

2024 Western Grand at Vernal Rod & Gun Club

//// by sean hawley



Just like every other Gun Club in the Association, the Vernal Rod and Gun Club prepared and planned, purchased supplies and worried if there would be enough or too much. They hired workers and made schedules, they prayed for good weather and hoped everyone who came to the shoot would enjoy themselves and afterwards tell their friends about their trip to the Beehive State. The 2024 Western Grand American was held in Vernal May 28 through June 2 and while the shoot was down around 5 percent on attendance it was clearly a successful shoot. The weather cooperated with mild temperatures and only a little wind at

the end of one day. It has been said that if you go to Vernal, you should expect a party and for six days that is exactly what happened. From a Cornhole tournament on Tuesday to Annie Oakley/Claybot games on Wednesday and Thursday there was plenty of fun. Following the Annies there was a Black Light Shoot Out each night and believe me those glow in the dark targets were pretty neat. There was a Fireworks show on Thursday night and Friday saw a Special event. Saturday evening there was a live band in the 8000 square foot lodge. Oh yeah, in between all that, there was even a trapshoot.



Jack Knaus

Tuesday

Preliminary Tuesday started off with the Board of Directors Welcoming Singles. Four shooters posted perfect centuries and all of them were category shoots. Jack Knaus (MN) and Wyatt Debrie (NE) took home Junior Gold and Sub Junior trophies, while Katie Jones (MB) and Vernal resident Joe Baker (UT) were the Lady 1 and Senior Veteran winners.

The Uintah County Handicap had Jack Knaus at the top of the leader board yet again. This time his 98 was a target ahead of Mitchell Pierson (NE). Knaus was the Junior Gold winner, while Pierson took home the 27 yard

trophy. Don Gibson (MT) was the 25-26.5 yardage group winner with 91 and Daniel Kruger (ID) broke 93 to win 22-24.5 yards. Barrett Debrie (NE) is the younger and much shorter brother of Sub Junior All American Captain Wyatt Debrie and he proved throughout the week that good things come in small packages. On this day he broke 93 to secure the short yardage win.

The Dalton Van Memorial Doubles finished off the day of shooting and for the third time Jack Knaus again had the top score on the board. This time he and Richard Marshall Jr (NE) each broke near perfect scores of 99 to win Junior Gold and AAA class respectively.

Tuesday evening there was a Cornhole tournament in the Lodge, where 20 randomly picked teams threw bags, laughed and teased each other until the final two teams squared off in the championship round. In the end, the team of Tyler Marshall and Jacob Eichler (CA) were victorious. This was the 3rd time in the last four years that Marshall was on the winning team.

Wednesday

The Craig and Sharon Hart Doubles marked the beginning of the 1100 target High Over All. Ryan Glow (NE) and Wyatt Debrie were taking it seriously



Tyler Marshall & Jacob Eichler- Cornhole Tournament Winners

with 100 straights to get things started. Glow took home the AAA trophy, while Debie was the Sub Junior Winner. Bruce Bradley (ID) and Perry Weiner (ND) carded 99s to claim the Junior and Sub Veteran prizes, while Cody Eye (KS) broke 98 to win Junior Gold.

Event 5 was Rho Rho's Rally Doubles sponsored by Eli and Rhonda Walker from Nevada. Ryan Glow found himself at the top of the board again, this time with 99 to win the AAA class trophy. Wyatt Debie, Jack Knaus and Steve Johnson (UT) were the Sub Junior, Junior Gold and Veteran winners with scores of 98.

The Friends of the VRGC Handicap was the final event of the day and the wind decided to show up for it. Gusts of 30 mph made shooting tough and the scores suffered. Still, trap shooters are a hardy bunch and they fought Mother Nature tooth and nail. Wyatt Debie broke the top score of the day with 95 and was the Sub Junior winner. His younger brother Barrett Debie posted a 93 to win the short yardage trophy. Ryan Glow won his carry-over with Richard Marshall Jr and Justin Debie (NE) (Father of Wyatt and Barrett) to earn the long yardage trophy, while Elaina McCarthy broke 94 to claim the Lady 1 prize.

Evening Fun

It never ceases to amaze me that after folks have shot all day, the first thing they want to do to relax and have some fun is to shoot more, but that's just the way trap shooters are wired. The Randy and Sharon Grilz Claybot/Annie Oakley shoots began around 7 pm with shooters paying \$20 for the chance to win \$500 split 50/30/20%. The proceeds from the entries were shared by the trap kids, without which, the Western Grand



Annie Oakley Shoot

could not happen. There were two Grilz Annies on Wednesday and two more on Thursday and when those were finished on each night the Claybot was set up with solid Green targets and another Annie was shot using twelve 300 watt Black Lights as the only source of light. Let me tell you, it looked like something out of Star Wars.

Thursday

The Singles Class Championship was the first of two events on Thursday and when the carry-over dust settled Richard Marshall, Jr. was the AAA class winner with a 100 plus 25 extras. Fellow Nebraskan Jason Krause finished as the AAA class Runner-Up. Don Williamson (AZ) bested Justin Debie in AA class and Jimmy Heller (AZ) broke 97 and an extra 25 to claim the A class trophy. Daniel Kruger, Joel Laborde (UT) and Craig Jones (UT) were the B, C and D class winners with scores of 98, 97 and 95.

The last event on Thursday was the Krieghoff International Handicap. Cody Eye, Gavin Kuck (NE) and Richard Marshall, Jr. all tied for champion with scores of 97. After a one round carryover where Marshall broke 24x25 the trophy



Ricky Marshall, Jr.



Jerri Hartwell

was his. Kuck took home the Junior trophy and Eye claimed the Junior Gold prize. Taite Hoopes (NM) broke 96 to win the Sub Junior category, while Leticia Slinker (NV) and Jerri Harwell (UT) broke 93 and 94 to win Lady 1 and Lady 2 trophies. Steve Ottesen (UT), Gary Bushnell (UT) and Gerry Williams (AZ) were the Sub Veteran, Veteran and Senior Veteran winners with scores of 94.

Dave Mansell provided the crawfish, shrimp, sausage and all the fixings while Cody Renkoski brought his big cooker. The boil was amazing and free to anyone who wanted some great food.



Dave Mansell

Friday

The morning started off with the Doubles Class Championship and there were two perfectos shot. Cody Eye and Richard Marshall Jr each put 100s on the board and Marshall finished as the AAA class winner, while Eye took home the Junior Gold trophy. Sharred Oaks (UT) was one behind Marshall for AAA Runner-Up and Utah State President Chris Kinder broke 99 as well to secure the AA trophy. Wyatt Debrie broke 99 to win Sub Junior, with Barrett Debrie posting 95 in the Runner-Up spot.

With the Class Doubles out of the way it was time to get down to business with the Doubles Championship. Wyatt Debrie kept his winning ways going by breaking the lone 100 and taking home the Western Grand Doubles title for the 2nd time in three years. Barrett (AKA Bear) Debrie broke his best ever doubles score of 98 to earn the Sub Junior title. Carson Schlimmer won his shoot-off with Richard Marshall, Jr to earn the Runner-Up trophy, while Marshall took AAA class. Nico Elardi (WY) was the AA winner with 98. Bruce Bradley had a near perfect 99 to capture the Junior trophy, while Cody Eye broke 97 to pace the Junior Gold ranks. Leslie Hight (UT) and her aunt Pam Wright (UT) broke 91 and 92 to win the Lady 1 and Lady 2 categories. Patricia Todd (TX) was



Pam Wright



Wyatt Debrie

the Lady 2 Runner-Up. Bob Robertson (OR), Jimmy Heller and Michael King (WA) were the Sub Veteran, Veteran and Senior Veteran winners with scores of 97, 96 and 94.

The Caesar Guerini Preliminary Handicap was the final event of the day and Peter Walker (MN) made his presence known with the lone high score of 99 to take home the champion trophy by two targets. Richard Marshall Jr bested Carson Schlimmer (WA) in the carry-over for Runner-Up after the two had knotted up with 96s. Bobby Street (UT) was the 4th place winner with his 95 and Scott Obenchain (CO) broke 94



Bear Debrie after breaking a 98 in the Doubles



Peter Walker

to claim the 5th and final place trophy. Trace Huber (UT) broke 97 to win Sub Junior and Gavin Kuck carded a 95 to take home the junior prize. Jack Knaus was the Junior Gold winner with 97.

Saturday

Scott Obenchain blasted the only 200 straight on the day enroute to the Browning Singles Championship trophy. Don Williamson broke only on bird less and was the Runner-Up without a shoot-off. Ashley Teal (CO) broke 196 to claim the Lady 1 title and Lynda Eichler (CO) was the Lady 2 winner with 184. Wyatt Debrie was the Sub Junior champ with 198, while Gavin Kuck and Jack Knaus were the Junior and Junior Gold winners with scores of 199. Steve Ottesen, Doug Gustafson (CA) and Tim Robb (AZ) were the Sub Veteran, Veteran and Senior Veteran winners with scores of 197, 195 and 198.

When the shoot-offs were over everyone was invited over to the Lodge for an evening of live music by the band Route 89.

Sunday

The Winchester Handicap Championship was the final event of the week and Jack Knaus saved the best for last by breaking his first ever 100 from the back fence to claim the title by two targets. Wyatt Debrie had the next closest score of 98 to claim the Sub Junior title. Alice Wiebe (CA) posted a 97 to claim the Sub Junior Runner-Up trophy. Richard Marshall Jr was the event Runner-Up without a shoot-off with 97 and Ryan Glow shot 96 to earn 3rd place. Easton Carter (UT), Shared Oaks, Nico Elardi and Jason Krause finished in that order for 4th through 7th places with scores of 95. Bruce Bradley and Grayson Stuart broke 97 and 95 to win the Junior and Junior gold trophies, while Melanie Frerichs (NE) and Jerri Harwell were the Lady 1 and Lady 2 winners with 95



Trace Huber



Scott Obenchain



Jack Knaus

and 90. Dave Mansell broke 96 to win Sub Veteran, while Jimmy Heller and Joe Sudbury (UT) were the Veteran and Senior Veteran winners with scores of 90 and 92.

High All Around and High Over All

Wyatt Debrie was the High All around winner with 396x400 which was four targets over AAA champ Richard Marshall Jr and Junior Gold winner Jack Knaus. Craig Hart (UT) was the A class Champion and his Grand son-In-law Billy Parrack (UT) took home the Class C trophy. In the High Over



Alice Wiebe

Singles Championship

Champion	Scott Obenchain	CO	200
RU	Don Williamson	AZ	199
AAA	Peter Walker	MN	197
AA	Greg Church	CO	198
A	Samuel Simons	SD	195
B	Jacob Eichler	CA	194
C	Leticia Slinker	NV	189
D	Taite Hoopes	NM	193
LDI	Ashley Teal	CO	196
LDII	Lynda Eichler	CO	184
Sub Jr	Wyatt Debrie	NE	198
Junior	Gavin Kuck	NE	199
Jr Gold	Jack Knaus	MN	199
Sub Vet	Steve Ottesen	UT	197
Veteran	Doug Gustafson	CA	195
Sr Vet	Tim Robb	AZ	198

Handicap Championship

Champion	Jack Knaus	MN	100
RU	Richard Marshall Jr	NE	97
3rd	Ryan Glow	NE	96
4th	Easton Carter	UT	95
5th	Sharred Oaks	UT	95
6th	Nico Elardi	WY	95
7th	Jason Krause	NE	95
LDI	Leticia Slinker	NV	95
LDII	Jerri Harwell	UT	90
Sub Jr	Wyatt Debrie	NE	98
Junior	Bruce Bradley	ID	97
Jr Gold	Caleb Simons	SD	95
Sub Vet	Dave Mansell	WI	96
Veteran	Jimmy Heller	AZ	90
Sr Vet	Joe Sudbury	UT	92

Doubles Championship

Champion	Wyatt Debrie	NE	100
RU	Carson Schlimmer	WA	98
AAA	Richard Marshall Jr	NE	98
AA	Nico Elardi	WY	98
A	David Landwerlen	AZ	96
B	Josiah Williams	SD	94
C	Daniel Kruger	ID	92
D	Joe Hollifield	ID	90
LDI	Leslie Hight	UT	91
LDII	Pam Wright	UT	92
Sub Jr	Barrett Debrie	NE	98
Junior	Bruce Bradley	ID	99
Jr Gold	Cody Eye	KS	97
Sub Vet	Bob Robertson	OR	97
Veteran	Jimmy Heller	AZ	96
Sr Vet	Mike King	WA	94

High All Around

Champion	Wyatt Debrie	NE	396
AAA	Richard Marshall Jr	NE	392
AA	Nico Elardi	WY	389
A	Craig Hart	UT	375
B	Barrett Debrie	NE	374
C	Billy Parrack	UT	364
D	Easton Carter	UT	373
LDI	Leslie Hight	UT	375
LDII	Pam Wright	UT	353
Sub Jr	George Lee	NE	37
Junior	Bruce Bradley	ID	389
Jr Gold	Jack Knaus	MN	392
Sub Vet	Daniel Bryant	NE	384
Veteran	Jimmy Heller	AZ	378
Sr Vet	Tim Robb	AZ	381

High Over All

Champion	Wyatt Debrie	NE	1075
AAA	Richard Marshall Jr	NE	1074
AA	Cody Eye	KS	1059
A	Bodie Kumm	NE	1022
B	Barrett Debrie	NE	1014
C	Billy Clendenen	SD	985
D	Easton Carter	UT	1008
LDI	Elaina McCarthy	OH	1014
LDII	Pam Wright	UT	969
Sub Jr	George Lee	NE	1020
Junior	Gavin Kuck	NE	1051
Jr Gold	Jack Knaus	MN	1066
Sub Vet	Perry Weiner	ND	1045
Veteran	Jimmy Heller	AZ	1027
Sr Vet	Tim Robb	AZ	1044



Craig Hart & Grandson-in-law Billy Parrack

All Debrie's total of 1075x1100 was one target ahead of AAA champ Marshall and nine targets ahead of Junior Gold winner Knaus.

The Western Grand in Vernal is a great time. The club tries hard to throw the best targets possible, the Trap Kids work hard and the atmosphere during and after the events is like no shoot that I have ever shot. If you get a chance to come out next year, you won't be disappointed. I hope to see you there. ■

