



SUPER WITH ATTITUDE

It was all stuff she'd done before. At least, that's how Karen O'Dell saw it, after she had finished watching the first season of Ammo & Attitude on Versus last year. As the superintendent of Wawashkamo Golf Club on Mackinac Island, Mich., she had spent plenty of time with nature. She applied to be on the second season of the show, and was notified she made it in just before Christmas.

The actual filming of the outdoorswoman competition went from May 14 through 28, with an episode for each day. "For the first little bit it wasn't bad, but as it got into week two, it started to wear on you," says O'Dell. "We got tired. You don't sleep very well away from home and you don't eat right, and at the end of it, we were exhausted both mentally and physically."

They competed in teams for the first few events, but when they broke into individual events, O'Dell started to really outshine her competitors. She's an experienced hunter and pulled top rank in the shooting challenge, but she liked taking on new obstacles as well.

"My favorite challenge was the heritage one, where it was roping, knife throwing and longbow," she says. "I got to learn something totally new. Every other challenge, I had done at

some point in my life."

As her star began to rise, she tried to keep from letting herself get caught up in the competition.

"I didn't want to get cocky and overconfident," she says. "It's always in the back of your mind, if you let it creep in there. But as soon as we went individual, I really started kicking it into overdrive and I won a couple things after that."

Ever the superintendent, O'Dell's secret weapon was research and preparation. Before the events ever started, she checked out the website for the next season of Ammo & Attitude, and made note of the sponsors.

"I put in a lot of homework before I went out there," she says. "I figured, if they're sponsoring, we're going to use their products. So if they had a signature product, I went and checked it out to make sure I was familiar with it and how to use it. The guys at my sportsman's club were so helpful just to throw every type of gun

in my hand to try out just in case it came up."

In the finale, she faced off against one other outdoorswoman in a turkey hunt and shooting challenge.

"In the finale, we did a walkthrough just before lunch and both of us, our nerves were just jangling," says O'Dell. "After I finished, the minute I got up and I had my gun cleaned, it was like the world had been lifted off my shoulders. Then after she finished, I knew I had cleaned my gun better, so it was just a matter of the time after that."

Going back to her studies, O'Dell had noticed that gun cleaning was a challenge in the previous season, so she had made sure she knew how to use the cleaning kit they would have on the show. It made the difference: Her opponent finished eight seconds sooner than O'Dell, but she had time penalties for her cleaning performance. O'Dell won the whole competition.

In the end, she cleaned up with five guns, two bows, two complete paintball sets, a bunch of clothing, deer cameras, shooting targets – oh, and a four-wheel drive, black 2012 Dodge Ram pickup complete with camo trim.

O'Dell will go back next season to film one episode with the new recruits, and if the series continues, maybe an all-stars episode.

"I felt like I grew a lot through it," she says. "You had to pull yourself through the hard times. It was hard to keep your spirits up, and I found some strength I didn't know I had."

KAREN O'DELL

