



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Bushnell® Recognizes Tom Beckstrand for Lifetime Achievement**

**OVERLAND PARK, Kan. – July 28, 2021** – Bushnell®, an industry leader in performance optics, has recognized Tom Beckstrand with the 2020 Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to optics and the outdoor industry. The rifle and optics editor for *Guns & Ammo*, Beckstrand is a dedicated writer and passionate shooting sports educator.

Born and raised in Wells, Nevada, Beckstrand grew up shooting bottles and cans with his father. His skill with a rifle would go on to serve him well in the military from West Point to Afghanistan and Iraq, where he led both Special Forces and counter-terrorism sniper teams.

After his military career, Beckstrand started writing for shooting publications, eventually landing at *Guns & Ammo* magazine. At the time, there was limited coverage of optics in books and publications, and Beckstrand stepped in to help fill the gap. An ever-evolving area of shooting sports technology, optics became a passion for Beckstrand. Known for his insatiable curiosity, Beckstrand sought to explore optics technology from every angle for his readers.

“Early on, Tom learned each company’s optic contacts and began putting himself in front of the engineers and product managers,” said Eric Poole, editor of *Guns & Ammo*. “He’d show up to an optics manufacturer with questions prepared and write down answers. Along the way, he immersed himself in the science behind the technology, always wanting to show how and why the features or products work the way they do.”

Beckstrand uses his own personal shooting experiences to inform his writing as well. In 2009, he started competing in Precision Rifle Series (PRS) matches, two-gun matches and precision gas-gun matches.

“At some PRS matches, Tom noted it was hard to see at a distance when it was overcast or rainy and when the target was a piece of shot-up steel inside a woodline,”

said Poole. “Most scopes are great when the sun is shining, but Tom started paying attention to who was hitting and who wasn’t when targets were in the shadows. He made note of the optics each were using, and along his journey as a writer, he started tracking and including light-transmission tests in his evaluations. That level of detail in his writing goes above and beyond.”

The Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement Award was established by Bushnell to honor the legendary writer and photojournalist Bill McRae for his vast contributions to the optics and outdoor industry throughout his 50-year career. Introduced in 2011, the annual award was created to recognize McRae and the other journalists who have made a profound impact in the industry.

“This award has honored some of the best shooting and optics writers in the industry, and Tom’s work and dedication has built on that tradition,” said Matt Rice, senior media relations manager for Bushnell. “Not only has Tom educated millions of hunters and shooters through his writing, but he has left his mark on the industry as a whole.”

Previous winners have included Ron Spomer, John Barsness, Wayne van Zwoell, David Petzal, Andrew McKean, Bob Robb, Bryce Towsley and Richard Mann.

#### **About Bushnell**

Bushnell, a Vista Outdoor brand, has been the industry leader in high-performance sports optics for more than 70 years. Our guiding principle is to provide the highest quality, most reliable and affordable sports optics products on the market. And, our commitment to outstanding customer service and strong retailer partnerships is unmatched. Bushnell boasts leading market share in all of the sports optics categories, and our products have consistently won design and performance awards. Our product lines enhance the enjoyment of every outdoor pursuit from spectator sports, nature study, hunting, fishing and birding to stargazing. For news and information, visit [www.bushnell.com](http://www.bushnell.com) or follow us on Instagram at [www.instagram.com/bushnell\\_official/](https://www.instagram.com/bushnell_official/) and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/bushnell](https://www.facebook.com/bushnell).

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