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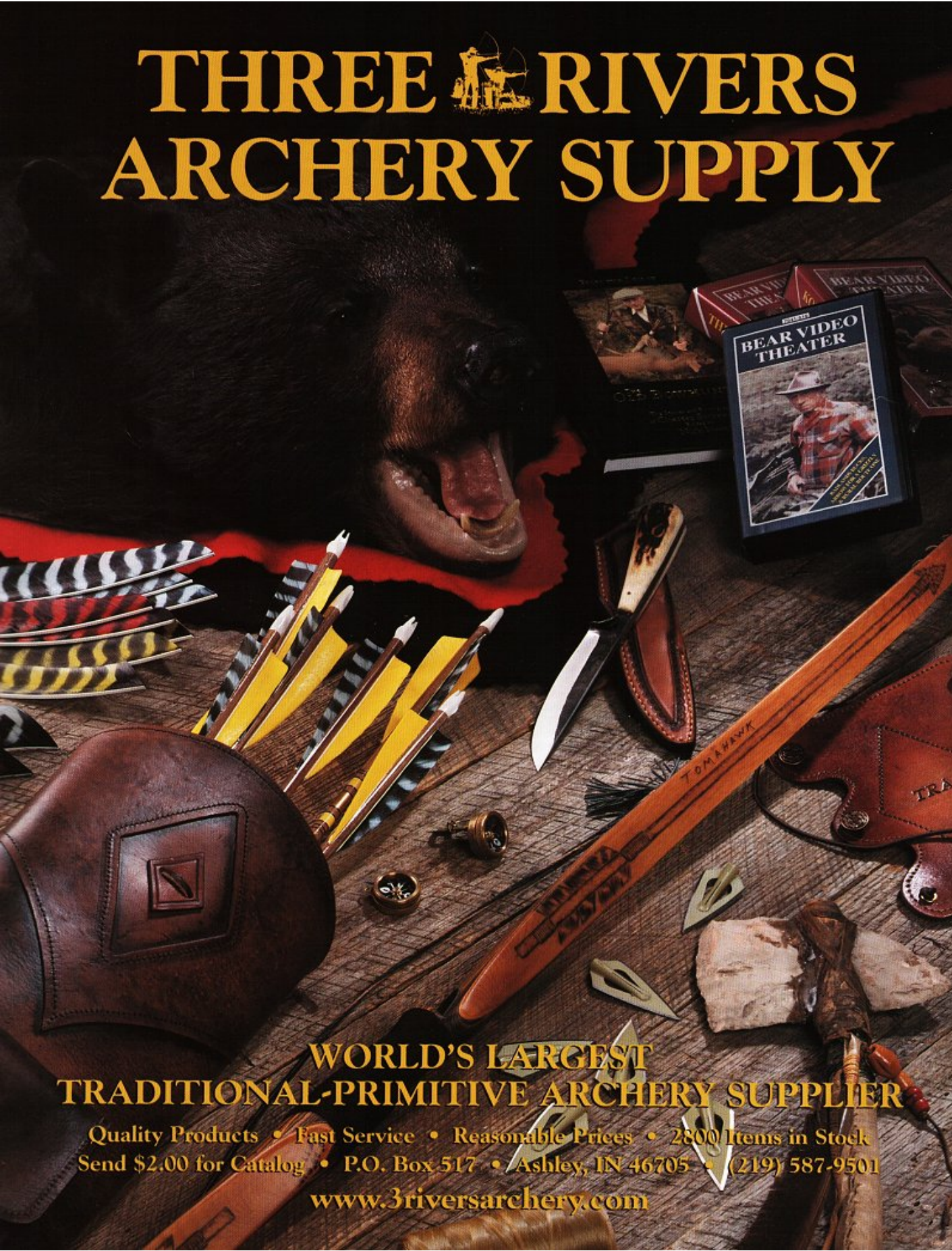
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INSTINCTIVE ARCHER® MAGAZINE

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From the old oak desk of the Editor



Rik Hinton, Editor

There are many ways to hunt with a bow. They all work at one time or another—but none of them work all of the time. If they did, we would all just concentrate on absolutely perfecting one method of hunting to the exclusion of all others, and that one method would then work in all hunting situations, anywhere in the world—all of the time. Ah—if only that were so. . .

In North America, the two primary hunting methods of stalking or sitting in a tree seem to be divided geographically. East of the Continental Divide, most archers kill their game by sitting in tree stands and waiting for it to walk close enough to the selected tree for a good shot. West of the Continental Divide, most archers kill their game by sneaking close enough to make a good shot. It is interesting to note that few archers on either side of the divide starve from lack of game.

Ask yourself honestly if living on one side of a mountain range can determine whether you are able to hunt on the ground or are only capable of ambushing game from an elevated tree stand? Do the Rocky Mountains exude a mystical hold over North America that keeps Eastern bowmen from being able to hunt on the ground, yet enables archers west of the Rockies to stalk and kill whitetailed deer, mule deer, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, and the sharpest-eyed, most alert of them all—pronghorn antelope—with an arrow? I think not.

I can only speak for myself here, but I believe that my stalking/ambushing ability, limited and imperfect as it is, stems from a failure on my father's part while I was just a young lad—he somehow forgot to tell me that I couldn't sneak up on animals and kill them. And so, being naive about such things and not knowing any better, I simply began sneaking up on animals and killing them. First with a B-B gun, then with air rifles and .22s, a 30.06, and finally with a bow. The type of weapon wasn't important, but my stealth was. If I did everything right, I could get close enough for a good shot. If I made a mistake, well, . . . there was always another day. (I also quickly learned the wisdom of not sneaking up on muskrats and grabbing them by the tail.) Thanks to dad's failure, pronghorn, mule deer, bear, elk, javelina, wild boar, coyotes, whitetailed deer, and more have somehow fallen to my arrows after carefully executed stalks or ambushes. (We probably shouldn't discuss all the critters that have ducked or simply side-stepped my arrows. Apparently their parents failed to tell them that my arrows never miss!)

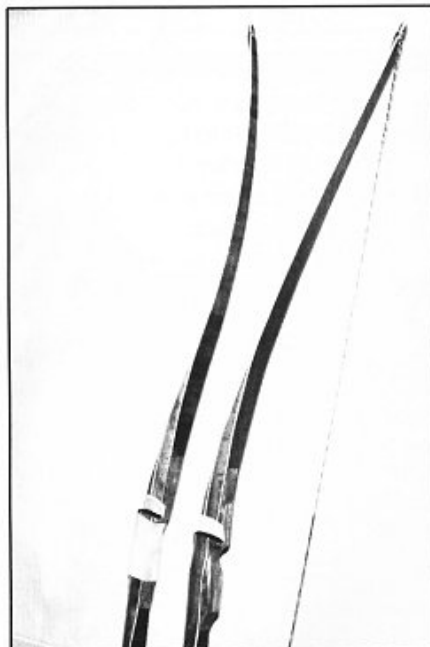
I have hunted whitetail deer back East in prime deer country, and I know the difficulties involved in hunting there due to wary deer and noisy groundcover. But I also know that Eastern deer can be—and are—hunted successfully from the ground by a number of archers whose only unique skill is the willingness to give it a try. Unfortunately, most Eastern archers don't think killing a deer from the ground is even in the realm of possibility. If only they would read the exploits of men such as Fred Bear, Ben Pearson, and Howard Hill, maybe they would realize that bowhunting is both feasible and enjoyable on the ground. It always has been and always will be.

I have a video by Wolf Creek Productions, in which Alan Altizer, shooting a compound bow for the most part, stalks and shoots numerous whitetailed bucks in Eastern states, from the deep south all the way to the Canadian border. He sneaks in on them; he spots bucks moving and circles ahead to ambush them as they walk by; he shoots them from a ground blind; he walks into the woods and kneels down near well-travelled paths and shoots bucks as they follow does; and he kills one huge buck by first spotting him bedded down, then sneaking in through thick, gooey mud in his socks, before shooting the buck in his bed—all on video. But the most exciting part, for him as well as the viewer, is when he takes to the woods with a Black Widow recurve and a backquiver full of arrows and proceeds to rattle in a big whitetail for a point-blank shot. The buck runs in so fast that Alan doesn't even have time to kneel down or hide behind a tree. (I suspect that his dad also forgot to tell him that he wasn't sneaky enough to kill game from the ground.)

Ask yourself an honest question. Do you limit your hunting methods because you are incapable of anything else, or because, due to regional myths, you haven't given other time-proven methods a sincere, go-for-broke try? There are many ways to hunt with a bow. Why not learn to use them all? You may find that the paths less traveled are often the best.



COVER PHOTO BY RIK HINTON: Northern California blacktailed deer and Russian boar country in a lull between storms. Wild salmon and steelhead run in the rapids at the bottom of the farthest canyon, below ancient Indian camps sites on the high slopes.



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MRS. PEARSON REMEMBERS BEN



By Wallace Renner

To meet the wife of the late Ben Pearson is to meet a genuine southern lady. She welcomed me into her large ante-bellum home in the heart of the Pine Bluff, Arkansas, historic district with hospitality typical of the Old South. Their French architecture style home was built in 1840 and is the oldest house in Pine Bluff. Ben and Mary were instrumental in organizing and restoring many of the ante-bellum homes on their historic block. Mary continues to live in the Pine Bluff home she and Ben restored. She volunteers as a historical guide for the city. My first meeting with Mary Pearson occurred at the Howard Hill Archery tournament in Wilsonville, Alabama, several years ago. I looked forward to renewing our acquaintance and perhaps have an opportunity to view Ben Pearson's famous trophy room. After cake and coffee, Mary invited me to do just that.

Just inside the door looms the giant grizzly bear. The bear is featured in one of the famous hunting stories known to all Ben Pearson bowhunting fans. The bear is huge with a menacing mouth and fierce eyes even in its stuffed state. It weighed 800 pounds and was a tremendous trophy even for a hunter like Ben Pearson. As Mary tells it, "This bear gave Ben trouble for some eight hours." The bear kept retreating to the brush.

They were hunting in deep snow and there were not enough snowshoes for the whole hunting party. The photographer was trying to manage with only one snowshoe. He was carrying a hand gun under his coat. Ben requested that the camera angle be over his right shoulder so when the bear finally decided to make a stand there would be no doubt that he had made the killing shot. Ben was in position when the guide, who carried a rifle, reminded them of the danger posed by a wounded grizzly. He advised the photographer to have his pistol ready in case Ben failed to kill the bear.

The bear presented himself for a shot through a dense willow thicket. Ben's sharp Deadhead and compressed cedar arrow passed completely through the 800-pound monster, landing in the snow a few feet away. No one realized until later just how dangerous their situation was, for Ben's glasses were fogging over in the cold, obscuring his vision, and when the photographer reached for his pistol, he found the holster empty. In trying to manage with the heavy camera equipment in the deep snow with only one snow shoe, he had lost it somewhere along the trail! This episode is captured in the video, "The Legendary Hunts of Ben Pearson." Ben remarked that this was one of the fastest kills with a bow he had ever seen. "The bear just looked up and then fell over." I bet the camera man did the same.



Ben also piloted his own plane. Mary tells of one time she and Ben were flying back to Pine Bluff after an archery event in Memphis, Tennessee. The plane developed a problem. Ben kept working at the controls. Nothing seemed to help. The plane kept losing altitude. Mary was prepared. "I was still in my new dress, hat and gloves." (Every southern lady knows that one puts on their best when one goes out just in case one has an accident!)

The plane continued to lose altitude. Ben's face was gray with worry when just over some trees they saw an abandoned air strip. Ben landed the plane safely. The problem was an unsecured rudder pin.

The Pearson's met when Mary was a check-out clerk in the store where he bought fruit for his mother. "I smiled at

him" said Mary. Their relationship developed from the smile. Mary still has a charming smile.

Ben was born in 1898 in Paron, Arkansas, west of Little Rock. As a young man he worked for the Arkansas Power and Light Company. In 1925 he happened upon an article in a Boy Scout Magazine on how to make a bow. His first bow was a 90 pounds and that started him on an archery adventure that lasted a lifetime. Ben's hobby soon grew as his friends asked him to make equipment for them. Nearly all archery gear at that time had to be made by hand. At first he made bows and arrows in his workshop and fletched arrows as he traveled. In 1938,

Ben's sharp Deadhead and compressed cedar arrow passed completely through the 800 pound monster, landing in the snow a few feet away.



Mary Pearson in Ben Pearson's Trophy room, holding the arrow Ben used to shoot the big grizzly standing behind her.

Ben Pearson Incorporated, moved into a converted sorghum mill in Pine Bluff, where he began manufacturing archery equipment and supplied stores nationwide.

Ben designed most of his bows and quivers, sometimes waking at 2 a.m. to sketch a design that came to him during the night. The next morning, he would go to the shop and build that item. As evidence of his genius at design, Mary pointed out prototypes of two cross bows in the trophy room that Ben designed to be used by commandos or "stealth soldiers" during the Korean War.

He loved the works of Leonardo da Vinci, and studied his drawings frequently. Mary still keeps that large book on the coffee table in her living room. He advised his children to also look to da Vinci's work and that of Thomas Edison. "He wanted them to think," said Mary.

Howard Hill and his wife Elizabeth were frequent visitors to the Pearson home. The friendship was so

close that when Howard was hospitalized with a broken leg, Ben went to California to visit him. This was just prior to Howard's memorable African Safari trip. When Ben returned to Pine Bluff after visiting Howard, he remarked to Mary that he thought it would be "impossible for Howard to make an African hunt as he was flat on his back with his leg up in the air." Like many wives married to archery buffs, Mary was not surprised. A little inconvenience like a broken leg never kept a avid bowhunter at home when there's a big hunt scheduled. Right?

The Ben Pearson Archery Company made the arrows for Howard's African Safari. Look at the boxes of arrows carried by the bearers and on the side they read "Ben Pearson." Ben examined and checked these arrows. In addition, in 1950 catalogue number 23, Howard wrote that although he made his own personal equipment because he had to be sure of his bows and arrows when making life threatening shots, he trusted the quality control of Ben Pearson so much that the Ben Pearson Archery

Company could produce his longbow. There was no higher recommendation in the archery world.

"Howard and Elizabeth would sit with us in the trophy room and tell story after story." Mary remembers. One night someone asked Howard how could all the meat of an elephant be cared for and stored. Howard's response was that after the local villagers finished there wasn't much left. It seems that a whole village would move "en masse" to the kill site and stay there until the meat/elephant was completely devoured. Then the whole village would move on. Mary showed me a cylinder given to them by Howard which she keeps on the mantel in the trophy room. It contains short pygmy arrows with the poison on the tips. We took one of the arrows out but handled it very carefully!

Elizabeth Hill was a good hunter in her own right. Once Ben took the Hills on a hog hunt on Calk Island in Mississippi. Elizabeth shot a hog on the other side of the river. The men asked if she needed help in tracking the animal.



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Ben Pearson, Inc. also manufactured farm machinery. Ben is shown here at the helm of a Ben Pearson cotton picker.

She replied that her father had taught her how to track. She then took a handful of leaves and rolled them in the blood and said, "Just put these bloody leaves along the way to the animal then follow them on the way back out." On that same hunt Ben shot one arrow through two hogs which were standing close together.

At an archery tournament in Blanchard Springs, Arkansas, the Mountain View Lions Club declared the area the "Land of the Longbow." Ben shot from a bluff down to the lower level and scored a bull's eye at the length of a football field. The Legendary Hunts video shows Ben making a mountain shot one to two city blocks long on a javelina.

Another story Mary recalled was in the movie "Tembo." Ed Hill (no relation) was attacked by a python and wrestles with the snake as it wraps it's coils around his light leg. Howard comes to his rescue and shoots the snake in the head. Mary points out that this was not staged and happened just as it is shown.

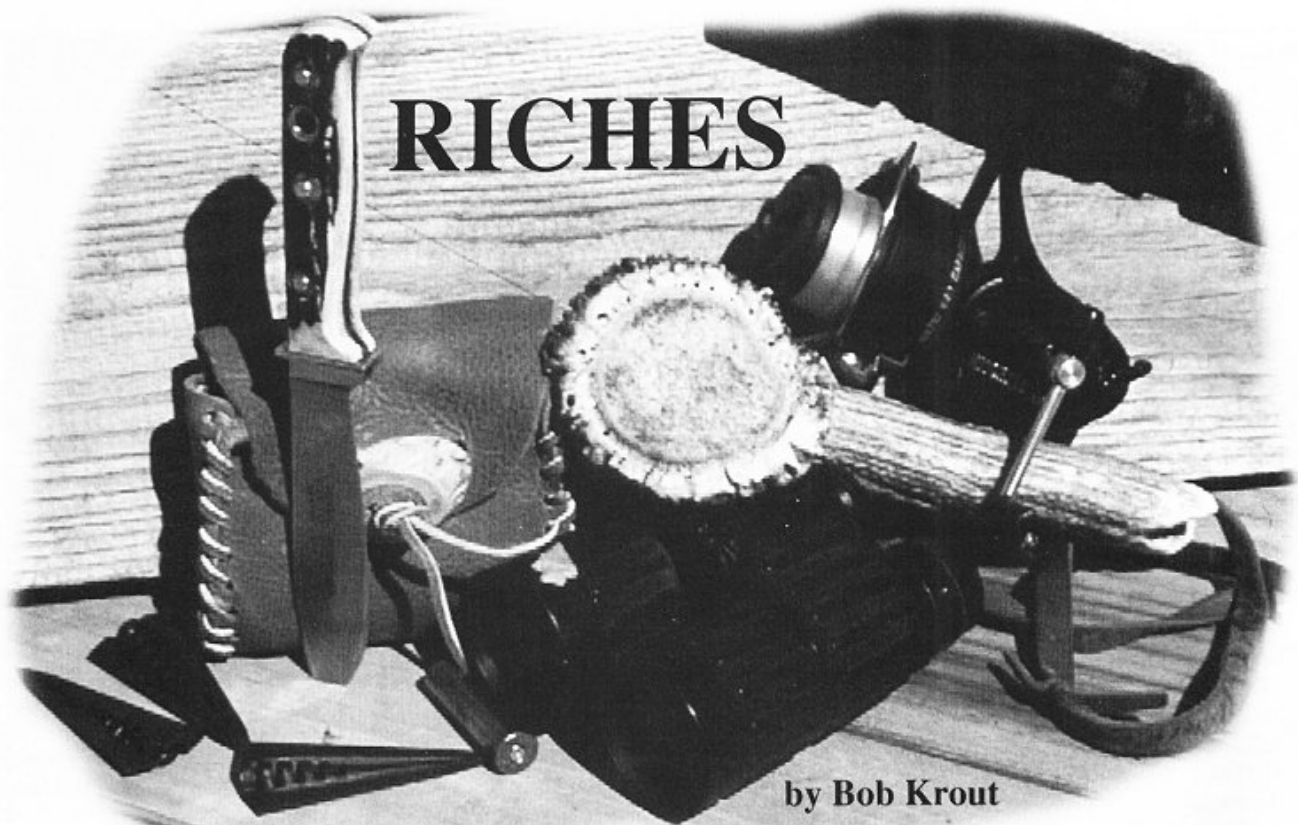
Ben Pearson was a humanitarian. He always tried to help someone down on their luck, especially if they needed a job and were willing to work. Mary remembers that Ben helped a

wheelchair-bound individual find a decent paying job. Thirty or forty years ago that was not an easy thing to do. Ben was known for such acts of kindness.

Today, Mary Pearson is semi-retired and helps her son Ben Pearson, Jr., in promoting rentals of the Longbow Cabin Retreat. Ben built the Longbow Cabin as a hunting lodge at Prim, Arkansas. The main structure is between two monolithic boulders and has a spectacular waterfall in the back yard. It's the type of waterfall and pool into which one might expect Johnny Weismuller to dive. I highly recommend that you investigate this unique and charming get away deep in the Ozark Mountains. They have future plans for a Ben Pearson Museum to display Ben's Archery gear and trophies. The Ben Pearson tradition lives on especially there in the Longbow Cabin.

For more information about the Longbow Cabin, contact Ben and Paulette Pearson, P.O. Box 66, Prim, Arkansas, 72130 or call (870)948-2362.





by Bob Krout

I started down the old woods road that winds through SGL (State Game Lands) #50. The large quiver of blunts and judos made a comforting weight on my back and my new Abbott longbow seemed like a part of my hand, an extension of my arm, as I ambled along searching for my first target. Soon I picked out a fallen leaf, nocked an arrow, and concentrated on a dark spot near the center of the leaf. The smooth, controlled power of the bow felt somehow sweet and comforting as I drew to my high anchor point, settled for just a split second, then released! The yellow feathers spun in a perfect line as the arrow arced across the 40 yards separating me from the leaf. Dead center! What a perfect way to start my evening trek.

I walked forward to collect my arrow, my eyes already picking out my next target. A stick here, a thistle sticking up over there, and over here, at the side of the woods, a fine old rotted stump. I gloried in just being out and shooting. The smooth well tuned feel of the drawn bow, the sight of the arrows spinning true, the satisfying pleasure of a solid hit, and the optimistic "almost!" of a near miss. It all came together like we all want and, if we practice enough, like we sometimes get.

Many arrows and about three miles later, I stood on the crest of the hill on the far side of the game land, looking down on the main parking area and the public rifle range.

Here is where I like to take a break and watch the food plots clustered around this hilltop. There are four fields here separated by patches of second-growth trees and laurel. On the far side of the big field behind me are the remains of the old Freak farm. No, that isn't meant as a sideshow reference. Rather, that is the name of the people who once farmed this area. The house is gone now but the old apple trees are still here as are a couple of the old stone walls and the grave of a young child of the Freak family.

On the edge of the homestead clearing, and across one of the stone walls, is a large stand of crab apples overgrown with wild grapevines. As long as I can remember, it has

been the home to many grouse and at least one really good buck. It must be ideal cover because there is always a big deer here. If one is caught out and shot, another moves in and takes over the thicket.

Sometimes I will see deer here in the evenings. Sometimes turkey, groundhogs, rabbits, squirrels, grouse, and even occasionally a stocked ringneck, although they don't seem to last too long around here. I saw my first grey fox at the edge of these fields and, lately, more and more tracks of what appear to be coyotes.

After a bit I will turn and start back towards the truck, shooting as I go and just enjoying all that this place has to give. As I kneel there, bathed by the evening breeze, I once again examine the bow in my hand and marvel at its beauty. My eyes follow every line, every nuance of color, texture, and flawless finish. It is a 68-inch bow of a deflex-reflex design pulling 56 pounds at 28 inches. The limbs consist of one lamination of bamboo at the back and three laminations of well-figured yew showing on the belly side. It has clear glass and a beautiful piece of cocobolo in the riser. The back overlay is cocobolo and the long nicely feathered tip overlays are a triple sandwich of cocobolo and ebony. It is my second Abbott.

The first is also a 68-inch bow pulling 58 pounds at 28 inches. It is my absolute favorite with four laminations of osage in the limbs and clear glass. The riser is a uniquely figured piece of bacote, as is the back overlay. The triple tip overlays are bacote and ebony. I thought I would never find another bow as pleasing to the eye or as sweet in the hand as that one which I eventually named "Honeybow." That is until I again ran into Steve Abbott at the first "Great American Traditional Archery Rendezvous" held at Warrior's Mark, Pennsylvania, in June, 1999.

As usual, Steve had a most impressive array of new bows displayed at his booth. All longbows ranging from 60 inches to 68 inches and with some of the most eye-popping combinations of wood that I have ever seen from any bowyer.

My good friend, Dave Lohr, was with me and, as the

three of us talked. Dave browsed through the display of bows. Eventually he found one that he couldn't live without. A 66-inch bow pulling 55 pounds at 28 inches. It had four laminations of the most gorgeous rose-colored yew wood under clear glass and a cocobolo riser and back overlay. The unique-looking tip overlays were cocobolo and white bamboo, for a very distinctive look. It was a smooth, sweet shooter and, after trying it out, he couldn't leave without it!

When Dave and Steve started discussing price I got that sinking feeling that comes when I know that I am going to have to explain to the missus why there are TWO long, skinny bow sleeves under my arm instead of the ONE that I had when I left. In an age when the price of bows seems to rise faster than Clinton's eyebrows at the sight of a new intern, Steve was still selling his bows at almost the same price that he had been asking three years ago. I was sunk.

When I got the new bow home (Mama was out shopping!) I took it out into the yard along with my original Abbott and proceeded to give them a real workout at the backyard 3-D target. Despite the two-pound difference in draw weight and the subtle differences caused by the different materials, they

shot remarkably alike. They are both smooth beyond my 28-inch draw with no hint of stacking. They both have a good flat cast with my 575-grain cedar arrows.

That weekend I decided that two such exceptional bows should have new, matching strings, ones fitted more closely to each bow. I must finally be getting this string-making thing right because they both turned out exceptionally well. They are both two-bundle, 16-strand strings of B-50 Dacron, yellow and brown with brown serving. I fitted the loops to each bow so that they are good and snug. I just hate loose strings that are forever falling off of the bow when it is not braced.

As usual I made the serving a little higher and longer than normal. I like both arms of my bow square to fit on the serving so that it slides easily when I am measuring brace height and nock point. I also like the serving to be long enough so that when shooting, the serving slaps on my armguard and not the bare string. That causes fraying and an eventual weak spot. It is much easier to replace the serving than it is to have to replace a string that is well adjusted with all of the stretch worked out and stable.

Evening shadows were lengthening as I ended my contemplation and started back over the woods road toward my truck. As I walked along, eager for whatever lay around the next bend, I shot as well as I have ever shot. In my life. Sometimes new bows are like that! Thistles bowed when clipped by a judo point like so many feudal peasants bowing before royalty. Stumps quivered with a resounding thump as each steel blunt hammered their sides. And in between and overall were the sights and sounds and the smells of the forest around me. Lord, it just can't get any better!

I was almost back to my truck and thinking that I have to find a name for my new friend. Naming bows is not something I used to do until I found the quality that is available in today's custom bows. Somehow most factory bows just don't give me that personal feeling that I

find in a finely crafted longbow from some little out-of-the-way shop. Maybe I am just getting sentimental in my old age. I just know that a bow like this one feels like more than just a tool. It is a companion with whom I can share the wild places and my innermost thoughts and feelings. For sure it will never talk back or belittle what I have to say, therefore I can say what ever I like!

As I was putting my gear away in the back of the truck, and continuing in my thoughtful mood, I remembered something someone had told me many years ago. I don't really remember where or who, only that it was after a day of hunting, which in those days meant ring-necks and rabbits. I was young, there was hot coffee left in the thermos and we were standing around the car, just quietly talking, no one wanting to be the first to leave for home. Someone was talking about a mutual acquaintance who had pretty much stopped coming out with the rest of us in favor of putting more time into his work. Someone commented that he was doing quite well and would soon be considered a rich man. No one spoke for a few moments and then someone, I don't remember who, spoke softly and said, "Do you know what being rich really is? It's having an extra box of shotgun shells on the day the season opens, a tank full of gas, and the time to use them both. That's real riches."

Times change but truth lasts forever. I still keep at least one extra box of shells for each gun, but I have also expanded my definition of rich to include having enough arrows and an extra bow from which to shoot them. With that and the time to enjoy such things, we are truly rich. The only thing I would add is family and friends with whom we can share our riches.



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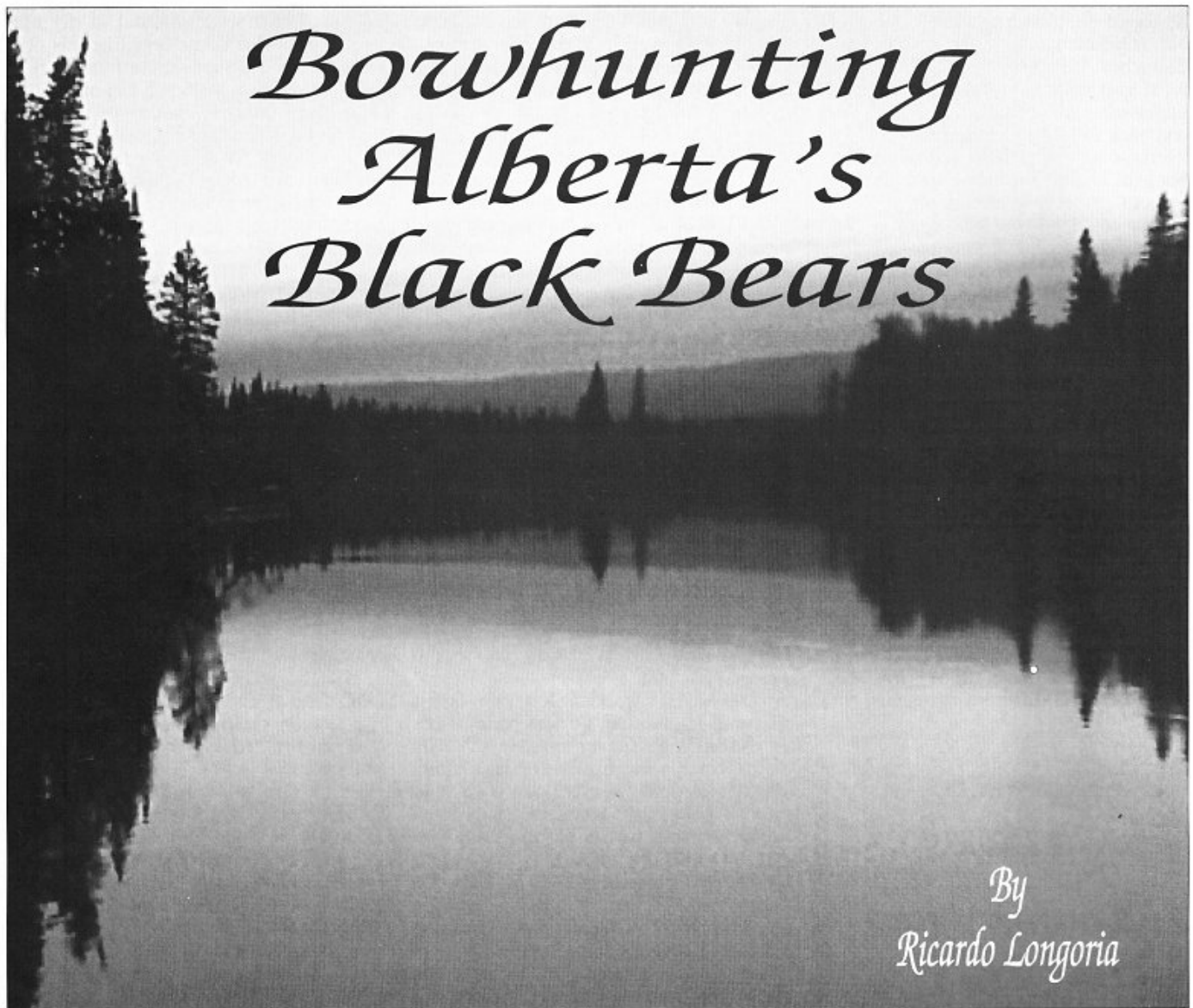
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Bowhunting Alberta's Black Bears

*By
Ricardo Longoria*

The North American black bear, *Ursus Americanus*, after the whitetail deer, is our continent's most sought-after big game animal. Its relative abundance and widespread distribution makes hunting black bears an activity that is within the reach of most modern-day hunters. Geographically, it is found from some parts of Northern Mexico up through most of the Continental United States, and onward to the Canadian provinces and Alaska.

The challenge that hunting black bears represents, as well as the beauty of their skins in either a rug or a full mounted trophy, encourages many hunters to venture forth in their pursuit. As a quarry to be pursued with traditional archery gear, black bears are ideal. They are beautiful and exciting, though realistic to attempt harvesting with a common, hunting-weight bow.

From a physical standpoint, black bears are the smallest of the North American bears. An average, mature black bear is about six feet square. An exceptional bear would be anything

over six and one half feet. Bears in the seven to eight feet range, though quite uncommon, have been taken by bowhunters. From a record book standpoint, an 18" skull qualifies a bear for the Pope and Young Record Book. Roughly, a six and one half foot bruin would have about an 18" skull. Black bears from some of the more arid southern states, such as Arizona, Colorado, and California, tend to have larger skulls when compared to their body size.

Black bear hunting most often takes place in either the late spring or the early fall. However, for several reasons, I would highly recommend concentrating one's efforts on hunting them in the late spring. First and foremost among these reasons is the opportunity to hunt over bait.

There are basically three different methods that can be used when hunting black bears with a bow and arrow. These are hunting over a man-made bait pile, spot-and-stalk hunting, and using a pack of well-trained hounds to tree the bear. Even though these are all acceptable ways of hunting black bears, I

would consider that the most effective and commonly used strategy, especially when bow hunting, is by hunting over man-made bait.

When the bears emerge from their dens in the late spring, there is one force which is driving all of the bears, they are looking for food to replenish the stored fat they shed while in hibernation. This is the time of year when bears will most readily come into bait stations, being concentrated around the areas where they know abundant food is present. In my opinion, one of the many advantages that hunting over bait provides, is the fact that one will see the most number of bears in the shortest time period, allowing a greater selection.

Another advantage of hunting in the spring, is that hunters will find the fur long and thick with a great amount of underfur. During the fall, hair will tend to be short with little or no underfur. However, a down side of spring hunting is that sometimes the bears will emerge from their dens with their pelts rubbed in a particular spot as a result of lying against an abrasive object.

The spring black bear rut is also a point to consider when thinking about when to plan a bear hunt. During the last week of May and the first week of June, the bears are rutting and the dominant boars can be observed coming into bait in search of receptive sows. The larger boars are often wary of baits, however during this time of the year there is a much greater chance to see them there.

The game laws in the different states and provinces will dictate, in some circumstances, whether one may use a "created" bait pile or not. When hunting in a state or province, where "created" baiting is not allowed, a hunter may always choose to hunt using a "natural" bait. Different forms of natural bait might include a pool filled with spawning salmon, an abandoned apple orchard, a gut pile from a harvested game animal, a remote oat field, or any other food source that results in an abnormal concentration of bears. By hunting one of these areas, a hunter's odds are increased substantially and the possibility of seeing more bears will likely lead to a better overall experience.

My personal experiences hunting black bear have included several spring hunts, using the baiting technique, and one fall spot-and-stalk hunt. Needless to say, I saw many more bears of better quality and diversity while hunting over bait than by the spot-and-stalk technique. I would definitely recommend that one choose the spring for a first-time hunt.

My most recent and memorable black bear hunt took place in the spring of 1999. This hunt was on the Clearwater River of Alberta, Canada. We were staying at a lodge that was about an hour boat ride from Fort McMurray. While on that hunt in Alberta, one evening I was sitting, perched atop a large aspen, waiting for a mature boar that we thought was coming into the bait. This stand had been hit hard, and on an irregular basis. The tracks and the behavior indicated that it was a large boar that was coming in to feed. Bruins of this size are very difficult to pattern. They come in at all hours and on an irregular basis. I knew that if I wanted an opportunity at this bear, I

would have to be patient and determined. If necessary, I would have to sit this stand the entire week, in the hopes that the large boar would come in while I was sitting quietly in the stand, waiting.

Fortunately, on this day, luck was on my side. Less than an hour after getting into the stand, I heard some movement off to my left. As I looked into the brush, I could make out a large bear, sitting on its haunches, less than 25 yards away. In all of my excitement, I could hardly breathe. It was definitely that large boar! In his current position, he provided no shot and I preferred waiting until he decided to come into the bait, where I would have a close-range, high-probability shot.

He sat for more than 20 minutes, licking his paws and looking at his surroundings. He was downwind of me and I was afraid of being scented. Fortunately, I had bathed with a fragrance-free soap and was wearing clean, aired-out clothing. I did not know if this



Association of Traditional Hunting Archers

We are pleased to announce the formation of the **Association of Traditional Hunting Archers**, a new national organization developed for the traditional archer. Its purpose is to provide a home where we can hang our hats, a home from which we can gain strength and grow. Though ATHA's focus is upon the hunting archer, its foundation rests upon the love of the same traditional archery tackle that unites hunter with rover, rover with recreational archer, and all of us with our past. ATHA aims to reinforce that foundation, to be a positive voice for archery, both within the community of archers and with state wildlife agencies, to present its true form and identity to the public, and to build its future.

For a copy of our mission statement, a list of our goals and a membership application, please mail to: Craig Oberle, C/O American State Bank, P. O. Box 197, Mellette, SD 57461

Please visit us at our website <http://tmuss.tripod.com/TA>, where this same information and a membership application are available, as well as a copy of our charter. Signed, ATHA Steering Committee, Doug Borland, Cory Mattson, Tom Mussatto, Craig Oberle, John Rook, Dale Sharp, Lon Sharp, Dean Torges, Mark Viehweg, Larry Yien, Jim Dahlberg, Chairman.



An old shed shows its rustic charm near the Clearwater River of Alberta, Canada.

would be enough to fool the old bruin's nose, but all I could do at this moment was sit still and hope that he would remain oblivious to my presence.

Suddenly, the bear stood up on his hind legs and sniffed the wind, looking directly up at my position. Even though knowing that unless I moved, the bear's poor eyesight would not detect me, I thought that this was going to be the end of the standoff, I was going to be winded. However, apparently satisfied, he came down on all fours and began to amble towards the bait. He was massive. His gut was large, hanging low, and he kind of waddled along towards the bait. If the sow that one of the other hunters had taken the night before was 200 pounds, this bear was probably approaching 400 pounds. I had seen many bears in the wild before, but nothing had ever come close to the size of the bear I now had under my stand.

He stopped for a short moment, and sniffed the base of the tree I was sitting in. Did he know I was up that tree? Turning his head slowly, he looked up towards the stand. I froze and clenched my teeth, hoping that he would not catch on to my presence. He turned

back towards the bait and continued his walk in that direction.

Once it was clear that he was headed straight for the bait, there was no turning back. I was going to get my opportunity. I was ready and as I came up slowly to a standing position, the platform emitted a slight squeaking sound. The bruin stopped dead in his tracks. He looked around for a moment and not knowing what the sound was, continued forward to the bait that was now just several yards in front of him. I was standing, my bow was in shooting position, the arrow was nocked and on the rest. I was ready to shoot.

As the bear came upon the bait, quartering away from me, I pulled back my 60-pound Harrison Black Wolf longbow, picked a tuft of hair behind his shoulder, and let the arrow fly. Everything felt right. My indirect aiming spot had been where it was supposed to be and the Snuffer-tipped cedar shaft hit where I was looking, penetrating to the fletching. The arrow hit where I had wanted and penetration was adequate. Upon impact, the bear lunged forward, and as he charged away I could hear branches crashing as he ran up the hill

behind me. A few moments later, I could make out the spine-chilling sound of the death bellow. I was ecstatic, being sure that I had successfully harvested the large bruin with my longbow.

I sat in the tree for a long time, taking in the scenery and recovering from the excitement. This was my fourth attempt at taking a large black bear. My previous attempts had been unsuccessful and up until this hunt, I had never even seen a mature boar come into bait. Now, everything had finally come together.

After giving the hit the necessary time, I climbed out of the tree and began to look for the blood trail. Having used a sharp Snuffer, I was sure that there would be a sizeable blood trail. First, I looked for blood at the point of impact and on the trail where the bear had run. There was none, not a single drop of blood! Determined, I continued to look for the sign that I was positive had to be there. After searching in vain for nearly an hour, I decided that it was time to go and get Kenny, one of the guides, to help. I was not concerned about the hit, but the lack of any visible blood trail had me worried. With darkness not more than two hours away, I wanted to recover the bear this evening and avoid the small risk of having him fed upon by other bears, coyotes, or even wolves.

After walking to the area where Kenny was, and finally finding him, it was nearly dark. We went back to my stand and tried to find a blood trail, but for the moment, our efforts were not rewarded. We decided to continue searching at first light and were optimistic that we would recover the bear in the morning.

Upon returning to camp, we were received with the news of some of the other hunter's successes. We celebrated the harvesting of some very nice bears and enjoyed the camaraderie and storytelling. I recounted my story of the large boar that I had arrowed and received the appropriate, incredulous looks upon recounting the bear's size. I could not wait to see the looks on their faces when we found the bear the next morning.

The other hunters were all good friends from Mexico. A year earlier, with a desire to go on an enjoyable hunt with a group of fellow traditional archers, we

had booked this Alberta bear hunt with Bruce McKenzie of McKenzie Brothers Outfitters. Mark Buehrer of Bowhunting Safari Consultants recommended Bruce for his professionalism, excellent hunting area, and superb accommodations.

Besides a spring bear hunt, I can think of few other hunts, anywhere in the world, that are as well-suited to giving a group of hunters as much time to socialize and just be laid back and relax. Most days, we were up after nine o'clock in the morning. We would have a late breakfast and then spend most of the morning sharpening broadheads, shooting arrows, playing cards, dominos, and numerous other games, leading us all to have a great time in the wilderness. After a late lunch, we would take showers and then head to the stands. Most afternoons, we left for the stands at about 4:30, most going by boat and one or two by ATV or on foot.

We would sit in the stands from about five o'clock in the afternoon until ten thirty or eleven at night. Upon returning to camp, we would have dinner

and talk about the day's hunting over a cold beer or two. Usually, we were not in bed until way past midnight.

The next morning, after having arrowed the large boar, we were up early. The other hunters had agreed to help in the effort to recover my bear. Upon reaching the stand, we fanned out and began searching for the downed bear. We were looking for blood, the arrow, or hopefully even the bear. There were ten of us looking and I was optimistic that it would only be a question of ten or fifteen minutes before we found the boar.

The minutes passed and eventually turned into hours. I was really beginning to worry. Being sure that the arrow had hit well and that the lungs had been taken out, why couldn't we recover the bear? The lack of an exit wound would explain our failure to find a blood trail, though this would not explain why we could not find the bear within one or two hundred yards of the stand. We made larger and larger circles and searched under massive boulders and in abandoned dens, all to no avail.

After three or four hours of searching, I had lost all hope of recovering the bear. I had mixed emotions about this whole occurrence. I was sure I had made a good shot, and surprised that we had not found the bear within a couple of hundred yards. Having heard the bear bellow made me believe that he had died a close distance from the stand. However, the brush was so thick that one could have walked by the bear at a few feet and realistically not seen it. With no blood, no arrow, and no bear, we finally gave up the search.

Even though we had not yet found the bear, I decided I would go back in one or two days and try to locate it by following the ravens and other scavengers. I was not going to give up yet. Though it was somewhat of a let down that our recovery effort had failed, I was content in knowing that I at least had the opportunity of nearly harvesting a large bear. Whether it would work out or not was now out of my hands. As often occurs with bowhunting, getting within range and getting a good arrow off only ends the first part of the hunt.

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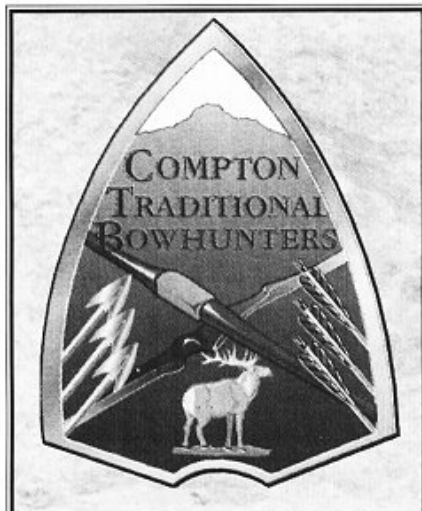
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Ricardo Longoria with his Black Wolf Take-down and the WORLD RECORD SOUTHERN ROAN ANTELOPE.

Afterwards follows the recovery effort, what can be the most difficult and oftentimes most anguishing part of the hunt.

That evening I sat in another stand. Three different bears came in. There were two bears that looked to be in the six-foot range and one that was a bit smaller. One of the two larger bears had especially nice fur. However, considering I had just taken a shot the night



It's Time

A group of traditionalists from across the country has decided that we can no longer wait. Forces have gradually been sweeping us under the rug. They would like us to go away. The traditional archery community needs to be brought together to once again become a prominent factor. It's time to rise and take back our place in the sun. Those before us numbered in the tens of thousands, and they proved the traditional bows—recurves and longbows—a viable hunting tool. The record is clear. It is now time to insure the identity of the traditional way for future generations. The natural resources departments will once again see our short-range bows as a low impact management tool—this we will encourage and pursue. It is also a great source of hunting enjoyment. Come join us as a member of the Compton Traditional Bowhunters.

—Glen St. Charles, Board Member Emeritus

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before, I decided to pass for the moment and just enjoy watching them. I made several practice draws in an effort to hone my skills and my movement went undetected. In my mind, I was still in the process of sorting out what had gone wrong on the bear the night before. I wanted to find a reason, something that I could put my finger on that would justify why I had lost that bear, especially when everything felt in place.

Below me, the bears kept feeding and I was able to take a few interesting pictures. Suddenly, breaking all peacefulness and tranquility, the bear with the nicer fur decided to climb the tree that I was sitting in. He ambled on up to the tree, bear hugged it and began to climb up the straight trunk, grunting as he pulled his way up. I was immediately alert and began shouting at the bear. "Heeyyyyyyy!!!!" I yelled with no apparent response from the bear. It was right under the stand, oblivious to my presence. I took my longbow by one of its ends, and thumped the bear across the head. This got its attention and it quickly scuttled down the stand and ran away. WOW! This bear had really caught me off guard. This abstract behavior had served to once again spike my interest. I decided that now I was going to try and take this bear. The close encounter got

my adrenaline going and now I was ready to get back to the task at hand. The only down side was that the thump on the head from my longbow was probably going to make this bear much more wary than before.

The next evening I went back to the same stand. I was determined to try and get a shot opportunity at that same bear. After sitting perfectly still for several hours, and not seeing anything, I began to get concerned. Maybe the bear had been more alarmed by the shout and the thump on its head than I had previously thought.

As it began to get dark, I noticed the same bear coming in from off on my right. He walked straight in to the bait, but immediately kept moving towards my left, before finally disappearing. Then, a few minutes later, once again he appeared. He was more than one hundred yards out in front of me, moving off to my right. He seemed to have little interest in the bait, leading me to think that he had finally left for good. With only about fifteen minutes of light left, he appeared once again, this time going straight for the bait. As soon as he settled down and began to eat the varied assortment of bear delights consisting of dog food, lollipops, pig intestines, and beaver, I stood up and prepared for my shot.

Standing in a slightly quartering away position, I pulled back and let the Snuffer-tipped cedar arrow sail straight into its chest cavity. The bear wasted no time in running out of the area at full gallop. I watched attentively as he ran and lost sight of him only after he went over a small rise about 85 yards away.

After sitting still for about thirty minutes, I carefully climbed out of the elevated stand and set upon the blood trail with my flashlight. Blood was everywhere. It literally looked as if someone had poured the blood out of a pitcher, much like they would with water. I easily followed the trail at a brisk pace and came upon the stricken bear, a few yards beyond the small rise where I had last seen him. From the ground, it looked much bigger than from the stand. It was an adult boar weighing in the neighborhood of 225 lbs. The fur had a silky texture and was five inches on its shoulders. In all, he made for a very nice, representative black bear. I was very pleased with my accomplishment.

I called Bruce on a hand-held radio transmitter and let him know that a bear was down. It would not be long before he and some of the other hunters would come walking up from the river to help me take the bear out to the boat. Using his custom-made boat, Bruce drops hunters off at different stands along the river. When a bear is taken, it is pulled to the edge of the river before being loaded in to the boat.

There was much celebration in camp that evening. Horacio, one of the other hunters, had also taken a very nice chocolate colored boar. This was the fourth day of hunting and we had already taken several nice bears and seen many others. We were having a great time and were just barely over half way through the hunt. Having chosen to hunt

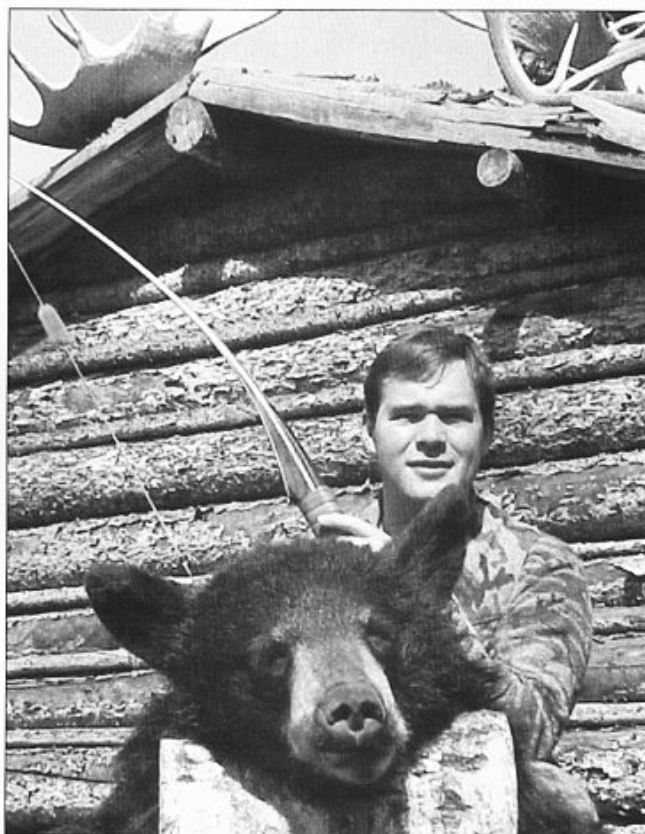
Alberta, allowed us to each take two bears which meant that we would all be able to get a great deal of hunting done during the seven-day hunt.

I spent the rest of the week hoping for another opportunity at a large bear. As

skills. The camp life was very enjoyable and the daily card games and ribbing sessions were always a treat.

On the last day of the hunt I sat in a stand that was fairly close to the camp, not more than half a mile by boat. I did not feel the need to loose an arrow at any bear and did not have the desire to kill. I was content to just see what came in. Several hours into the evening, a large, heavy bear came into the bait station. Immediately I knew there was no need to wait and study this bear. It was obvious that it was a mature bear and it had beautiful thick fur. Before sending the arrow on its course, I picked a spot and slowly drew back my Black Wolf. The arrow flew true, quietly entering the bear's side at precisely the spot where I had been looking, then exiting the opposite side. The bear stormed away, crashing through the sticks and branches in its hasty retreat. On the ground just in front of me, lay the crimson stained arrow. The hit was perfect! I would give it the necessary time and then go and recover my trophy.

Hunting Black Bear on the Clearwater River is one of the more rewarding hunting experiences I have had. The pleasant climate, beautiful scenery, and great bear densities, all contribute to make this area well suited for any bowhunter. Considering these hunts take place when little other hunting is available, a spring black bear hunt is the perfect hunt with which to break the monotonous void left after the winter hunting season is over. If looking for a group hunt, there is no better choice. Our group of seven hunters harvested twelve bears in seven days. The time spent together and the camaraderie were priceless.



Alberta black bear, taken near the Clearwater River.

each day went by, the possibility of having a rutting boar come into a bait station in search of receptive sows to breed would increase. I saw many other bears, but nothing even close to the one that I had unfortunately lost on the second day of the hunt. I did return to the area where we were unable to recover that first bear in the hope of spotting some ravens, finding no sign whatsoever. I was still troubled by the thought of having lost that bear, but knew I had tried my best to locate it.

As the days went by, more bears were brought into camp each evening. The seven of us were having a great time hunting these Alberta black bears. There were many to be found and they were challenging our hunting and shooting



An Interview with Jack Harrison—Bowyer

By Rik Hinton

Jack, you have been building bows now since 1985. Why did you ever start?

I was moving to Alaska from Oregon where I lived in Gresham, the same suburb of Portland where the late Jim Brackenbury lived. I spent quite a bit of time with Jim and through his encouragement I decided to make bows. It all came about one day when I asked Jim why someone didn't build a two-piece, take-down longbow. I asked him to make me one and he declined. He told me to do it myself. So, after I settled in Anchorage, I decided to go ahead and do it.

Was the take-down your first bow?

Yes. I eventually started building one-piece longbows, but, the Black Wolf was my first model. The HHC, one-piece longbow is my latest. There are 5 different models; three take-downs and two one-piece longbows.

You don't build a recurve?

No. My longbows shoot with any recurve, so why go to all the effort?

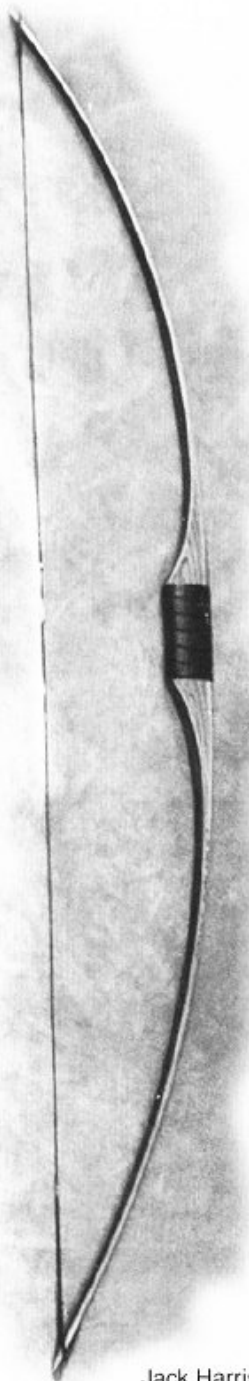
That's a pretty bold statement.

No, not as long as these longbows keep performing like they do.

What is it about your longbows that makes them perform like recurves; and exactly why do you compare them to recurves?

First of all, most recurves are smooth. They don't stack. Most are quiet. In general, most recurves are known for shooting faster than longbows, and the better ones cast arrows with no handshock at all. Two of the main reasons for their high performance are first, a heavier riser, and second, the recurved limbs. A heavy riser will help absorb and dampen handshock. The recurved limbs are actually pre-stressed in the bow form. The results of pre-stressing a bow limb produces a higher recovery rate in the finished recurve bow, compared to any typical longbow. The increased stress and the reduced limb mass makes recurved limbs shoot arrows faster.

Well, all this can be accomplished by building a longbow with the right materials, using the right design. By



Jack Harrison's new Hill-style longbow.

combining bamboo and carbon in the limbs, I build longbow limbs that recover as quickly as most of the recurves that are sold on the market today that hunters use. Remember, I am building a hunting longbow, so, I compare it to hunting recurves. The late Harry Drake built lots of recurves that cast better than most bows of any kind,

including most high-tech compounds. The point is, my focus is on longbows that are used to hunt with.

The riser of my take-down long bow is a full pound heavier than in a one-piece longbow. The sleeve fastener is the reason for the added weight. This added weight helps eliminate handshock.

The taper of my limbs is faster than most longbows. The edges are ground in a trapezoid shape from belly to back. This is the opposite of what most bowyers do. Building the limbs in this fashion removes excess mass.

The last one-third of the ends of the limbs are reflexed just enough to increase stress, but, not enough to make it a recurve. By either reflexing or recurving limb tips in any bow mass can be reduced and stress increased. This increase in stress with less mass increases the elasticity or recovery rate of the limbs, without compromising stability. The effect increases arrow velocity. Handshock is also eliminated.

The deflex design in the limbs makes the limbs recover more in an outward vector, compared to a forward vector like most straight-limbed longbows. Any residual vibration from the top limb is cancelled by residual vibration from the bottom limb because they both move in opposite directions away from the center of the bow more, instead of forward.

What's that about that trapezoid shape again? How does that affect the limbs?

The trapezoid shape from the belly to the back eliminates excess mass. By eliminating excess mass, the limbs recover faster. The reason this can be done is because the carbon is stronger in tension on the back of the bow, compared to the belly of the bow. Removing the excess mass from the back of the bow does not weaken or compromise the integrity of the limbs because of the added strength of the carbon. It is also physically lighter in weight. Because of its light weight and high stress it recovers faster in combination with bamboo. Again, handshock is reduced.

Pre-stressing both the carbon and the bamboo laminations by reflexing them in the bow form increases stress and allows me to taper them faster, thus

reducing mass again. With less mass built into the last third of the limbs, handshock is reduced.

Carbon laminations are very light in weight compared to fiberglass. Tempered bamboo laminations physically weigh less than most of the common limb laminations that bowyers use today. So, with less physical weight in the limbs from building them with physically lighter weight materials, handshock is reduced and elasticity is increased.

It's a bit confusing listening to all these little details. You don't expect the average guy who shoots a longbow to follow all that do you?

No, but if he shoots one of my bows, he will realize the benefits without all the mumbo-jumbo about mass, weight, recovery rate, vectors of movement and the rest of that "physics stuff."

Your bows cost more than any bow I have seen advertised. I can't imagine paying over a \$1000 for a bow!

Why not? If you ask anyone how many bows they have purchased in the past few years, most people respond with an average of three or four. The average cost of most well-made recurves or longbows runs more than \$500 each. You do the math!

People should ask themselves how many bows they have gone through in the past three years? Why do they keep changing?

The truth is, most people have a closet full of bows. If you add up the total amount spent on all of them it is more than what you ask for any one of your bows.

Right; my point exactly. It takes me three days to build one bow. I have more than \$250 in expense in each one. That does not add up to a high-dollar outfit by any stretch of the imagination. I can only build 10 bows a month. That means, in order to stay in business, I have to charge more. But, I feel the quality is worth every penny. These bows shoot well and look great!

With the development of my last bow, the Hill style, one-piece, I call the HHC, I even surprised myself. It is

a commemorative longbow that pays respect to the late Howard Hill. It shoots with no handshock, no stack, and it is smooth as glass. What's more, it is quiet and quick. For a Hill style longbow it is in a class all its own. Actually, I was encouraged to build it by Leo Markert, my dealer in Homewood, Illinois. Fred Anderson was the inspiration behind it. Leo sent me one of Fred's bows to refinish. Leo called it a Hill style longbow. I recognized Fred's bow as a hybrid style longbow that is actually "whip-ended." Leo convinced me that a whip-ended Anderson style longbow was just as much a Hill-style as any. So, based on Leo's input, I went ahead and designed my present HHC. So, now I offer a longbow with whip-ended limbs, Hill style riser, and Drake style nocks.

As an added feature, I introduced the Drake-style nocks on the HHC, Hill style longbow. They remind me of the old style English nocks on the yew wood bows they made with horn nocks. These nocks are without shoulders. The shape of the limb at the nock

on the belly side of the bow is similar to the profile of the nock loop in the string. This style nock helps center the string down the limb and it is quieter than those that are built with shoulders. Some time back I discovered that a great deal of noise is emitted from the shoulders of the nock where the string loop contacts it on either side. With the only contact at the back of the nock, the bow shoots quieter.

So far I have had an exceptional reception for this bow.

Well, enough with the bows, what about you? You were in business for a long time and then you seemed to drop out of sight. What happened?

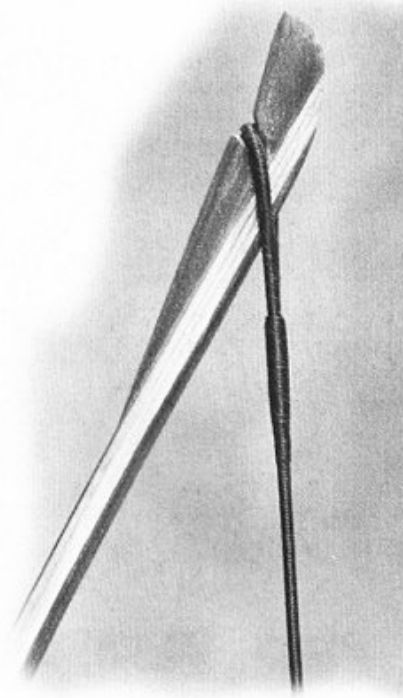
You're right Rik. I was hurt working in the oil patch back in September, 1993. Between 1993 and 1998 I was on "sick leave." I went through a series of 5 surgeries to fix broken bones, torn muscles and ligaments. It was intense. For the longest time, I went without knowing the exact nature of my problem. Until the orthopedic surgeon opened up my back, he didn't realize that I had a failed bone graft/fusion caused by an injury. Before the surgery, even cancer was not ruled out. Between the pain and the drugs, I was limited in what I could do on bows and anything else, for that matter.

I'll bet it about drove you crazy.

It did, and that ought to explain a lot! I spent most of my time "feeling bone grow." That's kind'a like watching the pot boil. No, I had my moments, but, I tried to make the best of it and work on my book. One of these days I'll finish it. If writing is anything like bowmaking, the guys who do it all the time are better at it than those of us who are wannabes.

Well, . . .

The good news about all the medical problems is that I got better. Right after I returned from my trip to Africa in 1998 the doctors did my last surgery on my shoulder. It has been more than a year now and I have done well on recovery. Africa is enough to

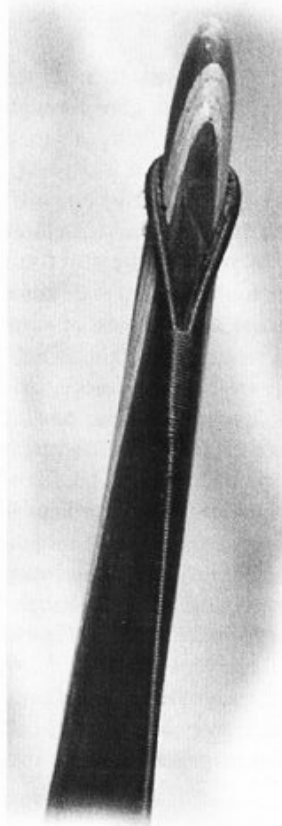


give anyone a new lease on life! Now I'm back up to bench-pressing 185 pounds. That's good for me. I can also handle a heavier bow too; 60 pounds.

In December, 1999 I had a ball with friends in Texas hunting exotics. Now I am up and running again; doing my own thing under Harrison Longbows. Alaska Frontier Archery is now owned and operated by Steve Tanner. He is doing the Forgewood arrows. The bow-making half of AFA went down the drain in 1997 just before the doctors performed corrective surgery on my lower back.

In any event, because I was the only one who was up to bowmaking, I went off on my own. Today, I am the only one in the shop. I get help from neighbors and a couple "believers," who are retired and enjoy helping me out.

Each month I have increased my bowmaking activity and sales. As I mentioned earlier, I am certain the HHC will be one of my best-selling bows ever. It is remarkable how well it performs. The price is right too. Many people do not need a take-down. Between the





Jack's home away from home—his bow shop. From here, he creates and ships longbows for repeat customers all over the world.

HHC and the American Wolf. I have the segment of the market covered now that most people can afford. I am extremely pleased with the Hill style bow. It amazes me that it shoots so well without stacking and without handshock.

So, it sounds like you are on a roll again.

Yeah, it really feels good. I didn't realize how badly I felt until I got better! As ridiculous as that might seem, it dawned on me one day just how far down I had slipped. It feels so good to be looking forward to a bright future with my new business.

Tell us a little about your African safari school.

I starting planning it two years ago while flying back from Africa. My 1998 safari was great, but, I paid too much for what I got. One thing about spending too much for too little, its an expensive education.

What happened?

Well, it is long story, but, suffice to say, I originally had to postpone my 1995 safari and original booking date because of my injuries. Then later, I had to take what was available or for-

feit my deposit. The 1998 trip was a great experience, but, it was nothing like it was originally planned and paid for.

How did you get involved with the safari school?

The upshot of my 1998 African experience was to organize a bowhunting safari school for 2000. The Mokore Bowhunting School article in the Fall issue of IA described it.

Does an African safari cost a lot?

Africa is very affordable, but, it takes some careful planning to pull a safari off without getting hooked into excess costs. Getting the right group together with the right safari operator is a win-win situation. Dealing directly with the Africans seems to work well, and I am thrilled with Balla Balla Safaris. They are located in the RSA. We were originally planning our safari to Zimbabwe, but, I was not able to meet the deadlines imposed on me by the owner of Mokore. Maybe we will be able to do it next year. In the meantime,

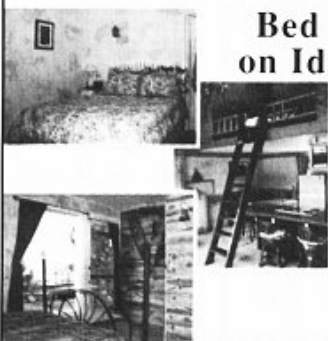
Peter and Alan Bird of Balla Balla were more than happy to accommodate and host our group.

By the way, we still have a few openings, so if there is anyone interested in joining us, hope they read about it. Better yet, just get on the Internet and pull up the web-site: Balla Balla Safaris. Anyone can also contact me at: afa@matnet.com

After running the article in IA, I heard a few people say that no one in their right mind would want to sit in a classroom in Africa. "School" is a loosely used word here. It will be more like a boot-camp! The bowhunters are going to be involved with a lot of "hands-on" activities. The idea is to learn to hunt with a plan and tactics, instead of running around the woods like a blind squirrel trying to find a nut. What bootcamp teaches is how to bowhunt by getting in close to take the shot without the animal hearing, smelling, or seeing the shooter. In order to do that, we are going to be learning a whole bunch of old Indian tricks!



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Yeah, I've heard about your "o'l Indian tricks." Are you going to use your decoys and Gillie suits?

Yes, that and more. It is unnerving to shoot out of pit blinds. Everyone always seems to botch their shots trying this for the first time. Part of the bowhunting boot-camp teaches techniques to overcome the "pit-blind blues." Also, those portable blinds that we used in Texas on exotic game were awesome. They are made and sold by Double Bull Archery (888) 464-0409. The plan in Africa calls for a number of tactics that "conceal" the hunter. Once sight, sound, and smell are effectively dealt with, the idea is to take the shot well under 15 yards. To get that close to the critters without being detected takes some effort, planning, and knowledge. The Balla Balla bootcamp teaches this. A friend of mine once told me that success is a "learned experience." With the game concentration and the bowhunting opportunities at Balla Balla, I can't think of a better place to learn successful hunting means and methods.

Sounds great! Are you getting lots of calls?

We're still looking for about eight more people who are interested in going with us for the period we want to hunt.

Well, Jack, I know this is asking a lot, but, what do you think of the future of bowhunting?

To me it looks better and brighter than ever, but, that's like asking a drunk who just got back on the wagon again! I'm an "elk-o-haulic," who's been dry for more than 6 years now. No telling what goes on in my mind! I know there are many people who disagree with me, but, I see bowhunting growing, along with the opportunity to hunt. If for no other reason it will increase because guns are getting a lot of bad press. Many of the people affected will seek some sort of compromise to continue to enjoy and preserve traditional hunting. What better way is there than bowhunting. As gun banning becomes more and more politically correct, the logical response will be to take up the bow and arrow to hunt.

Still, on the other side of the coin there is the argument that any ban on guns will precipitate a ban on hunting in general. I find this too improbable. The life cycle of most animals is short; they multiply and grow at tremendous rates, compared to the "life cycle" of any one political agenda. Just as soon as there are "too many" critters at any one time, those who advocate political correctness will seek out practical solutions regardless of what their "political orientation" might be. Plus, if the crit-

ters become too numerous, even our own species is at risk. Just where do the politicians think all the Flu viruses come from? Nature generally takes care of over-population with disease.

I think the real endangered species today are humans. Long before hunting is banned, I feel the human race is more likely to be brought up short with the results of wide-spread pandemics, to say nothing of the mess from wars that politics precipitate. That alone will shift the attention of any contemporary political agenda of any special interest group. When we entered the 21st Century, there was all that stuff on the History channel and Discovery.

Even Tom Brokaw got into the act with a TV special on the last century. People don't seem to recall that the body count for the last century was right at 100 million people murdered; that's a million for each year of the last century. The bad guys were all politicians backed by armies of thugs. If bowhunters are threatened today at all it will probably come from that same quarter, but, it won't be over a fight to keep and bear arms, or hunt. There are still a lot of bad guys out there with their own political agendas who will be rattling their sabers. Biological terrorism is just coming of age. Maybe the mental giants who we all voted for will realize there are more important matters to get off on, besides bowhunters and the "crops of harvestable game."

That's pretty heavy, Jack!

Well, you asked me . . .

Thanks for spending some time with us and sharing your thoughts. Any parting words of encouragement to our readers?

Yea; as my Tlingit friends say, "It just keeps getting better . . ." And you thought Bill W. was the first person to quote that!

Jack, sometimes I wonder about you . . .



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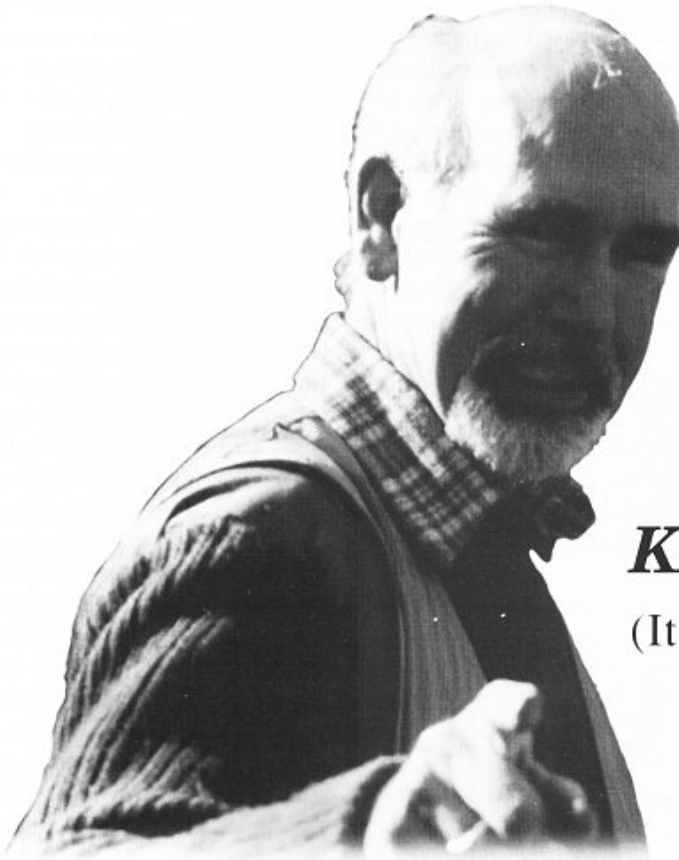
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I CAN KEEP A SECRET

(It's the people I tell that can't)

By Pete Day

Author's Note: The following is not meant to make fun of ethical hunters and bona fide archery hunting articles. It is a factual account of just what desperate measures an archer/photographer had to take to beat mankind's enemy—time.

JUST as I sit down comfortably to write about my archery "museum," I make the same mistake each time of looking up for inspiration (not Heavenwards) only to spot something that brings back a memory and "zap!" off I go on another tangent. You may recall how I espied the coned fire arrow featured in a previous article, *Remember, Remember the Fifth of November*. The museum then goes on the back burner.

The object of my gaze on this occasion—a hazel stick bow—has its story told. For years I have been "drawing the longbow," doing things "underhand" (as in clout or roving, meaning bow held high, looking under the bow hand).

The first mentioned, "drawing the longbow," is not so well known, but it led to this confession in print. It's another old one meaning "to make exaggerated statements about one's own achievements; to boast."

I want to tell you a story which could easily be judged as "drawing the longbow," but is perfectly true. After all, the camera never lies. . . .

PROBLEMS.

An archer colleague who wrote for adventure magazines in his spare time, was commissioned by a military magazine to write an article on the bow as an ideal survival weapon. Trouble was that they wanted it "yesterday." This posed some problems. First photographs. The article required action shots of game being taken with a primitive bow and arrow. Second, location. Much traveling was necessary to place the hunter in the right conditions for that wilderness effect. But my friend was working full time, and, in consequence, time was what he did not have. In desperation, he asked me to "see what I could do" to supply the necessary photos. I agreed to help, and he sent me a resume of the photo shots required, with suggestions of action, angles and quarry.

He left the choice of equipment to me, though expressed a desire for me to be dressed in something "military" for authenticity.

"How about a tank top?" I joked.

In fact, I wore an assortment of army surplus kit, begged, stolen, and borrowed.

Oh well, I had just a couple of days in which to get my act together, to hone my photographic skills (not my strongest asset, but let's not get **NEGATIVE**), and my chance to appear as an aging Rambo.

Readers may have read of my early hunting exploits in "Never Leave a Tern Unstoned" (Instinctive Archer, Fall

1997). This, however, was quite different; game to order.

I had to think this one out. Call in the cavalry! I decided to call on my friend, Pat Ballinger, a lady who has been mentioned before in these pages and who, over the years, has helped me with some bizarre archery projects.

To put you in the picture, I am no photographer. I sort of swing draw the camera like G. Fred Asbell, touch anchor and loose (shutter). The difference is that G. Fred hits what he is pointing at! Anyway, Pat and I decided that she should do the camera work using a steady tripod whilst I strutted my stuff with the stick and string.

Not wishing to act "fast and loose" (there's another archery hand me down—if modern archers hear the command "Fast!" they should immediately stop shooting, knowing that to continue would endanger the lives of anyone or anything that is in the "line of fire." Incidentally, this command was NEVER heard by the British bowmen in the Hundred Year's War [war between England and France, 1337-1453]. Should an archer disregard the command and still loose an arrow, then they would have acted "fast and loose.")

I checked the author's notes again. He also required photographs of Pat to represent the fairer sex (thought I was the fairer sex). Right; we now had the camera, tripod and at least two of the actors.

PRIMITIVE

For the weapons, I ventured into the deepest forest (actually the woods where my field archery club lives) and which is within a bowshot of my house. There, I cut a five-foot hazel stick for the bow and half a dozen thinner shoots for the arrows. These were to include a broadhead, a blunt, a flu-flu and a fishing arrow, plus a hooked arrow-finder which could double as a "despatcher," and each had to appear genuinely fashioned "primitive."

My bowstring was parcel cord, but boot laces would have sufficed in a hurry.

For the cutting broadhead, I used a natural shaped flint shard found nearby. For the fisher barb, I angled two

hazel slivers, inserted and swept back into a slit and bound. The blunts took care of themselves. For fletchings, I used discarded feathers of local birds and a full length pheasant pinion wound round the shaft for the flu-flu.

I also decided to throw in a rawhide backed ash bow made for me by club member John Barnes. However, the hazel bow would be the more likely to be used under survival conditions, taking only minutes to make. Also this prolific wood appears to "season" whilst working on the bow.

All this, then, is assuming the lost soul can shoot in the bow and arrow. However, the dire situation would surely bring out the dormant predator in the modern castaway, if unplugged.

Also the bow described could easily be made, then drawn with primitive thumb and index finger pinch—which is the method adopted by many of my more mature pupils when first handed a bow and arrow.

For instance, when I show them the Mediterranean finger placement, they belligerently and begrudgingly try the

"new fangled" way, ancient fingers and thumbs working on the string like demented worms, and all the while mumbling "Hmfff, I did it (grumble) that way (grumble, grumble) as a kid," their faces all screwed up like a bulldog chewing a hornet.

I received a nice letter from John Strunk (who I met at the North American Longbow Safari, Ovando, 1996, during one of his famous bow craft sessions) enclosing photos of beautiful bows he had fashioned from hazel, and asking if we used this wood in the UK. Yep! But I could hardly call this bow "fashioned." It was probably the weakest bow I have made, excepting the one made quickly from a leafy branch which was featured in a certain demonstration described in my "Alright on the Knight" story (Instinctive Archer, Winter 1997). Nevertheless, at just a few feet it certainly did not lack penetration and would easily have got a fish, and, with a flint head, a rabbit or similar sized animal. For game larger than this, the bow would have been perfect for administering acupuncture!

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What are you waiting for?

In Forrest Reber's super article about naming bows (IA, Spring 1998), naming is a practice which I have kept up all of my archery life. So, Forrest, we'll call this one—Hazel!

We had the props and actors but what of the location?

HENRY

I scoured maps of the wildest places in the UK, checking air schedules, drop zones, etc., etc., oh, why do I go on like this? Just feet from my house is a small wooded area with seven ponds. These have been restored by volunteers because they are medieval fish ponds, used to stock carp for the tables at the nearby Thornbury Castle. This castle was the last to be built in the UK. It was visited by Henry VIII, a noted longbow archer and beheader of wives to boot, in 1543, just two years before his flagship Mary Rose sank off Portsmouth, England. Some 139 English longbows were recovered from the wreck between 1979 and 1982. All were yew bows. Most were fashioned from fine grained yew and were of the finest quality imaginable. Many were in miraculous condition despite their submersion in sea water for nearly 440 years.

Fish no longer survive in the ponds, but that did not matter to me—just a shot into the water would suffice. I wanted to show game being stalked and harvested, and, as mentioned, this does not happen to order.

Pat's brainwave (blame, blame) of bringing a previously harvested duck and rabbit, both bow shot by her son David when in Scotland, and at that time fully clothed in her freezer (the game, not David), appealed to me. After all, I had already started on the long slippery slope of deceit with the very local location.

Pat duly arrived with the game, comprising a beautiful stiff mallard duck (after my encounter on the Isle of Wight I thought I'd finished with the ducks (see "Never Leave a Tern Unstoned" article) and a stiffer than stiff bunny rabbit. With no time to thaw, I decided to feature the duck first.

We proceeded to the fish ponds where I placed the duck naturally in a shallow pond amongst the reeds. After

ister the coup de grace on game which should have expired of boredom if not by the arrow.

CHILDREN

One of the disadvantages of using public places is the public. Didn't they know an epic was being filmed? Consequently, every time the camera was setup, and the prop was behaving itself, the muted sounds of children approaching our film set became rather off-putting. This resulted in some hasty camouflaging of the game to protect innocent eyes (and to stop them blabbing to their parents!).

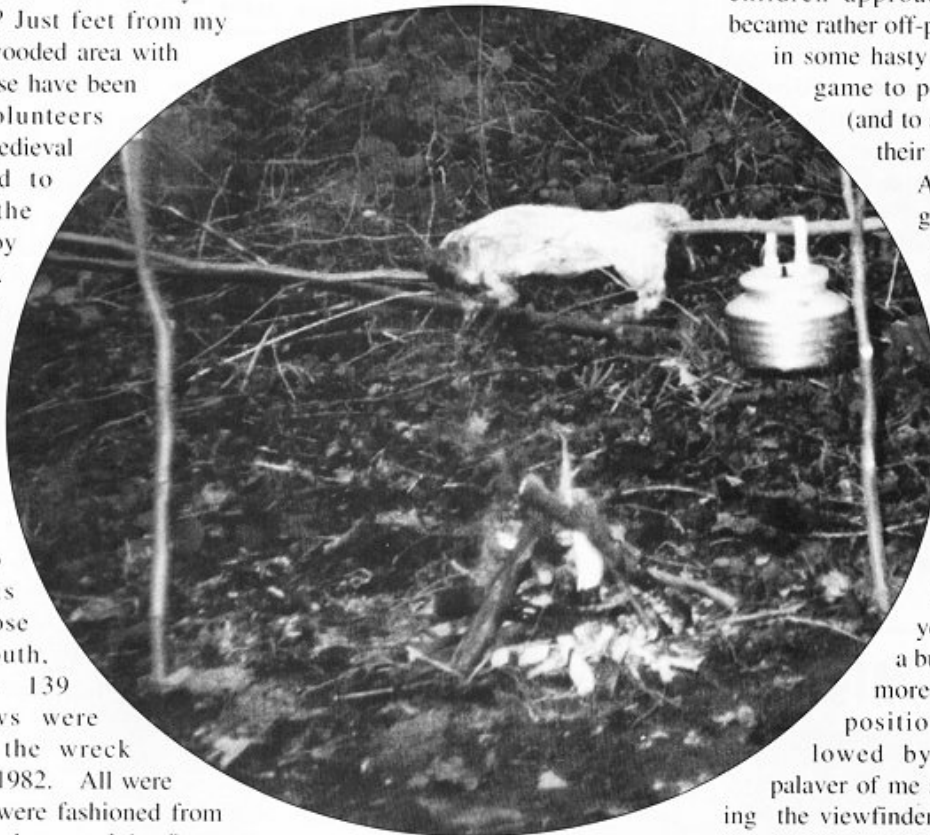
After all this, we were glad to retreat out of the pond area to the comparative quietude of a bordering field for the rabbit "hunt."

I took the still frozen rabbit and found a "run" that looked natural (though a rabbit had not been seen in this field for years), and placed it in a bunny position (looked more like the missionary position). This was followed by the same comic palaver of me setting tripod, checking the viewfinder, Pat on the camera, etc., etc.

Once again, the prop did not cooperate. Mother Nature has a knack of making her creatures look lithe and supple. When mankind intervenes and freezes the subject, therein lies the rub. I bent and twisted the torso so many times that I thought it would break in half. Finally settling on a kangaroo-like pose, we got our picture, then stepped out of the jungle and retreated back to the "sanity" of my house to grab some refreshment and plan the next move.

AMBUSHED

Reading through the author's notes again, I saw that he required some shots of still-hunting. So, off we went back to downtown Thornbury field and



"Honey, I shrunk the deer!"

checking the scene through the camera viewfinder, and making sure there were no signs of civilization apart from me, I handed the camera controls over to Pat and began my "stalk."

As I drew my bow, the quarry started to move! Startled, we realized that the frozen duck was thawing and, due to the position of its head, had begun keeling over. All action ceased whilst I adjusted the balance.

Six times this happened, during which time I was being driven quackers having to twist the icy neck one way and then the other trying to achieve upright flotation. Finally I was able to admin-

Roving Archers woods taking all the kit, plus the rabbit which by now, after all the manhandling, had thawed out -- just as well, because now we had to prepare it for spit-roasting.

Try to find some suitable areas for our task in a small well-targeted field archery course, add a golf course, the owner's house, lands and pretty garden, and a busy main road bordering all; include all targets, shot numbers, well worn paths and the ever present chance of being approached by club members who had as much right to be there as we did . . . then you can understand why I desperately wanted "OUTA HERE!!"

Had some club member appeared during our still-hunting shots, he/she could have been forgiven if they thought I was moon-walking. Actually, I was walking on the same spot for the benefit of camera women Pat.

For effect, I borrowed a couple of the club's 3Ds to demonstrate shooting at game, explaining of course that these were artificial target—a fact I remembered to point out to the photographic developers in case I had a visit from the authorities! (**Bow hunting in most of the UK has now been criminalized.**)



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For one shot I set a feeding 3D deer in a field just beyond a hedge, placing camouflaged Pat on the other side with her bow at the ready. At my command, she was to come to full draw so I could snap the scene. When I yelled "Action!" imagine my surprise when she quite instinctively drew up, loosed and scored a perfect inner kill! We both hooted with uncontrollable laughter.

Aerial acrobatics were called for when it came to a tree shot at a 3D buck. Due to my age, and the desire to keep all of my bones in their proper unbroken order, I borrowed the club ladder to ascend the tree.

The straight shot down between my legs resulted in pin-wheel number two. If only it were that easy!

After the photo session I was well and truly caught by the nocks—for Pat mischievously refused to put the ladder back!

While all this was going on, our rabbit was a-sizzling on the spit. The resultant meal was not wasted—we left the meat for the permanent wild residents of the wood, and the duck we . . . THE DUCK! Pat and I looked at each other . . . whatever happened to the duck? I remembered carrying it

out of the fish ponds, posing with it, then what? What is it with me and ducks?

Even worse, Pat confessed that she hadn't even asked her son David if we could have the frozen fare! For a long time after, David would often say to his mum in his broad Gloucestershire dialect, "Don't forget, Mother, we have a Scottish duck in the freezer—we ought to use it."

To this day David has never mentioned his hard-won game, though after all these years the sell-by date would be collectible.

I think though that when he reads this article there will be questions in the house. I will let Mum deal with that.

The moral of this story? Never ever work with kids, ducks, schmucks, and bucks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To submit this article for print, I have had to swallow my pride. That was the easy part. To approach the hapless author who wrote the original article for his blessing and to receive it, was a bonus.

I would also like to acknowledge the help of the following, without whose cooperation this story could not have been told:

Pat Ballinger who put up with me in the fish ponds and hearing my first four letter word (K-I-D-S!).

Finally, the main ingredients from the frozen north (Scotland), one of which, though mentioned in despatches, was sadly reported missing in action.

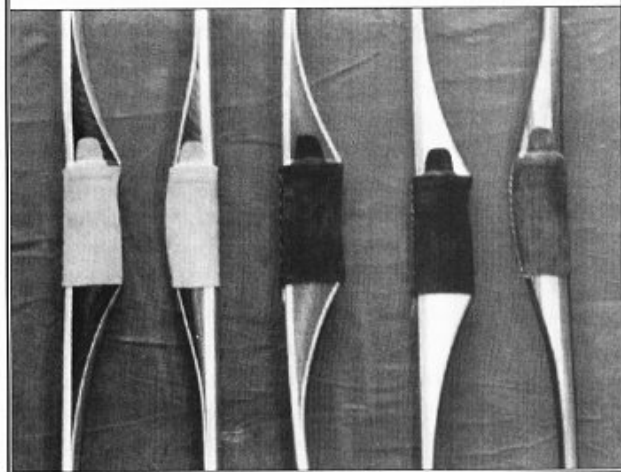


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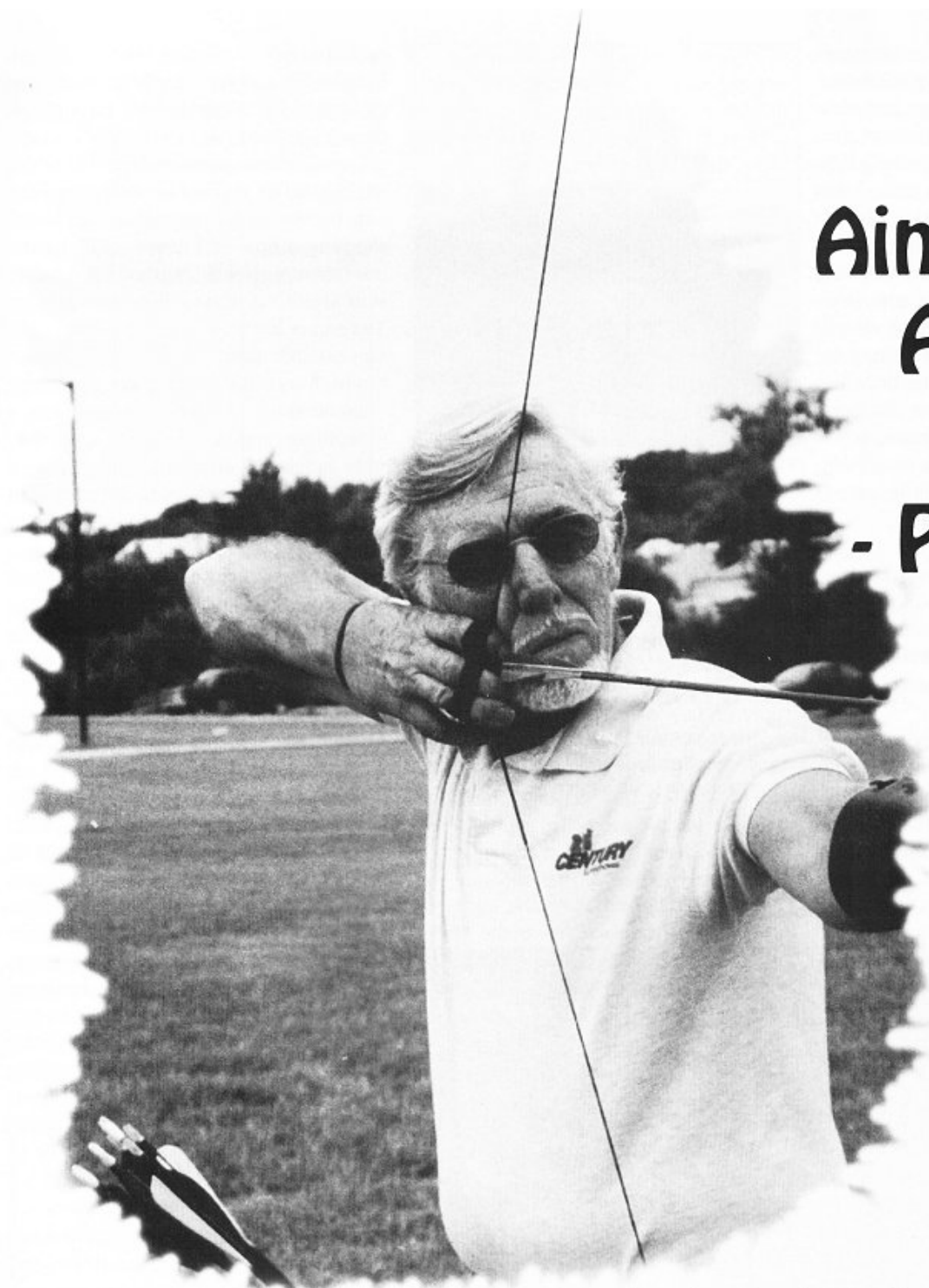
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Aiming the Arrow

- Part II -

by Jim Ploen



In *Aiming the Arrow, Part I*, we pointed out that shooting in the instinctive class simply refers to shooting without the aid of a fixed or movable sight. We also discussed that aiming is the most important part of shooting a bow and arrow, and that aiming is a learned behavior and not an instinct. You can “shoot by feel,” “look at a spot and have a feel that you are pointing the arrow at the spot,” “from any anchor,” or by “bow /arrow alignment,” and that is also a learned behavior.

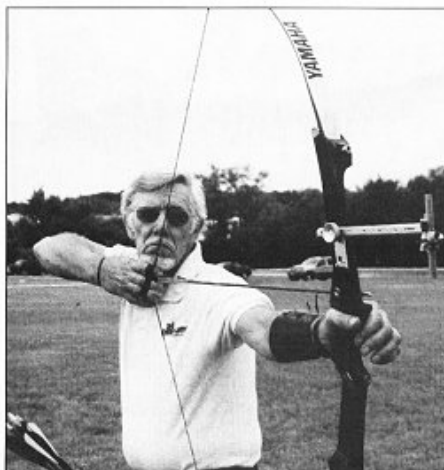
In order to have a better understanding of the act of “instinctively” aiming and shooting a bow and arrow, it may help to first look at the target shooter who uses a sight on the bow as a reference for aiming the arrow. The distance must be known, the arrow must have a trajectory to match the distance, and the arrow must be aligned so that its full length is pointed at the target.

and the string and sight are in the same alignment. (This would be the ideal set-up, but not necessarily so when plungers or variations in string alignment are used.) The target archer accomplishes the act of aiming by (1) selecting an anchor low enough below and under his eye, so when at full draw the bow hand will not cover the view of the target, and (2) selecting the proper sight pin, thus setting the arrow's trajectory to match the distance. Drawing the bowstring to the center of the chin with the drawing hand under the chin gives most archers enough room to set their movable sight attached to the bow, so that it would not interfere with the flight of the arrow when shooting at 90 or 70 meters.

The ideal set-up for target shooting with a sight is to have the riser cut past center in the sight window and have the string, arrow, and sight align with the center of the limb when the sight window is cut past the center of the bow to allow for this set up. A sight-shooter's alignment should be checked in a pre-draw to be sure the bow is held without twisting or turning that would cause anyone component of their shooting/sighting equipment to be out of line. They can correct alignment error by twisting or turning at the grip or turning the bow in hand with the string to bring the components in line as needed to match the build out of the sight window.

When the string is drawn back to anchor with the string in the center of the chin, the chin will rest on the index finger, the nose will touch the string, and the head will be turned slightly over the bow arm shoulder to place the eye in direct alignment with the string and the sight pin. Tipping the head back over the bow arm shoulder also allows for a clearer path for the following through of the release hand after the release.

A peep sight in the string gives the archer a clear view of the sight pin and a positive string alignment. In some competitions, peep sights cannot be used and the archer has to make allowance for a clear view of the sight pin by aligning the string slightly off the sight bead. As this causes a slight miss alignment of the string, some compensation must be made with sight adjustment, arrow build-out, or plunger setting.



The requirements of making a well-placed shot are the same for instinctive archers as they are for archers who shoot recurves equipped with sights (see above). Those who rely on sights must align the rear peep sight and the front sight pin on the mark, or they will miss. Instinctive archers must align the rear of the arrow and the point of the arrow on the mark, adjusting for the proper trajectory, or they will miss. Good shooting, regardless of the type of bow or shooting style, requires proper arrow/target alignment. It is as simple as that.

The target archer relies on the sight pin for elevation. It also serves as the "front sight," as in shooting a gun. The string and its alignment are the rear sight, and good archers have little or no awareness of the arrow itself when a sight is used. This view of target shooting with a sight is to emphasize the importance of the eye/arrow/string alignment in any style of shooting.

Another shooting style that is being used today in target shooting is to anchor under the chin—at the side of the jaw. In this position, the string will be closer to the corner of the mouth, with the head being straighter or tipping slightly over the drawing hand to

enable better eye, string, and pin alignment. This style also helps with the clearance for the following through of the release hand.

Learning to aim the arrow without the aid of a fixed or movable sight can be the most rewarding style of shooting a bow and arrow. I feel bare bow shooting should be the introduction into shooting of any bow and arrow. The archer learns:

- eye dominance,
- which eye the brain pays the most attention to,
- depth perception,
- the judging of distance,
- Eye-angle as it relates to different distances,
- alignment and trajectory,
- balance and control, and
- hand/eye coordination,

Instinctive shooting also aids in developing upper body strength. The simplicity of just a bow, a string, and an arrow is basically all that is needed to enjoy archery.

Starting with a bow light enough in draw weight to draw and hold steady for three to four seconds is of prime importance. You will need this to learn the knack of drawing, anchoring, aligning the arrow to aim, settle, and release. Once aiming is learned, it can be applied to heavier bows for hunting. At that time you will be aware of your shortcomings when the aim is hard to achieve because the bow is too heavy to



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draw to a solid anchor, or it cannot be held long enough for the you to become comfortable with the aim. Too heavy of a bow leads to short draws, snap shooting, and a shotgun pattern of arrows on the target that no amount of bare-shaft tuning can correct for.

The basic steps in leaning to aim should be started with the following:

- pre-draw,
- picking a spot, and
- assuring that the arrow aligned so that it is pointing at the spot in your scenic view of the target. This gives you the time to hold the bow so that the full length of the arrow is viewed having a trajectory pointed at the spot.

To do this, you must envision two lines: one from the eye to the spot, and another from the nock to the arrow tip to the spot. The fact that this line will actually have an arc in its trajectory to the spot is of little concern. We only need to be concerned with seeing the arrow as it would start its trajectory to the spot.

Remember to keep your concentration on the spot and aim the arrow using your peripheral vision for the alignment and trajectory. From your pre-draw and pre-aim position, draw the string and arrow back to anchor in as straight a line with little or no movement of the bow hand. This is also the time to be aware of any turning or twisting of the bow that would cause a change in the arrow's alignment at the arrow shelf. Once the anchor is reached, being sure you establish a firm anchor by pulling in line and not pressing into the anchor, maintain the feeling of drawing with your shoulders as well as with an equal push from your bow shoulder to your bow grip. (Simply feel the same muscle tension that is equal in both shoulders.) Note: If you press your string hand into your face at an anchor you will be using your biceps and triceps and upon releasing this causes a flip that results in an arrow flying to the right (for a right-handed archer). Pull into your anchor in

line and press with your head slightly to feel a firm anchor as you pick up the arrow shaft in your peripheral vision in the act of aiming.

The next step is to lean your head over, like placing your cheek on a rifle stock to align the rear and front sight. Remember: archery is a shooting sport and the same principle of aiming a gun applies to aiming the arrow. If you only see the front sight of the rifle and part of the barrel so that the rear sight is to the right, you will shoot left for a right-hand shooter. The same applies to the arrow, but the nock and the tip must be in line with the spot.

To achieve this string/arrow/spot

Learning all of the different steps needed to aim the arrow will become automatic with enough practice, so little conscious thought will be needed—and that is when shooting and aiming becomes almost like an instinct.

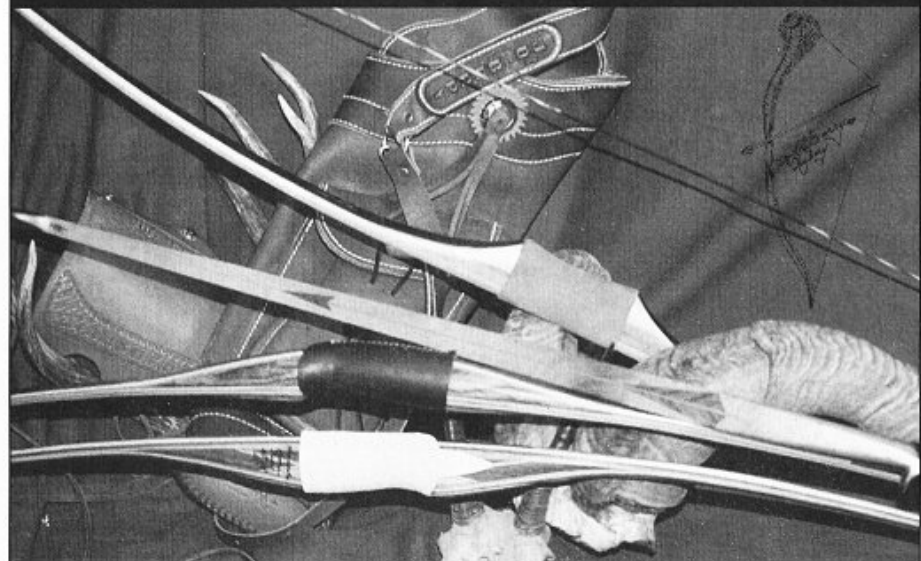
alignment, you must hold the bow so that the string will be to one side of the limb so that it will match the build out in the bow window. If the bow is held, or the

anchor is located so that the nock is not under the eye, or the string is aligned with the center of the bow, the right-hand archer will shoot to the left of the spot with properly spined arrows. This alignment of the string with the center of the bow, instead of aligning with the arrow, makes it difficult to find an arrow with the right spine. Arrow tuning will be for another article, as all we have to compensate for is the inertia of the arrow that is matched to proper arrow string alignment. This is the very reason the short draw will work quite well as it is easier to align the arrow.

In canting the bow, it is not the canting of the bow, but the leaning of the head that places the eye over the shaft that really helps in aiming. The shape of your face can greatly affect anchoring, head cant, and draw length when trying to get your eye over the arrow shaft. The archers who shoot three fingers under

the nock are well aware of the importance of seeing the full length of the shaft under their dominant eye. It results in making better use of the full-length

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alignment of the shaft. The important thing is knowing how to aim the arrow from any anchor if you simply get your eye over the full length of the arrow shaft.

How far below the eye the nock is placed has always been a question. Find an anchor to match the distance to be shot. You do not want to use an anchor so high on your face that you would be shooting at game beyond your point on range.

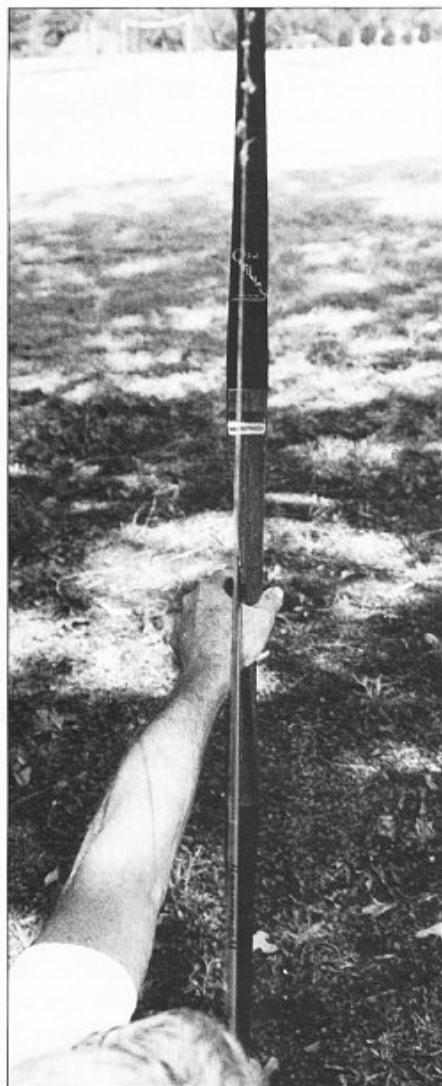
Point-on range refers to seeing the tip of the arrow on the spot, this occurs when the distance to the spot and the arrow's trajectory converge when anchored at a full draw. Some archers know the distance to each target and use multiple anchors. There is a good aiming technique, but it takes a lot of practice and a lot of concentration.

Once aiming is learned, depending on the game or round being shot, yes, the tip of the arrow can be used as a direct reference setting a gap to match a known distance. That is simply using your intelligence to master the art of aiming the arrow. Learning all of the different steps needed to aim the arrow will become automatic with enough practice, so little conscious thought will be needed, and that is when shooting and aiming becomes almost like an instinct. Any learned behavior can require little conscious thought with practice, practice, and more practice.

In closing, a simple approach to aiming will give you a basis that can be used for any shooting style and you will be able to use this basic style to see when making changes may help your aiming. Only when every arrow is aimed correctly and the execution of the release has the least disturbance to the aim, will you be able to make intelligent decisions regarding bare-shaft tuning, selecting arrow spines, and making changes to your equipment, such as tabs, gloves, and bow grips.

Here are some tips that will help your awareness of the arrow when aiming:

- Use light-colored arrows, carbon or dark stained arrows are hard to see in your scenic view on dark days or early or late in the day.



Arrow/target alignment is the key to accuracy!

- Use arrows that are one and a half to two inches longer than your draw length, you will find they are a lot easier to aim.
- Place Styrofoam cups at five-yard intervals at an angle to your shooting line then taking an arrow, place it in the "V"

of your thumb and index finger of your bow hand, then hold the arrow with the nock at your anchor and aim the arrow at the different cups to develop a feel for trajectory as viewed with your peripheral vision. When you are practicing your aiming of the arrow and looking at the cup with both eyes open to help with judging distance, pause and close your left eye if you are anchoring below your right eye and you will notice a clear view of the aligned arrow with your peripheral view. The brain can give undivided attention to the one eye being used and with this clear view of the arrow move the nock end slightly and you will become aware of how little movement at the nock end it takes and you will not be aiming inline at the cup. This is also the time to try moving the head to place the eye in a position that gives you the best alignment of the arrow. Then practice with the bow, aiming the arrow at each cup, being very aware of the arrow's aligned trajectory at each distance. This will help you to develop a feel for each given distance.

Now go to your target and shoot one arrow staring at five or ten yards moving back five yards at a time and put your aiming practice to use. Remember, these are training exercises to help you develop motor skills that will be used when we are finally ready for the perfect shot that feels oh-so-good.

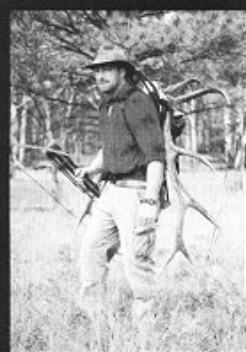
In our next series on aiming I will give you insights into how aiming can help you master target panic—and the dreaded "short draw."



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The Competitive Edge

by Gary Sentman

CORE WOODS and PERFORMANCE

Over the last 14 years of making bows, I have developed a preference for certain core woods used in the limb and the riser. While sitting around a campfire with the late Jim Brackenberry, a well-known custom bowyer in his day, I was told that it mattered very little what core wood was used in the recurve bow. The recurve bow was his specialty and for years the "Legend" was considered one of the best recurve bows made. Although I have never been involved to much extent in making a recurve bow, I would have to agree with him.

On the other hand, when it comes to longbows, the wood-to-glass ratio is considerably more in favor of the wood. In other words, much more is achieved through the wood core of the longbow. By the way, this is why I personally feel, as a unit, the longbow is a much more durable bow than the recurve, but that's another subject. At this point let's look at what core woods would possibly perform best in the limb.

Recurves have a very thin wood core, thus the core has little to do with performance. Consequently, hard rock maple would be one of the better choices for the limb in my opinion. It has a very high compression strength, is reasonably resilient, and is readily available in large quantities. Over the last 30 some odd years I have seen more maple used in recurve limbs as a wood-core than any other material.



Today I see an abundance of other woods used, but personally I feel there is more emphasis put on cosmetic appeal rather than on performance. Often beauty blinds the beholder to performance. Hard-rock maple is also an excellent wood for the riser or handle section of the bow. Again, it has excellent bending strength, compression strength, and the ability to absorb shock very well.

I used maple as a core-wood for longbows during my earlier years of bowmaking. The performance from a longbow with hardrock maple in the limb core would only rank "good" from my experience. For a longbow with a deeper cored limb, it is very durable, but is entirely too physically heavy in mass, thus transmitting more shock or what is commonly referred to as hand jar. Maple in the "riser" of a longbow on the other hand is excellent for performance, but can lack in character or personality and therefore is quite often used in economy bows.

Before writing this article, I made phone calls to several other commercial bowyers and asked their opinion of different core woods. In every case their basic response was that most of their customers are more interested in the beauty of the bow rather than the peak of performance.

In this article I will avoid discussing the beauty of a bow, because beauty is only in the eyes of the beholder. I will try to keep the subject basically on the performance of various

woods. My opinions of course, are based on my experiences of approximately 14 years as a commercial bowyer. I'm sure there are those with more experience and or knowledge that may disagree with my opinions. I may also add that these opinions will be basically in reference to the longbow.

LIMB CORES

First, let's list the qualities one would look for in optimum core material.

- The limb core should be physically light in weight.
- It must be very resilient for speed and lateral stability. A limb that easily twists on release of the arrow is not going to be as accurate as a limb that follows the string.
- It should have a very high compression strength for durability over many years of use. I have noticed that woods lacking in compression strength will gradually drop in pull weight with continued use and age.
- A good limb core wood, I feel, should be edge grain. Edge grain gives you the maximum strength durability and performance in any choice of woods.
- The last consideration would be the beauty or character of the wood, and even though I feel it is of the least importance, it should not be totally overlooked, because a longbow should project an image of character, grace, and beauty.

I have found that to achieve all of the above it is sometimes beneficial to use two different woods in the limb-core of a bow—if they compliment each other. Just as the sap wood on the back of a yew selfbow is beneficial because it will minimize the possibility of the limb breaking, I never like to use more than two woods in the core. I guess you might say "two is company, three is a crowd." Two woods can complement each other, but a third one may contribute a negative performance. I feel that if there is a third wood in the limb it would be working against the other two. Often times even going as far as breaking down a glue joint causing delamination.

When using two woods for a limb core, put your best compression wood in the belly of the limb. Take your weaker cosmetic wood, which is often flat grained, and put it in the back of the bow. This is a good compromise for performance and beauty of the bow. The weaker cosmetic wood I usually use on the back is a veneer, .040 to .100 parallel. Then my other two or three laminations would be high-compression edge grain for performance. For instance, one of my best combinations I feel is bamboo on the back and a black locust core, or osage orange on the back which is a very high compression wood, but on the heavy side so I use red elm as the core because it is much lighter in weight.

The objective with this combination is to keep the limb as physically light as possible. I think a yew wood veneer on the back with black locust edge-grain core would also make an outstanding limb core. Yew wood alone without the black locust, I feel, could possibly break down over the years from the compression of the glass on the back and belly of the bow. There are many combinations one could use and achieve both beauty and performance. Keeping in mind the basics mentioned earlier in the article.

While we're on the subject of limb cores, remember the overall length of the bow and the deflex/reflex of the design will have a direct bearing on the choice of favorable core woods in the limb. One last comment in the choice of limb core, if I were going to make a specialty longbow of say 54" overall length, first of all I would have to deflex it considerably in design and would return to hard-rock maple as a first choice in limb core.

RISER CORES

The bow riser consists of the grip area, the riser, and fadeouts. If I said a bow had a 16" riser, the length would be 16" between the ends of the fadeouts. The last several inches being referred to as the fadeouts.

The limbs on the bow act as levers to cast the arrow. As the arrow is drawn, the upper and lower limbs bend in an arch, stemming from the core or center section of the riser. It is important in this riser area to have extreme strength,

because the two levers of the upper and lower limb are going to break the bow in the middle section unless this area is extremely strong.

I have found the performance of the bow greatly depends on the proper core-wood for the riser. If this wood is too dense and hard I have found it will transmit shock to the hand just as a hammer would with a steel handle. The riser wood should not be too brittle. If the wood is too brittle it will have a tendency to break and not work into the fade-outs as well as a wood with bending strength.

It took me several years of continual bowmaking to realize the importance of the riser wood used in the bow. I found that if the wood was too soft or weak I would lose from 5 to 10 lbs of expected pull-weight and a big loss in performance. Also, some riser woods seem to have excessive amounts of oil and may increase the possibility of delamination in years to come.

Let's talk about some of my favorite riser woods. I rank bubinga as one of the best. If I were confined to one riser wood it would be bubinga. Purple heart is a close second, but will not appeal to everyone. Osage orange, if good quality, is an excellent riser wood material, but has a tendency to show black, spider-web lines that look like cracks. This is the reason I have chosen not to use much osage orange. When a person pays good money for a bow it's hard to make them believe that a black-spider-web thin line is nothing to worry about. I find that wenge is good if one likes a dark brown to black riser. Zebra wood is okay for lighter bows of less than 60 pounds, but I feel that it is a little on the brittle side for heavy-weight bows.

The objective with a good bow is accuracy, durability, and overall performance. I recommend you first consider these features, and then see if a compromise can be made for the beauty of the bow. Remember—archery is first of all a test of skill and not a beauty contest. Good Shooting.



SPOTLIGHT

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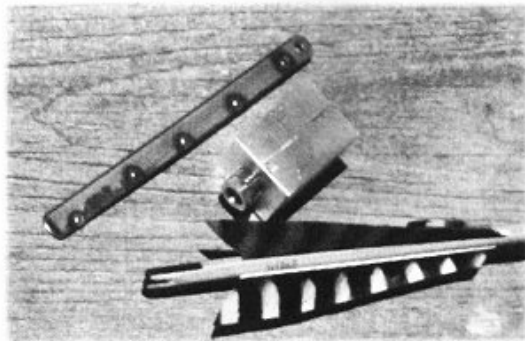
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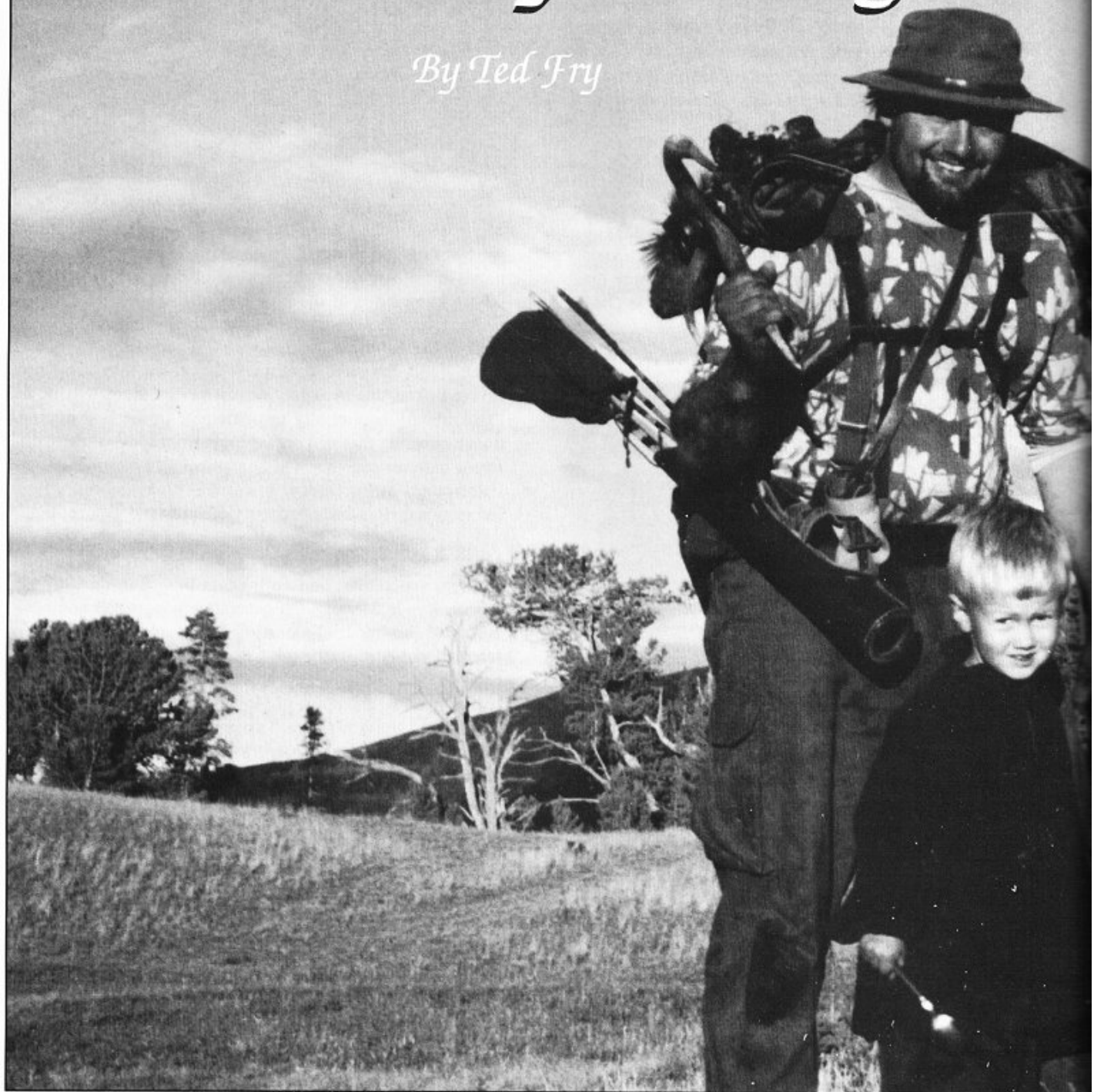


Fearless and proud warriors once rode on horseback from Mongolia through Central Asia and into Europe. Their bows were strong and powerful; their skills in archery extraordinary. In the Americas there were also powerful warriors whose knowledge of the bow and of the horse was unsurpassed. And elsewhere—Japan, Persia, and India—bow culture, horse culture was highly developed. In many places these traditions have continued. In others they are being revived. And this year in North America there will be an extraordinary opportunity to participate in the first international gathering that will draw people from some of these different cultures together. On September 7, 8, 9, and 10, the Fairgrounds at Ft. Dodge, Iowa, will host America's First International Horseback Archery Gathering and Competition.

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ELK COUNTRY *-Where Boys Belong-*

By Ted Fry





As I reached the summit of the narrow rocky trail, I peered into the next alpine basin. It was a large open meadow of alpine grass with densely wooded benches stair-stepping down into the canyon below. I paused, caught my breath, and bugled a challenge—hoping a bull elk would be interested enough to accept my threats.

As quickly as I stopped, a bull responded, echoing off the granite cliffs that surrounded this section of paradise. The bull sounded as though he was directly below me, however, I have learned that sound can be very deceiving in the high alpine meadows. The early evening was accompanied by the cooler breeze blowing down the canyon, mixed occasionally by the last remaining gust of warm wind from the valley below. The bull bugled again, offering his own challenge. I worked my way quickly down the steep pine covered ridge hoping to get close enough for the bull to feel as though he had no option but to turn and fight this intruder to his domain. I held off on bugling as I didn't want to give my position away until I was close enough that he wouldn't push his herd of cows out ahead to avoid a fight. Once I reached the bottom, I crossed a small creek, hopping from rock to rock, moving up as quickly and quietly as possible.

I reached for my bugle, adjusted the diaphragm to the roof of my mouth, and blew. The bull responded instantly with a frantic, raspy bugle that assured me he would be coming my way. He sounded as though he were only a hundred yards away and closing fast. He bugled again, this time closer. I quickly picked a good ambush spot with lots of cover as well as good shooting lanes through the sparse underbrush. Suddenly, there was a loud crashing behind me. I turned and saw a spike bull heading down the trail toward me, unaware that I was in his way. I raised my hands enough to catch his attention and give him room to escape, hoping not to alarm the bull I was after. The bigger bull bugled again. He was just on the other side of some small pines mixed with huckleberry bushes and closing, then it happened. I heard him come to a

stop. That's when I noticed the wind had switched direction and was at my back.

With loud crashing, he was gone. So close and yet so far. The evening shadows were beginning to lengthen and the air was quickly cooling, so I decided to come back in the early morning to see if there were other elk around as well. As I walked the mountain trail back toward a rendezvous with my friend Erv from Idaho and my eight year old son, Joey, I reflected back on all that had led to this evening.

Whenever I can, I involve my family into my hunting adventures. This year we had been invited to hunt one of Erv's favorite areas of Idaho on a fourteen day pack trip five miles in at an elevation of nearly 10,000 feet. My family consists of my wife, Lois, who was born and raised in Girdwood, Alaska, and quite comfortable in the wilderness; my son, Joey, a veteran of several family adventures, his first being at the ripe old age of two weeks in the Elkhorn Wilderness area of north eastern Oregon; and Jesse, who was on his first trip with this one at 3 years old. Having a family this size to pack five miles proves to be no easy task, even with the help of Erv's crew of six pack goats. That's right - goats. Erv uses six goats ranging in size and age of a special breed designed for doing this kind of trip. Each goat can carry between 20 to 40 pounds, more as Erv pointed out, if he could get them out here more often.

After carefully packing our gear in the goat packs, we headed down, or should I say up, the trail. We had five miles to cover and an elevation change of about four thousand feet ending at a 9,200 foot elevation for our base camp. We climbed the narrow trail, sometimes crossing small streams and always listening to the excitement expressed by the boys. "This is where boys belong," I said to my wife, who smiled in agreement. Higher and farther into the mountains we climbed in a single file line of goats and hikers, stopping once in awhile for food and water to fuel the hikers and give the goats a short break.

As the day wore on and the trail got steeper, Jesse's little legs started to fade and was relieved to be put on mom's back in a child pack with a snugly blan-

ket. He was soon chattering away at all the things he saw along the trail.

The goats were a real pleasure to have on the trail. As we learned the personality traits of each of our new camp mates, my family forged on toward our destination.

The camp we chose was a beautiful high alpine meadow at the summit of a pass between two large valleys with two large granite peaks majestically standing on both the north and south side of our new home. The meadow was surrounded by large fir and spruce trees which gave shelter from the wind that blew between the two valleys, funneled by the pass where we camped.

After a good night's rest, Erv and I left the campsite to return to the trucks and bring back one more load of supplies that our group would need for the two-week stay we had planned. As hunting with your family is no easy task, what usually was our sparsely supplied backpack became several to supply a family of four for the different climate conditions encountered in the high



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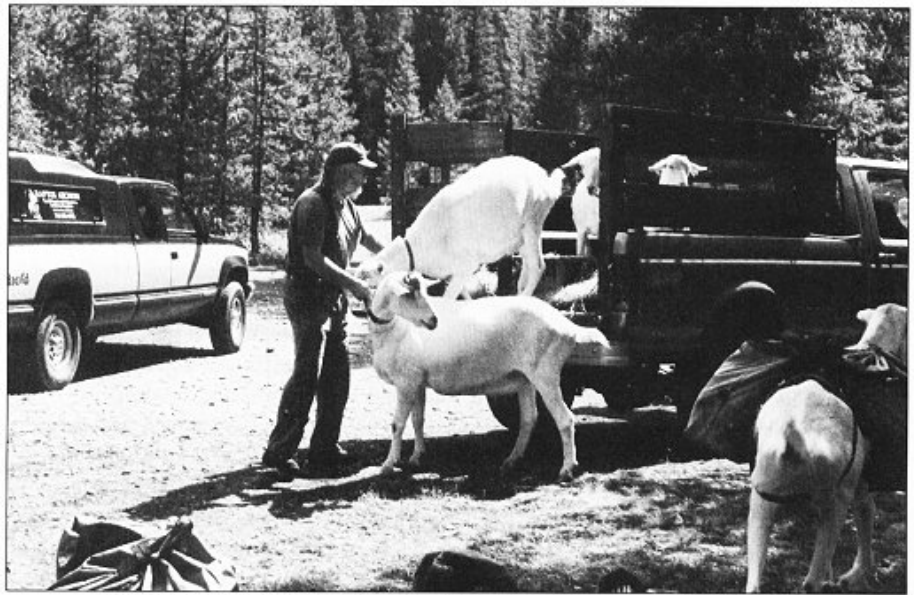
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mountains over any two-week period. I wanted to get serious about hunting, but knew I would feel better supplying my family with their needs and preparing the camp for what may come. Then I could focus on hunting.

The following morning, I left camp and headed up the ridge to the south and along a large ridgeline to explore some of the other basins that stepped their way along both sides of the ridge. Everywhere you looked there were hanging basins full of dark timber to spend the day in, secluded and cool usually near a good source of water.

As I spent the day exploring the area, I wondered what my family was doing. Their plan was to explore the ridgeline in the opposite direction, as to not disrupt the area I would hunt today. After a long weary day with no elk found, I trudged into camp to find they had a glorious day of tromping in our meadow, napping under the large spruce trees, and gallivanting among the mountain peaks and having had lunch near 10,000 feet with a breathtaking view of the Beaverhead mountain range to the east and the Lost River range to the west.

Erv and I plopped down around the campfire to share the day's stories with Lois, Joey, and Jesse. The goats weren't shy about sharing the camp area either as they worked their way right up to the fire's edge and bedded down like a bunch of house dogs. We did not have to tie them up as they stayed around camp, occasionally feeding out in the meadow and soon returning to see what was going on in our camp. They slept in a large tangle of snuggled goats at night right near the tent under the spruce canopy.



Unloading the goats in preparation for the long pack to our elk camp.

The following morning, Erv and I left the goats in camp and decided to hunt down the other side. Following the stream that flowed from a spring near our camp, we wanted to explore a bench we had spotted halfway down the west side covered with thick timber and bugle to the basin below. There were several areas that elk had been using as bedding areas, but none recently. So back up to the sum-

mit and out the long ridge we had traveled the day before.

As we traveled the ridge, we spotted several large mule deer. But they were not on the menu, as I only had an elk tag. Isn't that the way it always goes? Near midday, we stopped under some small scraggly alpine spruce that appeared to have had a battle with a not-so-kind thunderstorm. We took off our boots for a much needed break and had lunch. The mid-day sun beat down relentlessly at this altitude and what little shade we could find on this ridgeline was a blessing.

Just for kicks, I decided to bugle down into the basin below. Not expecting a response, I nearly choked on the diaphragm when a bull immediately responded. Both of us were up, boots on and ready to go. This bull was hot. It was quite a way down into the basin below, so Erv elected to stay up top as I pursued the elk, bellowing his challenge below. I quickly descended the ridgeline trying to locate where the bull was bedded without stumbling into the herd, unaware of their hideout.

As I reached near the end of the ridgeline running down to the basin below, I ran into a cliff with no way to get down without going back up then taking another route and coming in from

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Genesis 1:1

John 3:16

Matthew 5:16

below. Every time I would bugle, the bull would respond. Apparently, he was on a bench on the other side of the meadow below my eagle's perch. The bench was about three quarters of a mile away at best and much further by having to find another route. As I turned and looked back up the trail toward the ridge line summit, I realized we were five or six miles from camp, and camp was five miles from the trailhead and truck. It would be very hard to pack out our elk in this heat without some of the meat spoiling. For once in my life, good judgement kicked in. I don't care how big a bull he is, I don't think we could have gotten this elk out without wasting some of the meat and I chose to leave him where he was. Erv was thankful as well.

On the long hike back to camp,

I was excited that we had gotten into elk and mid-day as well, things were looking up.

The next morning I decided to hunt the creek bottom we had hunted the day before as we had seen lots of area that appeared to be promising with large avalanche paths of brush, green grass, and lots of cover. Bear sign was everywhere, which concerned me about our camp. Although my wife and Joey both had bear spray with them at all times, and my wife was quite accustomed to being around bears, the last thing we needed was a hungry black bear in camp making a mess of things. I hunted until mid-morning then headed back to camp planning on spending a little time with my family, lounging around camp (this was a vacation, right?), then planned to hunt later in the afternoon. Erv, Joey, and I

wanted to explore another basin to the southeast of our camp, hoping to locate elk a little closer to home. As we entered this new basin, we stopped to watch a large mountain goat feeding on a ledge above us in one of the rocky crags that funneled to the valley below. We decided to split up with me exploring on ahead and meeting up at the upper end of the basin near dark. Not soon after, I found the elk in the basin below in the beginning of the story. On our walk back to camp, I excitedly told Erv and Joey of the evening's events and plans to return in the morning. The lower part of the basin was an elk hunter's dream.

It had large wallows, sparse pine timber, a small stream flowing from an alpine lake, and some occasional ground cover to ambush in.

Erv was going to go back to Salmon the following day to bring his wife and daughter in to join our high meadow camp, so I would hunt alone this morning. The morning broke clear and cool with a little frost on the grass, the first frost we'd had. I quickly trekked back to the spot that I had first heard the bull last night and bugled. The bull answered back and was in the same area as yesterday. As to not have him suspect me, I switched to a different diaphragm so he wouldn't recognize my voice. The morning wind was still heading downhill so I ran down the ridge to close the distance as well as to get downwind. The ridgeline I ran down was full of lodge-pole pine and several of them showed signs of abuse from elk rubbing their antlers early in the season. I reached the bottom and searched for a good spot to set up for an ambush, then bugled. The bull responded, but somehow he had gotten below me and downwind.



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I countered by going up the other side of the draw hoping I could convince him to return up the creek bottom and praying he wouldn't catch my scent. I bugled and he responded, this time closer, and coming up the draw as I wanted. I decided not to bugle again in hopes he would think I was further up the draw than I really was. It worked! I spotted him tossing his head back to go under some limbs on his way up the hill. I bugled. He turned quickly, surprised that I was not where he had thought I was and headed right toward me. He stopped at about 50 yards and I cow called, then a light chuckle. Onward he came.

I was crouched behind an old burnt stump in some low huckleberries trying to blend in as best I could and look like a part of the stump. The bull turned at about twenty yards and stopped, all I could see of him was his hind quarter and his antlers. He didn't seem to know where I was but I didn't dare make a sound for fear he would suspect something was fishy by not seeing another elk. The moment seemed like a lifetime. I crouched in the brush, bow and arrow in hand, and the elk looking for my location. The moment is forever etched in my mind, as he turned to leave I drew my vine maple selfbow, then he paused and my arrow was on its way. At the sound of all the commotion, he was off. As he turned I could see my arrow protruding forward in his ribs. I

knew my razor-sharp broadhead would do its job and settled back to enjoy the feeling only a bowhunter could know. The satisfaction of a well placed arrow and meat for my family.

I waited about 30 minutes and started to look over the situation. I found the first sign of a trail and began to follow. There were elk tracks everywhere. The trail was easy until he slowed and the tracks mixed with about a thousand other elk tracks from the night before. The small specks of blood mixed with the dark soil and pine duff were near impossible to find.

I decided to leave the area for a couple of hours to play it safe and explore the next basin over to see what was on the other side. As I walked through this lush pine forest, I saw elk sign everywhere, trees with antler rubs, bedding areas and trails heading in all directions like spokes on a wagon wheel. And I was standing in the hub, the elk motherlode. I worked my way up the next ridge not paying attention to the wind and landed right into another herd with elk running in all directions. The basin followed another drainage that dropped into the valley we had originally hiked out so I knew if I had to, I would pack the elk down there. Sitting on a ledge enjoying one of my wife's homemade trail bars she calls Fry Bars and a water bag full of crisp clear water, I spotted another mountain goat below me unaware of my presence. I pretended to

stalk him, moving in carefully with my binoculars until he stepped from behind a rock, and the shot was mine. Then I heard an elk bugle below me that snapped me back to reality. I sat for awhile enjoying the sound of this bull's bugle echoing of the walls of the basin and watching the mountain goat working around on the cliff searching for food for about an hour. I got antsy and decided it was time to locate the bull I had shot. I walked back to the area I shot the bull and picked up the trail going only a little further than I had earlier and I found my elk. After the task of dressing and quartering, I decided to hoist the meat as high as I could to prevent the local bears and coyotes from helping themselves to the meat I had worked so hard for. The weather was taking a turn for the worse as well, which concerned me. I loaded one quarter on my pack, as well as the antlers, and headed back to camp.

Upon reaching our meadow, near exhaustion, my family spotted me and came running. They were yipping cheers of celebration on the return of a successful hunter and the joy of fresh meat in camp. I couldn't help but think and feel that this area had seen this cycle before.

The following morning, my family and I hiked back to the elk, loaded up our packs, covered up the rest with a tarp and hiked back with a full load of meat. Upon first arriving in this area we were feeling the effects of living at a lower altitude, finding it hard to physically exert oneself without huffing and puffing. Walking up the trail with family in tow, I noticed I had quickly adapted to the 9,000 foot elevation and felt great.

The next day, Erv and his family arrived and all the excitement of the hunt was retold around the campfire as the children listened with eyes wide at the story unfolding to which they already knew the ending. Erv, the goats, and I made short work hauling the rest of the meat to camp the following day and rested the rest of the day away in the lush grass of the meadow with our families in a lifestyle I can only guess must have been grand.

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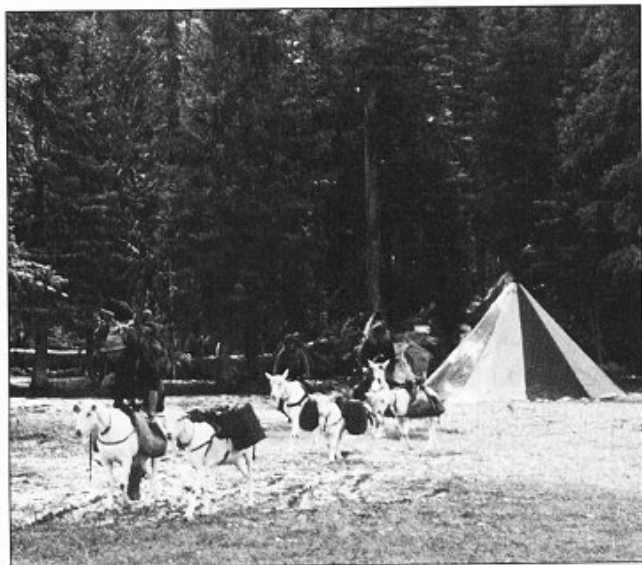
No, that's not a stick lying across the bull's chest, it's 'Ol Maplesnake, Ted's faithful, snaky vine maple self bow, provider of many mouthwatering meals over the years.

The following morning, while still pitch black, I heard what turned out to be mother nature's warning of things to come. All too soon, daylight broke to a white winter wilderness. The kids had a blast throwing snowballs, building snowmen, and running through the snow-white meadow as the adults decided to take heed in the warning, pack up, and head out. Amongst moans

and groans from children bound to stay put, we packed our gear on the goats, loaded our packs as heavy as we could, and walked down the trail toward civilization and our vehicles.

Since we had lots of gear and food left because our trip was cut short, Erv and I were elected to hike back in the following day to get the remaining gear while my wife would cut and wrap meat

with Bridget's help with kids as well as meat. Erv wanted to show me more of his haunts so we hiked in from another drainage, longer but not as steep. As we neared the summit we were engulfed in a blizzard with howling winds and blinding snow. I had covered a pile of wood with the tarp in hopes that we would have dry wood to burn upon our arrival and had the fire going in no time. That night, Erv and I tried to consume as much of the food as possible so as not to have to carry it out. After a not so restful night with full bellies and howling wind, we packed up and walked down the mountain under patches of clearing skies. As we hiked along, full packs on our backs as well as on the goats, I was thankful for all we had received both from the mountains, the gift of family time and the camaraderie and friendship from Erv. The time shared will be on my mind as well as the minds of my wife and children for many years to come.



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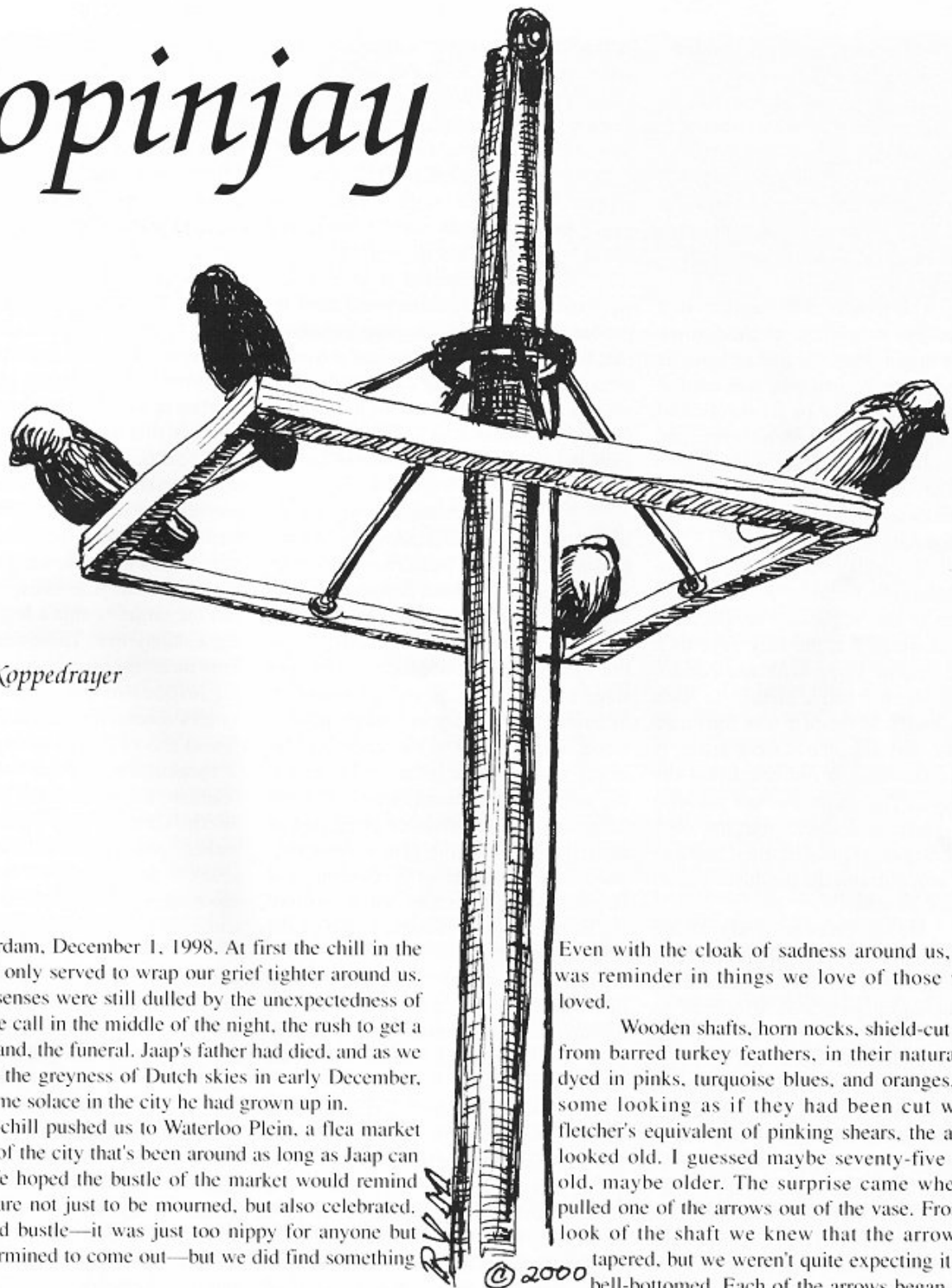


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Bob is a former president of the Mississippi Archery Association and was inducted into the Mississippi Bowhunters Hall of Fame in 1989.

Popinjay



By Kaye Koppedraayer

Amsterdam, December 1, 1998. At first the chill in the wind only served to wrap our grief tighter around us. Our senses were still dulled by the unexpectedness of it all. A phone call in the middle of the night, the rush to get a flight to Holland, the funeral. Jaap's father had died, and as we looked out at the greyness of Dutch skies in early December, we sought some solace in the city he had grown up in.

The chill pushed us to Waterloo Plein, a flea market in the center of the city that's been around as long as Jaap can remember. We hoped the bustle of the market would remind us that lives are not just to be mourned, but also celebrated. We didn't find bustle—it was just too nippy for anyone but the most determined to come out—but we did find something else.

Somewhere between one vendor selling wooden shoes and another with batiks from India or Bali or some such place, we saw the lady with antiques. There, on one side of her stall, tucked in between odd pieces of china and whatnot, was a vase full of arrows. The rich colours of the fletches made them look like fresh cut flowers. We laughed: archery and memory, how often does one moment link into another.

Even with the cloak of sadness around us, there was reminder in things we love of those we've loved.

Wooden shafts, horn nocks, shield-cut made from barred turkey feathers, in their natural and dyed in pinks, turquoise blues, and oranges, with some looking as if they had been cut with a fletcher's equivalent of pinking shears, the arrows looked old. I guessed maybe seventy-five years old, maybe older. The surprise came when we pulled one of the arrows out of the vase. From the look of the shaft we knew that the arrow was tapered, but we weren't quite expecting it to be bell-bottomed. Each of the arrows began at the

nock end with a 5/16 shaft, but by the time they got to what you'd expect to be the tip, they flared out to a big, flat horn disk, some 7/8 of an inch across. Looking at those big, flat blunt ends, we knew we were holding a clutch of popinjay arrows.

That made sense. We were, after all, in the Netherlands, where in the south of the country as in Belgium

and parts of France, popinjay had been quite popular around the turn of the century. These arrow had been used-and they certainly showed use in competitions in which the target, the popinjay, a wooden or leather replica of an eagle of some other bird, was placed on top of a mast or pole. Archers stood at the base of the mast and shot nearly straight up at the target.

The woman who ran the stall affirmed our suspicions of the arrows' place of origin when she told us how she obtained them. A man who had been at an antique auction in Brussels had picked up these arrows. A bow was part of the same lot, but we didn't get a chance to see it as he was only bringing it to the market later in the week. By then we would be back in Canada.

Naturally we bought the arrows. Maybe because we looked so desolate, or maybe because my fractured Dutch charmed her, the lady gave us a little discount along with her condolences. When I had a chance to look more closely at them, I was intrigued with the way the shafts were made. A visual examination indicated that the tapering of the shafts was not uniform down the shaft. Rather, from the nock end, it began gradually, then became much more dramatic the last several inches of the arrow.

Measurements of six of the arrows confirmed this impression. One shaft I measured was 30 1/2 inches long. At nock end it measured 5/16ths of an inch. Moving toward the blunt end, the increase in the shaft's diameter was very gradual, approximately 1/16" every 8 inches, so that at 25 to 26 inches down, the diameter of the shaft was 8/16", a mere 3/16" increase from the nock end. But, from 26 inches onwards, the diameter of the shaft increased 1/16" per inch, a much more accelerated expansion. At the blunt horn tip, the diameter was 14/16". This radical increase gave the shafts their flare. (see arrows in the photo on the following page.

Though all the arrows followed a similar tapering pattern, some variations in the increases and shaft diameters did show up. At one time there must have been several arrow manufacturers

in this part of Europe, as these arrows sport the labels and names of different makers: Gebr Schroeder (Gebr = Gebroeders, meaning Brothers) or the Schoeder Brothers, Andries Thijs of Putte, and so on. Andries Thijs' label is especially nice with its illustration of an eagle in flight with one arrow in its talons, another in its beak.

I'd be interested in seeing the equipment these manufacturers used to produce these shafts. The tapering gives the arrows a heavy front end without compromising the flight excessively. The weight would be needed to knock the bird down, and of course, the wide blunt gave the archer a better chance of hitting the target.

I cannot determine what woods were used for these arrows. Going by colour and grain patterns, different woods were used, based perhaps on manufacturers' preferences or on what was available. All the arrows are fairly heavy, but the size of the shafts accounts for some of the weight. Some are yellowish in colour, which may be the result of a wood stain as much as the natural colour of the wood. Others are paler. I'm guessing some were a European pine. Several of the arrows were grooved along part of their length, with the grooves starting about four inches below the fletching and stopping about the same distance before the blunt end. The grooves followed the same taper of the shaft in that the grooves were tighter together closer to the nock, then spreading out as the shaft widened towards its bell-bottomed base. The purpose of the grooving? Likely to keep the arrows straight.

On most shafts, that base is glossy black horn, probably water buffalo, though a couple were lighter in colour and chipped, suggesting cow horn. All the blunts were grooved in concentric circles. Some had a crimped pin dead center, though for most, only a hole remained where the pin had been. If the black horn is indeed water buffalo, and I have no reason to think otherwise, its use on arrows made in Europe tells its own story of trade routes that brought horn from south and southeast Asia to Europe.

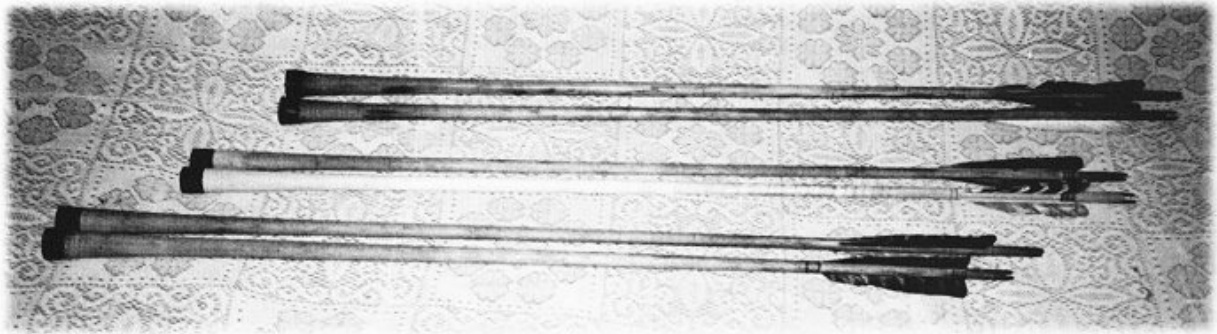
Well used, but now relics of another time, these arrows told of a sport

that once was quite popular in the Lowlands, in southern Holland, Belgium, and northern France. The term popinjay, referring to the target in the shape of a bird, is derived from the loan word papegai (meaning parrot), used by Dutch and Flemish speakers. In English, the term papegai was recast as papingo, and then to popinjay, suggestive of popping the jay, or hitting the bird.

The roots of the sport are pretty old in Europe. I've seen illustrations in medieval manuscripts which show a longbow archer taking aim at a bird perched in a tree directly above him. The arrow in this illustration was a stylized blunt. Such stylized images of popinjay shooting show up elsewhere. A late 16th century piece of needlework showing scenes of everyday life features a similar image, only this time the archer is holding a crossbow. The arrow is still a blunt and the target is still a bird perched on top a skinny tree. These examples come from medieval times, but an even earlier suggestions of this sport show up in Virgil's *Aeneid*. A scene in book 5 of the *Aeneid* shows Aeneas arranging a series of memorial games and competitions to celebrate the anniversary of his father's death. One of these games was an archery competition in which different archers demonstrated their skill by shooting at a dove fastened to the top of a mast taken from a ship.

Different bow guilds and bow societies in Europe included annual popinjay shoots in their calendar of events. Ralph Payne Galloway in his study of the crossbow and archery sports suggests that such events took place as early as the thirteenth century. The events were numerous, and at least at one a woman was the successful archer. The site was Brussels, the date 5 May 1615, the woman Archduchess Isabella, wife of Albert, Governor of the Netherlands. A special guest of the guild that hosted the match, the Archduchess used a crossbow and brought down the leather bird, to be proclaimed Queen of the Crossbowmen of the Grand Lodge of Brussels.

One contemporary archery society in Scotland, the Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers, dates the origin



Popinjay Arrows. The tapering gives the arrows a heavy front end to aid in knocking down the target without compromising flight characteristics.

of its annual popinjay shoot to either 1482 or 1483. Although that shoot has not had an unbroken history since the fifteenth century, there were disruptions between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, the event was revived in 1688, discontinued again in 1869, to be revived again in 1948 with the founding of the present archers' society—the annual event attracts some attention among archers in Europe. Arthur G. Credland of the Society of Archer Antiquaries attended that shoot in August 1990. In an article published in the society's 1995 journal, he offers a marvelous description of the completion to "ding doon the doo," i.e., strike down the dove or pigeon. The wooden target is tethered, so it really doesn't fall down, as in the past participants have been injured by falling birds; instead whoever is first successful in dislodging or hitting the wings is declared captain of the papingo. Credland also reminds us of one of the rules of the competition: that the bird has to be struck with an upward shot. Any chance hit of the target by an arrow on its return are simply does not count.

The sport of popinjay shooting must have had some currency at the turn of the century. Records of the early Olympic games of the modern period show that some popinjay shooting took place at two games, the Second Olympic games held in Paris in 1900 and at the Seventh held in Antwerp in 1920. In those early years of the Olympics, international standards governing different sports had not yet been developed. Instead, each event reflected the national flavor of the host country and the competitions, archery included, were orga-

nized along the lines of the way the sport was practiced in the host country, hence there was popinjay shooting at Paris (1900) and Antwerp (1920), but not at St. Louis (1904) or London (1908), which had other archery events. Called *sur la perche a' la herse* (at the perch on the mast) *sur la perche a la pyramid* (at the perch on the pyramid) at the Paris games, the popinjay shooting seemed more of an exhibition than a competition, as only a handful of French and Belgium archers competed. In Antwerp where archery competition was restricted to popinjay and target shooting at "uncommon" distances, both British and American archers boycotted the event. What competitors there were came from Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, countries which had some history of popinjay. The rounds included both fixed and moving bird targets. After Antwerp, popinjay was discontinued as an Olympic sport, and indeed, archery entirely was dropped until the 1972 Olympics in Munich.

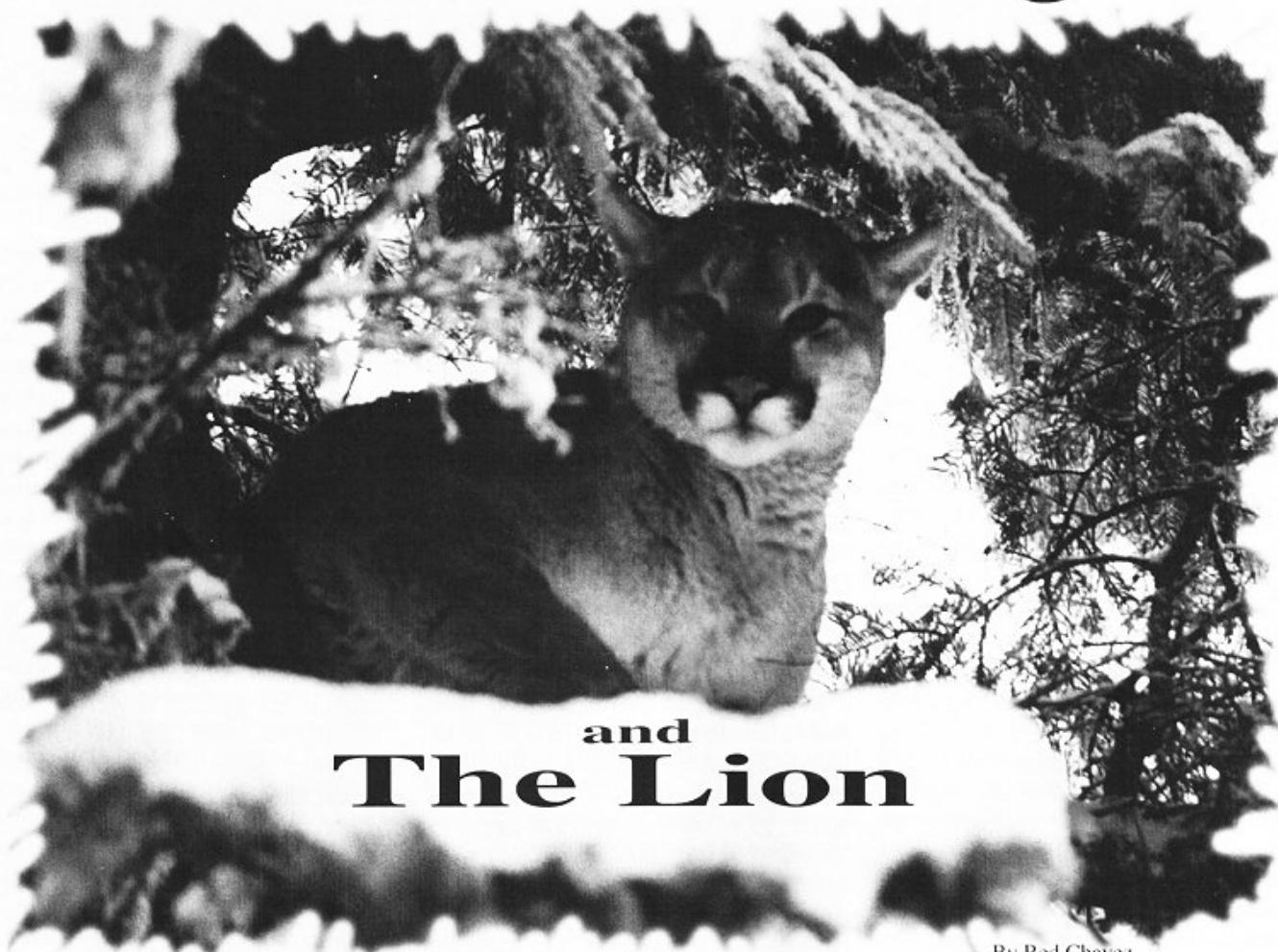
Popinjay was also practiced in America last century. In his review of the record books and minutes of the United Bowmen of Philadelphia, one of the first bow clubs in North America, Robert P. Elmer takes note of popinjay contests in the 1840s. At this club, popinjay shooting was done only on July 4th. With the club's location in Philadelphia, Independence Day was a gala affair, marked with much festivity, food, and archery games. For popinjay, archers shot at a wooden bird placed on top a slender pole. The club medal went to the archer who hit the bird's heart, marked by a piece of paper placed over the abdomen of the bird. There was apparently some

latitude in the way the target was erected, as the club records note that the target used for the popinjay competition on July 4, 1857, was a large wooden eagle placed directly on the lawn rather than on top a pole. The target book of the club for that year included a drawing of the popinjay target. Elmer describes it as made out of wooden boards cut in the form of a spread eagle with hinged wings. The target must have had a somewhat comical appearance, as the wings would flap each time they were hit.

I suspect that popinjay shooting, like other stylized forms of archery, saw a decrease of interest in North America by the turn of the century, but some traditions have survived, or have been revived. In Kitchener Ontario, a middle sized-city near where I live, a type of popinjay event marks the opening of the city's annual Octoberfest celebrations. Called the Eagle shoot, archers of all sorts—longbow shooters, cross-bow archers, re-enactors and so on—kick off the celebrations by taking aim at a wooden effigy of an eagle. Great fun, the shoot inaugurates the annual bash, but apart from these small pockets of interest, not much is really known about popinjay shooting elsewhere in North America. I had that clutch of arrows from Amsterdam with me at a recent archery exposition, and although many people commented on the way the blunts looked, only a few could place them as popinjay shafts. A pity that, because there is some mighty rich history in the sport.



The Lady



and The Lion

By Red Chavez

Winter has always been a long cold spell for me. I don't ski and only occasionally do I snowshoe. I do a little treestand hunting until the season closes on the 15th of January, but none of this adds up to the cold and misery that can be encountered on a mountain lion hunt.

Wendy Decker had a dream for years of doing the mountain lion thing, with dogs, waist deep snow, cold, high mountains. Brrrrr.... Well, a stroke of luck brought the friendship of the "Mountain Man" of the Bitterroots, Mario Locatelli, and Wendy was given the chance of a lifetime. Mario has good cat dogs and would take her on the hunt for the cost of the dog food. Such a deal! I remember an excited Wendy telling me that the next day they would be foraging up a canyon in search of cat sign. I think that first day was a sort of test for her. Mario wanted to be sure that Wendy had it in her to suffer the physical demands of the real hunt, when it happened. That first day there was no cat sign, but the snow level went from none at the mouth of the canyon, to knee deep at three miles and waist deep at the turn-around spot. Wendy was in good shape, but she needed a little help, and I had just the thing—a takedown bow that fit neatly into a cus-

tom backquiver with six broadheads. With this compact set up strapped onto her pack frame, Wendy could have free movement of her hands and arms during the search mode. I delivered the bow to her door step and watched as she put a dozen practice arrows through the bow. She handled the 54 pounds at 27" like she had been shooting it all summer.

Several days later, the pair made another trip to the mountain and this time the dog got on the trail of a cat, but it led to private property, so, Mario had to call the dog back. By now Mario was confident that Wendy could keep up and seldom did he turn to check her progress. I'll let Wendy's words describe the ensuing hunt.

"The next night, a Saturday, we got perfect snow and Sunday dawned clear and calm. My husband, Gary, had planned on going on this day, but we were unable to find a baby-sitter for the kids, so he became Mr. Mom. As I walked out of the bedroom, he said "Today is the day Wen, I can feel it." I was sure hoping that he was right, as I was getting tired of the routine, not the physical part, but the sitter finding and the household chores were piling up in my absence. I really wanted a cat and I wanted it this season!

We crested a low ridge on the trail and took a short break. Mario told me to wait there for ten minutes as he and the dog made a short loop higher up, then they would drop down and meet me at the creek bottom. From there we would try to pick up the trail of the cat we encountered last week. He did not really expect to find sign up higher, as most of the deer had moved down the mountain. Five minutes after he left, I heard Dealer, the dog, sound off. I threw on my pack and ran down the trail to catch up to Mario. I could see Mario's tracks bailing off the trail and I followed them to the brush-choked creek bottom. I could hear the hound high on the next ridge, so up we went, 2000 vertical feet up. The mountainside was so steep that I spent most of my time on all fours. The fresh snow made the hillside slippery, but we were glad to have tracking snow, as the dog was out of hearing range. We took our time, climbing steadily until the cat started to contour the ridge. The cold air burned my lungs and Mario stopped several times to make sure I was still able to follow. He didn't want to have to carry me out.

We came to a sheltered area under a huge ponderosa pine where the cat had passed. A single perfect track got my adrenaline going again. This was a large cat, not the same one that we had lost last week. We'd been on the track for three hours and I was wondering if we could keep going. Dealer's voice carries like a church bell and to not be able to hear him meant that he was a long way off or in some type of trouble. We had not heard from the dog since 15 minutes into the chase. All we could do is keep following the tracks in hope of catching up. We did not find them in the first deep ravine and Mario hoped that they would be in the next one. Mario left me behind, so that he could travel faster to locate the dog. I told him that I could easily follow their tracks and I needed a short break. Food, drink and rest were becoming a priority. For the next 15 minutes, I walked at my

own pace and the going was easier as the cat contoured the hillside again. I paused when I thought I heard the dog, but the sound never returned; then, I heard Mario yelling "he's treed!" I tried to run, but the snow was so deep that I only floundered about, making the breathing more difficult, so I slowed down. When I caught up to Mario, he told me to quit being so



"Mountain Man" of the Bitterroots,
Mario Locatelli

stubborn and give him everything heavy in my pack. I had declined the first time he offered to lighten my load, but this time I was glad to give up the weight. We had some ground to cover and needed to go fast. I could almost keep up with Mario as he trotted off following the tracks. As he dropped off the north face he told me to "take it easy" and don't get hurt. The snow was from a few inches deep to a few feet deep in amongst the rocks and logs. One blind hole I stepped into was butt deep and I was glad to have a walking stick to pry my way out. The hound's voice rang like music from the deep draw. He was actually closer to us than we had thought. "Good boy, good boy," I could hear Mario calling out. I

knew then that we really did have a cat in a tree. This side of the ridge was very steep and I spent more time doing the "butt slide" than walking. Suddenly, he was there in front of me, sitting in the tree glaring at the dog, a real live, muscle-bound, mad-as-hell mountain lion. Wow! What a sight!" After the long hard chase, I could feel my emotions roller-

coaster; here was the cat I always wanted, but at the moment, I didn't want to kill him. He was just fascinating and beautiful to look at. Then he turned his head and our eyes met for the first time. What a cold icy stare he had; the hair on the back of my neck stood up and I felt like he was saying to me "I'd like to kill you." I heard myself answer out loud "I'd like to kill you, too." The predators had met at last. The big tom broke eye contact first and my desire to take him returned. I fumbled with cold hands to snap a few pictures and to put together the take-down longbow. We studied his position and I did a couple of practice draws, then I slowly and deliberately took the shot. It looked good, into the front of the chest, angling back, but not as much penetration as I would like. I decided to take another shot, but the arrow "zinged" off a branch and the startled cat bounded from the tree and down the ridge with the hound close behind. As Mario ran, he shouted instructions back to me to gather up my things and follow. The cat was leaving a good blood trail, and he treed again about 300 yards further down the draw. By the cat's posture and attitude we could tell he was well hit, but Mario wanted me to hit him again. In my excitement, I missed. I calmed down and remembered Red's instruction. "push—pull—look down the shaft."

Push—pull—look. . .zip! Right through the heart. The cat faltered and started coming down the tree. Mario was yelling to hit him again and somehow I had already managed to knock my last arrow and found myself drawing again, push—pull—zot! . . .double lung.



Wendy Decker—all smiles after a high-country adventure in the Bitterroot Mountains of Western Montana

The big lion was dead when he hit the ground, and he and the hound rolled all the way to the bottom of the draw. The four hour, three mile chase was over and I was numb. The cell phone popped out of my pack and I called Gary to spread the good news and to ask for reinforcement. We would need help getting this big cat out whole. The tom was 135 pounds and 80 inches tip to tip. The green skull was 14 inches. I dressed him

out carefully so that I could see the effects of the arrows. The first arrow had clipped the aorta where it joins the heart, the second had gone through the heart and the third was, indeed, a double lung hit."

Wendy's call to me was a conglomeration of excited chatter and somewhere in the exchange of words was a stern "You're not getting this bow back." Yes, 1998 was a very good year for

Wendy. Her tally was a fine 5x5 white-tail buck, a cinnamon phase black bear, a 5x6 bull elk, a whitetail doe (shot out of my treestand), the fore-mentioned mountain lion, and a real honey of a long bow. Seems like everywhere we look, women are proving themselves in archery. Don't you just love it!





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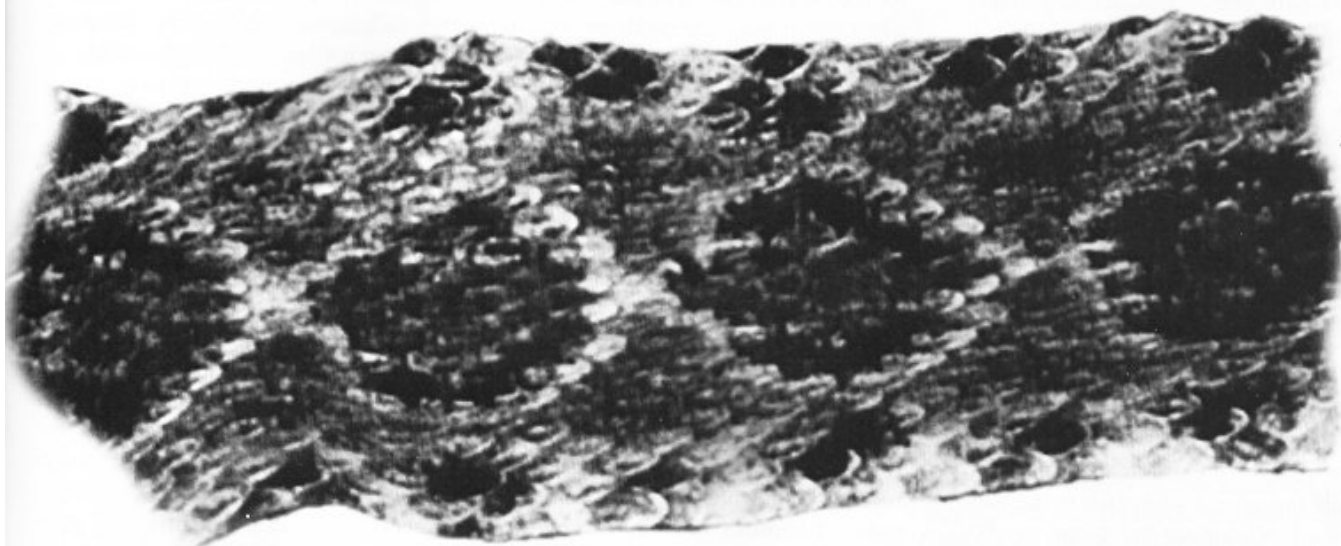
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—Step by Step—



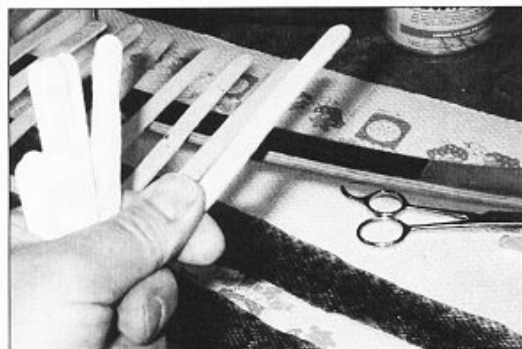
by Jack B. Harrison

I have tried at least three different adhesives in an effort to back a bow with snakeskin. First, I have used common carpenter's glue by Elmer's. This was a method I learned from John Strunk and Paul Brunner. Second, I have used hide glue. Dr. Bert Grayson put me on to this and supplied me with the recipe, which called for a specific ratio of water to dried, granular glue. Third, out of necessity, I learned to use contact cement, on my own. There are several brands, but they all work. My personal preference is the Barge brand.

The reason I started using Barge contact cement was because the snakeskins I purchased were all Glycerol cured. They were not dried and salted as before when I used the other types of adhesive. When I first used these types of skins, I had to overcome the "false" notion that Glycerol cured snakeskins could not be used to back a bow. Up until then, I

was always told that it couldn't be done. Various reasons were offered, but the most common was the objection to the time it took for the backed bow skin to cure once it had been "glued" on the limbs. Apparently, because of the Glycerol, the adhesive would not set up. Using contact cement, this was and is not a problem. In addition, with contact cement, I was able to start and finish a bow on the same day, without all the delays. What's more, using contact cement proved to be "tougher" and longer lasting on the finished bow.

Backing a bow with Glycerol snakeskins has another advantage. Compared to salt cured and dried snakeskins, all the Glycerol cured snakeskins are brighter with better definition of the diamond patterns common to rattle snakes that thrive in Texas. The supplier, Guy Adams, is from Texas. The skins I continue to receive from him are nothing short of per-



Lay out a row of Popsicle sticks about one-half-of-an-inch apart, the full length of the bow limb.



Carefully, lay the snakeskin on top of the sticks.

fection with regard to texture, pattern, and coloration.

The following are the steps I use to back the bow limbs with Glycerol cured rattle snake skins:

1. Soak the skins in acetone for at least 30 minutes. Soaking the skins in acetone removes any residual oils and grease. It almost "bleaches" the residual oils out of the skins. All the glycerol is not washed out. Enough remains in the skins so that they remain supple. It is best to soak and wash the skins in acetone outside. Interestingly enough, acetone also kills the odor. Cadaverine is the bacteria that produce the "dead smell." Acetone kills it off. Don't breathe the Acetone and wear rubber gloves.
2. Trim the "legs" off the skins. The legs comprise the edges of the skins that enable the snake to crawl along. Removing these strips from the skins relieves the tension and the tendency

for the skins to curl, wrinkle, and twist when the contact cement is applied to them. While this excess material is trimmed away, the Acetone is evaporating, so make sure to follow both steps one and two in well-ventilated areas. I crack a window and turn on my exhaust fan. The vessel I keep about a gallon of Acetone in is kept outside during the soaking and washing phase in step one. I also wear rubber gloves for personal protection.

3. Prepare the back of the bow limb surface. I use 36-grit abrasive paper to rough-up the surface of finish on the back of the bow. Interestingly enough, contact cement works better on a rough finish, versus one that has not been finished. Don't remove too

much. The rule I follow is to remove the shine or gloss only. Contact cement adheres more aggressively as it cures to the polymer surface.

4. Trim the skins to length and square up one end. Square up one end of the snakeskin by trimming with scissors. I also rough-cut mine for length. Just estimate the length you need and remove the excess. Then they are easier to handle. I trim my skins so that they fit between the riser overlay and the bow limb nocks. Sometimes I run the skins up under the leather wrapping of the riser. Depending upon the model of your bow, use your judgment for covering the surface of your particular bow.

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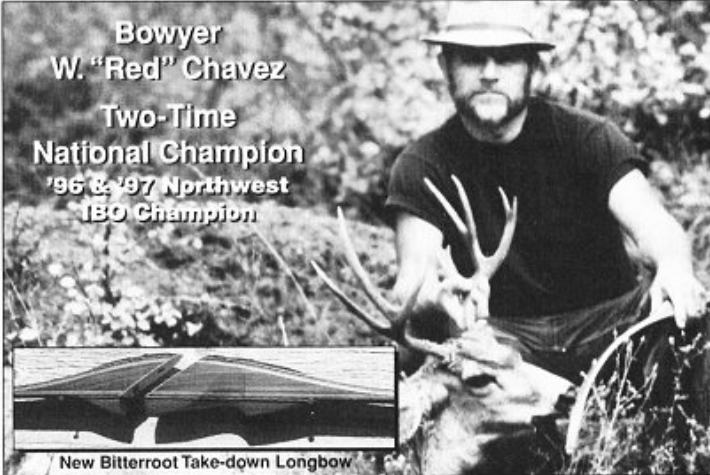
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5. Apply contact cement to both the backs of the bow and the snakeskins. Use a brush to apply the cement on both the surfaces of the bow and the snakeskins. By putting the bow on an elevated block, secured so it will not twist helps control it. Put the skins on a paper towel and brush contact cement on the surfaces evenly. Allow both skins to dry completely to the touch. When you touch the surfaces, they should not stick or adhere to your fingertip. The same thing applies to the bow limb surfaces. Remember to apply the contact cement evenly to all surfaces, both bow limbs and both snakeskins. Allow all surfaces to dry, completely.

6. Use popsicle sticks to align the snake skin on the bow limbs. Lay out a row of Popsicle sticks about one-half-of-an-inch apart, the full length of the bow limb. Then, carefully, lay the snakeskin on top of the sticks. The bow must be secure so the sticks do not fall off. If you do not have a block to secure the bow with, carefully fix the bow in a vise so that it does not move. Make sure you protect the handle and limbs from getting damaged.

Stretch the skin evenly so that the diamond pattern of the snake is centered on the bow limb. If your fingers are dry and clean, the contact cement on the skin will not stick to your fingers and it is easy to advance up the limb. I start at the riser and work out toward the limb tips. Secure one end first, then the other. Then, as you lay down the skin, it will make contact with the surface of the bow. When this happens, it adheres instantly. By methodically removing sticks and advancing up the bow limb, it is possible to carefully lay out the skin exactly on the limb without many problems with overlapping, wrinkles, and error. When you reach the nock, stop and trim off the excess with an Exacto knife. Make sure the blade is sharp. I use a stick with a square edge to ensure that I have met the leading edge of the nock where it comes in

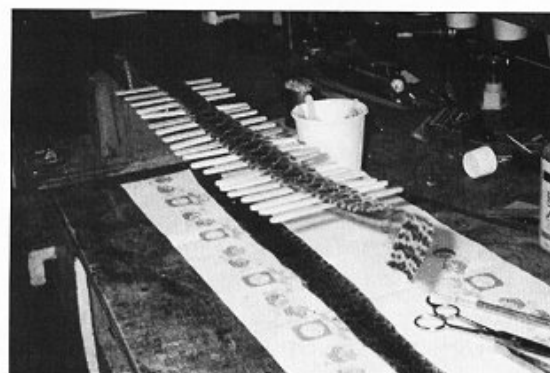
contact with the bow limb. I rub it down firmly until I can see the edge where the skin comes in contact with the nock. Then I cut the excess material off, by making a slice with the tip of the blade.

Note: If for any reason you run into trouble with a skin folding on itself and the surfaces sticking together, just re-soak it in acetone. The acetone will destroy the adhesive properties of the contact cement. It is then possible to open the skin back up and clean off the rubbery residue. Then, you can try again. Acetone will not hurt the skin. Just don't get angry and trash the skin. Re-soak it and start over. Try it; you'll like it!

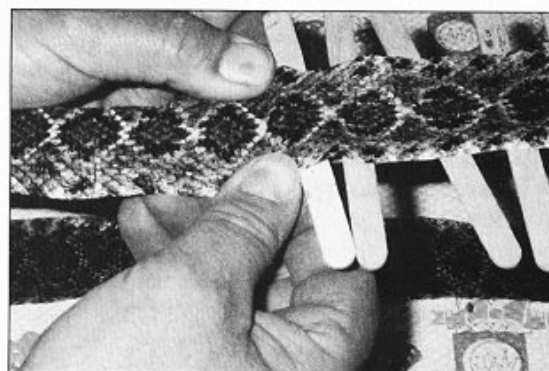
7. Trim and roll the skin on the back of the bow. Use a wallpaper roller to firmly roll the skin on the bow. Then trim both edges with the Exacto knife. Trim the excess skin away by cutting in either direction. I generally trim from the riser to the tip, but it works in either direction. I also trim my skins to the edge of the back of the glass or carbon on the bow. Roll the surface until you are satisfied that it is down and firm. You will note that the surface flattens out. Scales pop off and the overall surface area will seem smoother than before. Make sure your knife is sharp. The entire effort will be much more successful if your blade is "razor" sharp. Any residual skin that is left can be sanded away in later steps, so, don't be too concerned if the trimming



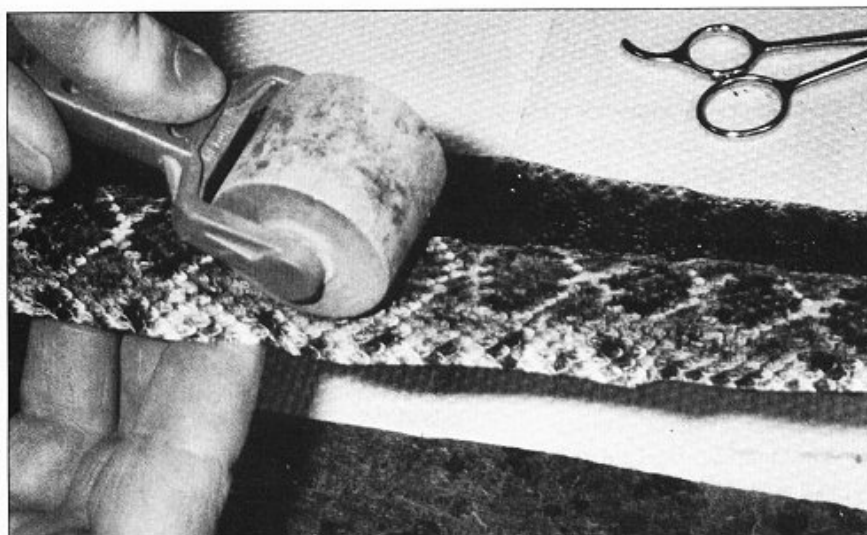
Stretch the skin evenly so that the diamond pattern of the snake is centered on the bow limb.



The bow must be secure so the sticks do not fall off. If you do not have a block to secure the bow with, carefully fix the bow in a vise so that it does not move.



By methodically removing sticks and advancing up the bow limb, it is possible to carefully lay out the skin exactly on the limb without many problems with overlapping, wrinkles, and error.



Use a wallpaper roller to firmly roll the skin on the bow. Then trim both edges with the Exacto knife.

job is not "perfect." Just don't leave any gross amount of skin on the edges of the limbs. It is easier to trim off with a knife, rather than sand away later.

Once both limbs are done, I allow the bow to cure for about an hour in an area of my shop where the heater can concentrate a steady, warm breeze across the surface of the skins.

8. Apply Super Glue to the surface of the skins, three times, while the bow is on the rack. Before putting the Super Glue on the surface of the snakeskins, I string the bow and draw it with my tillering board. I call it the "rack." The bow is drawn 26-inches and secured in a vice, via the rack. Then any residual scales are removed with the tip of my Exacto knife. I use a four-power lens hood to ensure that I get them all. Most of the time I wear the hood in my effort to fix the skins to the back of the bow. In this manner, I ensure that my work is neat, even, and that I can see what is happening better.

Once the scales are removed, I apply a moderate amount of Super Glue. Make sure you use the "watery" grade that is very thin. It soaks right into the skin. I put it on and spread it on the skin using the tip of my finger. I wear latex rubber gloves the entire

time. Be quick about putting it on, otherwise, you will stick to the skin! Wipe it on and move on. Make sure you do the edges of the snakeskin on the limbs too.

Allow at least 45-minutes between applications of Super Glue. **DO NOT GET IN A HURRY.** After one good coat, allow at least one hour before touching the surface with anything. Make sure the bow is in a well-ventilated area. The Super Glue must dry or cure completely, or the job will not turn out. If there is any question if it is dry, wait another hour. When it is dry, it will feel dry. **DON'T PUSH IT!** The entire job can be ruined if you get in a hurry at this point. Super Glue seals the surface of the skin. Any spray finishes sticks better to this surface than a raw skin.

9. Use 320-grit sandpaper to knock off the rough surface of the snakeskin. Remove the bow from the "rack," and prepare to sand the limb surfaces. By now the skins on the back of the bow should feel dry to the touch. The surface of the skin treated with Super Glue will be rough and sharp. Just knock it down with the 320-grit paper. Use an air hose to blow off the white residue that builds up on the surface of the skin when you sand down the roughness. **DO NOT WET-SAND THE SURFACE.** The residue will

create problems later. If the Super Glue was dry, it will dust off with no problem, but, if it is not dry, the white residue will stick in between all the scales and the job will be ruined. There isn't anything that I have found that will undo this mistake, to date. So, wait and be patient when allowing the Super Glue to cure before sanding the surfaces.

10. Finish sanding the edges of the bow limbs. I use 180-grit paper to finish-sand the edges of the back of the bow limbs. In other words, any excess Super Glue and skin is removed from the edges of the bow limbs in this step. Once this is done, the bow is ready for the final spray finish. **DO NOT BE TOO AGGRESSIVE IN SANDING THE SURFACE OF THE SKIN OR THE EDGES. USE YOUR FOUR-POWER LENS HOOD TO INSPECT YOUR PROGRESS.**

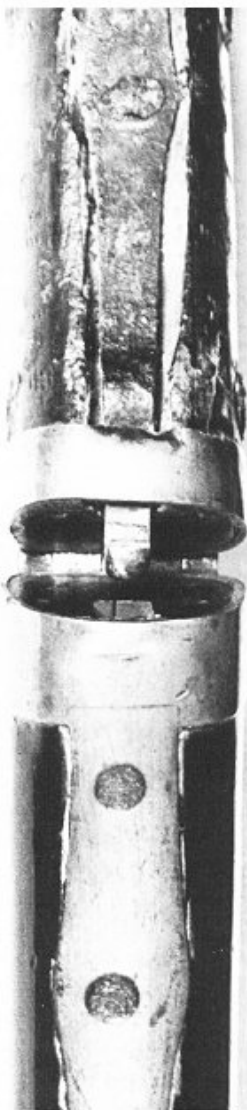
I put 9-coats of catalyzed Urethane on the back of my bow limbs. Everyone has their own way of doing this. It probably really doesn't matter what finish is used at this point. The skin is sealed and protected by the Super Glue. Because the bow was stretched with the "rack" mentioned above in step 8, the skins tend to stick on the bow a lot longer, and the spray finish has less problem giving with the limbs when the bow is shot, time after time.

These steps are easy to follow. If you have problems or would like to contact me, I am available at (907) 376-4969 (my e-mail address is: afa@mat-net.com). In the event, you would like me to back your bow with snakeskins, I charge \$150, complete, which includes the cost of the skins and to refinish the bow. Shipping/postage is extra.



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Carriage Bows

by Hugh D. Soar



Carriage bows, either jointed or hinged were not an unusual feature of the 19th Century. Anyone who has trapped his long bow in a car door, or the hood will instantly have appreciated the need, as almost certainly, will have his immediate travelling companion. There may be more room in a modern Cadillac, but space was limited when on Victorian archery business, and seven-foot longbow "Coffins," (to give them their proper name) or Aschams (to be less morticianous) were anything but ideal luggage for an elegant Phaeton.

Although journeying by railway train in Britain was culturally acceptable, and, —a passing comment—happened a good deal more successfully than it does today, transporting a bow box to the station and thence to the archery field at the other end was a cumbersome and time-consuming exercise fraught with possibilities too awful to contemplate.

Enter the carriage-bow. An early 19th century advertisement by bowyer John Spreat of Bath in Somerset placed in 1833 offered "ABBIEY GREEN JOINTED BOWS, *For travelling: - when put together, which may be done in one minute, - are warranted to be as firm and as elastic (sic), as if of a single piece; and will pack with a quiver of a dozen arrows, belt, and brace, etc., in a small flat case, half the length of a bow and about five inches wide.*"

No examples of Spreat's carriage bows survive to the writer's knowledge, and the method of jointing is thus not known. However, the principle was probably plug and socket; the socket being a metal sleeve. Rigidity may have been gained by a slot in the plug engaging a transverse pin, as is the case in the crude, late 19th century example of a socketed bow in the photograph.

Somewhat later, in 1879, still with space considerations in mind, Ephraim Morton patented a hinged bow. The year is significant since the National Archery Association of America's National Meetings started then; however if he was an archer—an assumption not easily sustained the closer one looks at his invention—and had thoughts of commercial gain, he and his bow were conspicuously absent from the shooting line. I cannot find Mr. Morton proving his point at any of the line-ups of the time. Indeed, anyone who shot this strange contraption needed excessive faith in his bow string, since if that broke—wow!

Despite the grandiose claims that invariably support each inventive exercise, from patent collar-stud to steam-driven bicycle, there is little actually new in this world, and hinged bows are no exception; Mr Morton's effort had been preceded by John Spreat's "invention" of 1833, whilst, at least 60 years before, one enterprising bowmaker, helped by the local smith had created a very interesting example which

dates from the early 19th, or even perhaps the 18th century.

Of self-yew, (*taxus baccata*), and constructed originally from a single stave, the overall length of this rare survivor is 184cm (approximately 72").

whilst its girth is 10.5cm (4 1/8") at the base of the handle covering, and 10.2cm at the terminal of the upper hinge strop.

The correctly tapered cross-section, maintained throughout its length, identifies it as a true longbow; the draw weight though is not marked, and because of fragility the bow cannot be drawn, it is therefore not possible to say more than that its girth suggests a very considerable strength compared to today's weapons.

The hinge, shaped and with etched decoration is of ferrous metal (wrought iron) and is secured with a quite complex system of internal pinning. This secures the back hinge strap to a belly strap of decorated brass. Locking of the limbs, a feature omitted by Ephraim Morton in his design, is by a sprung metal clip. Whether this worked if or when the string broke is anyone's guess, but at least a potential safeguard was there.

The handle covering on the bow when it came into the writer's keeping was a coarse light green Hessian, badly decayed, probably through dampness. Various small holes beneath the covering suggest however that this was not original and there is

some evidence for an earlier covering, which may have been of leather. The horn tips, although old in their own right, are recent additions and not original, having been placed on the bow by Charlie Warmingham, bowyer to the Woodmen of Arden in the 1980's.

No arrow pass is fitted, although a

narrow thin brass strip encircles the bow limb at this point and this would have served to prevent wear of the wood.

It's use can only be guessed, but it may have been a gentleman's sporting and recreational weapon. Equally, it can't be said for certain that it is of English or Scottish make, and not of Continental construction although the cross-section and general appearance suggest that it is native to Britain. Examination of the two cross-section halves show it to have originally been fashioned as a self-stave, cut in two for hinging, but whether this was its original purpose, or whether it was modified after some service as a conventional weapon can only be guessed at this stage.

It could be easily carried and for that matter easily hidden if by chance it were used illicitly for poaching! It is a very interesting bow, and the pride of the writer's collection of over 200 longbows. Although I certainly don't recommend its replication, because of technical problems with the hinge, there are always those whose enthusiasm and ability outweighs their sanity and I for one would be curious to see how the thing shot.

Whist there is the outside chance that this hinged bow is not British, but Continental, carriage bows are a feature of French and Belgian bowery and have been for some two centuries at least; however the system their bowmakers adopted was plug and sleeve.

When the French carriage, or take-down bow "l'arc demontable," was originally developed it broke new ground in two areas, both by its easily portable nature, as in the case of the hinged bow above, and also in its method of construction. The metal sleeve meant a nonworking handle, and it thus enjoyed the superior cast of two independently working limbs, an effect

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similar to that achieved by the English "Buchanan Dips," introduced in the mid 1850s by James Buchanan, the London bowyer and erstwhile partner of Thomas Aldred.

Although there is some circumstantial evidence for the use of iron hinged bows in Flanders during the early years of the 19th century, and G.A. Hansard, author of "The Book of Archery" 1841, mentions having seen them, he also describes bows being put together like two pieces of an "angling rod," (a fishing pole) and that perfectly describes "l'arc demontable."

A metal sheath, "la poignee" into which the lower limb was permanently fixed allowed insertion of the upper limb, "a branche supeneuse." The cross section of the bottom end of the upper limb is shaped to fit the sheath allowing as much flexibility, ("elasticity" as John Spreat would have said) as in a conventional bow.

A distinguishing feature of the French and Belgian carriage bows, both then, and now, and one that distinguishes it from its British and American counterpart, is the presence of an arrow rest.

"...beaucoup d'arcs de cette short sont munis at 'a poignee d'une petite plaque ou barre en metal sur laquelle s'appuie et passe 'a fleche et que l'on nomme pour cette raison guide- fleche."

The woods used for Continental bows varied. Bois des iles, bois de fer (ironwood), bois de lance (lancewood), and boise d'amourettes were each used. The back of the multi-laminar bow I

describe, made by Bowyer G. Peerboom of Amblesy (Aisne), France is conventionally of hickory. It is separated from the belly, whose wood is uncertain, but possibly hornbeam by two longitudinal laminations, one of which is probably also hickory.

The terminal of the upper limb, the male joint, is of quite complex multi-laminar construction, and seems to be of ironwood. A feature is its unusual wedge shape, perhaps to allow its replacement in the event of wear and tear.

Dimensions are less than for the earlier hinged bow. Its length is 176cm (69 1/2"), whilst from handle to nock the upper limb is 82.5cm (approximately 32"), and the lower 80cm. The handle is 12cm (4.3/4") in length.

We have no idea how the hinged bow was carried, although a box was favored by John SPREAT for his take-down; the Continental bow however was carried in a leather bow-case, an "etui en cuir." This was a substantial object made of black leather, some 110cm (43") in overall length, fitted with straps and made to be carried over the shoulder. If the example I have is a guide, it was formed from a central metal tube, sheathed in soft leather which runs the length of the case.

On each each side are two leather sheaths, also the full length of the case, and when travelling, the demounted limbs are stowed safely, one to each sheath. The central metal tube is stopped off at 28" and probably held two arrows, all that it will comfortably take. The case

ends in a heavy brass pelta (mushroom shaped spike) perhaps for protective purposes.

Although not marked, the bow is comparatively light, and probably no more than 40 lbs in draw-weight. It would have been used mainly for butt shooting at 50 meters, and this would have taken place in a "jardin d'arc" (bow-garden) at a cardboard target face 75cm square. On this, concentric circles would have been drawn, culminating in a black central spot. Shooting would have involved just two arrows at a time, and for short distance butt shooting the arrows would probably have been fitted with piles (points) of horn in 19th century Continental fashion, rather than in metal.

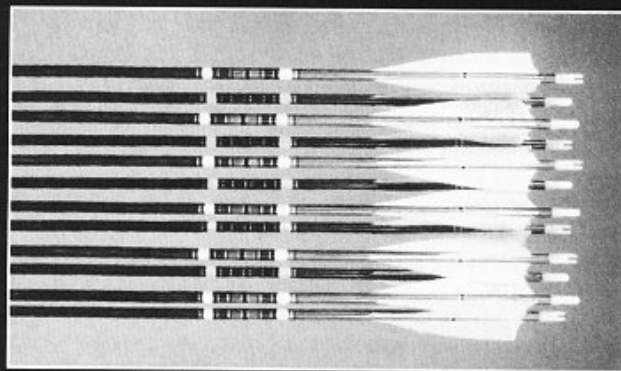
Each of these bows, Ephraim Morton's American patent, the heavy hinged weapon of uncertain ancestry, and the French carriage bow, have something to contribute to our knowledge of early modern archery. It is all too easy for us, from our lofty pinnacle of technical superiority and current convention, to disdain these solutions to problems of earlier days. We must resist the temptation, and accept them for what they are; examples of man's necessity to improvise, for if ingenious simplicity is combined with ingenious invention then from this, viable solutions will ultimately flow.

A passing thought. If necessity is the Mother of invention, should we not look to ingenuity for the Father?



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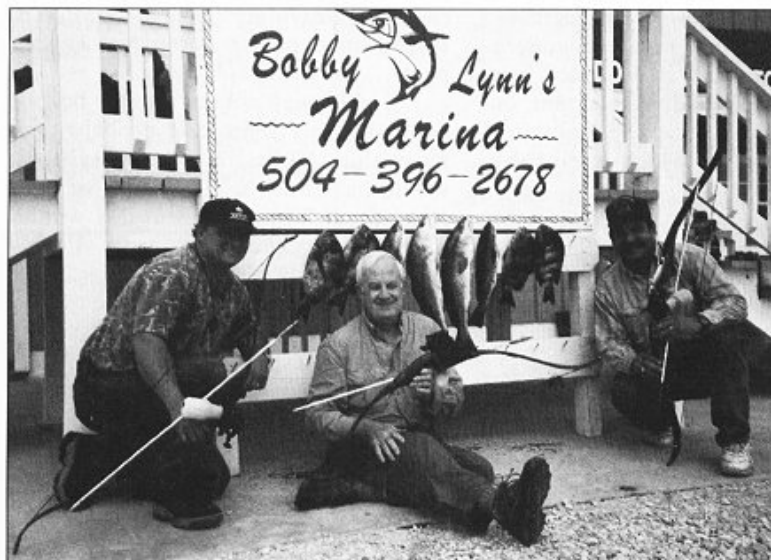


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by Bob Wesley

Bow Fishing Big Reds in Cajun Country

(Left to right) Barry Burke, Bob Wesley, and Don Francois with their bowfishing catch of the evening in Leeville, Louisiana: four reds and four sheep heads.

Don Francois made up an eerie image poised on the bow of Barry Burke's 20-foot flat boat, bow in hand staring down into the salt water of Bayou Lafourche near Grand Isle, Louisiana. Six large multi-watt spotlights mounted near the bow reflected light upwards to cast Don in a primeval pose replicating that of native Indians who once bow hunted red fish by torch light from push pole flat boats.

It was now after 3 a.m., and a special effort was required for me to remain focused while awaiting my turn to occupy the bow-shooting position. Barry Burke stood to Don's right while serving as signal man to confirm that a targeted red fish met the 18-inch Louisiana legal standard as a legal game fish.

Suddenly, Barry nudged Don's shoulder to signal "go for it" as a big red came into view several feet below the water surface. Don smoothly came to full draw and in a flash the glass fish arrow sliced the water to transfix the red.

"Wahoo" came the cheers as Don struggled with the attached arrow line to recover the twenty-inch Red. What a thrill! What a wonderful application of the great sport of traditional bow hunting!

This exciting traditional archery adventure resulted from a hunt donated by Barry Burke to the annual Louisiana Traditional Bowmen Sterling Harrell Memorial Tournament and State Championship being held this year near Pineville, Louisiana late in March. Barry sets up four 3-D deer at unknown distances and for a couple of bucks the traditional archer shoots "Robin Hood" style for this bowhunting adventure. I was lucky this past year to win.

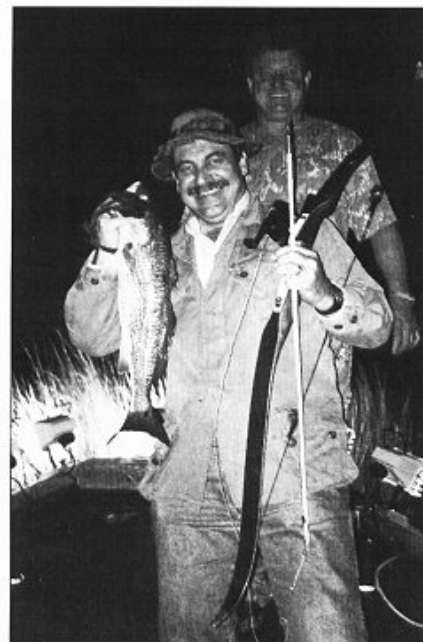
Bowfishing with Barry Burke is one of those special once-in-a-life-time breaks. Barry lives and breathes bowfishing. Over the years he has worked out the details regarding boat outfitting, equipment best suited, method of shooting, aiming, and where the big ones hole up. To see Barry shoot fish is to watch poetry in motion. He explains, "When shooting down into water one has to aim from six to ten inches below what he sees as his visual fish target to compensate for a factor known as parallax. The depth of the fish determines how far below one is required to aim. By trial and error the bowman develops a certain feel and this adds to the sporting challenge of bowfishing."

"Combining smooth instinctive shooting form with aquatic aiming produces a higher percentage of bow kills and a full live well." Learning what type boat, lighting system, archery equipment, and shooting techniques makes this adventure invaluable.

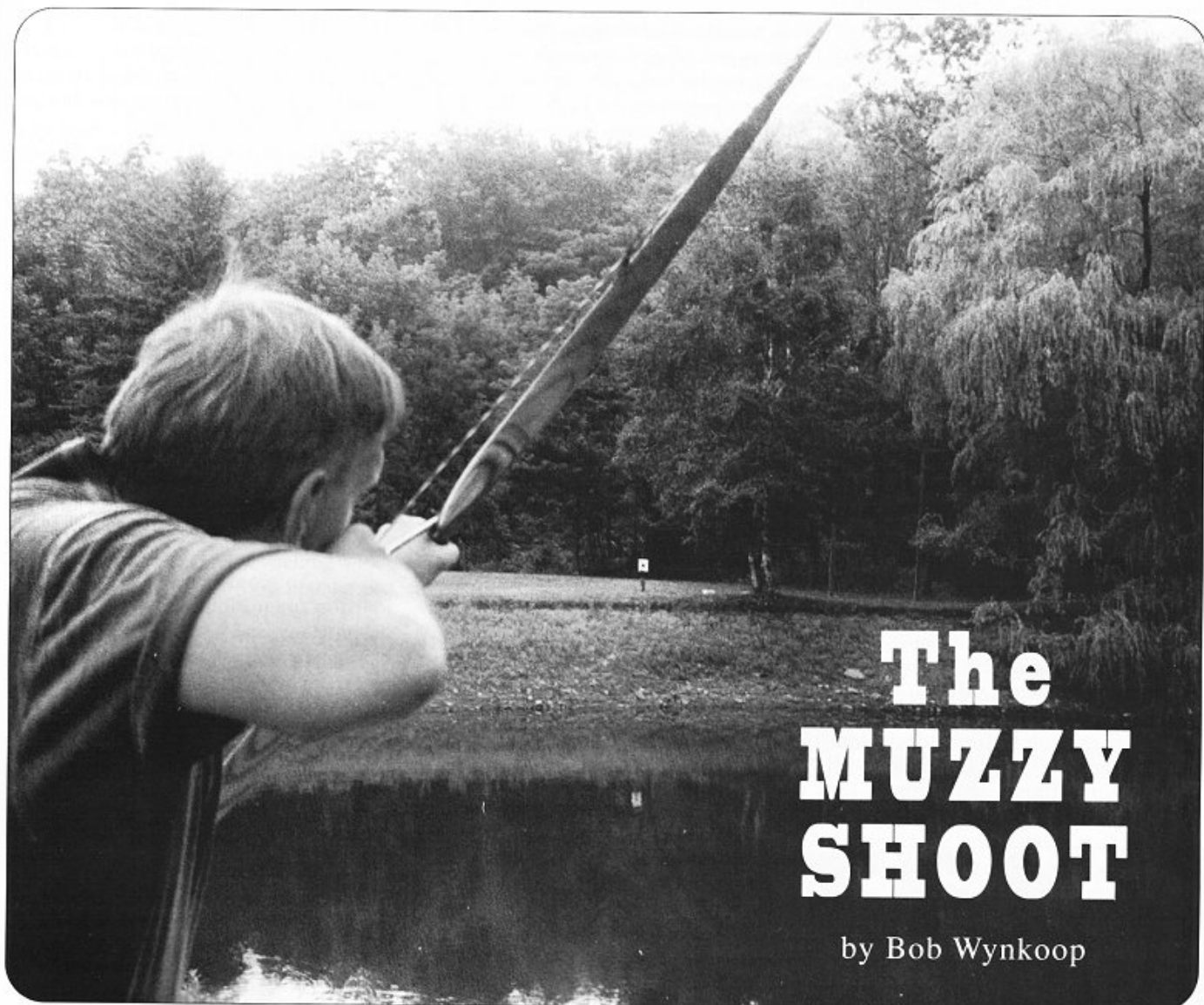
This bowfishing adventure took place within the town limits of Leeville, Louisiana (population 60) near Grand Isle, Louisiana. Bobby Lynn's Marina, the Mecca Lafourche Parish and southeast Louisiana served as host and jumping off point. Nestled on the banks of Bayou Lafourche, it was recently ranked in the top-three saltwater fishing spots in the United States by Saltwater Sportsman Magazine.

Even though bad weather cut our time short, we each nailed a nice red fish and a number of sheepheads. As a learning experience, this adventure was superb. The cheerful fellowship and warm camaraderie shared by all made the experience one of those once-in-a-lifetime memories. For information on the Sterling Harrell Memorial and Louisiana State Championship Tournament contact Troy Laurent (phone 225-627-4595 or e mail: bowmen@bell-south.net). For reservations at the Bobby Lynn Marina phone 504-396-2678).

Get your bow fishing gear and let's go get us a mess of big reds whether they're bitin' or not!



Don Francois with another nice one.



The MUZZY SHOOT

by Bob Wynkoop

For nearly 20 years New York's Catskill Mountains have provided the setting for one of the most unique competitions in all of traditional archery.

For years I'd heard it mentioned at various archery events around the Northeast, but when I first inquired about attending the event, I was told, somewhat dismissively, "It requires an invitation." Naturally, I took that to mean that archers needed to attain a certain skill level in order to earn such an affirmation of their abilities. But that's not the way it is, because the exclusionary nature of the weekend-long competition stems from the fact that it's as close to a traditional archery family reunion as you will find anywhere in the country. Getting an invitation is really a matter of knowing someone who is part of that "family." The simple truth is that no one is excluded and archers of all skill levels are there.

What started as a small gathering of friends in 1981 has grown to over 130 competitors from all over the Northeast; some coming from as far away as Michigan and Ontario. Louis Tweddle started coming with his son in 1997. "I heard about this shoot from a guy at the IBO Worlds," said

Louis, a tournament finalist in 1998. "I absolutely love it. It's a 500 mile drive from my home but we come every year."

I got my first invitation in 1994 and, being the practical sort, I mapped out the most direct route—120 miles of back roads through Connecticut and across the Hudson River at Kingston. I'm sure it would have been a wonderfully bucolic drive were it not for a pelting rainstorm that dogged me from the moment I left work that Friday evening. Three hours later I'd left the flatlands behind as I navigated the mountain darkness in the continuing downpour. A trip never seems so far as when you don't know where you're going. I scrutinized each bit of civilization as evidence I was still following my planned route. Eventually each new incline of the road had the needle on my fuel gauge bouncing on empty and I prayed for an open gas station to be around the next bend. No such luck. Thankfully I rolled into my motel just as the gasoline and raindrops were both giving out. The next day I learned that getting an invitation is one thing, but finding your way to the event is quite another. Each morning of the tournament caravans of cars line up as they leave the few breakfast

places in the charming village of Lexington. It's wise to follow one of the event veterans up from town; something I still do five years later. Some of the roads, if they qualify as such, don't even appear on the map. The small signs which direct you at each critical point along the way read simply, "To The Muzzy."

Actually, it is officially known as the John Musacchia Annual Invitational Stump Shoot, named in memory of the man who originated the event and purchased the property where it has always been held. John was a successful New York restaurateur and an avid traditional archer who was inducted into the Bowhunting Hall of Fame. He also was the inventor of the famous Muzzy broadhead which his children, Michele and John Jr. continue to produce as chiefs of Muzzy Products Corporation in Cartersville Georgia.

After he retired and bought the property in upstate New York, John worked to devise a competitive game which would simulate difficult hunting situations and test an archers shot making abilities under stressful circumstances. The Muzzy, as it's devotees call it, was born. Expanded through the years, it's a head-banging, ego-deflating series of four character-building courses. Each is made up of fourteen shots which have everyone scramble up, over, around, and down the wooded hills and open areas of the estate's 430 acres.

The object of the game is really pretty simple—knock down more targets than your competitor and keep doing it until you are the only one left on the board at the end of the weekend. Men and women compete separately in either the longbow or recurve division, and the class champs shoot it out at the end for the big prize. You might say it's traditional archery's answer to basketball's March Madness. Any type of arrow can be used but no stabilizers, sights, rests, or releases are allowed. Judo points or Grasshopper heads are required as they help keep things moving by minimizing the time needed to find errant arrows.

Since the event is a series of one-on-one shoot outs, it's necessary to seed the entrants. So, first thing Saturday morning, everyone completes a 28 target course in order to tally the total knock downs for each competitor. Shooters with high scores get seeded evenly along the ladder chart so that they won't necessarily knock each other out in the first

few rounds. Completing the morning courses and tabulating everything takes a while, but by noon the ladder challenge has been posted on the barn wall and the individual competitions are set to begin.

Bemoaned anticipation of impending fates can be heard amid the crush of people trying to see who is pitted against whom. Like a line from Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, one guy last year was heard to say, "Who is that guy?" as he read the name of the person he was to shoot against. A newcomer is always reason for some speculation and a little angst among the veterans, especially if he received a high seed.

As the afternoon progresses everyone waits anxiously to hear their next pairing called by the starter. There is definitely a little gamesmanship that goes on behind the scene during the down time between rounds. As more are eliminated, regional groups from New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New York begin to huddle in support of "their guy."

Reputations are discussed in whispers and potential opponents are sized up on the practice line. More than one talented competitor has blown an opening shot through sheer nerves or intimidation. Keeping your cool is all important. No one wants to seem nervous but, believe me, they all are, and that's because of the element of single elimination. A loss in the first round sends a shooter to the consolation "B" league. Of course, half the original field finds themselves there after just the first round. One loss in the "B" league sends a competitor to the "C" league to slug it out. However, if a competitor is so unlucky as to win his first two rounds followed by a loss, he is all done with competition for that year. It's too late for him to get into one of the consolation leagues.

Essentially the game is to knock a hard foam block off its perch. Depending on the distance to be shot, either a 5" x 5" or 8" x 10" block

is used. They are attached with a Velcro pad on the bottom edge. Each elimination round is made up of fourteen total possible points with the targets shot in rotation.

Shooter A goes first on all odd numbered targets and shooter B on the even numbers. In turn, each competitor is given a maximum of two alternating attempts to knock down any standing target. If a block is knocked down, one point is scored for that shooter. However, if all the shots are missed then that target is a zero and the shooters move on. Because of the limited number of targets, it can be nerve wracking to miss a target and watch as your opponent gets the point with his next shot, especially if he's up first on the very next target. You can suddenly find yourself down three and wishing you had read that book on Zen.

To score a point the rule states that the foam block must be knocked down. Hoots and howls can be heard all day long as targets are struck but refuse to fall or unexpectedly go down as a

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result of a centered hit on the post below. Many of the shot set ups are insidiously difficult or incredibly deceptive. Through the years several have acquired names like "Sophie's Revenge," "Ron's little pissar," and "The Bitch."

"Some guys have been coming here for ten years and have never knocked down a particular target," said David Volz of Glastonbury, CT. "It sort of becomes their personal nemesis." One unforgettable target which I like to call "flipping the bird," because of the reaction it tempts me to, sits uphill at about 40 yards. The archer must sit in a pit blind and shoot up slope at a 45 degree angle. Another makes you stretch out and split the six inch gap down through a dozen trees. Perhaps the toughest, though, is the impossible "bedded buck" which requires a perfect crouching shot under a fallen log and over a boulder at 15 yards. "I don't think I've ever seen anyone make that particular shot," remarked ETAR organizer Mike Knefley of Coudersport, PA.

Saturday's competition is suspended by around 6:00 p.m. in order to get ready for the highlight of the weekend, the catered dinner under the tent. Everything is set up on the expansive lawn of the estate, providing spectacular twilight views to the east. Barbara Musacchia, the family matriarch, seems to take a personal pride in the dinner feast. She smiles easily as she serves up Cornish game hens and laughs with old friends coming through the line. The food is fabulous and there is always enough for seconds and thirds. When they roll out the dessert buffet, you would think you were in Manhattan instead of the Catskills, but it's all the creation of longtime family friend Dolores Bushemi. No one refuses dessert at this outing!

On Sunday the competition gets a little hotter as the better archers continue moving to the top of the ladder. Crowds begin to follow the shooters as it gets down to the final rounds. Many of those who have been eliminated from the competition join up in small groups and shoot the courses for fun. Others find their way to one of the novelty events or just catch up with friends relaxing in the sun while vendors busily sell arrows to those who have found the courses particularly unforgiving. Five time Muzzy champion Tasos Gavrilis, speculated, "more targets are missed

than hit over the weekend and the set ups take a pretty big toll on arrows. Anyone who has been here once will definitely remember to bring a full quiver next time." It's not at all unusual to have lost or destroyed more than a dozen arrows over the weekend.

By early afternoon the ladder competition is complete and the winners of the longbow and recurve classes are announced. For the final round the number of targets is expanded to twenty eight. Head organizer Michele Crummins keeps the official tally as a crowd of spectators follows the action through the woods. John Jr. announces the scores after every few targets which tends to put more pressure on the finalists, which, of course, is part of the game. As expected, the crowd is equally divided, tending more to root for the longbow or recurve class, rather than for the individuals caught up in the struggle. Like any competition, the atmosphere can be intense, but sportsmanship is always the watchword of the day. The ultimate winner has bragging rights until the following year and receives a nice cash prize along with a trophy. Oh yes, I'm happy to report the longbow class came out on top in 1999—congratulations to Todd Hathaway.

A giant raffle drawing rounded out last year's event as friends said their good byes and worked through the crowd one last time. Most will return in 2000. Some will bring a friend or a child and the tradition will continue. "It's amazing," said Michele. "We get calls six months in advance with people wanting to make sure of the dates so they can plan their family vacation to include this." There were 136 participants in 1999 and it just keeps getting bigger. "I don't know how many more people we can accommodate," said Michele. "We seemed to handle this crowd just fine so we'll have to see what next year brings."

The Musacchia family has been remarkably generous through the years in continuing to host the stump shoot. It is clearly a labor of love for them and they have pledged to keep it going as a memorial to the man that started it all. Anyone interested in the Muzzy shoot for 2000 is welcome to contact Michele Crummins at Muzzy Products by calling 770-387-9300. It's usually held the second weekend in August. Just remember to bring plenty of arrows and save room for dessert.



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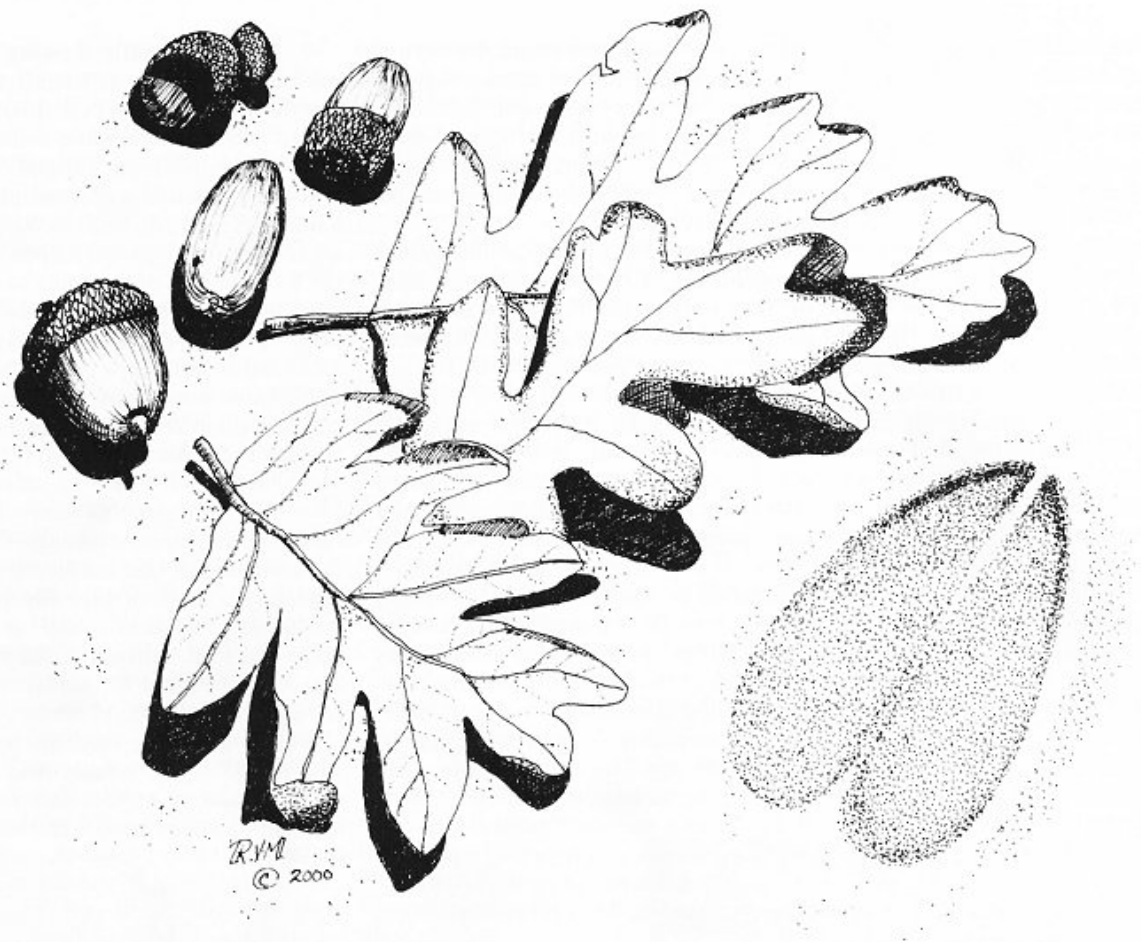


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The Connection

By Terry Jamieson

*T*he question of why we hunt has been thrown at me countless times through life. I have always tried the same answer in order to satisfy those minds whose cynicism has proved to erode the foundation of our sport over the years. I would always state that I hunt so that I can feel connected to the outdoors, or I hunt so that I can help control wildlife populations, and preserve the environment. I hunt so that my hard-earned dollars are spent on fees that in turn pay for the sound management of fish and game. These answers never seemed to silence any critics I encountered, or perhaps it served to validate to them that I really did not have any profound reason to take life.

I have been shooting a recurve bow since my youth, and the instrument has always had a sort of mystical grip on my imagination. Though I have hunted mostly with firearms, occasionally I would stalk the forests of my heart in search of a higher existence. Archery was something of a romance, but not yet a passion. I have always shot instinctively with a

rather decent talent of doing so, but never had I taken hunting seriously. It was always a gun deer tag, and a few days in the field with a multitude of people in orange, and violently confused animals jolted from the natural serenity by this sudden influx of warriors.

Quite recently a close friend introduced me to 400 acres of private Iowa farmland, and a couple of solid stands overlooking the agriculture. Being an avid fly fisherman, I had managed to introduce my friend to the calm beauty of the sport, and in turn he had promised I would feel that same calm when bowhunting. I can recall his facial expressions while holding a sparkling rainbow trout in his hand, or his stern concentration as he focused on the tiny fly floating in the current. I truly felt as though I had introduced him to a force only understood by those who sought it out.

On the private Iowa farmland I began daily vigils hoping for a shot at a whitetail, either buck or doe because I was searching for that force, not a trophy by any other persons

standards, but a moment of suspension above the law of man and quite removed from my real world stress, and pains. Each day I was fortunate enough to have an absolute theater seat for the natural plays hosted by the creatures of God. Wildlife was constantly around my stand in a big oak tree next to the beans, and I never felt boredom.

It was close to dark on the fourth day when a group of does stepped

into the field to feed.

Gradually they meandered

in my direction as the

wind rested

in perfect calm. Not a leaf

stirred as each animal

fed innocently beneath the fading sunlight. One doe particularly ventured into my being. She had the nervousness and stealth that made the experience seem almost tense with anticipation.

Her steps were deliberate with no sound at all in the dry bean field. The group followed her lead, and a few more steps would put them at 10 yards, and in the open. I could see her eyes. I could hear her breath. I watched her movements as though she were a dancer. I felt her presence as if she were a haunting spirit in a large beautiful garden. There she stood at 10 yards in the open as I came to full draw and released. I do not remember aiming at all, but only fixing my eyes on her lovely coat. I seemed to direct the arrow into her body more than I shot it. It struck with thunder and anchored her

right there. Immediately I looked into heaven and asked God to take her life. He did in seconds.

My heart was not pounding out of control, and I was not taken by buck fever. For some reason it was an experience that seemed to cause the greatest calm a person can feel. The fact that I did this with a recurve bow, and cedar arrow, and shot the weapon with my mind only fueled the perfection of the moment. Suddenly I noticed the wind stir. The sun was almost gone for the day. The other deer had received an education in survival, and pranced away to the solace of the deep forest of hardwoods to the north.

Standing next to her body I came to the powerful realization as to why I hunt. The very basis of our existence is survival. We have become certain in this day and age that our world is sound from technological advances, and cultural enhancement. Lost in this is the true essence of living. The simple things. Once upon a time we were forced to find survival in outdoors, and now we shop for it in a grocery store or mall. Harvesting that doe reduced me to a moment of pure detachment from the modern world. I felt as though she was a gift from God, and I had only enhanced the day by understanding this concept. A force of very real spiritual security had blanketed my heart. Hunting is good because I found a connection with an unseen perfection that is not found in a world so full of flaws. The animal, the trees, the sunlight, the weapon—are all perfect. The experience was perfect.

Instinct is the soul of hunting. With it we are able to grasp things that do not exist with people who live their lives waiting for a hand out, or perhaps a spiritual hand out as well. This is the connection of hunting. This is the connection I made. Thank God for hunting with a bow. Thank God for that animal. Thank God for the connection.

ROBERT V. MARTIN

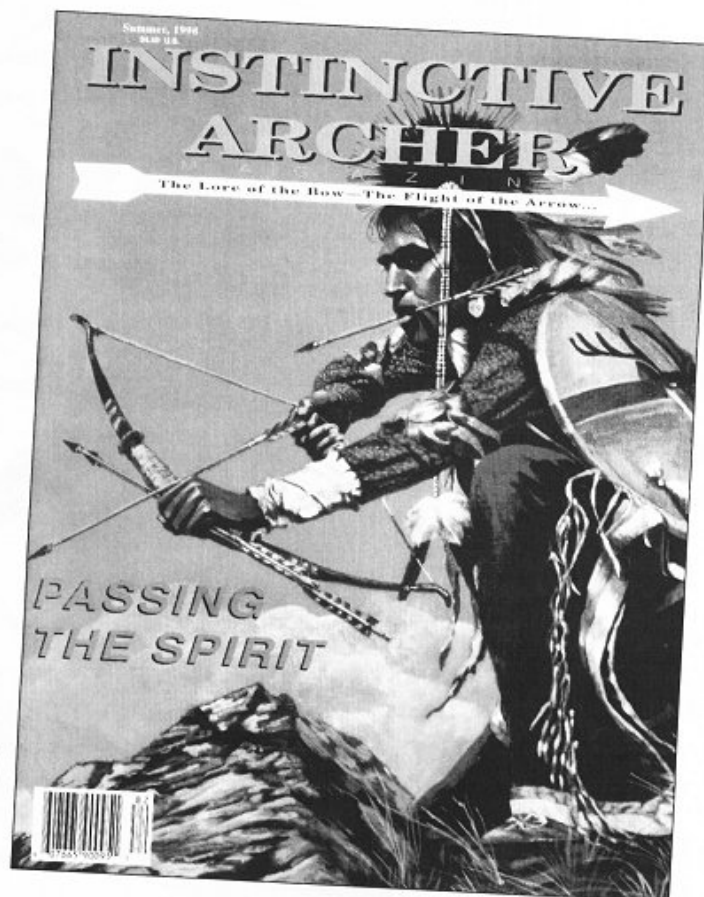
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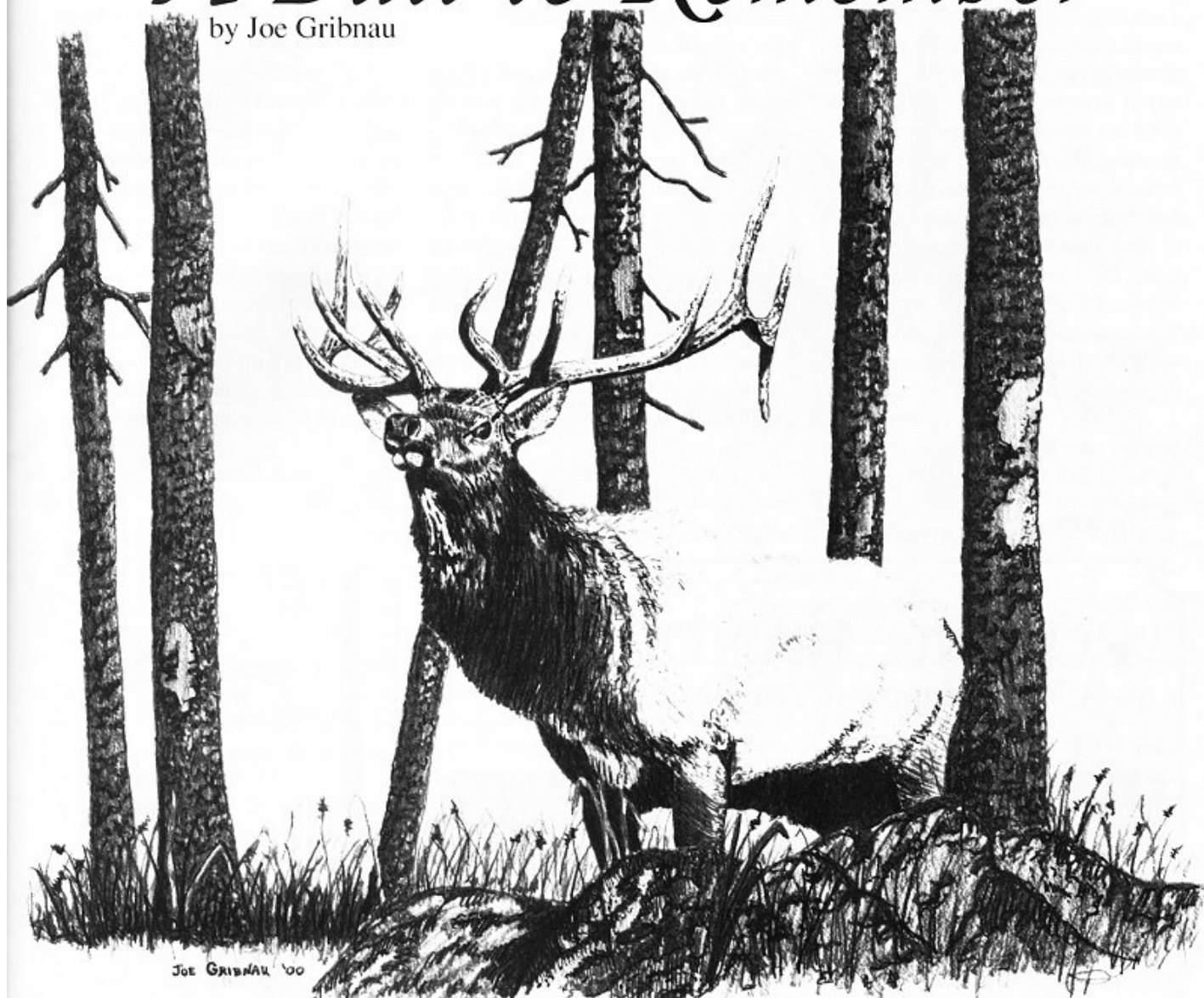
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LORE: A BODY OF WISDOM OR KNOWLEDGE . . . ESPECIALLY WHEN IT IS OF A TRADITIONAL NATURE.

A Bull to Remember

by Joe Gribnau



Sitting on a grass-covered hillside, deep in the Little Belt mountains of Montana, is when we first noticed the elk. A cow stood on the opposite ridge, and nudged up against her, a spike, both seemingly to appear from no where. Typical in the elk world. Dave and I were content to finish eating lunch, not in a hurry to pursue the cow or the spike. We didn't want this day to rush by. We didn't want this day to end.

As the two elk fed up the draw, a light snow began to fall, bringing about a breathless quiet. The mountains around

us disappeared in a white veil, hidden, but ominously there. The sudden flurry held no threat, just a hint to the coming months when big snows forced you out of the mountains and back into the civilized world. This was just a tease, but it did something to the elk.

Up the ridge, on a lodgepole flat, elk materialized from the timber. Two raghorns pushed each other around, energized by the drop in temperature, feeling the beckoning call that haunts and sometimes eludes these bulls. We watched

through our binoculars. The silent snow continued, unhurried by our sudden interest in the opposite ridge, each flake falling like a down feather, quiet, peaceful.

As we packed our lunch away, a bull bugled from the head of the draw, maybe even over the top, the eerie call shattering our silent world. It was hard to tell exactly where the bugle came from; but the volume was deep and rich, sounding like a big bull. In a matter of minutes, the challenge was answered by five different bulls, five different voices of the mountains, voices not heard by many. Dave and I looked at each other surprised and smiling. We were lucky. We were outsiders looking into another world. Without a sound, we eased into the world of elk.

This September was unlike any other, at least for me. We were miles into the Little Belts, setting up camp for the upcoming rifle season. Camp consisted of a large canvas cook tent, complete

with a frame made of small lodgepole pine, a tent for us and the extra gear needed to run the camp, and three smaller tents for the "dudes." We built a hitching rail and a coral for the horses. We cut firewood and split kindling. And most importantly, we built an outhouse, complete with a real toilet seat.

This area was a hotspot for big mulies and the elk that settled into the drainage usually contained large bulls. I knew this for a fact from sitting in Harold's kitchen, staring up at the many elk antlers adorning the walls of his home. In order to reach camp, you checked in with Harold and registered, which meant signing your name and hunting license number to a guest book. It was his property we passed through and also Harold's way of knowing who was down the creek if there was any trouble.

We always talked long and hard about hunting before venturing the rut-filled road to camp. Mostly, Harold

talked. I learned it was a given, a ritual of respect and friendship. Harold was older, stove-up from hard work and riding too many horses, living the Montana ranch-life of working cows. Harold welcomed our company and we welcomed his stories. He was a whitetail hunter, and shot an occasional elk, though he wouldn't have anything to do with mulies. The archway of whitetail antlers jutting over the gate to his home proved he didn't lie, and that he was a good hunter. Said he kept the "big ones" in the barn. I never did get to see the "big ones," but I believed him.

From where he sat he could look out the kitchen window to the open hillside above his ranch house. A battered coffee cup rested on the table, worn about as as the weathered hands that held it, draining the heat from the cup.

"Had a horse go bad," he said through an ageless grin. "Walked it up on the hillside before shooting it."

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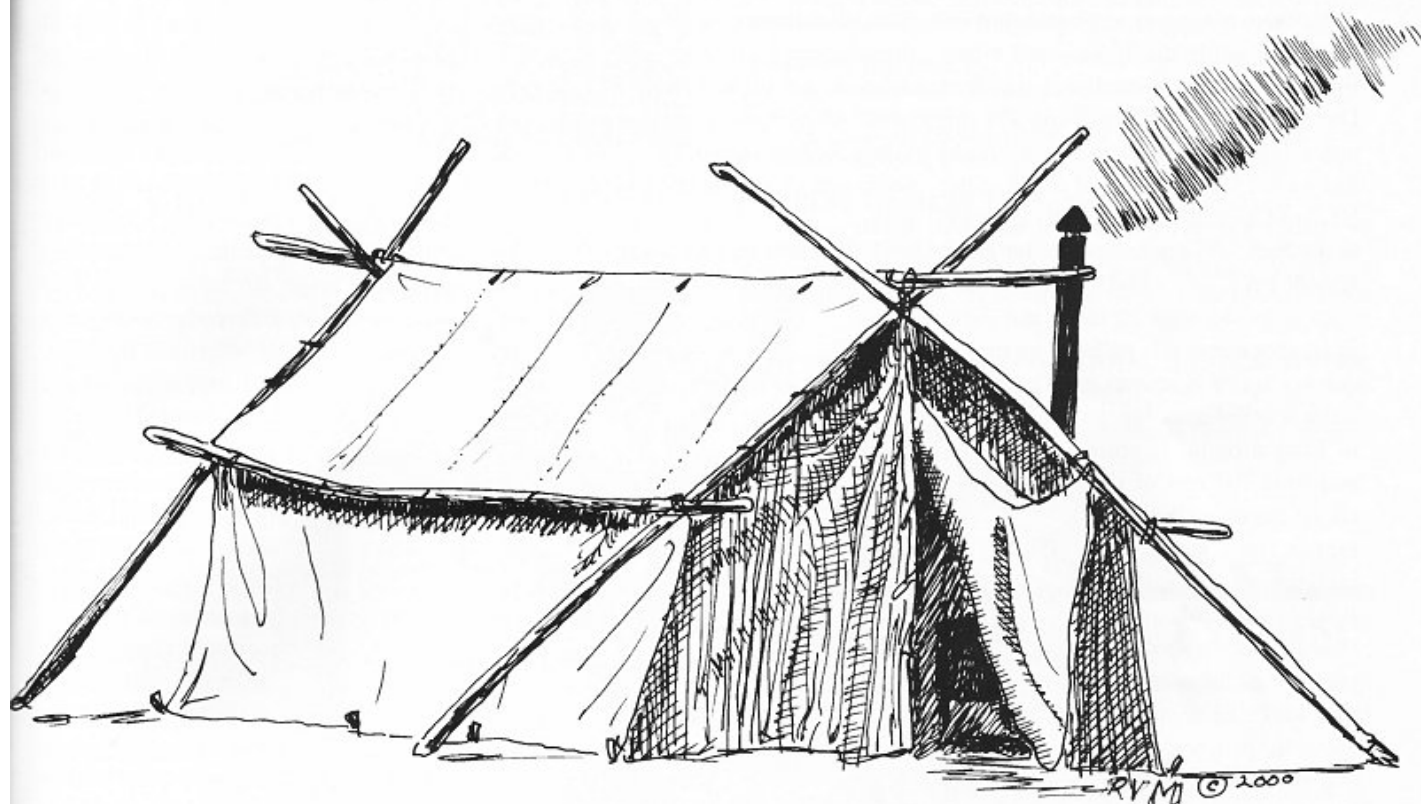
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Dave and I both scanned through the window to a dark lump.

"That way I can shoot the coyotes when they come in. Maybe even get a bear." He nodded at the rifle in the corner of the kitchen. We shook our heads in silence, returning the grin.

I sat back in my chair and looked again to the wall, dwarfed beneath the mount of a top-50 Boone and Crocket bull. Somewhere on this mountain, I silently hoped a relative of this bull was waiting for me, even a small one. We finished our coffee, said goodbye, and eyed the rainbow of white-tail antlers on our way back to the truck.

Setting up camp was a necessity for the upcoming rifle season, but also an opportunity to hunt. There were no clients booked for archery season so we had the place to ourselves. Gripped in our hands were new Bear Custom Kodiak take-down recurves. The very bow itself spoke of new beginnings: my friendship with Dave, traditional

archery, and the Little Belts.

The newness hadn't worn off from the months of practicing during the summer. Everything around me was startlingly new. That opening morning we worked back up the creek from camp, walking the bench and looking for white-tails near the beaver ponds. From the bench you could glass a large part of the creek bottom. At the mouth of the last draw, running into the creek, we turned uphill and pushed into the timber. The lodgepole faded the overcast morning light to solemn gray, the color of mule deer. The day was ours and we hunted slowly, not rushed, not in a hurry to see what was over the next ridge. I suppose that's why we found the elk in the first place.

"More elk," Dave said, pointing with the tip of his recurve. Near the tributary creek, elk wove in and-out of the timber, sleek, tan bodies mixed with lodgepole pine. Cows and calves side-hilled up the draw as we worked down

the ridge, trying to not hurry or be seen, and at the same time, trying not to fall behind the moving elk. They were everywhere and soon we were part of the herd, moving like shadows. Elk passed below us, nearer the creek, again, cows and calves, not a big bull like Harold's. They were close enough for a good shot but we still had plenty of time, knowing several bulls were just ahead.

However, there are times when decisions are put to the test, and such was this time. As we followed the elk, another spike, not more than 15 yards away appeared, staring wild-eyed at two young bowhunters, all three inexperienced, but in different ways.

The spike was broadside and doing its best to figure out exactly what we were. I looked at Dave with the question of, "Are you going to shoot?" It never occurred to me to take the shot, it was his shot, he taught me everything about bow hunting. However, I knew he wanted a bigger bull, but any elk with a

bow was an accomplishment. He slid an arrow from his quiver and knocked it on the string while the spike stood silent like the quiet snow earlier. I watched Dave come to full draw and set the arrow into motion. I watched the flight and waited for the sight and sound of the hit, and I watched the arrow fly over the bull's back, disappearing into the grayness of trees. The spike took a few nervous steps, its muscles tense and tight, as another arrow was pulled from the quiver. But, it wasn't to be. The spike was gone, too uncertain to hang around. It bolted and took the rest of the elk up the draw. We collected Dave's arrow, resharpened the old Bear broadhead, and talked about the shot. I can still see the eyes of that spike as it stood above us: piercing, wild, and wondering. We were intruders into its world.

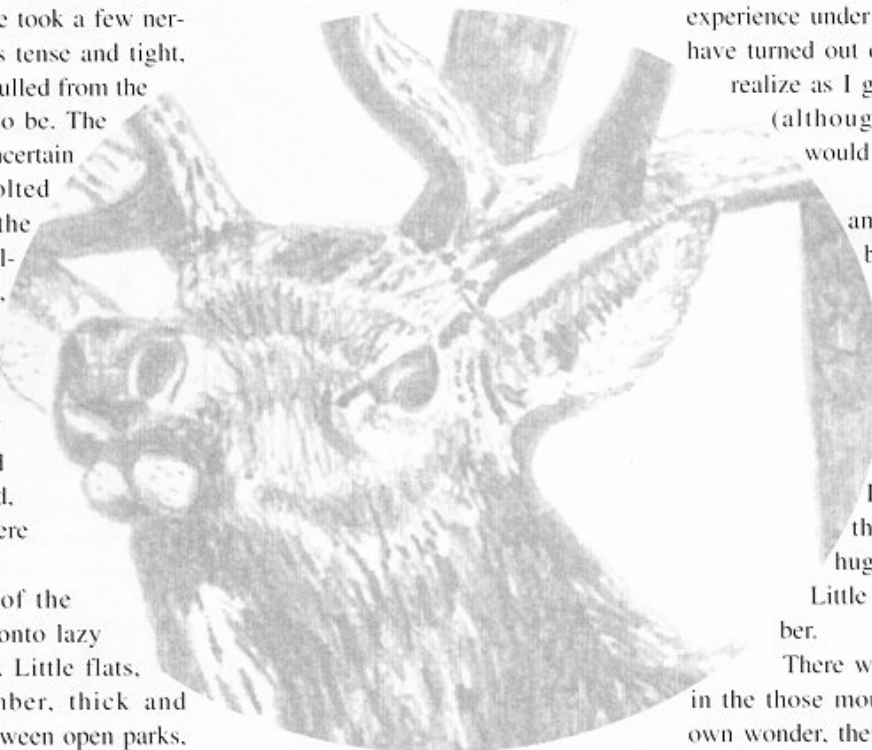
At the head of the draw, we topped out onto lazy benches of lodgepole. Little flats, with pockets of timber, thick and twisted, alternating between open parks, rich with dried grass, kept our attention as we hunted further into the mountains.

Nearing one small park, we saw a bedded cow, facing us, alert but not alarmed. After a moment of eye contact, she stood and walked off into the timber. We continued along the bottom of the park and dropped into a gully. The image still burns deep inside. I can recall the details, the sights, the colors, the smell as we worked our way undetected. The feelings and emotions are forever with me.

In the park stood a whitetail and a mule deer doe. Elk were in the timber on the up-hill side of the park, moving between light and shadows. That's when he showed up. From deep in the timber, a bull walked forth, his rack swaying side to side with six ivory-tipped points colored deep black at the

base. He was a magnificent bull—high, wide, and handsome, a true monarch of the mountains. He stood in the middle of the park, not more than fifty yards away as we sat motionless, hiding in the gully. When the bull turned, Dave snuck up the bank and crouched his way across the park.

There was no cover, only a little



juniper bush in the middle, which he did his best to hide behind. At six feet four inches, that was an accomplishment in and of itself. The bull was walking away, backs towards his cows, providing only a rear-end shot, not one we would take, not one we would even consider. Dave turned and motioned for me to bugle as the bull made the timber. Bugle, hell I could hardly breath. How was I supposed to produce enough oxygen to bugle? He looked at me again, which I took to be a little more serious. What came out of my grunt tube was more closely related to the sound a seal might make, a dying seal, at best. It wasn't a bugle, it wasn't even close to a poor attempt. The bull never looked back and disappeared into the timber as elk so easily do, gone as fast as he had appeared.

Dave didn't cuss me out for my

effort. He was too excited. His eyes, like the spike's, were piercing, wild, and wondering. We had run into a bigger relative of Harold's bull, though only for a brief moment.

There are days when I dream of reliving that moment. I think about hiding in the gully with Dave, this time with many more years of elk-hunting experience under our belts. Things may have turned out differently, not better I realize as I get older, just different. (although I know the bugle would have sounded better.)

I have never seen another bull, alive, that big. And, for all I know, it may not have been as big as it seemed. However, my memory will cling to that belief, and I'll still remember the look on Dave's face. I'll relive that grassy park with a huge six-point bull of the Little Belts. A bull to remember.

There were several more years in the those mountains that hold their own wonder, their own story, saved for another day. Saved for another chapter. So, for now, I'll cling to the silent snow, cold and wet on my face, the challenging cry of six different bulls in a hidden lodgepole draw, and the true monarch of the mountains, so big, so powerful. A bull Harold would have been proud to put on his wall.

And, I'll cling to the memories Dave and I built, together, wandering the ridges and draws of the Little Belts with our new recurves, wandering the path of friendship and the common thread of a love for archery and hunting. It's hard to put into words all the feelings and emotions wrapped up in a memory, wrapped up in a land as great as Montana and a friend like Dave. It's a world one can only experience in person—and forever in your dreams.



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 - **FLIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS**, hosted by the United States National Archery Asso. and Fita Star, at The Bonneville Flight Range. Wendover, Utah. August 25, 26, 27, 2000. Call Rulon I. Hancock. (801)467-3084, rhancock@uswest.net
 - The 18th Annual **NORTH AMERICAN LONGBOW SAFARI**. Sponsored by the Traditional Archers of Oregon, July 1 & 2, 2000. Brownsville OR. Call Steve Savage (541)688-0493. Pre-Registration is required. Also, there will be a John Strunk Primitive Bowmaking Class, June 26 thru 29, 2000. Call John Strunk (503) 842-4944.
 - **ELKHORN ARCHERS' 3RD ANNUAL TRADITIONAL GATHERING**, May 20 & 21, 2000. Pilcher Creek Elk Feeding Station, North Powder Oregon. Call Chuck Buchanan at (541) 877-2348 elfive@eoni.com. Or contact Terry Everson at (541) 523-5712 severson@oregontrail.net
 - **IDAHO STATE TRADITIONAL RENDEZVOUS**, Hosted by the Idaho Traditional Bowhunters, June 17 & 18, 2000, High Valley Road. Call Chris Tibbetts (208) 884-1580 lngbows4me@aol.com. Or see idahoarchery.com
 - **SHOOT THE ENGLISH LONGBOW IN THE U.S.! BRITISH LONGBOW SOCIETY—2000 U.S. SHOOT SCHEDULE.**
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*With
Bob Martin*

An integral part of mine and my friend's outdoor experience has involved two opposing influences. One is identified as the "vortex" and the other has been identified as the "non-standard solution." In order to solve the many problems we are faced with in our quests for adventure we have developed a process which is free-form and unencumbered by the ordinary bounds of the thought process.

We have determined through a long series of experiments and field tests that the only way to positively identify the pending doom of the vortex is in hindsight. You see, the vortex and the non-standard solution are initially indiscernible. Both will seem like excellent ideas in theory, but lurking unseen in the shadows is a "black-hole" with a gravitational pull able to suck its hapless victim mercilessly to its center and there meet his fate.

The most unpleasant part of falling prey to a vortex is what we call the "point of no return" or the "event horizon." This significant detail describes that singular moment when you realize you have made a serious miscalculation, but you are now helpless to stop the momentum as you are swept away in the ensuing chaos.

For example, you find yourself in the middle of the dark of night pulling a horse trailer up a goat path in a long-box, super-cab 4x4 pickup, now in low range, low gear, as your tires scratch for a foot-hold on the talus slope which the US Geological Survey map identifies as an "improved" road. The empty inky blackness of a bottomless chasm yawns endlessly off the passenger's side of the vehicle. As you catch glimpses of the "road" in the bouncing headlights which are mostly pointing at the empty black sky at a 45 degree angle, you realize you can't turn around, you can't back down. You perceive you've reached the "point of no return" and find there is no turning back. The only thought more terrifying is knowing that if you make it "safely" to the top, your only alternative will be to return the way you have come!

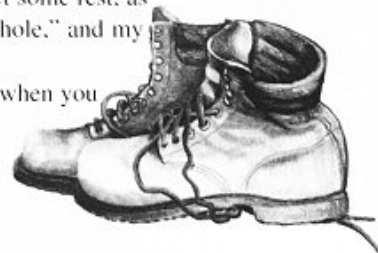
How did this happen? In hind-sight the pieces quickly snap into place: The map shows a road...; "my buddy who hunted here last year told me it was great...;" the sign pointed where?...; the road started out good but...; your new USGS topo map is metric...; "in 1969 this was a good road"... of such things are vortexes made.

The non-standard solution differentiates itself from the vortex in that it is an idea or plan that actually works. The non-standard approach must always be free of troublesome details like—the obvious—and for some strange reason seems to be associated with a lack of greenbacks at some level.

As part of our "non-standard solution" of adopting the use of llamas as pack animals, we are able to forgo hauling a horse trailer. The llamas hop in the back of our pickups, which are equipped with small stock racks, and there ride along blissfully. Now you have a far more maneuverable vehicle and are able to turn around (sometimes) on narrow mountain roads, thus preventing premature discovery of the "point of no return." However, an interesting phenomenon now occurs. You begin to tackle more difficult terrain and rely on increased maneuverability to get further up the goat path than you would have ever gone with a horse trailer in tow (on purpose). Significantly, now the "point of no return" has moved to a more rugged and nasty location in what appears to be a deliberate attempt to inflict retribution for trying to outsmart the vortex. It sometimes takes days to find it.

So it behooves you to exercise "chess-like" strategy when trying to out-fox disaster. Like keeping your pack stock in top shape! Which reminds me, I need to go feed and water the llamas. Vortex #1 looks like he wants some hay and Vortex #2 is hanging around the water trough. And I need to get some rest, as I go back to my day job tomorrow so I can pay the mortgage on the "black hole," and my "hind-sight" says she has dinner on the table.

So, until next time, I hope all your vortexes have a "non-standard solution" when you reach the "point of no return" on the side trail to adventure.





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