

2019 UNITED STATES POLICE & FIRE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Nearly 100 San Diego County Sheriff's Deputies competed in this year's Police & Fire Championships. Thanks to competitors Deputy James Parent & Sergeant Daniel Vengler for contributing stories and photos. And thanks to all who competed in the games and represented the Sheriff's Department.

MY FIRST RIFLE COMPETITION

by Deputy James Parent (VDF)

I've been shooting rifles on and off for about 25 years. But it wasn't until this year that I decided to "pull the trigger" and try my luck at a competition. I participated in the 2019 US Police & Fire Championships Prone International Sniper / F-Class (unclassified) tournament. It was held at Camp Pendleton MCB Range 117A, which is also known to the base personnel as the Sniper Training Range.

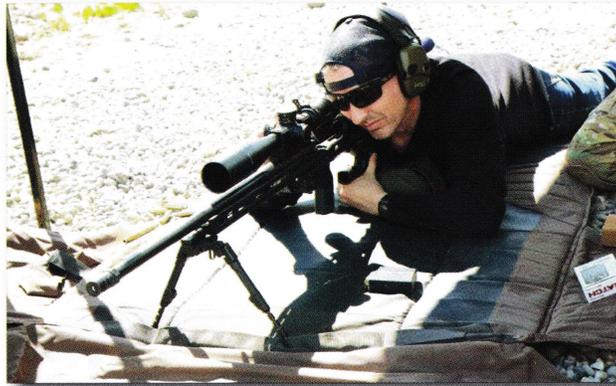
It's my opinion that any day at the rifle range is a good day. When I showed up to the competition, my first priority was to have a good time. My second priority was to learn as much as I could. The hills and shifty winds at the range made for a challenging 300-yard shoot. It quickly became evident that it was me against the wind.

Overall, I had a great time participating in the US Police & Fire Championships and learned a lot. I even took home a medal in my division. However, I owe a large part of my success at the tournament to the training I've received both online and in person from Frank "Lowlight" Galli and Marc Taylor.

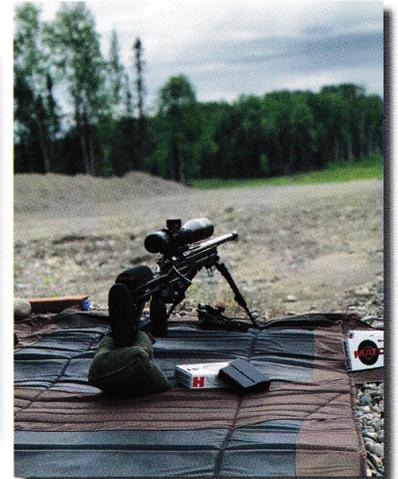
Lowlight and Taylor were both trained as Marine Scout Snipers, and Taylor was Lowlight's Platoon Sergeant in the Marine Corps. For the past three years I've been learning as much as I could about precision rifle from Lowlight's website (www.snipershide.com). Eventually, I enrolled in his online training and would spend my free time taking notes and testing my new-found knowledge at the range to distances out to 850 yards.

I flew up to Anchorage, Alaska, in June 2019 to attend Taylor's Alaskan Precision Rifle course. I rented a car and traveled northeast for about 1.5 hours to get to the Sheep Creek Lodge, which hosted the training. It wasn't until I saw the second or third moose that I thought to myself, "I'm definitely not in California anymore."

Taylor and Lowlight are creating a core community of shooters in Alaska where everyone is welcome to train. This isn't the type of course where you go and shoot for the day and then get a certificate of completion. It is much more than that. I call it the "live and learn experience."



Deputy Parent during the 2019 USPFC Games



Throughout the course I had access to Marine Scout Snipers. They were watching, evaluating, and helping me to become a better shooter. After the course of fire is complete for the day, the entire crew, including the instructors, travels back to the Sheep Creek Lodge for dinner and beverages. Your instructors are around you from the moment you wake up, until the point you decide to head back to your cabin to sleep. You can ask them anything you want. You can joke with them about anything too. Also, if you're lucky, Taylor and Lowlight may throw in some mental and verbal abuse for free! However, it's all in good fun. It's some of the best training I've ever had.

If any of you is interested in travelling up to Alaska to train, please let me know. I've already registered for a course in 2020. If you don't own a precision rifle, please don't let that stop you, as I'm sure you'll be able to borrow one. See you at the rifle range.



Deputy Parent took home a gold medal in his division.