

## HUSKERS ACCOMPLISHED RETURN TO NCAAs IN 2009-10

After an uncharacteristic absence from the NCAA Championships in 2008-09, the Nebraska rifle team set its goal to be a return to the NCAAs in 2009-10. The Huskers, led by experienced seniors Christine Costello and Amanda Jeffries and All-Collegiate freshman Janine Dutton, battled their way back to the NCAA Championships for the eighth time in school history and second time under third-year coach Morgan Hicks.

NU finished sixth at the NCAA Championships, but the experience gained for Dutton, Ryann McGough and Joyce Kim at the Championships will be valuable as Nebraska continues to build its rifle program into a national power.

The Huskers' return to the NCAAs started in October with a win over Air Force, 4,629-4,614. McGough led NU with a 586 in air rifle and Costello scored a 578 in smallbore, as Hicks got her first look at her two freshmen - Dutton and Kim - in live competition. Dutton responded with a 584 in air rifle, second-best in the NU lineup, while Kim scored 566 in smallbore as an individual.

NU then squared off against defending national champion West Virginia. The Huskers played up to the level of their competition, recording season-bests of 2,308 in smallbore and 4,634 overall, but still fell to the Mountaineers by 26 points. The Huskers' team score was a key in raising their NCAA Championships qualifying team average. Costello and Katie Kostal led NU with 580s in smallbore, while Dutton paced NU with a 585 in air rifle.

The Huskers used their early season confidence to reel off five straight wins in a six-match road stretch following the loss to West Virginia. Kostal kicked it off by capturing the overall combined title against NC State in West Point, N.Y., with a 1,156 total. A career-high 587 in air rifle highlighted the sophomore's performance. Dutton won the smallbore title with a 575.

Dutton wasn't the only freshman to post high scores early in her career. Kim led NU with a career-best 593 in air rifle in a road win over Army, 4,615-4,598. Her score not only won her the individual air rifle title, it matched the highest score by an NU shooter on the year, as Dutton matched it twice near the end of the season.

Costello then led NU to its third straight win with the overall combined title in a 4,608-4,582 triumph at Mississippi. Costello's 578 in smallbore and 584 in air rifle won her both event titles. The next day NU improved to 5-1 with a 4,616-4,574 victory over Memphis in Oxford, Miss., thanks to Costello's second straight overall combined title and smallbore title. McGough captured the air rifle title with a 586, becoming the fifth different Husker in six matches to earn an individual title. NU scored a season-best 2,337 in air rifle to clinch the victory.

The Huskers continued their string of six straight road matches by defeating UTEP 4,589-4,563, in El Paso, Texas. The Big Red got solid performances from McGough in smallbore (569) and Dutton in air rifle (587) to win the match, although the team total



*Clockwise from far left: Ryann McGough, Sheena Mahloch, Janine Dutton, Ashley Lane, Joyce Kim, Amanda Jeffries, Christine Costello, Katie Kostal.*

was the lowest posted by the Huskers on the year.

A week later, the Huskers made the trip to the site of the 2010 NCAA Championships to face TCU and get familiar with the range. NU dropped the match, 4,651-4,615 to the eventual national champion Horned Frogs, but Costello recorded a season-high 581 in smallbore and McGough posted a season-best 587 in air rifle to gain experience and confidence that would benefit them later in the season.

The Huskers closed the first semester with a 4,680-4,595 loss to perennial-power Alaska-Anchorage at the NU Rifle Range. Kostal and Costello led NU in smallbore and air rifle, respectively, but both were competing as individuals.

The Huskers' second semester portion of their schedule featured matches against four of the eight NCAA qualifying teams - Murray State, TCU, Kentucky and West Virginia. NU dropped all four, but averaged 4,608 in the process, including a key 4,612 at the NCAA Qualifier at West Virginia that boosted their final point total into the top eight nationally.

Jeffries came out of the gate after semester break to lead NU. She recorded a season-best 576 in smallbore against Murray State, then won the individual air rifle title against TCU with a season-high 588.

Costello and Dutton then captured titles in smallbore and air rifle, respectively, against Kentucky, but the Wildcats' depth was too much in the Huskers' 4,616-4,604 loss. Unfortunately for

the Big Red, Dutton's score was as an individual, but her performance would set the tone for the GARC Championships and NCAA Championships, where the freshman shined.

First, the senior/freshman combo teamed up again at the NCAA Qualifier to increase NU's chances of an NCAA Championships bid. Costello and Jeffries scored team-bests of 573 in smallbore, while Dutton scored a career-high 593 in air rifle to lead the Huskers to their 4,612 score, two points higher than their season average. Sophomore Sheena Mahloch recorded career-bests of 583 in air rifle and 562 in smallbore as an individual.

At the GARC Championships, the Huskers finished third in the seven-team field with another 4,612 performance. Dutton led NU in both smallbore (579) and air rifle (593), on her way to earning first-team All-GARC honors, as well as first-team All-GARC air rifle and smallbore honors. Costello scored a 585 in air rifle to earn honorable-mention All-GARC in that discipline for the second straight year.

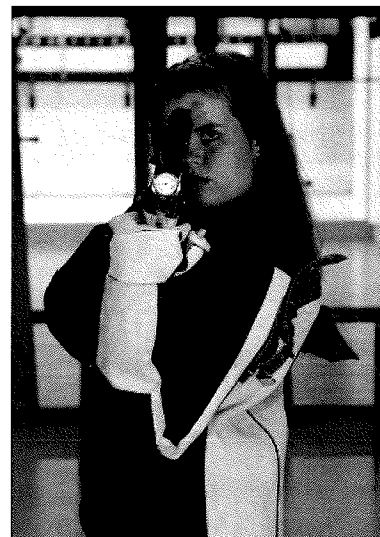
The Huskers reached their goal of getting back to the NCAA Championships, earning a spot in the eight-team finals for the eighth time in school history. Led again by Dutton in smallbore (578) and air rifle (590), the Huskers posted a sixth-place finish, edging out Murray State and Navy. TCU used its home-range advantage to capture the team title.

Dutton's 590 qualified her for a spot in the air rifle finals, where she finished sixth overall. Her performance earned her second-team CRCA All-

Collegiate honors in air rifle. Costello closed her career with a tie for 21st in smallbore at 574, while McGough recorded a 572 and Jeffries a 571. McGough and Kim added 581 in air rifle, while Jeffries scored a 572. Costello and Jeffries capped their illustrious careers in first and second on the team, respectively, in combined season average.

After the tournament, McGough was awarded the prestigious Elite 88 Award, which is awarded annually to the top student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average competing at an NCAA Championships event.

"I was very pleased with how we finished as a team," said Head Coach Morgan Hicks. "At NCAA Championships I had two girls with walking pneumonia--to see them fight through that and still shoot what I had asked of them was amazing. It really inspired the rest of the team to never give up and shoot to their potential."



*Janine Dutton earned CRCA All-Collegiate second-team honors at the 2010 NCAA Championships.*



*Ryann McGough won the prestigious Elite 88 Award, given annually to the student-athlete competing at the NCAA Championships with the highest grade-point average.*

## 2009-10 STATISTICS

SMALLBORE			
PLAYER	APPS.	HIGH	AVG.
Christine Costello	15	581	574.00
Amanda Jeffries	15	576	570.73
Janine Dutton	15	579	567.53
Ryann McGough	15	577	569.86
Katie Kostal	14	580	569.64
Joyce Kim	14	577	565.57
Sheena Mahloch	7	562	556.86
Ashley Lane	2	547	546.50

Individual Titles (4)—Costello 3, Dutton 1

AIR RIFLE			
PLAYER	APPS.	HIGH	AVG.
Janine Dutton	15	593	584.49
Amanda Jeffries	15	588	581.40
Ryann McGough	15	587	581.87
Joyce Kim	15	593	581.20
Christine Costello	14	591	581.07
Katie Kostal	14	587	578.43
Sheena Mahloch	8	583	575.88
Ashley Lane	2	563	559.50

Individual Titles (6)—Costello 1, Dutton 1, Jeffries 1, Kim 1, Kostal 1, McGough 1

COMBINED			
PLAYER	APPS.	HIGH	AVG.
Christine Costello	14	1,162	1,155
Amanda Jeffries	15	1,161	1,152
Janine Dutton	15	1,172	1,152
Ryann McGough	15	1,162	1,152
Katie Kostal	14	1,162	1,148
Joyce Kim	14	1,162	1,147
Sheena Mahloch	7	1,145	1,133
Ashley Lane	2	1,110	1,106

Overall Combined Titles (4)—Costello 2, Dutton 1, Kostal 1

## 2009-10 SCHEDULE AND RESULTS

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	SMALLBORE		AIR RIFLE		COMBINED		W/L	RECORD
			NU	OPP	NU	OPP	NU	OPP		
Oct. 9	Air Force	NU Rifle Range	2,296	2,304	2,333	2,310	4,629	4,614	W	1-0
Oct. 11	West Virginia	NU Rifle Range	2,308	2,314	2,326	2,346	4,634	4,660	L	1-1
Oct. 17	NC State	West Point, N.Y.	2,270	2,250	2,325	2,305	4,595	4,555	W	2-1
Oct. 18	Army	West Point, N.Y.	2,282	2,291	2,333	2,307	4,615	4,598	W	3-1
Oct. 31	Mississippi	Oxford, Miss.	2,283	2,265	2,325	2,317	4,608	4,582	W	4-1
Nov. 1	Memphis	Oxford, Miss.	2,279	2,250	2,337	2,324	4,616	4,574	W	5-1
Nov. 14	UTEP	El Paso, Texas	2,260	2,250	2,329	2,313	4,589	4,563	W	6-1
Nov. 21	TCU	Fort Worth, Texas	2,291	2,298	2,324	2,353	4,615	4,651	L	6-2
Nov. 30	Alaska-Fairbanks	NU Rifle Range	2,270	2,321	2,325	2,359	4,595	4,680	L	6-3
Jan. 17	Murray State	Murray, Ky.	2,279	2,282	2,318	2,336	4,597	4,618	L	6-4
Jan. 23	TCU	NU Rifle Range	2,282	2,302	2,337	2,335	4,619	4,637	L	6-5
Jan. 30	Kentucky	NU Rifle Range	2,292	2,281	2,312	2,335	4,604	4,619	L	6-6
Feb. 13	NCAA Qualifier (at WVU)	Morgantown, W.Va.	2,284	2,306	2,328	2,353	4,612	4,659	L	6-7
Feb. 21	GARC Championships	Oxford, Miss.	2,284	-----	2,328	-----	4,612	-----	3rd/7	10-9
March 12	NCAA Championships	Fort Worth, Texas	2,295	-----	2,324	-----	4,619	-----	6th/8	12-14
Season Averages			2,284	2,286	2,327	2,330	4,611	4,616		12-14