewellen</b>
1977	PVT Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	John L. Chapman <b>Matthew R. Stark</b>	PVT Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>MAJ Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	PVT Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>SP4 Karen E. Monez USA</b>
1978	SP4 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Douglas A. Knoop <b>Gloria K. Parmetier</b>	SP4 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	SP4 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>Gloria K. Parmetier</b>
1979	David P. Weaver <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Kurt H. Fitz-Randolph</b>	CPT Robert K. Mitchell <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>SP5 Karen E. Monez USA</b>
1980	CPT Ernest J. Vande Zande USA <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Carl C. Jooss <b>John R. Foster</b>	CPT Ernest J Vande Zande USA <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>2LT Denise Cannella USA</b>
1981	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	David Ross III <b>David B. Lyman</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>2LT Gloria K. Parmetier USA</b>

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
1982	Presley W. Kendall <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Presley W. Kendall <b>David B. Lyman</b>	SSG Dennis E. Ghiselli USMC <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Mary E. Stidworthy <b>SSG Karen E. Monez USA</b>
1983	David P. Weaver <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Stephen M. Gombocz</b>	CPT James E. Meredith USA <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard <b>Kirsten Pasch</b>
1984	Ronald O. West <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Ronald O. West <b>Deena L. Wigger</b>	LTC Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Marsha Beasley <b>Deena Wigger</b>
1985	LTC Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>Carl. R. Bernosky</b>	Presley W. Kendall <b>Carl. R. Bernosky</b>	LTC Lones W. Wigger Jr USA <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Marsha Beasley <b>Deborah W. Lyman</b>
1986	GYSGT Gary Andrade USMC <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Presley W. Kendall <b>Carl. R. Bernosky</b>	GYSGT Gary Andrade USMC <b>LTC Lones W. Wigger, Jr USA</b>	Edie P. Reynolds <b>CPT Joyce A. Meyers USA</b>
1987	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>SSG Karen E. Monez USA</b>	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	SSG Robbie B. Franker USMC <b>SSG Karen E. Monez USA</b>	Gwendolyn H. Fox <b>SSG Karen E. Monez USA</b>
1988	David P. Weaver <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	GYSGT Dennis E. Ghiselli USMC <b>GYSGT Dennis Ghiselli USMC</b>	Gwendolyn H. Fox <b>SSG Suzanne Mitchell USAR</b>
1989	David P. Weaver <b>SP4 Thomas A. Tamas USA</b>	David P. Weaver <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	MAJ Ray P. Carter <b>SP4 Thomas A. Tamas USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>1LT Kirsten Pasch USAR</b>
1990	Tyrone R. Bishop <b>MAJ James E. Meredith USA</b>	Tyrone R. Bishop <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	2LT Douglas Clark USAF <b>MAJ James E. Meredith USA</b>	Edie P. Reynolds <b>1LT Rhonda Barush USA</b>
1991	Ronald O. West <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	Ronald O. West <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	SSG Rudolph D. Hernandez USMC <b>SSG Bradley J. Carnes USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>2LT Kristin A. Peterson USA</b>
1992	CPT David E. Chesser USA <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	William H. Dodd <b>Lones W. Wigger, Jr</b>	CPT David E. Chesser USA <b>MAJ James E. Meredith USA</b>	Mary E. Sparling <b>SFC Karen E. Monez USAR</b>
1993	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>MAJ James E. Meredith USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	SPC Kenneth A. Johnson USA <b>MAJ James E. Meredith USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>1LT Kristin A. Peterson USA</b>
1994	CPL Kenneth A. Johnson USA <b>CPT Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Tyrone R. Bishop <b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	CPL Kenneth A. Johnson USA <b>CPT Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Lenore Lemanski <b>1LT Kristin A. Frazer USA</b>
1995	SGT Thomas A. Tamas USA <b>CPL Kenneth A. Johnson USA</b>	Tyrone R. Bishop <b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	SGT Thomas A. Tamas USA <b>CPL Kenneth A. Johnson USA</b>	Edie P. Reynolds <b>Jean S. Foster</b>
1996	SGT Thomas A. Tamas USA <b>CPT Webster M. Wright USA</b>	Shane M. Barnhart <b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	SGT Thomas A. Tamas USA <b>CPT Webster M. Wright USA</b>	Edie P. Reynolds <b>Emily J. Caruso</b>

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
1997	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>MAJ Steve C. Goff USA</b>	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	MAJ Steve Goff USA <b>MAJ Steve C. Goff USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>2LT Kimberly M. Howe USAR</b>
1998	Cory T. Brunetti <b>SGT Troy Bassham USA</b>	Cory T. Brunetti <b>Shane Barnhart</b>	CPT Douglas Clark USAF <b>SGT Troy Bassham USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Emily J. Caruso</b>
1999	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>SSG Troy Bassham USA</b>	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>Jean Foster</b>	SSG Anthony Leone NGUS <b>SSG Troy Bassham USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Jean S. Foster</b>
2000	MAJ Mike Anti USA <b>SSG Lance Hopper USA</b>	Cory T. Brunetti <b>Wesley Robinson</b>	MAJ Mike Anti USA <b>SSG Lance Hopper USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2001	MAJ Steve Goff USA <b>Troy Bassham</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Troy Bassham</b>	MAJ Steve Goff USA <b>MAJ Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2002	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>SPC Shane Barnhart USA</b>	Lones W. Wigger Jr <b>Jeff Doerschler</b>	SPC Shane M. Barnhart USA <b>SPC Shane Barnhart USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2003	Paul Gideon <b>MAJ Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Paul Gideon <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>	MAJ Michael E. Anti USA <b>MAJ Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Carolyn D. Millard Sparks <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2004	Jamie Beyerle <b>Jeffrey S. Doerschler</b>	Jamie Beyerle <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>	SFC Thomas A. Tamas, USA <b>SPC Shane Barnhart USA</b>	Jamie Beyerle <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2005	SFC Thomas A. Tamas, USA <b>SGT Shane Barnhart, USA</b>	Jamie Beyerle <b>Vincent Pestilli</b>	SFC Thomas A. Tamas, USA <b>SGT Shane Barnhart, USA</b>	Jamie Beyerle <b>Jamie Beyerle</b>
2006	Paul Gideon <b>MAJ Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Paul Gideon <b>Vincent Pestilli</b>	MAJ Michael E. Anti USA <b>MAJ Michael E. Anti USA</b>	Edie P. Reynolds <b>Kimberly M. Chrostowski</b>
2007	LTC Robert E. Harbison, USA <b>SGT Shane Barnhart, USA</b>	Kenneth M. Benyo <b>Abby Fong</b>	LTC Robert E. Harbison, USA <b>SGT Shane Barnhart, USA</b>	Reya Kempley <b>Abby Fong</b>
2008	Kevin Nevius <b>SPC George Norton, USA</b>	Kevin Nevius <b>Kyle Smith</b>	SPC David R. Specher, USA <b>SPC George Norton, USA</b>	Reya Kempley <b>Michelle E. Bohren</b>
2009	SPC Joseph Hein, USA <b>SPC Joseph Hein, USA</b>	Richard Fowke <b>Tarl Kempley</b>	SPC Joseph Hein, USA <b>SPC Joseph Hein, USA</b>	Reya Kempley <b>Reya Kempley</b>
2010	SSG Shane Barnhart, USA <b>SSG Shane Barnhart,, USA</b>	Charles P. Kemp <b>Amanda Luoma</b>	SSG Shane Barnhart, USA <b>SSG Shane Barnhart,, USA</b>	Amanda McMullin <b>Amanda Luoma</b>

Year	Open	Civilian	Service	Woman
2011	SSG Michael McPhail, USA	Mark A. DeICotto	SSG Michael McPhail, USA	Nancy Tompkins
	<b>SPC Joseph Hein, USA</b>	<b>Garrett Spurgeon</b>	<b>SPC Joseph Hein, USA</b>	<b>Lisette Grunwell-Lacey</b>
2012	CPT Chris Abalo, USA	Reya Kempley	CPT Chris Abalo, USA	Reya Kempley
	<b>Tarl Kempley</b>	<b>Tarl Kempley</b>	<b>CPT Chris Abalo</b>	<b>Kirsten Weiss</b>
2013	SSG Michael McPhail, USA	Reya Kempley	SSG Joseph Hein, USA	Katie L. Bridges
	<b>SPC Joseph C. Hall, USA</b>	<b>Tarl Kempley</b>	<b>SPC Erin M. Lorenzen, USA</b>	<b>Amy. G. Fister</b>

Year	Senior	Intermediate Senior	Collegiate	Junior	Intermediate Junior	Sub-Junior	Any Sight Only	High Visitor
1940	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	John C. Symmes	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1941	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	NA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1942	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1943	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1944	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1945	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1946	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	Arthur E. Cook	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1947	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	Audrey Bockmann	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1948	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	David Rosenberg	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1949	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	NA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1950	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	NA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1951	No Competition	No Competition	NA	NA	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1952	No Competition	No Competition	Not Designated	Charles Rogers	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1953	No Competition	No Competition	Leonard Brewster	Charles Rogers	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1954	No Competition	No Competition	NA	Presley W. Kendall	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1955	No Competition	No Competition	NA	William J. Grater* Victor L. Auer* *Dual Junior Champions in 1955 due to rule change	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1956	No Competition	No Competition	NA	Thomas R. Holm	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1957	No Competition	No Competition	Victor L. Auer <b>Barry R. Trew</b>	Jimmy J. Williams <b>William C. Roos</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1958	Herb Hollister <b>Chris T. Westergaard</b>	No Competition	William L. Madden <b>Barry R. Trew</b>	Janet S. Friddell <b>William C. Roos</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1959	Herb Hollister <b>Paul C. Frey</b>	No Competition	Lenore M. Jensen <b>James G. Kreder</b>	J. Eric Sundstrom Jr <b>Harry M. Malick</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1960	Herb Hollister <b>Virgil M. Corbin</b>	No Competition	A/3C Victor L. Auer USAFR <b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>	Marianne M. Jensen <b>McCloud B. Hodges III</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1961	CDR Theodore T. Charlton USNR <b>Fred Johansen</b>	No Competition	Lenore M. Jensen <b>Carl D. Guenther</b>	J. Eric Sundstrom Jr <b>McCloud B. Hodges III</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition

Year	Senior	Intermediate Senior	Collegiate	Junior	Intermediate Junior	Sub-Junior	Any Sight Only	High Visitor
1962	Henry W. Bensen <b>Paul C. Frey</b>	No Competition	J. Eric Sundstrom Jr <b>SGT Allan M. Dapp</b> <b>USMCR</b>	J. Eric Sundstrom Jr <b>Philip Dean</b> <b>Bahrman</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1963	Paul C. Frey <b>Virgil M. Corbin</b>	No Competition	John M. Garrison <b>Jilann O. Brunett</b>	Marianne M. Jensen <b>John H. Writer Jr</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1964	Herb Hollister <b>Richard H. Dorian</b>	No Competition	R.K. Emerson <b>John H. Writer Jr</b>	R.F. Perkins Jr <b>Philip Dean</b> <b>Bahrman</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1965	Ransford D. Triggs <b>Richard H. Dorian</b>	No Competition	L.Y. Anderson <b>John H. Writer Jr</b>	Daniel B. Wood <b>Thomas J. Whitaker</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1966	Herb Hollister <b>Richard H. Dorian</b>	No Competition	Cliff N. Davis <b>John H. Writer Jr</b>	Daniel B. Wood <b>Jack C. Schweitzer</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1967	Herb Hollister <b>Robert L. White</b>	No Competition	Mary Parris <b>Cliff N. Davis</b>	Daniel B. Wood <b>William P. Schweitzer</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1968	NA NA	No Competition	NA NA	Sue Lausten <b>William P. Schweitzer</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1969	NA <b>Maurice Kaiser</b>	No Competition	NA NA	Doug Charity <b>Stephen M. Brooks</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1970	Ransford D. Triggs <b>Fred C. Roeding</b>	No Competition	NA NA	Ronald E. Coleman <b>William P. Schweitzer</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1971	Kenneth J. Johnson <b>Fred C. Roeding</b>	No Competition	NA NA	Davis L. Ash <b>Ronald L. Plumb</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1972	Ransford D. Triggs <b>Robert S. Kline</b>	No Competition	NA NA	Mary Lou Adler <b>Mary M. Keys</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1973	George Stidworthy <b>E. Arrell Pearsall</b>	No Competition	NA NA	Kevin B. Richards <b>Janet S. Hays</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1974	John Moschkau <b>Robert Makielski</b>	No Competition	NA <b>NA</b>	Robert De La Hart <b>Dale A. Cox</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1975	George Stidworthy <b>Robert Makielski</b>	No Competition	NA <b>NA</b>	Schuyler Helbing <b>Sherri A. Lewellen</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
1976	Joseph Steffey <b>Robert Makielski</b>	No Competition	NA <b>Shawn McDonnell</b>	Tracy Hill <b>Sherri A. Lewellen</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition



Year	Senior	Intermediate Senior	Collegiate	Junior	Intermediate Junior	Sub-Junior	Any Sight Only	High Visitor
1977	Joseph W. Barnes Jr <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	No Competition	Kevin B. Richards <b>Matthew R. Stark</b>	Oscar L. Hernandez <b>Elaine S. Proffitt</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1978	Richard F. Hanson <b>Kenneth B. Aitkinson</b>	No Competition	Marsha A. Beasley <b>Gloria K. Parmetier</b>	John A. Rost <b>John A. Rost</b>	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1979	Richard F. Hanson <b>Robert A. Makielski</b>	No Competition	Mark Marinoff <b>Kurt H. Fitz-Randolph</b>	Brad S. Mundell <b>Kurt H. Fitz-Randolph</b>	No Competition	Don Wallace <b>Karen P. Spurgin</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1980	Ransford D. Triggs <b>Donald W. Burtis</b>	Richard F. Hanson <b>Robert A. Makielski</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>Kurt H. Fitz-Randolph</b>	Ronald L. Wigger <b>Kurt H. Fitz-Randolph</b>	Bradley J. Carnes <b>Robert Broughton</b>	Jeffery S. Fell <b>Theresa M. Leone</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1981	Richard F. Hanson <b>Donald W. Burtis</b>	Bruce G. Johnson <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	SP5 Mary E. Stidworthy AZNG <b>Danny K. Wigger</b>	Bartley A. Smith <b>Jesse J. Johnston</b>	Bartley A. Smith <b>Jesse J. Johnston</b>	Bart T. Parnell <b>William C. Suggs</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1982	Richard F. Hanson <b>Kenneth B. Aitkinson</b>	Frank R. Boyd <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	Mary E. Stidworthy <b>Shannon L. Cherry</b>	David Passmore <b>Mike E. Anti</b>	Ben D. Smith <b>Kirsten Pasch</b>	Eric R. Enhoffer <b>Matthew P. Suggs</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1983	Richard F. Hanson <b>Donald W. Burtis</b>	Bruce G. Johnson <b>Robert H. Vangene</b>	Carolyn D. Millard <b>David Passmore</b>	Thomas A. Tamas <b>Thomas A. Tamas</b>	Deena L. Wigger <b>Matthew P. Suggs</b>	Eliza C. Bishop <b>Peter Kang</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1984	Joseph W. Barnes Jr <b>Donald W. Burtis</b>	Ronald O. West <b>Robert H. Vangene</b>	Erik R. Kugler <b>Michael Anti</b>	Gary D. Stephens <b>Deena Wigger</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>Matthew P. Suggs</b>	Elizabeth C. Bishop <b>Sandra E. Worman</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1985	Joseph W. Barnes Jr <b>Robert A. Makielski</b>	Ronald O. West <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	Jesse J. Johnston <b>Jesse J Johnston</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>Fritz P. Borke</b>	Gina M. Schoenenberger <b>Robert Mercadante</b>	David A. Edger <b>David A. Edgar</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1986	Lawrence F. Moore <b>Robert A. Makielski</b>	Frank R. Boyd <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>Jesse J Johnston</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>Robin L. Bardenhagen</b>	Erin Gestl <b>Robin Bardenhagen</b>	Chuck Schif <b>Nicole Panko</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1987	Richard F. Hanson <b>Robert A. Makielski</b>	Frank R. Boyd <b>Charles B. Langmaid</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>2LT Michael Anti</b>	Webster M. Wright III <b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	Gwendolyn H. Fox <b>Gina Schoenenberger</b>	Nick Myers <b>Chad Meetre</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition
1988	Richard F. Hanson <b>Fred W. Cole</b>	Frank R. Boyd <b>Charles B. Langmaid</b>	Erin E. Gestl <b>Gary D. Stephens</b>	Erin E. Gestl <b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	Gwendolyn H. Fox <b>Jeffery A. Martin</b>	Joseph P. Gaydos <b>Shannon C. Lancaster</b>	No Competition	No Competition
							No Competition	No Competition

1989	Richard F. Hanson	Ronald O. West	William H. Dodd	Cory T. Brunetti	Cory T. Brunetti	Thomas W. Schady	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>Charles B. Langmaid</b>	<b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	<b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	<b>Nicole Panko</b>	<b>Thomas W. Schady</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1990	Richard F. Hanson	Ronald O. West	Erin E. Gestl	Beth A. Herzman	Cory T. Brunetti	Dace T. Murphey	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>John J. McClay</b>	<b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	<b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	<b>Cory T. Brunetti</b>	<b>Iryt Chance</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1991	Lawrence F. Moore	Ronald O. West	Beth A. Herzman	Cory T. Brunetti	Erik K. Anderson	Dace T. Murphey	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>SFC Kay Anderson NYNG</b>	<b>Erin E. Gestl</b>	<b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	<b>Charlie Minnella</b>	<b>Jenna S. Rich</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1992	Lawrence F. Moore	Presley W. Kendall	Cory T. Brunetti	Cory T. Brunetti	Charles R. Metz Jr	Jeffery M. Klotzbach	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>SFC Kay Anderson NYNG</b>	<b>Cory T. Brunetti</b>	<b>Cory T. Brunetti</b>	<b>Jaimee R. Caruso</b>	<b>Kenneth J. Capozzi</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1993	Joseph Steffey	Robert Holtzman	SPC Darrin J. Campbell ARNG	Richard D. Watson	Richard D. Watson	John A. Haffy	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>SFC Kay Anderson NYNG</b>	<b>Kenneth M. Benyo</b>	<b>Jaimee R. Caruso</b>	<b>David A. Martin</b>	<b>John A. Haffy</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1994	Ronald O. West	Lones W. Wigger Jr	Cory T. Brunetti	Anthony J. Chick	Anthony J. Chick	April A. Shea	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>Harry R. Wilcoxson</b>	<b>Eve D. Gestl</b>	<b>Jeffery M. Klotzbach</b>	<b>Jeffery M. Klotzbach</b>	<b>April A. Shea</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1995	Ronald O. West	Lones W. Wigger Jr	Cory T. Brunetti	Michael A. Lewis	Michael A. Lewis	Cole M. Ward	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Herbert O. Pasch</b>	<b>John J. McClay</b>	<b>Cory T. Brunetti</b>	<b>Ryan P. Meagher</b>	<b>Shane M. Barnhart</b>	<b>Robert J. Mahon</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1996	Ronald O. West	Lones W. Wigger Jr	SPC Darrin J. Campbell ARNG	Shane M. Barnhart	Geoffrey G. Regan	Sarah S. Paoletta	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>SGT Lance Peters MNNG</b>	<b>Neil K. Wright</b>	<b>Shane M. Barnhart</b>	<b>Taryn S. Lewis</b>	<b>Robyn E. Burow</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1997	Ronald O. West	Lones W. Wigger Jr	2LT Kimberly M. Howe USAR	Shane M. Barnhart	Matthew D. Emmons	Nathan A. Tracey	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>Vitalis J. Seputa</b>	<b>2LT Kimberly M. Howe USAR</b>	<b>Shane M. Barnhart</b>	<b>Cole M. Ward</b>	<b>Christine McLamore</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1998	Ronald O. West	Barry Smith	Shane M. Barnhart	Shane M. Barnhart	Andrew Morrison	Matthew Rawlings	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>David Cramer</b>	<b>Shane Barnhart</b>	<b>Shane M. Barnhart</b>	<b>Andrew Morrison</b>	<b>Heidi Magee</b>	No Competition	No Competition
1999	Jim Hinkle	Lones W. Wigger Jr	Shane M. Barnhart	Michael Beyerle	Kevin Simon	Kate Benjamin	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>David Cramer</b>	<b>Shane Barnhart</b>	<b>Nicole Allaire</b>	<b>Hannah Kerr</b>	<b>Kate Benjamin</b>	No Competition	No Competition
2000	Jim Hinkle	Lones W. Wigger Jr	Geoffrey Regan	Michael Beyerle	Kevin Simon	Catherine Leach	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Fred W. Cole</b>	<b>Howard Q. Moody</b>	<b>Michael Beyerle</b>	<b>Jamie Beyerle</b>	<b>Kevin Simon</b>	<b>Michelle Bauer</b>	No Competition	No Competition
2001	Joseph Steffey	Lones W. Wigger Jr	Michael Beyerle	Celeste Green	William J. Butler	Jillian Szymonifka	No Competition	No Competition
	<b>Kay Anderson</b>	<b>Jay Sonneborn, Sr</b>	<b>William "Billy" Grant</b>	<b>Jamie Beyerle</b>	<b>Celeste Green</b>	<b>Jennifer Payson</b>	No Competition	No Competition

Year	Senior	Intermediate Senior	Collegiate	Junior	Intermediate Junior	Sub-Junior	Any Sight Only	High Visitor
2002	Lones W. Wigger Jr	SSG Gregory V. Tomsen CTNG	Lukas R. Bastur	Daniel Ault	Daniel Ault	Jake Marasco	No Competition	No Competition
	Fred W. Cole	Harold J. Rocketto	William "Billy" Grant	Jamie Beyerle	Daniel Ault	Thomas Santelli	No Competition	No Competition
2003	Lones W. Wigger, Jr	James P. Miller	Jamie L. Beyerle	David W. Jacobs	Thomas E. Csenge	Thomas P. Rider II	No Competition	No Competition
	Fred W. Cole	John C. Funk	Jamie L. Beyerle	Jamie L. Beyerle	Jason C. Dardas	Justin D. Pentz	No Competition	No Competition
2004	Frederick J. Scielzo	David Cramer	Jaymi M. Collar	Jamie L. Beyerle	Alexander Karacsonyi	Thomas P. Rider II	No Competition	No Competition
	Jay A. Sonneborn	Howard Q. Moody	Sarah F. Kramer	Jamie L. Beyerle	Justin D. Pentz	Michael A. Kulbacki	No Competition	No Competition
2005	James A Hinkle	Paul T. Gideon	Jamie L. Beyerle	Nathanial Holcome	Thomas W. Santelli	Claudia Duksa	No Competition	No Competition
	Fred W. Cole	Steven R. Kern	Jamie L. Beyerle	Daniel J. Belluzzo	Cody S. Rutter	Emily R. Holsopple	No Competition	No Competition
2006	Lones W. Wigger	Paul T. Gideon	Andrew T. Roland	Andrew T. Roland	John M. Manzano	Claudia Duksa	No Competition	No Competition
	John J. McClay	Steven R. Kern	Kimberly M. Chrostowski	Kimberly M. Chrostowski	Andy Lamson	Emily R. Holsopple	No Competition	No Competition
2007	James A Hinkle	Paul T. Gideon	Curtis G. Gagne	Melissa M. Lussier	Heather A. Greathouse	Elijah E. Ellis	Larry Hoffman	Keith Ridgway
	Leonard S. Remaly	John C. Funk	Erin M. Lorenzen	Abby Fong	Michael A. Kulbacki	Elijah E. Ellis	William J. Godward	N/A
2008	David J. Cramer	Paul T. Gideon	Kimberly M. Chrostowski	Mark S. Nations	Claudia Duksa	Remington P. Lyman	Martha Kelley	Jim R. Ward
	Leonard S. Remaly	Steven R. Kern	Erin M. Lorenzen	Kyle Smith	Katie E. Fretts	Jennifer M. Smith	Joel M. Dutra	N/A
2009	David J. Cramer	Paul T. Gideon	Michael K. Seery	Sarah E. Beard	Michael Liuzza	Kevin Sui	Michael P. Boudreau	Richard Fowke
	Leonard S. Remaly	Steven R. Kern	Brandi J. Eskew	Caitlin Morrissey	Areielle E. Mouhot	Kevin Sui	Aaron Holsopple	
2010	Charles P. Kemp	Boyd D. Goldsby	Brad Driscoll	Brad Driscoll	Amada McMullin	Alex Gestl	Martha C. Kelley	Jim Ward
	Ronald F. Durcholz	Steven S. Kern	Abigail J. Fong	Amanda E. Luoma	Megan M. Lee	Elizabeth Tallberg	Sarah K. Elzer	None
2011	Peter B. Church	Larry G. Parker, Sr	Sarah E. Beard	Sarah E. Beard	Katie L. Bridges	Sammy M. Richardson	Paul Nordquist	Keith Ridgeway
	Ronald F. Durcholz	William F. Beard	Brandi J. Eskew	Brad Driscoll	Garett Spurgeon	Eric Sloan	None	None
2012	Joe B. Farmer	Steven R. Kern	Matthew J. Chezem	Garett S. Spurgeon	Benjamin W. Swanson	Peter M. Fiore	Paul Nordquist	None
	Harold Rocketto	William D. Burkert	Amanda Luoma	Amanda Luoma	Benjamin W. Swanson	Samantha Peterson	Joel M. Dutra	None
2013	Robert A Gustin	Virginal "Ginger" T. McLemore	Cody L. Manning	Amanda McMullin	William N. Dixon	Matthew J. Liao	Marianne "Bobbi" Vitito	Kenneth D. Bowley
	John C. Funk	William D. Burkert	Cadet Joseph Todaro, USMA	Remington P. Lyman	Bernard A. Cheezum	Seth Leonard	N/A	N/A

## Appendix D

### The National Smallbore Rifle Championships Courses of Fire 1919-2008

#### The Prone Individual Championship

##### Match Conditions:

**1919-1922:** The Dewar Course of fire with any sights with no sighting shots allowed.

**1923- 1928:** A 30 shot metallic sight match fired from the prone position with 10 shots each at 50,100, and 200 yards.

**1929-1933:** The aggregate of the individual short range match<sup>1</sup>, individual long range match<sup>2</sup>, The Smallbore Wimbledon<sup>3</sup>, and Camp Perry Individual Match.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE CRITCHFIELD TROPHY

##### Match Conditions:

**1934:** An aggregate of scores fired in Camp Perry Individual, Individual Short and Long Range, Smallbore Wimbledon, and the 50 meter Individual Matches<sup>5</sup>.

**1935-1936:** Aggregate of scores fired in Western Cartridge Co.<sup>6</sup> Trophy, U.S. Cartridge Co. Trophy<sup>7</sup>, Peters Trophy<sup>8</sup>, Winchester Trophy<sup>9</sup>, 50 Meter Individual Metallic and Any Sight Matches.

**1937:** Aggregate of scores fired in Western Cartridge Co. Trophy<sup>10</sup>, U.S. Cartridge Co. Trophy, Peters Trophy, Winchester Trophy, Austin Trophy<sup>11</sup>, and 50 Meter Individual Matches.

**1938:** Aggregate of scores fired in Western Cartridge Co. Trophy, U.S. Cartridge Co. Trophy, Austin Trophy and Remington Trophy Matches<sup>12</sup>.

**1939-1945<sup>13</sup>:** Aggregate of scores fired in Western Cartridge Co. Trophy, 50 and 100 yard Metallic Sights, 50 and 100 yard Any Sights All Comers Matches<sup>14</sup>, U.S. Cartridge Co. Trophy, Austin Trophy, and Remington Trophy Matches.

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<sup>1</sup> A Dewar Course of fire with metallic sights

<sup>2</sup> 20 shots for records prone at 200 yards with any sights

<sup>3</sup> 20 shots for record prone at 200 yards with any sights

<sup>4</sup> Ten shots for record prone at 50 yards, 100 yards, and 200 yards with any sights

<sup>5</sup> 40 shots for record prone at 50 meters; once with metallic sights and once with any sights

<sup>6</sup> 20 shots for record prone at 50 and 100 yards and ten shots at 200 yards with any sights

<sup>7</sup> A Dewar Course of fire with metallic sights

<sup>8</sup> 20 shots for record prone at 200 yards with metallic sights

<sup>9</sup> 20 shots for record prone at 200 yards with any sights

<sup>10</sup> A Dewar Course of fire with any sights

<sup>11</sup> 40 shots for record prone at 50 meters with metallic sights

<sup>12</sup> 40 shots for record prone at 50 meters with any sights

<sup>13</sup> There were no smallbore championships fired from 1942 through 1945.

**1946-1954<sup>15</sup>:** A 320 shot aggregate of 40 shots each 50 yards, 100 yards, 50 meters, and two Dewar Course Matches for both any and metallic Sights.

**1955-1960:** The 640-shot Critchfield Course of fire: an aggregate of a 160 shot metallic sight aggregate of 40 shots each, 50 yards, 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course plus a 160 shot any sight aggregate of 40 shots each, 50 yards, 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course.

**1961-1965:** Aggregate of 480 shots: 40 shots each at 50 yards and 50 meters both any and metallic Sights; 80 shots at 100 yards both any and metallic Sights; and two Dewar Courses, both metallic and any Sights.

**1966-2008:** The 640-shot Critchfield Course of fire: an aggregate of a 320 shot metallic sight aggregate, twice across the course of 40 shots each, 50 yards, 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course plus a 320 shot any sight aggregate, twice across the course of 40 shots each, 50 yards, 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course.<sup>16</sup>

**2009- Present:** A 4800 point aggregate consisting of a 240 shot metallic sight aggregate, twice across the course of 40 shots each 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course plus a 240 shot any sight aggregate, twice across the course of 40 shots each, 50 meters, 100 yards, and a Dewar Course.

### **Prone Team Competition**

#### **THE AMERICAN DEWAR CUP Prone Any Sight Team Championship**

##### **Match Conditions:**

**1930-1958:** Not an award as the trophy was either awarded for individual competition or withdrawn from competition.

**1959-1988:** Four-man team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23/A-25 Targets.

**1989-2008:** Four-man Team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with any sights on the NRA Conventional A-51/A-33 Targets.

**2009-Present:** Four-man team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23/A-25 Targets.

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<sup>14</sup> 40 shots for record prone at 50 or 100 yards; once with metallic sights and once with any sights

<sup>15</sup> There was no smallbore championship in 1950.

<sup>16</sup> The order of fire was changed in 1995 from 50 Yard, Meter, Dewar, and 100 Yard to Dewar, 100 Yard, meter, and 50 meter.

**THE OFFICERS' RESERVE CORPS TROPHY**  
**Prone Metallic Sight Prone Team Championship**

**Match Conditions:**

**1959-1988:** Four-man team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with metallic sights on the NRA Conventional A-23/A-25 Targets.

**1989-2008:** Four-man Team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with any sights on the NRA Conventional A-51/A-33 Targets.

**2009-Present:** Four-man team firing in the prone position 20 shots at 50 yards and 20 shots at 100 yards with metallic sights on the NRA Conventional A-23/A-25 Targets.

**Position Individual**

**THE FRANK PARSONS MEMORIAL TROPHY**

**Match Conditions:**

**1957-1958-**An 80 shot aggregate of 10 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 yards with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

**1959-1960<sup>17</sup>:** A 160 shot aggregate of 10 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 yards and 50 meters with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

.

**1961-1965:** A 160 shot aggregate of 10 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

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**1966-67:** A 320 shot aggregate of 20 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 yards with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

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**1968:** A 160 shot aggregate of 10 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 yards with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

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**1969-1977:** A 320 shot aggregate of 20 shots in each position: prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling at 50 yards with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

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<sup>17</sup> The Parsons Trophy was first presented in 1959.

**1978-2007:** A 240 shot aggregate of 40 shots in each of three positions, prone, kneeling, and standing at 50 meters with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Metric A-51 target.

**2008-Present:** A 240 shot aggregate of 40 shots in each of three positions, prone, kneeling, and standing at 50 meters with both metallic and any sights on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

### **Position Team**

#### **THE HERCULES TROPHY Position Any Sight Team Championship**

##### **Match Conditions:**

**1921-1958:** The Hercules Trophy was not the national smallbore team national championship trophy during this time frame as it was presented as an individual or team trophy for various high power and long range smallbore matches.

**1959-1977:** Four-man Team firing in the 4-Position, 50 yard Any Sight Team Match; 10 shots per firer, prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

**1978-2007:** Four-man Team firing the NRA 3-Position, 50 yard Any Sight Team Match; 20 shots per firer in each of the prone, standing, and kneeling positions on the NRA Metric A-51 target.

**2008-Present:** Four-man Team firing the NRA 3-Position, 50 yard Any Sight Team Match; 20 shots per firer in each of the prone, standing, and kneeling positions on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

#### **THE CASWELL TROPHY Position Metallic Sight Team Championship**

##### **Match Conditions:**

**1929-1936:** Officers Reserve Corps and the American Legion only permitted to enter Teams in a Metallic Dewar course of fire.

**1937-1938:** The Naval Militia of each state, each Reserve National match Team, and each American legion National Match team only permitted to enter this match, a metallic sight Dewar course of fire.

**1939-1951:** One or more six firing member teams from the National Guard and civilians of each state and one team from each American Legion Department only permitted to enter this match, a metallic sight Dewar course of fire.

**1952-1965:** One six firing member teams from each state and territory, and the District of Columbia permitted to enter this match, a metallic sight Dewar course of fire.

**1966-1977:** Four-man Team firing in the 4-Position, 50 yard Metallic Sight Team Match; 10 shots per firer, prone, standing, sitting, and kneeling on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.

**1978-2007:** Four-man Team firing the NRA 3-Position, 50 yard Metallic Sight Team Match; 20 shots per firer in each of the prone, standing, and kneeling positions on the NRA Metric A-51 target.

**2008-Present:** Four-man Team firing the NRA 3-Position, 50 yard Metallic Sight Team Match; 20 shots per firer in each of the prone, standing, and kneeling positions on the NRA Conventional A-23 target.



## Appendix E

### Locations Of The National Outdoor Smallbore Championships

1919	U.S. Navy Range, Great Piece Meadow, Caldwell, New Jersey
1920-1925	Camp Perry, Ohio
1926	No Competition
1927-1941	Camp Perry, Ohio
1942-1945	No Competition-World War II
1946-1947	Camp Perry, Ohio
1948	US Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia-Invitation Only
1949	Camp Dodge, Des Moines, Iowa
1950	No Competition-Korean War, planned for Camp Perry, Ohio-,
1951	Sharp Park Range, San Francisco, California
1952	Jacksonville Police Pistol and Rifle Range, Jacksonville, Florida
1953-2013	Camp Perry, Ohio
2014-	Wa-Ke'-De Rifle Range, Bristol, Indiana