

2016 NORTH DAKOTA JUNIOR OLYMPIC PISTOL & RIFLE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

January 19, 2016

Once again, we enjoyed the warm hospitality and the great facility provided by the Minot Rifle & Pistol Club. We really do 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, Paul and Linda are invaluable and I thank them for giving up their weekend to support this Junior Olympic Selection Match. All of you who helped with any aspect of the match operation are greatly appreciated. Connie and I have been managing these North Dakota JOSOC matches for over 20 years now. During these past 20 years, participation in the matches has increased to first outgrow our facility in Devils Lake and now to the point where we can barely fit in the Minot facility. As you all know, we were forced to split the rifle and pistol events into two weekends this year in order to accommodate everyone.

Many people 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 2016 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 hosted the North Dakota Air Rifle, Air Pistol, Smallbore Rifle and Sport Pistol Championships for our junior men and women over two weekends this year. We also hosted 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 2016 National JO Championship matches. We have included our North Dakota Pistol results in the scoresheet attached.

We enjoyed another great turnout with 35 competitors (Lana left her air rifle at home) for the Air Rifle JOSOC matches. 19 young men and women fired the Smallbore Rifle events.

This year, Women's Air Rifle provided a lot of drama beginning with Maria Rosa-Nieves, Devils Lake, ND, firing a personal best 388/400 during Saturday's first Air Rifle relay. This is 2 points better than Katie Zaun's Gold Medal winning score last year. Katie has not been resting over the past year though, and stepped up to display an outstanding demonstration of skill on the Saturday afternoon relay to fire a 396/400. This is one point better than the current published National Record for J3 women. Of course, this earned her our North Dakota Women's Air Rifle Gold Medal.

Maria had to settle for the Silver Medal and an automatic invitation to the 2016 JO Nationals. Mari Butler, Casselton, ND, fired a 385/400 for the Bronze Medal and an automatic invitation to the 2016 JO Nationals as well. This is the first time in the history of North Dakota State Junior Olympic competition that we have had three young women earn automatic invitations to the JO Nationals. In the end, Emily Haag, Harwood, ND was close on their heels with a fine score of 382/400. In all, four young women fired scores above 380 this year. That has never happened before either. They should each be very proud.

Of the 20 young women who fired the Women's Air Rifle match, six fired scores over 370/400. This is just a great testimony to the quality of competition in Women's Air Rifle in the state of North Dakota. Only 4 years ago, in 2012, there were only two scores fired above 370 in the Women's Air Rifle Championship event. Congratulations to you all on the improvement of your skills!

By the way, this year, we had 15 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.

Mathematically extending Katie's 396/400 to a 600 point match, we find it comparable to a 594/600. Think about that for a bit. This is world class! Of course, that is just a mathematical extension, but I think that it makes it clear that the women's skills are every bit as developed as the men's.

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Devils Lake, ND

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We had a great deal of drama in the men's Air Rifle event this year as well. Brady Fried, Bismarck, ND, fired a 565/600 with 23 center shots to win the 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.

We saw some fine scores fired by our young men and women in all three of the age groups, and we congratulate everyone again for their accomplishments. Our young competitors show great promise and if they can continue to put forth incremental effort to improve their skill over the next year, we will have another outstanding Junior Olympic Championship here in North Dakota again in 2017.

Brett Christianson earned the Gold Medal in Smallbore Rifle with his State Qualifying score of 555/600. He was followed by Tyler Linneman, Emerado, ND, for the Silver at 552/600 and Jacob Langerud, Bismarck, ND, at 534/600 for the Bronze.

Congratulations to Amanda Hintz, Bismarck, ND, for her Gold Medal performance in the Junior Women's 3-Position Smallbore Rifle match with her State Qualifying score of 564/600. She was followed closely by Lana Fairbanks, Bismarck, ND, with her 561/600 for the Silver Medal. Katie Zaun earned the Bronze Medal with her 560/600 for a J3 Open Automatic Qualifier score.

Hannah Walsh, Wolford, ND, is our North Dakota Women's Air Pistol Gold Medal winner with her 329/400, and Luke Simon, Fargo, ND, with his 541/600 earned the North Dakota Men's Air Pistol Gold Medal. They both earned an invitation to compete in the Junior Olympic National Championships. Hannah Morstad, Hampden, ND earned the Women's Air Pistol Silver Medal and Addisyn Meyer, Devils Lake, ND, earned the Bronze. Max Schuh, Devils Lake, ND earned the Men's Silver Medal and Nick Dorscher, Harwood, ND took the Bronze.

Luke also earned the Gold Medal in Sport Pistol with a 513/600 and an invitation to compete in that event at the Junior Olympic National Championships as well. Hannah Walsh is our Sport Pistol Women's Gold Medal winner with her score of 508/600 also a State Qualifier invitation to the Nationals. Dylan Markwardt, West Fargo, ND, took the Silver Medal in Men's Sport Pistol.

Again, I think that the long term and substantial commitment by their parents and coaches to prepare these young people for success at this match deserves everyone's recognition. Mastering a skill requires incremental dedicated effort over time. There really is no shortcut. Whether or not you fired a great score, we hope that each one of you learned something during these matches that will help you to shoot better in the future.

We hope that everyone had a great experience at the match, and we look forward to seeing you at a match soon. If you can find your way to the North Dakota Shooting Sports Association Annual Meeting and Banquet in Fargo, ND on Saturday, January 30, 2016, we will likely see you there. Connie and I were so busy at this match that we did not get much time to visit with many of you, and we regret that. The Orion Scoring System has helped a bit, but there are a lot of details that keep us busy.

We also hope that you will all find and seize opportunity for some perfect practice and fun over the next year to improve your skills in preparation for this match in 2017. We look forward to seeing you then.

Rick & Connie Jorgenson

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

Accept responsibility for your life. Know that it is you who will get you where you want to go, no one else. – Les Brown

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