

Youth Newsletter

Izaak Walton League of America June 2022

The Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) youth program teaches local youth how to safely handle firearms in a hunting environment. The main focus of the program is safety and education. When the group meets, the practices are lead by coaches who teach in various categories of shooting and hunter safety training. The members of the program practice and train all year to compete in the Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC). This competition tests eight different categories including rifle, archery, muzzleloader, shotgun, orienteering, hunter safety exam, hunter safety trail and wildlife identification. The youth athletes better themselves and their communities everyday.



Rifle at YHEC

If you could ask any athlete competing in YHEC what event they would most like to place in, the majority would say rifle. Rifle is the most prestigious and competitive event because of its precise nature. The event consists of three targets, squirrel, rabbit, and groundhog, located at 25, 50, and 75 yards respectfully. At the squirrel target you can shoot only standing. At the rabbit target you can shoot standing or sitting but sitting is recommended for the most stability. And for the final target, the groundhog, you can shoot standing, sitting or prone. Prone is generally recommended but you should go with the position most comfortable to you. For example at the 2021 Maryland YHEC Michael Anfang scored first in rifle in part to his decision to sit instead of go prone on the far target. If you are more comfortable with one position over another just make sure you start with that position because after you fire your shot you cannot change you position.

Wildlife ID



At the Maryland state YHEC the Wildlife ID section tests competitors' skills in identifying skulls, feathers, wings, eggs, hides, and more. Athletes choose from a word bank with 50 or so animals for each animal. From duck wings to canines, wildlife ID is one of the most difficult events and requires a lot of practice to become proficient at.

Author Notes

If any reader would like to make any suggestions or ideas for articles email me at

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