

2018 NORTH DAKOTA AND MINNESOTA JUNIOR OLYMPIC STATE CHAMPIONSHIP - PISTOL

January 15, 2018

The outstanding generosity of many people made this match the best possible opportunity for our junior shooters to earn an invitation to compete in the 2018 Junior Olympic National Championships. Each of you who competed in this match owe more to your coaches, local shooting clubs and to your parents than you can ever repay in any tangible manner. The only payment that means anything will be your continued commitment toward excellence in this sport/discipline that we all enjoy so much.

This year, we were again able to offer competition in the disciplines of Air Pistol and Sport Pistol. Eric Pueppke provided equipment and management for the Sport Pistol match. Eric is an outstanding example of just how essential and effective one individual is to the success of this Junior Olympic Selection Match and to the shooting sports in North Dakota. Thanks to everyone who helped us set up for the match, and to those who worked during the match and with range cleanup. We were out of the range by 3:00 PM, and that would not have been possible without the help that you provided.

This is the third year we have hosted the Minnesota JOSCA Air Pistol & Sport Pistol Championships as well as the North Dakota JOSCA Air Pistol & Sport Pistol Championships in order to afford every competitor a true match atmosphere. With 16 young men and young women firing the air pistol matches, we were once again at our capacity to fire this match in one common relay here in Devils Lake, ND. If we continue to grow this sport, we will soon require 2 relays of air pistol, and it will really become an all-day event.

Our Sport Pistol matches were fired in two relays by 10 junior men and women. Brett Carlson, Bemidji, MN was unable to repeat as the Minnesota Men's Air Pistol Champion this year losing that title to a fine performance by Cade Haiby, Blackduck, MN who put forth a 552-15. Brett fired a 543-8 to earn the Silver and this is a J1 qualifying score. Isaac Klejeski, also of Bemidji, MN fired a 535-3 which is a J2 qualifying score. Congratulations to Cade, Isaac and Brett for their fine performances.

In her first attempt, young Kaitlin Slaubaugh took the North Dakota Gold Medal in Sport Pistol with her 518-10 to earn an invitation.

Luke Simon, Fargo, ND, repeated as the North Dakota Men's Sport Pistol Champion with a 555-7 and is our state qualifier.

Young Kaytlin Haiby, Blackduck, MN earned the Gold in the Minnesota Women's Sport Pistol event with her 482-3. Although this score was not enough to qualify under the current criteria set by USA Shooting, it is a fine score for a J2 shooter. Her winning score in sport pistol is significantly higher than she fired at our match last year, and represents great progress over last year.

Luke Simon with his 551-12 earned the North Dakota Men's Air Pistol Gold Medal. Hannah Walsh was able to fire a score of 360-1 to earn the North Dakota Women's Air Pistol Gold Medal. These are each State Qualifying scores.

Our Minnesota State Men's Air Pistol Gold Medalist is Isaac Klejeski, Bemidji, MN, with his 532-7. This year, Kaytlin Haiby, Blackduck, MN, with her 358-3, earned Women's Gold. These are both qualifying scores and earn them invitations to compete in the Junior Olympic National Air Pistol Championships.

During our air pistol match, Emily Yoder suffered a malfunction and lost critical points before we were able to put her pistol back into service. She stayed composed and finished with an excellent effort to earn the Silver medal.

Brett Carlson's air pistol was disabled, and could not be put back into service. He had to fire the match with a borrowed air pistol with which he was entirely unfamiliar (Thanks, José!). He displayed exceptional character and perseverance in the face of this adversity, and offered a stellar example of how even in the most adverse circumstance, it is possible to excel.

Congratulations to each one of you who competed. Many of the scores fired in this match are just a few points lower than the qualifying scores posted by USA Shooting, and it is quite possible that USA Shooting will issue invitations in the second round which will include some of you who did not earn automatic invitations in this match. Whether or not you fired a great score, we hope that each one of you enjoyed a great experience at the match and learned something which 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 Grand Forks, ND on Saturday, January 27, 2018, we will see you there. Thank you all for coming to Devils Lake to compete at these matches. We will do it again in Minot, ND for the Rifle JO's next weekend, January 20 & 21, 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 2019. We look forward to seeing many of you then.

Connie & Rick Jorgenson

Lake Region Shooting Sports Association
Devils Lake, ND