

DCM AND ME

RECOLLECTIONS

[and maybe you too]

Glen Zediker

This is all still here!

Skaggs Drug Store might be gone forever, but CMP and all the kids who can enjoy it are stronger than ever.

ORIGIN: This is a jist of an article I did for another magazine. I added a few things that I don't send to magazines due to space concerns.

Like a lot of long-time match shooters, I started out my competitive experience in smallbore rifle at "Gun Club." That was 1966. Us little kids started off shooting prone and, as we got more age on us, went to (then) four-position shooting — standing, sitting, kneeling, prone, still with .22s. We could get involved in High Power Rifle when we were deemed ready, and that was (as it should be) entirely subjectified, and unanimously agreed upon, by the elders. Now, I realize that you really don't have elders in a gun club, but we did.



That's all my stuff there, including my first shooting coat purchased.

I wanted an "Army gun" and so went that direction. It was an M1. I recollect my favorite thing being the clip clanging out on the last round and my least favorite thing was loading them up again. I was 14. We had a (then) DCM-affiliated club so could shoot all we wanted fer near to nuthin. They even "gave" me a coat. Back in those days, we could use an AR15 only to qualify on the "Carbine Course." That was unfair, to the course. That special award was intended for those with a .30 M1 Carbine. I recollect cleaning the course with

Here's something you don't see much anymore. Folks in Western Colorado thought it was a dandy-like idea for kids to have guns at school. This photo is from a page in my school yearbook from 1966 and, yes, we are in the gym, and, yes, those are real rifles and real kids. There are girls and boys. Girls were really good at this game, and that's where I first learned about that.

an SP-1 Colt, and I didn't call myself a very good shooter then. That rifle was bought at a drug store new, with Colt clamp-on scope, for \$350.00, by the way. Yes. A drug store. This was Western Colorado. They kept .22 shells by the bubble gum in our local general store, seriously. I guess that was my first competition with an AR15. The course targets were fairly close and fairly circumferentially generous, and we only had to fire 10 rounds each standing, kneeling, prone. I didn't do nearly as well on it with an M1 Carbine.

Then I started racing motocross and quit shooting in competition. That took years for me to get back to (about fifteen), but I recollected the M1 when the thought struck me to go at it again. The smell of cosmoline was the prevalent memory of childhood shooting, and it's funny because only grunts and jar heads normally say anything about fond memories of cosmoline, not schoolboys.

Folks, I'm not just taking a trip down memory lane because that detour is actually necessary to understand High Power Rifle. My memories started in the 1970s, but the sport's go back to 1903. Teddy Roosevelt,

GUN CLUB

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By the way. That is a huge percentage of all the kids in school. There weren't 500 people in my whole town, country-county area included.

bless his soul, urged the formation of the National Board For the Promotion of Rifle Practice (NBPRP). This took an act of Congress. Money was set aside to transport teams from the various service branches to meet at a National Match. The idea was better shooting soldiers. A couple of years later, Congress passed a law allowing the sale of surplus military firearms to qualified shooting clubs. In 1916 there was a war on. Congress passed the National Defense Act. Part of that was the formation of the Director of Civilian Marksmanship (DCM). Congress set aside a fair amount to promote marksmanship skills amongst the mensch. The idea, again, was better shooting soldiers (to come). Transport funding for civilian teams got them and soldiers together together at a National Match. For the record, civilians won both service pistol and rifle

Please support these folks.

They're the best friends we have, in my opinion. CMP is all about shooting, and it's all about shooters.

Support shooters and the guns will remain, I think.

My oldest son, Matthew, is going to participate in some of the CMP programs this next year. It's a legacy that everyone can share, equally.

the first meeting. We had a very different country then, or at least those running the show. The short course in this study is that DCM continued to expand after WWI when there were virtually limitless surplus rifles and ammo available. Through the post-WWII decade the programs maintained tremendous support from our citizens. Some rifles were selling for under two dollars, and even match-conditioned M1s were available to qualified competitive shooters. In the 1960s most of that stopped and funding took a hard hit, but the DCM persevered, somewhat. DCM withstood Congressional investigations by anti-gunners and cleared itself mightily. Findings showed that it worked, and worked well, in its original intent to better prepare civilians for military service, at least in shooting skills. Well, the no-gunners got their way in 1996 and NBPRP was abolished. Some of our buds in Congress, however, wrangled a way to establish the Corporation for the Promotion of Rifle Practice and Firearms Safety. Ha! So now we call it the "CMP" (Civilian Marksmanship Program) and it's strong and safe. For now at least. Learn more about them and support them. Please. Folks like these are the best friends we have. They support clubs that can teach your kids to shoot, and you too, and also still give you a good deal on an M1. It hain't no two dollars, but those days are well past. CMP is a non-profit and must support itself. You can get a match-ready AR15 through CMP also. Better deal than any drug store can give you now. You'll have to get out and shoot a match to qualify to purchase one, but that's the spirit. It's all about shooting.

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