

APG STAFF REPORT

## LIGHTNING FORCE

20 YEARS AND THEY'RE STILL POUNDING PAINT!

**Y**our 2007 challenge just may be to start your own team. You can make it happen. A short roll of the clock back 20 years, and one longtime team was just getting itself started. Here's their story.

Formed in 1986 to play in the first Skirmish-Pocono 15-man tournament, they were called the Big Red One. By their third year, the team's name became "Lightning Force" because that name better fit the image they wished to convey. "Since then, we have evolved many times over," says Rick Wloch, co-captain of Lightning Force Paintball Team.

In the 1990s, Lightning Force was a club with about 40 members. They would play every other Sunday on private property. While this was fun, a few members liked to always play in tournaments. They went to events at Skirmish USA in Pennsylvania, and to the

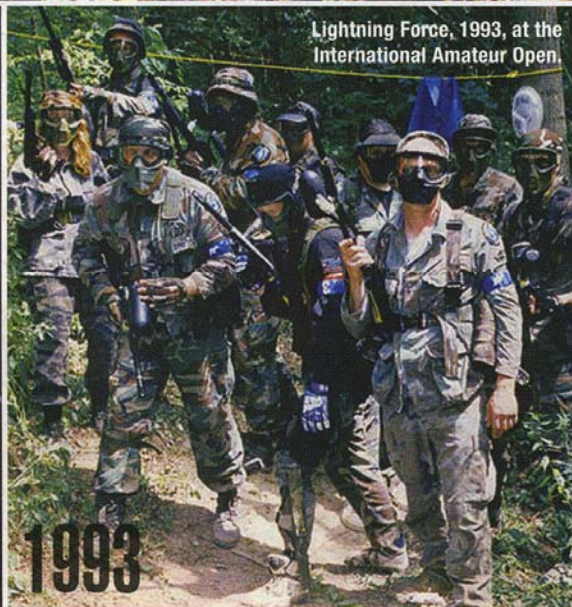


Alone on patrol, he works the deep winter brush. Photos by Skirmish.com

Woodland warrior, wearing a mixture of camouflage into the dark winter forest.



Lightning Force, 1993, at the International Amateur Open.



## FIRE TEAM CHALLENGE

Your fire team will fight its way through jungle-like territory and the Karnage Firebase. Your mission: Retake them from enemy forces! Raise the flag once again over the American firebase.

The newest form of scenario games comes from Paint Games Plus in Springfield, Missouri. Each fire team could have semi-auto markers or pumps, paintgrenades, and radios, plus paintballs, of course. The enemy, Shadow Force, shot pumps and only had 200 paintballs per Shadow Force player per game.

The challenge—great fun for all ages and skill levels of players—puts your team at the firepower advantage if you choose to shoot semi-autos. Three different challenge fields must be mastered, two being woods fields and one being Firebase Karnage. The teams play 6 games each, 2 on each field. Game limit: 7 minutes. Points totals determine which team is the best. A final points tie would be played off in one game between the two tied teams.

Scoring system: One point for live players, three points max. One point for eliminated enemy players. Four points for raising the flag over the American base.

The first of these events awarded Fire Team t-shirts to every player, and trophies to First, Second, Third, and Sportsmanship.

Think your field might want to run a Fire Team Challenge?

*Paint Games Plus, 345 N. Karnage Lane, Springfield, MO 65803; phone: 417.866.8858 or 417.866.8862; paintgames@sbcglobal.net; www.paintgamesplus.com.*

International Amateur Open near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A 5player part of Lightning Force formed a tournament team called the Cooper-Team, sponsored by Cooper-T Products. In 1990, it competed in tournaments in Ohio, New York, and Canada. In the mid 1990s, the Lightning Force sponsors included Sheridan Paintball and National Paintball Supply, but near the end of

This is Lightning Force in 1995, posing partly in costumes for a 24 hour scenario game. Full facemasks are mandatory for actual paintball play.

the '90s, many team members stopped playing due to family obligations or they were starting to feel their age. The team became only a handful of players. This small close-knit group still enjoyed going to local fields to play and attending whatever



2006

Lightning-Force, 2006, at a GRC 24 hour scenario game.



1995



Teammates on Lightning Force in 1991.

1991

# SCENARIO SECRETS

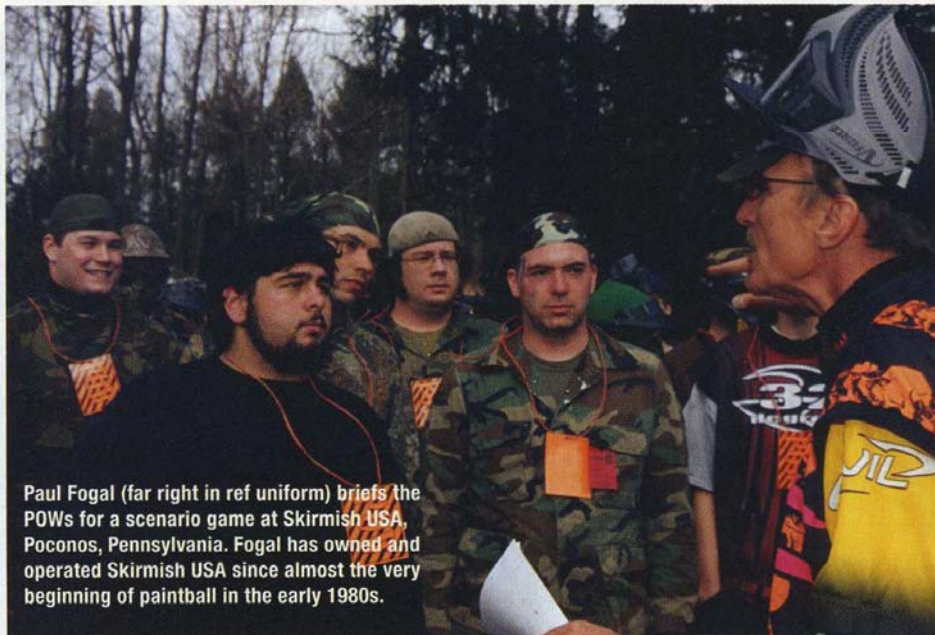
big and scenario games they could afford.

Always holding the name Lightning Force for big and scenario games, some players joined with another team, "Unforgiven," to compete in 5- and 7-player speedball, Sup'Air, and hyperball tournaments.

In the 2000s, Lightning Force has evolved into a team that only attends scenario and big games. They make 5 to 8 games a year, and are sponsored by Tater's Wilderness Paintball and Jester's Cap Games. Team size is back up to 17.

"We have seen many changes in the years we have been playing paintball. Also, we have met a lot of interesting players along the way, some of which have become great friends. Paintball is an incredibly fun teambuilding sport that has helped give us enjoyment, and camaraderie that we would have difficulty finding in many other sports," says Wloch. "We thank those [who] have helped paintball grow and become such a great sport. Hopefully, we will still be playing for another 20 years. If you would like to learn more about us, go to [www.wnypaintball.com](http://www.wnypaintball.com)." 🎯

**Scenario teams, you're invited to send your team's history to editor [actionpursuitgames.com](mailto:actionpursuitgames.com)**



Paul Fogal (far right in ref uniform) briefs the POWs for a scenario game at Skirmish USA, Poconos, Pennsylvania. Fogal has owned and operated Skirmish USA since almost the very beginning of paintball in the early 1980s.

## BARREL SLEEVES

Where the need to hide is the key to victory—the Barrel Sleeve should be on your barrel. The cloth cover slides over the barrel and fits barrels up to 1 inch in diameter, with elastic at one end of the sleeves.

The camouflage helps you blend into the woods. Each Barrel Sleeve is handmade. This inexpensive camouflage is available for various barrels including the Tippmann A-5 Flatline, Tippmann Model 98 Flatline, the Apex barrel, and more. Several camouflage patterns are available. A Rain Sleeve is for playing in the rain. Leaf six packs add a 3-D effect to any camouflage. A-5 Hopper Covers are among the other choices at Barrel Sleeves. [info@barrel sleeve.com](mailto:info@barrel sleeve.com); [www.barrel sleeve.com](http://www.barrel sleeve.com).

Advantage leaf pattern.



Mossy Oak leaf pattern.



Woodland brown.



Woodland green.



Barrel leaves.



Aim that Tippmann!