

Aurora cadets earn top prize in national air rifle competition



By Jake Courtepatte

The accolades continue to pour in for York Region's sharpest shooters.

More than 120 army, navy and air force cadets from 22 corps converged on Gimli, Manitoba last weekend for five days of competition in the National Cadet Marksmanship Championship. Among them was the 2799 Queen's York Rangers Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps, who returned home with the top spot overall in team standings.

With at least one team representing every province and territory in Canada, the York Rangers were also presented with the George V Trophy for the top army cadet team in Canada, gold in the standing unit category, and silver in the prone unit category.

?All of these team qualified to participate at Nationals through a series of competitions starting at the local level, advancing to Provincial and Territorial Championships, and then on to the Nationals,? said unit head coach Roger Romses.

The Aurora-based unit qualified for the competition by winning the provincial title last month, their first since 2010.

Warrant Officer Ethan Hoyes, whose gold medal-winning performance in the provincials led his unit to the national competition, earned the gold medal for prone shooting to finish third overall in individual shooting.

Corporal Nicholas Ertl earned the Clement Tremblay Award for the top junior in Canada, claiming the title with a third-place performance in the standing open category and a win in the standing junior category.

Master Corporal Maya Neumann also found success at the junior level, claiming second-place overall after a silver medal in prone and a bronze medal in standing.

Chief Warrant Officer (and team captain) Emily Woodhouse as well as Warrant Officer Tyler McKechnie were also a part of the team's gold medal performance.

Funded by the Department of National Defense Canada, joining the cadet program is free of charge. Along with the marksmanship program, cadets are offered the opportunity to improve their skills in everything from hiking, mountaineering, winter survival, military navigation, first aid, among many others. Currently, the cadets are in the process of fundraising to send forty members to Vimy in France next year for the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

For more information about the Queen's York Rangers Army Cadet program, check out their website at www.rangers2799.com.