

Longbows & Recurves

TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTING AT ITS BEST



Winter 1996-97
Volume 1, Number 1

PREMIERE ISSUE

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Number 1

LONGBOWS & RECURVES

TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTING AT ITS BEST



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Howard Hill's
Childhood Dream

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➤ Southern Review
➤ A Parting Shot

EDITOR'S LETTER



Premiere Flight

I just returned from a weekend out in the woods with my son and my bow, and I realize again how fortunate I am to have a hobby that my entire family can enjoy together. With so much emphasis today on "having and getting," it is refreshing to have a recreation as satisfying as archery, bowhunting, and camping in the outdoors.

That is the premise of **Longbows & Recurves**™ and the reason it has been established. Each issue we hope to bring the same satisfaction in reading about this great sport as you get from actually pulling the bowstring.

One of our regular columns will be "Southern Review," which brings bowhunting news from around the South. As bowhunters, we listen to the wisdom of elders, glean what is useful, and obey the laws, but we like to do things our way. Responsibilities come with this freedom: encouraging young archers, supporting all aspects and forms of archery so that we will have a voice in the legislative process, and voting. Otherwise, we have no right to complain when questionable laws are passed.

Bob Wesley, in his regular column, shares some of his insights about life in "From the Whisperin' Pines," while my wife, Claire, gives some ideas for delicious meals in her "Wild Game Recipes."

This issue, Jerry Hill, a seasoned bowyer and hunter, tells us in "Inside..." more about his great-uncle, Howard Hill, considered by many to be the world's greatest archer.

Don Francois writes "Living Arrows" about the relationship between a father and son and the part that bowhunting has played in Rhett's road to manhood. The very fabric of our society depends on the strength of the family, and while we alone cannot change the culture, we can certainly get our own houses in order.

In "Pigs in Paradise," Matt Schuster puts into words the excitement of hunting wild boars with friends in Paradise, his south Georgia hunting club, while Sam Fadala examines a small but useful part of archery tackle in his article, "Glove or Tab? Which is for You?" We like a little fiction thrown in as leavening and hope you will enjoy "The Bows of Hiawatha."

This publication gives me the opportunity to talk to some very genuine people who love the bow and arrow, the camaraderie, and the journey that life holds for us. Paul Sparks, Wally Renner, and Vince Guidroz are some of those people and have made my life a little more enjoyable the past few months. I look forward to meeting many of our readers.

Enjoy the magazine and pass it along to a friend.

Mike

Michael K. Stanley
Editor

Longbows & Recurves

TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTING AT ITS BEST

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Thanks to all of our friends.

DEPARTMENTS

FROM THE WHISPERIN' PINES—Bob Wesley

SOUTHERN REVIEW—Don Francois

WILD GAME RECIPES—Claire W. Stanley

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Longbows & Recurves™

TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTING AT ITS BEST

Winter 1996-97

Volume 1, Number 1

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Photograph by Ernie Seneca



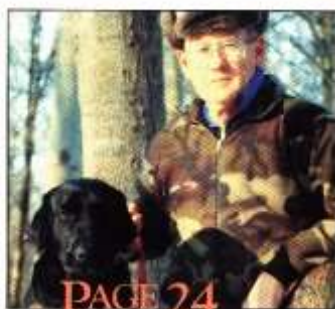
FRONT COVER

Without question, romance surrounds a day afield when traditional archery equipment is involved.

Photograph by Tony Kinton.



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Longbows & Recurves™

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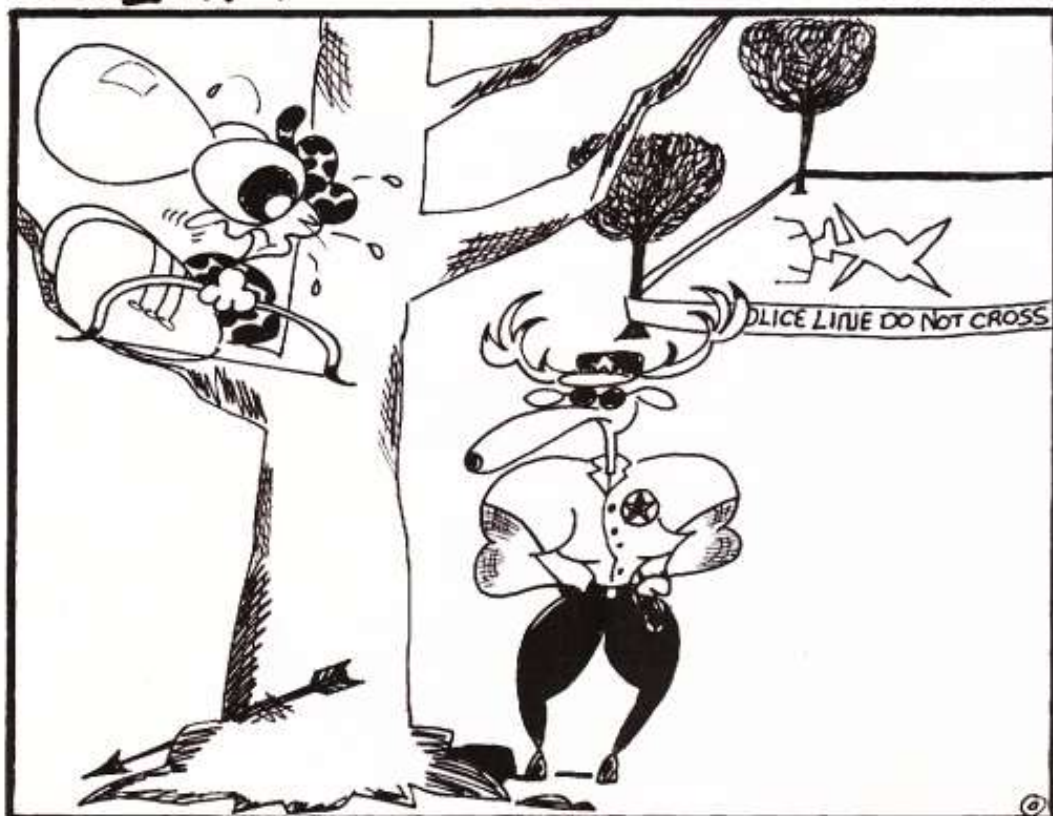
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B.ZAR

By JEFF CURTIS

**This is
B.ZAR's
first time
in print.**

**Watch
for his
funny
antics in
our next
issue.**



WRITE ON TARGET

The views expressed by letter writers in Write on Target are not necessarily the views of the magazine, *Longbows & Recurves*™. The editor does welcome your comments and opinions, but reserves the right to condense or to not print letters due to space availability and/or appropriateness. Letters should not exceed 300 words.

To the Editor:

While attending the 16th Annual Howard Hill World Longbow Championship (June 21-23) in Wilsonville, Alabama, I was fortunate enough to have a very sweet lady, connected with your magazine, in my shooting group on Sunday... When I heard the name of your magazine, I was immediately interested. Please sign me up!

I enjoy shooting longbows and recurves, of which I have several, but never enough! Although I have varied interests, I only subscribe to a few magazines. *Longbows & Recurves* sounds like a magazine for...

I look forward to receiving and enjoying a copy of your magazine. If the contents are as good as the title, I look forward to enjoying a long-term relationship with your magazine.

When I initially entered archery in 1981, the compound was the leader of archery (at least for the majority of archers). Thanks to Dan Quillian of Archery Traditions, I was introduced to the longbow and recurve in August of 1989. Ever since that day, I have been "hooked!" Within a year, I bought a longbow and sold my two compound bows. I have not shot a compound since that time but have purchased traditional archery equipment (several longbows and recurves). My current favorite is a laminated Osage Orange longbow (sixty-six inches in length, eighty-one pound at twenty-eight inches) by D.J. Harper of Phoenix, Arizona. This bow is incredibly fast and quiet without any hand shock (despite the draw weight).

... I love traditional archery! Long live Longbows & Recurves!

Sincerely,

Tom McBrayer, Alabaster, AL

To the Editor:

(Regarding *Longbows & Recurves*' cartoon B.ZAR.)

This letter is to serve notice that Jeff Curtis is truly "bizarre."

... sometimes, it (takes) a few moments to get the meaning. More often, the cartoon (stays) in your head for an eternity. I still chuckle to myself about some of my favorite B.ZAR's.

Jeff's style is akin to, and maybe a cross between "(The) Far Side" and "Ziggy."

Getting to know Jeff over the past

few years I have found him to be quite a nice, sensible and caring person. But if you only know him through his cartoons, you may wonder, "what type of weird bird thinks of stuff such as this?"

I highly recommend Jeff's work on the grounds that he has made my office staff and me chuckle on a regular basis.

Here's hoping he makes you chuckle or laugh your tail off.

Sincerely,

Rupert Howell,

Editor/Publisher, *The Panolian*
Batesville, MS

To the Editor:

Sounds good! Count me in! I look forward to getting the premiere issue.

Jim Pitts, Athens, GA

B.ZAR

BY JEFF CURTIS



BIONOTES



When not chasing various critters throughout his home state of Georgia, **Matt Schuster** works as an independent manufacturer's rep in the sporting goods industry. He is active in The Professional Bowhunters Society and is editor of the *Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia* magazine.



Don Francois hunts, fishes, and writes from his home in Morganza, Louisiana. He belongs to several bowhunting and conservation organizations and is a volunteer safety instructor with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.



Bob Wesley, one of the best known archers in the South, has an achievement list as long as his bow. Achievements include winning title to the 1982 Howard Hill Longbow World Championship and shooting as a team member of the 1978 American Longbow Team which won the National Bowhunt in Wyoming. Bob has been recognized by a number of organizations, including the Mississippi Senate in 1982 for his important contributions to archery. He was inducted into the Mississippi Bowhunter's Hall of Fame in 1989. He now owns the Whispering Pines Archery Camp in Poplarville, Mississippi.



Wayne Hoffman, a.k.a. "Biggie," of Gray, Georgia, is a well-known bowhunting advocate who has written for a number of bowhunting publications. He is past president of the Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia and is currently serving as council member of the Professional Bowhunters Society.



With a current obsession of chasing spring gobblers, **Tom Hoar** of Oxford, Mississippi, is, to say the least, an avid bowhunter. His intentions for this fall are clear since in his pursuit of spring gobblers last April he found both sheds of a 150-class buck on public land near his home.



Professional archer **Jerry Hill**, owner and operator of Jerry Hill Longbow Company, came into archery naturally since his great-uncle was the world famous Howard Hill. Jerry's archery expertise has been used in archery films, television commercials and shows, and stage and lecture presentations. His annual Howard Hill World Longbow and Recurve Championship has been held each spring for sixteen years in Wilsonville, Alabama.



James Coal Train Walker is the pseudonym for a well-known traditional archer/writer.



A veteran of more than twenty years as an outdoor writer, **Tony Kinton** has approximately two thousand articles published in state, regional, and national magazines. He is the author of three books. His latest, *Outside and Other Reflections*, is "a romance of the out-of-doors," he says. Kinton has hunted extensively in fourteen states and three Canadian Provinces. He lives in a quiet, rural setting of central Mississippi, and says he is "a hopeless romantic who loves sunsets and sunrises and autumn leaves and old dogs and young children!"



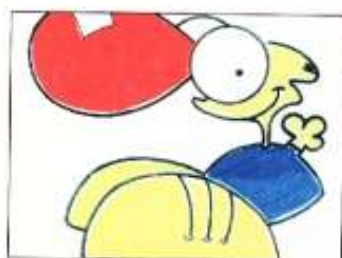
Sam Fadala, a full-time writer for over 18 years and the author of twenty-two books, has had a love of the out-of-doors since he was a child. His writing covers a wide spectrum from blackpowder gunsmithing to centerfire shooting, bowhunting, and camping.



Paul Brunner started bowhunting at fourteen years of age and since then he has hunted many different species of animals all over the world for thirty-nine years. Brunner is a senior member of the Pope & Young Club and a life member of the Professional Bowhunters Society. He has written two books and is a speaker for clinics and seminars in North America.



Dan Quillian designs bows and archery equipment based on nearly fifty years of hands-on experience. He is an outdoor writer, an expert in wildlife ecology, and a hunter who has taken over one hundred big-game animals with the bow. Dan lives in Athens, Georgia where he acts as sales manager for Tallahatchie Woodworks.



B.ZAR© is a character created by cartoonist **Jeff Curtis** of Batesville, Mississippi. Jeff has been developing this character for about eight years.



An outdoorsman extraordinaire, **Don Stokes** has bowhunted for more than thirty years. He is an expert in wood properties, with more than twenty years experience in research, development, and quality control of wood products. Don and his brother, Bill, founded Tallahatchie Woodworks in Ripley, Mississippi to manufacture the Superceder arrow shaft.



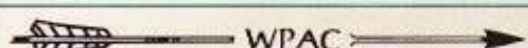
For over 30 years, **Richard Stubler's** cartoons have graced hundreds of magazines. His cartoons prove his deep love and understanding of the outdoors and they are regularly published in over 15 nationally distributed hunting and fishing magazines.

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Bob Wesley has been in archery for over forty years. He is a former president of the Mississippi Archery Association, has served on the board of directors for the Mississippi Bowhunters Association, holds many state titles, and the 1982 Howard Hill World Archery Championship. He received personal instruction from Mr. Howard Hill. Bob was inducted into the Mississippi Bowhunters Hall of Fame in 1989.



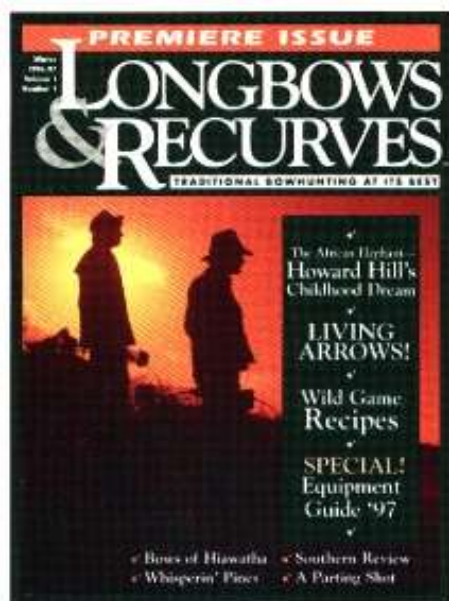
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FROM THE WHISPERIN' PINES by Bob Wesley

Shoot Traditionally for Stress Relief

What magic is there about a traditional approach to shooting the longbow that seems to calm the spirit and brings a warm inner glow of gratification to the bowman? Perhaps it's your sleek, unencumbered longbow and the cowhide quiver filled with arrows you made yourself. Quite possibly, this return to the basics is an inner revolt against this modern age of plastics, computers, and the pressurized push of society to be the first, the fastest, the best. Or, just maybe, it's the inner genetic make up of us all to have a little bit of Robin Hood in us.

There's no doubt that you're joining people from all backgrounds and all parts of the world in re-discovering the magic of the simple recurve and longbow. In the compound bow age of archery, you don't feel the pull of a bowstring on your fingers, enjoy the aromatic smell of fresh cut cedar from hand crafted arrows, or actually see the arrow you shot, from the time it leaves the bow to the time it strikes the target. There's no comparison between a low-fledged cedar arrow whistling down through a shady glen to make a resounding whack as it lands on target and the glitter of the compound. People say that traditional archery requires 80% of the bowman's effort in actual applied skill; the compound approach replaces this with 80% performance on the part of the equipment.

As I'm sure you know, however, traditional archery indicates simplicity, but not simpleness. If you're having some problems or wanting to get someone

else interested, a professional traditional instructor is important. He will probably encourage you to select a bow with a draw weight that is comfortable for you and pleasant to handle. The holding weight of a well-constructed forty pound draw weight longbow or recurve fits the average male and a twenty pound draw weight fits the female. Even the experienced bowman needs such a bow in his arsenal to keep from straining his posture when working on the correct basics of shooting form.

Longbow tradition doesn't mean you don't use any modern technology. The professional traditional instructor will probably use slow motion and stop action video photography to help you understand what correct shooting form really is. He will film you from four different angles to identify your weaknesses

"The archer begins to become the bowman when that special feeling of confidence and inner gratification begins to enhance his shooting style."

and assist you in establishing the correct form. Hand position on the bow, lateral bow arm elbow, low bow shoulder, position of the drawn arrow so that its full length is directly under the dominant shooting eye, and positive anchor with most of the holding weight carried by the muscles of the back are all important parts of the correct shooting form for the traditional bowman.

Instruction in the correct shooting form is essential to achieve the consistency necessary before developing a method of aiming the arrow. Once the



bowman groves-in his form and it seems to take over without conscious effort, then a method of aiming will gradually seep into the bowman's make-up. Most traditional bowmen prefer the feeling

of freedom that instinctive aiming gives them since this seems to enhance the sense of freedom that complements the traditional shooting style. The archer begins to become the bowman when that special feeling of confidence and inner gratification begins to enhance his shooting style.

As a beginner or "old" longbowman, you want to participate in a traditional rendezvous. Some traditional shoots that you should not miss are the Sterling Harrel Memorial the last week in April in Louisiana, the Loftin Nationals at Grenada, Mississippi the first weekend in May, and the Hill Championships the third weekend of June in Alabama. Plan to have a good time at these shoots, where the participants place the emphasis on fun, rather than tournament scores or trophies.

For a real Sherwood Forest adventure, pick up that sleek, unencumbered longbow, put on your shoulder quiver, and strike out across a wooded field or stroll along a woodland stream with a good friend or even alone. The center of a decaying stump or a clod of dirt on the creek bank makes for a suitable mark. Perhaps the forest glen and the absence of worries about anything except you and your skill as a bowman is the medicine your soul needs to relieve the stress of a modern technological world. *h*

SOUTHERN REVIEW

by Don Francois

Many interesting things are happening these days with traditional archery and bowhunting in general, especially in the South.

Especially important is that Louisiana bowhunters will enjoy an extended season. Bow season for deer in Louisiana has traditionally opened October 1st statewide and extended until the end of gun season which is mid-January in most areas, but will now extend to January 31, 1997.

Two years ago the Bayou State Bowhunters Association (B.S.B.A.) began working to extend the bow season statewide so that it would reach beyond the close of gun season. The steps and sequence followed by the B.S.B.A. is noteworthy should your own organization wish to petition for changes in the hunting regulations in your state.

First, the B.S.B.A. contacted the state biologist in charge of deer management and discussed the impact of a mid-winter extension of the archery season on deer populations. Members spoke candidly and told the biologist that if the impact of such an extension would be detrimental to state deer herds, they would forget the idea. The biologist, however, gave the go-ahead to pursue an extension.

They then met with the chief of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. They asked for and received his approval before proceeding further.

Next, they wrote up a resolution to present at the meeting of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation and worked hard to get it passed. The backing of the Wildlife Federation meant support from other sport groups besides just bowhunters.

The next step was presenting the plan to the Louisiana Wildlife Commission, the people who set Louisiana's hunting seasons. The B.S.B.A. collected information from other southern states regarding seasons and deer harvests which they presented as justification for the extra days of bow season. They made sure that the B.S.B.A. was represented at public hearings and that Commission members received well-documented material supporting the change. They also asked Association members to write to the Commission and express support for the extension.

The Commission gave preliminary approval, so this year archery season will open statewide on October 1st and remain open until January 31st of 1997.

Another change in favor of bowhunters is in Florida. Beginning April 1, 1996, Floridians can bow-fish at night year round. This should increase the opportunities for people who like to do their fishing with a different kind of "stick and a string."



In the future, it may be possible to do something in Arkansas that no bowhunter has done there for probably hundreds of years, that is, setting up for a shot at an Arkansas wapiti. In centuries past, elk lived in much of what today is the southern and eastern United States, but unfortunately, they disappeared from southern environs along with the bison and prairie chickens that had also inhabited the region.

Between 1981 and 1985, Arkansas got a core herd of 112 surplus elk, mostly from Colorado, which were released on public land near the Buffalo River in the northern part of the state. Over the years, the herd has increased to about 350 animals according to Mike Cartwright, elk expert with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Mike said surveys are being conducted to determine public reaction to a limited hunting season for the Arkansas elk herd. It will probably be a few years before they reach a decision about the season, according to Mike, and if there is one, it will be very limited and probably done by lottery drawing. A tip of the hat to Arkansas for their efforts.

After a long time and a lot of effort by various sport groups, every state now has a law which basically makes it illegal to interfere with or harass hunters who are legally participating in hunting activities during an open game season.

This is welcome news, however it concerns me that society has to come to the point where laws must be enacted to protect people engaged in legal activities. This should make us aware that we cannot take anything for granted, not even the heritage of hunting in our country. This heritage should be cherished and protected just as carefully as a fine old bow or anything of great value which could never be replaced if lost or stolen.

Finally, if something is happening in your community or your state that bowhunters need to know about, please write to the address below and tell us about it. For example, we want to know about changes in hunting regulations, what your club or organization is doing to promote traditional archery or bowhunting, and any openings of new public hunting lands available to bowhunters. ⁴⁶

Editor's Note: You can write to Don Francois at 1032 Crochet Street, Morganza, LA 70759

WILD GAME RECIPES

by Claire W. Stanley



If you are like my friends and me, there are some strange "critters and varmints" in our freezer. We, as keepers of the kitchen, have several choices in addressing this "freezer filler":

- (1) We can chunk them, heaven forbid,
- (2) We can pretend they are not there or,
- (3) We can address the issue head on and try some marvelous recipes.

Not only would this help our food budget but we would be constructively dealing with the "critter and varmint" issue. Here are some suggestions to start with.... If any of you have some recipes you would like to submit we would love to see them. Send them to the address below.

Roast

Take out and wash.
Place roast in crock pot, (salt and pepper to taste)
1/2 bottle of BBQ sauce
You can cut up onion or pepper if needed.
Let cook on low for 10 hours.
Makes good BBQ sandwiches.

Tenderloin

Slice tenderloin in 3/4 inch thickness.
Use meat-cleaver to tenderize. Put tenderloin in milk and 1 egg solution.
Flour and pepper in bag and shake.
Cook like chicken in grease with lid on. (med/low)
Do not over cook. 10 minutes on each side. Take lid off.
Turn temperature up to get crisp.

Game Sauce

4 T. butter
1 2-1/2 oz. jar mushrooms, chopped
3 green onions, thinly sliced
1/8 t. thyme
2 T. browned flour
1/2 C. hot consomme
2 T. catsup
3/4 C. red wine
Dash, cayenne pepper (or to taste)
1/2 C. green olives, chopped

Melt butter and saute mushrooms, onions, and thyme for 2 minutes. Stir in browned flour, stir in consomme mixed with catsup. Mix well. Add wine gradually. When hot and bubbling add cayenne and olives. Stir and cook until thick.
Good with any type of game.

Venison Marinade

Cover venison in water in pan.

4 to 5 T. salt in water.
1/2 t. minced garlic
1/3 C. vinegar

Let venison set over night in refrigerator.

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LIVING ARROWS

by Don Francois

Gibran in this poetic line certainly points out the awesome responsibility in rearing a child. The analogy has even greater significance to the parent who is an archer since an archer knows the effort and concentration required to send an arrow on a true course. An archer also knows all of the things that can go wrong. The sport of archery has taught me a great deal about being a parent; it teaches when to instruct, when to take advantage of a situation, and when to let go.

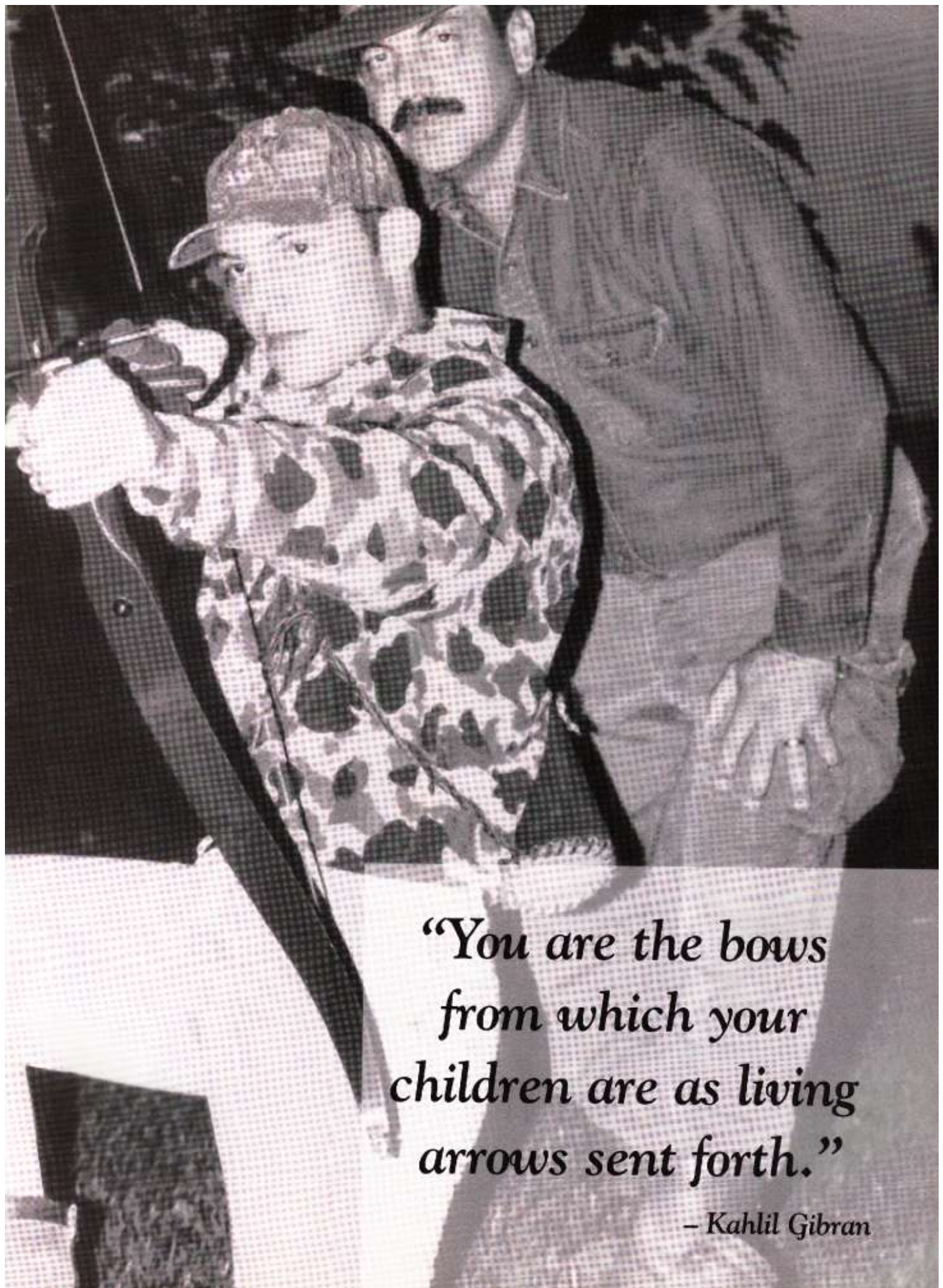
In the pre-dawn darkness of an October morning of my son Rhett's thirteenth year, I settled him into a tree stand with his bow and I realized the arrival of that time—time to let the "arrow" go.

As I walked away from him toward my own stand, last minute doubts arose. My only son was alone, twelve feet up in a tree in the dark woods with a bow and four lethal, razor-tipped arrows. I knew, however, that the time had come for him to do this; he was taking another step on the path toward becoming a young man and a hunter.

I have learned that a child growing up in a home where hunting is important will likely show an interest in learning more about it and gradually begin participating in different phases of the endeavor. It may begin with just wanting to blow on Dad's grunt tube or asking questions about the game brought home, but if that spark of interest is recognized and encouraged, it can eventually grow into a life-long avocation and a source of great personal contentment.

During the course of development there will come a time when the youngster is ready to go afield as a hunter, not just as an observer or tag-along. That point in a person's growth is not a chronological absolute, but rather when he or she reaches a stage where physical ability, judgment, skill, and self-discipline are adequate to the task of hunting with a weapon capable of humanely taking a game





*“You are the bows
from which your
children are as living
arrows sent forth.”*

– Kahlil Gibran

animal. Unfortunately, some people go through life without ever achieving such a level of maturity.

Rhett was lucky to grow up in a family where hunting—especially deer hunting—is not just a pastime, but a passion. His uncles and grandfather have a wealth of experience with deer hunting and I have been at it for twenty years. Conversation at family gatherings often turns to some aspect of the sport and many a pre-season weekend will find us in the woods scouting, fixing roads, or planting food plots. Even as a little boy, Rhett was always an eager companion when we ventured into the hardwood bottom lands near our Louisiana home. As he grew older he shared a deer stand with me or with his grandfather during gun season. He learned early that the hunter does not always see deer while hunting and even if a deer is sighted, a shot is not always possible or appropriate.

At this time in Rhett's life, I was strictly a firearm hunter, but one of his uncles was an avid bowhunter with a compound bow as well as with a longbow. A segment on bowhunting included in a hunter safety course offered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and his uncle's love for the sport got Rhett interested in hunting with a bow and arrow. I purchased a starter bow for him and he and his uncle spent hours together shooting arrows at targets set up in the backyard. As Rhett was already in the Boy Scouts, he expanded his newfound interest in bows and earned

the merit badge in archery.

He quickly outgrew his starter bow, so his uncle accompanied him to a pro-shop where he purchased a bow that correctly fit his size and strength. Rhett was more intrigued with the gadgets and performance of a compound bow than

he was with traditional bows, so as long as he stayed within the bounds of ethics and safety that I expected, I allowed him to make most of his own choices regarding equipment. Archery and bowhunting are very personal endeavors, and the equipment used must become an exten-



Rhett Francois and Don Francois enjoying some good traditional archery.

sion of the archer complementing the requirements of his style of shooting.

Rhett began participating in local 3-D tournaments, which are a great way to practice bowhunting and to learn much about judging distance and shooting at game that does not necessarily present the classic broadside shot. Pressure exposed to during competition can prepare the archer for the moment when a real animal is in front of him.

As I watched my son and my brother-in-law enjoying themselves and being so enthusiastic about archery, I decided to try a bow myself. Before long I had joined them in the backyard shooting a borrowed Bear recurve. It took awhile for my skill to develop to the point where I didn't spend the majority of my practice time looking for lost arrows, but eventually I was hitting more than I was missing.

I became fascinated with traditional equipment and instinctive shooting. I found a used Red Wing recurve for a reasonable price and grabbed it. I practiced with the bow, learned everything I could by watching and talking to others, and practiced some more. Even the practice was enjoyable and relaxing. After a tiring day at the office I could come home, take my recurve into the backyard, nock an arrow, and shoot away the problems that had followed me home from work.

Rhett and I became even closer as we practiced together and attended 3-D tournaments that summer. By October we were ready to get into the woods and replace the field points on the tips of our arrows with broadheads.

"It may begin with just wanting to blow on Dad's grunt tube or asking questions about the game brought home, but if that spark of interest is recognized and encouraged, it can eventually grow into a life-long avocation and a source of great personal contentment."

Rhett would accidentally cut himself on a broadhead or fall out of his stand and be seriously injured. I looked over in his direction several times but could not see him through the thick foliage. Admittedly, my mind was not really focused on my own hunt.

Having seen nothing, at around nine o'clock I decided to walk over and check on my young partner. Announcing my approach with a whoop when I was still about fifty yards from his stand, I heard an excited whoop in response and hurried my steps.

"Daddy, I hit one!" Rhett excitedly proclaimed. I was surprised that he had even seen a deer because I had seen nothing and assumed that the deer were not moving.

He enthusiastically explained how a doe had approached just after daylight and how he had held his compound at

So, there I was settling into my own tree stand with my recurve about one hundred-fifty yards from Rhett's stand. I settled in and began to wait for shooting light. It was a cloudy morning and darkness was reluctant to leave the woods. The canopy and underbrush were still thick with leaves since our region of Louisiana could not expect a freeze for at least another month.

As I sat there waiting and watching, my mind dredged up various scenarios where

full draw waiting for the right moment. The deer had come well within his range but had seen or heard him at the last instant and jumped just as he released. He was sure, however, that he had hit the deer and she had turned and run off in the direction she had come from.

I had mixed feelings. I was glad that he had gotten a shot and made a hit, but was it in a vital area that would put the deer down or just cause a serious injury that might lead to a slow death and the waste of an animal?

As it turned out, we found the young doe easily. She had run only about one hundred yards and had lain down and died. The arrow had severed a major artery.

When we found the deer, I truly don't know which one of us was the more excited. Rhett returned home with the first deer of the season taken by a hunter in our clan and to all of the glory that accompanies such an occasion. While Rhett would not get another shot the remainder of that season and would not see a deer within bow range the following season, he knew when he started that the idea behind bowhunting was not the easy kill.

Archery is special in my family. My son has grown up with a true respect for the ideas behind bowhunting, and while he still hunts with a compound bow and I hunt with a recurve, he respects my method and I respect his, and really, that is all I can ask. My young arrow has taken flight. *1/4*

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Bowhunting, Coon Hunting Don't Mix

by Tom Hoar

An acquaintance asked me the other day what I liked most about bowhunting. Interested in trying the sport, he sought advice—not from a great bowhunter—but from someone who knows firsthand not only the rewards, but the disappointments of hunting with a stick and string.

There is much to like about bowhunting, I answered him. Above all, bowhunting is challenging. That single element may be what draws more and more sportsmen and women into the sport's ranks every year.

The idea of hunting with a bow, I explained, often appeals to sportsmen who thrill more to the chase than the kill. Eliminating the advantage offered by today's super-efficient firearms and shifting the odds back to the quarry's favor add much to the hunting experience.

Bowhunting, in addition, honors a heritage that a majority of us can't claim. Few bowhunters share a drop of ancestral blood with the Native Americans who originated many of the techniques we emulate since our forebears came to the New World armed not with bows but flintlock firearms.

It is always kind of a surprise to me when everything works in bowhunting since there are many variables, I told my acquaintance. The wind must be right, blowing from the deer, for example, to the hunter's location and not vice versa. Camouflage and cover scent must make someone like me invisible in woods where a six-foot-one, two hundred pound hunter isn't exactly native fauna. Stand location must be perfect. Movement to raise and draw the bow must go undetected. The arrow must fly true. Even so, the hunter must always be ready for the unanticipated. Take last season, I told him, and I related my story.

I had scouted a secluded cornfield for weeks prior to opening day. Unharvested due to wet weather, the three-acre field was a virtual haven for deer. Trails, deep and wide, converged there from surrounding river bottom land. Stripped cornstalks, empty cobs, big tracks, and droppings lay everywhere.

I was more than mildly excited about the possibilities. This was the first time in years I had found such a concentration of whitetails prior to bow season. It seemed that every deer in that neck of the county knew exactly where the corn was, and now so did I.

The Wednesday prior to the opening Saturday, I checked the field one last time. I picked the most promising trail, followed it about a hundred yards into the dark hardwood bottoms bordering the field, found an intersecting trail as heavily trampled as the first, and locked my portable stand to a tall, straight oak.

When I arrived well before dawn on opening day, I found the unanticipated had happened. The field had been cut. No problem, I told myself, the deer would be nearby anyway.

Then I noticed a parked truck. Again, no problem, I told myself. It was a big block of woods and another careful bowhunter wouldn't hurt my chances. Much.

After dousing myself with coon whiz cover scent, I headed for the woods. I reached my stand, applied more coon scent, and began my climb. It was then that I heard the dogs. They were a long way off, but their voices were unmistakable.

Coon dogs.

Coon hunters can tell you exactly what their dogs are doing by the way they bark. A certain bark means that they've struck a hot trail. Another means they have treed the coon. I haven't been coon hunting enough to do that, but I could tell exactly what they were thinking when the breeze shifted and they caught wind of me.

Hound music, now frenzied, grew ever nearer. Resonant "wooo... woos" interspersed with enthusiastic shouts of "git 'im Blue, tear 'im up!" echoed through the bottoms.

To ole Blue and the rest of his sharp-toothed kin, I was the biggest, smelliest coon they had ever come across. In those small, desperate moments, it didn't escape me that Mississippi's bow season and raccoon season shared the same opening day.

Details of the last act don't add much to this story, I told my patient listener. It's enough to say that all of the players left the stage intact. I wasn't torn to shreds by ole Blue or popped 'twixt the eyes with a .22 rifle. The coon hunter has quite a story to tell about a two hundred pound coon. The dogs earned extra rations and are now legend among the local coon hunting fraternity.

And, the deer, I told the interested sportsman, had nothing to worry about. Nothing at all. *✱*



"To ole Blue and the rest of his sharp-toothed kin, I was the biggest, smelliest coon they had ever come across."

Equipping



for Tradition

by Tony Kinton

Editor's Note:

Longbows & Recurves™ is dedicated to promoting traditional archery to young would-be archers, to people who shoot self-bows, as well as to compound shooters who may not yet have experienced the joy or appreciated the power of the longbow and the recurve. This article is available for reprint to pass around to those people who might benefit by it. Reading Tony's introductory details about longbows and recurves, you will find, is a little like sitting in an easy chair in front of the fireplace listening to him talk about traditional archery.

I was taken aback by the comment: "Man, you are a dying breed. You need to move into the future!" These words came from the young proprietor of a small but well-equipped archery shop in a rural Mississippi town where I had stopped to get some incidental item. All around were state-of-the-art bows and accessories, and the fellow handled and tuned them with skill. He certainly meant no ill will when he encouraged me to "move ahead;" he likely felt he had just encountered a poor, ignorant Neanderthal who had yet to be exposed to the marvels of technology.

While pondering this, it occurred to me that this young archer had probably never seen such equipment as I told him I used. He entered the pastime of bows and arrows at the height of wheels and cables and eccentrics and overdraws and speed. What he didn't know was that I had seen this movement from its inception; I had indeed moved into the modern world of bowhunting, leaving behind the traditional methods which had given me a solid start. Then, after a decade of so in this mode I "moved ahead" again, to tradition. He didn't know this, and as a result I was gentle with him. Although I did fail to convince him, I stated my case with a measure of chivalry, maintained my dignity, and left his shop less a convert to his ways than he was to mine.

The young shop owner was not unlike a multitude of bow shooters today who have yet to discover the thrills of traditional archery. They have little if any exposure to the methods surrounding the pursuit, and are basically unaware that credibility must be given the tools of the past. In their thinking, the only reason a person would use such gear is because he doesn't know about or can't afford more up-to-

date shooting systems. Such an assumption is not valid since it is safe to conjecture that all bowhunters are cognizant of the vast array of "modern" bows and gadgetry and these are priced so that anyone serious about the matter can afford something from the long list. It is important for the traditional bowhunter to stress to those holding these assumptions that the true reason for going traditional is the challenge, the aesthetics, the simplicity, and the pure thrill. Nothing in the hunting world compares, and therein lies the core of traditional archery. It is something not fully appreciated in any other form of the activity.

Since there are those who may wish to experience these rewards but who, like the store owner I mentioned, don't know the true meaning and joy of traditional archery, the remainder of this piece is on the subject of getting started. It focuses on that most vital of equipment needs, the bow. Those of you who have been shooting traditional for a long time can just sit back and remember those first days of becoming traditional.

Traditional bows fall generally into two basic categories. These are the longbow and the recurve. Their names give a solid description.

The longbow is a "long," graceful tool with straight limbs. These rigs usually run about sixty-six inches in length and have a simple arrow rest nestled above a leather-wrapped handle. They are the most basic of traditional bows and are a pure delight to shoot. If there is one drawback to longbows, that is the fact of recoil or hand shock. Some shooters find this objectionable, and it can lead to sore wrists, especially if the shooter, like me, has a touch of arthritis or a similar ill that comes with being over forty! Even so, hand shock is not something that can be overlooked, and some longbows are designed to reduce this a bit. Most such bows are available only through custom bowyers, and will likely carry a hefty price tag.

The advantage of longbows, aside from the fact that they are pretty and romantic, is that they are quiet and generally a little easier to master than the recurve. A specialness, an aura, surrounds the hunter who takes to the deer woods with a longbow and back quiver.

Recurves are just what the name suggests. The limbs,

unlike the longbow, are recurved toward the tips. This adds more flex and cast, and the design virtually eliminates the hand shock associated with longbows. Recurves are an exercise in beauty. Some are very fast, turning in speeds of 190 feet-per-second or so. Average lengths range from fifty-eight to sixty-two inches, determined by draw length. For a draw length of twenty-eight inches, a sixty inch bow is a good bet. Shorter or longer draws work well with the shorter or longer bows.

The shooter who wants to try traditional archery should first decide which of the two styles of bows he wants. After that, the shopping begins.

One choice is to contract with a custom builder. This somewhat assures that the buyer gets it right in the begin-

ning, but there are drawbacks to this approach as well. One is cost. Custom bows are expensive. Expect to pay in the neighborhood of six hundred dollars for a truly custom bow. Also, the waiting time can be quite long if the bow comes from some of the more popular builders. A year's wait is not uncommon which may not fit into the plans of those of you who want to give tradition a try.

Another point to keep in mind for the new tradition-bound archer is if the bow is clearly custom built for a specific individual, that bow may lose value should it be put on the market for resale. This generally is not true, but if a particular grip style or length is specified, the bow will be useful only to one who matches those specifications. In any case, if a custom bow is in your plans, take the time to research.

Look through the major archery magazines and find the ads from reputable builders. Ask for brochures and references. Check these out carefully. Find a traditional archer to talk to; all of us will probably tell you way more than you want to know.

An alternative to the purely custom route is the semi-custom approach such as that offered by Black Widow. These bows can be produced with custom touches, but since they are semi-custom can be made available sooner. They are fine units, and most hold their value quite well. Prices begin in the mid-five hundred dollar range.

If custom or semi-custom bows are not an option, there are several truly fine bows on the market available over the counter. In fact, these may represent the best buy for the beginning traditionalist, and both the longbow and recurve can be had in this fashion.

Since traditional archery is enjoying a resurgence in popularity, the number of factory bows is increasing. Most manufacturers at this time offer at least one model, and most are probably quite good. Since I have not personally tried them all I can't comment on them all, but the ones I have tried I have liked very much.

One of my favorites among the over-the-counter rigs is the Martin Hunter—once called the 2800. This is a one-piece bow that handles and shoots extremely well. At around two hundred dollars, it is a superb buy. Another is the Bear Kodiak, either the one-piece or take down. These bows



Whether the game is large or small, the hunting is enhanced by the use of traditional archery gear.



Practice, patience, and dedication are required to master traditional archery, but the rewards are grand indeed!

build on the tradition begun by archer-great Fred Bear himself and should serve any shooter for many years. Prices are about the same as the Martin. The Kodiak Custom Takedown is like the one preferred by Fred Bear, but keep in mind, this bow is priced in the same category as some customs.

Whatever bow you choose, don't give in to the temptation of shooting off a rest other than the shelf. If the rig doesn't have a clearly defined shelf to place a hair rest, avoid it. Shooting from the shelf gets the arrow down near the hand and makes for more natural pointing/shooting.

Since longbows and recurves don't "break over" and relax like compounds, the weight of draw increases throughout the full length of that draw. For this reason newcomers find it awkward if they have been shooting wheels. But don't succumb to the urge to get a too-light draw. Any reasonably strong adult can work into sixty pounds with practice, and this is about right for deer hunting. Still, it is better to begin with a bow you know you can handle than to go too heavy and develop bad shooting habits. A workable ploy is to draw the bow a few times every day for a month or so and build up shooting muscles before the shooting actually begins. This

will put the shooter in a more comfortable posture and help avoid those nagging habits that, once entrenched, are difficult to break.

If you are just beginning this journey into traditional archery, you are entering a world unto itself. It demands practice, patience, dedication, and a bit of finesse. But the pursuit is well worth the effort. As stated earlier, there is simply nothing that can compare. *W*

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Duff: King of Trail Dogs

by Bob Wesley

In the hill country north of Greenwood, Mississippi, somewhere between the Pelusha Creek and the Big Sand Creek there lives a four-year-old black lab retriever named Duff. Now I haven't been loosing broadhead arrows at white-tailed deer but a touch over forty-eight years, but this is still long enough to have seen quite a few trail dogs in action. What I'm trying to get around to saying is that ole Duff is by far the best that I've ever seen.

In January 1996, I sat perched some twenty-five feet high up in a pine tree with the wind swirling about at about thirty miles an hour. I was hunting as a guest of my best bowhunting friend, Jim McCrory, along with some younger friends in the delta foothill country near the Pelusha Creek, an area rich in Indian tradition, which apparently was hunted by a famous Choctaw warrior known as "Three Bears." I was having a good time doing what I enjoy doing, which is longbow hunting the wily, white-tailed deer with my bow and arrow.

For you newcomers who have been into bowhunting less than twenty years or so, Jim McCrory was the first president of the Mississippi Bowhunter's Association and was the "Bull Gator" of the competition circuit way back in the seventies. I told him he was the "best" way back in '77 and he didn't believe it, so I insisted that he go to Clemson, South Carolina, and shoot in the Nationals with me. To make a long



Jim McCrory and Duff

story short, after the smoke settled following the 3-D animal round, Jim walked up to me after reading the bulletin board and said, "Bob Wesley, you've done it now. You've got me into a three-way tie shoot-off for first place. Come on over here and share some of this pressure by standing in my corner." The tie was with a young Indian competitor from Oklahoma and a young man from Indiana. After three flights of arrows at a three inch circle from thirty-five yards, measurements were taken

"... everyone knew why we referred to Jim McCrory as 'Old Granite Jaw' when the pressure was on."

and everyone knew why we referred to Jim McCrory as "Old Granite Jaw" when the pressure was on. He was a national 3-D champion.

Anyway, six years ago Jim was impressed with a deer recovery by a chocolate lab named Buster at Willow Point South near Vicksburg, Mississippi. A doe had been shot at 7:30 a.m. by a bowman who had been unable to recover it. Buster entered the scene at 2:30 p.m., approximately seven hours after the deer had been shot. He then trailed and recovered it. This incident sparked Jim's research on the ideal trailing dog.

Jim found the ideal trailing dog should obey all commands, not run live deer, have an intense desire to trail blood, and bark when the deer is found. Jim's research led him to the labrador retriever as the ideal breed, which led him to Duff.

Duff was only two months old when he recovered his first deer. Jim had made a good hit on a nice buck and saw the deer fall about sixty yards away. After placing Duff on the blood trail some thirty yards from the deer, Jim was not disappointed as he watched the young lab follow the blood to his buck. Jim recovered the buck, brought Duff back to the site the next day, and to his delight, after sixteen hours, Duff again followed the blood trail.

Over the next four years, Duff recovered approximately twenty-five deer per year as surrounding hunters searched out his services. Duff wears a bell on his collar which normally allows Jim to follow him on the trail, however, on windy nights when it is difficult to hear from any real distance, Jim uses a lead line on Duff's harness to follow him.

Well, back at the pine tree where I perched, a yearling deer came close and milled about. Then, a fine adult doe entered the scene. I eased to my feet and picked the spot I wanted to hit and my indirect aim spot, some two feet below the first spot, drew the osage longbow to anchor and released. The white fletched arrow hit the doe a bit back but maybe got one lung. She whirled and ran into the trees. I could visually follow her only thirty yards or so. I remained in my tree stand replaying the exciting event in my mind.

After dark, Jim showed up, "Bob, did ya see a deer?"

Having a bit of sport with Jim, which we old timers do from time to time, I answered, "I missed her clean. What am I goin' to do?"

"Bob, don't ask me something like that. Don't you teach this indirect aiming instinctive stuff?"

Then, smiling, I said, "Jim, I hit her dead center, which means it's going to be a job for Duff."

After three hours of trailing, Jim, Duff, and I met back at the site where the four-wheelers were parked. Jim looked like a mummy without the wrappings. Duff had obviously also had a real workout as his bounce had now become a slow shuffle.

"Bob, Duff found the deer about a

mile from here. It lay in an oak hollow, down a draw in a shallow ravine. This was one of those recoveries that only Duff could make." Since the wind was howling about thirty miles an hour, Jim had been unable to use the bells he usually put on Duff for trailing after dark. In place of the bells he used a fifteen

"The training takes time and patience but the rewards are great. To see a despondent hunter's face light up when Duff recovers a deer that otherwise would be lost, is reward enough."


foot lead and dragged it along behind him through briers, vines, and downfall. Since the blood trail was almost nonexistent and the deer traveled at least a mile, the other hunters now understood why Duff is referred to as Jim's wonder dog. "Once ole Duff realized that every ten yards he had to quit pulling on the lead line and let me fight my way through the thickets to catch up with him, we made it fine." Turning and looking at me, Jim said, "Bob Wesley, did you shoot that deer back a touch to give me and ole Duff a workout?"

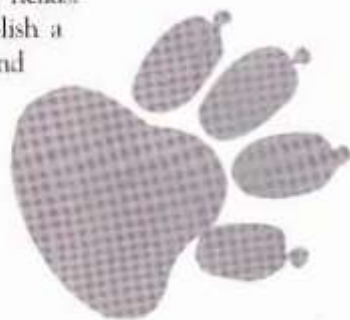
Out of the corner of my eye I noticed the younger members of our party smiling and shaking their heads. Duff had again helped accomplish a successful hunt. It was 10 p.m. and Duff had one more deer to trail. "Tucker," another one of Jim's bowhunting friends, had arrowed a deer. Jim and Duff turned to disappear into the

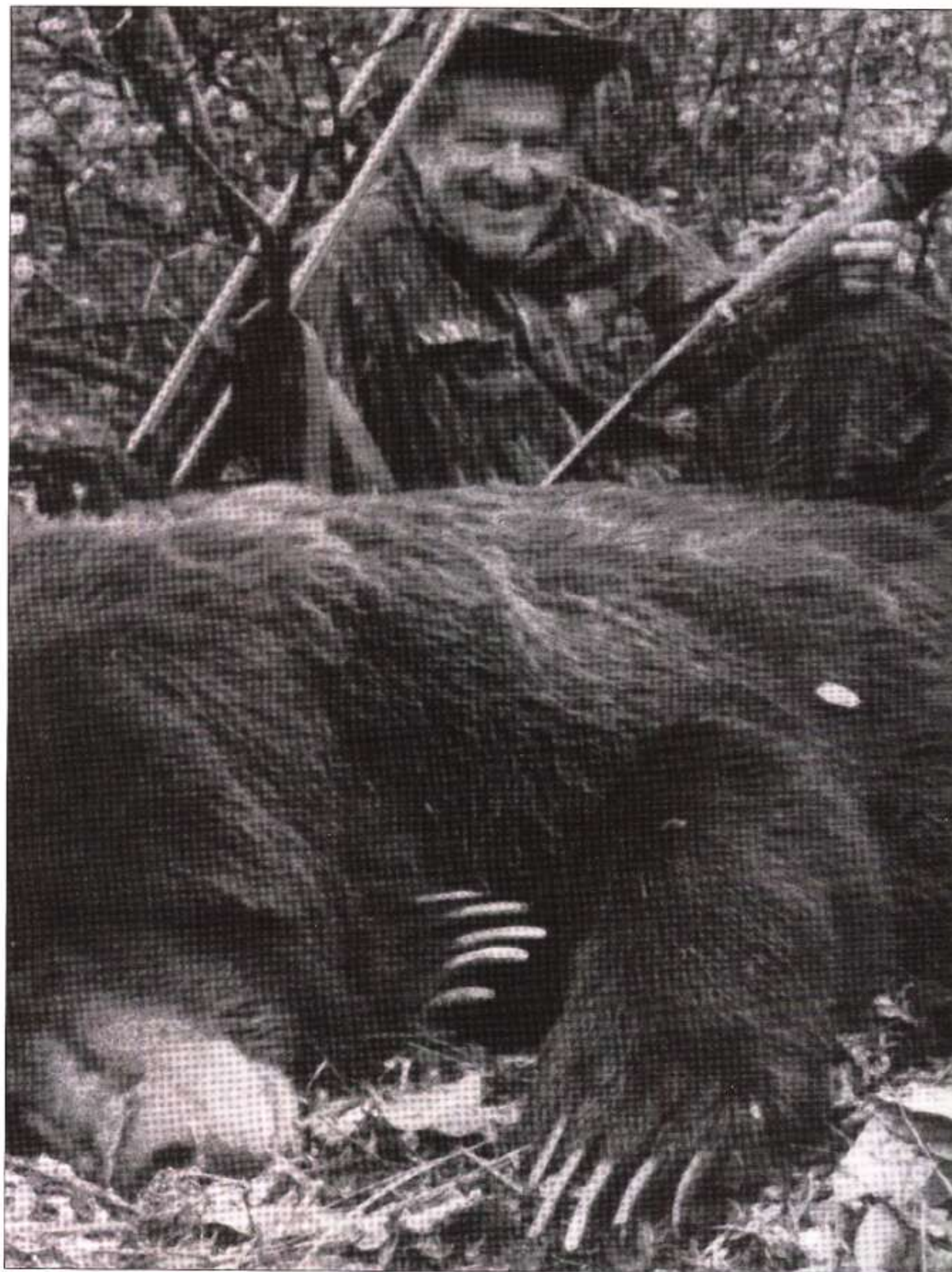
darkness to trail Tucker's deer. This deer, a nice eight point buck, was recovered an hour or so later, after also leading Duff on a winding trail through the thickest imaginable vines and briers.

While Duff is definitely an exceptional dog, a master trail dog of his caliber just doesn't happen. The training takes time and patience, but the rewards are great. To see a despondent hunter's face light up when Duff recovers a deer that otherwise would be lost is reward enough. Jim has devoted thousands of hours of patient training to produce this "king" of trail dogs. Such things as creating artificial trails for Duff to follow by collecting deer blood during the deer season months, freezing it, and then thawing it during the off-season months for use as a trail, keeps Duff sharp year-around. Duff has also received command performance training prior to and along with his blood trail training.

Jim gives credit to a number of other hunters in Duff's training. Of the twenty-five or so deer that Duff recovered each year over a four-year period, many hunters were thoughtful enough to request the aid of Duff in recovering the deer, even though they saw the deer fall.

This labrador retriever isn't one of those hounds that some deer hunters prefer, but ole Duff trails like a true champion. 





Dan Quillian

Traditional Shooting and Wooden Arrows

by Dan Quillian and Don Stokes

At any gathering of traditional archers, discussions always arise on the subject of whether a particular piece of equipment or a certain technique is really "traditional." Like the self-bow, wood arrows are considered by many to be the ultimate in tradition.

Arguments aside, it is a fact that many archers have difficulty getting good arrow flight with wood arrows and resort to metal arrows or some other high-tech material instead. While there may be many reasons for poor arrow flight, one primary reason may be that the arrows used do not match each other in spine (stiffness) and weight. Simple physics dictates that in order for arrows to group well, each arrow in the set must closely match the others in spine, and to a lesser degree, in weight. Arrows matched by weight alone will probably vary greatly in spine and will not group well. Arrows matched by spine alone will group better, but the ultimate in matching requires both.

So, what makes for proper arrow spine? First of all, the orientation of the wood grain must be considered. Spine is usually measured on a simple device known as a spine tester. The shaft being tested is typically supported at two points on twenty-six inch centers. A two-pound weight is applied to the center of the shaft, and the deflection of the shaft is measured in thousandths of an inch. The two sides of the arrow shaft where the growth rings of the wood are perpendicular to the side of the shaft are normally the stiffer sides. For accurate spining of the shaft on the spine tester, one of these sides must be turned up. After the deflection is determined, the stiff side should be marked to insure that when the arrow is made, the growth rings are perpendicular to the bow string when the arrow is nocked on it. This aligns the cock feather with the grain on a three-fletched arrow.

The other two sides of the shaft can vary considerably from the stiff sides, as much as 30 percent in some cases. Arrow shafts that are spined by an automated machine are

not always spined with the proper grain orientation since the machine checks them however they happen to be positioned. Hand spining is necessary for the best match.

After the shafts are sorted by spine, they then should be weighted into sets to complete the matching process. Sets that match within fifteen to twenty grains or less will shoot together at all ranges. Most longbows are less sensitive to arrow weight than recurves and can consistently shoot a wider weight range with accuracy.

"Modern" Traditional Bows

A major contributing factor to difficulty in matching "modern" traditional bows is that many archers are attempting to use the spine charts which originated in the 1930s for self-longbows. Since that time, bows have had efficiency increased significantly through the use of materials such as fiberglass and fast-flight strings, together with the improvements in design made possible by these materials. A thirty-five to forty pound modern recurve such as the Canebrake from Archery Traditions has a cast equal to a sixty-five to seventy pound self-longbow. To properly match such modern bows with wooden arrows, the self-bow scale is not appropriate.

Criteria necessary for matching today's bows include draw weight, bow design and efficiency, the length of the arrow, and the frequency of vibration of the material from which the arrow is made. It appears that all woods are similar enough to ignore this last variable, but it is clear that other arrow materials such as aluminum, fiberglass, and graphite need totally different spine charts.

The Superceder spine chart was developed experimentally by the authors by bare-shaft matching hundreds of archers and different types of bows. This technique involved shooting arrows that were nocked and pointed but without fletching. The arrow must be perfectly matched to the bow and archer to fly straight under these conditions. When the

"Superceder" Spine Chart for 28" Arrows

Bow Draw Weight (IMPORTANT: See Notes)	Self Longbows	Straight, Narrow-limb Laminated Longbows	Reflex and Reflex/Deflex Longbows with Dacron String	Reflex and Reflex/Deflex Longbows with Fast-flight String; also Dacron Recurves	Recurve Bows with Fast-flight String
Pounds	Spine class	Spine class	Spine class	Spine class	Spine class
35-40	620	520	440	405	375
40-45	570	480	405	375	350
45-50	520	440	375	350	330
50-55	480	405	350	330	310
55-60	440	375	330	310	290
60-65	405	350	310	290	275
65-70	375	330	290	275	260
70-75	350	310	275	260	245
75-80	330	290	260	245	230
80-85	310	275	245	230	-
85-90	290	260	230	-	-
90-95	275	245	-	-	-
95-100	260	230	-	-	Higher spines in limited quantities.

Notes:

1. Determine bow draw weight at archer's draw length.
2. For arrows longer than 28", add 5# to actual draw weight for each inch over 28".
For shorter arrows, subtract 5# per inch.
3. Subtract 5# if a bow quiver or heavy string silencer is used.

perfect spine was found for each archer, the data on bow type and design, string material, draw weight, and draw length were recorded and later plugged into a computer graphing program to produce the charts for each type bow. There are substantial differences in the deflection required for various bow types at a given draw weight, as can be seen in the accompanying chart. Since the chart is based on averages, there may be slight differences for any individual bow, but the majority of archers can use the deflection numbers shown in the chart to achieve excellent performance with wooden arrows.

Wooden Arrow Problems

If the arrows are spined correctly but still do not fly well, then what? There are several signs to look for if wooden arrows are not shooting well. Arrows that are not well matched will frequently show a mark on the side of the arrow opposite the cock feather just ahead of the fletching. This mark is caused by the arrow striking the bow as it passes, usually resulting from shooting underspined shafts. When this is the case, the lower side, or hen feather, will usually be worn more than the other two as well. An abnormally worn hen feather also can be caused by having too large a shelf on the bow. Some bows just will not shoot well off the shelf because of this.

When shot, underspined arrows sometimes appear to

"corkscrew" through the air and will usually hit to the right. Overspined arrows typically wobble from side to side and fly to left of the target. Arrows which "porpoise," or wobble in the vertical plane are an indication that the nocking point is not in the correct position on the string.

Another common cause of poor arrow flight is nocks which are not straight. Straight nocks are critical to accuracy and good arrow flight. When shooting broadheads, it is also very important for them to be installed straight, especially the larger, wider heads, to avoid wind-planing. When an archer's arrows are perfectly matched to a well-tuned bow, field points and broadheads will shoot to exactly the same point, and no adjustment of the aiming point is necessary when changing over for hunting season or a broadhead tournament.

Finally, the fistmele, or string height, should be checked. The Howard Hill Archery Company seventy inch longbow performs best with a fistmele of 6-5/8 inches while their sixty-six inch longbow likes a 6-1/4 inch fistmele. The Paul Sparks-designed sixty-six inch bow likes a 6-1/2 inch fistmele, and the Stotlar sixty-six inch longbow likes a 7-1/2 inch fistmele. Therefore, fistmele will vary with bow length and limb design. The archer should follow the bowyer's recommended fistmele which should be measured from the belly of the bow or inside of the shelf to the string.

Proper Form

Of course, proper form is necessary before accuracy and consistent arrow flight can be achieved. While it is too complex to go into in detail here, a discussion of arrow performance must include at least a couple of important points about form.

A common fault observed at archery tournaments is the tendency that many archers have to lean into the shot, head far forward and crouched down. This form shortens the draw, effectively robbing energy from the bow that can be made use of by standing upright and getting full draw. Underspined arrows are probably at least partly to blame for this tendency since the short draw that results will make underspined arrows seem to fly better. Chronograph tests have shown, however, that losing one inch of draw is comparable to losing ten pounds of draw weight in terms of effectiveness of the arrow. It is also very difficult to achieve a smooth release and follow-through with this form.

At tournaments where the crouched stance is commonly seen, the winner of the competition almost always uses the classic upright stance, with perfect alignment from the tip of the arrow to the archer's elbow. This is the form used by Howard Hill, as seen in his movies.

The archer also must be on guard against "torqueing" the bow, which results from not pulling the bow string in alignment with the bow. This can be checked by having an observer stand behind the shooter to check to see whether the bow string is in alignment with the center of the limbs at full draw. If not, the torque can usually be corrected by adjusting hand placement on the bow.

Design of Bow

One other possible cause of poor arrow performance, if all else fails to correct the problem, is the design of the bow itself. Some bows, which can be identified by the bare shaft shooting technique, just will not shoot an arrow well at all because of a flaw in the design or materials. In the development of the Superceder spine chart, the authors encountered several bows like this that were essentially "unshootable." Some of these were actually made with the upper limb stronger than the lower one, or negative tiller. The only way these bows would shoot a bare shaft straight was to turn them upside down.

Keeping all these points in mind, any traditional shooter should be able to make wooden arrows perform well. Good form, regular practice, and well-matched wooden arrows shot from a properly tuned bow will work together when the opportunity for that big buck comes. ¹⁶

"Superceder" Spine Chart courtesy of Tallahatchie Woodworks, Inc., P.O. Box 118, Ripley, MS 38663, (601) 837-9906.



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EQUIPMENT GUIDE



Glove or Tab?

Which one is for you?

by Sam Fadala

Gloves and tabs work as well with compound bows as they do with traditional sticks; however, the mechanical release, a long-ago invention recently come of age, is now associated with wheelbows, while gloves and tabs remain a part of long-bow/recurve tackle. The contribution these implements may not seem very important at first, but how the arrow gets away from the string can mean a hit or a miss. That's how vital finger-coverings are to bowhunting success. Of course, to some people tabs and gloves mean nothing. They don't use them. I have a friend who wraps his fingers with surgical tape and another bow-shooting buddy who uses no finger protection whatsoever.

Most of us, though, need something to protect our digits from the ravages of the bowstring. There's nothing new about that. Maurice Thompson, co-father of modern archery, wrote in the nineteenth century:

"The shooting glove is made to protect the three first fingers of the right hand from the wearing effect of the bowstring in shooting. It is formed of three thimbles of stiff, smooth leather, having elastic stitches to allow them to perfectly conform to the size of the fingers." Maurice went on to say that "If your fingers can stand it, shoot without gloves." That was his advice in 1878.

Thompson's finger protectors were true gloves, not finger stalls, for they had straps that met at a wrist band. I suspect most archers of his time, and several decades later, were glove people, although the tab does have ancient roots. Moving forward in time 47 years, here is what Saxton Pope had to say about finger protection: "Doubtless the ancient yeoman, a horny-handed son of toil, needed no glove. But we know that even in those days a tab of leather was held in the hand to prevent the string

from hurting." Pope goes on to explain his "leather finger tips" in a somewhat medical manner, indicative of his profession, including that the "tips enclose the finger on the palmar surface up to the second joint."

Pope's glove, however, was not a glove. It was just what he said was—a finger tip protector. He even called it a

glove with finger protectors joined with straps to a wristband. Hill alludes to stalls being finger tips, as Pope called them, but these become a true glove for him, with a wrist strap to hold the finger tips firmly in place. This type of shooting glove remains with us today, although there are many variations on the theme.

"The shooting glove is made to protect the three first fingers of the right hand from the wearing effect of the bowstring in shooting. It is formed of three thimbles of stiff, smooth leather, having elastic stitches to allow them to perfectly conform to the size of the fingers... If your fingers can stand it, shoot without gloves."
Maurice Thompson's advice in 1878.

"finger tip." It was made of leather, shaped to fit the forepart of the fingers only, stitched on top, with a hole for the knuckle to protrude through. I've never tried a finger tip, nor have I even seen one. I'd fear for it taking off with the arrow upon release, but it must have worked fine for Pope and friends. Note that Pope mentions a tab of leather used by the bowman of ancient times. There's your tab, although today it's a lot more sophisticated than a little piece of leather.

Moving forward another 28 years, the great Howard Hill had his chance to tell about finger protection. "The protectors, or stalls, for the fingertips should be selected with care. A shooting glove works well, but when worn all day it often becomes uncomfortable, especially when the weather is hot." Hill may have believed that a glove was not always comfortable, but he did not suggest a tab. He said, "A shooting tab, as used by many target archers, does not allow the hand enough freedom of movement if used in hunting." Hill's glove ends up just that—an archery

Walking forward another 15 years, the unforgettable Fred Bear tells about finger protection. "It is actually the skeleton of a glove, with but three finger stalls for the first three fingers of the drawing hand," he says. While Bear mentions the tab, he does not truly recommend it, especially for beginning archers and bowhunters. In the photos I've seen, Bear is using a standard archery glove. The same type of glove was my favorite for years, and I could go back to it in a minute, but today, the tab is my choice. I have my reasons, but they aren't good enough for anyone to give up his shooting glove for a tab. That's personal.

I like the tab because it is cool on the hand for my favorite hunting month of the year, September, when darn near everything is open to the bow in my state. While cool, it is also warmer than a shooting glove. How? It can be worn right over a regular glove, as long as the glove is not too thick. This, for me, is a great feature during our winter rabbit hunts and late deer seasons. I also get a clean

release with a tab. As for it getting in the way, it doesn't. I've learned to turn it around so that it rests on the back of my hand when I'm hiking. It only takes seconds to turn it back into the shooting position.

A shooting glove does a good job. Anyone who prefers the glove over the tab should keep it that way. I never did find the glove a problem, including the groove that sets in. Supposedly, once the glove is deeply grooved by the string, a good release is impossible, since the string has to jump out of the groove for the arrow to get away. Maybe so, but that never happened to me or to those friends who still prefer the glove over the tab. Also, the glove is supposed to give a less smooth release than the tab, because the fingers can pinch together tightly around the nock, which doesn't readily happen with a tab. Again, maybe so, but I never had a

"Nobody can tell a bowhunter which tab or glove to buy. The best I can do is give a little rundown of a few of each, allowing the individual to try those he thinks might suit him."

problem with glove release, nor do my friends. I've seen newcomers with the glove pinch the nock so hard that the arrow was actually forced downward (bent) against the riser of the bow, but that problem can get unlearned in a hurry.

There are dozens of different shooting gloves and tabs currently available, so many that an archer can literally spend years trying different ones until he finds what he really likes. The soft

leather or hard leather choice is by itself a problem. It seems to me that softer leather allows a truly good feel of the string, which I don't mind at all, while harder leather no doubt offers a bit slicker surface for a clean release. The soft leather/hard leather choice exists with tabs as well as gloves. Tabs are made of many different materials nowadays, including synthetics. Some tabs have finger separators (dividers), some don't. I've always had good luck with the separator, which keeps the index finger and second finger apart so they cannot pinch the nock, but I recently tried a tab without a separator, and it worked fine for me. It's a matter of practice, I think.

Nobody can tell a bowhunter which tab or glove to buy. The best I can do is give a little rundown of a few of each, allowing the individual to try those he thinks might suit him. ♣

A Few of Fadala's Favorite Tabs and Gloves

Western Style Finger Tab
Jack Howard Archery Co.
21914 Hwy. 20
Nevada City, CA 95959

This tab is made of double thickness Cordovan leather with a hard slick surface. It takes glove powder (talcum) very well, making an even slicker surface for a good release. As with many tabs, this one may need minor adjustment, which normally means trimming a little bit of leather from the index finger portion.

Cordovan Shooting Tab
Screaming Eagle, Inc.
P.O. Box 4507
Missoula, MT 59806

Proving how different tabs can

be, this one is also made of Cordovan leather, but its design is entirely its own. It is one layer thick, and it does not have a finger separator or divider. It may take a day or two to get used to this aspect if your present tab does have a divider, but it can be done. One longbow shooter proclaimed that he got the best release ever using this tab.

The Shooting Glove
Jerry Hill Longbow Co.
P.O. Box 231
Wilsonville, AL 35186

This shooting glove carries no fancy name. Jerry Hill wants it that way, because he sees this glove as a true classic. It's a dead ringer for his Uncle Howard's glove, and it's made

the right way of the best materials. It's built to last a lifetime. Straps and wristband are of soft leather with Velcro fastener, while finger stalls are made of much harder leather.

Abel Shooting Glove
Abel Mfg. Co.
6915 N. Frontage Rd.
Fairland, IN 46126

This glove is not in the traditional style, and those who want a truly comfortable shooting glove may find it perfect. It is made of relatively soft leather, which does not readily take a groove. It allows good string feel, but I had no problem with a smooth release. Instead of strips of leather connecting the stalls to the wrist band, there is a wide

band of leather. It looks more like a regular glove than most archery shooting gloves, and it feels familiar on the hand.

Saunders Fab Tab
Saunders Archery Co.
P.O. Box 476
Columbus, NE 68601

This tab is slicker than a greased ice cube because it's made of a synthetic. It has a finger separator, and it comes in many different sub-styles. It'll wear for ages, and it doesn't take long to get used to. It's cool and light in the hand. The Fab Tab is a product of modern technology that works extremely well for the traditional archer.

NEET PRO-200 Finger Tab
NEET Products, Inc.
Rt. 2, Box 269B, Hwy. 50
Sedalia, MO 65301

Another absolutely unique tab, the PRO-2000, has what NEET calls a "touch and close hook and loop finger adjustment strap" for proper individual fit. This tab can actually be disassembled for parts replacement. It's made, essentially, of Cordovan leather.

NEET PFT-H Pinch Free Tab
NEET Products, Inc.
Rt. 2, Box 269B, Hwy. 50
Sedalia, MO 65301

Another neat tab from NEET, this is one of my all-time favorites. It comes in different styles, including the R.T.E. Rib Tab Facing, which makes less contact with the string for less friction. There is also a Super

Leather option that is soft enough for string feel, but slick enough for a fine release.

Damascus Shooting Glove
Butler's Bowhunting Supplies
163 Bear River Drive
Evanston, WY 82930

Proving that when it comes to gloves, you never know what variation you might see, the well-made and interesting Damascus Shooting Glove has Velcro fasteners; its made of tanned deerskin, but the tips are reinforced with goat skin, and it has a pull-tape fastener to ensure a snug fit.

Super Archery Mitt-Tab
Kustom King Arrows
1260 E. 86th Place
Merrillville, IN 46410

The Super Archery Mitt-Tab is exceedingly different from other tabs by design alone. It is adjustable for up to one-fourth inch to accommodate different finger sizes, and it's made of a single piece of leather so cleverly constructed that it looks like multiple pieces sewn together—but there are no stitches.

Mega Glove
VISTA
3505 E. 39th Ave.
Denver, CO 80205

The Mega Glove is this company's sub-model of their Comfort Glove. It's made of cordura backing with different facings, including what the company calls Mega Hide tips. Wide elastic wrist band and flexible knuckle area are other features.

Black Widow Wilson Tab
Black Widow Custom Bows, Inc.
P.O. Box 2100
Nixa, MO 65714

The Black Widow Wilson Tab is named for the Wilson Brothers, who originally owned the Black Widow company. Once again, design is entirely unique. Made of Superleather, the tab is virtually weatherproof. It has what the company calls "finger fenders" that protect against string burn. This tab went from target shooting to bowhunting.

Wyandotte Glove
Three Rivers Archery
Company
P.O. Box 517
Ashley, IN 46705

The major difference between the Wyandotte and other shooting gloves is the flexible band that exists between the finger stalls and the wrist band. It's made of tanned leather with closed finger tips, and it's currently the most popular glove sold by Three Rivers Archery.

Bateman Three Finger Under
Little Jon's Archery
5346 Missouri Road
Marshall, WI 53559

The Bateman Three Finger Under is a tab designed for those who do not use the English style draw. Instead of two fingers below and one finger above the string, all three fingers are placed underneath the nock.

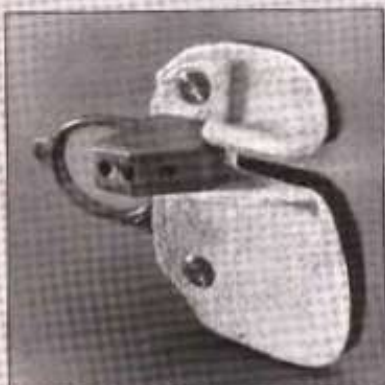
On the Market



Tab and gloves are made out of many different materials nowadays. This Montana tab is made out of Kangaroo hide. The toughness of 'roo is actually noticeable



Abel's shooting glove is made in the USA, as proudly displayed on the glove itself. This is much more a glove rather than finger stalls with a connected wrist band.



This Saunders Fab Tab is quite different from other sub-models of the same basic design. It still has the finger separator; however, raised material protects the sides of the fingers.



This is one of Saunders Fab Tabs. It is a single thickness of synthetic combined with a single thickness of felt. Notice the finger separator.



One of many NEET Products finger protectors, this is the PRO-2000 with touch and close hook and loop finger adjustment strap for proper individual fit.



Fadala sometimes shapes a tab the way he wants it by using a clothes pin, as shown here. This excellent NEET Super Leather Pinch Free Tab is pinched to shape it differently. Also note that middle finger hole has been enlarged.



Here, the NEET Pinch Free Tab is shown after the clothes pin has done its work. The tab is now mostly flat in shape, with ends slightly pitched toward each other.

CLUB LISTINGS

Please send Longbows & Recurves™ your updated local and state club information to include in our next issue.

ALABAMA

- Alabama Society of Traditional Bowmen, John Kimbrell,
334-361-8261
Montgomery Bowhunters Club, Bill Powell, P.O. Box 1367,
Montgomery, AL 36102, 334-277-7592
Traditional and Primitive Archers of Alabama, Troy D. Breeding,
981 Union Road, Somerville, AL 35670,
205-778-8871

ARKANSAS

- Traditional Bowhunters of Arkansas, Wayne Millican
501-327-8637, or Joe Clark 501-834-8883
Ozark Traditional Bowhunters, John Wolf, 4322 Beaver Lane,
Fayetteville, AR 72704-5535, 501-575-0784

ARIZONA

- Archers Who Care, Jim Schultz, 16144 E. Palisades Blvd.,
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268, 602-837-3119

CALIFORNIA

- Junior Bowhunter Program, National Field Archery Association,
Esther Rodighiero, 31407 Outer I-10, Redlands, CA 92373,
909-794-2133
Longbow Hunters International, Mel Toponce, 1953
Countrywood Court, Walnut Creek, CA 94598-1015,
510-938-2721
St. Sebastian's Renaissance Guild, Travis Fletcher, 2200 Carbine
Court, Elverta, CA 95626, 916-991-7905
Traditional Archers of California, Olivia and Robert Lawson,
6109 26th Street, Rio Linda, CA 95673-4608, 916-991-5350

CANADA

- Willow Ridge Traditional Bowhunters, Jeff Barker, 2823 Howell
Drive E., Regina, SK, Canada S4N 6G1, 306-789-8859
Traditional Bowhunters of Manitoba, Inc., Ron Missyabitt, 338
Victor Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3G 1P6,
204-772-8585
Traditional Bowhunters of New Brunswick, Gregg J. Doucette,
130 Biggs Street, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada E3B
6J6, 506-455-2247, 506-451-9520
Traditional Archers Association of Nova Scotia, Bernard A.
Clancey, 22 Chaswood Drive, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia,
Canada B2V 2E1, 902-462-0671
Quebec Longbow, Andre Lauzon, 20 4th Avenue, Pte-du-
Domaine, Ile-Perrot, Quebec, Canada J7V 7P2,
514-453-2889

COLORADO

- Colorado Traditional Archer's Society, P.O. Box 4262, Grand
Junction, CO 81502-4262, 970-242-4725
National Archery Association of the U.S., Robert Balink,
1 Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5778,
719-578-4576

ENGLAND

- Society for the Promotion of Traditional Archery, Hillary
Greenland, 14 Upton Road, Southville, Bristol, England BS3
1OP, 44-117-963-4197

FLORIDA

- Fred Bear Sports Club, Frank Scott, 4600 S.W. 41st Blvd.,
Gainesville, FL 32608, 352-376-2411
Traditional Bowhunters of Florida, Ron Weatherman, 21936
Freeman Drive, Umatilla, FL 32784, 352-669-5636

GEORGIA

- Robin Hood Archery Range, John Hood, 2915 Cade Circle,
Elberton, GA 30635-5733, 706-283-4878
Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia, Joey Buchanan, 4476 Debracy
Place, Tucker, GA 30084, 770-270-9424

IOWA

- Iowa Traditional Bowhunters Society, Jim Miller, 349 Central
Avenue, Evansdale, IA 50707, 319-232-7066

IDAHO

- Idaho Traditional Bowhunters, Doug Chase, 4507 N. Anchor
Way, Boise, ID 83703-3168, 208-336-6761

ILLINOIS

- Illinois Traditionalists, Jeff Carr, Box 166, Hildago, IL 62432-
0166, 618-793-2005
Southern Illinois Traditional Bowhunters, Larry Hughes, 174 Rock
Springs Road, Makonda, IL 62958, 618-529-2818

INDIANA

- Indiana Longbow Association, Robert Schumake, Box 33,
Fairland, IN 46126-9803, 317-835-7239
Indiana Traditional Bowhunters Association, O. J. Cornett, 2810
N. Slab, Austin, IN 47102, 812-752-6264

KANSAS

- Kansas Traditional Archers Association, Kip Hoffman, 9812 Hwy.
K177, Alta Vista, KS 66834, 913-499-6328

KENTUCKY

- Bearhill Traditional Archers, Howard L. Rogers, General Delivery,
Hazel, KY 42049-9999, 502-492-8505

LOUISIANA

- Beyou State Bowhunters Association, Russell Lantier, HC18, Box
71H, Homer, LA 71040, 318-927-3915
Louisiana Traditional Bowmen, Troy Laurent, P.O. Drawer 160,
Morganza, LA 70759, 504-694-2223
Many Archery Club, Bud Frey, 1104 Maple Avenue, Many, LA,
71449, 318-256-5769

MASSACHUSETTS

- St. Sebastian Archery Society, Tom McDonald, 124 Lake Street,
East Weymouth, MA 02189, 617-335-3424, 617-335-1769

CLUB LISTINGS continued on page 63.

The Recurve Maker

RANDY BAIN

by Tom Hoar



Most of us can remember certain events during childhood that shaped the course of our lives— events that, as adults, we recognize as important factors in the mix that made us who we are.

For Randy Bain, it was a father's gift.

"My dad bought me a bow when I was five years old," he said. "He was active in archery at a time when not many people were. I have pictures of him as a young man, hunting with a recurve. There weren't any compound bows then. Because of his love of archery, I had a love for it even as a young child."

Bain still has that bow. He also has the first bow he ever made, a one-piece recurve "so ugly I don't even show it to people." And he still has a love of traditional archery that burns brighter every year.

The son of a Baptist minister, Randy Bain was born in Calhoun County, Mississippi. His family moved to Lafayette County when his father accepted a call to a Baptist church there, and he grew up roaming the area's hardwood ridges and bottoms. Today, he too is a husband and father, and a Baptist pastor. At thirty-eight, he is also an accomplished and recognized bowyer.

Bain has been a bowyer for years; by the time he was a teen, he was a skilled archer. "It was about that time that compounds came out," he said. "I thought they were the greatest thing since sliced bread. You could hold them longer and they shot so much harder. So I went to a compound like everybody else." But the infatuation was short-lived. "It was just too mechanical," Bain explained. "I lost my love for archery. I kept thinking about when I was a boy and how much I loved it. I wanted to rekindle that, to go back there. So I started shooting my old recurve again. I guess that's where my beginnings were."

After attending seminary in Memphis, Bain accepted a call to a Baptist church just north of Oxford, Mississippi. There he began building his now prized Genesis recurves—namesakes of the Biblical word for "beginning."

"I just had a dream," he said. "I think that is how everything starts, when you have a dream and you try to make it a reality. I had a little shop there, and in my free time I worked on my bows. I loved it so much that I'd get up at four o'clock in the morning and work late at night." But success did not come easily. The sleek recurves he makes today reflect years of effort and experimentation. Notebooks log every bow built, specifications, and the result. If a bow failed, Bain would determine the cause and correct it or try something new. The end result is a high-performance, custom takedown that is both fast and beautiful. Doing it the hard way, he found, was the best way to learn. "I didn't know anybody who made bows, so I ordered some literature and did it by trial and error," he explained. "And I made a lot of mistakes. A lot of my early bows blew up the first time I drew them. It

was heartbreaking to invest twenty-five hours in something, then have to go back to the drawing board. I existed on sheer determination."

The problem, he found, was due to moisture, or a lack of it. "I really didn't understand how critical moisture was in wood," he said. "In order to cure the epoxy that holds laminated limbs together, the limbs must be heated. I was getting them so hot for so long that I was driving every bit of moisture out of the wood. It was mixing with the epoxy, or forming a barrier, and the epoxy wouldn't hold. Since I eliminated that problem, I have not had any—not any—delaminate." Once he perfected his design and technique, Bain set to work. "I started out trying to sell as many bows as I could," he said. "But when you try to make a living at something, it's work. And I already have a job. I don't do it for the money any more. I do it for fun."

Building bows, he says, brings relief from a stressful profession. "Everybody needs something like that if they're going to live very long. If someone calls, I can't promise that I can build them a bow. Sometimes I have the time and sometimes I don't, but I tell them I'll do my best. Most people understand that I don't do it as a business."

Bain uses both exotic and local woods, and currently works with bubinga and zebra wood from Africa and osage orange, or bodock, from trees less than twenty miles from his home. Inset accents of maple, walnut, and colorful rain forest woods add to each bow's character. "Bubinga and zebra wood are beautiful," he said, "but bubinga is the hardest stuff I've ever seen. It's so hard that when you sand it, it burns. The bodock bow I'm working on now won't

be as pretty as those, but it will be unique. The wood came from trees near Sardis Lake that were knocked down by an ice storm two years ago. I grew up out there, so that wood is special to me."

For Bain, the work involved in building each new bow is truly a labor of love. "You hold a piece of wood in your hand, and you realize it was once a living tree," he said. "With your own sweat, you carve it out and put it together, then use what you've made to shoot at a deer or a target. I get a great deal of pleasure from that."

It should come as no surprise that the traditional aspects of archery and bowhunting are dear to Bain. The fact that traditional archers rely on themselves, rather than their equipment, makes the sport unique. "Traditional archery is something that's filled with warmth and lore," he said. "It's romantic. Shooting a bow that's not mechanical in any way, relying completely on your instincts, uses all of your

**"Building bows,
he says, brings relief
from a stressful
profession.
'Everybody needs
something like that if
they're going to live
very long.'"**



(Counter clockwise from top left)

1. Bain begins the process with a choice cut of wood.
2. The instrument in the hands of its maker.
3. Bain, gently perfecting one of his bow's limbs.
4. Bain gives this recurve some final adjustments.



Randy Bain's takedown recurve functions with accuracy and power.

God-given abilities. I think that's why traditional archers enjoy archery more than anyone else. There are more rewards than those you can see."

Learning to shoot instinctively, he believes, is within everyone's grasp. "You can train yourself," he said. "Your mind programs the speed of that arrow and the distance to the target. I've heard people compare it to throwing a football. A good quarterback drops back, sees an open receiver, and just throws it. Everything is done in his brain. He does not judge the distance or guess whether it's twenty, twenty-five, or thirty yards; he just throws it. Everything is automatic. It's the same with traditional archery. It all takes place in your brain, and that really makes it a lot of fun. Sometimes

you make errors and miss. But that just reminds you that you're human."

An avid hunter, Bain uses his own recurves throughout Mississippi's bow and gun seasons for deer and occasionally during the spring turkey season. And though he has not yet taken a trophy buck with one of his bows, he certainly can not blame the equipment. His nerves, he says, are the culprit. "I could tell you about some really big deer I've missed with my bows," he said, laughing. "I was easing toward my stand one morning a few years ago, just at daylight. I was moving real slow, just looking. I saw a flicker of movement, then saw a deer coming right down the slough toward me. I just stepped over into a treetop. It was a massive buck—a mas-

sive one. It walked out into the water, turned and came right to me. Finally, at about twenty yards, he stopped and turned broadside. Whether I shot high or low, I don't know. But I missed." The buck, neck swollen in rut, bounded about twenty yards and stopped again. Bain loosed another arrow, missing again. The deer ran fifty yards further and stopped again. "I had a grunt call, so I started grunting," said Bain. "The deer ran right back to me and stopped about fifteen yards on the other side of my treetop. By then, I was jello. I was totally shook. So I let another arrow go, and of course, it hit a tree. And then he was gone."

Missing, he knows, is part of the game. Enjoying the opportunity, not necessarily the result, is at the heart of traditional archery. "A lot of people are trying to make a name for themselves, to get a record-book buck regardless of the cost," he said. "I'm probably talking from a preacher's point of view, but I think they've lost sight of what success is in hunting. If I come home empty handed, it's not what's in my hand that counts but what's in my heart, and my heart is always full. I may not have a lot of entries in the Pope and Young book, but I have a lot of entries in my heart. Success is what you get out of it. For me, it's enjoyment. The satisfaction, fellowship, and enjoyment that comes from traditional archery is beyond description."

By that standard, Randy Bain is successful indeed. *by*

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PIGS IN PARADISE

by Matt Schuster

I ducked my head for the tenth time in five minutes as I pushed my way through a bamboo thicket along a small slough off of the Ocmulgee River in south Georgia. I was not comfortable in this thicket at all. Although it wasn't extremely hot this July day, I was convinced that I had already walked past dozens of water moccasins and rattlesnakes and surely the first one that made it out of my imagination would be the one with two sharp fangs buried into one of my ankles.

Eventually, after being bitten only by a particularly fierce thorn bush, I emerged into a clearing at the end of my destination — a two hundred yard long, eight yards wide strip of sorghum, lovingly planted to attract the local deer and wild hog population. Three black boars, hundred pounders at least, were just entering the strip twenty yards away, totally unaware of my presence. Spotting them several minutes earlier heading toward the sorghum, I had fought my way through the thick stuff in order to get into shooting position before they arrived.

Taking a shot at a big game animal is not the most exciting moment in bowhunting for me. The most exciting moment for me is at the precise moment when I realize that I am going to get a shot at a big game animal. It is at this moment when my heart starts pounding, my arms get weak, and I often quit breathing. Luckily, shooting a traditional bow is

mostly a subconscious exercise and the less-rattled part of my brain usually comes through. But not today. I forgot everything that I know about shooting a longbow and managed to miss the closest boar, broadside, at only fifteen yards. My cedar arrow glided several inches over his back and buried into a pine tree with enough noise to scatter the group of porkers in a matter of seconds. It is hard to be too disappointed after getting a shot minutes into a hunt, although it is extremely discouraging to miss a "gimme" and manage to do absolutely nothing right in the process. I walked over to pull my arrow while muttering age-old wisdoms such as "pick a spot" and "come to full draw." I needed an excuse and decided that I simply was not mentally ready to shoot a critter that afternoon; I had too much of the city left in me.

I had been "pedal to the metal" all day long; I pushed to get my work done by noon Friday so I could get in a two and a half day hunt. By Thursday morning, I felt that I deserved even more time off, so mid-afternoon I loaded up and sped away from Atlanta determined to slip in an evening hunt. The timing was perfect. The weatherman was calling for a rare cool weekend, with highs only in the eighties. The numerous sorghum strips planted at The Paradise Hunt Club were ripe enough to attract pigs from miles around. I arrived at camp with an hour of daylight to spare, so I





Matt Schuster with pig from Paradise.

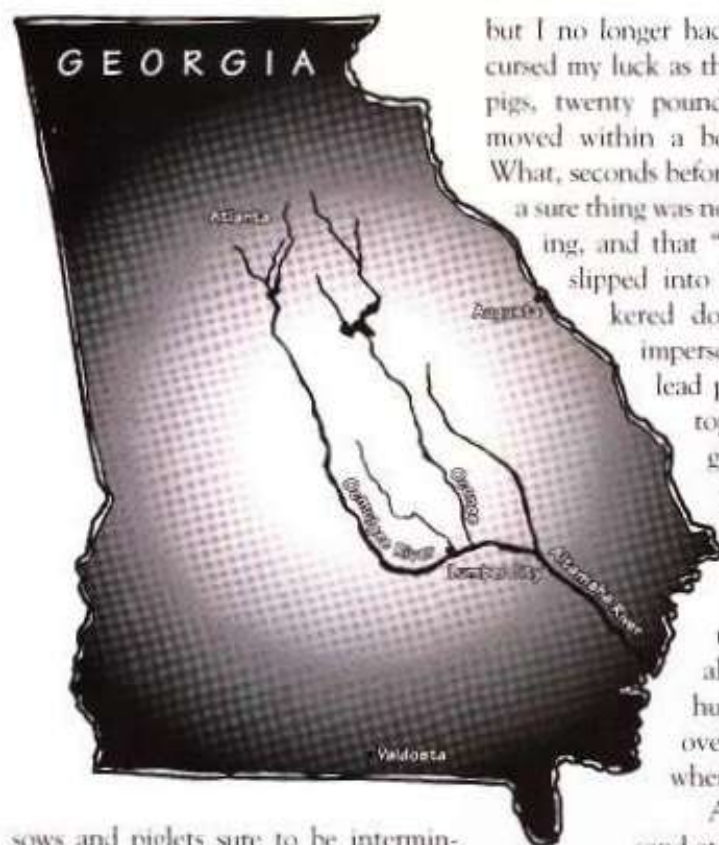
touched up a few broadheads, threw on a camo shirt, made a hasty and poor decision not to take a few practice shots, and took off for the river. I was so rushed that I simply was not ready to deal with the quick success that I found when I ran into the three hogs.

Back at camp that evening, I commiserated with several other members. All had been into pigs, but no pork was destined for the grill just yet. Our club, affectionately known as the "Paradise" consists of four thousand acres of planted pines, hardwood bottoms, and cypress swamps along the Ocmulgee River in south Georgia. The best fea-

ture of the club, besides the fact that it is intensely managed for deer and hogs by the club's founder, Sam Roberts, is that membership is reserved for traditional bowhunters only. The game population at the Paradise is excellent, and the pigs hit a peak during the summer months when sloughs are brimming with crayfish, and the sorghum and other tasty morsels are ripening in the fifty acres of food plots. Both the terrain and the natural noisiness of the quarry make spot and stalk bowhunting the ideal tactic for arrowing a pig. Still it is not easy. The hogs here are wild, not fenced-in or released, and taking a truly

big boar off the ground with traditional equipment is tough. To keep the population high, club members try to take only pigs less than one hundred pounds or large boars and protect the big breeder sows. Heavy-tusked boars are numerous but extremely wary and hard to approach except when running a sow in heat.

After an evening spent telling typical hunter lies, shooting bows, and watching alligators swim in the bayou next to camp, I could tell that my inner timing was slowing down to match the pace of life in the swamp. I was ready the next morning as I left camp with longbow in hand, confident that any meeting with a pig this day would result in fresh pork loin on the smoker for dinner. I headed for a thousand-acre tract of thickly planted pines on high sandy ground crisscrossed with food plots. The area offered not only everything a pig needs: cover, food, and water, but everything a hunter needs: numerous pigs and sandy soil made for silent stalking. The sun had not yet crested the trees when I had action. Several raucous, porcine squeals violated the peacefulness of the summer morning and instantly filled my head with visions of large boars fighting over a hot sow. The commotion was only a couple hundred yards away and I closed in quickly. At sixty yards, I could see waves of sorghum tossing violently as a large band of pigs ripped seed heads from stalks. The sorghum, about thirty inches high, hid the pigs from view, but allowed me to sneak to less than forty yards. Unfortunately, the greenery also kept me from being able to pick out a shooter. Feeding hogs move quickly and as the group moved away from me, I found myself hurrying to close within killing range. The key to getting a shot at a feeding hog is to hang back at forty or fifty yards until you can identify which pig you desire, then to move in quickly for the shot. If you move in on a large group of roving hogs, then spend too much time picking out a target, you risk being betrayed by an errant breeze or being spotted by one of the many



but I no longer had a shot. I silently cursed my luck as the group of smaller pigs, twenty pounders at the most, moved within a bow length of me. What, seconds before, had seemed like a sure thing was now rapidly unraveling, and that "not again" feeling slipped into my brain. I hunkered down and tried to impersonate a bush as the lead piglet got right on top of me and started grunting. This caught the attention of the big sow and she took one look at me, sounded an alarm snort and my hunt appeared to be over as pigs ran everywhere.

As I squatted in the sand at the edge of a food strip muttering to myself, I heard a grunt, then another, coming through the sorghum toward me. Evidently, at least one pig had been too busy chowing down to heed the alarm call and was now searching for his companions. He closed in on me fast and I just had time to put one knee down as he emerged from the stalks directly in front of me. At ten yards, the eighty-pound boar looked up, saw the lump squatted in front of him and stopped dead in his tracks. The string of my longbow

inched slowly back toward my face as I waited for this little porker to turn sideways. As if on cue, he began to circle and just as he began to show signs of spooking, I released and watched the yellow feathers of my arrow zip through both lungs. He squealed and made a mad dash for the safety of the nearby pine thicket.

I rolled off my knees and scooted up under a tree. For twenty minutes I simply sat and enjoyed the summer morning and the satisfying feeling of success. As I ruminated about how lucky I was to be carrying my bow around this beautiful place, the sun cleared the tops of the trees surrounding me and the temperature began to rise noticeably. This was Georgia in July after all. The numerous bird calls of the morning were quickly being replaced by the constant drone of heat loving insects. When I could stand to wait no longer, I eased down the rows of sorghum until I found the beginning of a steady blood trail. A short fifty yards into the woods lay my barbecue.

Sam Roberts is fond of saying that the only bad thing about pig hunting is that you might end up with a dead pig. I have my own slightly more positive version of this saying, and it goes like this: Cleaning a dead pig in the hot summer sun may not be a heck of a lot of fun, but it sure as heck beats digging a sharp broadhead out of an old pine tree. ✎

sows and piglets sure to be intermingling with the shooters. When the pigs are feeding in any kind of thick cover, picking out a shooter can be an exercise in frustration.

I could identify three large black hogs and shaking sorghum told me that there could be another dozen pigs in addition. After following them for nearly fifteen minutes I felt sure that I had identified the boar, and I carefully closed from forty to fifteen yards in thirty seconds. Unfortunately, the two other large porkers, probably sows, moved up with my intended prey and by the time I was in shooting position I simply could not tell which was the boar. I picked a spot just behind the shoulder of the closest hog, which was feeding blissfully unaware of my presence, and imagined my arrow zipping through it. But I could not shoot. I did not want to chance shooting a big breeder sow by mistake.

As I searched for some sign of porcine masculinity on this critter, several smaller pigs began to feed toward me followed by a mature gray sow. As these non-shooters moved in on me, I finally confirmed that my imagined target of moments ago was indeed a boar,



INSIDE...

The African Elephant— Howard Hill's Childhood Dream

by Jerry Hill

It is an exciting moment in archery history. Fifty-year-old Howard Hill stands atop an ant hill in the Belgian Congo. High above the elephant grass, he knows that one small blade of grass can deflect his arrow and cause a miss of the killer bull elephant. He shoots with a special bamboo glass backed longbow, and the arrow finds its mark between the ribs into the heart and lungs. The five-ton elephant with tusks as long as the longbow comes crashing down.

Immediately a second elephant charges. Hill draws another arrow, this time shooting the beast in the head. The elephant veers off into the bush, almost trampling Hill and a cameraman.

Fortunately for bowhunters, the moment is captured by a film crew for the movie, "Tembo." The film follows Hill, who died in 1975, on his nine-month African expedition in 1950.

When this expedition was over, Hill, who already had the reputation as the world's foremost bowhunter, lacked only the rhinoceros of the big five game since he killed three elephants, a cape buffalo, two African lions, and a leopard on this expedition. His bird shooting, including many difficult wing shots, netted guinea fowl, ducks, sand grouse, and buzzards. He also took antelope, two

cheetahs, jackals, hyenas, reptiles, and fish. Howard Hill's African elephant hunt is especially remarkable since it made him the first white man on record to kill an elephant with a bow and nonpoisonous arrow. Other archers could then think of the elephant as fair game for the bow and arrow.

"He would tell his father of his future plans to 'kill an elephant with my bow.'"

Although Hill's favorite weight bows for hunting were between eighty and 110 pounds at full draw, the equipment he used in the African expedition was specially made during the months previous to the departure. For the elephant he constructed a special bamboo glass-backed longbow called "Gram-Ma" drawing 115 pounds at twenty-eight inches. Heavy pulling as it was, this weight was still a far cry from the 172 pound osage bow he used to set his flight record on February 26, 1928, but he thought it would be more than enough since in previous tests, he had shot his arrows through five automobile tire casings. The arrows for "Gram-Ma" had the usual parabolic fletch, but otherwise

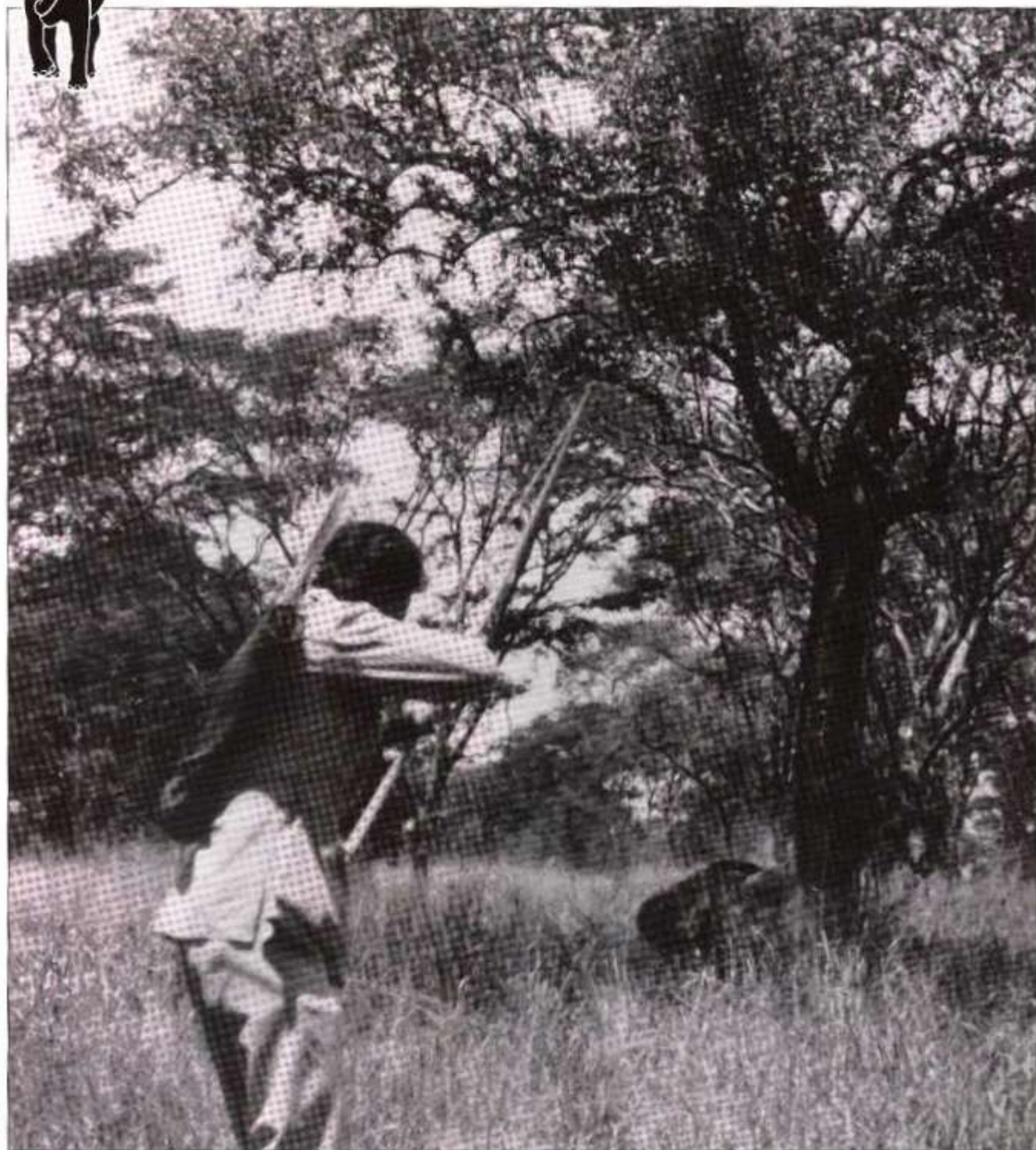


Jerry Hill

they were quite different. Made of a special 24SRTX Easton aluminum tubing instead of his favored wood arrows, the elephant arrows were 41 inches long and weighed 1700 grains. This size and weight increased the

danger of the hunt because arrows that large were a bit clumsy to handle when nocking and drawing. To be really effective the arrows would have to be shot from a fairly close distance.

The broadheads were made of gun barrel steel and hardened to the hardness of a crosscut saw blade. The broadheads were barbed in design and the ferrule was welded to the blade. The total length of the head measured 8-3/4 inches from tip to tip. The main blade measured four inches long and 1-1/8 inches wide, with straight edge cutting surfaces and vent holes to avoid wind-planing or side-stepping while in flight. The ferrule was reduced in size to one inch to allow



Photographs courtesy of Jerry Hill.

Howard Hill stands atop an ant hill well above the tall grass for a clear shot at Tembo, a known killer.





Ed Hill, Wayne Stotler, Carl Mikule, and Howard Hill pose with second bull elephant. Note the arrow placement into the elephant's left eye.



Wounded from the second arrow, the lion moves in for the kill.



Drawing the arrow from his quiver, Hill prepares to shoot again. Note the arrow shot into the lion above the eye.

the head to be hot-melt glued onto the aluminum shaft.

For all other arrows, Howard used a smaller ferrule made out of the jet-age alloy, "Duraluminum," which was heavy-riveted to the main blade. The arrows were made by the Ben Pearson Archery Company of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. While increasing the danger of the hunt, the heavy arrow made possible the 31-1/2 inches of penetration into the elephant.

Not only did Hill's triumph over the elephant mean archery history, but it meant a personal triumph for him as well. Family stories abound about how he envisioned that someday he would kill an elephant with his bow and arrow. As early as four years old he was dreaming the dream when, in his home state of Alabama, he first saw a huge circus elephant. As he grew expert with the bow and arrow, the dream continued as he would tell his father of his future plans to "kill an elephant with my bow."

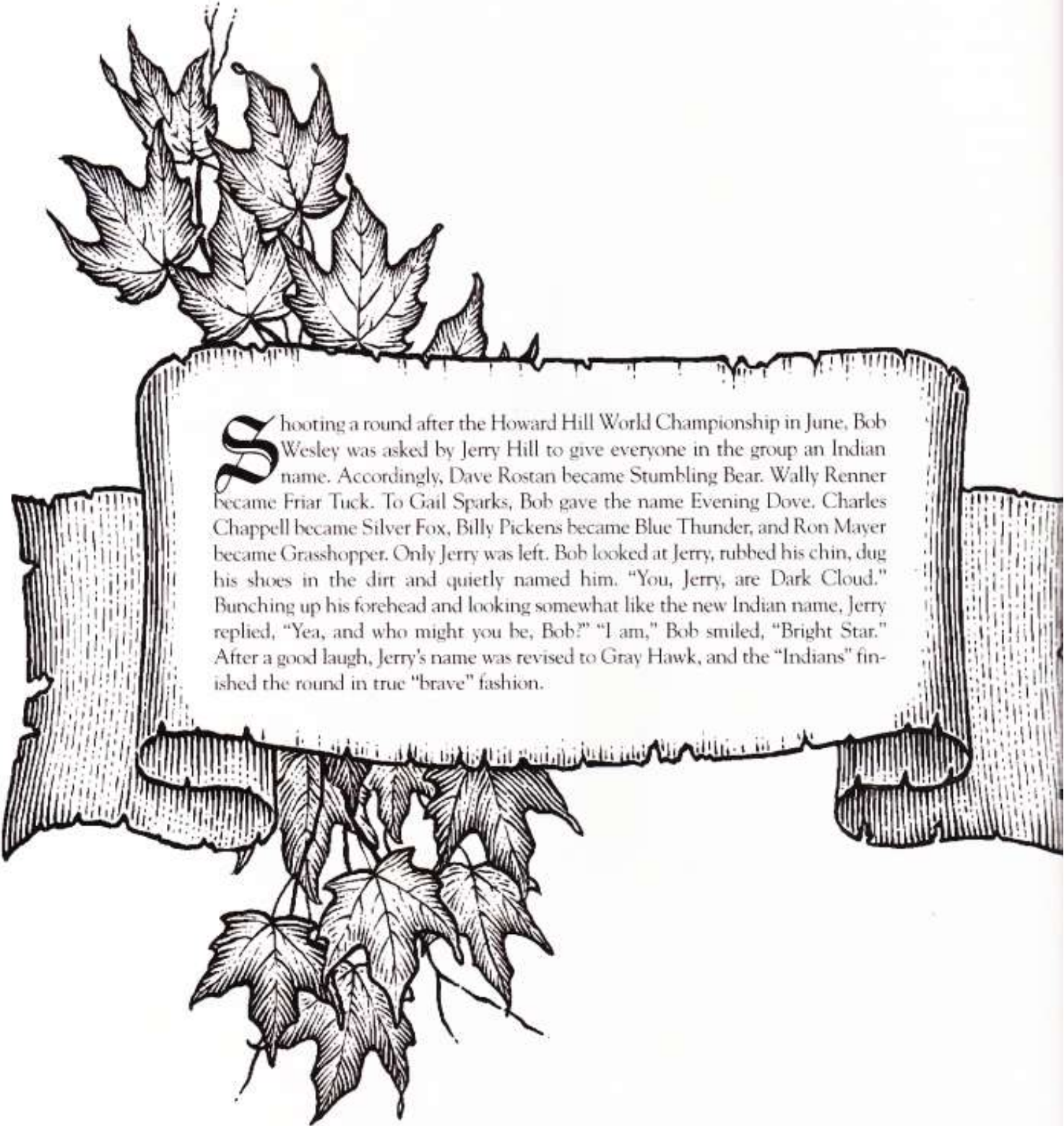
Howard Hill, in his African expedition, lived his childhood dream of shooting an elephant with just a stick and string. It is fortunate that "Tembo" lets today's bowhunter share in Howard Hill's extraordinary experience. ¹⁴

Note: "Tembo" is available from Jerry Hill Longbow Co., 515 McGowan Road, Wilsonville, AL 35186, (205) 669-6134



HOWARD HILL IN AFRICA.

FROM THE FIELD



Shooting a round after the Howard Hill World Championship in June, Bob Wesley was asked by Jerry Hill to give everyone in the group an Indian name. Accordingly, Dave Rostan became Stumbling Bear. Wally Renner became Friar Tuck. To Gail Sparks, Bob gave the name Evening Dove. Charles Chappell became Silver Fox, Billy Pickens became Blue Thunder, and Ron Mayer became Grasshopper. Only Jerry was left. Bob looked at Jerry, rubbed his chin, dug his shoes in the dirt and quietly named him. "You, Jerry, are Dark Cloud." Bunching up his forehead and looking somewhat like the new Indian name, Jerry replied, "Yea, and who might you be, Bob?" "I am," Bob smiled, "Bright Star." After a good laugh, Jerry's name was revised to Gray Hawk, and the "Indians" finished the round in true "brave" fashion.



Keith Bain, Edith Bain, Paul Sparks, and Bob Wesley take a break at the Louisiana Traditional Bowmen's shoot in St. Francisville.



Bull pen at the Howard Hill World Championship.

MORE FROM THE FIELD

Two grandsons accompanying Johnny E. Stelly of Port Barre, Louisiana did some shooting which rivaled some of the adult shooting at this year's Louisiana Traditional Bowmen's Shoot in St. Francisville, Louisiana. A strong interest in frying bugs in a citronella candle around the evening campfire, however, took precedence over later archery talk with nine-year-old Johnny Stelly and brother seven-year-old Chance Stelly, along with other youngsters.

If you and your family haven't told stories, sang songs, and fried some bugs around a campfire with other archers at a traditional rendezvous, Longbows & Recurves™ urges you to put it in your plans for next year.



Mickey Wilson and friends wait for the next moving target at the Hill shoot.



D.D. Quillian hones in on the target in Wilsonville, Alabama.



Tom McBrayer retrieves arrow at the Howard Hill World Championship, in Wilsonville, Alabama.



Michael Stanley, Jr. waits for Tembo to take to the bush, at the Hill shoot.

Dan Quillian in Athens, Georgia tells of a shooter coming to him not long ago complaining he just couldn't get straight arrow flight. "While I stood behind him," Quillian says, "he was drawing the bow about an inch and a half to the left and gripping it like it was a baseball bat." After Quillian explained the correct hand placement and was told "That's not the way I shoot," he replied to the shooter who hopefully learned his lesson: "Well, all I can say to that is, if all you want to do is practice your mistakes, then you'll never be the archer you could be."

MORE FROM THE FIELD

Barbara Sims of Baton Rouge, Louisiana sent a newspaper clipping not long ago telling of how sheriff's deputies in Jefferson Parish were planning to use crossbows to answer calls from residents when nutria, rat-like mammals, show up in backyards and other confined areas. The Associated Press story relates that crossbows and specially-made arrows are being used in human-populated areas since bullets can ricochet from the .22 caliber rifles deputies normally use for such hunts. Why don't we send them some traditional bows and some volunteers?



The Louisiana Traditional Bowmen's rendezvous includes not only shooting, but the camaraderie of fellow archers.

The Bows Of Hiawatha

Based on Henry
Wadsworth Longfellow's
story titled *Hiawatha*
and the Pearl-Feather



by James Coal Train Walker

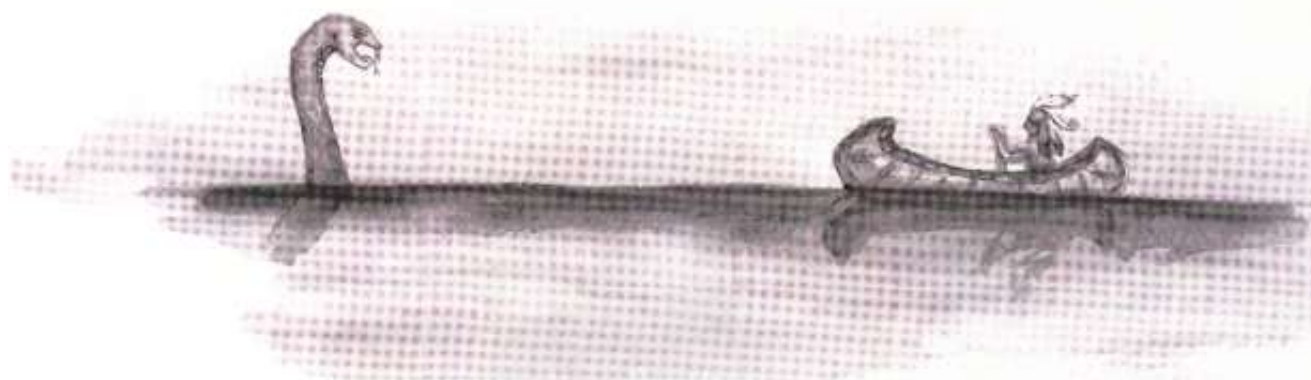
Fire-spitting serpents swimming in black waters that stretched to a sunset ever purple guarded the land of the Great Pearl-Feather, Manito of Wealth and Wampum, also known as the evil Magician. The Great Pearl-Feather slew Hiawatha's great grandfather by wicked craft, for the Magician controlled the cruellest killer of all, Disease. Pearl-Feather sent Disease, invisible, from the dark marshes against the People.

Hiawatha's great grandfather did not see Pearl-Feather's henchman steal upon him. The cloaked assailant breathed his poisonous vapor upon the father of Nokomis. Then the coward stole back to his master in the black swamp to boast of his conquest.

Nokomis, grandmother of Hiawatha, patiently waited for the boy to mature into the god-man that now he was. She bade him take his powerful bow and straight arrows tipped with broadheads of Jasper sharper than eagle talons, and go forth in revenge upon the evil Pearl-Feather and his deadly ally, Disease.

Hiawatha boarded his birch bark canoe. Nestling down in her transparent skin all by himself, he swept the water with great paddle strokes. The craft leaped forward like a salmon. The warrior, Hiawatha, a year before swallowed by a giant sturgeon, escaped by attacking the great fish from within. When the monster beached, releasing the great archer, sea gulls tore the fish's flesh. Now oil from the same sturgeon dressed the sides of the canoe as she slipped silently through the water.

The magic oil turned aside the inky liquid slapping Hiawatha's canoe as the little boat cut a path toward the Great Pearl-Feather's land. The Indian



Brave patted her side, praising her sharp bow as it sliced the dark waters. The canoe answered with a leap to show her master how cunningly she parted the aqueous barrier that lead to the land of the deadly Magician.

A war-eagle followed high above the canoe, screaming in anticipation of the coming battle. Soon Hiawatha saw before him huge serpents ever-searching for interlopers daring to approach the lair of the Great Pearl-Feather. The reptiles expected easy conquest of this floating creature by reducing it to fevered ash with jets of fire from their fangs. But Hiawatha did not falter at the sight of the hideous eyes staring over the surface of the black water.

He reached for his powerful bow, nocking an arrow on the string, the jagged edge of the broadhead gleaming against the dull waters, reflecting flames of light flashing from the serpents' fiery breaths. The huge snakes sensed fear for the first time and in self-defense tried to instill the same emotion in the heart of the archer. "Go back. You are but a boy. Our fires will consume you. Turn away while you still have life." The warrior, Hiawatha, concentrated only on the skulls waving above the waters. Blending anger with resolve, he drew his great bow against the first serpent as it raised its body menacingly, with fire shooting from its long fangs.

The swift arrow parted the skull like a sword, and the scaly beast sank in depths of murky water like a coil of petrified wood. Another arrow whined from the bow with a hiss more dreadful than the serpents'. The sharp broadhead found its mark and a second

writhing beast sank beneath the black waters. Then another, and another, until all lay on the bottom of the dreaded lake, coiling and uncoiling for endless time.

Hiawatha looked with pity upon human corpses floating in the stagnant water, all victims of the Great Pearl-Feather's assassin, Disease. He held in front of his face the charmed scarf given to him by Grandmother Nokomis, breathing through the pores of the cloth to clear the dank air of the foul and deadly smell.

All night the craft of Hiawatha made its wake, until at last the warrior saw before him flames rising from the sea. He stroked the long paddles against on-coming waves until the bow of his canoe rested upon the land where the Manito of Wampum ruled. There, Hiawatha landed his faithful friend, hiding her among green plants.

He walked not far before seeing the lodge of the Great Pearl-Feather, a fortress covered with hard shells of wampum, as the body of the evil thing inside was likewise protected. An arrow sailed against the lodge, breaking away a chunk of armor. "Come out, coward, and bring thy lowly servant that strikes unseen," challenged Hiawatha. The warrior remembered to place in front of his eyes the special glass given him by Nokomis, who found it lying next to her one morning after a long journey to the Land of Dreams.

Through the glass, Hiawatha's eyes saw what they could not see before. Standing by the lodge of the Great Pearl-Feather, a dark figure in robes, no flesh on its bones, stared at him with an

unchanging grin. The warrior nocked an arrow on the string of his powerful bow and sent the shaft speeding toward the white forehead gleaming beneath its black cloak. The broadhead splintered its target, pieces of bone flying everywhere, and from two caverns where eyes should have been, flames shot out. The creature threw its arms into the air with bony fingers outspread, and, reeling, fell upon the ground.

From the portal of the lodge stepped a figure more hideous than the fallen one, its body covered with hard wampum. It screamed the fierce cry of the cougar at the sight of its companion lying dead. Grasping a heavy stone-head war club in one hand and a black-tipped spear in the other, Manito of Wampum strode forward. The spear flew against the warrior, who threw aside the magic glass from his eyes, dodging the weapon as it roared on the air like the wings of eagles diving out of the clouds upon swans below.

Hiawatha sent a sharp-tipped arrow against the form in front of him, but the jasper head shattered into a million pieces against the terrible coat of wampum. The Great Pearl-Feather laughed. "Hiawatha, great grandson of Nakomis's father slain so long ago, you cannot kill me. The father of Nakomis could not kill me. Now I will split you like a piece of wood for the fire."

The huge form moved forward, shrieking. "I know you," it bellowed, its voice like thunder resounding from the wooded hills beyond the lodge. "Best you return to the side of old Nokomis and tell her that I spared your life to show my great power, so great I need

not crush you, for there would be no honor in killing a weak boy." Pearl-Feather concluded his speech with a laugh, expecting the brave to run. But Hiawatha did not retreat. He fired a second winged shaft against the armor of wampum. Again the broadhead shattered, only a few hard shells tinkling among the rocks.

The mighty figure stalked closer. Black feathers rose from its head like burned trees on a mountain top. Hiawatha aimed his next arrow below the feathers, releasing his deadly dart. But the jasper head exploded on the broad forehead of Manito of Wampum, sending a shower of sparks into the air like a lightning bolt striking a white boulder.

Hiawatha laid aside his faithful bow and leather quiver of arrows, taking from his belt a mighty war axe. Blows rang through the forest like the sounds of gladiators' blades clashing on ancient armor. The battle raged for hours, until the Great Pearl-Feather's weapon struck the shoulder of the warrior, sending him sprawling upon the ground. Hiawatha looked up at the giant figure looming over him. He saw next to him the bow that already failed against the Great Pearl-Feather. He saw also a small form perched upon his leather quiver. The little creature spoke to him.

The dull gray head of a woodpecker bobbed up and down as the bird addressed the brave warrior. "Your life is but one blow away, Hiawatha," the bird warned, "but there is time to save yourself. Take up your bow with arrow of jasper head, but aim only for the temple of the Great Pearl-Feather. Nothing can pierce the front of his granite head." The bird rose on its wings, fluttering about Manito of Wampum, who turned to breathe his deadly breath against the small winged creature. As Manito turned, Hiawatha loosed his shaft at the temple of the giant. The broadhead ripped into the Magician's skull like a harpoon into Leviathan.

The Great Pearl-Feather screamed and dropped his war axe. He leaped

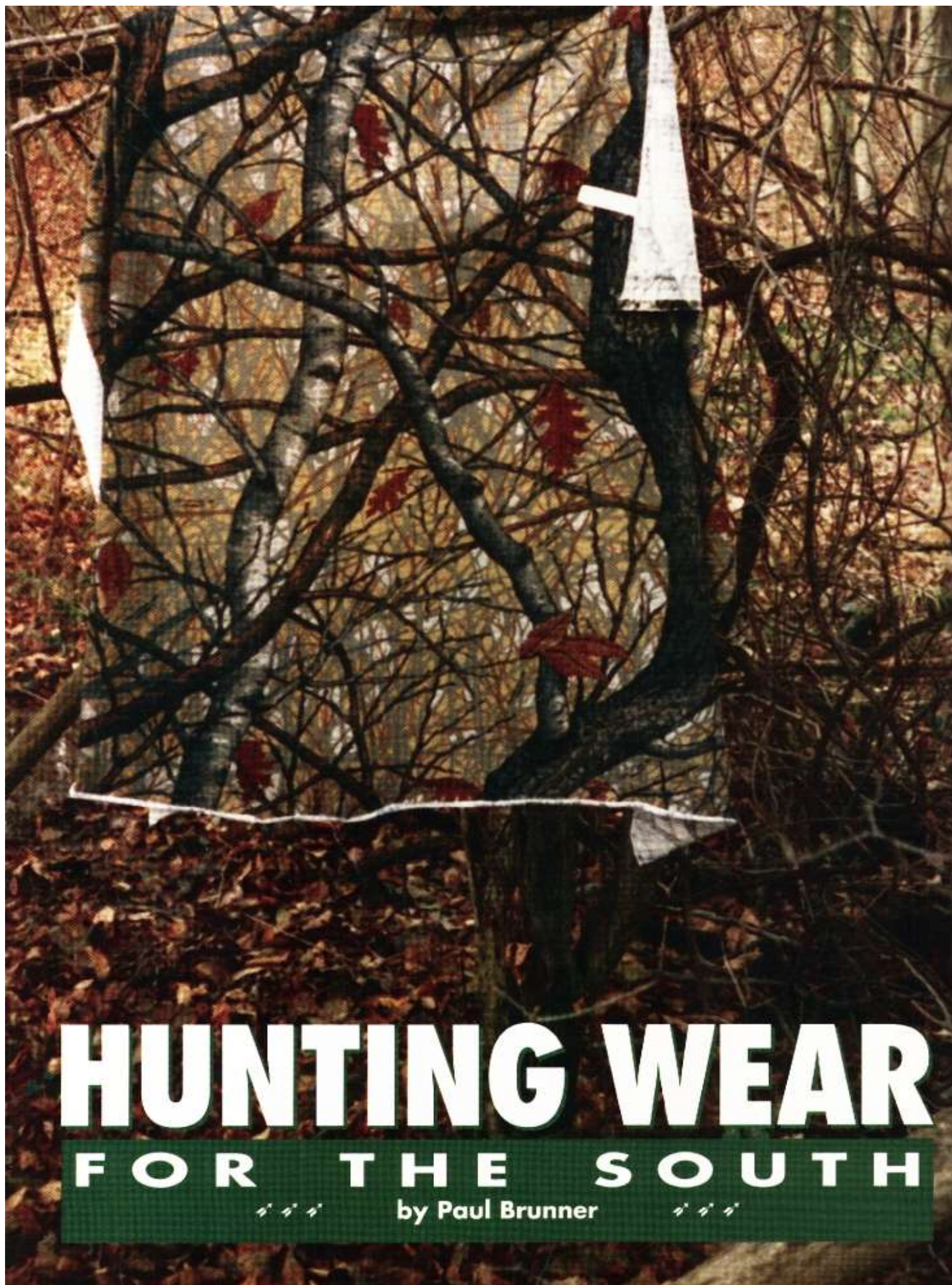
into the air with pain and fright, his black crown of feathers exploding, his jacket of wampum bursting into pieces, bits of pearl shell flying. Hiawatha watched the beast roll on the earth, crushing lush vegetation beneath him. The warrior fitted another arrow on the string, aiming again at the temple of the Magician. The feathered shaft flew. Now the Great Pearl-Feather writhed on the earth as his serpents rolled beneath the black waters.

Lifeless as a fallen tree lay the Manito of Wampum; the woodpecker perched on a remaining single black feather striking out sharply from the Magician's head. Hiawatha crouched by the bird. Drawing from his sheath a sharp knife, he touched the blade lightly against the tip of his own finger. Then

the warrior painted a red crown on the head of the bird to wear forever in honor of service to man. Hiawatha rent asunder the lodge of the Great Pearl-Feather, taking from within many treasures stolen from the People. These treasures the archer placed in his faithful birch bark canoe. All would be returned to the tribe, save one fine bow backed with sinew and faced with the scales of the Eastern diamondback. This treasure he kept for himself, for it was the bow of Nokomis' slain father.

The canoe sped for home on calm waters. The warrior's powerful bow and quiver of sharp-headed arrows lay peacefully in the craft, waiting to serve again. The great bow of Hiawatha's great-grandfather also lay at rest, among the treasures of the People. ⁴





HUNTING WEAR

FOR THE SOUTH



by Paul Brunner



In the southern states, the bowhunter encounters a wide range of climatic conditions affecting clothing choices. Once the hunter addresses the issue of climates, then he or she faces the quandary of choosing between "traditional" clothing or the various kinds of modern camouflage.

Over the years, in bowhunting professionally all around the world in temperatures ranging from minus fifty degrees to one hundred-twenty degrees above zero, in all kinds of terrain, ground cover, and vegetation, I have had to address the issues involved in choosing clothing, from the standpoints of both temperature and blending with the environment. Some of my experience in choosing hunting clothing may be able to help the nonprofessional bowhunter.

One very common misconception is that it does not get very cold in the South. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those who think that the South does not get cold weather are not familiar with the humidity factor in determining cold. I can vividly remember sitting in a tree stand in south Georgia and being so cold that I was shaking. I doubt that I could have drawn my bow, I was so cold... and the temperature was only in the high teens or low twenties! I have hunted in Montana at minus twenty degrees and been far more comfortable.

My experience leads to my belief that it is far better to be too hot and shed clothing, than be underdressed and wish for more warm clothing. When I am going to a new hunting area, I always bring warmer clothing than recommended. It is a fact: hypothermia can kill you. When I go to hunt in the South now, I always bring at least some wool clothing and long underwear. I also bring lighter clothing.

Keeping warm is reasonably easy. One thing for bowhunters to remember,

New "Apparition" pattern from Skyline has an amazing 3-D effect.

though, is the need for total quiet. Do not wear anything that will make even the slightest noise. Gore-Tex and rip-stop are terrible for the bowhunter. In my experience, wool is really the only answer for really cold weather. One of the most important characteristics of wool is its ability to keep the wearer warm even when it is wet. In other words, survival.

The various fleeces just do not do the job and they do not last nearly as long as good wool does. A word to the wise in the selection of wool clothing, however, wool has to be tightly woven. Wool with a loose weave is useless in keeping warmth in. Two of the major brands of camouflage wool garments which are the most expensive

are so loosely woven that the wind blows right through them. A good rule of thumb is not to buy any wool garment in which the threads can be seen. My first choice in good wool clothing is the Swannie Wool Clothing System which is available in three different camo patterns. Swannie clothing, made in New Zealand, is the finest wool clothing in the world and is both wind-proof and waterproof. Shirts and pants are specifically designed for the bowhunter; Swannie coats are traditional New Zealand shepherd's and hunter's coats. Coats have detachable hoods and extend to mid-thigh for warmth and dryness. Filson is another excellent choice, although not available in camo.

Layering is important for the bowhunter for freedom of movement to draw and shoot. Layering traps air, which is the best insulator. Layering allows warmth without noise and solves the problem of bulky clothing. Just

make sure that all the layers are quiet.

If I were hunting in Georgia or Alabama and the temperature was predicted to be thirty-two degrees or below, I would dress the same as if I were hunting at home in Montana at zero or below. First would come my Extended Cold Weather Clothing Systems (ECWCS) polypropylene long under-

wear, worn by U.S. Special Forces and SEALs in cold combat conditions. It is the warmest I have found. Over this, Swannie wool pants, which come in three camo patterns, so matching conditions should be easy. The Swannie wool shirt comes next and over that a Swannie coat, if needed. I then use Screaming Eagle's

"Many traditional bowhunters are going back to the basics such as the charcoal wool pants and checkered wool shirts worn by Pope and Young, Fred Bear, Howard Hill, Glenn St. Charles, and others. Others steadfastly maintain the need for camo to be as invisible as possible."

Woolie Boogers hand warming mitts, a wool Balaclava helmet, then last, but certainly not least, comes the U.S. Army Bunny Boots. Unfortunately, these are no longer made, so check catalogs and Army surplus stores for the last of these.

There are other items to use to keep warm when it is extremely cold, but remember that the definition of cold really means what is extremely cold for you and for your area. I always carry body, hand, and foot warming packets which lasts for hours with me which can be unwrapped and put in pockets, Woolie Boogers, or boots. Poly-pro Balaclavas are available and so warm it must be beyond cold.

The next clothing consideration for the bowhunter is whether to wear more "traditional" clothing, or to use modern camo patterns. Many traditional bowhunters are going back to the basics such as the charcoal wool pants and checkered wool shirts worn by

Pope and Young, Fred Bear, Howard Hill, Glenn St. Charles, and others. Others steadfastly maintain the need for camo to be as invisible as possible.

A couple of thoughts on that

score. Deer and most other animals are at least partially color blind, and they have trouble picking out form. Movement is what they really pick off,

"Those who think that the South does not get cold weather are not familiar with the humidity factor in determining cold."

great deal of marketing behind the recent popularity of the various kinds of camo, good camo really does work, especially in hard hunted areas or in

which is why it is so much easier to stalk on a windy day since movement of the brush makes for animals having a harder time picking the hunter up. While there is definitely a

places with high numbers of predators, such as Africa. I would not think of bowhunting in Africa without camo. It is a fact that most creatures see movement rather than pattern. But, there are the exceptions in turkeys, baboons, and monkeys. These see three dimensionally and differentiate color, so hunting in a checkered shirt may be very difficult.

I still have mixed feelings about the issue of camo versus no camo, probably because I am a strong "traditional" hunter. For years I hunted in the old wool pants and checkered shirt. I took



AUTHOR AND COMPANION. My favorite Mossey Oak pattern, Treestander, and a bull that looked right through me at twelve steps. Temperature is in the high nineties in Montana. Wearing chamois/moleskin fabric.



The old standby—Paul Brunner with gray wool pants and checkered wool shirt. Buffalo from Henry Mountains in Utah. #2 in Pope and Young. Took him at sixteen yards with a seventy-eight pound longbow with homemade compressed lodgepole pine arrow.

deer, elk, bear, sheep, and antelope, among other animals. Now, however, I wear camo. My main reason is personal. I do not like to be seen in my favorite hunting spots, and I just do not like being seen in the woods since it is my "away-from-others" time.

When wearing camo, light contrast, or light reflection is a concern. Dark clothing, such as the original Trebark pattern, in a bright, open area, shows the human as a dark blob and game will notice this as being inappropriate for the area and conditions. Likewise, Skyline (which will actually work as a "snow-camo") in green ground cover in September, makes the

"One of the most important characteristics of wool is its ability to keep the wearer warm even when it is wet. In other words, survival."

human stand out. I like camo that matches my surroundings in color tone, light reflectiveness, and pattern size. I judge pattern size to be critical. Too small, or "busy" patterns tend to look dark and make the wearer stand out as a "blob," separate from the surroundings.

There are excellent camo patterns available. While the point of this article is not to endorse one over another, I will, however, state my choices, which have worked very well for me in the South. I use Mossy Oak Treestander, primarily, in their chamois/moleskin material. I use this all over, in Africa, Siberia, Montana, and Mexico. The gray color, coupled with the large tree

limbs, seems to just melt into the surroundings. Even humans cannot spot it in most cases unless the hunter is moving; I have actually had other hunters walk right by me and not see me. I use the Fall Foliage pattern in the early season if there are lots of greens in evidence.

In hardwoods after all the leaves have fallen, I use Skyline's Ultimate pattern quite a bit, especially if I am on the ground in the leaves. This pattern is also available in the Swannie Wool, which is great as the temperature drops. A new camo pattern has just been introduced by Greg Haskell of Skyline Camo called "Apparition" which is virtually three dimensional. This looks very promising; I will give it the test with fall whitetail hunting.

Clothing is of ultimate importance when bowhunting; the right choices can make or break a hunting trip. 1/4



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Pope and Young Club, Glenn E. Hisey, P.O. Box 548, Chatfield, MN 55923, 507-867-4144

MISSOURI

Flatrock Traditional, Ben Gueulette, 3244 W. Lombard, Springfield, MO 65802, 417-865-5275

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Bowhunters Association, Max Thomas, P.O. Box 16915, Hattiesburg, MS 39404-6915
Mississippi Traditional Archers Association, Jerry Kattawar, 36 Abide Drive, Greenville, MS 38701, or Terry Morgan 601-226-4831

MONTANA

Traditional Bowhunters of Montana, Cris Fannelli, 1215 Pineview, Missoula, MT 59802-3240, 406-728-6058
Professional Bowhunters Society, Jim Chinn, 210 Green Acres, Butte, MT 59701, 406-494-4889

NORTH CAROLINA

Carolina Traditional Archers, Dave Foulk, Route #1, Box 57-A, Spruce Pine, NC 28777, 704-765-1701
Little River Stickbous, Kenneth Byrd, Route 2, Box 350A, Linden, NC 28356, 919-893-9852

NORTH DAKOTA

Bowhunters of America, Elbert Hartwig, P.O. Box 1702, Bismarck, ND 58502, 701-255-1631

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Club Pond Archers, Bob Perry, P.O. Box 179, New Durham, NH 03855-0179, 603-859-4261

NEW JERSEY

United Sportsmans Association of North America, Skip Myers, No. 1 Oak Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080, 609-358-4891

NEVADA

Nevada Traditional Archers, Mitch Sowl, 4486 Center Drive, Carson City, NV 89701-6711, 702-885-9584

NEW YORK

Traditional Archers of Southern New York, Roberto E. Granato, 1 Garmany Place, Yonkers, NY 10710-5106, 914-961-7390

OHIO

Ohio Society of Traditional Archers, Hoot Gibson, 614-468-3422

OKLAHOMA

Green Country Traditional Archers, Don Scott, Rt. 2, Box 1-3, Claremore, OK 74017, 918-342-0081

OREGON

Lost Art Bowhunters, Al Kimery, 42626 S.E. Klinesmith Road, Sandy, OR, 97055-9608, 503-637-3144
Saddle Mountain Traditional Archers, Bob Bingham, Rt. 1, Box 641B, Astoria, OR 97103-9801, 503-325-9566

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Hocking Hills Bowhunters, Hoot Gibson, 614-468-3422
Meeker Conservation Club, Hoot Gibson, 614-468-3422
Sugar Creek Archers, Hoot Gibson, 614-468-3422
Pennwoods Traditional Bowhunters, Mike Antonace, 362 Bagdad Road, Leechburgh, PA 15656, 412-845-7674
Seneca Tri-State Traditional Archers, Bill Sisler, 314 Hainer Road, Amity, PA 15311, 412-883-2520

UTAH

Professional Archers Association, Cindy Rhode, 26 Lakeview Drive, Stansbury Park, UT 84074-9668, 801-882-3817
Utah Wood Bow Club, Dan Perry, Salem, UT 84653-0479, 801-423-2354

VIRGINIA

Traditional Bowhunters of Virginia, Bob Seltzer, 7588 Woodstown Drive, Springfield, VA 22153-3528, 703-644-9708 or John Gresham, 804-448-1411
Virginia Traditional Bowhunters Association, Jason Blount, P.O. Box O, Farmville, VA, 23901, 804-392-6588 or Tom Lester, 804-598-3104

WASHINGTON

Traditional Bowhunters of Washington, Jerry Krauth, 326 DeKay Road, Hoquiam, WA, 98550-9303, 360-532-6901

A PARTING SHOT

HARVEST MOON

by Wayne Hoffman

The harvest moon shone brightly through the branches as I left the trail and made the final approach to my stand two hundred yards through the open hardwoods. I quietly cursed the light. Although some prefer the full moon for hunting, I have seen more critters after a dark night. But, working for a living means hunting every chance available. Rain or sun, hot or cold, moon or not.

As I eased into my seat, a coyote howled nearby, startling me slightly to a heightened sense of alertness. I could feel the coolness now that precedes the dawn, the signal that a new day would soon begin. No other time of day is quite so satisfying. Quiet. Clean. Peaceful. No worries about what is happening in Third World countries. No cares about the Presidential race, or the bills on my desk at home, or the pipe that is dripping under the house, or what did not get done at work last week. This is my time. A bowhunter's time. I mumbled thanks to the Creator.

I thought of other mornings like this. There have been many over the last twenty-six years or so; some were successful, some were not, but I cannot recall a single one when I was wishing I were somewhere else. The solitude is fuel for my soul; nothing else comes close. To shoot a feathered shaft through the branches and follow its flight fills a void in my well-being. It is my high.

A crunching in the leaves snapped me back to reality. I slowly turned to see a beautiful doe intently studying the white oak twenty yards beyond my stand. She was fat and sleek and she had been here before. She stood for three or four minutes cupping her ears first one way, then the other, not nervously, but more like she was listening for something in particular. I noted the wind blowing slightly in my face; a brief gust caused a few big acorns to fall to the ground with a resounding plop, plop. The doe's ears swiveled instantaneously to the sound, and as if they were the controls for her feet, she moved towards the sounds. She crossed in front of me at twelve yards. As I drew the cedar shaft across my hand to its full length, she stopped, one foot slightly raised as if she were on point. In the blur of the next few seconds, I knew my quest was complete.

After a brief instant of thrashing, the solitude of the October woods returned. The birds never missed a chirp; the squirrels kept gathering nuts, my heartbeat returned to normal. I lowered my bow to the ground and let the rope slip from my fingers; it coiled harmlessly to the ground. I thought I would just sit for a while; otherwise I would have to go home to fix that leaking pipe. ♪

Illustration by Clare W. Stanley

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