

Silver Bay Clay-Busters Aim High

By John Sandstrom

The Silver Bay Clay-Busters trapshooting team has completed their conference season and finished the year in second place. There are nine teams in the conference which are determined by the number of shooters on a team.

Trap shooting is the fastest growing high school sport in the country. As an example, there are 12,000 high school shooters in Minnesota. Safety is paramount. There are no documented injuries in the sport's history, an enviable mark for any sport.

Head coach Al Klotzbach is in his seventh year. When asked what he wants people to know about the sport, he responded, "This is a lifetime sport. We have a 94-year old gentleman who still shoots at the club. Another great thing about the sport is that everyone participates. There is no bench."

Two competitions remain. During the first weekend of June, the team participates in the 'Pheasants Forever' shoot in Proctor. Ten days later, the team travels to Alexandria and participates in the largest clay target tournament in the country with up to 9,000 shooters representing 340 teams.

Assistant coach Tom Sullivan says his highlight of the year was seeing Damon Sullivan and Sam Peterson shoot a perfect 25 out of 25. "They were both very excited and I was just as excited for them."

Sam Peterson was the "top gun" on the team for the year. He narrowly out shot Laura Sullivan by two tenths of a point. Laura was the female conference champion. For his part, Sam says he enjoys trap shooting because it is a challenge every time he shoots. "The wind can play a big factor in a person's score and

you need to account for it." Sam shoots with his grandfather's classic gun, a Winchester Model 12.

Sophomore Laura Sullivan has been shooting for three years. She enjoys it because it is competitive and "you compete against yourself, but you are still part of a team. Everyone counts and everyone can participate". Laura has to balance her commitment to the team with playing softball for the Mariners. Being the female conference champion was a thrill for her. "Even though it was the 'girl's champion,' it was exciting and unexpected."

The team has seven members including Sam Peterson, Damon Sullivan, Laura Sullivan, Chase Hipple, Patrick Smith, Kaleb Krech, and Braylen Hoff. The coaches expect that number to grow next year by several members.

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