

Travis Jorgenson is now a Distinguished Rifleman and Distinguished Pistol Shooter.

One of the most prestigious titles a marksman can earn, however, is Distinguished Rifle or Distinguished Pistol. The Excellence in Competition matches date back to February 20, 1884. The Army marksmen had so dominated the early matches that it was ordered that after three years of winning; these top marksmen were booted from competition to give others a chance. In 1925, the Excellence in Competition matches expanded to civilian marksmen, who earn points during EIC matches to reach the “distinguished” level. These EIC matches are administered by the Civilian Marksmanship Program. While the matches take place in the U.S., international shooters may compete for the honor as well.

To earn the badge, a competitor must accumulate 30 points in the EIC matches during which shooters must be familiar with their firearm, since no sighting shots are allowed. Points are given based on a marksman’s placement among the top ten percent of competitors who haven’t earned the “Distinguished” title. The first sixth of that group earn 10 points, the next third earn eight points and the remaining competitors earn six points at national competitions. At Regional and State competitions, it is common that there are only enough shooters to award an 8 or 6 point leg. A marksman must earn at least one “hard leg” of 8 or 10 points among his total of 30 in order to become distinguished. There is nothing easy about it. Having one “lucky” day of shooting won’t earn anyone the title. At best, it will earn only 10 of the 30 points necessary.

In more than 125 years of Distinguished competition, CMP records indicate only 4,786 marksmen have earned the Distinguished Pistol badge and 7,696 have earned Distinguished Rifle. No more than 791 worldwide have earned “Double Distinguished.” The majority of these competitors are actively supported by one branch or another of our armed forces. It is difficult to determine exactly how many civilians have earned these badges since 1884. To the best of my knowledge, less than ten of those who have earned “Double Distinguished” are North Dakota natives. Few of these are civilians.

At the North Dakota State Service Rifle Championship held on July 20, 2013, in Grand Forks, ND, Travis Jorgenson earned his Distinguished Rifleman badge # 2152 and became the 791st competitive shooter to earn the distinction of “Double Distinguished.”

Travis earned his Distinguished Pistol badge # 1106 in 1996 at age 18 while actively competing as a member of our Lake Region Shooting Sports Association. He didn’t begin the pursuit of the Distinguished Rifleman badge until about 3 years ago. Travis is the only native of Devils Lake, North Dakota, who we know to have attained the distinction of Distinguished with both pistol and rifle in the Excellence in Competition match programs. Travis, having done so as a civilian, is even more rare.

The CMP website has more detail on the distinguished marksmanship programs at:

<http://ct.thecmp.org/app/v1/index.php?do=reportMultipleDistinguishedShooters>

On the following page, you will find a couple of photos of Travis at the July 20, 2013, North Dakota State Service Rifle Championship (the first is in preparation for the rapid fire stage at 300 yards, and the second is of Travis firing in that rapid fire stage of the match):



Rick Jorgenson