



MMA TIMES

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Army defends 'Best in Nation' title: National Trophy Pistol Matches



Members of the USAMU Service Pistol Team are awarded the National Trophy Pistol Team plaques at Camp Perry, Ohio.

USAMU PAO

CAMP PERRY, Ohio -The Army's Service Pistol Team won the National Trophy Pistol Team Match during the 2015 Civilian Marksmanship Program National Trophy Pistol Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio, July 12. The winning U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU) team of Sgt. 1st Class Adam Sokolowski, Sgt 1st Class Patrick Franks, Staff Sgt. Lawrence Cleveland, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gasser and Sgt. Ryan Franks also won several individual matches including the prestigious President's 100 Trophy. "I'm pretty pleased with the overall results," said Sokolowski, a Yeagertown, Pennsylvania, native and USAMU Service Pistol Team coach. "We are very proficient with the service pistol, and we have a lot of depth on that," said Sokolowski. "I was confident going into (the match), we would dominate. We didn't expect to win everything because there are a lot of great shooters here, but I'm pleased with how it turned out." The Army Pistol Team won the National Trophy Pistol Team Match with a total score of 1150-43X, defending the title of "Best in the Nation." The "X" in the score denotes hitting an X ring inside the bull's-eye of a target. The X scores are used to break ties. During the competition, Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Franks, of Henderson, Nevada, broke three national match records, bringing home the Military Police Corps Trophy, the General Mellon Trophy and the General Patton Trophy. His

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MMA President's Report

Rob Harbison



Greetings fellow MMA members!

Shooting News: If you haven't been watching the news on the performance of the USAMU Soldiers in competition this season, there are many notable accomplishments. The service teams dominated Interservice and national competitions as usual.

Also, there is recent news on the Olympic front: In September Sergeant John Joss earned a Paralympic Country Quota Slot in Sydney, Australia for the US to participate in the 50 Meter Prone event. Staff Sergeant Glenn Eller has qualified for a fifth straight Olympic Team nomination in Double Trap. Eller earned the team nomination through USA Shooting's Olympic Point System, which is designed to recognize significant individual accomplishment and demonstrated potential during the quadrennial. Sergeant First Class Mike McPhail also earned a slot on the 2016 Olympic Team in Men's Prone through the Olympic Point System with his first place finish at the World Cup Final.

Dues: The Executive Board has received a lot of feedback from members about the annual dues and renewal fee structure. It seems that the structure that we created to differentiate between new and renewing members created more confusion than it resolved. Bottom line up front, the Executive Board voted in September to simplify the procedure and eliminate the penalty renewal fee for members whose status had slipped into arrears. For new and renewing annual members, the cost is now a simple, flat rate of \$20 per year. If your membership expires and you have an accidental lapse in renewing, there is no penalty to renew. Incidentally, our online membership renewal mechanism is working well and several members have simply gone to the MMA website to renew online with a credit card. It is also a great way to update your contact information.

Annual Meeting: The annual membership meeting will be held in the Benning Club's Regimental Room at Fort Benning, on December 14th, 2015, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. The Benning Club is the old Officer's Club, Building 128 on Morrison Road

on post. The club serves a wonderful buffet lunch for \$10, Dutch treat. During the annual meeting the executive board will present our annual report, and we will present awards for the Soldier of the Year for 2015. Speaking of the Soldier of the Year awards, the MMA Executive Board is pleased to announce changes for the 2015 presentations. Working closely with the USAMU, this year MMA will award two new presentations. We are adding a "new shooter" category and a "support" category.

Memorabilia: Some of our members have enquired about purchasing unit memorabilia. There is now a link on our website to the USAMU store where you can purchase memorabilia items such as shirts and hats - www.militarymarksmanship.org.

Lew Tippie Article: Elsewhere in this issue of the MMA Times you'll find an interview with Lew Tippie. Lew is one of two service members to have fired a perfect 500 across the National Match Course in Service Rifle (SFC Pat Boyle fired a 500 in 1975 during the Ten-Man Team Match). We caught up with Lew to remember that day. Yours truly was an eye-witness to that spectacular performance in 1993 at Interservice.

MMA Times: Lastly I want to let you know about a decision by the Executive Board to publish the MMA Times in electronic-only format beginning with the June 2016 issue. We want your feedback on that, so please e-mail me at president@militarymarksmanship.org and let me know what you think. The decision was made in concert with our ongoing efforts to keep the organization in a strong financial position to accomplish all of our organizational objectives.

All ready on the firing line.

ATTENTION!

The MMA Executive Board intends to publish the MMA Times in an "electronic-only" format beginning with the June 2016 issue. We are going paperless! Let us know what you think by e-mailing the president at president@militarymarksmanship.org. We want your feedback on this important change.

Interview—Lew Tippie

In the summer of 1993, Sergeant Lew Tippie (USMC) fired a perfect score in the Interservice Ten Man Team Match at Quantico, Virginia. His score of 500-25X is a rare feat that stands out among the great shooting performances of all time, in any discipline. It had been eighteen years since a 500 had been fired across the National Match Course in national competition. The MMA Times Staff sat down recently with Lew to remember that day.

MMA Times: How did you get into shooting Lew?

LT: I was born an Army Brat, June 18, 1967, in West Germany. My dad was in the Army, and my mom was an elementary school teacher. We moved to Fincastle VA, when dad got out in 1969. We lived on a small farm. I got the proverbial 'Red Rider' and started hunting the ever elusive soda can. I quickly graduated to a Crossman pellet rifle, and with that accuracy, to clothes pins, string and swinging targets. My grandfather (40 year Army Air Corps/Air Force veteran) bought me a .22 rim fire, when I was ten. My parents complained that the yard had taken on the color of brass... I also shot and hunted with a bow. In March 1982, I was invited to shoot air rifle through 4-H. I did very well on the decimal targets, but had no idea about competitions past that level. I decided to enlist in the USMC in 1984, and went to Parris Island the following September. I won my Platoon 'Leatherneck' award as highest scoring qualification shooter. After graduation from MOS school, (2111, Small Arms Tech) I was assigned to 3rd BN, 6th Marines @ Camp Lejeune, NC. I did several deployments with them, and three years later I was in Okinawa Japan, and had been selected for the battalion shooting team. In March 1989, I won a Bronze Medal at the Far East Division Match, which also included returning from Okinawa a month early to shoot the USMC Championships. Which..... Also introduced me to the M14! At that time, Marines shot M16A2s at division Matches, and then switched to M14s at the USMC Championships. I did not do well at that first USMC Championship, but I set a few new goals. I had met some of the Marines in the Gold Sweatshirts, and Campaign hats. I still did not know many things... Marines don't wear Presidents Hundred Tabs etc. so, I had no idea of anything past shooting with the USMC team and being a Distinguished Marksman.

MMA Times: Lew, in the 1993 Interservice Rifle Championship, Ten Man Team Match you fired a perfect 500-25X. What do you remember about that day?

LT: We drew guns at normal time, the match was supposed to begin at 0730, normal team chit chat that morning. Team captain verified zeros. We already knew the lineup for the day. My pair firing partner was Staff Sergeant Kevin Kistler (Kevin passed away June 5, 2009). Kistler and I were the last pair on the 6 man team side. The first two pair of shooters finished their

standing very quickly, so there was no rush for time. Kistler and I had plenty of time to finish our standing. No pressure. As I recall, my hold was about 10-ring that morning which I told to the team Coach and Capt. Cook said "That's fine, shoot 10s"... Kevin's first shot was a deep 10 or X. I had 100-2x standing. I really didn't pay much attention to what was going on around us. We immediately got ready for 200 yard sitting rapid fire. I know it happened, but I don't recall the Capt re-confirming zeros, they were confirmed between each yard line. I had a 100-7x sitting. As soon as I finished we moved to the 300 yard line. Tony Bailey from the All Guard team was our score keeper. He came up to us and congratulated us on the 200 yard line performance. At 300 yards I had 100-6x. We moved to the 600 yard line. After the 600 yard began, Kistler and I went to sit in the shade next to the gun truck. We were having a really good performance and wanted to stay away from what was going on around us. When the 2nd pair was close to being finished, Cook signaled us to move to the ready line. As soon as the 2nd pair cleared the firing line we confirmed zeros and moved up, prepared to fire. My first 10 shots was 100-6x.



MMA Times: Were there any "tense moments", close shots/challenges, favors in rapids, etc.?

LT: Everything was fine until my 17th shot...which was a misfire. I immediately yelled misfire, and quickly extracted that round from the chamber. Coach had me load the next round which I fired. We fired the next 2 rounds, and the team captain handed me one round, to make up for my misfire. I didn't know it at the time, but my lot of 600 yard ammo was not on the gun truck. What they handed me was one of Kistler's rounds (extra ammo from the gun truck)...so my 19th shot for record was out of my partner's lot of ammo. I loaded it up, coach gave wind call, made the adjustment, I fired the shot, and it was a deep 10. I must admit to having a good pulse beat at this point. Kistler shot his 20th shot, target came up, coach asked if I was ready, I replied ready, coach said "send it",

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target went down and came up a 10...Final score 500-25x. I got up into a kneeling position and was taking gear off and getting pounded on the back, shook hands with my team Coach, Capt, and partner.

I believe that it's very important to remember that there is no way that any one person can take credit for that score. From the 2112s, (USMC Gunsmiths) to the Ammo Techs, to my Team Coach and Captain, and my "SP" Kevin Kistler and other team-mates...This was FAR from an individual effort.

600 YARDS SLOW FIRE DATA SHEET M-RX TARGET

RANGE	TARGET NO.	RIFLE NO.	DATE	USED	ELEVATION CORRECT	WINDAGE CORRECT							
4	24	53	430727	20	36	36							
AMMUNITION	LIGHT	MILEAGE	TEMP	REMARKS									
M14	M14	78	1330	500 25X									
NO.	SS	SS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	SCORE
ELEV.	SS	SS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6x
W.G.	SS	SS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4x
CALL	SS	SS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
VALUE	SS	SS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

MMA Times: You had the high score on the day and won the Reynolds Trophy, but the USMC team lost the match that day. What do you remember about that?

LT: When we finished, we found out one of the younger shooters on our team had a problem at the 600 yard line and had not had a great performance. The other teams were done and the Army was just finishing with its 2nd pair. Their 3rd pair was getting set up to shoot the 600. (To include a very young Lt. named Rob Harbison) I felt really good about my performance, my partners (Kistler finished with a 497) and Sergeant Cole finished with a 498. Although this doesn't average well with a 470 something. As the Army 3rd pair was finishing, we knew the score was very close, and in their excitement, some of the score keepers were passing bad information. When the dust cleared the Army team won the match by 1 point. I was left with a very mixed emotion as we went to shake the Army team's hands.

MMA Times: How did the team take it, how did it affect your ability to celebrate your performance?

LT: At the Interservice banquet, the Marine Corps Team was very subdued. It was very difficult for me to celebrate my Interservice Individual Championship (Which many people have forgotten) as well as my performance in the team championship with the loss to the Army Team. We as a team did not talk about it very much, until we got to Camp Perry for the National Championships.

MMA Times: How had your shooting performances been that summer prior to Interservice? Had you fired a 500 in practice?

LT: Never. I was averaging in the mid 490s on the National Match Course.

MMA Times: Did you shoot well in the Interservice individual match and the Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) match?

LT: Yes that year, I won my first Interservice individual championship and had a 298 in the MCCDC. I only dropped 11 points total in the Interservice.

MMA Times: How about the VA Regional?

LT: I won the VA state match and Regional Individual matches and the Marine Corps as a team won the Regional Team match against that same army team

MMA Times: What advice would you give to new shooters who are just getting into the sport?

LT: There are 3 things that I believe are of equal importance....

Pay attention to what people are doing around you. Never assume that because someone is having one good day that they know everything there is to know about shooting.

Spend your time wisely, try different techniques, if it works for you, train that way.

Never ever "practice". Practice would mean you are going through the same motions over and over again. Use every chance you get to TRAIN yourself to be a better performer.

MMA Times: What are you doing now?

LT: Nadine (my wife), LJ (my youngest child, now 2 ½) and I currently live in Knoxville, TN. I retired from the Army in 2008, I am semi-retired; we have started our own catering business in Knoxville called Knoxville Smoke. We competed in our first cooking competition, a wing competition, earlier this year. I rarely shoot, but I do train. I frequently speak to and assist other people who are interested in shooting. We travel a little, but try to stay busy with the business.

MMA Times: Thanks Lew, and congratulations again on one of the finest feats of rifle marksmanship in competitive shooting!

TIDBITS - Web Wright III new Rifle Coach at West Point

Web Wright III, an Olympian and national champion, was named the Army West Point rifle coach on May 12, 2015. Wright has an impressive list of accolades including competing at the 1988 Olympic in Seoul, South Korea. He earned a gold medal in the 1986 Zurich World Cup and was a bronze medalist in the 1987 Seoul World Cup where he set the World Record in smallbore kneeling, scoring a 399 out of 400. Wright was also a medalist at the 1987 and 1995 Pan American Games, and was a member of the 1994 Gold Medal World Championship 300 Meter Standard Rifle in Tolmezzo, Italy. Wright competed with the US Army Marksmanship Unit from 1991 until 1996.

2 shooters earn Olympic berths

USAMU PAO

FORT BENNING, Ga.- Two Soldiers from the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU) are headed to the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro after earning automatic berths on the Olympic Team this month. Sgt. 1st Class Michael McPhail, a 2012 Olympian won his seat for men's 50-meter prone rifle, and 2008 Olympic gold medalist Staff Sgt. Glenn Eller won his for men's double trap.

McPhail, who is the No. 1 men's 50-meter prone shooter in the world, won a gold medal—his third this year—and a U.S. Olympic Team berth Sept. 3 at the 2015 International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Final Rifle/Pistol in Munich. The nomination for the Olympic Team is McPhail's second bid for an Olympic medal. The Darlington, Wisconsin, native finished ninth in the men's 50-meter prone event during the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

"I'm glad I shot well," McPhail said. "The goal was to make the Olympic Team."

McPhail said the Army provides many advantages for its athletes to ensure they succeed.

"First, we have a very good coach," he said.

"Sergeant First Class (Jason) Parker is, without a doubt, the very best coach I have ever had in any sport in any time of my life—that's a huge bonus. Next, the way our team operates between Sergeant First Class Parker and Sergeant First Class (Walter) Craig, the goal is winning Olympic medals.

"Then, the Custom Firearms Shop is second to none. It's a confidence booster when you go to the line and know that you have the best equipment in the world. And it all comes down from the command group whose intent is to win Olympic gold medals, and that falls all the way down to the Soldier."

McPhail said he is going to take some time off in the next few weeks while he and his wife await the arrival of their second child, but will start training again by December.

Eller, currently ranked No. 1 in the world for men's double trap, earned his seat on the Olympic Team Sept. 14 at the 2015 ISSF Shotgun World Championships in Lonato, Italy, where he placed sixth.

"It was an amazing feeling, knowing all the hard work paid off for my fifth nomination," Eller said. "The automatic berth gives me the time and ability to wrap my head around competing in another Olympics. My priorities will be on winning, not just making the team."

This is the fifth time Eller has been on an Olympic Team, and he is the only male American shotgun competitor who has achieved this distinction, according to officials from USA Shooting, the organization chartered by the United States Olympic Committee as the national governing body for the sport of shooting. The organization implements and manages developmental programs and sanctions events at the local, state, regional and national levels.

Eller, of Katy, Texas, won a gold medal Aug. 11 for men's double trap at the 2015 International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun in Gabala, Azerbaijan, that took place Aug. 6-16. Eller is also a two-time World Champion and has medaled at 14 World Cups.

"The Army has given me the structure, support and opportunity to train at and compete at the highest level," he said.

Eller will head to the 2015 ISSF World Cup Final Shotgun in Nicosia, Cypress, Oct. 15- 21. After that, he said he will plan his year around peaking during the 2016 Olympic Games so he will have the most confidence in winning.

Athletes who want to compete in the Olympics must qualify in their shooting sport discipline to participate on their country's Olympic Team. Athletes have two ways to qualify.

Athletes may earn automatic berths through high finishes in international world shooting sport events in the year prior to the Games or win in the Olympic Trials, which are a few months prior to the Games. All Olympic Team nominations are subject to the approval of the U.S. Olympic Committee.

MMA Annual Meeting

The annual MMA membership meeting will be held at the

Benning Club's Regimental Room

December 14th from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

A Dutch treat lunch buffet is available for \$10. The Executive Board will provide the annual report and we will present the USAMU Soldier of the Year awards. The Benning Club is the old Officer's Club, Building 128 on Morrison Road on Fort Benning.

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combined score of 588-28X set a third national record for the match.

"I had a couple of issues early on, but I coached myself on the line and ended up coming out pretty strong," said Sgt. 1st Class Franks, who also instructs other shooters at the Small Arms Firing School. "In the end, I was super focused. We had the team match, and I really wanted a good score." Another Army Pistol Team member, Cleveland, won the National Trophy individual match, bringing home the General Custer Trophy, with a score of 294-7X.

"I can't complain about today's performance," said Cleveland, a native of Tacoma Washington.

"Basically what I have been doing all season is setting goals. I am no longer trying to compete with anyone. I just set goals (for the matches) and try to meet them. This year I ended up meeting my goals and surpassing them."

Although one of the less experienced Army Pistol Team members, Sgt. Ryan Franks proved his mettle, winning the prestigious President's Pistol Match, earning the top spot on the President's 100 competition. He also brought home the President's Trophy with a total score of 392-15X.

"This year the thought of winning the President's 100 match was so far from my mind because it was inconceivable; there are so many other great shooters out there that I didn't believe it was possible for me to win," said Sgt. Franks, of Henderson, Nevada.

He said he shot well during the President's Pistol Match because he did not just focus on winning.

"I believe it aided me because I just got up there and did everything the team has tried to instill in me," said Sgt. Franks, who shoots on the team with his brother, Sgt. 1st Class Franks.

The President's Hundred Tab is awarded to competitors for exceptional shooting with either the service pistol or rifle during the President's 100Match. Each year, 100 tabs are awarded to the top shooters.

