



SMOKE SIGNAL

SKOOKUM ARCHERS NEWSLETTER - jUNE 2003

Club to Host State Target and FITA

New Hunting Regs Available

The new 2003 Washington big game hunting season regulations are now available, and can be downloaded from our club web site at skookumarchers.com. The file is an Adobe Acrobat Reader portable document file (pdf).



2002 State Target Championship

Skookum will host the WSAA Target Championship July 12 & 13, and the WSAA FITA Championship August 2 & 3. Even for bowhunters, these are fun events to test your skill and refine your form. Mark your calendars and plan now to participate in these exciting events. One day shooters are welcome, although you must compete both days in order to be eligible to win a WSAA award.

2003 Redding Report

Skookum Archers were well represented at the annual Redding Western Trail Classic and NFAA Marked 3-D Championship. More than a dozen club members travelled to Northern California for this popular shoot. Unfortunately, the weather was not cooperative, and competitors found themselves shooting in rain and 3 inches of mud. The grounds were so wet and saturated that the parking lots had to be closed and shooters shuttled to a nearby school for parking.

Even with the on-again off-again downpours, several shooters did well. Five of our club members placed in their class at the national tournament. Congratulations! (Apologies to anyone left off the list).

- Kristina Jenkins, 2nd Place, Female Cub FS
- Marlene Brandt, 3rd place, Female BHFS
- Gary Brandt, 2nd Place, Male BHFS
- Shane Peterson, 3rd Place, Male BHFSL
- Carolyn Elder, 1st Place, Female FSL Pro.

NOTICE: The Saturday Fun Shoot that had been scheduled for June 21st has been cancelled to support the Tacoma Sportmen's IRON AMOS 3-D.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Word Puzzle and Elk Quiz.....	2
Dirty Thirty 3-D Results.....	3
In the Blink of an Eye.....	3
Tournament Pressure, Friend or Foe?.....	4
Tips for Competitive Archers.....	5
Keys to Holding Steady.....	6
Archery Lesson Schedule.....	7
Calendar.....	8

On Target Archery - Your Full Service Pro Shop & Techo Hunt at Skookum Range

Gary & Marlene Brandt, Owners - 11209 Shaw Road East - Puyallup, WA 98374

Phone: (253) 845-7165 • E-Mail: info@ontargetarchery.com • www.ontargetarchery.com

Word Find Puzzle - Board Members

U G U E Q O T I C L S L N J F D F G I U
 O N M W N V F U F C K H O B P Y U M Y L
 U I F U W Y O O M X X A T M W B O A D Y
 Z W S O P O R T G E Y I S Q D H A P E P
 V E D Y M B C B M Y T C N J N G Y X U B
 J B M W V D I I T K K M H F S V O K C Z
 E M R N N T O R P Y R C O N R O V C G G
 N K K M N C A E U E P I J O J Q K C W D
 K V Z W K T T K I T G O L E W J L B Q Y
 I H F K V E A D Y U L L K M E M K F D J
 N I S J R W W L I O F E K P O K E T O E
 S A F S T C W G C B G K D R Z R R B G T
 N D O S S S N V Y T J L R G N U M U O J
 H N D P K T G D K G L I Q A E V E G V V
 Z S V W X V Z C P G S R N I C F M Y H U
 P M G G J X C X I O S D X X F T D O K V
 A T Q Z I Q S S N M E P W M S K Y S R U
 G T D A E G Y Y Q Z R M B G F A D A V N
 X I O R U Y C D K M R B U A C W G A C H
 G L U O P D S Z Y N T S L J O S T B Z A

Words to find: CROFT, EWING, FERNANDEZ,
 JENKINS, JOHNSTON, MORRISON, PETERSON,
 REID, RUTLEDGE

Elk Quiz

Test your knowledge about Elk. Circle your answer. Correct answers given at bottom of page. From the Hunting Network.

1. Bull elk bugle all year round.
 True False
2. How many pounds does the average mature bull elk weigh?
 400 600 800 1000
3. A cow elk never grows antlers.
 True False
4. When do bull elk shed their antlers?
 Spring Summer Fall Winter
5. What term is used to describe a rutting bull elk's group of females?
 Stable Family Harem Group
6. A spike bull is too young to mate or bugle.
 True False
7. How many points does a mature bull elk's rack usually carry?
 4 6 8 10
8. A bachelor bull doesn't care to be around females.
 True False
9. Why do most elk migrate out of the high country in winter?
 Predators Too Cold Deep Snow
10. What state has the highest elk population?
 Arizona Montana Colorado Wyoming

A Federal study showed that 50% of all hunting accidents come from hunters falling out of trees.

"Sometimes, I think deer can read."

Correct Answers: 1. True; 2. 800; 3. False; 4. Spring; 5. Harem; 6. False; 7. Six; 8. False; 9. Deep Snow; 10. Colorado

Results of the 2003 Dirty Thirty 3-D

(Sorry, no scores printed this time)

FSM

1ST JAY BOQUIST
2ND DONNIE GLASGOW
3RD STEVE COVE

FSF

1ST TAMI WEBB

FSL F

1ST LINDA PARKER

SEN FSL M

1ST TC PARKER

SEN FS M

1ST EARL RANKIN

BHFS F

1ST DEBBIE KRAUSE
2ND RITA MCGOUGH

BHFS M

1ST TERRY MCCLAIN
2ND DON WEBB
3RD DON STARKWEATHER

Y BHFS M

1ST JOSH JONES
2ND BILL JOE MCCREADY
3RD KAYLE SALTER

BHFSL M

1ST SHANE PETERSON
2ND JEREMY RYSER
3RD BRETT RANKIN

SEN BB/BH

1ST DENNIS DUNN
2ND FRED RAMISKEY

TRADM

1ST KEVIN EDIGER
2ND MELVIN DANIEL
3RD BILL MCCREADY

TRADF

1ST KARI REED

BHFS F

1ST CHELSEY PASSMORE

CUB TRAD F

1ST BETH DANIEL
2ND CAITLYN PRENGEL

SEN TRAD F

1ST EVELYN HAMMOND

PW TRAD F

1ST LEXI REED

CUB BHFS M

1ST BURK JOHNSTON
2ND CALEB JOHNSTON
3RD ZACK WAGNER

Are You Hitting What You're Aiming at? It All Happens in a Blink of an Eye.

Article Courtesy Spot Hogg

In a blink of the eye, a lot can happen. The blink of an eye can make the difference between hitting what you are aiming at, and just being close.

We have found, if you *don't* blink your eye at the same instant the arrow is released, then it's possible to watch your complete shot execution.

Blinking your eyes at the moment the arrow is delivered has never (to our knowledge) been discussed or touched upon before. But, when we discovered that we were blinking, and made an effort to stop (it wasn't easy), our shooting improved. Then we discovered that everyone we worked with shot better if they were able to stop blinking during the shot execution. So, we felt it was time to talk about it.

Blinking is a natural thing to do and hard to notice because everything happens so fast. It seems to be below the threshold of awareness. There are a lot of things going on, during the shot, that seem to be more important.

In fact, there is a good chance even now, you may not be able to tell if you are blinking. Many will swear they **do not** blink even when they do. They're not lying, they're just not doing what they think they are doing. *Are you doing what you think you are doing?*

This single blink comes at the most critical moment. It has the effect of shooting with a blindfold. We go to all the trouble to draw back the bow, get everything all lined up and then we close our eyes as the arrow is released.

This may be why practicing up close at a blank bale with our eyes closed helps so many people shoot better. It is the only time that they practice what they are really doing. That is, shooting with their eyes closed.

Closing your eyes is indeed the best and easiest way to just let the shot happen. Although, letting the shot be a surprise works pretty good as well. But, if the shot really is a surprise, the natural reaction is to blink. There is a very fast reaction time, when it comes to protecting the eyes from damage. Fast enough, that we don't see all of what is happening when the bow "explodes" during arrow delivery. We're too busy protecting our eyes.

Tournament Pressure - Friend or Foe?

"Is feeling pressure good or bad at a tournament?" We are conditioned by the commonly held idea that pressure is a bad thing, and if it's bad then we need to avoid it.

If you feel pressure in a competition but not during training, then you have a problem. Interestingly enough, it may did not seem to cause your scores to go down but the concern and anxiety can make it more difficult to duplicate every shot the same. Very few shooters that say that they do not feel something different in competition. For many, the effects of pressure are so destructive that they cause loss of points at critical times at best and the premature termination of careers at worst. However, many elite shooters find that the pressure of competition is useful, even essential, to the attainment of their best performances.

You should not want or need to avoid pressure. Pressure, or the stress of competition as some call it, is not something you need to avoid. It is something you need to use.

The first thing we must do to control something is to understand it. The negative effects of pressure seem to be more prevalent in shooters who have trouble winning. You can hear shooters talking about butterflies, being tight and the infamous choke. By the way, what is the opposite of choke anyway? We seem to have a great vocabulary for the dark side of pressure and few words for the good side. Oh, there is "Use the force, Luke!" but we don't hear that one much. The good side of pressure just doesn't make it as topic of conversation in a negatively charged world, but it should. Pressure, simply put, is neither positive nor negative. Pressure is like air. Too much and you have a hurricane. Too little and you suffocate. But in the correct amount it is the breath of life.

Again, pressure, is not something you need to avoid. It is something you need to use.

The fact is we need pressure. We just need it in the right amount. IPressure is two things at the same time, anxiety and arousal.

Anxiety is fear. It is almost always viewed as a negative but, think about it. Fear is what keeps us from driving too fast, following too close to the car in front and not paying the mortgage on time.

Fear in a competition however can be paralyzing. We can be afraid of not shooting well which usually means that we will not be happy and we will have a long ride home. Bummer! Here is the good news, fear is overcome by experience. Even if you're not shooting well, go to the tournaments and shoot anyway. It's great practice. It is also true that pressure generally increases in direct proportion to your chances of winning.

On the other side of fear we have arousal. Arousal is your level of excitement. Everything we do best has a corresponding level of arousal. If we are too relaxed, we might lose focus. If we are too nervous we might rush the shot or over-hold. People have a natural arousal state. Some are calm by nature while others are bouncing off of the walls. Sports also have different natural arousal states. Sports like fencing and downhill skiing are high arousal sports. These athletes are excited and full of adrenalin from the start. Archery and golf are low-medium arousal sports. Adrenalin increases the pulse rate and moves the arousal level up. Way up! However, again this is not all bad. An adrenalin push can cause increased endurance, added strength, and increased awareness of the senses.

So, if you are a naturally high arousal person in a low arousal sport you may have more trouble with arousal control than someone more naturally balanced to their sport. If that is the case some proven arousal control techniques must be learned, practiced and mastered.

If you are too nervous in a competition there are three things you can do.

1. Recognize that pressure is positive and something that you can control. Pressure is not in your imagination. It is a good thing and you can use it to your advantage. You must accept that it is normal to feel something in a pressure situation. This is your body saying, "This is important. Pay attention!" Accept the advantages of stress and expect that your scores will be better for having felt pressure. Also, do not be surprised if you occasionally do not notice pressure's effects even in a big competition. Pressure does not always make itself known to the conscious mind. "Remember coal under pressure produces a diamond. Shooters in control, under pressure, produce winning scores."

Continued on Page 5

2. Focus on what you want to see happen not on what is stressing you. Most of the time when shooters experience point-reducing arousal levels it's because they are thinking about something that causes the arousal level to rise. "Boy, I really need this one!" "What am I doing wrong?" "If I finish strong, I win." These thoughts are on outcomes, not on the process of shooting. Thinking about what you are doing wrong or counting your score just increases the negative effects of arousal. Keep your mind on the process of shooting well and the score will take care of itself.

3. Develop a recovery technique. Sometimes the pressure seems to increase just after a poor end and you might need a way to recover. One effective technique is to have a planned and trained recovery strategy. All recovery strategies have two important things in common. First you must get your mind off of the things that are increasing the arousal/anxiety response. Secondly, you must do something that you can absolutely control. Here is an example. You've had a bad series of shots, you begin to think about your score and you need to recover. First, concentrate on your breathing. Breathe in a practiced pattern for say three breaths. Then relax a specific muscle group such as your neck and shoulders. Finally, visualize being in complete control of shooting a perfect shot. You can only think of one thing at a time so while you are thinking about these things you cannot be still thinking negatively. Also, you can 100% control your method of breathing, the relaxation of your muscles and the visualization so the second step is accomplished as well. Now, when you refocus on your next series you should be recovered and should shoot well.

If you catch yourself becoming a bit too aroused and need a quick tool to get you calmed down, try yawning. This might seem strange but this really works. If you catch yourself becoming a bit too aroused, fake a yawn. The same chemicals that cause your muscles to relax when you yawn naturally also seem to work just the same when you fake a yawn. Next time you watch the Olympics on TV watch for this technique. You will see someone in a pressure situation yawning. Everyone else will think he is really in control. You will know the truth. He might be using the fake yawn to control unwanted arousal.

Tips for Competitive Archers

First, don't work on shooting form during the tournament season. During the competitive season shooting your bow should feel like walking. It takes thousand of shots to really get that sensation. You can't get it if you are tinkering with your form. You can't effectively compete if you are still thinking technically about your shot. You have to be automatic, not controlling. You have to let the repetition of practice take over.

Second, you'll never outperform your rivals by trying to copy them. You'll always be one step behind. Develop your own winning style.

Third, The more you train the better you absorb the affects of that training. If you are not strong enough to shoot 300 quality arrows per day, you should be. If you are not that strong, start lifting some weights and finding more practice time.

Fourth, understand that the toughest shoots to win aren't those against the archers you expect to have to go down to the final shot with, but the archers you expect to easily defeat. You have to be challenged in order to bring out the best of your ability. This is easy in a tough match. You know that you'll need to do your best to win, so you do that. Where you get in trouble is when you let yourself be complacent about a match, effectively guaranteeing that you won't shoot at your peak. Meanwhile, your inferior competitor is very aware that he will need to shoot his best to win, increasing the likelihood that he will shoot his best. All of a sudden that competitor that you should have walked all over is right on your heels.

The bottom line for archers who want to win is to give it your best, but don't take it too seriously. Remember and re-live your practice sessions. Enjoy the moment. When you stay focused on your shot execution and stay in the present, then the chance of success is increased substantially. Most people fail due to their fear of failure and focusing on the past or future which they cannot control. Stay in the present and do what you do best, shoot good shots. Remember that you got where you are at that very moment because you enjoyed shooting. You enjoyed the competition and, especially, you enjoyed the moment.

Competitive archery is more of a discipline than a sport.

Blinking, continued from page 3

So far, we have found a few ways to determine if the eyes are blinking. The first one, is to find out if you have trouble shooting with your eyes purposely held wide open. The ease with which you are able to do this will tell you if you have a problem. If you still have to blink even though you are trying to hold your eyes ridiculously wide open, then you are indeed shooting with your eyes closed. Another way is to have a friend watch you.

The third way to find out, is to take note of the bow movement that occurs when the shot is executed. If you have a strobe light effect, where the bow jumps from a "before the arrow is gone" position, to the "it's a done deal" position and you didn't see the bow make the movement. Then you blinked.

The eye, brain, and all the connected wiring don't run on a frames per second type basis, but sees and records on a continuous basis. The bow movement is not so fast that your eye can't pick it up and your brain record it. Watch someone else shoot and you can see their bow move. The reason you don't see your bow move is your eyes were closed when it happened. In the blink of an eye a lot can happen.

A few problems that we found happened in the blink of an eye are; the sight moved out of position, the bow torqued from different hand pressure, the bow didn't always move the same, and the bow starts to drop before the shot is done. There was an amazing amount of consistency with all of the things that could and did happen in the blink of an eye. For a lot of shooters that consistency is "good enough". Especially, when you find how hard it is to not blink. It is a lot easier not worry about it and settle for "good enough".

For some, "good enough" comes only when the arrow hits dead-center-perfect. Not only does the arrow have to hit exactly where we intend, but we have to feel that it was our skill that put it there, not luck. That is our "good enough".

Lots of practice, money, and frustration are spent in pursuit of "good enough". Generally, a shooter seems to reach a certain level of skill and can't get any further. It is often referred to as reaching a "plateau". Getting from one "plateau" to the next sometimes seems impossible and is seldom easy. To stop blinking during that nano-second of shot execution is not easy. But if you can see what is really going on, you might be able to see the path to the next "plateau". You can't fix something that you don't know is happening.

Three Keys to Holding Steady

There are three principal keys to holding steady when aiming a bow.

The first key is to figure out how all the different body parts have to be aligned and balanced so the sight picture becomes steadier. That may not seem to be a big deal. All you have to do is to close your eyes when you are at full draw and wait for your body to align and balance out the muscles needed. If you have the physical strength developed to do this, when you open your eyes you will find that you are actually holding a lot steadier than you thought you could. Then you run into the second part of holding steady.

The second part of holding steady is to be able to hold steady and aim. As you try to move your pin to the spot you may lose your steadiness and end up catching the spot as it flies by. Steadiness can be lost if you are not balancing the muscles that control steadiness. A good approach is to keep the same shoulder and arm alignments, but pivot at the waist as needed to center on the bullseye. This is not as easy as it seems. But, anything else seems to cause the steadiness to break down.

Finally, the third key is to be in good physical condition. Exercising the muscles used in archery can be a big help in holding steady, especially after a lot of shot.

Club Member Classifieds

NEW GOLD TIP ARROWS 3555. 1 dozen new uncut in package with insert and lock nocks. On sale for \$40.00. **BOWTECH BLACKKNIGHT2.** Model 2002 (used) left handed, Draw Lt: 29", Draw Wt: 70 or 80 lbs, Axe-Axe: 36", speed 350 fps @ 29" (80lbs). Normal price \$749.00 + tax, sale price \$600.00 Contact Richard 425-941-8201.

New Gold Tip XT 5575 Camo Shafts. Great hunting arrow. 1 dozen new uncut in package with inserts and lock nocks (or can substitute Bohning flo. green nocks). Straightness of ± 0.003 "; Weight tolerance of ± 5 grains. For 55-75 pound draw weights (8.2grains/inch). Retail between \$80-\$90. Will sell for **\$49** plus \$3.90 S&H. Will cut to length and install inserts for no extra charge. Can also fletch (4" AAE or Duravanes) for additional \$6. Contact Don at morrison@lgi.org. Phone: 253-565-6253 (days), or 253-565-1630 (nights).

Email your classified ads (Archery related only and keep it short) to info@skookumarchers.com, or fax to 253-565-2575 by the 26th of the month

Archery Lessons

Skookum Archers sponsor an ongoing archery education program. The Club has a number of National Archery Association (NAA) Certified Instructors. All equipment is provided. Students can use their own equipment if it is deemed safe by the instructor. Our new beginning classes consist of a series of four (4) one and a half hour (1 1/2) lessons, on Tuesday nights from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. Intermediate classes are also offered on Tuesdays from 7:30pm to 9:00pm. The Board of Directors Liaison to the Archery Education program is Cooper Ewing, who can be reached at 253-653-1575 or cooperewing@yahoo.com. You can also visit www.skookumarchers.com (Archery Education) for more information. Sign up no later than the first of the month for that month's lessons.

Up coming class schedule:

June 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th

July 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th

August 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th

NAA Level 1 Archery Instructors wanted. We are looking to start a once a month free Saturday Shoot for children and adults to introduce them to archery. This will be a free clinic held for two hours either on a Saturday or Sunday. I'm looking for instructors that are interested in volunteering for one or more of the days. You also get work credits for you volunteer hours if you are a Active Member. Please contact Cooper Ewing at 253-653-1575 or cooperewing@yahoo.com.

If you ever want to shoot well, you probably need to take a few lessons. The mental aspects of archery are the real key to top competitive archery, but they only come into play after technique and proper shooting form becomes consistent.

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11209 Shaw Road East
Puyallup WA 98373
(253) 845-7165

www.ontargetarchery.com

(253) 845-7165

Board of Directors and Managers

PRESIDENT

Curt Reid; (253) 850-3689
creid@seanet.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Shane Peterson; (253) 631-5702
fingershooter@attbi.com

SECRETARY

Shawn Johnston; (253) 826-5592
shawn@odega.com

TREASURER

Dennis Jenkin, (253) 862-8582
dennis_jen@msn.com

COMMUNICATIONS

Don Morrison, (253) 565-6253
morrison@lgi.org

TOURNAMENT

Dan Croft, (253) 770-7662

RANGE

Cooper Ewing, (253) 653 -1575
cooperewing@yahoo.com

GROUND

Pat Fernandez

HUNTING

Dave Rutledge; (253) 848-3685
darutledge@hotmail.com

ACTIVITIES

Open - Volunteer Today!

PROGRAM MANAGERS:

Facilities - Open

Education - Cooper Ewing, (253) 653 -1575

Eyes in the Woods Liaison - Open

Bowhunter Education - Open

Pierce County Sportsmen's Council Liaison

- Open

Target Shoots - Open

3-D Shoots - Open

To submit items for the Smoke Signal, contact Don Morrison, Newsletter Editor, by the 26th of the month at morrison@lgi.org. Fax: 253-565-2575.

CALENDAR

- June 7-8, State Field Tournament, Capitol City
- June 14-15, 3-D Shoot, Cedar River
- June 19, Member and Board Meetings
- June 21-22, NW Outdoor Sectionals, Eugene, OR
- June 28-29, Fun Marked 3-D, KBH
- July 5-6, Oregon Safari, Eugene, OR
- July 12-13, State Target Tournament, Skookum Archers
- July 19-20, Big Game 3-D, WCW
- June 21, Tacoma Sportsmen Club, Iron Amos 3-D

Target Assignments: Active Members are responsible for maintaining a target area. Life Members, Associate and Junior Members are not required to maintain a target area. IF YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR TARGET ASSIGNMENT, CONTACT THE CLUB VICE-PRESIDENT. Your target assignment is generally printed on your Smoke Signal mailing label. You will be responsible for replacing the Target Face when it has been shot out, picking-up trash in your shooting lane, and reporting any maintenance that needs to be done; grounds work (grass, trees, brush, etc.) that needs to be done to the Grounds Chair, and reporting any range work (target shed, shooting bales or shooting stakes) that needs to be done to the Range Chair. Replacement targets can be acquired by contacting the Pro-Shop; you will be assisted with finding the correct replacement target face. Please do not replace targets until they need it; typically this means that the center scoring area is shot out. Also, we can all pitch in on replacing the target faces on the flat range. Thanks for working together!

JUNE 2003

**SMOKE
SIGNAL**

Skookum Archers Club & Range 

P.O. Box 73753
Puyallup, WA 98373
(253) 770-4177
www.skookumarchers.com