

# Allington Castle Archers

## Nocking Point

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*April 2012*



2<sup>nd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> April School Holidays

### **Dates for your diary**

**Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Beginners courses**

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> Mid Kent League match Home**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> St George's day shoot**

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> NO SHOOTING School Boot Fair**

### **Changes to 2012 Calendar**

**Family Day and BBQ has to be moved to 30<sup>th</sup> June**

**As**

**The school Fete is on the 7<sup>th</sup> July NO SHOOTING**

**Canterbury longbow is on the 1st July**

## Chairman's chat

Last weekend saw the clocks go forward giving us another hour of daylight in the evening. For those that can get to the field early, we have rights to shoot every evening in the week after 5.30pm. The only restriction is that you have to have another adult with you. The main nights are Tuesday and Thursday but if you can organise a shooting partner feel free to come down any evening you choose.

The latest news from the shooting line is that Pam has been giving her Longbow an airing and doing rather well with it too. Clive has got his second Bowman score of the season already and so have I. Chris has got the first order of club clothing through from the supplier so if you ordered anything, see him soon. My latest news is... To complete my collection of all the GNAS recognised bow types I have purchased one of Stan's old Compound bows. Having tried shooting it Barebow I gave up and relented and taped on a beginners Recurve sight (sight mount didn't fit. Bother!). I'm not sure if Stan would have approved of my lash up, but it did mean I could spend more time shooting and less time looking for arrows. I don't think I will be a compound convert but it does help me understand a little better the complexity of this discipline.

**And finally, whilst talking about Stan, I understand from Geoff that the last of Stan's old archery kit has been sold off and has raised £322.00 for Stan's hospice charity. It has been suggested that as Stan was one of the longest serving ACA members, and that over those years he did more than his part to get the club to where it is now, ACA could round this figure up to £400.00. As this extra donation of £78.00 only represents just a little over a pound per member I, along with the majority of the committee, feel this would be the right thing to do. So unless I receive an over whelming response from club members against this donation, it will be made in a few weeks time.**

Good shooting.

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## Secretary's Sidelines

Thanks to all of you that have paid membership fees. **Please note** that if you have not paid by 1<sup>st</sup> April you cannot shoot until payment has been made – **and I do not accept payment.**

While I have my official hat on, can I remind you all about courtesy on the shooting field.

1. Try to arrive on time and help to set up the field.
2. If you are the last person using a target it is your responsibility to put it away. This means in the store shed not the barrow, as the barrow does not put itself in the shed.
3. If you want to join someone already shooting on a target, ASK if you can join them.
4. Do not use someone else's equipment unless invited to do so.
5. If someone is shooting a round try not to disturb them. Put up your target while they are collecting their arrows.
6. New members may do it wrong. Be tolerant and explain what to do.
7. Be helpful and considerate so that we will all have a pleasant shooting season.

Happy shooting

Colin

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## Captains Corner

### *Psycho archery scheme*

What are you shooting at a tournament?

Not a round.

Not arrows

Not badly

Not well

The answer is this "one shot" the one that is in the bow **now**, and to repeat it over and over again.

Prepare that shot well and believe in it, trust yourself.

A routine is required. Coming to the shooting line, stance, stand up straight, really straight, nock the arrow.

Control your breathing, relax shoulders, and stomach, look to the target, concentrate on the target hard or point of aim; spend four seconds min in this. Come to full draw, anchor your draw hand, exhale, bring the sight ring on the target, and aim totally. By this I mean visualise the arrow flight perfectly to the target. Do not take your eyes or concentration off the target.

Relax your draw fingers, and follow through, keep your bow hand in place, do not take your eyes off the target. See the arrow arrive in the centre of the target.

Look at it this way there are 9 points sitting there with each shot, all you have to do is pick them up.

### **Subconscious**

In the scheme of things the bow has been used for approx. 10,000 years, if you represent the whole of the existence of the bow as 12 hour clock face, the average time for our use on that clock face is 12.6 seconds, so 99.65% of archery was before our time. They did not have all the gizmos we have now, stabilizers, carbon limbs, sights, and hi-tech strings, but they still put food on the table. They hit the gold. How did they do that? Well they used their instincts. Nowadays most instinctive shooting is done in Field shooting. But that does not mean that you cannot use yours to improve your control, and accuracy. Another way of saying this is to let your subconscious take control of some aspect of your shooting. The loose and aiming is an area that can be in this category.

These notes on Psycho Archery I have been putting in the Nocking Point over the last few months are not mine but Al Henderson, a USA Olympic coach. His book called Understanding Winning Archery was published in 1983, but his ideas are still valid.

Just a bit of information I have been trying to apply to what I said over the last few months. Well I can only say that in the last two weeks I have managed to equal my own PB at a Portsmouth of 480 and followed up with a 468 the next week including a MISS. So something is working.

On the **new field front** two parcels of land have been identified and the owners have been written too. Lets see if we get replies. I am putting

together costing for the conversion of the land to sports use and planning, utilities, storage, pavilion and foundation. We will have to ask for funding as the costs involved exceed the clubs savings.

### **MKL**

It's the start of the outdoor season, and the first MKL is home on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>. All archers are encouraged to shoot, just let me know what you want to shoot. There are some rules about classification but I will explain them on the day. Hope to see you on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Geoff B

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### **Twig and Stick**

Of the 3 battles made famous during the 100 year's war, where the Longbow weapon changed the result of the battle, Crecy in Northern France was the first.

Crecy-en-Ponthieu, a small town in Picardy about mid-way between Paris and Calais, was the scene of a battle on 26 August, 1346 that changed the way battles were fought. Knights on horseback - heavy cavalry -, who had dominated the battlefield for years, lost their dominance. Infantry had been unable to withstand the terrifying and irresistible charge of a massed formation of armoured knights on heavy horses with long lances that could reach over shields and outreach pikes. The new weapon, the Longbow had never before been used to its full potential. It had taken decades to work out how to maximise its range and power, perfect its accuracy and develop tactics and training to exploit it to the full. At Crecy, it was decisive.

The English were led by Edward III. French forces numbered approx 36,000. English forces numbered approx 12,000 of which approx 7,000 were archers. The battle line was approximately 2,000 yards wide. The French army was disorganised, arguments between their nobles, fighting a defensive English position, during wet weather so plenty of mud etc to slow them down and exhaust them. Knights' armour had not yet evolved to the stage where longbows could not penetrate, and the knights' horses were barely protected at all. The storm of arrows killed or disabled the knights' mounts, and left the knights floundering in the mud on foot beneath an unavoidable hail of arrows.

The English army, occupying the top of a gentle ridge near the town, consisted of three groups of men-at-arms and spearmen, with archers placed on their sides. The King had ordered that the army should be divided into three battalions, one commanded by himself, one commanded by 'The Black Prince' his sixteen year old son with help from many nobles, the third commanded by the Earl of Northampton and other nobles. The archers formed ranks resembling an outward V. The battle is seen by many historians as marking the beginning of the end of classic chivalry, many of the prisoners and wounded were killed, this was against the chivalric codes of warfare. Each English archer carried 2 sheaves of arrows (48) into battle. Re-supply was accomplished by going back through the lines or having more brought forward.

The bow draw weights were normally from 80 to 120 lbs. Arrows, depending on type and weight, could be shot 250 to 300 yards. The English archers could shoot an average of 10 arrows per minute. (That rate could not be kept up for very long)

The total number of arrows shot during the battle is estimated at a half million.

There were 14 to 16 charges made against the English lines from the start of the battle at 4:00 PM until the completion at midnight. (I'm surprised they could see...)

Casualties were estimated from 5,000 (low) to 10,000 or more (high) for the French Knights and Genoese crossbowmen. The French even went as far as to leave behind the pavises, the only means of defence for the crossbowmen, along with the other infantry. The decision proved a deadly mistake. (The pavise was primarily used by archers and crossbowmen in the medieval period, particularly during sieges. It was carried by a *pavisier*, usually an archer, or, especially for the larger ones, by a groom. The pavise was held in place by the *pavisier* or sometimes deployed in the ground with a spike attached to the bottom. While reloading their weapons, crossbowmen would crouch behind them to shelter against incoming missile attacks, like a large shield. English casualties were several hundred.

King Philip of France was himself wounded, and, at nightfall, ordered the French to retreat. It was a disastrous and humiliating defeat for France and an overwhelming victory for England.

At this stage in history the longbow was capable of penetrating armour (particularly the parts not yet covered by plates), but not all the arrows shot by the longbow men would have found a target or penetrated the armour of the advancing French knights, if they did it was partly due to angles at which they happened to strike. However, victims would have their horses shot out from under them, and it is worth remembering that even a non-piercing impact would still be substantial enough to bruise, wind and knock down knights on foot as they attempted to advance. If survivors of the volleys reached the English formation, they were cut down with relative ease by the defensive line of dismounted English men-at-arms. The overall effect was devastating.

Apparently, after the battle, the Black Prince, having won respect and honour, was triumphant. He paid tribute to a brave middle aged man, an almost blind stranger, King John of Bohemia. As a gesture of admiration and respect, he took the old king's shield and made it his own; the Prince of Wales feathers (Fleur de Lys). When the battle was over and the Welsh longbow men had returned to their home in Llantrisant, South Wales, they were each given an acre of land for their bravery. They were also awarded "Freemen" status and were exempted from paying tax for grazing rights for their cattle. "How about that then..."

A picture showing what the area looks like today, the ridge between Crecy and Wadicourt that was the site of the battle. (Do you notice a lack of trees?)



Any Longbow men interested, a Western shoot called 'The Hurricane' at Biggin Hill by the Leaves Green Bowmen Club on the 28<sup>th</sup> Apr 12. A good venue and very welcoming. If it is your first time there, they present you with a badge of a Hurricane and last time, I got a 'free' sausage roll at lunch. You will enjoy it... 😊

*(Unfortunately the shoot was full in January I did not get in Geoff B)*

There is also, the Spring Longbow meeting at Wisley on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 12 doing a Two Way Western (BL-BS rules), starts at 1pm and costs £5 (seniors). This is run by the County of Surrey Archery Association, not that many places available but I have an entry form if you are interested, I can e-mail it.

I wanted to mention some of the 'funny incidents' that archers have whilst practicing or shooting at tournaments. Nobody seems to be 'admitting' that anything funny happens but... I was practicing and enjoying the company 'on the field', decided to sit down for a well deserved rest when my folding chair did it's final 'fold' leaving me with my legs in the air and back on the ground, much to the amusement of everybody around.

Another incident occurred to a very good friend of mine whilst he was making some arrows. He had got to the point of adding fletches and then cutting them to the shape he required after gluing the fletch to the shaft. The cutter he used cuts by heat. After a short, 'poof', the fletch disappeared in a puff of smoke as the fresh glue had ignited and 'removed' the fletch in seconds, the surprise on his face was a sight to see...☺

The ILAA are holding a Longbow shoot, At the Marks, at Speed and in the Cloth of Gold at Hall Place, Leigh, near Tonbridge on the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> April. Leigh is a lovely Kent village which started life in the early 1100's, much of it still exists; Hall Place is also lovely with beautiful gardens, both are well worth a visit.

The St George's Round is the oldest known round. It was first shot by a club calling itself the Fraternity of St George after the medieval society who became the Honourable Artillery Company in 1537. They lasted from 1835 until about 1845, and shot at the St. Marylebone Archery Ground, Hamilton Terrace, St. John's Wood, London. Their rules are quoted in Alfred E Hargrove's Anecdotes of archery, 1845, with no mention of the round, but Horace Ford includes it in his chapter on ancient and modern scoring in his, "Archery: its theory and practice", 1856. (By the way this is a very interesting book) An account of a match held 21st July, 1841, when this round was used, appears in the Sporting Magazine Aug 1841.

More interesting stuff to come... ☺

What did the lustful maiden say to the handsome Longbow archer? You make me quiver... Ohhhh noooo.

I see Pamela finally got to use her Longbow for the first time and did very well, from what I could see, my first attempt I didn't even hit the target... ☺ Well done Pam, keep it up.

The latest Frostbite should have been called, 'Warmbite'. It was a lovely day, Barebow out-numbered Longbows 4 to 3, first time I had seen that, watch out Neil, they are after you... ☺ Pam did very well at the Frostbite, keep it up Pam, both Christine & Karen will be keeping a eye on you.

Finally you Guys & Girls, just make sure you are enjoying yourselves.

Alf

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Hi all

I just wanted to write a quick update on the club clothing. I have received the first order of the new club colours and will be handing them out to those that ordered ASAP. If anyone else would like to order any items then please go on the website all prices and order forms are on there, please return completed order forms to myself (address is on the form) along with payment ASAP. If I get a large enough order I will place it with the supplier and hopefully receive it before we get too far into the season.

Regards Chris

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