

Despite cold temperatures and frigid winds, students at Owasso High School were able to finish in the Top 12 in the state. Last week, four juniors and four seniors competed at the Oklahoma City Gun Club in the state finals of the Sporting Clays competition. "It was extremely cold, so we had to stay focused. It's easy to get side-tracked when you miss one target. It was extremely cold, your hands are cold," said Jonathan Holloway, agricultural education instructor and FFA advisor at Owasso High School. The Junior Team finished 11th and the Senior Team 12th. James Mosley saw the team come together and gel before the competition. "This competition has taught us to be a team. Mr. Holloway, he's been a good coach and taught us a lot. We're all real good friends and we learned how to do teamwork and learned how to fight through the cold and still shoot good," Mosley said. Tess Decker agreed. "The experience is a lot of fun. We all get together and practice weekly. We get together and we shoot a couple of rounds then go home and then we are all prepared for the competition. And then we head off and go shoot it and try to do our best," she said. Connor Simmons said competitors are given specific instructions on how to shoot. "This competition is 20 targets and it's six throwers. They have different numbers and you shoot what they call out," he said. Cameron Simmons said competing in this will help him later on. "What I hope to take from this competition is the drive and determination it takes and apply that to the rest of my life," he said. Holloway said, while learning to shoot, each student learned about gun safety. He gave credit to three people "Monte Decker and Greg Simmons, with the Tulsa Gun Club, and Barry Hartmann, a level three master instructor. "If it weren't for those guys, I don't know if we'd be able to have a team. I've give those guys all the credit. I'm grateful for them for being able to do that," Holloway said. Before the state contest, the teams shot at the

Northeast District Sporting Clays Contest. The Junior Team was second out of 55 teams and the Senior Team was third. They take the Top 4 teams on to state, Holloway said. "We went down there yesterday and competed in that [state] contest. It was extremely cold. These kids got out there and braved the elements. They represented Owasso well," Holloway said. "To me, one of the most unique things about the contest is it's different than anything else we do. It attracts a different student than our other leadership activities might attract."