

# ***MINI-PALMA® TEAM***

## **Brief History:**

The "Mini-Palma® Match" is a friendly international long range prone competition between the New England States and the Maritime Provinces of Canada. The "Match" was started 42 years ago by the famous Vermont rifleman and gunsmith Creighton Audette and Canadian Al Mutch. The location alternates annually between countries. The idea was to promote the shooting sports, camaraderie, and sportsmanship through competition.

Original teams consisted of 10 shooters with coaches on each side. The match program was that of the host country. In the beginning the Canadians were issued IVI 7.62 ball ammo by the government. They did not reload then and built rifles to shoot that ammo. We reloaded ammo to fit our rifles. So our rifles didn't shoot their ammo very well and their rifles didn't shoot our hand loads either. There was a lot of rifle borrowing going on in the early days. A while ago they stopped shooting the government supplied ammo and discovered reloading. Equipment has leveled out over time and now we all complain about the price of bullets and powder.

Originally, there was only one high power rifle discipline. Today there are several, across the course (the original), mid-range, long range, and international full bore. To that add F-TR & F-Class. A few years ago at the request of the Canadians the team makeup was changed. We now have 6 sling/ iron sight shooters and 4 F-TR shooters. We have no choice but to keep up with the times.

After the match the host team puts on a jacket and tie awards banquet. We enjoy a few drinks, a good meal, and jab each other about the day's events. Then the trophies are presented. There are traveling trophies for the winning team and the high shooter. The New England team has both trophies this year. We would then exchange simple gifts, a club pin or hat, some homemade jam or maple syrup. Everyone looked forward to the gifts, it put a personal touch on the event. Over time the gifts got a little out of hand and a hiatus was put on the giving. I hope we get back to the basic gift exchange to restore the tradition. We regularly bring our wives/husbands along and make a little vacation out of the event.

I guess Creighton and Al had a good idea. It's been going on for over 40 years.

We've had some super shoots, great experiences, and made some wonderful friends. It's much more than just a match.

