

CAMP PERRY LONG RANGE

THE BEST YEAR EVER

The CMP Long Range Matches consisted of two 1000 yard iron sight matches the first day, two 1000 yard scope (any) sight matches the second day. The third day we fired a 1000 yard scope match in the morning followed by the scoped team match. The next day the format was the same as day three except using iron sights. The final day we fired the Palma Match at 800, 900, 1000 yards. There was no Palma Team match. There were 170 competitors.

Individual results for PA shooters were as follows:

Hanne Brantner	1 st Palma rifle in the Baesel Memorial match High woman overall in the Palma Rifle class with a 1592 62X
Garey Diefenderfer	3 rd Palma Rifle in the Kerr match
Matt Zagorski	1 st Optic Rifle in both the Viale and Critchfield matches
Dave Shellhammer	3 rd overall in the Henry match 4 th overall in the McMaken & Speaks match High grand senior overall
Joe Sopko	3 rd Service Rifle in the Baesel memorial match High senior overall with the service rifle

The team matches is where we really put it together. Reade Range team members were Bill Gelet, Hanne Brantner, Dave Shellhammer and Tom Ferraro. Bill and Dave shared the coaching duties. The first match was the Battan Memorial team match and we started off with two disadvantages. Bill's 6.5 had a defective barrel and 4 bullets the day before blew on the way to the target. He put a scope on his 308 and used his Palma rifle. Hanne used her Palma rifle and shot it with iron sights. Dave and Tom both used 6.5s with scopes. Hard to figure but we shot a 795, finished second overall, 7 Xs behind the AMU. Hanne shot a 199 with her iron sights. We were flying high but the best is yet to come!

The final team match is the Winder Memorial match fired with iron sights at 1000 yards. Since Bill and Hanne had to use 308s, Tom and Dave decided to shoot their Palma rifles in the morning match before the team match and we would enter as a Palma team. We figured we had a chance at winning the Palma class. Instead of the 63 minutes block time a pair we're used to, the CMP cut the time to 47 minutes. There was no mirage to read wind in the morning, you had to rely on the flags. Bill was our first shooter and for the first 8-10 shots things are going along great, he's hammering the 10 ring. Then it began, the wind coming off the lake was changing direction off and on and there was no mirage to read. Dave held Bill up frequently trying to catch a favorable condition. Bill was in position so long he was in pain and shot a few bad shots. It started warming up enough so there was some mirage to read. Bill finally said he can't do this anymore, we had to click the sights and shoot. He nailed two tens on his last shots and when he got out of position his left arm was shaking.

Hanne was next and we're running out of time. Bill came back to the line and set up behind Dave watching the mirage as Dave watched the flags, mirage and turned the sights on Hanne's rifle. Hanne was ready and fired when told. We came off the line with less than a minute to go and Hanne fired a 198. Team coaching was really working. We really lucked out because we got to shoot with mirage to read, holding Bill up had paid off. I'm sure other teams tried to shoot during the shifting wind direction before the ground warmed and mirage was visible. After the pit change Dave and Tom fired. Bill coached and Dave helped coach when he was done shooting. Bill did his usual superb job and we ended up with a total of 776 22x. We figured we did pretty well in the Palma class. When the scores came in we not only won the Palma class but had the high score overall and we used 308s. We have come close to beating the Army and the other great civilian teams in the past but that was using our big guns. We've been on the stage before but this was really a joy. What great people and what a great team.