

# Write on Target!

**Stourbridge Company of Archers Newsletter  
30 April 2012**



Well having had such a mild winter and a couple of weeks of summerlike conditions in March, we have now been well and truly reminded that this is the UK, where an essential piece of archery kit is a good set of waterproofs! It seems to have barely stopped raining during April, but let's hope that summer is around the corner and May sees the start of some better shooting weather – fingers crossed!! Still at least all of this rain has given me some time to put the newsletter together .....

*Michelle*

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## “SCOA Olympics”!

Archery will be a significant part of the London 2012 Olympics, with the various archery events taking place at Lord's Cricket Ground between Friday 27 July and Friday 3 August 2012. Some of us thought it would be nice to hold a Club event to coincide with this very special occasion and if we can generate sufficient interest, we intend to hold a **Club Olympic Shoot on Saturday 28 July 2012**.

Details are still to be finalised, but initial thoughts are that we will have an Olympic themed Club shoot, with everyone bringing some food, along similar lines to the “Frostbite” we had just before Christmas. We may even have a barbecue, if we can find someone to man it - any volunteers? Alternatively, if we have a barbecue, it may be that we charge a nominal entry fee, so that food can be purchased in advance, thus avoiding the need for people to worry about it on the day.



Peter and Tony are currently looking at the logistics of the competition itself, although it's likely that we will shoot a 70 metre round, using a 122 cm face and 10 zone scoring – the criteria used in Olympic competition - although obviously newer members and juniors who can't manage this will be able to shoot shorter distances. We will try to make it fair for everyone and may even have a handicap adjusted competition.

The idea is to have a relaxed, enjoyable afternoon and family and friends will be welcome, although of course, only Club members will be able to shoot.

We thought it would be a shame not to mark what is such a special year for archery with our own Olympic themed event, so please make a note of the date and put your name down on the list which will be posted in the Clubhouse shortly, so that we can gauge the level of interest (or alternatively, drop Michelle an email). Similarly, if you have any ideas, then please let us know.

## Saturday Shooting

Unless you've been living on Planet Zog, it cannot fail to have escaped your attention that we are nearing the end of the football season. This is good news for SCOA, as it means that AFC Somers will not be using the field during the summer months and it should be available for archery use **every Saturday from mid-May 2012 onwards up until August 2012**. The next available date for Saturday shooting should be Saturday 12 May 2012, but this date may be subject to change, depending on whether there are changes to the football fixtures due to the recent bad weather - I will keep you posted.

*Michelle*

## Beginners Courses

As some of you will be aware, we will be running two beginners courses commencing on Tuesday 1 and Friday 4 May 2012 respectively. Each of the courses will run for 7 weeks (including the first week's introductory session) and we have a full contingent on both nights. Please bear this in mind when shooting on Tuesday and Friday evenings – in particular, please do not leave equipment in the seating area, as this area will be required for briefing the beginners. Sessions commence at 7.30pm.

Having had quite a lot of interest in these courses and with this being an Olympic year, if we have sufficient numbers, we may run a further course later on in the year, so if you know of anyone who fancies trying their hand at archery, give Margaret their details and she can put them on her mailing list, in case we are able to do this.

## New Club Records

### Ladies Compound

FITA 70	-	Michelle Hall	626
Long Warwick	-	Michelle Hall	394

### Ladies Barebow

American	-	Barbara Hall	383
Western	-	Barbara Hall	391

### Gents Compound

FITA 70	-	Tony Carter	655
Gents FITA	-	Tony Carter	1301
Long Metric Gents	-	Tony Carter	623

### Boys Recurve Under 16

Short National	-	Luke Cutler	350
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## New Classifications

Congratulations to the following archers who have gained new classifications since the last Newsletter:-

- Bob Hanson                      First Class                      (Gents Longbow)
- Steve Lines                      First Class                      (Gents Compound)
- Conrad Lowe                      Second Class                      (Gents Longbow)
- Third Class                      (Gents Longbow)

*Dave Johnson  
Records Officer*

## TORM

On Friday 16 March 2012, a group of six of us went to see the Re-Enactment Market at Ryton on Dunsmere near Coventry, where if your interest is history, you can see or buy many items relating to past years, together with viewing re-enactments of the civil war, roman and medieval times. You can also purchase your suit of armour, guns, material, leather, knives, axes, spears, swords, clothes etc of many times past. They also have on show buttons, buckles, broaches, fur and footwear - not to mention, mead, pies, cheese and pottery items. There is such a vast variety of items you can view or purchase - too many to mention, but they range from books, archery bows, longbows and crossbows to arrows, fletchings and 3D targets and so much more.

An early visit for two of us and the first call of the day was the restaurant, just for the full breakie. After stuffing ourselves, we wobbled back down to stand in the entry queue where we met up with two more of our group.

On entry to the first hall, we encountered a group of fully dressed Spartan warriors with shields.

The market was on for three days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and is held twice a year in March and November. If you have a computer, just type in TORM (which stands for The Original Re-Enactment Market).

Some of the things that members of the group purchased included cheese, pies, mead, beer, fudge, fletchings, deer fur, leather, rivets, bamboo, hickory strip and a 3D grouse (oh and one of the group nearly bought a Lute!). Personally, I couldn't afford the buxom wenchies I saw throughout the day !!! The group seemed to enjoy what they had seen and went away very happy, as well as learning a little bit more of our history. Look forward to our next visit in November.

***Hutch - "I'll be back!",  
The Stick & String Brigade***

### **Beware of the Webster!**



One of the perils of indoor shooting is finding that you have been "robin hooded" by someone else's arrow (or in some cases, even your own!) – luckily the pink fletched arrow left is so much smaller in diameter and length than the blue one that the blue one escaped with only a broken knock! Now that the indoor season is over, we thought we were relatively safe, but apparently, there is a new danger emerging from the woods ..... "The Webster"!

*"At a recent field shoot, he robin hooded my arrow, then three days later, we were at practice up the woods and he did it again, this time on his own arrow!? You've been warned!"*

***Rabbit"***

## **Team Stourbridge**

### **Bromyard D's & Downs**

Four Stourbridge archers (Colin Dewis, Dave Johnson, Peter Langmaid and Alyson Smith) took part in the Bromyard D's and Downs on Sunday 18 March 2012, with Peter taking second place in the Gents Recurve and Alyson, second place in the Ladies Longbow. SCOA were also third placed team.

### **Sunday 15 April 2012 was a busy day for Stourbridge archers with a number of our members in action at various events .....**

Arvon Hutchinson, Dave Johnson, Peter Langmaid, Keith Raybould, Becky Simonds and Brian Webster took part in Doverdale Bowmen's Spring Field Shoot - Peter coming second in the Gents Freestyle (Recurve); Brian, third in the Gents Longbow and Becky, second in the Ladies Longbow.

Tony Carter and Michelle Hall were the sole Stourbridge representatives at the County of Worcestershire Trials which were held at Evesham. Tony had a really good day, shooting his first score in excess of 1300 on a Gents FITA – only a few points off a Master Bowman score! Both were selected for the County squad for the first County match (Staffordshire –v- Cheshire –v- Worcestershire) on 29 April 2012 which unfortunately (or maybe that should be fortunately!) had to be cancelled due to the horrendous weather conditions.

Another of our members, Colin Dewis, acquitted himself well in the WMAS FITA 70m competition at Long Mynd and Luke Pennell, our GB junior, was also in action, putting in qualifying scores for the GB Field Team.

### **Severn Valley Field Shoot – Sunday 22 April 2012**

Our intrepid threesome of Arvon Hutchinson, Keith Raybould and Brian Webster took part in Severn Valley's Field Shoot on Sunday 22 April 2012, along with over 200 other archers. Although there were no trophies or medals on this occasion for our gents – only rain and hail in the last hour – it was a really good shoot. According to Hutch – the best target was a full size tiger approximately 60-70yds away from either the normal colour pegs or a gold peg – not many got it - an AK47 or an 80 mm tiger tank being more suitable kit for hitting it!

### **Redhill American – Monday 7 May 2012**

Our next Away Shoot is Redhill's American tournament on Bank Holiday Monday 7 May 2012. We currently have eight archers booked in for this (Tony Carter, Colin Dewis, Michelle Hall, Roger Hanson, Peter Langmaid, Steve Lines, Conrad Lowe and Alyson Smith), although there are still places available, if you wish to enter.

Redhill are also holding an Archery Equipment Table Top Sale, so if you have any items of unwanted equipment, why not give them to one of the SCOA archers attending or alternatively, take them along yourselves on the day. There is a £3 charge for displaying goods totalling up to £50 in value and a £5 charge for displaying goods totalling over £50.

Also, don't forget if you do have items to sell, you can always post them on the "For Sale" board in our Clubhouse free of charge (although of course, they won't have such a wide audience as at Redhill) or if you send Michelle the details, they can be included in the newsletter.

## Dates for your Diary

Just a reminder of upcoming SCOA events:-

- 6 May 2012 - Short Metric (Postal) (Club Members only)
- 20 May 2012 - Hagley National (Victor Ludorum round) (Club Members only)
- 17 June 2012 - Breakfast Shoot (Club Members only)
- 1 July 2012 - Club Champs (Club Members only)
- 15 July 2012 - Rat's Ashes (American) (Open to all)
- 28 July 2012 - "SCOA Olympics" (Club Members only)
- 12 Aug 2012 - Stourbridge Albion (Open to all)
- 2 Sept 2012 - Sheriff's Western (Open to all)
- 9 Sept 2012 - Clout (Bowflights) (Victor Ludorum round)
- 16 Sept 2012 - All-Comers Warwick (Club Members only; handicap adjusted)
- 23 Sept 2012 - Derek Peacock Memorial Longbow Shoot (Two Way Western) (Club members only)
- 1 Oct 2011 \* - AGM
- 18 Nov 2012 \* - Annual Worcester (Indoor) (Open to all)
- 13 Jan 2013 \* - Annual FITA 25m (Indoor) (Open to all)

\* Provisional Dates – To be confirmed

Don't forget that in addition to the above Club competitions, there are also plenty of tournaments organised by local Clubs that you can enter – see the detailed calendar on the board in the Clubhouse.

## 2011 in Numbers

Archery GB (GNAS) has just published its 2011 Yearbook which shows that during the year, membership topped 34,000 – 33,380 members of 1,266 Clubs and 645 direct members. Of the 1,266 Clubs, 98 were located in the West Midlands and the West Midlands Region accounted for 8% of the membership.

*Roger Hanson came across the following which he thought may be of interest – particularly to our longbow archers.*

### **The last Warbow Archer - By Nils Visser**

Sometimes one runs into a story that seems to contain so much poppycock, that you know the story simply has to be true. No writer would be brave enough to make up the plot elements, simply because no one would believe it. Such is the tale of Captain Jack Churchill.

Jack Malcolm Thorpe Fleming Churchill (not related to Winston) was born in 1906 and became famous in the Second World War because of the utter fearlessness with which he entered battle as well as his rather unorthodox kit.

The first honourable mention for said kit is merited by his bagpipe. Of course, this isn't an unknown item in the British Armed Forces, being used to this day by Scottish units. We have all seen them in the fifties and sixties World War 2 epics, fearless Highland pipers piping their way through a hail of bullets on beach, in woods, on fields and hills, the enemy fleeing, either totally intimidated by the courage of the pipers, or else frightened witless by the Celtic caterwauling heading their way. But Jack was an Englishman, not a Scot, and he wasn't half bad at playing the bagpipe. In 1938 he managed to come in second place at a competition for officers at Aldershot. He was the only Englishman amongst the 70 or so other contestants.

Jack's love for the bagpipe meant that he couldn't quite grasp that others did not always share his passion, which meant there was little to stop him when he decided to practice in the barracks at odd times. Who, after all, doesn't appreciate a few jaunty gigs at three o'clock in the morning? He also took his instrument with him when he went to war, playing tunes when his commando unit landed on beaches in Norway, Italy and Yugoslavia. This reached a climax in Yugoslavia in May 1944. Jack's commando unit had been surrounded on a hilltop on the island of Vis. The few survivors, half of them wounded, had just beaten off a German attack, and as the German soldiers pulled back to regroup, Jack played *Will ye no come back again?* That the Germans did, and Jack was taken prisoner. Because it was assumed he was related to Winston Churchill, he was flown to Berlin for interrogation. By the by, Jack has always denied having anything to do with the fire that broke out on his plane after landing in Berlin. He assumed that the pile of smouldering newspapers was related to one of the German officers who had been smoking during the flight. Naturally, Jack managed to escape from the Niederdorf prison camp, was recaptured, and then escaped again, after which he walked 150 miles southwards until he ran into an American tank unit in Italy.

The second piece of Jack's equipment was his sword, a Scottish Claybeg, not quite a Claymore which is larger, but an imposing weapon none-the-less. According to Jack: "...any officer who goes into action without his sword is improperly dressed." It's possible to conclude that the enemy were duly impressed by Jack's blade as well. During the landings at Salerno in 1943, Jack entered the town of Piegoletti at night, accompanied only by Corporal Ruffel, and armed only with his Claybeg. Jack approached the enemy sentries one by one, shouted "Haende hoch!" and waved his sword about a bit, Ruffel guarded the prisoners. Jack and Ruffel returned with 42 prisoners-of-war. Jack said this wasn't entirely due to his sword. "I maintain that, as long as you tell a German loudly and clearly what to do, if you are senior to him he will cry 'jawohl' and get on with it enthusiastically and efficiently whatever the situation. That's why they make such marvellous soldiers..."

Jack's last remarkable piece of equipment was his Longbow. Jack had taught himself the art of archery before the war, and represented Great Britain at the World Championships in Oslo in 1939. At the outbreak of the war, Jack had ordered a Warbow at Purle's in London, an 85Lbs Selfbow, made from Spanish Yew. He had also purchased hunting arrows, with aluminium broadheads, and had two spare steel bows as well.

When the British Expeditionary Force was sent to Europe at the onset of the war, Jack marched with his old Manchester Regiment, armed with his bows and arrows. When the BEF was driven to the coast by the Blitzkrieg, Jack offered determined resistance. One of his colleagues said "One of the most reassuring sights of the embarkation [from Dunkirk] was the sight of Captain Churchill passing down the beach with his bows and arrows. "Another officer recalls that Jack used to get around on a motorcycle (another one of Jack's hobbies), with the sword and bows tied to the side of the motorcycle, the arrows in quivers behind the saddle, and a trophy German Officer's cap atop the headlamp.

In May 1940, in the village of l'EpINETTE, Jack and some of his men approached a German post. Jack started shooting with his Warbow and killed at least one of the Germans, his men opened fire with their rifles and all five Germans ended up dead. We don't know what the Germans made of various casualties with arrows sticking in them, though it was bound to have caused some surprise. We do know that Jack attached value to his expensive broadheads, on several occasions he came under fire as he tried to retrieve his arrows from the fallen foe, a touch of archery most of us will recognize, though fortunately have not had to do under enemy fire.

Jack Churchill went down into history as the last English soldier to fight with the Longbow, about 350 years after Britain stopped issuing them as standard gear. He also earned the nickname "Mad Jack". By the way, Jack survived the war. He attained his parachute wings at the tender age of 40, served in Palestine, and learned to surf while stationed in Australia as an instructor. He retired in 1959, and died a peaceful death in 1996 at the age of 90.

***Article supplied by Roger Hanson***

### **Did you know?**

In the 14th century, archery was considered so important to the defence of the nation that an English law made it compulsory for every man aged between seven and 60.

The first known archery competition was organised in Finsbury, London, in 1583. It attracted 3,000 participants.

Hollywood actress Geena Davis took part in US trials for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Archery team.

At the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, archers competed in the Panathinaiko Stadium, where the first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896. The Stadium was built on the ruins of an ancient stadium built in 329 BC.

## SCOA's answer to Mr Kipling!

Some of you will have seen (and sampled) the superb cakes made by SCOA's resident "Mrs Kipling", Alyson Smith. Amongst Alyson's recent creations have been a selection of fairy cakes depicting the various archery styles (compound, longbow and recurve), given to the "best on the night" at our last indoor of the season (you had to see them to believe the detail and appreciate just how good they were!) and the "SCOA" cake pictured right which Alyson made for our last "Frostbite". If you haven't been down to the field lately, as well as missing out on a bit of archery and some friendly banter, you may have also missed out on Alyson's cakes which are to die for!



## Distance Markings

In case you were wondering what has happened to the distance markings that were mentioned in the last Newsletter, our Chairman, Martin Woodhouse, has made the stencils and when the footballers have finished using the field, the various markings and shooting line will be put in place.

## Foam Bosses

A number of our longbowers have been asking about foam bosses and this has been raised and discussed at recent Committee Meetings. Our Equipment Officer, Roger Hanson, did some research and we discussed the practicalities of them at our meeting on 13 February 2012. The relevant extract from the Minutes is shown below.

***"Foam Bosses (Previous Minute 3.24):** Roger had made enquiries regarding foam bosses and the ones that appeared most suitable were produced by Ten Zone Targets. He had circulated details to the Committee in advance of the meeting (copy attached to these Minutes). The main problem with foam targets was the additional space that would be required to store them, as they were not as compact as traditional targets. They were also heavier and more difficult to move around. The cost was £148.50 per target and the price per target would be the same, whether we purchased one or ten targets. There was also a delivery charge of £40.00 which was payable on each target. After some discussion on the practicalities, it was decided not to proceed with obtaining foam targets due to the logistics of storing them and the problems of moving them around due to their sheer size and weight. It was queried whether members would use them in any event due to the latter. Foam targets had originally been requested by some of the Club's longbow archers due to problems with points getting stuck in the straw bosses, but longbow archers on the Committee did not think they were necessary, as they didn't experience problems with losing points, providing they used a soft target. Soft bosses should be marked up as such for longbow use."*

Having initially raised the question of foam bosses on behalf of the longbowers and having a vested interest in them myself (as being a lady compound archer, I find it difficult to get my arrows out of some of the harder bosses), even I had to agree with the rest of the Committee that they appeared impractical for our purposes due mainly to the difficulties of moving them around due to their size and weight. Of course, if anyone has any sensible alternative suggestions, then please let myself or one of the other Committee members know and we will look into them.

**Michelle**





### **Shoot Through Risers**

Some of you may have seen the recent “118118” television commercial which apparently shows someone using a recurve type bow with a “shoot through” riser. However, it should be noted that a bow such as this would **NOT** be eligible for use in competitions and we would therefore suggest that you do not consider buying such a bow, as it would inevitably lead to disappointment as you would not be able to use it in competition – even our own Club events.

The only example of such a bow of which we are aware (although there could be others) is the Greenhorn “Cyclope” which is pictured left. It is intended for “Come and Try Sessions”, mainly as it has a centre arrow rest and can therefore be used left or right-handed, hence speeding up the “have a go” process.

### **Stourbridge Cricket Club Open Day – Sunday 6 May 2012**

Stourbridge Cricket Club will be holding an Open Day on Sunday 6 May 2012 and Bob and Margaret Hanson and Dave Johnson will be manning an SCOA stand. If you are at a loose end, please feel free to pop along and give them some moral support. It’s not a “have a go” – just an opportunity for them to chat to members of the public and answer any questions they may have about archery and possibly joining the Club.

### **Thoughts from the shooting line .....**

This week sees the start of our next round of beginners courses which prompts the question “What has happened to our new members from last year’s courses?” A few (Conrad Lowe, Luke Cutler, Jake Jancso and Adrian Tuck) are still shooting regularly, but where are the rest of you?

It’s got to stop raining sooner or later, so with the lighter nights coming, why not dust off that equipment and give it another try? You should find someone at the Somers field on Tuesdays (afternoons and evenings), Fridays (afternoons and evenings), Saturdays (any time from mid-May onwards) and Sundays (afternoons). If you need any help, please ask - someone will be happy to help you.

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