

Prince of Wales Challenge Cup & Fullbore Shooting Awards – Royal New Brunswick Rifle Association

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In 1860, His Royal Highness, Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), travelled to New Brunswick and presented a Silver Cup to the colony to inspire its militia to develop rifle marksmanship through competition. The Cup was first awarded in 1861 and has been presented annually up until the present day making it the oldest continuously-awarded trophy in North America. It is kept on display year round at Government House in Fredericton, the official residence of New Brunswick's Lieutenant Governor (where the Prince of Wales stayed during that visit in 1860).



The Prince of Wales Challenge Cup being presented by Her Honour, The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau, Lt. Governor of New Brunswick and Honorary Patron of the RNBRA. The winners are Gordon Holloway (F-Class) and Marcel Kolb (TR).

In 1866, the New Brunswick Rifle Association was formed to govern the marksmanship competitions in New Brunswick. Similar organizations were established in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia and England during the same period. The Association received its "Royal" designation from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in 1983, and has since served as the Provincial Representative for the shooting sports. This includes long range marksmanship as well as pistol and air rifle sports. The RNBRA also affiliates with private sports clubs throughout the province. The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau, Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, serves as Honorary Patron of the RNBRA.

Rifles have progressed markedly over the past 156 years, from muzzle loaders to black powder cartridges to modern smokeless powder cartridges. The targets have also gotten progressively smaller and the ranges longer. Today competitions are held anywhere from 300 m to 900 m with the scoring ring for full value a mere 30

cm (12 inches) in diameter at 900 m. In spite of these advances, the competitive shooting sports have changed very little over the past 156 years. It still requires precision, discipline, dedication and intelligence to become a top marksman. The development of precision equipment and guiding the projectile to the centre of the target through nearly a kilometer of turbulent wind is a demanding task with little margin for error.

Long range competition shooting has two primary forms: classic Target Rifle (TR) and F- Class. Classic Target Rifle requires the shooters to support the rifle with their arms and sling while lying in a prone position. Sighting is done with an aperture (peep) sight which must be held in alignment to within 10-thousands-of-an-inch until the shot is produced to achieve a maximum score. Classic target rifle is an athletic sport which requires full body control and stamina. F-Class is also fired from the prone position but it allows the use of front and rear rifle rests and a telescopic sight with magnification up to 68X. In F-Class, the target is half the size (15 cm) of that used in TR and this demands extreme precision in rifle and load development. The greatest challenge for both TR and F-Class is anticipating the effect of the wind on the bullet trajectory over its 1.5 second time of flight towards the target. A 2 kph wind (which is barely noticeable) acting over a 900 m distance will deflect the bullet laterally on the target face by a distance of 30 cm. Competitions are often held in gusting winds of 20 kph (or more) so the marksman is in fact aiming up to 3 m to the upwind side of the desired point of impact!

New Brunswick has produced its fair share of top marksman over the years. Most recently an F-Class Marksman from Fredericton, Adam MacDonald received a Bronze medal (individual) and a Silver Medal (Rutland Team Match) in the 2017 World F-Class Championship held in Ottawa, Ontario at the Connaught Rifle Range. This competition included 400 participants from North and South America, Europe, and Africa. The winner was from the United States but half of the top ten positions were held by Canadian civilians.



Adam MacDonald receiving his Bronze Medal at the 2017 F-Class World Championship held in Ottawa.

Long range competitive shooting is an exciting sport that is growing throughout the world. F-Class in particular is growing rapidly in popularity because of its

accessibility to shooters of all ages. Competitive matches are held throughout the Maritimes most weekends from May until October and National level matches are held annually in August. To find out more about long range competitive shooting, google: RNBRA Full Bore Blog Spot.