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For Immediate Release

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June 26, 2006

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McKenzie, Henry County, Jefferson County Among Winners At SCTP Tennessee Trapshooting Championships

Next Stop: National Championships in Sparta, Ill.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—State champion teams were crowned in five divisions this weekend, as the "Super Bowl" of Tennessee youth trapshooting wrapped up at the Tennessee Clay Target Complex.

Advancing from a statewide pool of 1,564 young shooters and a series of regional qualifiers, the event's 532 competitors had previously qualified to compete in the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) national championship in Sparta, Ill., in August.

The Nashville event was about being the best in Tennessee.

Walking away with state titles were teams from McKenzie, Henry County, Jefferson County and Chester County in the state's senior experienced, junior experienced, senior novice, junior novice and rookie divisions.

"This is the cream of the crop of the largest group of youth trapshooters in the country," said Zach Snow of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), which developed and coordinates SCTP on the national level. "All of these teams worked very hard to get to Nashville, and we will certainly see some of them at the top come August at the SCTP nationals."

Active in Tennessee for six years, SCTP has seen phenomenal growth. Fifteen young shooters participated the first year, growing to more than 1,500 this year. Tennessee has more SCTP shooters than any other state, thanks to strong support from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) and Tennessee Wildlife Federation (TWF).

"The success of the Tennessee's program can be attributed to strong support and guidance from state organizations and an impressive network of dedicated parents and volunteers," Snow said.

The program is designed to instill in participants safe firearms handling, commitment, responsibility, leadership and teamwork.

Nearly 40 states and more than 8,000 youths take part in SCTP. Nationally, SCTP's popularity is booming. In 2005 alone, overall participation in the program grew by over 50 percent, not to mention an 84 percent increase among female participants.

Winning the state title in the senior experienced division were the McKenzie CABA Crushers, who combined to hit 965 of a possible 1,000 targets. Leading the way was Clint Beachum of McKenzie, who hit 195 of 200 targets. The winning team also includes Travis Russell, Brandon Sellers, Carson Rider and Luke Anderson, all of McKenzie.

"Yesterday they started off a little slower than they wanted to, but I told them, 'We can only go one way and that's up,'" said McKenzie coach Lance Rider. "They came today and had their game face on, and they shot like they needed to and like they usually do. I'm very proud of them."

In the junior experienced division, the McKenzie Smokin' Guns placed first with a 936 total score. The team includes Austin McKinney, Jake Johnson, Alex Rider, John Johnson and Andrew Doster, all of McKenzie.

"I've had these kids for three years now and they've been the runner up the last two years. This year they worked very hard and they deserve first place. I'm very proud of them," said McKenzie coach Mark Anderson. "They work very well together. When one of them is down, somebody else picks them up. And that's how they've shot in every competition. They all shoot together well as a team."

In the senior novice division, the Henry County No Fly Zone took first with a 929 total score. Leading the way was John Hinson of Buchanan, who hit 194 targets. The team also includes Ross Paschall and Joshua Triplett of Puryear, Justin Chilcutt of Paris and Tyler Allen of Henry.

"They were a true team this weekend," said Henry County coach Thomas "Bud" Edwards of Paris. "Yesterday we had a young man shoot a hundred straight, but we also had one of our better shooters shoot a 77. Today they came back and shot a lot better together and ended up winning."

In the junior novice division, the Jefferson County Patriot Shooters placed first, giving coach Wayne Rich a special gift for his birthday.

"I asked these kids three weeks ago to win this for my birthday. They worked hard and got it done," said Rich.

The team shot for a 914 total score. The Patriot Shooters include Ozzy Milligan of New Market, Daniel Bible of Jefferson City and Alton Dalton, Hunter Rich and Chase Rich of Dandridge.

In the rookie division, the Chester County Rookies placed first with 428 of out 500 targets. The

team of fourth and fifth graders includes Zeke Yeager of Corinth, Blake Carnell and Kurt Lecornu of Henderson, James Mitchell of Luray and Brandon Hughes of Reagan.

"Working together, that's what this is all about," said Chester County coach Janice Cooper of Henderson. "Three on my team are fourth graders and two are fifth graders. They started shooting last September. Two have already run 100 straight, one has run 50 straight and one has run 25 straight. They've got the biggest hearts you can think of, and they've pulled for each other this whole season.

For more information, visit www.nssf.org/sctp and www.tnwf.org/sctp.

Results

Senior Experienced Division (Grades 9-12)

First Place—CABA Crushers, 965: Travis Russell, Brandon Sellers, Carson Rider and Luke Anderson of McKenzie, Clint Beacham of Huntingdon.

Second Place—Carroll County High School Jets, 961, plus 118 in shoot-off: Kevin Chamberlin, Mark Filley Jr., Isaac Graham, Aaron Ewing and Samuel Music of Crossville.

Third Place—Morristown Trap Club "Dead-Eyes," 961, plus 115 in shoot-off: Kevin Helton, Greg Roach and Todd Lamb of Morristown, Allen Parker of Tazewell, Ryan Parks of Bulls Gap.

Fourth Place—Carroll County Clay Busters, 940: Alex McAlexander, Kyle Bond, Farris Bartholomew and Justin Baker of Huntingdon, Kellen Webb of Trezevant.

Fifth Place—Blackman High Clay Target Team, 937: Kevin Sisco, Eric Weber, Mathew Bowland and Alex Martin of Murfreesboro, Chase Cortner of Smyrna.

Senior Novice Division (Grades 9-12)

First Place—Henry County No-Fly Zone No. 2, 929: John Hinson of Buchanan, Ross Paschall and Joshua Triplett of Puryear, Justin Chilcutt of Paris, Tyler Allen of Henry.

Second Place—Jefferson County High School Patriot Shooters Squad A, 926: Dustin Ballinger and Andrew Barding of Jefferson City, Matt Courtney and Travis Allsup of New Market, Ben Swanger of Dandridge.

Third Place—Arlington Trapper No. 1, 924: Matthew Holt, Andrew Reed and William Segerson of Bartlett, Matthew Eley of Memphis, Curtis Robinson of Arlington.

Fourth Place—Shelbyville Central High School No. 1, 919: Josh Phillips, Clint Nichols, Justin Gordon, Nick Brown and Robert Collins of Shelbyville.

Fifth Place—Smoky Mountain Top Guns/Head Hunters, 918: Ethan Smelcer, Taylor Houser and Tyler Lucas of Seymour, Jordan Crawford and Jake Proffitt of Sevierville.

Junior Experienced Division (Grades 6-8)

First Place—McKenzie Smokin' Guns, 936: Austin McKinney, Jake Johnson, Alex Rider, John Johnson and Andrew Doster of McKenzie.

Second Place—CABA Cannons, 917: Tyler Verner, Matt McBride, Linley McClain, Jonathon Curtis and Tyler Sisson of McKenzie.

Third Place—Middle Tenn. Christian School, 902: Trey Hill, James Dunaway and Trent Inman

of Murfreesboro, Ethan Fetz of Lavergne, Cameron Meece of Smyrna.
Fourth Place—Blackman Middle Flames, 892: Kayla Swatzell, Brandon Creech, Micah Meshotto and Steven Haas of Murfreesboro, Hunter Mellish of College Grove.
Fifth Place—Chester County, 891: Troy Cooper, William Bishop and Benjamin Hale of Henderson, Robert Dilworth of Rienzi, Dustin Alexander of Beech Bluff.

Junior Novice Division (Grades 6-8)

First Place—Jefferson Co. Patriot Shooters Squad A, 914: Ozzy Milligan of New Market, Daniel Bible of Jefferson City, Alton Dalton, Hunter Rich and Chase Rich of Dandridge.
Second Place—Carroll County Clay Busters, 893: Jacob Allen, William Espey III, Zack Wallace and Brett Cross of Huntingdon, Dakota Anderson of Bruceton.
Third Place—Christiana Middle School No. 1, 892: Emily Bruer, Matthew Cantrell and Connor Goodwin of Murfreesboro, Zackery Taylor of Bell Buckle, Brian Clinton of Christiana.
Fourth Place—Dyersburg Junior Trap Squad A, 880: Christopher Bizzle, Zane Mathis, John Bowers and Tyler Orr of Dyersburg, Louis Palmer of Ridgley.
Fifth Place—Dyer County 4-H Junior Trappers, 866: Tyler Nichols of Ridgley, Christopher Davenport of Dyersburg, Jacob McBride of Hornbeak, Bradley Baker of Friendship, Tyler Hallum of Newbern.

Rookie Division (Grades 5 and under)

First Place—Chester County Rookies No. 1, 428: Zeke Yeager of Corinth, Blake Carnell and Kurt Lecornu of Henderson, James Mitchell of Luray, Brandon Hughes of Reagan.
Second Place—East Tenn. Rookies, 409: Alex Swanger and Michael Hammer of Dandridge, Hunter Davenport of Bean Station, Mason Shepard of Russellville, Mason Thornton of White Pine.
Third Place—Carroll County Clay Busters, 394: Seth Fields, Brett Jackson, Peyton Turner, Cory Mathis and William Thorne of Huntingdon.
Fourth Place—Hoodlum Alley Claybusters, 385: Devin Casteel, Michael House, Vincent Caldwell and Kevin Jones of Shelbyville, Lucas Smith of Unionville.
Fifth Place—Henderson County 4-H Rookies, 371: Peyton Olive of Lexington, Justin Rogers of Scotts Hill, Riley Bridges of Sardis, Jeffery Mount of Reagan, Brett Jordan of Parsons.