

# AMERICAN LEGION JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition. Shooters use the .177 caliber air rifle. Both males and females can participate, through Legion sponsorship; disabled youth are encouraged to join, as competitive shooting is a sport that creates an equal playing field for all competitors.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

In shooting sports, you don't have to sit on the sidelines: Anyone under 18 (or high school seniors no older than 20) can participate. Physical ability and size are no match for mental toughness and discipline in this co-ed skill sport.

## Why Shooting Sports?

After demonstrating knowledge of safety techniques, you will join the centuries of Americans who have mastered marksmanship for survival and sport. But the appeal doesn't stop at our nation's borders — the best marksmen from around the globe vie for Olympic gold. In fact, 2002 American Legion Three-Position National Champion Jamie Corkish won a gold medal at the 2012 Olympics. As you become a better marksman, you'll gain responsibility, confidence and self-reliance. To hit your mark, you will also have to improve your ability to concentrate. Plus, you'll develop a skill you can enjoy and hone throughout your life.

## Beginner: Safety First

All participants start with rifle safety and fundamentals. The Legion prides itself on safety. There has never been a rifle-related injury in Junior Shooting Sports Program history. You'll learn the right way to handle, load, aim and fire a rifle.

## Intermediate: Build Skills

Once you have mastered the basics, you can take air rifle courses from the National Rifle Association or the Civilian Marksmanship Program through your club. These will help you develop your skills, set personal goals and work to achieve established performance standards.

## Advanced: Compete With Others

Your club may hold competitions among its own members, or it may host or attend regional matches. The two basic kinds of competitions are postal and shoulder-to-

shoulder. In a postal match, you and fellow participants shoot at targets and then mail them off to be scored. Shoulder-to-shoulder matches are in-person and scored in real-time. The American Legion Junior Three-Position Air Rifle Tournament begins with postal matches. The best 30 junior marksmen from across the country earn an expense paid opportunity to contend for the National Championship in Colorado Springs, Colo. In the same facility where Olympians train, those junior marksmen will compete in a shoulder-to-shoulder match for the title.