

THE TARGET

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA SHOOTING SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Growing up with the Shooting Sports – From Junior Shooter to Parent

Let's start by going back to April 2002 in Bottineau, ND. I'm shooting my very first ever North Dakota Light Rifle State Championship Match. I remember it well even though it was 17 years ago. I was shooting my little Anschutz Achiever rifle that my dad, Bill Langer, kept for his future grandkids. That day I shot a 900/1000 and my mom, Sheri Langer, beat me by one point with a 901/1000. While not the first match I ever participated in, it is the first match I can remember clearly every single detail even this many years later.

My shooting sports experience started when I was about 8 years old in the Turtle Mountain Rifle and Pistol Club range in Rolla, ND, shooting with my brother, Matthew Langer, my mom and dad, and their friends. The Rolla club didn't have enough junior shooters to ever have a junior team so my brother Matthew and I always shot individually, and while we didn't have any fancy rifles or the nice equipment, we had a lot of fun. For my dad, it was a struggle to coach his own kids because we just didn't always want to listen to him. Any parent knows how this goes, your child always knows better than you! So, he would have other coaches like Tom Thompson, at junior 4-position matches in Bismarck, tell my brother and me to change things on his behalf.

My parents always pushed me to practice and I hated it. It seemed like so much work and it wasn't as fun as basketball because there was no team aspect. Even when the air rifle range I practiced at was in my back yard, it was still way too much work to actually go out there and practice. There was always TV to be watched, friends to go visit, friends to talk to. I also intended to play basketball at NDSU; all 5 feet of me. As a teen I never shot rifle to my true potential due to never wanting to practice and due to my commitment to other high school sports. I never attended the Junior Olympics in Colorado because I was almost always injured from playing basketball, when it came time to shoot the qualifiers; holding tight to my internal beliefs that I was for sure going to play basketball for NDSU.

Luckily, I still went to NRA and CMP shooting camps where I learned a lot about myself and made lots of friends. As it ended up, I didn't get to play basketball in college, not much of a surprise really, when you don't grow past the 5-foot mark. In fact, I no longer play basketball to this day. That stage of life ended, when I graduated high school, but the one sport that I have never stopped participating in is shooting. Even though I didn't feel like practicing as a high school athlete, once I started shooting I always enjoyed myself. With encouragement from my parents and members of the Bismarck club, I continued to shoot throughout my college years at BSC, just for fun.

Then adulthood started, I turned 21, and my first son, Michael, was born. This made shooting feel a little harder to manage, as a new mother. I would work all day

and leave my baby at daycare and then come home knowing I really needed to go to the range to shoot. But that would mean that after not seeing my child for 9 hours for work, I would not get home till after he went to bed. Shooting as a mom is still a little hard for me. As most of you know, you can't just let little kids run around the range. So I'll take this great opportunity to thank all my fellow shooters for their encouragement and their help with babysitting at matches, allowing me to continue my passion for shooting even while having two kids.

Speaking of two kids: The most fun I think I have had in my shooting career was shooting the 2018 North Dakota State Light Rifle Championship. I was 8 months uncomfortably pregnant with Harvey, my second son. For those that teased me about having an advantage by being pregnant, I can only say, "give it a try and see if it helps!". I fondly remember it as just being a fun day of shooting with family and friends at the Bottineau range where it all started 17 years ago. I shot the best match score of my Light Rifle career with a 990/1000 to take the ND State Light Rifle Championship. The reactions of my fellow shooters, when they saw and heard that the "Fat Lady had Sung" was something I will always remember with a smile. My husband even has gone to work to be asked "are you Melissa Langer's husband?" after hearing the news.

Now here I am, 27 soon to turn 28, a mom of two beautiful boys with a 3rd child on the way, finally seeing the shooting sports through my dad's eyes. I understand now why he enjoyed it so much; I understand wanting to see your children practice something and excel at it. My parents were wonderful, they never once made me feel bad that my sights weren't set on shooting as a sport. I did it because they wanted me to at the time. Now I do it because it's so much fun, the camaraderie is amazing, and the friendships made are lifelong. I sit here today thinking about traveling to matches with my parents and brother, and it is something special we do as a family, and it's so much fun. I look forward to the day we can hopefully have 3 generations standing on the line at the same time. I pray all the time that my children will choose to participate in shooting sports. I mentioned the rifle I shot at my first match at the beginning of this article because last summer was the first time that Michael, my now 6-year-old, shot that rifle with his grandparents. I'm looking forward to the day I can hopefully be one of those proud parents tagging along watching my kids shoot in all their matches, giving up almost all my winter weekends to travel to matches, and thankful that my boys will hopefully have the same opportunity to build the friendships, learn the skills, and have the great family fun and memories I have in my life because of the shooting sports.

(Continued on Page 3)

Editorially Speaking

This issue is a celebration of some of the results of our North Dakota junior competitive shooting sports program. Our Junior Shooters are growing up, and some are now adults. These adults and our maturing juniors are making their mark both here in our North Dakota matches and at matches elsewhere in the USA and around the world. In our last issue, we congratulated Megan Hardy Vandall as the first adult to win our Open State Air Rifle Championship in the last 20 years. Read our article on page 3 for more of Megan's accomplishments this year.

We enjoyed following Katie Zaun at the India World Cup. She enjoyed a great experience there, and has followed it with an outstanding performance at the 2019 USA Shooting Junior Olympic National Championships. More on Katie on Page 5. She will be in Germany for the World Cup in late May. We wish her luck and a great experience there.

The spring weather has been slow to arrive here in North Dakota, but our outdoor matches are being held regardless. So, dress warm. It will be a relief to see some improvement in the weather. I am ready to spend some enjoyable time shooting outdoors.

This issue is a bit longer than normal in order to celebrate Katie's performance at the 2019 USA Shooting Junior Olympic National Championships. See page 4 and 7.

Take a look at our schedule of matches on page 4 for further shooting opportunities.

Thanks to Melissa and to Steve Greer for their articles in this edition of our newsletter. I hope that you enjoy them. Again, if any of you have what you think is an important thought about the shooting sports in North Dakota, write it down and email it to me.

***Thanks to James Ladwig for his continued work on our NDSSA Website and to Melissa Carson, our Membership Chair, for our NDSSA Facebook page and we encourage members and match directors to forward/post their bulletins and results to that page, she already has it up and running. Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/North-Dakota-Shooting-Sports-Association-75181884660730>

"A strong body makes the mind strong. As to the species of exercises, I advise the gun. While this gives moderate exercise to the body, it gives boldness, enterprise and independence to the mind. Games played with the ball, and others of that nature, are too violent for the body and stamp no character on the mind. Let your gun therefore be your constant companion of your walks." - Thomas Jefferson, letter to Peter Carr, August 19, 1785

NDSSA is a small organization that gets a lot of good things done. We are always searching for people to **join us** as members or officers. If any of you have a prospective member, share your copy of our newsletter or help them fill out the membership application that is on page 5 and send it in to **P O Box 228, BISMARCK ND 58502-0228**.

"The Constitution shall never be construed to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms." Samuel Adams, Massachusetts Ratifying Convention, 1788

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From Junior Shooter to Parent

(Continued from pg. 1)

Shooting sports is one of the best gifts that has ever been given to me, and I am so thankful that my parents made me practice and introduced me to the sport. It truly is one of the only lifelong sports out there. So if you are a junior shooter and you are reading this, appreciate what your parents do for you, and if you enjoy shooting put your all into it. It is worth it. If you are a parent or a coach as a former junior shooter thank you. Thank you for your time to support your juniors and travel to matches, thank you for funding our participation in the sport, and know that even if your kid may not look like they enjoy it now or appreciate what you are doing for them just know down the line (maybe when they become a parent) they will. I am here to stay, so expect to see me and my family at as many matches as we can get to!

Melissa Carson (Langer)

NDSU Club Rifle Team and Megan's Individual Results at the 2019 Collegiate Club Championships

The NDSU Marksmanship Club air rifle and smallbore rifle teams traveled over 1800 miles by van down to compete in the 2019 National Collegiate Championship Rifle Matches, hosted by the US Army Marksmanship Unit at their ranges in Ft. Benning, GA on March 23 & 24, 2019. Megan took a plane with her dad. We hauled her gear and rifle.

The 10 top non-NCAA Club teams from around the nation fired these matches along with individuals not on NCAA teams. Each team is composed of 5 members, and the team score is the total of the top 4 individual shooting members. The NDSU Rifle Teams top 4 were composed of:

Brandon Alexander, a freshman in Construction Management, Devils Lake, ND;

Sarah Biggers, a sophomore in Radiological Sciences, Buffalo, ND;

Amanda Hintz, a freshman in Agribusiness, Bismarck, ND;

Tyler Linneman, a freshman in Crop and Weed Sciences, Emerado, ND;

Rachel Voigt, a freshman in Animal Science, Halliday, ND.

The air rifle match is a 60 shot match with all shots fired from the standing position at 10 meters indoors. To fire a 10, the pellet must cut the 10 dot which is roughly twice the size of the period at the end of this sentence. The air rifle team (Brandon – 587, Amanda – 576, Tyler – 563, Sarah – 554) finished with a score of 2280 points out of a possible 2400 points. This earned the NDSU rifle team a 2nd place finish.

As individuals in air rifle, Brandon is tournament champion with his score of 587. Amanda finished 5th overall, and Tyler was 17th, while Sarah finished 26th.

The smallbore rifle match is a 3 position match with 20 shots from prone, 20 shots from standing and 20 shots from kneeling all at 50 meters outdoors. The smallbore rifle team (Brandon – 564, Amanda – 540, Tyler – 548, Rachel – 515) finished with a team score of 2167 out of a possible 2400 points. This earned the team 3rd place.

As individuals in the smallbore rifle match, Brandon was tied for first place, but finished 2nd with his 564 after the tie breaker. Tyler was 9th overall, and Amanda finished 15th while Rachel finished in 40th place.

The combined tournament champion is determined by the total of the individual and team scores in the air rifle and smallbore rifle matches. The NDSU team ended in a tie for second place with Grand Valley State University of Michigan at 4447, and after the tie breaker, NDSU was 3rd overall.

Individually, Brandon Alexander won the overall championship with his combined score of 1151, fully 9 points ahead of the second place finisher.

The tournament awards included recognition of the 1st Club Team All American Team and individuals determined by their scores in this match plus their scores in the Sectional championship matches fired earlier in the year. The NDSU rifle team earned the trophy for 2nd Club Team in air rifle and 3rd Club Team in smallbore rifle.

Brandon and Amanda were individually named to the 1st Club All American Team for air rifle.

Brandon was also named to the 1st Club All American Team for smallbore rifle.

Tyler was named to the 2nd Club All American Team for smallbore rifle.

These are outstanding accomplishments for the NDSU Rifle Club Team and its individual shooting members. The team was coached by Mitchell Godbout of Casselton, ND with assistance from his son Brandon and Rick Jorgenson of the Lake Region Shooting Sports Association, Devils Lake, ND.

Go Bison! It is not just football!

Megan Vandall, a senior at Bismarck State College, fired the match as an individual collegiate competitor, and had an outstanding experience and result.

Her smallbore rifle match ended with her in 3rd place overall with a score of 559-21 (prone 188-6, standing 180-5, kneeling 191-10) which beat her personal best of 545 from last year at the 2018 NRA Collegiate Championships.

In air rifle, Megan ended in 4th place overall with a score of 577-33 (1st was Brandon Alexander with his 587, 2nd and 3rd place tied at 578).

Megan earned 3rd with her aggregate score (smallbore and air rifle match scores combined)

She also earned a place with Brandon on the 1st Club All-star-All American team for both air rifle and smallbore.

The complete results are available here:

http://tpc.nra.org/documents/pdf/compete/col_champs/2019-natl-collclub-champs.pdf

I renew my request for more info on Airgun Maintenance. I have a stark lack of response, so far.

I received an email from Steve Greer, and greatly appreciate his thoughts. I have his emailed comments outlined on page 6, so check them out. I think that there is much more to airgun maintenance, and I am certain that someone can add to what we have so far. So, I am still looking for more information. Send me what you know, and we can spread the knowledge.

Rick Jorgenson

Katie Zaun is the Gold Medalist in Women's Three-Position Rifle at National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships

COLORADO SPRINGS (April 18, 2019)



The Women's Rifle competition at the National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships ended with our first North Dakota Gold Medalist in the history of the matches at the Olympic Shooting Center in the Women's Three-Position Rifle (Smallbore) event.

Katie Zaun (Buffalo, North Dakota) entered the Smallbore Final leading by a full 6 points over the second place competitor after the two preliminary matches. Since this was a selection match for the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup in Germany this summer, all athletes shot two Qualification matches, and they were selected for the Final based on cumulative points. Additional points - eight for first, seven for second, six for third and so on - were awarded based on their finish in the Final. Medals, National Junior Team appointments and slots on the team going to Germany were awarded based on their total points from Qualification and Finals finish.

Over the two days of Qualification, 15-year-old, Katie Zaun built up a total of 2329 points – 6 points more than eventual silver medalist **Sarah Osborn** (Hampton, Virginia).

Katie said, "I worked very hard and every single 10 just worked out and it paid off." She admitted that she knew she had a good lead on the field into the Final, but she did her best not to let it affect her performance in the Final.

After a grueling Final, Katie finished the Final in fourth place, earning 5 points to add to her preliminary total for a final aggregate score of 2434. Sarah Osborn fired an outstanding Finals to win and to add 8 points to her preliminary aggregate for a final aggregate score of 2331. So, Katie remained three points ahead of Sarah to earn the Gold Medal. **Morgan Krebs** (Colorado Springs, Colorado) won the Bronze Medal.

Katie said about her performance, "I was very consistent and just tried to do what I know how to do, and it worked out, so I'm pretty happy." At the end of February, as you know, Katie competed in the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi, India and she credits shooting a major competition like that with helping her learn how to deal with nerves. Zaun also won Bronze in Women's Air Rifle.

See a summary of that on page 7. Also find the full results at the USA Shooting website: <https://www.usashooting.org/7-events/njosoc>

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Airgun Cleaning/Maintenance

Although I am far from an expert on the topic, I have been dabbling in airguns over the last couple of years. As one of those who believe that only accurate rifles are interesting, I have made the following painful discoveries that might serve as fodder for someone else's comprehensive article on the subject:

1. Being somewhat expert on powder burners does not make one an expert on airguns. It is an entirely new field.
2. Nominal airgun bore diameters are not the same as nominal powder burner bore diameters. If you use your existing powder cleaning equipment, you may run into difficulties cleaning your new airgun.
3. At least some high quality accurate airguns feature "choked" barrels; thus, that smaller nominal bore diameter becomes even smaller at the muzzle.
4. Due to lack of powder deposition, an air rifle bore may need minimal cleaning. In other words, if it is still shooting accurately, don't clean it, period.
5. If your air rifle is shooting lead pellets accurately, beware that use of the new lightweight "alloy" pellets may mess things up entirely. You may have to clean the barrel to get it shooting well again.
6. If you are shooting a "springer" air rifle, be aware that shooting those same new lightweight "alloy" pellets may damage your rifle. It was designed for normal weight lead pellets.

This only scratches the surface, but perhaps it will prompt a more knowledgeable person to write the article you need. If that person knows of a source book to help us beginner airgunners, I'd appreciate the pointer.

Your friend, an expatriate North Dakotan growing soft and silver in Virginia,

Steve Greer

Katie Wins Bronze in Air Rifle at National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships - COLORADO SPRINGS (April 15, 2019)



Macey Way proclaimed this to be her best day ever after winning gold in Women's Air Rifle at the National Junior Olympic Shooting Championships (NJOSC) at the Olympic Shooting Center in Colorado Springs.

Way, 17, won her first overall medal at NJOSC on her home range before the Final even began, posting two impressive Qualification scores of 623.9 and 623.7. With the two-day total of 1247.6, Way had already put the gold medal out of reach for anyone else, regardless of how everyone finished in the Final. (Additional points - four for first, 3.5 for second, three for third and so on - were awarded based on the competitor's finish in the Final.) This was a selection match for the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup in Germany this summer, so, all athletes shot two Qualification matches and were selected for the Final based on cumulative points. Medals, National Junior Team appointments and slots on the team going to Germany were awarded on the total points from Qualification and Finals finish.

"I was so nervous, even going into Finals because it's the most fun part of all the matches!" said Way. "I just really wanted to do well, but in the months before this I just trained, and I trained, and I tried to get coaching from everyone I could that was bigger than me or that I knew, and I just knew I was prepared, and I came in mentally prepared, physically prepared - knowing I was ready. This was the first time I've won something so big and I'm just so excited because I've got my team jacket! It's been a goal since I was 13 just to get this medal so achieving it just feels so good!" Way, who will enter College in Nebraska this fall as a freshman, will also make her international competition debut at the Junior World Cup in Germany.

NCAA Air Rifle National Champion **Kristen Hemphill** (Lohn, Texas) won the Silver Medal, but the Bronze Medal was decided in a shootoff between the second-place finisher from the NCAA National Championships **Angeline Henry** (Fort Worth, Texas) and 15-year-old **Katie Zaun** (Buffalo, North Dakota). Katie had entered into the final in 6th place with a preliminary aggregate of 1240.2. Katie won the Final, so the additional four points she earned for that effort put her in a tied position of 1244.2 points with Henry who entered the Final with a 1243.2. Angeline earned only a single point in the final to also end with 1244.2 points. Katie Zaun won the sudden death shootoff firing a 10.6 to Henry's 10.3 to earn the Bronze Medal.

We all know that every single shot that we fire in a match must be the very best that we are able, and this is certainly a great example.

Congratulations Katie!! Really good stuff. Have fun in Germany.