

The President's Rifle Trophy Match Was An "On The Edge Of Your Seat" Show For Everyone!

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The President's Rifle Match was first fired as a military rifle match in 1894. When the National Matches were established in 1903, it was incorporated into the National Matches program and has become one of the most important of all National Matches events. The winner of the President's Match receives a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States, the President's Rifle Trophy and a presentation M1 Garand rifle. In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt began the tradition of providing a letter of congratulations to the winner and most U. S. Presidents since have honored this practice, including Presidents Clinton and Bush.



This year the President's Rifle Match was concluded with a fourth or final stage where the top 20 competitors in the first 30 shots finished the match together on the Rodriguez Range firing line. This photo shows the final 20 in position with their scorers at the start of the stage.

On Monday, 30 July, 2007, the President's Rifle Match kicked off with 85 degree temperatures and a light breeze coming off of Lake Erie. 1,258 eager participants began shooting on Rodriguez and Viale ranges at 7:00 A.M. All competitors fired the first 30 shots of the course of fire to determine the 100 shooters who would make the President's 100 and the top 20 shooters who would advance to a final stage of ten additional shots. The first 30 shots were 10 shots standing at 200 yards, 10 shots rapid-fire prone at 300 yards, and 10 shots slow-fire prone at 600 yards. For the first time this year, a shoot-off for the top 20 competitors was conducted that extended their course of fire to 40 shots. The shoot-off took place on Rodriguez Range where the top 20 competitors fired 10 additional shots in the prone position at 600 yards, one-shot-at-a-time. Their final stage scores were added to their scores from the previous three stages to determine their final placing. The fourth stage format took place in front of several hundred spectators and a television crew from Shooting USA. It was designed to showcase the top service rifle competitors in a pressure-packed match ending that added additional drama, excitement and visibility to this match and to service rifle shooting.



SGT Kristopher Friend, USAR, holds the facsimile target kept by his scorer during the final stage to display the locations of his ten shots. Friend's final stage was an excellent 99-4X that vaulted him from third into first place at the end of the match.

The last stage lived up to its advance billing. 21-year-old SGT Kristoffer Friend, a U. S. Army Reservist from Cheshire, Connecticut started the fourth stage in third place, but he fired a 99-4x in front of the large crowd and with the outcome of the match on the line to vault into first place. SGT Friend was a member of the Connecticut Junior Rifle Team, coached by Brad Palmer, until last year, when he joined the USAR team. The entire Connecticut Junior Rifle Team, his USAR teammates and many friends were there to support him through the final stage. Friend said he was extremely nervous and even had nightmares the night before

about bringing the wrong gun or the wrong ammo to the match, but that did not stop him from hitting the X and 10 rings nine of his ten shots.

SGT Friend's 40-shot total, including his fourth stage score, was a very impressive 392-10X. He began the match with a 94-2X in 200-yard standing. He added a 99-2X in prone rapid fire and a perfect 100-2X at 600 yards. He began the last stage with a 293-6X, three points behind the leader and one point behind second place. Even when the leaders at the start of the final stumbled on their first three shots, Friend did not have an easy road to victory because there were nine other shooters who began the final stage just one point behind him with 292s. Friend, handled the pressure exceptionally well. He opened with 10-X-X-10 and then shot his only 9. By the fourth shot he had moved into a lead that he never relinquished. Once declared the winner, Friend was surprised; the first words out of his mouth were, "I can't believe it! I have to call my mom!"



Friend's teammates doused The 2007 President's Rifle Match Winner with a bucket of ice water in bring to the sport of shooting what has become a traditional way of celebrating a great sports victory.



Directly behind Friend, coming in second was Thomas Rider of Bellefonte, PA. Rider also fired a 99-4X in the final to total 391-11X. Rider started the final one point behind Friend and kept the match extremely close. Third place went to Justin Utley of Mineola, TX, who fired a total score of 390-12X, just one point away from second place. Utley

SGT Kristopher Friend, USAR, poses with the President's Rifle Trophy after it was presented to him immediately after the final stage by Lt. General John Crosby, USA (Ret.). General Crosby is a member of the CMP Board of Directors.

began the final in 17th place, but he also fired a 99 in the final to climb all the way to third.

After the shoot-off, Lt. General John S. Crosby, U. S. Army Ret., and a member of the CMP Board of

Directors, presented awards to the top 20 shooters and the President's Rifle Trophy to SGT Friend.