



## NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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By NCTA News

### **Aggie trap team aims high**

CURTIS, Neb. – Emily Miller has been competing as a student athlete recently in three states.

So have her teammates on the Shotgun Sports Team at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.

Miller, a first-year veterinary technician student and vice president of the Aggie team, calls Norton, Kansas home. Miller has been aiming at sporting clays on ranges in Nebraska, New Mexico and Texas.

She will join Kaden Bryant of Firth, Cooper Mazza of Potter, and Kamren Sitzman and Trey Barnhart, both of McCook, at San Antonio for the ACUI National Collegiate Sporting Clay Championships.

Miller is a top athlete among the Aggie men and women. At their matches, she's ranked high in the charts, including third high over all in the women's division at the Oklahoma State Shootout three weeks ago.

"Oklahoma was a very challenging shoot for me as well as the others," Miller admits. "The conditions were not ideal, so you really had to have your mental game in check, which is not always easy."

Her points outranked her Aggie counterparts, placing first in women's trap hitting 99 of 100 targets.

"Getting third HOA is something I am very proud of," Miller said. "I have worked really hard to get where I am at, and it is starting to pay off."

Coach Alan Taylor agrees. "Everyone continues to improve wonderfully. I am very proud of the team."

### **New Mexico warm-up**

In late February, the Aggies had an exhibition dual meet 45 miles north of Curtis, near North Platte, with Mid-Plains Community College.

Cold, harsh conditions there were quite different than the warm-up, literally, the Aggies enjoyed late last week and Saturday in New Mexico.

Seven Aggie students joined other collegians and sports enthusiasts at the Whittington Center near Raton, New Mexico where Colorado State University hosted athletes to an ACUI National Warm Up.

Team bonding and exercise was a part of the scenic setting. The Aggie students hiked one afternoon in the warmth of the mountainous venue of New Mexico. They stayed in guest cabins at the center.

For the next two days, the team practiced sporting clays, trap and skeet.

“I’m so thankful for the amazing experience at the Whittington Center. Most of the team got personal bests in one discipline or another. We even got some hiking in,” Miller shared.

Kaden Bryant, team secretary, kept friends and family informed of activities by posting photos and updates from daily practice sessions on the club’s social media site.

As five Aggies and two sponsors stayed at Raton for a rest day before heading on to San Antonio, two students returned to Curtis. They had classes on Monday plus farm crew duties as student workers. Chores include feeding livestock and helping with spring calving of the NCTA cowherd.

Maddy Carr of North Platte and Nathaly Dragoo of Lincoln, who are each studying animal science and veterinary technology, agreed the New Mexico trip was a highlight of Spring Break.

“Raton was such an awesome experience! I am very thankful to be able to experience shooting in such a beautiful place and have so much fun with my team! It’s definitely something to remember,” Dragoo said.

### **ACUI Nationals**

Coach Taylor said he looked forward to coordinating the trip.

In 2019, for NCTA’s inaugural venture to the national clay target championships, the Aggies were in the top five 2-year colleges vying in their first national contest.

Contests are Tuesday through Friday. NCTA competes in:

- Tuesday – American Trap
- Wednesday – Sporting Clays & Double American Trap
- Thursday – American Skeet & Super Sporting Clays
- Friday – Double American Skeet

Afterwards, they’ll travel 900 miles back to Curtis with even more memories and experiences to share. If time allows in April, they may host a year-end sporting clay fundraiser.



Aggie student athletes from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture practiced for the ACUI National Clay Target Championships with a 2-day workout in New Mexico. From left, Emily Miller, Cooper Mazza, Kaden Bryant, Trevor Barnhart, Kamren Sitzman, Maddy Carr and Nathaly Dragoo. (Taylor / NCTA)

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