

Jeff Chudwin honored as the “Godfather Of The Patrol Rifle” and wins the NPRC

By John Peterson and Chuck Soltys
Forward by Lt. Ed Mohn, ITOA Vice President

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Trainer, former Army Special Forces soldier, and long time friend of the ITOA John Peterson sent the following article for publication. Knowing that if the subject matter of the article focused on him, our President & ITOA NEWS Editor Jeff Chudwin would not place it in our journal, John sent it to the ITOA Board for submission. We voted unanimously to have this article published as we thought it a fitting tribute to the accomplishments that Jeff has worked so hard for and rightfully deserves. Join us in congratulating Jeff on his incredible first place finish at this year’s National Patrol Rifle Competition and the honors presented him by Centermass Inc.

Sunday, June 6th, 2010 was a special day in US law enforcement, firearms training, and competitive shooting. Jeff Chudwin won the National Patrol Rifle Competition (NPRC) beating out over 100 competitors. NPRC is an event of Olympic level difficulty, designed for law enforcement and conducted by Centermass, Inc of Metro Detroit, Michigan. The event took place at a major private range outside of Detroit. Jeff is one of the only people in the US that instructs on the range, competes in events, teaches at conferences, writes in national publications, is a full time Police Chief, and carries a patrol rifle. This is a man who, as nice as he is, really puts on his “game face”, and is described by his competitors as “intense” and “a true shooting machine”. Most NPRC competitors are in their 30’s, Jeff is a bit older than that, and this event has its share of crawling, running, and other forms of induced stress.

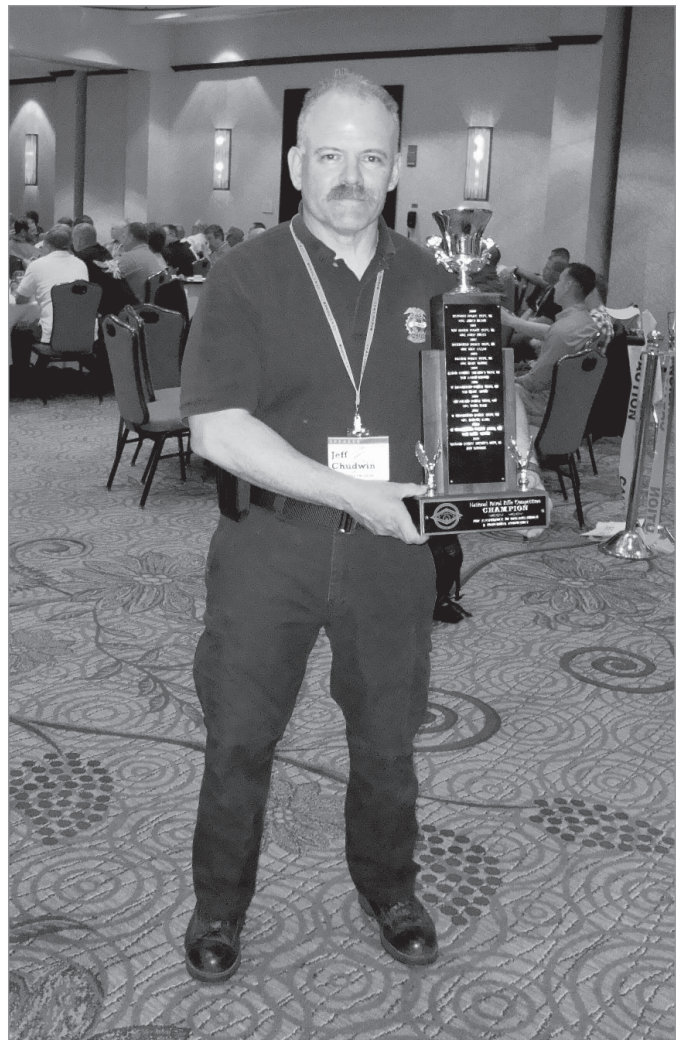
Prior to this year’s NPRC, Centermass owner and NPRC founder Jeff Felts, contacted the NPRC Advisory Board and some select others and announced a new award for this year’s conference. Felts asked for input on the criteria for the award and for nominations. It was decided that this award would be given to a deserving law enforcement officer for actions in physical battle and/or contributions to the greater cause of preparation, training and education in the purview of the patrol rifle. Jeff Chudwin was immediately nominated along with several other worthy individuals. As the board discussed who the first recipient should be, it was suggested that this award be named the “Jeff Chudwin Award” in honor of the man who has come to be known as the “Godfather of the Patrol Rifle”.

In response, Ned Christiansen, wrote this:

“Jeff Chudwin is not a guy who seeks awards, but I believe this award was made to find him.

You could boil it down to this: Jeff Chudwin was Patrol Rifle before Patrol Rifle was cool. He saw the logic and advantages of the patrol rifle way ahead of the rest of us and was bold enough to start promoting it. Now, decades on, Jeff continues to seek out pockets of resistance, and continues to win them over with knowledge and determination. His tireless endeavors are the kind that can never be really boiled down into statistics, yet those of us who have worked with him and seen him at work know the results are there, in terms of lives, families, and careers saved.

As a patrol rifle advocate and trainer, Jeff possesses vast knowledge in every pertinent area; the mechanics of the rifle



Jeff Chudwin with the NPRC trophy.

(and not just the AR15), the internal, external, and terminal ballistics side; tactics; safety; marksmanship, both fundamentals and advanced. The legal side...I doubt many people can quote cases, dates, and details like Jeff can. Top it all off with that Chudwin's command presence, armor-piercing voice and projectile-vomiting rate of knowledge sharing, and you have a guy that anyone can learn from.

Above all, Jeff Chudwin is a man of honor. I don't think I've known a man more righteous, or less self-righteous, than Jeff Chudwin. His personal policy of doing what's right does not change according to how it might benefit, or inconvenience, or even damage him. It applies to every facet of his life and I have used him many times as a silent, subconscious example to guide my own decisions. I have learned many a lesson from him, not from him teaching me, but simply by observing his actions.

I met Jeff many years ago in competition shooting. As acquaintances, we diced many a time for a trip to the prize table. It was never easy shooting against him, but always a pleasure, and often an education. To this day, the competitor in Jeff is easily baited; the mere hint of a challenge and suddenly he's off loading magazines! A more driven competitor I have never seen. As his assistant instructors, we have to be careful what we say or boast about as it could result in an hours-long duel to see, for example, who can hit the most 300-yard pop-up targets with a pistol.

There may well be many contributors to the patrol rifle movement whose efforts rival Jeff's. I don't claim to be a historian of it all or know everyone involved. But I have seen in Jeff Chudwin a tireless quest to find the truth, and shout it out", Christiansen said.

Consider that Jeff Chudwin is a police chief, attorney, trainer, inventor, president of the ITOA, as well as one who has gone all out for decades to help law enforcement in so many ways. He never seeks nor wants any credit but is always trying to spread the wealth of knowledge by expanding the information exchange network. He is a real innovator. It would take pages to describe all he has done.

Jeff was a likely candidate to be the first recipient of the new NPRC Award due to his pivotal role in this realm of US law enforcement, to set the standard high for the award and its criteria, and to give credit where credit is due. But the NPRC board knew that Jeff Chudwin would not want the recognition or any accolades. He is not about awards and publicity; he is just a humble man, expert leader, gifted instructor, and now, the top rifle armed cop in the land.

And so, the Jeff Chudwin Award was born. The first Jeff Chudwin Award went to Officer Michael Lego of Michigan, a very deserving recipient. Officer Lego received this award for his heroic actions in a life-threatening encounter where he used his patrol rifle to save his life and neutralize an attacker who was determined to commit murder. Officer Michael Lego went toe to toe with this bad guy and the bad guy lost. Officer Lego was permanently injured as a result of this con-

frontation. That action, in and of itself, was enough to qualify Officer Lego for this prestigious new award. But in addition, Officer Lego has spent years as a patrol rifle instructor, sniper, volunteer match director for the NPRC, and has many other accomplishments related to the patrol rifle. He has devoted much of his own time and money to helping other officers excel in this craft. On the evening of June 6, 2010, the director of the NTOA, the event director of the NPRC, Chief Jeff Chudwin himself, and supported by a huge audience, presented the very first National Patrol Rifle Award of Excellence (now known as the Chudwin Award) to Officer Michael Lego.

The NPRC is held each year in June near Detroit. It is designed for those who serve in uniform and/or carry a rifle as part of their job. It is not designed for hobbyists or gun gamers. The event was developed from the ground up for the rifle armed officer as "a place to call home". It has grown into their national event to gather, learn, compete, observe, network, test out the latest weaponry and gear, and 'recharge their batteries' in order to prepare for today's threats. In fact, the top two positions in the NPRC are held by recently retired law enforcement officers who have been in rifle shootings. Their advisory board and event staff is a veritable 'who's who' of top law enforcement/tactical instructors and leaders drawn from the top ranks of other organizations and entities such as the NTOA, ITOA, Sniperweek, TREXPO, North American Police Sniper Summit, renowned warrior trainer and author Lt. Colonel Dave Grossman, and a number of generous companies who support the event. It's a highly organized, job relevant and high quality event that has taken a lot of time and effort to perfect. For more information, go to the NPRC website www.centermassinc.com.



Mike Lego and Jeff Chudwin with the new "Chudwin" award.