

Texas State Rifle Association John C. Garand State Championship May 24th -25th 2003 by Dave Wilson

I would like to start by thanking everyone who came and shot with us at the State Championship. The shooters are what this is all about... with out you there would be no Championship.



TSRA Vice President Don Benson took top honors as the Match Champion. Photo by Robert Langham.

We started with the threat of rain for the weekend, and with luck on our side we made it through the two days with just a few drops. All of the support people we had for the match are part of your Texas State Service Rifle Team. We decided to give something back to you and give you the best match we could put together. We hope this will be an annual event.

I want to apologize for not having the 101st Airborne Reenactment Unit as advertised in the program. The unit was forced to cancel at the last minute. However, Trey Curington was there and took us back in time with his WWII Texas 36th Division display. It gave us some idea how far we have come in 60 years. Eric Pierce checked rifles and triggers for US and helped some of the shooters with rifle problems. I would like to thank both Trey and Eric for their time and effort (I might add Eric took 3rd over all in Sunday's Championship).

Now for the ammo! It looked like fire

breathing dragons out there. I was a little disappointed in the ammo, especially because it was CMP issued ammunition. Maybe next year we won't issue ammo, and you will be able to shoot what you bring.

The First Shot Ceremony, both Saturday and Sunday, was to honor not only Sgt. Albert Essig and Cpl. Pete Shockey, but all WWII Veterans. I read a report that we are losing them at 1000 a day. So we don't have much time to show them that the sacrifices they made have not been forgotten.

We had 9 teams shoot Saturday morning with only 7 points separating ZZ Top and Big Country Service Rifle Team # 1. That's pretty close, less than 2 points difference per team member. .



Infantry Trophy Winner Wallace McDaniel, Dan Holovic and Bob Quinn. Photo by Robert Langham.

The Rattle Battle event was a lot of fun and gave everybody a chance to see what they could really do under pressure. I had no idea that anyone could shoot 56 rounds in a 1:40 out of an M1 Garand and hit anything. Boy, did I get surprised! Wallace McDaniel, with the Big Country Service Rifle Team, took top honors with a score of 52 hits out of 56 shots. That's not bad folks! The real crowd pleaser came with the shoot off between Bob Quinn and Dr. Dan Holovic for second and third place. They were shot for shot the full 50

seconds, and at the end Dr. Dan Holovic scored 1 hit more than Bob. We are trying to have more team events, and next year we may have IT teams (Rattle Battle) instead of individual matches.

Sunday's Championship came with a wonderful cloud cover that made for a great shooting day. Forty-one shooters tried their best to win the title of John C. Garand State Champion. When it was all over, Don Benson took the Championship title home with him, along with a fine wall clock trophy. For those who don't know, Don is First Vice President of the Texas State Rifle Association and in his day was one of the top long-range shooters in the state. Everyone who participated in Sunday's Championship, will receive a certificate from the CMP that entitles you to purchase another M1 Garand.

Just one last note. . . If you noticed, Randy Palmer had the high score in the I. T. match, but he didn't receive any award. Another shooter fired on Randy's target. By the rules, Randy won the I. T. match. But he refused to accept the score. He said that's not the way he plays the game! He showed great character, and I personally won't forget. With that, I want to thank you again and hope to see you at the match next year!



The pit crew of Brandon Driscoll, Raobert Langham, Mont Barling and Gary Duffey take a break to mug for the camera.