

# The 2024 US Open

//// by karla harrison



Summer's surge of shooting continued to put registered targets in the air at the World Shooting and Recreational Complex May 29-June 2 near Sparta, Illinois. The 2024 U.S. Open drew in 728 entries (an increase for the second year in a row) and those shooters chasing All American points (with its Factor 4 events) competed for over 300 trophies. In conjunction with the U.S. Open registered program, young shooters participated in the championship events on Saturday and Sunday as members of the Southern Illinois Youth Shooting Sports Association (SIYSSA).

## Preliminary Wednesday

Complimentary food and drinks were served by the Butcher's Block at lunch time on Wednesday and Thursday and following the last event on Saturday. This local business has been a favorite vendor during the U.S. Open, AIM Nationals and Grand American for the past 15 years.

Bruce Davis kicked off the tournament with a flawless performance in the Promatic Singles, winning him the event championship. Dagen Voigtman (AAA/100); Frank Payne (AA/99); James Frost (A/99); Grayson Stout (Sub Junior/98); and Larry Norton all laid the foundation to their eventual High Over All awards. Anna Rawe and Sandy Digesualdo led the Ladies with scores of 95 and 99 respectively. Jack Holland (Junior champ) Doug Cox (Veteran champ) and Stephen Russell (Senior Veteran champ) collected trophies after breaking all 100. Jordan Ziercher was Junior Gold champ and Henry Winn was Sub Veteran champ, both with scores of 99.

Indiana resident Lance Dooley set the bar in the Little Egypt Handicap with his championship score of 99. Dr. Scott Norris, fellow Indiana shooter, won the Senior Veteran champion's award with 95. Wesley Eavenson was Junior champ (94); Brian Cox earned a Sub Veteran



Hospitality Tents

award and Aiden Nace was event fifth, both with scores of 93.

Ian Lawrence began his quest toward High Over All honors with his event win in the Graf & Sons Doubles. Tied scores in the Singles and Doubles events all carried over during the week. Lawrence eventually defeated Tyler Honnold, (Junior Champ) both with perfect scores. Heading to the trophy counter were Aiden Deitering (AA/97); Payton Wottowa (A/96); Drew Hoekstra (B/95); Ronnie Fearheiley (C/90); Cindy Riggs (Lady II/91); John Davis (Veteran/97); and David Winn (Senior Veteran 93).

## Thursday

Gilbert Palmer became the Trap & Field Singles champion after all scores of 100 were carried forward into the week. Others collecting trophies with 100 hits were Keith Ditto (AAA); Izaak Zihlman (Junior); Jacob Fournie (Junior Gold); Bernie Merchlewitz (Sub Veteran); James Frost (Veteran); and Frank Payne (Senior Veteran).

Fourteen trophies were handed out after the Friends of the WSRC Handicap shoot-offs were concluded. Scores of 98 and 95 were called for extras and after the lines cleared, Dagen Voigtman was the event champ; Drake Reynolds

earned Junior honors; and Eric Munson won Sub Veteran accolades, all with 98. Bobby Fowler was event third outright (96). With tied scores of 95, Lance Dooley was the event fourth; David Giacomi took fifth; Doug Cox was Veteran; and Ronnie Ruebhausen was Senior Veteran.

Beautiful belt buckles were presented to the winners of the Molly's Custom Silver Doubles after scores of 99 were later sorted out by carry-over. Dagen Voigtman's buckle was designed for the champion while Ian Lawrence sported the Junior Gold buckle; Michael Hathaway now wears the Veteran's buckle; and Frank Payne took home the Senior Veteran's buckle, all with scores of 99. Winners with scores of 98 included Garrett Helms (AAA); Tal Parmenter (A); Jack Holland (Junior); and John Farina (Sub Veteran).

## Friday

New faces took trophy places in the NRA Class Singles. Kenneth Kauffman, of Kentucky, was one of eight to take home a trophy (AA champ) with a 100 straight. Others with scores of perfection were Dagen Voigtman (event champ); Coltyn Schutte (Sub Junior); Gilbert Palmer (Junior); Aiden Deitering (Junior RU);



Clay Murphy

Jacob Fournie (Junior Gold); and Jordan Ziercher (Junior Gold runner-up).

Event 8, the Preliminary Handicap was presented by Rio Shotshells. In celebration of the upcoming 125th anniversary of the Grand American, Rio has introduced their Vintage 1896 paper hull target load. Sub Junior Clay Murphy made his presence known in the Preliminary Handicap by winning the champion's title without any challenges from the field of 267 entries. His score of 99 stood two marks above runner-up Dagen Voigtman; Keith Ditto (3rd); Jack Holland (Junior); Jacob Anderson (Junior runner-up); Ian Lawrence (Junior Gold); and Mike Westjohn (Senior Veteran).

Keith Ditto (AAA champ) and Tyler Honnold (Junior champ) came close but fell one target short of Dagen Voigtman's lone 100 to win the Class Doubles Championship, presented by Kubota: Sparta Equipment Sales & Service..

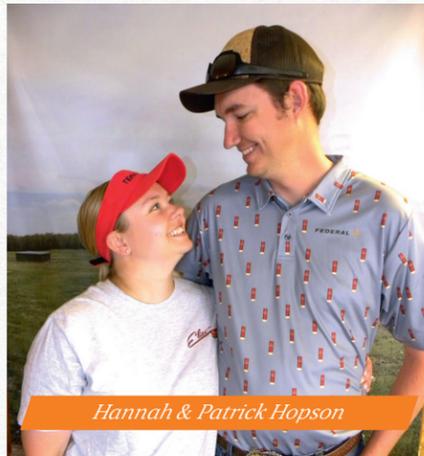
In the Veteran's group, Dean Townsend and Matt Smelser knotted with 95 for champion and runner-up

respectively. Iowa resident Lexi Henning won Junior runner-up with 98.

### Saturday

It took a solid 200 to place in the top four slots in the Junior categories on the winner's list for the U.S. Open Singles Championship, presented by Winchester—official ammunition of the ATA. Patrick Hopson (event champ); Zach Nannini (event runner-up); Bobby Fowler (AAA champ); and Keith Ditto (AAA runner-up) all answered the shoot-off call along with Drake Reynolds (Junior champ); Payton Wottowa (Junior runner-up); and Gilbert Palmer (Junior 3rd).

Entries swelled to 545 on Saturday



Hannah & Patrick Hopson

as members of the Southern Illinois Youth Shooting Sports Association (SIYSSA) took to the line in the Singles Championship.

While ATA shooters were squadded on traps in front of the permanent vendor buildings on the west side of the complex, SIYSSA shooters stretched out along the eastern trapline. A sparse number of vendors were open as they took advantage of being on the grounds to prepare for the upcoming AIM Nationals and the Grand American.

Individual SIYSSA champions included: Wyatt Ritter High Over All/389 and Singles HOA/198; Briley Dent High Lady/195; Kayden Kelly A/197; Briar Clement B/193; Lane Hill C/194; William Naliborski D/196; Jacob Fournie JR Gold/199; Gavin Kuenster Pre-Sub/187.

In Sunday's Doubles, SIYSSA champions were Jayce Wellen HOA/98; Drake Lawler A/98; Brendon Landreth C/94; Gavin Kloth D/89.

The final event of the SIYSSA tournament was 100 Handicap and youth shooters taking home trophies were Brenden Landreth, HOA/98; Drake Lawler, long yardage/91; Dawson Hemker, mid-yardage/96; John Holste, short yardage/97.

In SIYSSA competitions, in addition to individual honors, squad trophies are presented. The High Over All Squad was



Claybusters Team

the Fox Fire Varsity (960); Varsity Squad champs were on the Pinckneyville team (957); Crab Orchard JV was the best Junior Varsity squad (951); Intermediate Advanced 1st place went to the Mascoutah team (937); Intermediate Entry squad were members of the Fox Fire team (813); Open team honors went to Mascoutah (940); Junior Gold team trophies were awarded to Waltonville (968).

Second and third place awards were also presented to individuals and teams.

A single miss on his first trap turned out to be Dagen Voigtman's only target to get away and put him in the champion's spotlight in the SOS Clays Handicap. Samuel Wehde and Keith Ditto were runner-up and event 3rd both with scores of 98. Justin Weis became 4th place winner with 97 after a shoot-off against Brady Duren (Junior); Jack Holland (Junior runner-up); Carter White (Junior 3rd) Cole Henning (Junior Gold) and Bob Felber (Senior Veteran). Samuel Leiendecker rounded out the top spots as the fifth-place finisher with 96.

**Sunday**

When the last twin targets of the U.S. Open Doubles Championship (presented by White Flyer Targets) ended their flight, shoot-offs were called for scores of 100/99/98/97/96/95/94. Four top scores of 100 from Ian Lawrence, Zach Nannini, Keith Ditto, and Tyler Honnold resulted in Lawrence as champion, Nannini as runner-up, Ditto won Class AAA and Honnold took home the Junior champion trophy. This was a repeat from last year's score and place for both Nannini and Honnold. Ditto also repeated his placement from last year but improved his score from 97 in 2023 to 100 this year.

One target off the pace, Trey Wilburn was AAA runner-up; Patrick Hopson won AA champ; Mason Bartlow took home Junior runner-up; and Cole Henning picked up the Junior Gold



Ian Lawrence



Zach Nannini

champion's award.

U.S. Open Handicap Championship—it doesn't matter if you miss two targets on the first field and run them out (as did Samuel Leiendecker and Dagen Voigtman) or if you miss one target on each of the two middle traps (like Richard Thompson and Brendan Landreth), everyone goes to a shoot-off for champion with a score of 98 in the US Open Handicap Championship presented by Browning.

At final tally, Voigtman was Champion; Leiendecker was runner-up; Landreth took Junior Champ.

Thompson claimed the Sub Veteran title. Trophies were awarded to the top seven event places, while in the Sub Junior, Junior and Junior Gold categories the top five shooters took home awards.

**High Over All**

Dagen Voigtman needed more than a golf cart to haul all of his trophies back to Nebraska. Out of the program's 15 events, his name was listed as champion in eight contests and as runner-up in three others. His total of 988x1000



Samuel Leiendecker, Dagen Voigtman & Brenden Mowen

**Winchester Singles Championship**

Champion	Patrick Hopson	200
RU	Zach Nannini	200
AAA	Bobby Fowler	200
AA	Tim Lewis	197
A	Aaron Kortte	199
B	Wyatt Ritter	198
C	Robert Martin	195
D	Chris Sternecker	196
Sub Jr	Grady Fallert	196
Junior	Drake Reynolds	200
Jr Gold	Jacob Fournie	199
LDI	Hannah Hopson	199
LDII	Shelly Heitner	196
Sub Vet	Durand Wagner	199
Veteran	Michael Hathaway	199
Sr Vet	Mike Westjohn	199
Chair	Larry Norton	185

**White Flyer Doubles Championship**

Champion	Ian Lawrence	100
RU	Zach Nannini	100
AAA	Keith Ditto	100
AA	Patrick Hopson	99
A	Alexander Miller	97
B	Jaxson Wilson	95
C	Aaron Kortte	94
D	Alex Paul	92
Sub Jr	Drake Lawler	98
Junior	Tyler Honnold	100
Jr Gold	Cole Henning	99
LDI	Caroline Hope	93
LDII	Janice Rigler	93
Sub Vet	Henry Winn	98
Veteran	Mike Dennis	97
Sr Vet	David Coles	94
Chair	Larry Norton	87

**Browning Handicap Championship**

Champion	Dagen Voigtman	98
RU	Samuel Leidecker	98
3rd	Brenden Mowen	97
4th	Jerrold Vaupel	96
5th	Carl Swift	96
6th	Garrett Helms	95
7th	Kevin Polson	95
Sub Jr	Gavin Kuenstler	97
Junior	Brendan Landreth	98
Jr Gold	Ian Lawrence	96
LDI	Millicent Laboube	94
LDII	Brenda Dennis	87
Sub Vet	Richard Thompson	98
Veteran	Mike Dennis	95
Sr Vet	Bob Felber	95
Chair	Larry Norton	95

**Browning High All Around**

Champion	Ian Lawrence	395
AAA	Dagen Voigtman	395
A	Aaron Kortte	385
B	Parker McDowell	384
C	Robert Martin	377
D	Zach Boatner	373
LDI	Millicent Laboube	379
LDII	Janice Rigler	365
Sub Jr	Drake Lawler	380
Junior	Derick Gerding	390
Jr Gold	Jordan Ziercher	392
Sub Vet	Kevin Polason	383
Veteran	Mike Dennis	391
Sr Vet	Frank Payne	381
Chair	Larry Norton	367

**White Flyer High Over All**

Champion	Dagen Voigtman	988
AAA	Keith Ditto	977
AA	Cole Henning	955
A	Jack Holland	959
B	Maddox Schulte	932
C	Dexter Ruffcorn	901
D	Harold Niebruegge	874
LDI	Katie Gilbertson	944
LDII	Shelly Heitner	901
Sub Jr	Grayson Stout	946
Junior	Tyler Honnold	967
Jr Gold	Ian Lawrence	978
Sub Vet	Eric Munson	964
Veteran	James Frost	944
Sr Vet	Frank Payne	952
Chair	Larry Norton	903

*In Sparta*



*Dagen Voigtman and his dad, Mike*

earned him top honors in the High Over All race, presented by White Flyer Targets.

Larry Norton doesn't make use of a golfcart, he shoots from a wheelchair. In fact, he shoots very well from a chair, as evidence of his High Over all championship (903x1000) and his High All Around win (367x400) both in the chair category.

**High All Around**

Junior Gold shooter Ian Lawrence won out over Dagen Voigtman to become the Browning High All Around Champion after both men ended the tournament with scores of 395x400.

Illinois resident, Ian Lawrence, claimed

a total of 8 trophies by week's end, including two event championships, six as Junior Gold category champion, and one category runner-up placement.

Senior Veteran Frank Payne topped all other shooters with longevity and experience by taking home both the High Over All (952x1000) and the High All Around (381x400) category trophies.

Plan ahead...You never know what you might see at a trapshoot unless you're there! This year at the U.S. Open, a pair of baby foxes could be seen in the arms of their owners in the grandstands, watching shoot-offs! Yes, they were real domesticated foxes and yes, they are legal to own and keep in captivity.

Dates for the U.S. Open next year are yet to be determined but keep your calendar clear the last of May and into June, 2025...go check out all the interesting sights you might see! ■

