

Will College Students

Make Good Marksmen?

In the National Rifle Matches Next October Students Will Compete for First Time With the Army, Navy and Organized Militia.



High School Boys Competing in Small Feet



On the Firing Line of a National Match



National Match in Fall Blast



G. P. Dowling



In the Target Pits

WASHINGTON, D. C.—For a good many years the War Department has been asking itself a question—will the college student make a good soldier?

Armed conflict has become an unpopular pastime in the United States, so the War Department has never been able to answer adequately its own question. On the other hand, the department will investigate next Fall to see if the college student makes a good marksman.

Its decision to give the college student of the United States an army service rifle, with plenty of cartridges to bang away at a target, was brought about by the urging of the National Rifle Association of America, which is working constantly to make every man in the country familiar with the weapon which he might have to use if the country went to war.

And next Fall, for the first time in the history of national rifle matches, the college students of the country will compete with the Army, Navy and organized militia.

The big national match, held under the auspices and control of the War Department, will be held at the Army's big rifle range at Jacksonville, Fla. While it is much too early to predict how many college students will enter, it can be stated that Yale, Harvard, Princeton and other big universities, as well as practically all college and schools with military establishments and discipline, will enter teams in the match.

President Wilson said not so long ago that he would like to see every serviceable male in the United States familiar with the army rifle, and Assistant Secretary of War Breckinridge holds to the same idea and speaks about it more frequently than does any one else in the War Department.

Last January the National board for the promotion of rifle practice, which is an organization headed by Mr. Breckinridge and composed of regular and militia officers from the Army and the country at large, met at Washington to lay down rules for the regulation of the National match at Jacksonville, which opens October 18 next.

The match will be open to teams of 18 men, one selected from each branch of the Army, one from the Navy, one from the Marine Corps, one each from Annapolis and West Point, and a team from each of the organized land and naval militia establishments of the states and territories, including the District of Columbia. Also there will be teams from the various colleges and universities, which is the chief feature of the present match.

The Jacksonville range is about eight miles south of that city, on the St. Johns River. During every tournament mobilization, special local trains are run from Jacksonville to the range.

When the contestants arrive at the camp, they will bring with them camp kitchen and table equipment, just as though they were off for a camping party in the woods, although the camp quartermaster will have on hand food supplies for the whole camp, which will be sold at cost.

Once settled in camp and creature

comforts provided for, the contestants next turn their attention to the matter of preliminary practice, which opens several days in advance of the real match. It is the intention of the War Department to permit the contestants to shoot any way they prefer in this preliminary practice, but once the real match gets under way the rules become very strict.

Both slow and rapid-fire are made compulsory by the regulations in the match proper. Slow-fire will be at distances of 300, 500 and 1000 yards, while rapid-fire will be at shorter distances, namely, 200 and 300 yards. In the rapid-fire shooting 10 shots must be taken at each range, and 15 will be allowed in the slow firing.

The arm to be used will be the United States service rifle, which will be issued to the contestants along with sufficient ammunition by the ordnance department of the Army. The trigger pull must be three pounds, at least, and each team captain must certify that his team is using only the rifles issued by the ordnance department.

The War Department had some trouble meeting the rifle demands of the college men, who are the new factor in this year's competition; so it was decided to permit all colleges not already equipped with the Army service rifle, model 1903, to use the 1898 model, magazine rifle.

The matter of supplying the contestants with ammunition is a big job in itself. There will be, at a rough guess, nearly 100 teams competing in the match, and each of the teams is entitled to 15,000 rounds of ammunition for preliminary practice at home and 300 rounds more for preliminary practice and actual competition on the range.

For the purpose of awarding prizes at the conclusion of the national rifle match, the national board for the promotion of rifle practice has decided to group the contestants into three classes. Class A will be composed of the first 15 teams, according to the standing of 1913. Class B will be composed of the second 15 teams, and class C will be remaining teams which competed in 1913, and all others which may be added. This will mean that the college men must start in class C.

The winner of the class A first prize will divide up among its members \$450 in cash and each member of the team will get a bronze medal. The second prize will be \$350, the third \$300 and the fourth \$250, with bronze medals for each.

The winner of class B will receive the Hamilton trophy, \$250 in cash, and a bronze medal for each member. The second prize will be \$250, third \$225 and fourth \$200, with bronze medals for all hands. Class C's winner will get a trophy, \$300 in cash and bronze medals. The second prize in this class is \$200, third \$175 and fourth \$150.

All this looks as though the War Department would permit the best sharpshooters in each team to keep coming back, year after year, and carrying off the prizes, but the War Department has provided for such a contingency. There is no "best sharpshooter in the Army." They are all supposed to be the "best sharpshooters" and the de-

partment has provided that at least six members of each team must be men who have never participated in a National match before. In this way the contesting teams at future matches will always contain a new element and every one in the organization will eventually get a chance to qualify for National honors.

Each team will consist of 12 contestants, three alternates, a captain, scorer and "spotter," the latter assisting in the scoring.

The War Department will be represented at the match by an executive officer, who will have absolute charge of all arrangements and whose judgment on practically all matters will be final. The executive officer will have several assistants, an adjutant, a quartermaster, a statistical officer, range officers, a surgeon, an assistant to the adjutant and an assistant to the quartermaster.

The quartermaster will have charge of all stores and supplies and will issue them as needed. The statistical officer will assign the contestants to targets and fix the order of firing. This is usually done by choosing lots. These officers will verify the scores kept, grade them in order of excellence and prepare the results for official announcement.

The range officers will supervise the marking and scoring. They will have charge of the "spotters" who are assigned to the target pits and whose work is thus made visible, with the use of glasses, to the scorer at the firing line. The regulation of the "spotters," however, is not the only duty of the range officers. They must see that the regulations are properly obeyed, and examine at any time the rifles used by contestants.

The range officers are also responsible for the accuracy of the score cards, and, after certifying to their accuracy, they turn over the cards to the statistical officer and his assistants. Such officers are equally experienced mark-

men, and must be thoroughly familiar with their duties.

The surgeon, who is always on hand, is not placed there to patch up bullet wounds, caused by the possible carelessness of the contestants, although such would come under his care. But he is responsible for the sanitary conditions of the camp, and in case a contestant desires to withdraw from the competition, due to illness, the surgeon must issue a certificate to that effect if the contestant's condition warrants.

When the match begins, each team captain must send a representative to the pits, who will call to the attention of the range officer in his pit any irregularities in scoring and the like. The firing line and the target pits are

connected by telephone, and as soon as the competition begins, the pits are notified by telephones. The officer on the firing line gives the order to load, and in the meantime, a red flag is raised at the target pits.

As soon as the firing line is ready, the target men again are notified by telephone and the contestants make ready to shoot. The red flag at the pits is waved and lowered and five minutes later, in the case of rapid-firing, the targets appear. The targets remain exposed for one minute and a half, then disappear.

The moment the target rises above the edge of the pit the rifleman kneels suddenly and pump ten shots into each target. The ten shots must be dis-

charged before the target sinks or all unfired shots will be counted as misses.

The same procedure is observed when the men are firing at all ranges, except that at 300 yards, rapid fire, the men kneel, while they lie prone at 300 yards.

Thus the game of teaching collegians to shoot will go forward merrily, along with the regulars and the militiamen, who can be expected to put on some airs by reason of previous experience in national rifle matches. Nevertheless, it is just a step along the road that the expert rifleman must travel, and if college men who want to shoot find the road a little rough, they may be comforted by the thought that the War Department is doing everything possible to make it smooth.

The main difficulty to be met with in teaching college men to shoot is the absence of the spectacular in rifle matches. As a usual thing there is no gallery of "sweet young things" to cheer on the successful marksmen, and while a college will make all sorts of an outlay for a baseball or a football team, there is very little money spent by such institutions on rifle teams.

The French Republic appropriates large sums of money every year for the support of rifle training in the public schools, and in Italy it is impossible for a college student to get a degree unless he has passed an examination in marksmanship.

Canada has also made rifle instruction a part of the curriculum in the public schools and Australia has over 40,000 school boys who have been organized into cadet corps and furnished with rifles and ammunition by the government. The government of New Zealand has built small rifle ranges in connection with all its public schools and furnishes instructors as well as rifles and ammunition for the pupils.

Switzerland and Hungary both are encouraging the idea, Switzerland being especially careful to train its boys, beginning at the age of 16. Greece has laws making rifle practice obligatory on all university students.

The great trouble with marksmanship in the United States, according to officials of the National Rifle Association, is the general failure of land grant colleges, which draw a Government subsidy, to live up to the spirit of their appropriations.

These institutions are supposed to install military instruction, and they do so, but their failure to live up to the spirit of the law is shown by the neglect of the army officers who inspect these military establishments. The appropriations for three colleges in particular is shown in the reports to verify such a statement. Each institution, drawing \$75,000 a year, spent \$21,000, \$250 and \$150 a year, respectively, on their military establishments.

The training of the college man as a marksman has a twofold purpose as its foundation. Not only will a well trained, finely developed student corps be a rock of Gibraltar in case of war, but, it is argued, rifle training is another force in college life which will wear the student away from the petty

and cultivate his manhood and character.

The flowing bowl is very hard on "bull's-eyes," and cigarettes, perhaps, are worse. No one can hope to be a good marksman under such conditions, and now that Congress has authorized the War Department to issue free service rifles and ammunition to rifle clubs affiliated with the National Rifle Association, it is believed the art of fine shooting will be received with fresh enthusiasm at the big colleges of the country.

With preparations practically complete, the War Department is impatiently waiting until next October, when the results of the big Jacksonville meet are partially expected to answer its question of whether or not the college student will make an efficient rifleman.

Building of the Canal

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3.)

of office, to perform certain duties specified by the Spooner act, but the awakening came too late to overthrow the power which it was claimed I had usurped, for the Panama Canal act had ratified and confirmed all executive orders previously issued, so that the one of January 6, 1908, had been enacted into law.

Failing in this, the press spread the news that there was friction in the Commission, that the Commissioners had been instructed by President Roosevelt that they were to carry out my orders without question or to be relieved; and that, since there was a change in administration at Washington, this condition would be remedied. This was a press sensation of short duration, however, for the management continued to the end of the construction period without modification.

Now that the canal is in operation, I doubt if this result could have been accomplished in any other way than by a single responsible head. This President Roosevelt realized the first time I met him, and I have subsequently felt that they were to carry out the support given to me in carrying it out are due the results that have been attained.

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In next week's installment of his own story of the building of the Panama Canal, General Goethals will tell how he reorganized the canal force after President Roosevelt, by executive order, had placed all responsibility for the construction of the canal in his hands. It was this reorganized force that built the canal, and therefore, General Goethals' account of this force and his reasons for organizing it as he did, are vital to a clear understanding of the manner in which the canal was built.

Some Story Tellers. Exchange. Some story tellers are too hard to discourage.

Self-scoring Target, Bullets Penetrate the Outer Screen and Score by Shock Against the Plates Behind.

