

Camp Perry 2011: Of National Champions and National Records

The days were simply the hottest in recent years at the Camp Perry National Matches. This was the Smallbore phase of the 2011 matches, Position Week to be exact. The day is Saturday, July 23, 2011. The air temperature is 98 degrees with a heat index of 114 degrees! But there was something even hotter than the air on Saturday, July 23rd... your Gun Owners of New Hampshire State Junior Team.

New Hampshire has traditionally fielded one of the largest contingents of smallbore competitors at Camp Perry, particularly "Junior" smallbore competitors. The New Hampshire Juniors have not dipped beneath 10 in numbers for at least eight years. This year, 16 Juniors temporarily moved their trigger skills from New Hampshire to Ohio for 11 days. Can you call a teenager a grizzled veteran of these matches? Some of these teenagers are competing for their 7th consecutive year at Camp Perry!

Saturday is Team Day for the smallbore position matches. For 2011, some members of the Hudson F&G Junior Rifle Team and the Ferry Brook Junior Shooters combined their strengths to create a Gun Owners of New Hampshire State Team. Individually these young men and women already have incredible resumes including: an individual NRA National Champion, NCAA rifle competitors, several Regional Championship wins, and lots more. Throw NH's four top Juniors together and collectively they could make history!

Who's who? From Hudson comes Smallbore Position Master Brian Jylkka, Experts Brad Driscoll and Megan Polonsky. Ferry Brook adds Expert Alex Martin. Team Captain is Hudson Team Alumni Adam Auclair who now age 21 cannot compete as a junior any longer. Team Coach is Hudson's JRT Director Keith Jylkka.

The course of fire this Saturday morning is 20 shots prone in 20 minutes, 20 shots standing in 30 minutes and 20 shots kneeling in 30 minutes. With a potential 600 points per person, this is a 2400 point match.

Firing begins at 0800 and all Team members start strong and stay strong throughout, despite the scorching heat. Hydrate and fuel between stages. Hydrate and fuel again. Don't let the conditions win out or get in your head. Stay focused. By late morning, the metallic sight match is behind them and they're already preparing for their second team match of the day, the Any Sights match. The GONH guys know they did well. They are a confident bunch. They hydrate and fuel with thoughts only about their next match. The Shooters, Captain and Coach talk. Talk about managing the wind and light changes better. They talk about the Coach calling out the wind changes seconds before it even happens by watching the grass and the wind flags a hundred feet left. The results of the metallic sights Team match haven't even been posted yet, but they give it no thought. They are focused only what they can do even better in the next match.

After firing is complete for the day, the metallic sight match bulletin goes up. There are subtle oohs and ahhs. Is that right? A bunch of Juniors from New Hampshire take second place overall!?! Ahead of a Team from the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit? Yup. Okay.

MATCH 221 — 3-POSITION METALLIC SIGHT TEAM MATCH

Four member team, Metallic sights, each pos.

2011 National Matches - Camp Perry, Ohio		FINAL RESULTS BULLETIN	Teams Entered - 49	Teams Finng - 49
WINNER	3PM101 USAMU STRIKE FORCE GOLD	Coach: OLSON, JOSHUA J. Captain: OLSON, JOSHUA J. 1109 CPL RAWLINGS, MATTHEW L., USA 1110 SSG NORTON, GEORGE K., USA 1113 CPT ABALO, CHRISTOPHER R., USA 1118 SGT HEIN, JOSEPH A., USA	2391— 169 589— 47 597— 36 599— 47 598— 39	SIX HERCULES TROPHY PLAQUES AND A \$20 VISA GIFT CARD TO EACH FIRING TEAM MEMBER
SECOND	3PM129 GUN OWNERS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE	Coach: JYLKKA, KEITH Captain: AUCLAIR, ADAM M. 5056 JYLKKA, BRIAN 5109 DRISCOLL, BRAD 5124 MARTIN, ALEXANDER J. 5200 POLONSKY, MEGAN R.	2361— 119 596— 33 590— 31 587— 29 588— 26	NRA SILVER TONE MEDALS
THIRD	3PM102 USAMU STRIKE FORCE GOLD	Coach: NO COACH Captain: SSG BARNHART, SHANE , USA 1112 SSG BARNHART, SHANE , USA 1114 SSG GRAY, HENRY H., USA 1115 LTC BRIGHT, RHONDA , USA 1116 LTC FRAZIER, KRISTIN , USA	2360— 144 587— 41 591— 35 592— 40 580— 28	NRA BRONZE TONE MEDALS
HIGH JUNIOR TEAM	3PM129 GUN OWNERS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE	Coach: JYLKKA, KEITH Captain: AUCLAIR, ADAM M.	2361— 119 596— 33 590— 31 587— 29 588— 26	SIX HERCULES TROPHY LAMINATED PLAQUES

But wait, there's more... look a little lower... Junior Team National Champions. Cooooool says the hottest Junior Team in the USA for the moment.

For the third straight year, a Junior Team from New Hampshire will step up to the stage to accept honors as Junior Team National Champions at Camp Perry. Hudson's Junior Gold Team did it in '10 & '09. But now, for 2011, the Gun Owners of New Hampshire is in the bright white spotlight!

On stage in the auditorium that same Saturday night, the six competitive representatives for the Gun Owners of New Hampshire are called to the stage to accept the accolades of their peers and awards from the NRA. The 2011 Hercules Trophy for Junior National Champion and Silver National Championship medallions for second place overall. Standing proud across the stage at Camp Perry are the Gun Owners of New Hampshire.



Left to right: Presenter Lones Wigger, Coach Keith Jylkka, Captain Adam Auclair, Alex Martin, Megan Polonsky, Brian Jylkka and Brad Driscoll

But wait, there's even more... unbeknownst to the champions was one more honor to be bestowed. Well-not-so-fast. Additional honors would not happen on stage that night. It would be weeks, or more accurately, months to be announced. The ying/yang like pendulum has swung from the high heat of July at Perry to four chilly New Hampshire mailboxes in December. In the mailbox is the final honor for their efforts on the morning of July 23. Each competitor now holds in their hands a brand new NRA National Record certificate. The previous record has fallen and the Gun Owners of New Hampshire now own the NRA National Record for 3 Position Junior Team.

Congratulations to the thousands of members of Gun Owners of New Hampshire! You have a Team of young people who represent you well.

