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Minnesota Rifle & Revolver Association - Since 1932

FALL 2015 AND SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

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<http://mrra.org/membership.htm>

2016 U.S. Army National Junior Air Rifle Champions Minnesota Centershots

Source: Liz Powell

The Minnesota Centershots junior air rifle team consisting of Samantha Peterson, Elizabeth Ewert, Kamilla Kisch, Dana Buessler and Abby Buessler, recently competed in and won the 2016 U.S. Army National Junior Air Rifle Championship held at Fort Benning, Georgia. The team received an invitation to this elite competition after demonstrating their expertise and aptitude as marksmen in the Regional Sectional match held at St. Thomas Academy in December of 2015. MN Centershots came into the National Championships facing a great challenge by being ranked 9th. out of 11 teams with a qualifying score of 2262-98X. The Championship was a 3-day event consisting of one day for equipment control, practice and a clinic hosted by the Army Marksmanship Unit (AMU) International Rifle Team, followed by two day competition days consisting of a 60 shot offhand match. Competitors shot at the AMU's world-class Pool Range Complex on single-bull electronic targets. Competitors also had direct access to the AMU International Rifle Team throughout the competition.

Day one of the competition displayed the Minnesota Centershots' ability to rise to the challenge as they climbed from being in 9th. place to finishing in second place. Ewert lead the team with a 583/32X / 600, Peterson with a 581-32X / 600, followed by Kisch with a 564-27X / 600, D. Buessler with a 563-18X / 600 and alternate A. Buessler with a 570-23X / 600 for a team total of 2291-109X. Georgia Team Hardcore 4 Precision placed first with a score of 2297-106X and Colorado team National Training Center Shooting Club (NTCSC) closely followed with a score of 2287-120X.

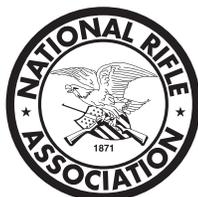
Day Two of competition brought a whole new level of excitement and tension to the range. With each shot the top four scoring teams were constantly trading places on the electronic

scoreboard. Nothing could shake the Centershots team, in fact day two brought out the best in them. The team finished the day led by Ewert with a score of 583-38X, Peterson with a 582-28X, D. Buessler shot a new personal best with a 573-23X, Kisch with a 571-27X, which is 1 point below her personal best score and A. Buessler shot a new personal best score 576-30X, for a team total of 2309-116X. The Minnesota Centershots finished the competition with a total two-day score of 4600-225X, followed by Hardcore 4 Precision with a 4589-208X and NTCSC with a 4581-231X.

The 2016 U.S. Army National Junior Air Rifle Championships allowed the Centershots team to put into practice its strengths and even take its strengths to a higher level. These extremely dedicated shooters were led to become even more dedicated to their team and the sport of shooting as a result of their decisions to be absent from school, be absent from work and be apart from family for several days. The team is led by team captain, Samantha Peterson, who has a way to convey critical shooting principals in a fun and effective way. Along with Peterson's leadership, the team has a cohesiveness that creates a family-type environment in which the athletes care for each other in a genuine way. Each team member choses to make decisions that benefits the team as a whole rather than make decisions based on personal preference. The team also has a level of friendly competition in that they are constantly pushing each other to higher levels of competitiveness. The Minnesota Centershots team looks forward to the next competition as a way to continue to sharpen its skills.

The Minnesota Centershots is sponsored by the Anoka American Legion Post 102.

KEEP SHOOTING STRONG! PLEASE SUPPORT



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Instead of a Presidents Message, I have attached news from Minnesota Gun Owners Political Action Committee that sums up current MN legislation. Note opinions stated are those of MNGOPAC not MRRRA.

Website: <http://www.mngopac.org/>

As of February 1, 2016 the Minnesota Legislature released details on bills that were filed for the upcoming legislative session. Buried in the mass of bills were four gun control bills that MNGOPAC strongly oppose along with one bill that has the potential to earn our support. There were no pro-gun bills filed prior to the pre-filing deadline yesterday. Here's a brief rundown on the bills. For more details at any time throughout the session, you can follow along at <http://www.mngopac.org/>

HF2399 - Hennepin County; gun court establishment funding provided

- *Overview: Creates a gun court in Hennepin County to primarily adjudicate illegal firearm possession cases*
- ***MN Gun Owners Caucus Position: NEUTRAL W/ POTENTIAL TO EARN OUR SUPPORT***

HF2415 - Comprehensive Gun Control Act of 2016 • *Overview: Requires training to purchase a firearm, creates a 28 day waiting period to receive a permit to purchase a firearm, requires universal background checks / registration for any firearm transfer, requires government mandated "safe storage" methods for firearms and ammunition, imposes criminal penalties*

- ***MN Gun Owners Caucus Position: STRONGLY OPPOSED***

HF2415 - Rep. Kim Norton's signature gun control bill. It's full of the failed gun control strategies of the past and would do nothing to stop mass shootings, violent criminals, or suicides. Her bill even makes it illegal for you to have a ready-to-use home defense weapon stored safely in a bedside safe. Instead, the firearm must be un-loaded with the ammunition secured separately from your firearm. Rep. Tony Cornish, Chairman of the House Public Safety Policy and Finance Committee, described the bill in the Rochester Post-Bulletin by saying "I see nothing in the bills that would prevent suicide, crime, mayhem, or murder".

HF2416 - Requiring federal licensure of persons who regularly transfer firearms *Overview: Requires anyone who buys/sells more than 3 firearms in a calendar year to obtain a federal firearms license, or transfer only through a dealer*

- ***MN Gun Owners Caucus Position: STRONGLY OPPOSED***

HF2417 Establishing gun buyback grants for local law enforcement *Overview: Requires the Commissioner of Public Safety to create a gun buyback grant program for local law enforcement agencies*

- ***MN Gun Owners Caucus Position: STRONGLY OPPOSED***

HF2580 - Prohibiting persons on the terrorist watch list from possessing firearms • *Overview: Prohibits persons on the FBI Terrorist Watch list from possessing firearms.*

- ***MN Gun Owners Caucus Position: STRONGLY OPPOSED***

We'll (MNGOPAC) continue to keep you up to date as additional bills are introduced. Be sure to keep an eye on our 2016 Legislative Tracker page for updates on legislation before and during the session.

Credit: Bryan Strawser Executive Director • Minnesota Gun Owners Political Action Committee

<http://www.mngopac.org/>

SUMMARY OF 2015 CMP PISTOL RULE CHANGES

Source: <http://thecmp.org/cmp-pistol-program-rule-changes-for-2015/>

Legal Service Pistols. The previous rules recognized only M1911 and M9 U. S. military pistols and commercial equivalents that closely copied those pistols. The 2015 rules will permit a wide variety of U. S. service pistols or pistols “derived from U. S. or foreign service pistol design” that are chambered for cartridges “no smaller than 9 x 19 mm and no larger than .45 ACP.” A list of approved Service Pistols and chamberings is in the rules, but a regularly updated version will always be available on the CMP website. Approved pistols must be chambered for designated cartridges and comply with specified barrel lengths. All Service Pistols must have 4 pound trigger pulls.

Other Approved Service Pistols. The 2015 Pistol Rules provide a list of “other approved Service Pistols.” This list includes pistols from 14 different manufacturers along with the specific cartridges those pistols must fire. The concept embodied in this change is to open EIC Match to shooters who already own these pistols and would like to shoot them in EIC matches if they are authorized. The list of current approved Service Pistols is now posted at:

<http://thecmp.org/competitions/cmp-pistol-program/>

as the new ***CMP Competition Rules for Service Rifle and Pistol*** rulebook is in its final stages of preparation and will be released in January 2016.

Match Conditioning Modifications. The new rules now permit pistols with several additional match-conditioning modifications that were not previously permitted. In addition to authorized modifications on M1911 and M9 pistols such as barrel bushings, extended and vented triggers, replacement sights and Accurails, the new rules will permit all approved service pistols to have oversize or extended magazine releases, hammers of any configuration, beavertail grip safeties, ambidextrous or extended safeties and full-length recoil guides.

Ammunition. Pistols fired in CMP EIC and National Trophy Matches will be required to shoot ammunition loaded with metal-jacketed bullets. Specific bullet weights will no longer be required, however. In the last 15 years, accurized M9 9mm pistols have dominated the top ranks of the National Trophy Individual and Team Pistol Matches. By allowing any safe jacketed ammunition, it will make the M1911 more competitive and will make other approved Service Pistols capable of shooting 250 minimum EIC cut scores.

Distinguished .22 Rimfire Pistol Badge. Judging by shooter responses to the initial announcement of proposed pistol program changes, the new Pistol Distinguished Badge should become very popular. A new and completely different badge is being designed. Rimfire Pistol EIC matches will be fired as separate matches where only .22 cal. pistols can be fired. The 30-shot National Match Course will also be used for .22 Rimfire EIC matches except that the ready (start) position for timed and rapid-fire series will be with the pistol lowered to a 45 degree angle. If the range has a high bench that does not permit a 45-degree ready position, the loaded pistol must start from a point just above the bench. An objective of this requirement is to add a new skill that must be mastered to earn the .22 Rimfire Distinguished Badge. The low gun start position will also make this CMP pistol event more relevant to Junior and College shooters who already use low gun start positions in their matches. The rules for earning .22 Rimfire Pistol EIC points will be the same. Competitors must finish in the top 10 percent of all Non-Distinguished shooters. There won't be any Distinguished shooters in the first .22 Rimfire Pistol EIC Matches, but there will be lots of Distinguished Service Pistol shooters who will be trying to earn a second pistol badge so the competition level will be high. The CMP encourages all EIC Match sponsors to offer both Service Pistol and Rimfire Pistol EIC Matches to be fired in succession on the same day.

FULLBORE US NATIONALS, AND LONG RANGE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Erik Rhode

AUGUST 2015, CAMP PERRY, OHIO:

This past August, the USA played host to the World Championships of Long Range rifle shooting for the first time in over 20 years. These historic matches revolve around the Palma Team Match, which was first fired in 1876 to commemorate our country's Centennial anniversary. In that inaugural match nearly 140 years ago, the US team battled back fierce competition to emerge victorious over teams sent from Australia, Canada, Ireland, and Scotland. This most historic of shooting matches has taken place roughly every 4 years since then – a total 28 more times on 4 different continents, with the US coming out on top in 13 of those.

While the Palma Team match is certainly the pinnacle of the World Long Range Championship cycle, it is not the whole story. It is preceded by 4 days of individual competition to decide the world's top Long Range shooter, as well as a week of International Fullbore competition prior to that. Teams and individual shooters alike were on hand at Camp Perry days or weeks in advance of the WC's to ensure they were fully prepared for the important task at hand. I was not on hand for the Palma Team match, so this article will focus on the days leading up to it.

My personal 2015 Camp Perry experience was a long one. Morgen Dietrich and I drove out on the Thursday night of July 31st, and arrived on post around 8 am on Friday August 1. A 12-hour overnight drive can be a tricky proposition, with potential side effects that are not usually conducive to good shooting. We had originally planned to stop halfway for the night, but by the time either of us were too tired to drive, we were really past the point of no return. 2 hours of sleep at a truck stop was enough to get us back on the road heading east. This change of plans worked out very well, as getting to Camp Perry at that time allowed us to get through in-processing with no lines, with plenty of time to check on our friends who were already there shooting the NRA Long Range Nationals.

Shooting for me would start the next morning with the Palma individual match – the last individual match of the NRA LR Nationals. This match is one of the most important in US long Range shooting, and the list of past winners reads like a who's who of the best prone shooters. Semi-local boy Brian Mrnak of Ashland, WI won the trophy in 2013 in what would be considered

the crown jewel in any shooter's list of accomplishments. The competition this year was unusually stiff, as many more shooters than normal from outside the US were on hand due to the upcoming world championships. 371 of the world's best Long Range shooters would battle it out for the right to have their name added to that historic trophy.

With this number of shooters at this level of competition, there is no room for error. This year, it was the American John Rhynard who made no errors to win the Match with a stunning match score of 450-20x. John is a grand senior (over 70 years old), but he didn't let that stop him from firing the only perfect score in the match. John had been passed over for the US Veteran's team on this World Championship cycle, and I'm sure that winning this match left him feeling somewhat vindicated. The top 20 shooters in this match are awarded "Palma Twenty" honors, similar to the "President's Hundred" in OTC Highpower shooting. This year, in order to make the top 20, you'd need to shoot a 447 with more than 20 X's. My 446-25x was only good enough for 28th overall, and Morgen was right behind me at 31st with his 446-24x. It was stiff competition indeed.

On Sunday, the 4-shooter Palma Team match served as a wake-up call for the USA, as teams from Great Britain secured both first and second places overall. The USA's top 4-person team coached by Norm Anderson could only muster a 3rd place finish, 10 points behind the Brits. Would this be a sign of things to come at the WC's? Hopefully not, but time would tell.

Fullbore National Championships

Monday morning marked the beginning of the Fullbore National Individual Championships, with shooters competing at the 300, 600, 800, 900 and 1000 yard lines for 3 days. Both the FB Nationals and the WC's were fired under international rules, as specified by the International Confederation of Fullbore Rifle Associations (ICFRA). ICFRA rules are fairly similar to US Palma, with a few minor, but important differences. As with US Palma, the only cartridges allowed are the .308 Winchester, the .223 Remington, and their NATO equivalents. Unlike US Palma though, bullet weights are limited to less than 156 grains for the .308, and less than 81 grains for .223. This rule goes a long way to leveling the playing field by not allowing any of the ballistically superior

heavy bullets that are popular with US shooters. Triggers must have a pull weight greater than 500 grams, or just over 1#. Different targets are used, with scoring rings from 1-5. Matches are fired in 15-shot strings, with a possible score of 75. This particular difference can make math challenging for some of us, as the easy multiplier of "10" that we are so used to is not in use here. One of the most noticeable differences with ICFRA rules is the use of convertible sighters. Shooters are allowed 2 sighters before shooting for record, but may convert one or both to record shots if they so desire. If you have good zero's and can make good initial wind calls, this can be very helpful in getting you off the line quicker, thus exposing you to fewer potential condition changes.

As the 3 days of individual competition played out, it started to become clear that the international shooters might have a bit of an advantage over the US shooters, even on US soil. Most believed that the reason for this was that these shooters do not shoot anything other than Palma rifles with 155 class bullets – ever. No 185 Juggernauts, no hot-rod 6mm's, just Palma rifles with 155's. As it turned out, only 2 Americans were able to crack the top 10 in the FB Nationals. It just so happened that Minnesota's own Matthew Griffin was one of those 2 Americans. Matt shot brilliantly over the 3 days to make it to the shootoff with a #9 overall finish. Norm Houle was the only other American in the top 10 (5th overall), and the list of names below Matt's was very impressive. Australia's Matt Pozzebon was the overall winner, making it 2 years in a row of Aussie's winning this match.

2 days of fullbore team matches were next on the schedule, with several matches running concurrently each day. The storied "America Match" pits the top 8-person teams from each country against each other on the 300, 600, 900, and 1000-yard lines. Great Britain again dominated the field, dropping only 15 total points between their 8 shooters over all 4 yard lines. Their team score of 2385-263v was head and shoulders above the competition. Australia and South Africa rounded out the top 3, with the USA's top 8 managing a 4th place finish.

In the NRA President's 4-man team match, the USA finally got a win under the brilliant coaching of Norm Anderson by shooting a dazzling score of 1193-

126v out of a possible 1200. Having shot on a much lower-placing team that day, I can vouch for that score being almost unbelievable. Coach Anderson's team was squadded only a few firing points from my team, and I know that my own coach had over 12 minutes of wind on my rifle when I shot the 1000 yard stage. Norm's shooters did their job perfectly, but his coaching was unequalled that day.

In the Veterans World Championship 10-shooter team match, the USA vets were determined to show the rest of the world what they were made of. The upper Midwest's favorite gunsmith Randy Gregory was a firing member, and laid down a rock-solid score of 194-14v while leading the team to a 12-point victory over the Great Britain Vets and a gold medal.

World Long-Range Championships

With the Fullbore Nationals officially in the history books, everyone's attention turned to the real reason we were all here – the Long Range World Championships. Saturday morning's opening ceremony saw Former World Champion Sherri Gallagher dropping out of an airplane to land on Viale Range with her US Army Golden Knights Parachute Team teammates to kick things off. A morning practice followed, and then the opening 800-yard stage of the aggregate. The race was on.

The format for the world championships was scheduled to be 3 complete Palma matches over 4 days. A Palma match consists of 15 shots for record at each of 3 yard lines – 800, 900, and 1000. 45 record shots per match with a possible score of 225, 75 possible points per yard line. The 800-yard stage is generally considered to be the "easy" stage, and most good shooters expect to clean the 800-yard stage in any reasonable condition. This was evidenced in the very first stage of the WC's on Saturday, as 171 shooters shot perfect scores of 75. This meant that dropping even a single point kept you out of the top 171 spots.

On Sunday, the first 2 stages went off without a hitch, and the 800 yard scores were even stronger than Saturday as an unbelievable 242 shooters turned in perfect 75's. Shooting at 900 yards was uneventful, but the 1000-yard stage was a different story. A torrential downpour rolled through Port Clinton after roughly half of the shooters got their 1000 yard score cards tuned in. After about a 2-hour delay, the match officials decided to scrap the whole stage and try to re-shoot another day. I was not happy about this decision, as I had shot a very good score before the rain started, and a costly error in the first

800-yard match the day before left me with a lot of ground to make up if I wanted to finish strong.

Monday's schedule was rearranged, and the 3rd and final 800-yard stage was scrapped in favor of re-shooting the lost 1000 from the day before. Most supported this decision, as since this was a Long Range World Championship, it only seemed right that the longest ranges determine the winner. The revised schedule would feature a 900 yard match in the morning, followed by 2 1000's. The 1000-yard winds were as tricky as I have seen at Camp Perry, and some very accomplished shooters were taking some serious abuse at its hands. In the first 1000-yard match of the day, Brian Mrnak topped all shooters with his score of 75-10v. This would be enough to earn Brian a World Championship gold medal, and give him a reason to drive to Sandusky to buy a new suit!

Tuesday was the final day of the individual aggregate, and all that was left was a 900-yard stage, and 1 last 1000 before the top 10 would face off in a final 1000-yard shoot off. Throughout the 4 days of competition, Australia's Ben Emms had been untouchable. Dropping only a single point all week left him in easy reach of the Gold Medal in the most prestigious rifle match in the world. Ben's aggregate score of 599 put him a full 4 points ahead of his nearest competitor, and as the top 10 assembled for the final shoot off, his World Championship victory looked like a foregone conclusion.

As fate would have it, the shoot off proved to be a lot more interesting than any of us expected. Mr. Emms seemed to be cruising along on auto pilot, comfortably recording 5's and V's when out of nowhere a "2" showed up at 9 o'clock on his target for lucky shot #13. On that one shot, Ben had lost 3 times as many points as he lost the previous 4 days of shooting combined! Ben stared in his scope, watching the conditions and the other shooters' targets for signs of what had gone wrong. Seeing nothing similar come up anywhere else, he needed to make a call and carry on. After what seemed like an eternity, he finally shot again. This time, the target came up scored a "3" at 6 o'clock! Those of us in the gallery were stunned – it seemed we were watching the wheels coming off of what had previously appeared to be an unstoppable train. 5 points lost in 2 shots and only 1 shot remaining. At this point, Ben was the only shooter left still firing, all of the others had already completed their strings. Great Britain's Nigel Ball had posted a phenomenal shoot-off score of

74-4v, putting him within a single point of Ben. Ben had accumulated more tie-breaking V's over the week than Nigel, so a 4 or better on his final shot would secure the win. All of the spectators on hand were on the edge of their seats as Ben finally shouldered his rifle. I can only imagine the pressure he was feeling as his sights settled on the target, he felt the trigger break, and the hammer fell on that final round. It would be 4 more years before there would even be a possibility of competing in another World Championship match. A lifetime of training had come down 1 bullet that was now spinning at 3000 feet per second towards a target over half a mile away. The slightest twitch of wind, an imperfectly loaded round, an uncontrolled heartbeat, any of these seemingly insignificant things could snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. A Ben Emms win had seemed like a sure thing only 10 minutes ago, but after the last 2 shots it was anyone's guess. The crowd was silent as the target went down for the last time. Every spotting scope on Viale range was trained on that one target. Cheers erupted when the target finally came up showing a 5.

Ben Emms had won the 2015 Long Range World Championship!

After all the dust had settled, the Australian team carried Ben off the range in the ceremonial champion's chair. He may have done it the hard way, but outstanding shooting and nerves of steel when the chips were down proved that he is the best Long Range shooter in the world. I was glad to have been on hand to witness the shoot off. We all know that shooting is not much of a spectator sport, but those 15 minutes or so watching it unfold were pretty darned exciting - it is not something I will forget anytime soon.

Overall, my experience at the Fullbore Nationals and World Championships was a great one. Spending 11 straight days shooting with my friends, and making new ones from all over the world was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I didn't shoot as well as I had hoped, but I guess that is always the case. I did manage to shoot well enough to qualify for the next WC's in 2019 in New Zealand, so I will have to put some serious thought into that possibility over the next few years. I hope to be on the Palma team for that trip, but this way I could go and compete as an individual even if that doesn't happen. It's good to have options. A lot can change in that amount of time, but I'd sure love to get another opportunity...

Lodi Palma Championship - August 13 & 14, 2015

By Morgan Dietrich

Many people from MN made the trek to Lodi, Wisconsin last Sunday (8/13/15). I have shot this event probably 8 times, this BY FAR was the best weather we have ever had for the whole week. We had rain on day 1 before the team match began, we got started late but once the day started it turned into a day I was glad that the coach was in charge of the wind. Bob Mead steered my sights along with Erik Rhode, Brian Mrnak and Bob Steketee's sights to the Palma team win. It blew so hard I was getting buffeted in position, and with as tight as a position as I am using it did not make delivering a good shot very easy.

On to the aggregate, the weather got better! Twitchy winds, low in value with mirage slowly changing deceptively lulled you into not paying attention. Then you finished the yard line and realized you dropped more points than you had hoped to. Norm Crawford shot a stellar score day one, 448-14. I was proud of my 23X's, but 443 was not in Norm's league that day. Day 2 another beautiful day, deceptively easy again. Ricky Hunt had it figured out, shooting an awesome 448-26, Randy Pike was next with 446 and Brian Mrnak showed how to stay in the middle with a very nice 445-19. The agg was starting to take shape. I was having wind zero issue, I had changed it by 1 minute, then got to 900 with mirage running left to right. My impatient self-thought I had the wind figured out. Mirage changes going right to left with the same velocity it had in the opposite direction. In my infinite wisdom I decide to make the sight change instead of waiting for the condition to return. That 7 at 9'oclock is burned into my memory. grrrrrrr. I still would have been back for the day but that one stings and reminds me why "Lodi" always wins.....

Day 3 of Palma, who is going to get it done today? Another beautiful day arrives, mid-seventies, slight wind to make one simply be happy to be outside. Randy Pike again shows us how to get it done, 450. Boom! Nobody can catch him for the palma agg, but others are trying. Waylon Burbach shoots an excellent 449-30, Steve McGee 448, Kyle Liebetrau fired a personal best 448. You needed to be on top of your game but the conditions were there to take advantage of if you were paying attention. My 445 was no-where to be seen near the top.

Final day of the Midwest Palma- two any rifle matches and a Palma/scope match. I swapped out my Palma rifle for the 243 fresh from its win in Harris. Having done some slight load development after shooting one day I was hoping for success, the rifle shot great- I needed a little work! Steve McGee was the Friday wizard, 596! Kemp Fuller shot a 595 with his Palma rifle and Waylon shooting his palma rifle (I believe) had a 594 for third. My 593 would just earn me 4th.

For the Midwest Palma Agg, Randy Pike holds on followed by Waylon Burbach, Steve McGee, last years winner Bob Steketee and I finished in 5th. A great week to be amongst friends and fellow shooters. Per the norm, Winnequah Gun Club ran a first class event, it is always a pleasure to shoot there, even when the conditions beat you up.

On to the Weekend! The WI State LR Match is a Palma match followed by two any rifle strings on Sunday morning. Many WI greets grace that trophy. Obermeyer, Liebetrau, Pagel, Gregory, Knutson, Burbach, etc. Who would claim it this year? Palma day starts out with the same weather as the week, beautiful! You needed to be clean with a bunch to be near the top at 800, back to 9. Same thing, I believe I counted 8 riflemen that had cleaned both yard lines (I was not one of the few, stupid 900). Back to 1K, who is it going to be? All the WI hard holders are squadded on one line. Mark Liebetrau had been shooting great all week; Randy G was ready having stayed clean after 9. Here we go! I was able to pull a little magic out and won the 1K yard line with a 149-7 as I was on the relay first to shoot there. Next relay goes to WI. After the dust settled Waylon Burbach lost the least, finishing with a 448-22 for the Palma win. No 447's fired then 4 446's- 3 by MN guys Dietrich, Rhode and Jay Johnson. Randy Gregory was in second for WI trophy with a 446.

Sunday arrives with bad weather. I was thinking seriously about packing up my car and heading south. The radars lied, the sky cleared and we were able to shoot without getting wet. Any sight rifle up first. WI Relay starts out the day, who can catch Waylon? Only two cleans fired in the first match, Norm Crawford and I got it done. Many 199's and 198's. Conditions were great, but you needed a little luck to get through with no nines. Waylon had lost one in the first match, I had to go clean to be able to catch him. Norm had a chance to having fired a 445 the day before. Jay Johnson shooting his dasher cleans the second match for the win, now who will get the any rifle aggregate? 5 people fired 398 scores, Waylon Burbach slams the door and claims the title with a pair of 199's with 21x's. Crawford, Steve Clark, Mark Trew and I had to compare X counts for placement. Waylon Burbach is the 2015 WI State LR champ, I was able to finish 2nd in the aggregate and Randy Gregory came in 3rd with a huge X count shooting his Palma rifle in all matches.

Congrats to all the class winners. I do not have F-Class results- however; Pat Scully was on FIRE on Saturday. Had he not lost one loan nine at 1000 he would have had a national record! His 449 left all other shooters in the dust. His X count was great, he continued on for the F open win the following day

The F-Class Rifle

By: Dr. Ken Erickson

The F-Class shooting discipline was conceived sometime in the middle 1990's, by a Canadian fullbore shooter by the name of Farquarson (hence the 'F' class) who was a senior citizen. Apparently he was no longer able to participate because of failing eyesight and difficulty in using the sling. Reluctant to give up shooting, he came up with the idea of shooting prone, with scope, front rest and rear sandbag. This shooting game has taken off and become very popular with shooters of all ages. The use of scopes has made a huge difference over iron sights; as David Tubb says, "It should be a shooting contest, not a seeing contest."

Looking at the Rules, there are two categories, F/TR and Open. The F/TR requires rifles of only two cartridge options, both unmodified; the 7.62 Nato / .308 Winchester or the 5.56 / .223 Winchester. The rifle must not weigh more than 18 lbs. with a front bipod which must be attached to the rifle and a rear sandbag. The Open Class requires rifles of .35 caliber or less, may not weigh more than 22 lbs. and is ordinarily fired with a sophisticated front rest with many adjustments and a rear sand bag. Muzzle breaks are NOT allowed. The front rest and rear sandbag may not be attached to each other.

There are several ways to go in this sport depending on how serious you are about competing and the state of your checking account. The rifle you chose will be the single most expensive piece of your equipment. There is just one factory rifle available that is suitable for your F-Class shooting and this is the Savage. It comes with a good stock and trigger. With the addition of a suitable scope it is ready for competition. A team representing the U.S. went over to England a few years ago to compete in an international championship. The whole team shot Savage rifles furnished by the Company. They won first place! The only complaint that I have heard about these

rifles is that once in awhile one gets out of the factory with a poor barrel. The last two summers I have twice scored for shooters using Savage rifles and both of them shot 200 with high "X" counts. One had a .243 Win. the other a .308 Win.

The other and expensive way to go is with a full custom job assembled by a gunsmith who specializes in accuracy work. You will need to buy an action, trigger, barrel, stock and a scope with mounts. We will discuss each of these components in order.

The action being the heart of the rifle should be considered first. There are quite a number of custom actions available these days. Stolle Panda, BAT, Stiller, Surgeon, Pierce, Barnard are a few examples. The Barnard comes with a trigger, but the others require the purchase of one. Popular triggers are Jewell, Shilen and Stolle, the Jewell being most popular. Count on spending \$800 to \$ 2000 for a custom action and trigger. According to the benchrest shooters, the two most popular actions are the Stolle Panda and one of the many versions of the BAT.

Likewise, there are a number of good barrel makers out there whose popularity seems to come and go. Among the most used are Krieger, Bartlein, Shilen and Hart. You need a heavy and long barrel, both for accuracy and velocity. Twenty-eight inch and longer barrels are popular with a 0.9 inch muzzle diameter being a good choice. Just remember, you have to carry the thing up to the firing line! Most barrel makers are charging \$325 and up for a premium stainless barrel these days. I can remember buying Douglas premium barrel blank for \$11 in the 1950's.

You will never regret buying and using a purpose made F-Class stock when you build your rifle. Such a stock will have a high adjustable comb, a two or three way adjustable buttplate. Most will have an almost vertical grip, 3 inch wide forend and be made of fiberglass or laminated wood. When I built my first "F" rifle in 1999 there were no purpose

made F-Class stocks available. I bought a used McMillan fiberglass prone style stock which was the best available at the time. I recently restocked it with an Alex Smitman Laminated wood stock. What a difference! Another popular stockmaker is Bill Shehane. I buy Sitman stocks that are finished on the outside but without any inletting. I do the inletting, bedding and finishing myself. They cost about \$300 and are well worth it. If you have them do the complete job, it will cost upwards of \$800.

Finally, we need a quality scope with 1/8 minute clicks (important!) and a minimum of 24X. I used a 24X scope for many years and thought it was quite suitable. I then tried a 36X and I now feel it is a better choice for me. Beware of those 50X scopes, when the mirage is running, the bullseye will look like a penny at the bottom of a swimming pool. Perhaps the best choice would be a variable power which you can change to meet the conditions. It means another detail to remember during a match. Good makes are Leupold, Nightforce (very expensive), and Sightron. There are plenty of inexpensive scopes that might be suitable out there, but not knowing their reputation, you might be buying a pig in a poke. Kelby rings and bases are very good and used by many.

A word about front rests and rear sandbags. The front rests seen on the firing line are often extremely sophisticated (and expensive) with a lot of adjustments, which will make your sighting a lofty easier and solid. For a good selection, go to www.sinclair.com and look at their comprehensive selection. The rear sandbag is simple, a "rabbit ear bag" is what you are looking for.

There is a wonderful website on the internet – www accurateshooter.com which is a goldmine of useful, up-to-date information for the F-Class shooter. You can spend hours looking at the very informative articles. The site is highly recommended.

MARRA.org

MN RIFLE & REVOLVER ASSOC.

4737 CO. HWY 101, # 114

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TO:

MARRA MEETING DATES

March 19, 2016:

10:00 AM Board Meeting, 12:30 PM Membership Meeting
Splitrocks Entertainment Center, Wyoming, MN

May 21, 2016: Board Meeting

Gopher rifle & Revolver Club Range, Harris, MN

August 20, 2016: Board Meeting

Gopher Rifle & Revolver Club Range, Harris, MN

December 10, 2016:

10:00 AM Board Meeting, 12:30 PM Membership Meeting
Splitrocks Entertainment Center, Wyoming, MN

MARRA SPRING MEMBERSHIP AND BOARD MEETINGS:

The Spring MARRA Membership and Board Meetings
is scheduled for Saturday, March 19, 2016
at Splitrocks Entertainment Center
5063 273rd Street, Wyoming MN 55092. 651-462-6000
The Membership meeting will start at 12:30PM.
The Board meeting is scheduled to start at 10:00 AM
same date & location.
All members are encouraged to attend.

THE FOLLOWING HAVE GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED MARRA & SHOOTING SPORTS



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Accuracy Precision Limited Rifles



J & S Custom Gun Shop

17400 Kenwood Trl
Lakeville, MN 55044
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