

Published March 14th, 2012

Trap Shooter Aims for Olympics

Cathy Dausman



Photo Craig Isaacs

clay targets. Where skeet targets are launched from a single machine, trap shooters must hit targets launched from multiple machines while standing at one of five posts.

Bowers got her start four years ago when she accompanied her father to the Livermore Pleasanton Rod and Gun Club (LPRG).

Jim Bowers recalls that while they shot, an older gentleman watched. That man was Jim Wyllie, Sr., a Level 1 American Trap coach and a Level 2 International Trap coach. Wyllie needed a female athlete to complete his nine-member junior trap team and quickly recognized Bowers' potential.

"I know a shooter," Wyllie said. He approached her parents and encouraged them to let her learn.

At the time, Bowers had begun playing high school volleyball. She realized her height, 5'6" would hold her back in volleyball, so she switched. She spent an average of three hours four-to-five days a week on the range learning the sport.

Wyllie can't say enough good things about Bowers, calling her his "shining star," and "a perfect student."

"Her drive is phenomenal," he says. "She just won't quit!"

The rise from novice to potential Olympic contender seemed to come quickly. With her father's help, LPRG built an Olympic quality trap bunker in 2010 and Bowers began shooting International Trap, the Olympic standard.

Jim says his daughter "bombed out" pretty badly during her first competition in Tucson in 2011. Yet that May, she won the California Junior Olympics in Livermore. At the summer Nationals in Colorado, she placed 5th in her age category and 11th overall.

Bowers' shooting skills have taken her around California, as well as to Texas, Colorado and Arizona. Her father says that it is a "pretty substantial" travel commitment of eight-to-ten weeks on the trap circuit, but that she is "pumped up" about competing.

Bowers will continue to hone her craft after high school; she has opted to attend a local junior college to allow for more practice time.

She'll compete in Tucson again in May and attend state competitions in August and "fall selection" in September.

Bower's father says whether or not she makes the 2012 Olympic team "there's Brazil [summer Olympics] in four years."

Dressed in jeans and western boots, cradling a 12 gauge shotgun, Kimberly Bowers might be mistaken for Annie Oakley.

"No," she laughs, "I've never been called that!"

Still, the Campolindo High School senior from Lafayette has the same eagle eye, and belt buckles and medals to prove it. Bowers competes in International Trap shooting. She's recently become a member of the Junior Olympics team, and will compete in Tucson this May, during the sport's "spring selection."

Although the dates conflict with Campolindo's Senior Ball, she's not concerned because the winners will represent the United States in Trap Shooting for the 2012 London Summer Olympics.

Bowers is modest, pointing out that only "one girl" out of three dozen ranked nationally will compete in London. Yet, her coach places her among the top ten women shooters nationwide.

"She climbed a pretty big mountain" he says.

Skeet and trap shooters both compete to hit the highest number of fast moving (60 mph) machine-launched

Reach the reporter at: cathy.d@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA