



April 11, 2019

Aggies aim takes fifth at nationals

By NCTA News

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – “Breaking rocks” is the aim when competing in sporting clays.

Top shots of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Shooting Sports Team recently won fifth place among junior colleges at the national championships.

Five team members each took aim at 600 targets over four days at the ACUI Collegiate Clay Targets Championships in San Antonio, Texas.

They competed with other junior colleges and first-time teams to nationals in Division Four, and won a large fifth-place trophy.

“I am extremely proud of our team. We have not been able to attend the national meet before and to be able to bring home a trophy in our first foray to San Antonio was wonderful,” said Aggie coach Alan Taylor.

Veterinary technology student Angela Crouse of Haigler described the experience as thrilling and mentally challenging.

“Even though we were at a huge shooting complex with thousands of shooters, we competed just as if we were at home,” said Crouse, high overall Aggie breaking 477 of the 600 targets.

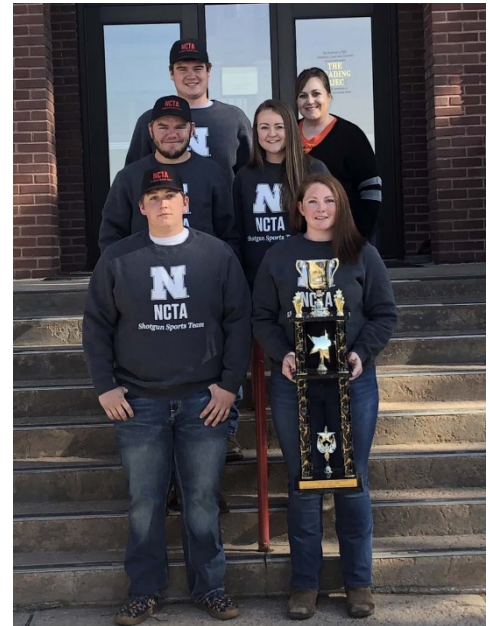
Events of 100 targets each were in six categories: American trap, American skeet, international trap, and international skeet, sporting clays, and super sporting clays.

Team leaders were Crouse at 477 and Kaylee Hostler of Central City at 452.

David Jelken of Juniata, Lincoln native Chase Stanley, now of Shickley, and Trevor Kuhn of Omaha “all have improved over the year and were able to shoot well for the week,” Taylor added, scoring 444, 441 and 439, respectively.

To earn a team trophy Taylor said all members needed to stay focused, persevere and not be overwhelmed by being at ‘nationals’.

“I thought going into competition we had a chance to do well and I am pleased with what the team was able to accomplish,” Taylor said. “The students have worked hard and invested great amounts of time and money to be able to accomplish this placing.”



The NCTA Shooting Sports Team is congratulated on its fifth place division ranking at the National ACUI Clay Targets Championships by Associate Dean Jennifer McConville, top row, right. (Taylor photo)

Shooter's perspective

Crouse agreed that the team did well, describing each day's events starting with American skeet.

"I thought as a team we competed very well in this event!" Crouse said. "Trevor shot an 85, Kaylee, David, and Chase shot an 86, and I ended with a 95, tying a personal best in competition. I think this started us off on the right foot."

Thursday's contests were sporting clays and super sporting clays.

"They were great courses and had targets that we don't normally see," Crouse said. "I loved shooting it and it really tested us mentally."

Friday posed the most challenging events in international trap and international skeet.

"These are events that we don't see on a normal basis at shoots and also don't get to practice hardly ever," Crouse explained. "But we all still shot our best and I was really proud of our team for staying focused."

The final day of shooting on Saturday ended the team's nationals experience with American trap and awards presentations.

Since shooting sports can become a family affair, parents of some team members traveled to nationals. They shared enthusiasm for the experience at nationals and in touring local sites such as seeing the Alamo and the River Walk of downtown San Antonio.

"It was a long, exhausting week. It truly is a marathon shooting over 600 clays within a few days, not to mention the 15-hour drive there and back home to Curtis," Crouse said. "But I am absolutely thrilled that we were able to compete and showcase our team. The countless hours of practice and competition led us to finishing fifth overall in the junior college division."

Nationals was the finale for Crouse, Hostler and Stanley, as they end their collegiate careers in shooting sports.

Crouse will continue a rigorous fall semester in veterinary technology, while Hostler graduates May 2 with an associate degree in animal science and Stanley in irrigation technology.

"We are sad to be saying goodbye to those students who shot their last clays for NCTA," Taylor said. "It has been a privilege to coach them."

Jelken and Kuhn will be returning next year to compete, along with several new freshmen who look to bring their talent to the team, he added.

See this article online: <https://go.unl.edu/pxz3>

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(Right)
The NCTA Aggie Shooting Sports team won 5th place at nationals in Texas. From left, Angela Crouse, Trevor Kuhn, Kaylee Hostler, David Jelken, Chase Stanley, and Coach Alan Taylor.



(Lower left)
Angela Crouse of Haigler and Kaylee Hostler of Central City led the Aggie team with the two top scores. They finished their collegiate careers.

(Lower right)
Trevor Kuhn of Omaha, Chase Stanley of Lincoln/Shickley, and David Jelken of Juniata comprised the Aggie men's team in San Antonio, Texas.

~ Photos by Jody Crouse



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