

10.5, 10.6, 10.7

After four more years of training and competition it comes down to just one shot.

Chris Trifonidis of Vancouver, BC, Karen Van Nest of Prince Albert, SK and I participated in this Quadrennial's Paralympics. Each event produced solid performances, Karen shot a 360/400 in the Ladies Air Pistol (P2) event and placed 10<sup>th</sup>. Chris participated in the mixed 10 m Air Rifle Prone (R3) and Mixed 50 m Free Rifle Prone (R6) event.

The first few days in Beijing were spent recovering from jet-lag and getting familiar with the range as well as completing the numerous administrative items necessary to finish up before training and competition. The range was a beautiful and well laid out as any I have seen. As with all high end competitions the electronic target systems were well functioning and plentiful. We were able to participate in numerous training sessions giving us a good opportunity to get the "feel" of the lighting as well as experience the wind.

Karen had some minor troubles settling in during here training but performed to her goal when match time came. Most times in competitions like these an athlete's mental state can make all the difference in the world. During the match she brought her focus together.

The highlight of the matches was when Chris shot a 599/600 in the R3 event. At the end of the qualification match there were 2 x 600 qualifiers and 10 x 599 qualifiers. With only 8 shooters advancing to the Finals some eliminating had to be done. The first cut was done by doing a "count back" and then counting the number of inner 10's. Even at that point Chris was tied with another shooter so they had to draw for position and Chris ended up with 6<sup>th</sup> (triple tied with 5<sup>th</sup>). The next stage was to shoot the 10 shots for the finals. Each shot is scored to the nearest 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a point. This score is then added to the qualification match to determine who receives the Gold, Silver and Bronze. Again Chris was in a tie – (three way) for the Bronze medal. Positions 3, 4 & 6 were called to the line for a sudden death shot by shot shoot off. Unlike in training where we had numerous shoot offs with continuous ties (ask Chris about the randomizer) this one ended with the single shot. The shots were 10.5, 10.6 & 10.7 with Chris finishing 4<sup>th</sup>. On any given day this whole performance could have won a Gold, Silver or Bronze.

Chris also finished 15<sup>th</sup> (12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> tied scores) in the R6 match with a 584/600. Canada was well represented producing commendable performances by all.

Any athletes interested in trying out for the Canadian National Disabled Shooting Team should contact Rick Ward at [pstlshtr@hotmail.com](mailto:pstlshtr@hotmail.com). This is a high performance team not an entry level team. Athletes should be prepared to work hard and travel. The load is heavy but the reward is great.

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