

The Department of Minnesota American Legion
Junior Shooting Sports Program
(*This Information Guide is compiled from the National JSSP*)

A. What is the Department of Minnesota American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program (JSSP)?

The Department of Minnesota's JSSP is modeled after the National Program and provides similar content as the National Program. The program emphasizes safe firearms handling and provides postal competitions for those individuals, 20 years of age and younger, within the State of Minnesota sponsored by and/or affiliated with a Department of Minnesota American Legion Post.

The program goals are to provide an opportunity for young people to learn firearms safety and basic marksmanship. To introduce the shooting sports to community members and educate them about shooting. To provide shooting competitions for existing and beginning shooting programs. To use the shooting sports as a vehicle to help young people develop discipline, concentration, sportsmanship, and responsibility.

The Department of Minnesota American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is governed by the rules outlined in the National Standard Three-Position Air Rifle RuleBook. For a copy go to www.odcmp.com/3P.htm

B. A Perspective on the Shooting Sports.

Today, the shooting sports are an important recreational activity in America. Nearly 70 million people own firearms, with over half of all U.S households containing at least one firearm. Tens of thousands of competitors participate in matches from neighborhood tournaments to the Olympic Games. More than 20 million hunting licenses are issued annually in the United States generating vast sums for the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Marksmanship is a proud part of our State and National Heritage. Skilled American riflemen have played a deciding role in all of our Nation's wars and conflicts.

There is call for expert marksmen in the exciting sport of competitive shooting. In recent years the United States has been a dominant force in international shooting competition.

Competitive marksmanship does not require great physical size or strength. Even though physical fitness and stamina are important, mental qualities determine whether a shooter will ever become a champion. Being able to concentrate completely on a task and being able to relax under pressure are two keys to success.

C. What is Shooting?

Shooting is a skill sport. Skills learned in shooting are valuable in other aspects of life. Learning to hit a difficult target teaches self-discipline and self-control. Learning to hold a firearm steady and hit the target teaches concentration. Knowing the shooter alone is

ultimately responsible for his or her performance teaches self-reliance and enhances individual esteem

Shooting is a participation sport. No one has to sit on the sidelines and watch; everyone can take part. This active involvement is important because sports are fun when young people can participate personally instead of watching others. Persons with disabilities also can take part in shooting, often alongside other shooters in matches.

Shooting is an Olympic sport. The summer Olympics have rifle, pistol, running game target and shotgun shooting events. The winter Olympics have a biathlon event that combines cross-country skiing and shooting. Shooting is the third most popular Olympic sport. Only two sports – track and boxing – regularly have more participating nations.

Shooting is a safe sport. Injuries are so rare in target shooting that accidental records are not even kept. Shooting is safe because it has a strict code of safety that all shooters follow.

Shooting is a lifetime sport. Persons of all ages participate successfully in shooting

Shooting is a sport for girls and boys. Girls and boys compete equally in shooting. Recent state and national junior shooting championships and the American Legion Junior Air Rifle State and National Championships have been won by both girls and boys.

D. Checklist for Starting a Program at your Post Home.

1. Identify Your Leadership. The shooting club leader will need to be qualified to instruct the basics of gun safety and marksmanship. Qualification to instruct can be obtained by completing a NRA, CMP or USA Shooting Instructor/Coach certification course. The following site is recommended:
www.odcmp.com/CoachingResources.htm
2. Affiliate with the Department Junior Shooting Sports Program. Simply complete the application form and return it to the address on the form. Affiliation will automatically place your program on the Department JSSP mailing list.
3. Check your insurance coverage. It is critically important that you make certain that your Post has liability coverage if you are going to be conducting marksmanship instruction at your Post home. If you plan on locating the operation of your club in some other facility, you will need to check their insurance coverage. If your Post coverage is not adequate, you may wish to look into an additional rider to your Post policy or investigate some specific shooter's coverage.
4. One of the great advantages of firing air rifles is that the range can be set up just about anywhere. Most meeting areas in most Post homes can serve as an air rifle range. Depending on the number of firing points you wish to have, there are some minimum requirements.

- a. The shooting distance measured from the target to the edge of the firing line closest to the shooter must be 10 meters (33 feet).
- b. The firing line and firing point must be marked so that the instructor and shooter can see it. The firing line is the front edge of the firing point. The firing point is the area immediately to the rear of the firing line that is designated for one shooter. The recommended minimum width of each firing point is 1.0 meters (39.4 inches). The recommended minimum length is 2.2 meters (88.6 inches).
- c. There must be one firing point for each target set.
- d. There must be ample room behind the firing point for the instructor to move freely.
- e. The recommended total length of the range should be 14.2 meters (approximately 47 feet).
- f. Equipment that will be needed includes backstops/traps, safety glasses, and hearing protection, kneeling roles, shooting mats, and spotting scopes, pellets and air rifles. All air rifles and equipment must comply with paragraph 4.2 of the National Standard Three-Position Air Rifle RuleBook.

5. Sources for Equipment.

American Target Company
1328 South Jason Street
Denver, CO 80223

303-733-0433
americtgt@aol.com

Civilian Marksmanship Program
P.O. Box 576
Port Clinton, OH 43452

419-635-2142, ext. 1112
programs@odcmp.com

Champions Choice
201 International Blvd.
Laverne, TN 37086

615-793-4066
Championchoice@nashville.com

Champions Shooters Supply
P.O. Box 303, 42 N. High St.
New Albany, Ohio 43054

614-855-1603
www.championsshooters.com

Daisy Outdoor Products/Special Marketing
P.O. Box 220
Rogers, AR 72757

800-643-3458
www.daisy.com

Crosman Corporation
Routes 5 and 20
East Bloomfield, NY 14443

800-724-7486

6. Funding Your Program.

- a. First check with the Post commander because each Post has different situations regarding available funds. Funds may already be set aside for youth activities.
- b. In the beginning participants may have to provide their own air rifles and equipment with the Post providing the instructor/coach, facilities and instruction.
- c. Club member fees could be used to pay for targets and pellets.
- d. Local businesses or local shooting clubs may wish to make donations to the good of the club
- e. Many Posts dedicate proceeds from specific Post functions to raise money for their JSSP.
- f. In all cases the goal should be for the Post to eventually provide everything.

7. Promoting Your Program.

- a. The first audience you will want to interest will be the participants. Good ways to communicate with young people include posters on school bulletin boards, items in the school newspaper, Internet and Post websites.
- b. Other audiences you will want to interest are parents of potential participants, individuals who are in a position to provide assistance and support for your program such as business people, community leaders, and school officials, as well as the general public. Even though the majority of the community may not be involved with your JSSP, their goodwill is important to the success of the Post's efforts. These audiences can generally be reached through newspaper articles, radio announcements, or internet websites. This type of publicity is frequently the result of news releases.

8. Recruiting Participants.

- a. Many groups have existing youth programs, which can provide a readily accessible pool of potential participants. Examples of some of these are school athletic departments, police athletic leagues, Boy Scouts, 4-H clubs, Army, Marine, and Navy Junior ROTC program, or simply the children and grandchildren of you Post membership.
- b. Remember you can be more successful in your recruiting efforts if you explain that air rifle safety is the foundation of your program, and that shooting activities complement many other youth activities.
- c. Keep in mind that in order to have a successful program; you must constantly seek new members. In addition, you must ensure that the program can be adapted to meet the various needs of its young participants.

E. An Alternative to starting a program at your Post is to sponsor an existing shooting program such as an Army, Marine Corps or Navy JROTC Marksmanship Team. 4-H clubs and the Boy Scouts may have air rifle teams as well.

1. The benefits of sponsoring an existing shooting program are tremendous.
 - a. The instructor is usually already trained.
 - b. The program already has the required equipment and facilities.
 - c. The program already has the participants.
2. This alternative gets the Post involved with the JSSP and may help the existing programs in obtaining new membership. The Post would need to provide assistance to the sponsored program by providing funds for targets, pellets, and repair/replacement of air rifles and equipment. Funds may also be required for entry, travel and billeting fees if a team member qualifies to compete at the National level.
3. Consideration should be given to providing some form of liability insurance for the instructor and participants due to the Post formally sponsoring the program.
4. All in all this would be a cheaper way of being involved with JSSP than starting a Post program from nothing.

F. Competitions.

The Department of Minnesota American Legion JSSP provides four postal matches per year beginning in November and ending with a State Championship Postal Match in March. The top three competitors in each match receive medals provided by the Department. Each competitor that receives a medal is then invited to participate in the State Championship. Beginning with the 2008–2009 season team competition will be added. A team will consist of four competitors and one alternate, which must be declared at the beginning of the season. Team and individual events will be fired concurrently. The scores fired by each team member will count for both individual rankings and team rankings. Team scores will be calculated by adding the individual scores of the four-team members.

Department of Minnesota JSSP members desiring to compete at the National level will have to affiliate with and order target sets from the National JSSP. Department of Minnesota State Champions can not move forward to the National level competitions due to the fact that all Departments do not have a JSSP. The National JSSP does not feel that it would be fair to include an athlete from Minnesota who could possibly score below the final cut of the qualification round postal competition, which determines the fifteen athletes to compete in the National Championship.

To affiliate with the Department of Minnesota American Legion JSSP please fill out the form below and mail to the address provided.

Point of Contact for the Department of Minnesota JSSP is:

Roy Gene Kruger
324 7th ST. NW.
Byron, Minnesota 55920
507-775-6865
roykruger@gmail.com

YES!

**We want to affiliate with the Department of Minnesota American Legion
Junior Shooting Sports Program**

There is NO affiliation fee. Complete and return this form.

Adult Leader Information

Adult Leader: _____

Team Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Work Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Signature of Adult Leader: _____

Date: _____

Sponsoring Post Information

Sponsoring American Legion Post: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signature of Post Commander: _____

Date: _____

**Return to:
Roy Gene Kruger
Dept of Minnesota American Legion
Junior Shooting Sports Program
Chairman
324 7th ST. NW., Byron, Minnesota 55920
E-Mail: roykruger@gmail.com**

*This form does not affiliate your team with the National American Legion JSSP. To
affiliate with the National Program please go to www.legion.org*