



MMA TIMES

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MMA Annual Meeting

23 Jan 04, 1500
Pool Shooting Complex

USAMU Custom Firearms Shop chief receives award

USAMU PAO

USAMU Custom Firearms Shop chief, William O. Harden was recently awarded the Meritorious Civilian Service Award for his part in the war against terrorism.

Mr. Harden received the award, which is equivalent to a Legion of Merit, from LTG Dennis D. Cavin, commanding general of U.S. Army Accessions Command of Fort Monroe, Va., as he and USAAC CSM Perry L. Roberts visited USAMU's Easley Range.

As the Custom Firearms Shop chief, Harden is responsible for the shop's transferring of competitive firearms accuracy lessons learned to combat weapons used in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

"Mr. Harden's contribution to the Army and Department of Defense has been without equal, and this assistance took on a larger role and greater priority since the events of Sept. 11, 2001," Cavin said. "The Custom Firearms Shop, under the direction of Mr. Harden, has answered the call to improve weapons systems from units being deployed in defense of American interest against terrorist groups."

Over the past several years, with Harden's extensive knowledge of weapons design and ballistic requirements, the USAMU shop transformed the M-16A2 into the most accurate and versatile combat rifle in the DoD.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks and after being asked by the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, the Custom Firearms Shop developed a modified



USMAU Photo
Mr. W. O. Harden was presented the Meritorious Civilian Service Award by LTG Dennis Gavin at USAMU in November.

M-16A2 for specific war-fighting efforts and improved the M-4 weapon system for use in hot weather climates. Recently, the USAMU Gun Shop has also rebuilt numerous M-21 sniper systems for units in Panama and along the demilitarized zone in South Korea.

"These weapon systems have been used to fight the war on terror during Operation Enduring Freedom and to defeat a vicious dictator in Operation Iraqi Freedom," Cavin said. "Mr. Harden's commitment to the development of accurate and dependable competitive and combat weapons has resulted in Soldiers not only being awarded Gold Medals in marksmanship competitions, but lives saved on the battlefield."

"Receiving this award is without a doubt one of the highlights of my career," Harden said. "It is one highlight that couldn't be accomplished without the soldiers and civilians who surround me. The talent level of the men and women of the shop has enabled this unit to achieve its win mission year after year. I humbly accept this award on their behalf and say thanks to each and every one of them."

MMA President's Report

Arch Arnold

As we enter the season "to be jolly", I hope all of our members have enjoyed Thanksgiving and are preparing for a very Merry Christmas. Though we are a nation at war with those who would terrorize us both abroad and at home, there remains much to be thankful for.....most especially our fine military men and women in harm's way in places like Afghanistan and Iraq who are most directly bearing the cost of our freedom.

It is always sad to learn of the passing of an association member. Some I have had the privilege of knowing or meeting at past reunions; others I can only read of their accomplishments in obituaries or in the MMA Times or on our website Taps. Present Arms page. During the past quarter, USAMU and MMA lost Henry "Hank" Shaw - a world-class shotgun shooter; Samuel E. Cosby - a fine Service Rifle shooter and gunsmith; Roy Combs - a Service Rifle shooter and former USAMU Command Sergeant Major; and several weeks later, Hazel Combs, Roy's wife. I have been told that "Hank" Shaw and Sam Cosby were a outstanding non-commissioned officers and gentlemen. In a letter to the association, MMA member Marylouise Hinds, paid tribute to Roy and Hazel in saying, "Sgt. Maj. (Combs) was the most loyal person I have ever known. Loyal to AMU and all he worked with, loyal to his friends, and especially loyal to his family." She concluded, "There will be a big empty space at MMA without Roy and Hazel. They were two great people." On behalf of the MMA, I thank Marylou for her contribution to the association in memory of Roy and Hazel.

On the home front, I'd like to bring you up to date on the latest activities of your association and board:

Historic Records

With the retirement of Ken Hamill as our historian at the beginning of the year, we have figured out that he is irreplaceable and have formed a team of volunteers to attempt to do what he did so well for so many years. There are hundreds of photos to be identified and archived; boxes of donated memorabilia to be inventoried, stored and displayed; trophies to be organized; periodicals to be managed; and a bottomless pit of match bulletins, results, programs, orders, rosters, etc that need to be saved. As the USMAU has most generously lent us another office, we should be able to spread out from our cubby hole on the second floor and begin making progress on some of the aforementioned tasks. We are looking for help from anyone in the local area who might be willing to donate a couple hours of their time every now and then to help out with this project. Send us e-mail or give us a call if you are interested.

All Army Matches

For the first time in over a decade the USAMU will conduct an All Army rifle and pistol competition at Fort Benning 14-26 March 2004. What a great initiative !! The unit hopes to attract up to 200 competitors from all the components (active duty, national

USAMU Commander's Report

LTC David J. Liwanag

The holidays are upon us as we wrap up 2003. Our young shooters have had an amazing year breaking and setting world, national, and interservice records.

The New Year brings us the Olympic Selection Finals for Shotgun in March, and Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, and Running Target in May. For those of us who have never been to an Olympics, remind your friends and families that the USA Shooting Finals for Olympic Team Selection are open events, and anybody can see them — free — at the Hook and Pool Ranges.

We have a number of Soldiers I am sure will represent us as Olympians in Athens. We'll keep you informed of their progress as the Games approach.

The All-Army Rifle and Pistol Championships are returning to Benning in March. We're hosting individual and team rifle and combat pistol events (with respective EIC matches) and three days of long range competition to 1,000 yards (all matches to be fired with rack-grade issue weapons but match ammo). We will need volunteer help, and the POC is Mike Behnke, Chief of Competitions in the S3.

The AMU is on azimuth with Warfighter support picking up momentum. Service Pistol has taken combat training at Universal Academy in Florida; Blackwater in North Carolina; and with the 1st Special Forces Group in Washington. Our first Mobile Training Team to Iraq may be a Close Combat Train-the-Trainer to teach fighting from muzzle to 200 yards with rifle, carbine, and pistol.

Service Rifle is progressing with development of the M16 Squad Designated Marksman Instructor Course. This training revolves around what Service Rifle does best in the Infantry Trophy matches — rapid precision fire against E-type silhouettes at ranges from 200 to 600 yards. SSG Kyle Ward's Soldiers will run two pilot courses in October and November 2004, with training at Benning or by Mobile Training Team starting in December 2004 through February 2005.

Our gunsmiths and ammo guys are keeping up with cutting edge shooting and loading technology — I am constantly amazed at the imagination and ingenuity our folks exercise to give us consistent and repetitive precision and accuracy.

You would be proud to see how each and every one of our support staff makes the AMU such an amazing place to work. Our Soldiers leave for competitions with the best the Army can afford to provide you WINNERS.

Take the time during this season to remember our friends, family, and alumni who have passed this year. I have not had the great privilege to meet the majority of our wonderful alumni, but I look forward to it, either here on the ranges or during one of the unit parties or reunions. So much of the unit's reputation rests on your achievements and contributions — a reputation we try to live up to.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, with warmest regards from the AMU.

Coats Brown, A Legacy

Ken Hamill

his series is about the life and times of a shooting legend. At 95 years old, Coats Brown still has a remarkable memory. If you shot or worked with or for Coats Brown, please send any memories you have of those times to the Editor so the membership can share or relive those memories.

Myrtlewood, Alabama. In the early days mail came to Myrtlewood by way of ferry boat up the Tom Bigbee River. Trains later carried the mail. A mailcar would hook a bag of mail without the train stopping and postal workers would sort the mail on the moving train. The mail by rail system was excellent those days. Coats remembers ordering a new plow point via a Sears catalogue order form and receiving the needed part one week later. The plow point had been sent from Chicago.

An unforgettable Myrtlewood character was called Granddad Adams. He had long gray whiskers and looked like Santa Claus. He was intelligent, but talked to himself all of the time. Granddad Adams bought a Star automobile which had a hand operated shift lever when he was in his sixties. He was taught to shift the transmission into low gear when going downhill to assist with braking the vehicle. Depot Hill Road had a 10° incline and led to the railroad depot. One time prior to going down Depot Hill Road he shifted into neutral rather than low gear. The car with Granddad zipped down the hill, bounced across four sets of railroad tracks and ended up in a ditch. A group of people half way down the hill said when Granddad went by them he was talking loudly to himself. Granddad had to replace two tires, but he and the car were not hurt. He sold the car and bought a horse and buggy. Granddad Adams granddaughter married Coats brother-in-laws brother in 1925. They both still reside in their own home in Myrtlewood and take care of themselves. Coats chatted with them on their front porch when he visited Myrtlewood in October 1999. He was 95 and she was 93 during that visit in 1999. Coats was 91 at the time.

Mrs. Brown was a walking history book and enjoyed relating stories of the family and their Scotch heritage. Coats paternal grandfather y the name of John Allison Brown was a farmer in bordering Greene County. He was anti-slavery, but was drafted into the Confederate Army. He served as a medic in the 5th Alabama Infantry Regiment through Chancellorsville and Appomattox. He was 38 when the war ended. He and friend Sam Sollie from Marengo County walked back to Alabama from Virginia. The Federals had burned his house and barn and taken all his cattle and other animals. His wife and a freed slave woman were sharing a lean-to when he got home. Shortly after the war, two local black freed men came to him with a serious problem. Their previous slave owner had given them each 50 acres and a mule when he freed them. A Yankee carpetbagger was trying to take the land and mules for himself. The three of them made a plan and carried it out at night. They knew of a dead horse in a field. The carpetbagger's body was placed in the horse's stomach and sewn in place. Buzzards cleaned everything up. There never was an investigation. He rebuilt and reestablished the farm. He owned approximately 150 acres, his principal crops were cotton and corn. He had several animals including horses, mules, cows, pigs, chickens, turkeys, and ducks. He died around 1892.

Coats Brown credits his mother for bringing him up right. He was brought up the old fashioned way, respecting his elders, asking permission when it was appropriate and treating everyone with dignity. When questioned about honorable acts he performed or decisions he made during his younger days he often responds – "That is the way I was brought up". A credit to his mother.

The Brown family had always been an open and loving family. They communicated their thoughts and ambitions to one another. His mother was healthy and comfortable. She would be supportive of his decisions regarding his future in any case. Coats brother Robert married at age 23. His sister Louise married at age 20. Both remained in the local area and were nearby in case of any problems. His brother Robert could take over the home farm while supporting his wife, child and mother. Coats was having thoughts of a different life. In the 1930's, the Brown family subscribed to a Sunday Birmingham newspaper that ran an occasional simple advertisement "Army Recruiting Station, Birmingham, Alabama". In June 1934, Josie Adams, a neighbor offered Coats \$12.00 to paint the tin roof of her house. He painted in sweltering heat for a few days. He sweat through all of his clothing and remained sweat drenched while he worked. When finished he came off the painted roof, drew a bucket of water from the well and poured it over his head to cool off. He told Josie that he was going to Birmingham and join the Army.

Lessons Learned

R. M. Williamson, Sr.

Fort Benning is famous for hot, humid days in early summer. On one morning particularly so in the mid-seventies, the Service Rifle Section was firing a practice session with their M-14s. One of the younger new "pickup" shooters sat down and fired a perfectly round, ten-ring sized group at 6 o'clock in the seven ring! He had forgotten to reset his sights for rapid fire sitting after shooting the offhand/standing stage.

Rifle shooters know even though both of the above mentioned stages were fired at two hundred yards, M-14 sight settings will probably be different for each stage. Even if they are not, the elevation setting could easily be bumped down during movement on and off the line unbeknown to the shooter. Therefore, standard procedure calls for the shooter to run the rear sight all the way down upon completion of any stage to prevent that, and more importantly, to protect the sight from damage.

The OIC happened to observe the shooter's mistake and proceeded to counsel the young soldier right there on the line. The young man appeared embarrassed to say the least.

Shortly afterwards, that relay (mine) retired to the pits for target detail. The always busy OIC chose to fire his practice session at that time. In the pits, I watched a very nice offhand score, mid-to-high nineties, being tallied by my shooter. Then there was the usual pause to prepare for the rapid fire sitting stage. By then, I knew who my shooter was.

With the command "TARGETS UP," we all tried to snap our targets to the full up position without delay. Army shooters always prided themselves on giving excellent target service to everyone, regardless. Within a few seconds, rounds began snapping through my assigned target. They were arriving in a perfect, measured cadence and were forming a nearly perfect, x-ring sized, round group. The shooter got all ten rounds off in plenty of time. They were well centered laterally but were all in the 2x4 pine plank about three feet below the bull's eye. The shooter had forgotten to reset his sights!

I just had to have that plank, so, long before our target detail was completed. I had located an old, rusty carpenter's saw in the target shed and cut the piece of 2x4 from the bottom of the target.

Just before "Miller Time," the coaches issued their comments and the next day's schedule. Then the OIC commented about the importance of getting "plenty of rest." He was about to dismiss us when I pulled that piece of 2x4 from the folds of my shooting mat. I noted that the OIC surely knew what he was talking about, as anyone could be tired and forget to change their sights. He stared at me and for a few long moments. I expected to be "chewed out" but he said, "That's right, we all learned a lesson today. Now, lets all go home and get some rest."

I wonder if he still has that piece of wood?

USAR SHOOTER PROFILES

William F. Beard: International Rifle

Bill Beard became a member of the USAR International Rifle Roll of Honor through his many contributions to the sport. Born 22 June 1948 in Paducah, KY, he learned to shoot a rifle hunting rabbits and squirrels and via the Marksmanship Merit Badge Program of the Boy Scouts. He was a member of the Murray State University National Championship Rifle Teams of 1968 and 1970. He was National Collegiate Individual Conventional Rifle Champion in 1969 and 1970 and an All American selection. Bill was enamored with the opportunities for travel and the challenge of competing against other universities in the surrounding states. His ROTC graduation saw him assigned to Fort Knox and the Armor Basic Course.

Assigned to the 197th Infantry Brigade at Fort Benning, he was able to be transferred to the Army Marksmanship Unit. In addition to competing at Camp Perry and state and inter-service championships, he represented the US Army in Sweden, Germany and USSR.

Upon leaving active duty, Bill was recruited to shoot with the U S Army Reserve because COL Bruce Meredith told him that he would be able to further satisfy his desire for travel and competition. During his career in the USAR, he continued his shooting in Canada, Mexico, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Switzerland, Venezuela, Japan and Norway. Major Beard went on to become the QIC of the team in 1986-1987.

In addition to being awarded the International Distinguished Shooter Badge during his career, Bill also has the NRA Distinguished Rifle Prone and Position Rifle Badges. He won the silver individual medal in the 50 meter English Match at the World Championships in Caracas, Venezuela in 1982. Shooting a magnum, he was a member of the USAR 1,000 yard National Championship Team at Camp Perry in 1983. Bill's talent as a prone shooter won him three National International Championships but his expertise in three position shooting made him a member of the 1984 Olympic Team in Los Angeles. Additionally, he won the gold medal and a 1992 Olympic quota space for the USA in the 50 Meter Prone Match at the World Cup in Los Angeles in 1991.

Major Beard retired with 23 years of active/reserve service in 1994. He has worked for many years with the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and currently is a coordinator assigned to Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development, a private 501(c)3 organization.

He resides with his wife and children at 3131 Lickridge Lane, Danville, IN 46122. Telephone (317) 539-2915 and email billbeard@sycamoretrails.org.

Philip J. Whitworth: International Rifle

One of the shooters in the U S Army Reserve Roll of Honor is Phil Whitworth. Born 14 August 1954 in Sharon, PA, he started shooting at Hickory High School where shooting was a varsity sport and he captained the team for three years. He attended West Virginia University on an athletic and ROTC scholarship and became a Collegiate All American.

Entering active duty in 1976, he attended the Transportation Officer Basic course at Fort Eustis, VA and was assigned to the 197th Infantry Brigade, Fort Benning. The AMU grabbed him immediately and assigned him to the International Rifle Team. Phil competed for the AMU in international competitions including the CISM matches in Sweden and Egypt.

Upon leaving active duty in 1980, he served with the PA National Guard and shot with the All Guard Rifle Team briefly before joining the USAR International Rifle Team in November 1980. At the Championship of the Americas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1981 he set the World Record for the 300 meter Prone Rifle event commonly referred to as the English Match. At the same CAT Games, Phil won the individual silver medal in the 50 meter 3 position rifle match and four gold team medals for the two 300 meter events and the two 50 meter events. Captain Whitworth continued to shoot for the USAR through 1986.

Phil has been awarded the International Distinguished Shooter Badge and the NRA Distinguished Smallbore Rifle Position and Prone Badges. He was a firing member of the USAR team that won the 1,000 yard Any Sight match in 1983 at the National Championships at Camp Perry.

He has completed the requirements for the CPA Certification and after a short time in corporate circles he has been with the Internal Revenue Service of the U S Treasury Dept. His career as an Internal Revenue Agent has included positions as a Computer Audit Specialist, National Industry Specialist and currently is a Technical Advisor for changes in accounting methods. Phil currently can be reached at 2929 Williamsburg Circle, Stow, Ohio 44224. Telephone (330) 677-0851. His email is PJW0854@aol.com.

MMA Web Site at -

militarymarksmanship.org

Join Us Today!!!

Photos needed: If you have a 8" X 10" shooting photo of yourself or a team, please photo copy it, identify the event, date, people and send it to: MMA Historian, PO Box 52025, Ft Benning, GA 31995-2025. Photos received will be captioned, placed in document protectors & notebook binders and stored in the USAMU Photo Archives.

USAMU Soldiers named Athletes of Year

USA Shooting recently announced its Athletes of the Year in the four Olympic shooting disciplines.

Staff Sgt. Jason A. Parker of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit of Fort Benning, Ga., is the Rifle Shooter of the Year. Parker, a 2000 Olympian, grabbed a Gold at Munich's World Cup, while also setting a World Record score in Air Rifle. Besides his Munich World Cup Gold Medal, Parker also won the Gold Medal in Three Position Rifle at the Pan-American Games and Gold Medals in Air Rifle and Three Position Rifle in the National Championships.

Sgt. 1st Class Daryl L. Szarenski of USAMU, a 2000 Olympian, was chosen as the Pistol Shooter of the Year. Szarenski won a Gold Medal in Free Pistol at the Pan-Am Games and a Gold Medal in Free Pistol and a Silver in Air Pistol at the National Championships.

Staff Sgt. Armando R. Ayala was selected as the Running Target Shooter of the Year. He won Gold Medals in 10-Meter 30+30 and 50-Meter Mixed and Silver Medals in 10-Meter Mixed and 50-Meter 30+30, at the National Championships, as well as receiving the Bronze Medal in 10-Meter 30+30 at Pan-Am.

USA Shooting changed the procedure for picking the Athlete of the Year, just last year, making it much more objective. Wanda Jewell, USA Shooting director of operations, who was the person to implement the new procedure, said it just seems better this way.

"It is more objective than subjective," Jewell said. "We don't have to worry about missing anyone who might have a chance."

MMA Annual Meeting Pool Indoor Shooting Complex January 23, 2004 at 3 o'clock PM

Briefings, Entertainment, Soldier of the
Year Award, and Refreshments

Mark Your Calendar Now

Stories needed: If you remember a funny, inspiring or interesting shooting experience, please share it with us, so we can share it with the membership through the MMA Times. Please send your experiences or second hand stories to: MMA Times Editor, PO Box 52025, Ft Benning, GA 31995-2025.

Taps, Present Arms

The Military Marksmanship Association announces with sorrow the passing of Staff Sergeant Major (Retired) **Roy H. Combs**, 72, on Monday October 20, 2003, in Columbus, Georgia.

SGM Combs was a veteran of the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. He made two combat parachute jumps with the 187th Airborne Regiment Combat Team in Korea and was the NCOIC of the 101st Airborne Division Sniper School in the Republic of Vietnam from 1969 to 1970. SGM Combs was first assigned to USAMU in 1966 as a Service Rifle shooter and later assumed the duties of the Head Coach of the Service Rifle Branch. SGM Combs was the USAMU Sergeant Major from 1975 until he retired in 1979.

SGM Combs' awards include the U.S. Army Distinguished Rifleman Badge, Purple Heart, Combat Infantryman Badge with Star, and Master Parachute Badge with two Stars.

The Military Marksmanship Association announces with sorrow the passing of Master Sergeant (Retired) **Samuel E. Cosby**. MSG Cosby died in Hampton, Arkansas on Monday, November 24, 2003. MSG Cosby was a USAMU Service Rifle shooter and gunsmith in the late 1950s.

Master Sergeant (Retired) **Henry "Hank" H. Shaw**, 87, died on September 29, 2003, in Jacksonville, Florida. As a youth "Hank" excelled in sports and played professional baseball in the minor and major leagues.

"Hank" Shaw enlisted in the Army in 1939 at Fort Logan, Colorado. His assignments included Fitzsimmons Army Hospital during World War II, 177th Station Hospital, Yokohama, Japan, during the Korean Conflict, and Brooks Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas. "Hank" was ultimately assigned to the USAMU Shotgun Branch in the early 1960s as a Skeet and Trap shooter. He retired from the Army as a Master Sergeant in 1964.

MSG Shaw was awarded the United States International Distinguished Shooter Badge in 1963 for his gold medal winning performance at the Pan American Games in São Paulo, Brazil.

USAMU / MMA REUNIONS

The USAMU 50th Reunion will be held in 2006 (USAMU was activated in 1956). We will have a 48th Reunion in 2004, but the date has not been determined. Any one with input of ideas and time-frame for these should contact the MMA VP, Bruce Meredith at bameredith@mindspring.com or via mail at 103 Woodfield Circle, LaGrange, GA 30240.

Conway Chronicles

Francis B. Conway

Some years ago there was a NRA Regional High Power Rifle Match sponsored by the Fourth Army Marksmanship Unit. Individual matches on Saturday and team matches on Sunday. Come Saturday morning it was really fogged in! The match was supposed to start at 8:00 but you could only see 50 feet some times. Some deer came through, appearing out of the fog and there was a lot of confusion! In one group, all of a sudden, one soldier said, "I hear a rattler"! It only took a few seconds to find him. Rattling was the biggest mistake of his life! He was killed real quick, one guy took the rattles, another pair skinned him and some others built a small fire and ate him! We did start shooting about 10:30. This was at Camp Bullis, outside of San Antonio. Nice range normally.

MMA Soldier of the Year Nominees

Action Shooting: SGT Maxient J. Michel
Service Pistol: SSG Thomas A. Rose
Service Rifle: SFC Lance S. Hopper
International Rifle: SSG Jason A. Parker
International Pistol: SFC Daryl L. Szarenski
Running Target: SSG Armando R. Ayala
Shotgun: SFC Shawn C. Dulohery
Custom Firearms Shop: SSG Joe D. Harless

Information for the "Keeping in Touch" column needed: If you shot for the Army, your old friends want to hear about you. Send us a description of your experiences, when and where you shot, coached, accurized weapons, or other duties. When did you get out of the Army? What did you do? School? Work? When did you retire? What are your hobbies? Please jot down some information about yourself and send it to: MMA Historian, PO Box 52025, Ft Benning, GA 31995-2025.



P.O. Box 52025
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31995-2025

PRESIDENT / From Page 2

guard and reserves). This will be a significant undertaking for the unit, and they'll need the help of the MMA in lots of ways to make it the best event it can be. Please mark your calendars to come watch and/or help out running the matches.

Annual Meeting

We have scheduled our annual meeting for Friday, January 23rd, at 1500 (3 PM), at Pool Indoor Range. The highlight and focus of the meeting will be the announcement of the 2003 Soldier of the Year award recipient. We strongly encourage all our local members to attend. I promise to keep the slides and speeches short so please make a point to be there.....it will be a good time!

Tax Exempt Status

We were very disappointed that the Internal Revenue Service recently rejected our application for fully tax-exempt status. Hoping that there will be more than one way to skin this cat, we have made some changes suggested by our lawyer and are in the process of resubmitting. All I can guarantee at this point is that your board is fully committed to this project and will persist until we are successful.

Again, on behalf of the MMA Board of Directors, I want to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and happy holiday season.

P.S. I visited with Bill Blankenship a couple times over the past week at St Francis Hospital where he is recovering nicely from open heart surgery to repair an aneurysm discovered by chance in an unrelated medical test. He is home now and be-moaning the fact that the docs won't let him back on the golf course for 90 days! He was very thankful for the many visits and well wishes he has gotten from his MMA friends.



5/05
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