

LOCAL NEWS

# Lorain County produces two clay shooting national champs



Jesse Scott, left, a Keystone High School junior, and Dakota Hessoun, a North Ridgeville High School sophomore claimed the national title in both the Scholastic Clay Target Program men's and women's divisions. (Submitted)

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Lorain County is the home to pair of clay shooting national champions.

Out of 4,000 participants from all over the country at the recent national tournament in the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP), Jesse Scott, a Keystone High School junior, and Dakota Hessoun, a North Ridgeville High School sophomore, claimed the national title in the men's and women's divisions, respectively.



Jesse Scott, a Keystone High School junior, won the Scholastic Clay Target Program men's division national title. (Submitted)

There are two major youth clay shooting programs in the country, the [USA Clay Target League](#) and the [Scholastic Clay Target Program](#), which competes under the moniker of the Lorain County Youth Trap Team.

In the Scholastic Clay Target Program national tournament, Jesse won in the senior men's varsity division and Dakota won in the senior women's varsity division in the trap singles category, by far the largest event in the tournament.

Jesse shot a perfect score in the tournament, hitting 200 out of 200 clays.



Dakota Hessoun, a North Ridgeville High School sophomore, claimed the national title in the Scholastic Clay Target Program women's divisions. (Submitted)

He actually tied with another Ohioan forcing a shoot off, which Jesse won scoring another perfect 25 out of 25.

Dakota scored a 198 out of 200, and shot a perfect 100 out of 100 on the second day of shooting to vault into national championship honors.

Head coach Grant Comnick said it was amazing to have both the male and female individual national champions from the same team, as the national tournament is extremely competitive.

Secondly, the Scholastic Clay Target Program gives individual honors, but they stress team competition, too.

“I would be remiss to not say how proud I was of all our kids, to have a squad finishing in second place, a junior varsity squad in fourth place and a varsity team score in fourth place nationally, that’s quite an accomplishment,” Comnick said. “The excitement was palpable. The competition was really tough.

“The days were long, and these kids exhibited mental toughness and focus, which is a must in shooting. Competition is tough at this level, and even though I don’t know if we will ever have another national champion, we do have some youngsters in the intermediate and junior varsity classifications that have a lot of potential.

“I think we will be very competitive going forward for the next five or six years.”

In team scoring, the Lorain County team also did well in trap shooting. In the Intermediate Entry level division, composed of first year shooters in sixth through eighth grade, the squad of Aven Fye of LaGrange, Kaellen Cole from North Ridgeville, Silas Judy from North Ridgeville, Griffin Stypa from North Ridgeville, and Clark Boose from Avon placed second.

There are 30 youngsters on the Lorain County team.

In the junior varsity division, the squad of Sam Arnold from North Ridgeville, Lucas Jirousek from LaGrange, Matt Kinosh from Elyria, Zak Batey from Bellevue, and Robbie Bodak from North Ridgeville were fourth place.

And finally, in the senior division team scoring, the team of Jesse Scott, Dakota Hessoun, Juliana Clarke from North Ridgeville, Ian Hurst from LaGrange, and Matt Mohrman of Wellington were fourth place.

Their score missed a four way tie for first place by a single target.

“We just have some special kids coming out the way they do on a regular basis. I think we have a good program, and we have some good coaches good technical coaches,” Comnick said. “We teach the game, the mechanics, the mental part of the game.

“The kids learn responsibility. We stress safety every day, but we also try to have fun. If the kids that come out have fun in a safe environment, and have fun competing, then we have succeeded.

“I think it’s a team thing, too, so they make a lot of friends. You want to do well and you have to be out there and you have to practice you just like any other sport.

“It teaches you that guns can be safe when handled properly. It teaches them some mental discipline too in order to shoot as well as they do because you have to have mental focus and discipline.”

Participation can start as early as fifth grade, and runs through high school.

There also is a division for collegiate shooters.

Youngsters interested in participating on the team can go to

[www.NRShootingSports.com](http://www.NRShootingSports.com).

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2024 > September > 1