

Summary: Montana 4-H Shooting Sports Air Pistol and Small Bore Rifle teams win national championships.

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From MSU News Service

#### Montana 4-H Members Win National Championships at the National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational Tournament

BOZEMAN - Montana 4-H shooters stacked up well against 4-H shooters across the country, winning one silver medal and two national championships in one week.

After qualifying as state champions, a delegation of 21 Montana 4-H shooters participated in the National 4-H Shooting Sports Invitational Tournament in Grand Island, Nebraska June 24-28, 2009. The Montana 4-H Recurve Archery Team took the silver medal and both the Air Pistol and Small Bore Rifle Teams won National Championships. Montana is also the home of national champion individuals in Recurve Archery and Air Pistol. With 30 states represented and nearly 500 shooters in attendance, Montana 4-Hers made a good impression.

"I would say that the behavior and sportsmanship of the Montana 4-H shooters is the most important aspect of their performance," said Todd Kesner, Montana 4-H Program coordinator for ag and natural resources, who oversees the Montana 4-H Shooting Sports Program from Montana State University. "They didn't disappoint me there. Medals and national championships are a bonus."

Each tournament discipline is split into three contests over three days and winners are determined by the total combined score of the three contests. Placement for both individuals and teams are awarded after each contest and the overall winners are announced at the final award ceremony.

"Montana competitors don't have the facilities or funding that other states have, but they do have an ample supply of skill and are pretty level-headed," said Kesner. "Some states completely fund the trip for their team members. Our kids are funded by parents."

With six to seven nights in a hotel and travel expenses, the bills add up quickly. But the 4-H members, families, and coaches all say the experience is worth it. With the tournament site moving to Texas for 2010 and 2011, the funding challenges will be even greater.

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With more than 2,500 youth enrolled, the Shooting Sports Program is currently the fifth largest project in Montana 4-H. The project is administered by more than 300 volunteers across the state who have been trained and certified by state 4-H shooting sports instructors. Families interested in the shooting sports program may contact Todd Kesner at the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development at (406) 994-6816 or their county MSU Extension office.

Tournament Results

Austin Styler of Flathead County was the individual Air Pistol 4-H National Champion as well as the National Daisy Air Rifle Scholarship winner. The Air Pistol team consisting of Austin Styler, Tyler Volkman, Alana Davis, and Nellie Ward, all of Flathead County, won the gold medal. The team coach was 4-H volunteer and State 4-H Shooting Sports committee member Dennis Urban of Flathead County.

The Small Bore Rifle Team of Brook Kinna, Gallatin County; Ashley Nagel and Naomi Nagel, McCone County, also won a National Championship Gold Medal. Greg Nagel of McCone County coached the Small Bore Rifle Team.

The Silver Medalist Recurve Archery Team included Rachel Potter, Beaverhead County; Justin Nelson, Ravalli County; Jesse Sykes, Park County; and Jessie Roe, Lewis and Clark County. Justin Nelson was also the national champion individual recurve archer. The team was coached by Nancy Roe of Lewis and Clark County.

Also competing were the Air Rifle Team, the Compound Archery Team, and two individuals in Muzzle Loading. The Air Rifle Team, coached by Scarlett Wirtz of Gallatin County, included Joe Potter, Beaverhead County; Nichole Wirtz, Gallatin County; Benjamin French, Sanders County; and Nate Sutton, Beaverhead County. The Compound Archery Team, coached by Terry Maninger of Madison County, was made up of Justin Robbe and Terry Biere, Silver Bow County; Josh Tokarski, Yellowstone County; and Courtney Severeid, Madison County. The two individual competitors in Muzzle Loading, coached by Scott Francis of Gallatin County, were Codi Francis of Gallatin County and Colin Barth of Fergus County.

The Air Rifle Team took fifth place in the Standing Position Contest.

The Air Pistol Team finished with a Silver Medal in Slow Fire Bullseye as well as a Silver Medal in Silhouette and fourth place in Timed Fire/Rapid Fire.

Individuals in Slow Fire Bullseye: Austin Styler, Bronze Medal; Tyler Volkman, fifth; Nellie Ward, seventh; and Alana Davis, ninth.

Individuals in Air Pistol Silhouette: Austin Styler, Bronze Medal; Alana Davis, fifth; Tyler Volkman, tenth.

Individuals in the Time Fire/Rapid Fire Combo: Austin Styler, Bronze Medal; Tyler Volkman, fifth; Nellie Ward, seventh; and Alana Davis ninth.

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The Small Bore Rifle Team won the Gold Medal in Silhouette. Individuals in Small Bore Rifle: Brook Kinna, Silver Medal; Ashley Nagel, seventh; Naomi Nagel, ninth.

In Recurve Archery the Montana Team was awarded the Silver Medal for the FITA contest and the Silver Medal in Field Recurve. In individual FITA, Justin Nelson won the Bronze Medal and Jessie Roe took ninth place. In Field Archery, Jessie Roe took home the individual Gold Medal and Justin Nelson placed sixth.

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