

New Mexico Tech Shooting Sports Club competes in the NRA Intercollegiate Rifle and Pistol Club Sectionals

The New Mexico Tech Shooting Sports Club competed in the NRA Intercollegiate Rifle and Pistol Club Sectionals Feb 9-10, 2019 in Socorro, NM. Shooters must compete in the sectionals in order to qualify for the NRA Intercollegiate Rifle and Pistol Championships held March 2019 in Fort Benning, GA. Rifle consists of 2 events: air rifle (60 shots standing at 10 m) and smallbore (.22) rifle (20 shots in each of 3 positions—prone, standing, kneeling at 50 ft) for a total possible score of 600. Although the NRA has both .22 pistol and air pistol at both the sectionals and national championships, New Mexico Tech competed only in the air pistol event this year, which consists of 60 shots standing at 10 m.

Unlike most rifle teams in the U.S. that shoot on indoor ranges, the New Mexico Tech smallbore rifle team had to compete outdoors because it has no indoor .22 rifle range. So on Saturday Feb 9, 2019, 4 members of the rifle team competed outdoors (Troy Vigil, Vincent Herrera, Macs Brown, Raymond Sanchez). They started with the prone position at a temperature of about 35 degrees and everyone shot close to their normal scores. As the day went on, the temperature increased, but the wind came up during the standing position, making it seem even colder than when they started! By the time the team shot kneeling, the wind was blowing 20 mph, with stronger gusts. Despite the tough conditions, Troy Vigil won Gold and did shoot a qualifying score (490/600) to enable him to compete at the NRA Intercollegiate Smallbore Rifle Championships. However, the team score fell short of the qualifying score needed to compete at Nationals as a team.

On Sunday, the New Mexico Tech rifle and pistol teams moved indoors (much warmer and no wind) at the New Mexico Tech gym to compete in the air rifle and air pistol events. In air rifle, Hannah Murphy won Gold (score of 517/600) and 2 members of the team qualified to compete in the NRA Intercollegiate Air Rifle Championships as individuals (Troy Vigil and Hannah Murphy). Troy Vigil was 2nd (score of 514/600). The team also qualified to compete as a team (4 members). The other 3 shooters were Vincent Herrera, Eli Jackson, and Macs Brown.

The top 30 air pistol shooters and the top 10 teams throughout the U.S. are invited to compete at the NRA Intercollegiate Pistol Championships based upon the sectional scores, so we do not know yet if any of the New Mexico Tech shooters qualified for the national event. However, Vincent Herrera won Gold. The other air pistol shooters were Haley Dietz, Troy Vigil, and Hannah Murphy.

The New Mexico Tech Shooting Sports Club practices indoors at the New Mexico Tech gym every Monday night during the school semester at 5-7 PM. Anyone over 10 yrs old, including non-Tech students is welcome to attend. The club also has other rifle and pistol outdoor events and anyone is welcome to participate. Contact coaches Virginia McLemore (virginia.mclemore@nmt.edu) or Jim McLemore (1979redcorvette@gmail.com) for more information.

Finally, the New Mexico Tech Shooting Sports Club would like to thank our many sponsors for their support throughout the year: New Mexico Tech, Midway Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, NRA Foundation, and local and regional gun clubs, including Socorro, Capitan, Sandia (Albuquerque), and Zia (Albuquerque).

February 10, 2019
Virginia T. McLemore



New Mexico Tech rifle team shooting prone position with .22 rifles at the Socorro Gun Range.



New Mexico Tech rifle team kneeling prone position with .22 rifles at the Socorro Gun Range.



New Mexico Tech rifle team air pistol and air rifles at the New Mexico Tech Gym.



Winners. From left to right: Vincent Herrera Gold Air Pistol, Troy Vigil Gold Smallbore Rifle, and Hannah Murphy Gold Air Rifle.