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Rifle Junior Olympic Championships Will Unveil the Future Generation of USA Shooting This Week at Hillsdale College

COLO SPRGS, CO (May 12, 2021) – Later this week, the nation's top junior rifle shooters will stand shoulder-to-shoulder in one of the most competitive and thrilling events of 2021 at the National Rifle Junior Olympic Shooting Championships (NJOSC). Traditionally contested at the Olympic and Paralympic Training Center (OPTC) in Colorado Springs, this year the athletes will compete in Hillsdale, Michigan from May 12-16, 2021.

This competition provides an opportunity to clinch the coveted title of Rifle Junior Olympic Champion, while also offering the publicity and exposure necessary for future shooting opportunities well into college and beyond.

"In the summer of 2020, five months into the pandemic shutdowns, Rich Pewe and I stood in the center of the Biermann Athletic Center and contemplated holding the Junior Olympic Championships at Hillsdale. Without the assistance and partnership of Hillsdale College, we would not be able to hold this match in 2021," said USA Shooting CEO, Matt Suggs.

NJOSC is particularly special this year for a few reasons. This will be one of many 2021 scheduled competitions taking place at Hillsdale College, including Shotgun National Junior Olympic Championships and Shotgun National Championships. Both shotgun events will be held at the state-of-the-art John Anthony Halter Shooting Sports Center, also known as "Home of the USA Shooting National Team." Along with its new location, Rifle Junior Olympic Championships will be the largest USA Shooting rifle event of the year. This is a highly anticipated match as the last NJOSC took place in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling all NJOSC competitions for the year 2020.

In order to gain an invite to the National Junior Olympics, competitors had to compete at the state-level where they had to shoot well enough to meet this year's cut-off scores, the majority of them champions in their respective state. Out of the 1,400+ total state competitors, only 33%, 487 total received an invite. Competitors hail from 44 states, with the largest number of athletes coming from Texas, Virginia and Pennsylvania with the following clubs producing the most athletes: Arlington Optimist Acorns in Virginia, and ZIA Rifle & Pistol Club from New Mexico. The youngest athletes include Women's Air Rifle, Shannon Moriarty (Great Mills, MD), Women's Smallbore, Ella Lee (Roxbury, MA), Men's Air Rifle, Gavin Carrizales (Scottsbluff, NE) and Men's Smallbore, Parker Sullivan (Wayne, MN).



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NCAA athletes will make a large appearance at this year's NJOSC. Over 30 NCAA athletes will compete for a title from 15 Universities around the country including: University of Kentucky, ARMY, U.S. Air Force Academy, University of Alaska Fairbanks, University of North Georgia, Moorehead University, Murray State, University of Memphis, Nebraska, West Virginia University, Akron, The Citadel, Ole Miss, Georgia Southern, and Texas Christian University.

Named Air Rifle Olympians and NCAA competitors, Will Shaner (Colorado Springs, CO) and Mary Tucker (Sarasota, FL) will compete at their last Junior Olympic National Championships this year. Tucker tied the Women's Air Rifle highest qualification score of 598 with Calista Smoyer (Slatington, PA) and shot the sole highest qualifying score in Women's Smallbore Rifle with a score of 594. Shaner tied the Men's Air Rifle highest qualifying score of 597 with Olympic Alternate Matt Sanchez (Tampa, FL). Shaner also tied the Men's Smallbore Rifle qualifying score of 586 with Andrew Duross (Marlboro, MA).

Full match program and daily results for Rifle NJOSC can be found on the USA Shooting website (<https://www.usashooting.org/7-events/njosc>)

Follow along for competition updates on the USA Shooting website ([usashooting.org/news](https://www.usashooting.org/news)), Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

About USA Shooting

USA Shooting, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation was chartered by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee as the National Governing Body for the Olympic Shooting Sports in April 1995. The organization develops and implements programs to promote growth in the sport and serves as a sanctioning body for local and national competitions. Headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the US Olympic and Paralympic Training Center, USA Shooting has a full-time staff dedicated to our sport.