

BB gun team qualifies for Internationals

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwks.com
The Norton County Rotary BB Gun Team proved the power of persistence on Saturday in the 14th annual State 4-H Shooting Match in Alma when they earned third place to qualify on their second try for the International BB Gun Championships in Bowling Green, Kentucky.

The first time, they were the third best shooting team in the 44th annual State BB Gun Championships hosted by the Kansas Rifle Association on March 14, which was also held in Alma; however, Norton County's written test dropped them to fourth overall.

Since only the top three teams from the Kansas Rifle Association sponsored shoot qualify for the international competition, the Norton County team was in danger of not qualifying for one of the few times in history.

So, the young marksmen went back to work the past month when they only had to concentrate on shooting since the 4-H shoot has no written test.

Record number of shooters

Saturday's shoot attracted a record 168 girl and boy marksmen so finishing in the top three teams was far from a cakewalk for the Norton team, who qualified to compete for the state title by winning the championship of the Northwest Kansas Regional 4-H Shooting Sports Match on February 28 in Oakley.

Battling some of the same teams they competed against in the earlier state shoot, Norton improved their earlier score by 18 points and finished behind the same champion and runner-up. Pottawatomie/Riley County was the champion with a total shooting score of 1814, followed by Wyandotte County, 1808; Norton County, 1785; Phillips/Rooks County, 1740; Jefferson County, 1736; Wabaunsee County, 1716 and Jackson County, 1714 in the top seven.

A different format is used in the 4-H shoot. Shooters are divided into junior shooters ages 9-11 and senior shooters ages 12-14. Team members can be from any age group but awards are given for individuals in both age groups.

Also, each marksman has only one appearance on the firing line during which he or she fires from the prone, standing, sitting and kneeling positions one right after the other.

Scores of the shooters and teams were not announced until the awards ceremony in the evening, but the breakdown shows that

Norton placed second behind Pottawatomie/Riley County in prone firing with a 467 compared to their 477. Wyandotte was third in prone with a 465.

In the standing position, the toughest of the four, Norton finished third with a 418. Wyandotte won that position with a 432, followed by Jefferson County, who was just one point ahead of Norton at 419. Eventual champion Pottawatomie/Riley County was fourth in standing, just one point behind Norton.

Norton County defeated all other teams in firing from the sitting position with an outstanding 466. Wyandotte was second with a 463, Phillips/Rooks County third with a 461 and Pottawatomie/Riley County fourth with a 457.

At that point, with only the kneeling firing remaining, Pottawatomie/Riley County, despite a fourth place in sitting, still held a slim overall lead with 1361 points. Wyandotte was just one point behind at 1360 and Norton was third, just nine more points behind at 1351 and still very much in the race for the championship.

Firing from the kneeling position was not as good as was hoped for the Norton marksmen, however, and they were unable to challenge for the championship. Pottawatomie/Riley County pulled away with a 463 in kneeling, compared to a 448 by Wyandotte County and 434 by Norton County for the third best kneeling score and final standing of third.

Norton's five-shooter team consisted of Kaitlyn Campbell, 14; David Smith, 13; Gabriel Bird, 13; Zachary Bird, 13 and James Berry, 10. Alternates were Dalton Vanover, 11 and Trenton Sprague, 10.

Lane Archer, 13 and Erin Archer, 11, former Norton BB Gun Team marksmen who are not eligible for team competition this year, shot for individual honors and did very well.

Individual awards

Berry, Sprague and Erin Archer were listed as junior shooters and all had exceptional scores. Berry shot a 367 total score to receive the medal for second high overall aggregate! He also won medals for each individual position. He was second in prone with a 95, third in sitting with a 94, fourth in standing with an 88 and fourth in kneeling with a 90.

Sprague shot a 358 for third high aggregate and finished third in kneeling with a 91. He also shot an 87 in prone, 87 in standing and 93 in sitting.



Firing from the kneeling position during Saturday's State 4-H Shooting Match in Alma were Norton's Lane Archer, left, and Gabriel Bird, center. Norton's head coach Cameron Archer was checking Lane's target with binoculars and Gabriel's assistant coach was Cole Archer, who was looking down range

Erin Archer was right behind Sprague with a 357 for fourth high aggregate. She was also fourth high in prone with a 94. Erin also shot an 84 in standing, 92 in sitting and 87 in kneeling.

Dalton Vanover was also a junior shooter. His scores were: 90 prone, 80 standing, 86 sitting, 86 kneeling, 342 total.

In the senior division, Lane Archer was third high aggregate with a 376!

He also received a medal for being second high in standing with a 90 and a medal for being third high in kneeling with a 94. Lane also shot a 97 in prone and 95 in sitting.

The other members of Norton's team and their scores were: Kaitlyn Campbell, 96 prone, 88 standing, 93 sitting, 87 kneeling, 364 total; Gabriel Bird, 90 prone, 85 standing, 92 sitting, 93 kneeling, 360 total; Zachary Bird, 95 prone, 83 standing, 94 sitting, 85 kneeling, 357 total and David Smith, 91 prone, 74 standing, 93 sitting, 79 kneeling, 337 total.

Coach's comments

"We knew what we had to do in this shoot and we improved by 18 points," said Norton head BB gun coach Cameron Archer.

"I had hoped that we would do even better but we had some tough competition. Some of our older shooters didn't shoot as well as we had hoped but some of our younger shooters stepped up to



Teams grade each other's targets at the State 4-H Shooting Match and officials decide scores when there is a question on a target. Nancy Becker, assistant chief statistics officer, left, was doing just that when Norton County and Miami County were undecided on a target. Also pictured are, from left, Cameron Archer, Norton head coach; Keri Vanover, mother of a Norton shooter, who was checking another target at the next table; Angie Bird, mother of twin Norton shooters; Joni Berry, Norton shooter's mother who was grading the Miami County target and Pam Blackmore, scorer for Miami County.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

help out."

Coach Archer thanked his assistant coaches Mike Campbell and Cole Archer for their help on the firing line and parents Keri Vanover and Joni Berry for assistance with grading targets.

He thanked all the parents for encouraging their youngsters to be dedicated to the shooting education program.

Coach Archer also thanked Keith VanSkiel, Norton County Extension director, and Jeana

Yost, his office professional, for their help with registration for the 4-H shoot.

The shoot was organized and hosted by the 11 person State 4-H Match Committee. Paul Seematter was the range officer.

Good showing at KU

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwks.com
Norton Community High School track and field athletes competed against the best of the best high school athletes from within a 500 mile radius from the Kansas border on Friday and Saturday in the prestigious annual K.U. Relays in Lawrence and demonstrated that they can run and throw with the best of them!

Norton head track and field coach Jason Jones took to the meet four seniors, Hayli Bozarth, Laura Lee Baird, KaraJo Jones and Zach Bainter, all of whom had to have qualifying times and distances to be entered.

The top eight placers in each event won medals. Norton had two medal winners and one athlete who just missed with a ninth place. The Blue Jays set one school record, another personal best and all had season best performances!

Hayli Bozarth placed third in the shot put with a heave of 43'9.25". She also threw the discus 124'5" to place tenth in that event and threw the javelin 107'3" to finish 18th.

Laura Lee Baird broke her own school record in the 1600 meter run with a time of 5:17.50 to place 18th. The previous record was 5:17.95, which she set in the Mid-Continent League Meet last season. Baird also medaled in the 800 meter run where she placed seventh with a clocking of 2:21.74.

KaraJo Jones placed ninth in the long jump with a leap of 16'8".

Norton's Zach Bainter set a personal record in the 1600 meter

run with a time of 4:31.38 to place 14th.

"The trip to K.U. was awesome," said coach Jones. "We are extremely proud of Laura Lee Baird, Hayli Bozarth, KaraJo Jones and Zach Bainter and their efforts and representation of our school and community. To be accepted and to qualify for this meet is an honor in and of itself. Meet management accepts only a limited number of entries from athletes who attend high school anywhere within a 500 mile radius of the Kansas border. These young people performed very well in what is the most competitive field of athletes that they will see all year long.

"Each one of our athletes posted seasonal best performances in every event. It is exciting to see them perform at their best on a large stage!

"Our trip was highlighted by personal best performances by both Zach, who trimmed his 1600 meter run time by nearly eight full seconds, and Laura Lee, whose time in the 1600 meter run bettered her lifetime best in breaking her own school record! All said, we had a wonderful weekend!"

The entire Norton track and field team will compete today in the annual Plainville Invitational meet, which begins at 3 p.m.

Norton teams will split for competition on Friday in the Lexington Invitational, beginning at 12:30 p.m. and the Phillipsburg Invitational, beginning at 3 p.m.

The Lexington beginning time is a change from the originally scheduled 3 p.m.

Boys fourth, girls seventh in meet

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwks.com
North track and field athletes set 14 personal records in the Freshmen/Sophomore track meet on Monday, April 13 on Monday in Goodland.

The boys placed fourth as a team and the girls finished in seventh place.

"Our young people had a great day competing," said Norton head track coach Jason Jones. "We earned an impressive number of personal records in events across the board.

"Our hard work in practice is producing results and we expect to see that continue. It is exciting to see people go out and compete and better themselves.

"We are proud of these athletes, their efforts and results

and look forward to these improvements and success continuing. Most of these girls and boys will have the opportunity to compete again at Trego on Monday."

GIRLS

Sophomore Bekah Streck won the silver medal in the 1600 meter run with a personal record time of 7:19.90. Sophomore Morgan Baumann placed fourth with a clocking of 8:39.64.

Freshman Caren Thomson won two bronze medals. She was third in the 100 meter hurdles with a personal best time of 19.10 and third in the 300 meter hurdles in 57.93.

Distances and times of Norton girls who did not place were: Morgan Baumann, 24'2"; sophomore Katie Scott, personal record 18'10"; senior Emily Scott, personal record 17'3"; shot put; Mor-

gan Baumann, 51'4"; Katie Scott, 44'1"; Emily Scott, 41'; discus; Caren Thomson, personal record 13'1", long jump; Caren Thomson, 14.96, 100 meter dash.

BOYS

Freshman Bryan Henry won Norton's only gold medal when he hit the finish line first in the 800 meter run with a time of 2:23.10.

Sophomore Ryan Blecha set a personal record of 38'2" to finish second in the shot put. Sophomore Justin Griffith finished just behind him in third with a personal best distance of 35'3".

Griffith also placed third in the discus with a personal best throw of 107'2". Blecha placed sixth with a personal record throw of 104'10".

Sophomore Kegan Vanover won the silver medal in the 3200

meter run with a clocking of 13:04.70. Freshman Kurt Douglas finished in third place with a time of 13:46.30.

Norton's 4 x 100 meter relay team of freshman Justin Waggoner, freshman Damien Davis, Justin Griffith and Ryan Blecha placed fourth with a time of 51.85.

Norton boys' distances and times which did not place were: Damien Davis, personal record 30'11", shot put; Damien Davis, 64', discus; Justin Griffith, 94'6", javelin; Ryan Blecha, personal best 12.60; Justin Waggoner, personal best 13.18; Damien Davis, 13.78, 100 meter dash; Justin Waggoner, 27.75, 200 meter dash; Kegan Vanover, personal best 5:58.28, 1600 meter run.

Youth 3-on-3 tournament this weekend

The 2009 "Sappa Valley Shootout" 3-on-3 youth basketball tournament is scheduled for Saturday at the junior/senior high in Oberlin. Boys and girls, grades 1-8 are eligible to participate.

The event is sponsored by the 2015 boys' basketball to provide

funding for summer activities.

Boys and girls will participate in separate divisions. T-shirts and medals will be awarded to the winning teams in each age division and second place teams will receive medals. Entry fee is \$30 per team and all interested can

download at sappavalleyshootout.com, or contact Angie Erickson at (785) 322-5338.

The public is invited and admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for students. Players and children under age 5 enter free. Concessions will be available all day.

Weatherman says outdoor walking season now upon us!

For help with your advertising needs please give Dana a call 877-3361