

Norton BB Gun Team places eighth in Kentucky

By DICK BOYD

Competing in the annual U.S. Jaycees/Daisy International BB Gun Match Championships for the 38th out of 41 years, the Norton County Rotary BB Gun Team lived up to previous Norton teams' winning tradition by placing eighth overall out of 39 teams competing over the weekend on the campus of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Ky. The Norton team placed fifth in the written test with an outstanding 484 x 500 and 13th in shooting with an excellent 1833.36. Marksmanship in the prone, standing, sitting and kneeling positions was so competitive that Norton was just eight points behind a tie for ninth place.

Some of the top teams in last year's international shoot finished 20 points higher than the previous shoot. Scores were even higher this year. The international champion was Washington, Mo. with an 1893.72 shooting score and perfect 500 on the written test for a grand total of 2393.72. That was almost 44 points better than last year's champion, Pierre, S.D., who had won it two years in a row.

Norton's score was 66 points better than in the state shoot in marksmanship and four points better on the written test for an addition of 70 points from state, where Norton placed third behind Manhattan and Arkansas City.

Under current rules, the top three teams in each state are eligible to compete in the international shoot.

The international championships are the largest junior marksmanship competition in the world. Norton has won the international shoot eight times, more than any other town. Shooters are not allowed to compete at international two years in a row.

The young marksmen must be between 8 and 15 years of age. Each of the four shooting positions counts as 20 percent of a shooter's score and the written test on marksmanship and gun safety counts for the other 20 percent.

The written test contained questions on information from the Daisy 10-Lesson Curriculum and the National Rifle Association BB Gun Rule Book.

Norton has won the state shoot 36 times but the Blue Jay shooters' long string of championships was interrupted at this year's state shoot on Saturday, April 8 in Manhattan.

After the state shoot, the Norton marksmen and coaches were determined to improve and they did dramatically. They practiced twice a week, with some practices lasting three hours. Between the state

and international championships, the Norton marksmen shot over 1,000 targets, which is over 10,000 shots. They also redoubled their efforts on the written test. It all paid off handsomely with their tremendous international performance.

TEAM SCORES

Manhattan proved that their score at the state shoot was no fluke by placing sixth overall in this year's international shoot. The top ten teams and their scores were: Washington, Mo., 1893.72 shooting, 2393.72 aggregate, first; Palmyra, Penn., 1874.70 shooting, 2374.70 aggregate, second; Rockville, Md., 1872.62 shooting, 2362.62 aggregate, third; Pierre, S.D., 1868.54 shooting, 2354.54 aggregate, fourth; Tussey Mountain, Penn., 1872.67 shooting, 2352.67 aggregate, fifth; Manhattan, Ks., 1871.50 shooting, 2341.50 aggregate, sixth; Spink County, S.D., 1858.70 shooting, 2338.70 aggregate, seventh; Norton, 1833.36 shooting, 2317.36 aggregate, eighth; Kirley Jr. Shooters, S.D., 1837.71 shooting, 2305.71 aggregate, ninth; Appling County, Ga., 1841.62 shooting; 2303.62 aggregate, tenth.

The Arkansas City Jaycees team placed 21st with a total score of 2263.46. Two 4-H teams from Kansas were also allowed to compete. The Wyandotte County team placed 32nd with a score of 2102.30 and the Flint Hills' Jr. Shooters team finished in 34th place with a score of 2091.27.

Members of Norton's international team were on the Yellow team for Norton in the state shoot. Their names and ages were: Caleb Vanover, 14; Chance McMullen, 14; Dustyna Sprigg, 13; Dylan Sprigg, 12 and Lane Archer, 11. Lane Archer and Dustyna Sprigg were the only members of this year's international team with international experience. Both were alternates on last year's team.

Alternates on this year's international team were members of the Blue Team at the state shoot. They were Kegan Vanover, 13 and Kaitlyn Campbell, 11.

Cameron Archer was this year's head coach. Assistant coaches were Mike Campbell and Brian McMullen. Lynette Archer was the classroom instructor. She was assisted by Keri Vanover, Missy McMullen, Sara Campbell and Coady McMullen. Former head coach Dan Lauer also assisted with the coaching.

Dustyna Sprigg was Norton's top shooter with a 380.14 x 400 and ranked No. 7 among all shooters. With her test score of 98 x 100, she placed 11th overall.

Norton shooters and their indi-



Norton alternate Kaitlyn Campbell records another bull's eye during her phenomenal 99.05 x 100 performance in the sitting position during the U.S. Jaycees/Daisy International BB Gun Match Championships in Bowling Green, Ky. Her sitting score was nearly perfect and was second best of all shooters from that position. Her score was also third best overall in all positions among the 253 shooters.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

vidual scores were:

Dustyna Sprigg, 98.04, prone; 93.02, standing; 95.05, sitting; 94.03, kneeling; 380.14 shooting; 98 written test, 478.14 total;

Lane Archer, 97.03, prone; 88.01, standing; 93.01, sitting; 91.02, kneeling; 369.07 shooting; 98 written test, 467.07, total;

Caleb Vanover, 94.01, prone; 91.00, standing; 96.04, sitting; 91.02, kneeling; 372.07 shooting; 94 written test, 466.07 total;

Dylan Sprigg, 95.02, prone; 84.01, standing; 95.01, sitting; 91.02, kneeling; 365.06 shooting; 98 written test, 463.06 total;

Chance McMullen, 95.01, prone; 85.00, standing; 78.00, sitting; 89.01, kneeling; 347.02 shooting; 96, written test, 443.02 total.

Kegan Vanover was seventh high overall out of 58 alternates and Kaitlyn Campbell placed 17th. Campbell also recorded the second highest score of any of the 253 total shooters in the sitting position with a 99.05 x 100. The top sitting score was recorded by Nathan Sellers, Tussey Mountain, Penn. He shot a 99.09 x 100. Campbell was edged for second place in all positions by Briana Stadlander, Manhattan, who shot a 99.06 x 100 in prone, the easiest position.

Individual scores of Norton's alternates were: Kegan Vanover, 90.01, prone; 91.02, standing; 95.03, sitting; 91.04, kneeling; 367.10 shooting; 98 written test, 465.10 total; Kaitlyn Campbell, 94.02, prone; 87.01, standing; 99.05, sitting; 82.01, kneeling; 362.09 shooting; 94 written test,

456.09 total.

"Coming into the international, I felt that we were shooting at least 50 points better than at the state and we beat that," said coach Archer. "We were right where we needed to be and had no gun problems the entire shoot."

"We were underdogs but every team member improved on their score at the state shoot. I'm really proud of them."

"I was very pleased with our written test score," said Lynette Archer. "Our five shooters missed just eight questions. It was a high level test and our youngsters proved that they have a solid foundation of hunting safety knowledge."

"Coming to the international is an overwhelming experience but our boys and girls held their composure and gave it their all. They can be proud of their accomplishment."

"Kaitlyn's sitting target was exceptional," said coach Archer. "She is only 11 years old and should be really competitive in coming years."

SPECIAL CEREMONIES

The opening ceremonies were held Friday evening when all teams and coaches marched into the arena and were introduced prior to the program.

Everyone was welcomed by Bowling Green Mayor Elaine Walker. "Congratulations to all of you on your hard work," Walker said.

Among the speakers was Ray Hobbs, president and CEO of Daisy Products, who is celebrating their 120th anniversary. "We appreciate the commitment of the shooters, coaches and parents to this shooting education program," he said. "Some of you had to travel a long way to this shoot."

Officials for the shoot were in-

troduced. They were: John Venskoste, match director; John Wright, match referee; Bill Wada, chief range officer; Mary Furr, chief statistical officer; H.Q. Moody, national coach trainer for NRA; Joe Tinsley, on-site coordinator.

The Barter Bar was held on Saturday evening and allowed shooters, coaches and parents to get better acquainted as they traded souvenirs from their respective states.

The Awards Ceremony was held Sunday evening. The top ten teams were honored and marched into the arena in the Parade of Champions. The top three teams received special recognition. The champion team received the traveling trophy. Members of the top three teams and the top three individual shooters received individual medals.

Featured speaker was Denise O'Neil, Clarksville, Tenn., national Jaycees vice-president. "I admire you shooters; you are so excellent in what you do," said O'Neil.

"I'm amazed by this program. It avoids gun accidents and saves lives. We need this program across America. Too many children are taken from us because they didn't know gun safety."

"Over seven million youth have gone through this shooting education program. There are so many things that distract lives today but you chose this program which teaches concentration, discipline, determination, pride, confidence and achievement. These six contribute to the success of your life."

"I applaud Daisy, parents, coaches and all you young people who take this program."

"This shooting education program is a character builder," says veteran coach Dennis Bellew, Carlton, Ga., who has coached BB gun shooters for 22 years.

"I teach our young people self respect. I want them to feel good about themselves. I teach them to be winners in life, the right food and drink, to be gentlemen and ladies and safe hunting. I want them to incorporate what I'm teaching into their adult life. If they can

stand on the firing line and learn to control their mind and body, then I'm a successful coach. Two-thirds of shooting is mental. I want them to be able to stand before a boss in a company some day and know how to present themselves for a job."

Bellew has coached many state and international champions.

MANY THANKS

"We thank everyone in the Norton community for the tremendous support of the shooting education program and our marksmanship teams," said Norton coach Archer.

"Much thanks to my wife, Lynette, who is so helpful in addition to being the classroom instructor."

Among the parents and fans present to boost the Norton team were: Sara Campbell, Michelle Sprigg, Cole Archer, Missy McMullen, Coady McMullen, Erin Archer, Greg Vanover, Keri Vanover, Mary Beth Boyd, Dick Boyd, all of Norton; Margaret Campbell, Rodney Campbell, Randy Campbell, Sr., Debbie Campbell, Randy Campbell, Jr., Aolani Campbell, all of Bardstown, Ky; Aaron Cochran, Dorothy Cochran, Skyla Cochran, Sidney Cochran, Bryce Cochran, all of Louisville, Ky.; Eugene Ziegler, Grainfield; Jim Ziegler, Indianapolis, Ind.

HIGHLIGHT

The International championship is the highlight of the Jaycees Shooting Education Program.

The program was designed to introduce youngsters to the basics of gun safety and marksmanship. About 250,000 young people take part in the program each year.

The safety program is based on a format proposed by the late Norton Jaycees member, Duane Winder, which was adopted nationwide when Daisy and the U.S. Jaycees began the program.

Norton's preparation for the state and international shoots began in October when the shooters entered the gun safety program. After passing the course, they began practicing marksmanship and studying for the written test.

Division III boys baseball ends

The Division III boys baseball teams wrapped up their season on June 27.

Love's 9

Engel's/NAPA 5
On June 20, Love's opened up the first with two from Justin Waggoner and Drew Ellis. Casey Temmel scored one in the second and then Ellis crossed home base again in the third. The fourth inning was a big one, bringing Daniel Field, Gunnar Hays, Jordan Hartwell, Waggoner and Ellis home.

Engel's made it on the board in the second with one each from Nathan Violentir, Wyatt Wentz and Lucas Engel. The team made its final two in the fifth when Carson McKenna and Robert Blecha rounded the bases to score.

Love's 9

Engel's/NAPA 5
The second game on June 20 was called early because of lightning. Engel's opened their first with one from Carson McKenna. They scored four more in the third when Trevor Rossi, Austin Fenn, McKenna and Kurt Douglas each crossed home base.

Love's took a three run lead in the first when Damien Davis, Drew Ellis, Joe LeClair and Brett Pulec scored four runs. Jordan Hartwell, Justin Waggoner and Davis each scored in the second, while Pulec and Daniel Field rounded the bases in the third.

Engel's/NAPA 6

Brooks Motel 5
It was a close game on June 22 with Engel's taking the lead in the first when Nathan Violentir

scored. They bumped it up by two more in the second after Tye Nickell and Wyatt Wentz rounded the bases. In the fourth, Nickell hit a home run, bringing in Robert Blecha. Zach Nelson made the team's last scoring run in the fifth,

giving Engel's the lead and the win.

Brooks made all five of its scoring runs in the fourth when Trey Millan, Seth Antrim, Dalton Miller, Taylor Meder and Michael Courtain crossed home plate.



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