



# SHARP SHOOTER BEN SHINES AT NATIONALS WITH 40-YEAR-OLD GUN



Hale sharp shooter Ben Harper-Stone finished in a stunning fourth place in the National Schools' 10 metre air pistol championships using a 40-year-old borrowed gun.

The academically gifted St. Ambrose College Sixth Form student was competing against teams from the nation's top public schools at the blue ribbon event in Cardiff, but confirmed the potential seen in his second place showing in the Northern qualifier weeks earlier.

He has worked extra shifts at the Fox Restaurant in Hale Barns to co fund with his grandparents the purchase of a new compressed air gun as he aims to step up into the national squad.

Ben, 17, who got one A\* and eight As and one B in his GCSEs, and wants to read Law at university has other ambitions as well: "I'd love to represent my country and who knows perhaps the 2020 Olympic Games."

He started learning the sport at 1st Timperley scouts and said: "I can't thank them enough. I'm an Explorer Scout now and you simply get to do the sort of things you never dreamed possible in the Scouts and it was them who introduced me to the sport."

He then developed his expertise at the Altrincham Target Sports Centre under county coach Ian Jones and added: "I go down as often as possible to practise, at least two times each week, and again can't thank them enough for all their support and lending me my gun."

"However," he added, "the compressed air gun shoots faster and straighter and should improve my performance hopefully onto another level again."

Ben scored 172 out of 200 and says the secret is "knowing when to shoot and when not to shoot, often it's about not pulling the trigger."

He added: "It's all about practice, practice and more practice and developing mental and physical control. You need some muscle but not too much as it can weigh you down but you do need to be developed in the right places. However above it's all about practice and discipline."

Ben also plays rugby for the St. Ambrose College's 1st and 2nd XV's in Hale Barns and Sale RUFC either at Second Row or Prop and is a talented rower with Trafford Rowing Club on the Bridgewater Canal.

St. Ambrose College Director Sport Nigel Handy said: "Ben is a cracking lad; hard-working talented and out to make the most of every opportunity."