

2017 NORTH DAKOTA JUNIOR OLYMPIC

PISTOL & RIFLE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Minot Rifle & Pistol Club, once again provided us with their warm hospitality and their great facility to host this match. We appreciate each and every one of you who helped to make this championship match successful again this year. The Minot Rifle & Pistol Club range facility was in excellent shape again, and we thank the Club's range committee for their continued support and assistance with this match. Doc, Jeremy, Al, Paul and Linda are invaluable and I thank them for giving up their weekend to support this Junior Olympic Selection Match. Participation in the matches has increased to the point where we can barely fit in the Minot facility even though we have moved the pistol JOSOC matches to Devils Lake. By splitting the rifle and pistol events into two weekends again this year we were able to accommodate everyone. We plan to make some more changes next year to make these matches run more efficiently, but we hope that you each enjoyed the matches as they were run this year.

We hope that you appreciate the many people who go a long way out of their way to make these matches the best possible opportunity for our junior shooters to earn an invitation to compete in the 2017 Junior Olympic National Championships. Parents, coaches and local shooting clubs work throughout the year to create the foundation that allows each competitor the opportunity to improve their skill and to be prepared for this qualification match.

We acted as host for the North Dakota Air Rifle, Air Pistol, Smallbore Rifle and Sport Pistol Championships, and we also played host to the Minnesota Air Pistol and Sport Pistol Championships. This allowed us to offer those competitors who travel to our match from Minnesota a chance to qualify for the Junior Olympic National Championships as a Minnesota State Champion in addition to their opportunity to secure an invitation as an open qualifier. That worked out quite well again this year to allow many more young people to earn an invitation to the 2017 National JO Championship matches. We have included our North Dakota Pistol results in the scoresheet attached.

This year, we had another great turnout with 36 competitors for the Air Rifle JOSOC matches while 22 young men and women fired the Smallbore Rifle events.

This year, Women's Air Rifle began with Maria Rosa-Nieves, Devils Lake, ND, firing a personal best 100/100 for her first 10 shots in Saturday's first Air Rifle relay. She ended with a total of 385/400 to take the Bronze Medal. Katie Zaun, Buffalo, ND stepped up during the last relay on Saturday to fire a 387/400 for the Silver Medal. On that same final relay on Saturday, Mari Butler, Casselton, North Dakota provided us with an outstanding 392/400 to earn the North Dakota Women's Air Rifle Gold Medal.

This year, USA Shooting has set the automatic invitation score for J1 women at 390, for J2 women at 385, and for J3 at 370; so we are not sure who besides Mari and Katie will be invited to the Junior Olympic Air Rifle National championships. Still, Maria and Amanda Hintz are likely to receive invitations, as their scores are well above 380, and are certainly worthy. Last year, the first round invitations were issued to all shooters with scores at or above 380 regardless of age group. This is the second time in the history of North Dakota State Junior Olympic competition that we have had four young women fire scores above 380. They should each be very proud.

While Katie is our Silver Medalist as a J3, three other young J3 women (Jordyn Ewine, Molly Anderson, and Hannah Vaagen) fired scores above 360/400 in this match. The quality of competition in Women's Air Rifle in the state of North Dakota continues to be very high.

By the way, this year, we had 16 young men and 20 young women fire the air rifle matches. Talk about gender equity all you want. The Airgun Shooting Sports really are gender equity sports.

We had a great deal of drama in the Men's Air Rifle event again this year. You may recall that Brady Fried, Bismarck, ND, fired a 565/600 with 23 center shots to win the 2016 Junior Men's Air Rifle State Championship event and to earn himself an invitation to the Junior Olympic National Championship. Brett Christianson, Casselton, ND, fired a 565/600 with 21 center shots for the Silver and, Brandon Alexander, Devils Lake, ND followed with his 558/600 for the Bronze.

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This year, Brady again is our champion firing a State Qualifying score of 578/600 for the Gold Medal. Brandon fired a 577/600 for the Silver and Brett followed with a 567/600 for the Bronze. This is outstanding competition.

If you will look through the results, you will see some very fine scores fired by our young men and women in all three of the age groups, and we congratulate each of you again for your accomplishments. You each show great promise and if you can continue to put forth incremental effort to improve your skill over the next year, we will have another outstanding Junior Olympic Championship here in North Dakota in 2018.

Brett Christianson earned the Gold Medal in Smallbore Rifle for the second year in a row with his State Qualifying score of 561/600 with 21 center shots. He was followed by Brandon Alexander who fired another 561/600 with 11 center shots for the Silver Medal. Tyler Linneman, Emerado, ND, followed with a 552/600 for the Bronze. What a great competitive match.

Congratulations to Katie Zaun who earned the Gold Medal in Women's Smallbore Rifle with her 572/600. We believe that this will prove to be a USA Shooting National Record score for a J3 woman in the current format for 50 Foot Smallbore Rifle 3 Position (in the order of Kneeling, Prone, and Standing). In any event, it is a great score. In the prone portion of the match, Katie fired a 199/200 to eclipse Tyler Linneman's existing North Dakota Junior State Record of 197/200 set in 2015.

Katie was followed by Amanda Hintz, Bismarck, ND, for the Silver Medal in the Junior Women's 3-Position Smallbore Rifle match with her score of 556/600. She was followed by Mari Butler, Casselton, North Dakota, with a 550/600 for the Bronze Medal.

For the third year we hosted the Minnesota JOSCAir Pistol & Sport Pistol Championships as well as the North Dakota JOSCAir Pistol & Sport Pistol Championships. This affords every competitor a true match atmosphere. On January 14, with 16 young men and young women firing the air pistol matches, we were at our capacity to fire this match in one common relay in Devils Lake, ND in lieu of the two relays that would have been necessary in Minot. If we continue to grow this sport, we will soon require two relays of air pistol, and it will really be an all-day event.

Our Sport Pistol matches were fired in two relays by ten junior men and women up from nine last year. Luke Simon, Fargo, ND, repeated as the North Dakota Men's Champion with a 533. This is a state qualifying score and earns Luke the opportunity to compete in the 2017 Junior Olympic National Sport Pistol Championship.

Hannah Walsh earned the North Dakota Women's Sport Pistol Gold Medal with her qualifying score of 524 to earn a trip to Colorado Springs to compete in the 2017 Junior Olympic National Championships. These winning scores in sport pistol are significantly higher than those fired at our match last year, and represent great progress in the skills of those who have earned a trip to Colorado this year.

We were very happy to have Krista Dvorak, South Dakota resident and student at NDSU, compete with us as an at large competitor. She fired the top score in our Women's Air Pistol matches with her 348/400. We wish her luck in the selection process, and believe that she has a good chance to secure an invitation to the 2017 Junior Olympic Nationals.

Luke Simon with his 555/600 earned the North Dakota Men's Air Pistol Gold Medal. Hannah Walsh was able to fire a score of 342/400 to earn the North Dakota Women's Air Pistol Gold Medal. These are each State Qualifying scores, and again, they demonstrate a significant improvement over their scores of one year ago. In the Men's Air Pistol competition, Nicholas Dorscher followed Luke with a 525/600 for the Silver Medal and Max Schuh earned the Bronze with a 513/600. In the Women's Air Pistol competition, Hannah Morstad fired a 318/400 to earn the Silver Medal and Kaitlin Slaubaugh earned the Bronze Medal with a 313/400.

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Congratulations to each one of you who competed. Whether or not you fired a great score, we hope that each one of you had a great experience at the match and learned something that will help you to shoot better in the future. We look forward to seeing you again soon. If you can find your way to the North Dakota Shooting Sports Association Annual Meeting and Banquet in Bismarck, ND on Saturday, January 28, 2017, we will see you there. Connie and I are so busy running the matches that we often do not have much time to visit with many of you, and we regret that. The Orion Scoring System has helped a lot, but there are a lot of details that keep us busy. Thank you all for coming to Minot and Devils Lake to compete at these matches. We look forward to doing it again in 2018.

We hope that you will each seize as many opportunities as possible to enjoy some perfect practice and fun over the next year to improve your skills in preparation for this match in 2018. We look forward to seeing you all then.

While others will likely help you along the way, only you will get you where you want to go in your life. Accept that you are responsible for the path that you follow in your life and for what you accomplish with the skills that you learn along the way.

You will not get where you want to go with a frown or by beating up on yourself. Persistent positive effort combined with a good attitude and self-control will help you earn success. Smile! – Rick Jorgenson

Connie & Rick Jorgenson