

Rotary BB Gun team headed to state

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton County Rotary BB Gun Team will compete in the Kansas State BB Gun Championships on Saturday in the Jackson County Fair Building in Holton.

The Norton BB Gun teams have won 38 of 47 state championships during the program's existence, including March 13, 2010 in Alma. They did not compete in the state shoot in 1982 because there was no Jaycees chapter that year to sponsor them.

The Norton Jaycees were the original sponsors but the Rotary Club is in the ninth year of sponsorship since the Jaycees chapter in Norton disbanded.

BB gun teams consist of young girls and boys from 8 to 14 years of age.

The top three teams in each state shoot qualify to compete in the Daisy National BB Gun Championships, formerly the Daisy/Jaycees International BB Gun Championships.

Norton has competed in 43 of the 47 international shoots and has also won eight international championships, more than any other team in the world!

The Norton County team was in the hunt again last year in placing seventh out of 53 teams competing in the national shoot, which is the largest junior marksmanship competition in the world!

Three Norton teams will enter the state championships in Holton on Saturday and a top three finish would again guarantee Norton a spot in the national championships, which will be held again in Rogers, Ark., the home of Daisy.

This year's national shoot will be on June 27 through June 30.

Team members

Members of the Yellow Team on Saturday and their ages will be: Trenton Sprague, 14; Scott Sansom, 12; Miles Harrington, 12; Nick Davis, 11 and Riley Goss, 10. Alternates will be Trent Merchant, 13 and Stacie Elliott, 11. Coaches will be Marty Harrington and Steve Sprague.

Shooting from the Blue Team

will be: Dalton Vogelgesang, 12; Tia Paxton, 10; Christien Hawks, 10; Nathan Nelson, 10 and Nolan Juenemann, 9. Kylie Vogelgesang, 11, will be an alternate for the team. Coaches will be Jeff Elliott and Jeremy Hawks.

Marksmen for the Red Team will be: Eric Wiltfong, 12; Aaron Blair, 11; Kevin Wiltfong, 10; Morgan Goss, 8 and Miles Goss, 8. Coaches will be Rod Sansom and Jerry Hawks.

Shannon Goss, former Norton BB gun shooter, is this year's classroom instructor.

Lots of BB Gun history in Norton

Norton is associated with the beginning of the national gun safety program. It is based on a format proposed by the late Norton Jaycees member Duane Winder. His suggestions were adopted nationwide when Daisy and the U.S. Jaycees began the program.

The purpose is to introduce young shooters to the basics of safe gun handling and marksmanship.

About 250,000 young people take part in the program each year.

"The Norton community has supported this program because it teaches the children the importance of learning gun safety," said new head coach Jeff Elliott. "If I help teach them to be a responsible, ethical hunter, I've done my job.

"I've been very impressed in practice with both the Yellow and Blue team shooters. The Red team shooters are all first year shooters. If they continue to improve, they may be a force to reckon with in a few years down the road.

"We've been working hard on the written test in addition to shooting. Many thanks to Shannon and all our coaches for putting forth great effort in working with the youngsters.

"We are proud of the sportsmanship shown by our shooters and the good behavior example that they set for other teams when they come to shoot."

The winning performances of the Norton shooters at the state and national (formerly in-



Some members of the Norton County Rotary BB Gun Team fired from the sitting position on Monday evening during their last practice before the State Championships in Holton this Saturday. Pictured with the coaches are, from left, front row: Trenton Sprague, Stacie Elliott, Trent Merchant, Althea Paxton, Scott Sansom; back row: Marty Harrington, head coach Jeff Elliott, Shannon Goss, Jerry Hawks, Rodney Sansom.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

ternational) level have earned them an admirable reputation in marksmanship circles.

Coach Elliott thanked Jodi Sprague and Kendra Merchant for the hours they've spent scoring targets. He also thanked Vern Heiser of Vern's Gun Room for cutting some gun stocks down to size for no charge.

State shoot schedule

The State Shoot will be hosted by the Kansas State Rifle Association and will be held in Holton.

Opening ceremonies will be at 8 a.m.

The written test will be taken at 8:15 a.m. A coaches meeting will also be held during this time.

Shooting from the prone position will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will be followed by marksmanship from the sitting, kneeling and standing positions.

Presentation of team and individual awards will be around 6 p.m.

There is no admission charge for the shoot.

Practicing since October

Norton's preparation for the State Shoot began in mid-October when the shooters entered the gun safety program, sponsored by Daisy and the National Rifle Association.

The first night was a tryout night for youngsters to explore their interest in shooting a BB gun in competition and a number of potential shooters were recruited that night.

The youngsters had four weeks of classroom instruction from the Daisy 10-Lesson Curriculum Book.

After passing the gun safety course, the young girls and boys began practicing marksmanship from each of the four positions (prone, sitting, kneeling, standing) and studying for the written test.

The young marksmen's knowledge of gun safety is very important since the written test score is 20 percent of each shooter's final score.

Practices are every Monday evening in the back of the Norton Rotary BB Gun Museum on East U.S. 36 Highway in Nor-

ton. Shooters are also encouraged to practice at home.

"Many thanks to the Norton Rotary Club for their unwavering support of our program and team," said coach Elliott.

"The museum building is really nice for a practice area and there's enough room to keep our targets set up all the time and a separate room for a classroom."

Norton's first competition for the year was on February 23 in Oakley where Norton finished runner-up in the Logan County 4-H Regional BB Gun Shoot. Ten marksmen from Norton competed and seven qualified for the State 4-H BB Gun Shoot on April 13.

There is no written test of gun marksmanship and safety given for the 4-H shoots whereas that is part of the Kansas State Rifle Association Shoot being held this Saturday.

Second generation shooters

As in the past, Norton has been involved in the BB Gun program long enough that several shooters are second-generation marksmen.

Former Norton shooter Kim Hull is Miles Harrington's mother. Shannon Goss has three children on the team, Riley Goss, Morgan Goss and Miles Goss. Christien Hawks is the son of former Blue Jay marksman Jeremy Hawks.

BB Gun Museum

A plaque in honor of the international BB gun program originator Duane Winder is in the BB Gun Museum on East U.S. 36 Highway in Norton.

The museum contains trophies, medals, newspaper articles and other memorabilia of the Norton shooting education program.

Shotgun winner

The Norton BB Gun Team held a drawing for a Browning 12-gauge shotgun as a fund raiser and the winner was Corinna Olliff.

The shotgun was donated by the Longspur Pheasants Forever chapter.

"The shotgun tickets really sold well," said coach Elliott. "We really appreciate this kind of community support."

Athlete signs letter of intent

By Dick Boyd

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Norton Community High School senior John Risewick, an excellent all-around athlete, has signed a letter of intent to wrestle for Bethany College in Lindsborg.

John is a four-time state medalist in wrestling for the Norton Blue Jays. He is a two-time state wrestling champion, which included this season.

He is a wide receiver and linebacker in football where he lettered two years. He was also a second team offensive choice for the All-Mid-Continent League Football Team this fall and also received honorable mention on defense.

He has also lettered three years in golf while at NCHS and

is a solid member of the Norton American Legion baseball team in the summer.

"I don't recommend that athletes go on to compete in college because I realize how difficult it is to become a full-time student and full-time athlete," said Norton head wrestling coach Bill Johnson.

"I never initiate the process of going on because I want them to show their desire on their own.

"It's very tough competing in athletics in college. They may stick with it longer if they make the decision on their own.

"Every wrestler we send on to college to compete is a reflection of our program in Norton. John will be a good reflection at the next level. He'll work hard in college to get to the next level.

"Bethany is a good college where he will receive more individual attention."

Jacob Marrs is the head wrestling coach for the Bethany Swedes.

"John Risewick is an outstanding young man from a supportive community, family and wrestling program," said Coach Marrs.

"John has had a good upbringing, great coaching and he possesses excellent character and work ethic.

"John will raise the level of this place and all those he comes into contact with.

"We have high expectations for him. Go Swedes!"

John is the son of Dawn and Rich Risewick.



John Risewick, outstanding Norton Community High School senior athlete, is shown signing a letter of intent to wrestle at Bethany College in Lindsborg. Also pictured are his mother Dawn and father Rich. Standing is his high school wrestling coach Bill Johnson.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

All-League basketball team members announced

The member schools of the Western Kansas Liberty League have selected their 2013 All-League Boys and Girls Basketball teams. The following are the results of those selections. The honorees are listed alphabetically first by school and then by name.

2013 WKLL All-League Boys Basketball team

Cheylin
Joshua Keltz, senior
Adam Orten, senior
Kenan Reeh, senior
Golden Plains
Tritan Schwarz, junior
Healy
Luis Hernandez, senior
Logan
No representative
Northern Valley
Matt Stutsman, sophomore
Palco
Seth Armbrister, senior
Brent Gehring, sophomore
Chase Newell, senior

Triplains/Brewster
Michael Schmidt, senior
Seth Smith, junior
Weskan
Jared McKinney, senior
Samuel McKinney, senior
Hayden Walker, junior
Western Plains
Casey Kraus, senior
Wheatland/Grinnell
No representative
Honorable Mention-Boys
(Schools listed alphabetically)
Regan Kats, freshman-Logan
Jordan Baird, junior-Northern Valley
Drake Wentz, junior-Western Plains
Eddie Beckett, junior-Western Plains
Austin Lager, senior-Wheatland/Grinnell
2013 WKLL All-League Girls Basketball team
Cheylin
Stephanie Busse, senior
Shayla Hubbard, junior

Golden Plains
Jordan Christensen, junior
Kylie Jones, junior
Angela Ritter, senior
Healy
No representative
Logan
Brooke Hammond, junior
Northern Valley
Brooke Baird, freshman
Palco
Fallyn Handley, junior
Kali Newell, senior
Triplains/Brewster
Brittany Plummer, junior
Shayna Rogge, sophomore
Weskan
Kelsey Hale, junior
Robyn See, sophomore
Western Plains
No representative
Wheatland/Grinnell
Brooke Ostmeier, senior
Paige Ramey, junior
Honorable Mention-Girls
(Schools listed alphabetically)
Kiley Marcotte, junior-Palco

Ruth Hair, junior-Western Plains
Kassandra Herrera, senior-Weskan

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FUNDRAISER
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for Fun and Games
from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on
SATURDAY, MARCH 23
Casino Games with Funny Money
Bring the Entire Family to Enjoy the Fun!!
Auction will follow with items to purchase using your funny money
THIS WILL BE A SMOKE-FREE EVENT UNTIL 10:00 P.M.
Fundraiser for the Fraternal Order of Eagles Diabetic Research Center at the University of Iowa
— MEMBERS AND GUESTS WELCOME —