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NPS Marksmanship Team Dominates Latest Competition

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Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California

NPS Marksmanship Team Dominates Latest Competition - Today at NPS May 2016 -

Naval Postgraduate School

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Today@NPS



U.S. Navy photo by Javier Chagoya

NPS Marksmanship Team Dominates Latest Competition

By Javier Chagoya

NPS Marksmanship Team members Lt. Zachary Lukens, right, and Marine Corps Capt. Andrew Blackwell, left, hoist their recently-acquired Master Guns Pistol trophy onto a shelf in the Trident Room, May 12. Team captain Lukens created the marksmanship display as a centerpiece to officially thank Naval Support Activity Monterey (NSAM) Commanding Officer Capt. Kevin Bertelsen and NPS Dean of Students Capt. Matthew Vandersluis for the commands' support of their efforts.

"The NPS Marksmanship Team takes this opportunity to share the team's achievements with the chains of command that support us, and raise school-wide awareness of the team and the opportunities that it offers," said Lukens.

The team could not exist without the help of both NSAM and NPS DOS support, Lukens says. NSAM owns and stores the weapons in its armory, and provides ammunition for the team's target practice sessions. The Dean of Students office coordinates with program officers to ensure participants can compete in regional and national competitions without conflicting with their studies.

"Our program at NPS/NSAM is unique in that the team is comprised of NPS students and faculty, and civilians from all tenant commands in the area, and that is why both chains of command are here today – to thank both," added Lukens.

At their latest competition, the NPS Marksmanship Team dominated the Pistol category with Marine Corps Maj. Kevin Kratzer and Capt. Anthony Rybicki, and Navy Lts. Mitchell Nelson and Lukens, and civilian Youssef Carpenter each earning a first place showing. Capt. Andrew Blackwell, along with Nelson and Lukens, distinguished themselves with a second place in the rifle competition. Two team members earned the coveted SECNAV's M-1 Trophy Rifle.

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NPS Marksmanship Team Dominates Latest Competition

May 18, 2016

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In addition to campus leadership, Lukens also credited the Marksmanship Team's eminent coach and mentor, the late Gordon Nakagawa, a retired Navy captain and NPS lecturer emeritus in the Department of Operations Research.

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"Gordon really created the NPS Marksmanship Team from the ground up. We have trophies and plaques dating back to 1970, demonstrating that NPS has been a contender in the marksmanship sport for decades," explained Lukens. "I never had the pleasure of meeting him, but his spirit lives on in the coaches who worked with him, and they pass their collective knowledge on to us. And because of Coach Nakagawa's inexhaustible influence and contributions, his photograph crowns the Marksmanship Team's display."

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