

Incidentally . . .

One of the fascinating things about the NRA is the amount of service it can give its members for four bucks a year. We checked it once and learned that if each of our 300,000 members asked for all of the Association's services . . . well, we'd be bankrupt inside a couple of weeks. Fortunately, no such catastrophe is in sight. Except for one common bond . . . an interest in guns of some sort . . . the people who make up today's NRA are as unlike in their interests as any other random lot of Americans. For every shooter who likes to play around with reloading tools and empty cartridge cases, there is one to balance him who wouldn't be caught dead with such a combination. No reloading for him. He wants to work up to a Master classification with that small-bore rifle of

Strictly a tournament shooter, that one. And there's the old gun collector. If it shoots he wants nothing to do with it . . . and who wants to reload for a muzzle-loader? The cartridge collector, of course, associates with one of the above. He's the guy who shudders every time some cold-blooded individual solves a few rounds with his old Colt re-olver and the paper cartridges Granddad re-out . . . It's the cartridges he's worried about . . . not to shoot, but to 'collect.'

With that kind of variety entering into the NRA's membership, it is obvious why the RIFLEMAN has to cater to so many different tastes . . . and just as obvious why all of our members do not take advantage of all of the Association's services. It's a good thing, too. If every NRA member was an active competitive shooter, for instance, we would need something like 150 full-time employees

thinking along those lines, we wandered to find out exactly how many people go to a tournament shooting. Mrs. Palmer, who presides over a 27-foot rack of cards,



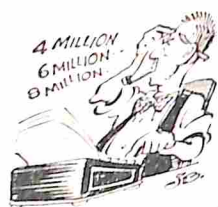
COVER

Richard Ballinger, member of George Washington University's rifle team, is pictured with the late Lt. Col. Eugene S. Hicker on the cover of the Rifleman. Taken on the range of the Arlington (Va.) Rifle and Pistol Club in March 1948, before Hicker's flight into northeastern Canada, the picture was made at a second at f6.3 on Ansco Color Film with a Rolleiflex camera. NRA photographer Richard L. Reish, whose pictures of night shooting in Middlefield, Connecticut, appear on pages 15, 16 and 17,

something called a National and four assistants, gave us and 21,000 classifications and, incidentally, roughly registered tournaments each year.

For the information of those who are not tournament shooters, the classification business is the shooting equivalent of a handicap system. Classes . . . ranging from Master to novice, are based on the relative newness to the game, through Sharpshooters. The members of the elite shooting world. Only about ever piles up the average into that fast company.

So far, classification sounds like a major headache. To start with that the average tournament shooter registers each year a rifle shooting matches he usually has with 22, 45-caliber rifles. For the 90 matches he must win 45-caliber rifles.



a guess, say 80 or more. And, to keep them up-to-date, those 21,000 classifications must be after posting of each group of clubs.

And by the way . . . if anyone knows why the NRA gets a two-bit registration fee from competitors at tournaments (fifty cents for class blame it on the classification system so. Those two-bits are needed to maintain uniform conditions at registered tournaments we send 'official' to each one. Sending that referee NRA, on an average, \$22 per . . . more than we get in registration.

As we said before, it's a mighty thing that all of our members don't ask through the Association's services.—J. S.

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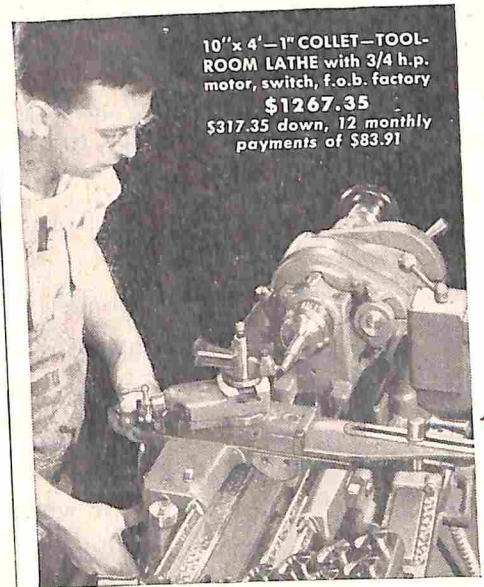
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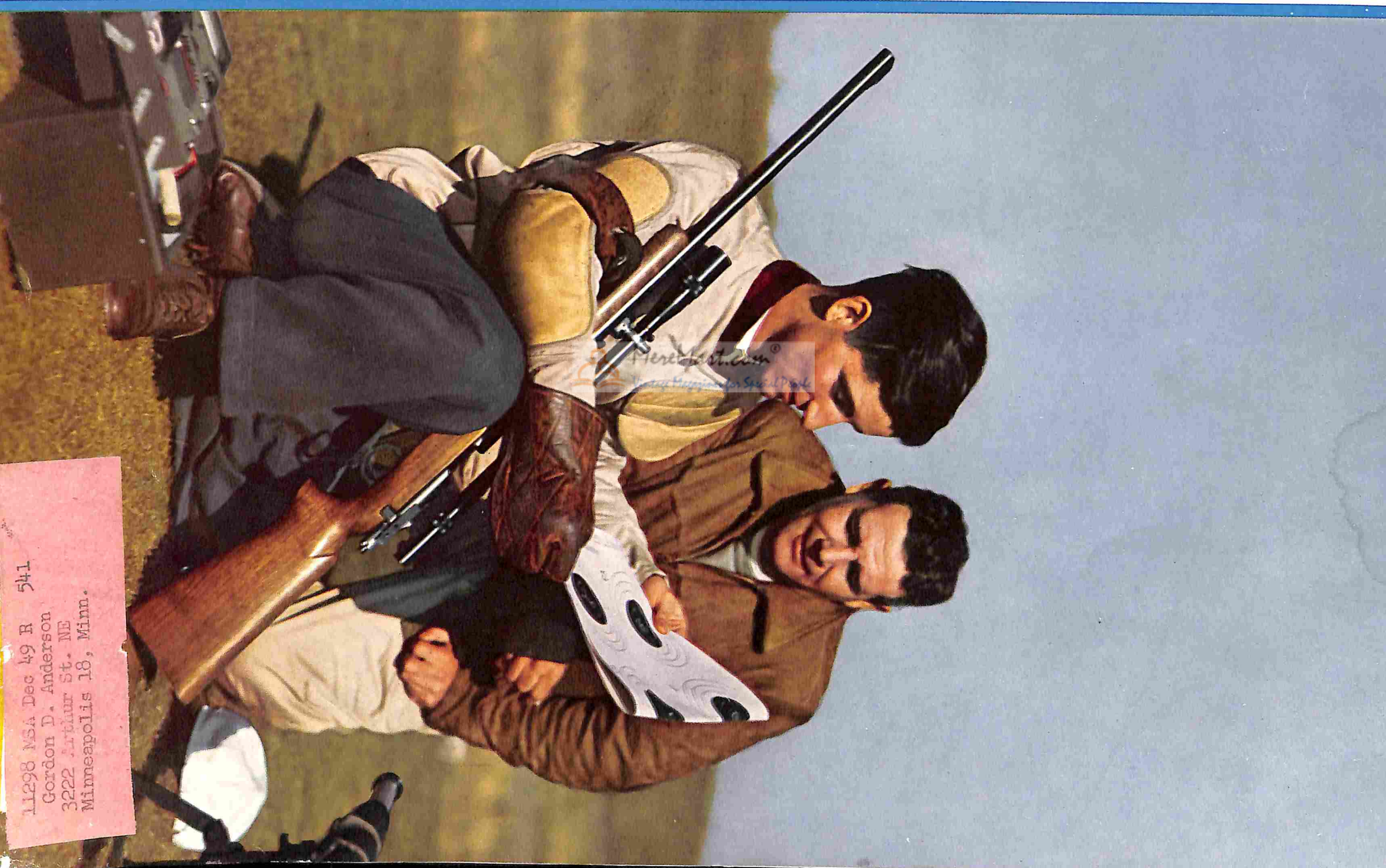
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