



Confidence

Friendship

Concentration

Perseverance

**ARCHERS NOTE BOOK**

**MAKE EVERY ARROW COUNT**

**FOR EVERY SHOT**

# Oxford Archery



**Congratulations On Making The Archery Team.**

**All Archers Must Maintain Good Grades Throughout The Season.**

**All Archers Must Remain Free Of Any Disciplinary Problems.**

**The Team Has A Zero Tolerance Policy For Any Kind Of Major Disciplinary Problems.**

**Archers May Be Removed From The Team For Any Of The Following Issues.**

**Safety Violations**

**Disciplinary Problems**

**Unsatisfactory Grades**

*[Handwritten signature]*  
1/24/12



NATIONAL ARCHERY  
IN THE  
SCHOOLS PROGRAM

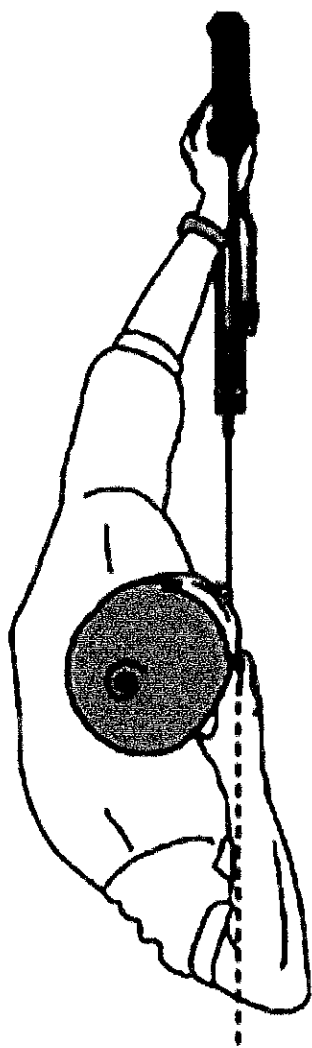
## *11 Steps to Archery Success*

- 1 Stance**
- 2 Nock** — *BIG DEEP BREATH CLEAR YOUR HEAD*
- 3 Draw Hand Set**
- 4 Bow Hand Set**
- 5 Pre-Draw**
- 6 Draw**
- 7 Anchor**
- 8 Aim**
- 9 Shot Set-Up**
- 10 Release**
- 11 Follow Through & Reflect**

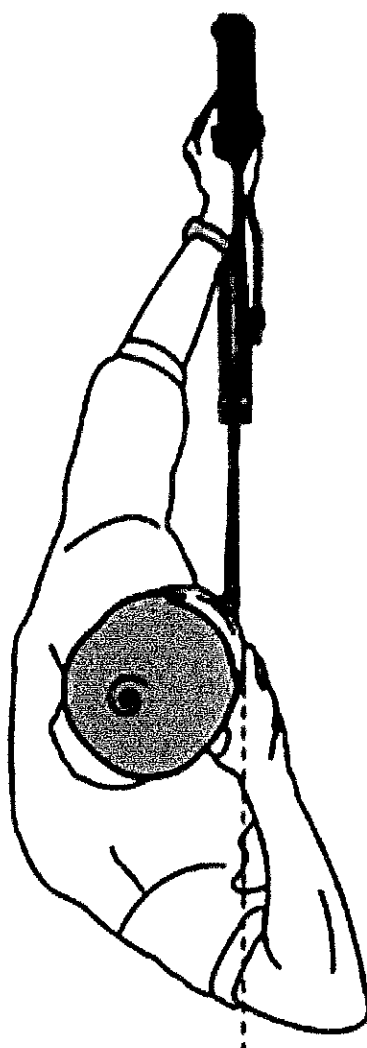


**NATIONAL ARCHERY  
IN THE  
SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

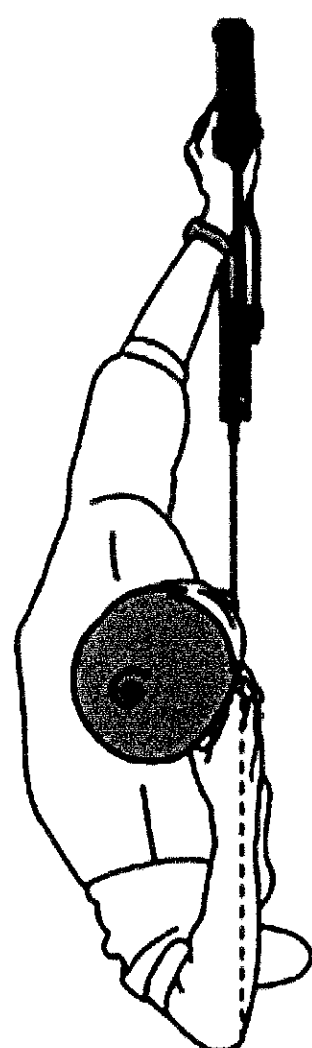
# Draw Length



**Correct**



**Short**



**Long**

## FORM DRILL

### *MAKE EVERY ARROW COUNT*

- 1) Set your stance, good solid base shoulder width apart and feet staggered
- 2) Nock an arrow, insure it is up against the tied nock point
- 3) Take a deep breath and relax, look at the target and begin to focus
- 4) Set your draw hand, fingers directly under the arrow, same spot every time
- 5) Set your bow hand, same way every time
- 6) Pre-draw, look at the target and begin to draw, relax
- 7) Draw to your anchor point
- 8) Anchor, settle in on your anchor point, same place every time
- 9) Aim, begin to narrow your focus to a specific spot on the target, pick your spot
- 10) Focus on your aiming point and begin your shot set up to release
- 11) Follow through on the front hand by keeping steady and in place, follow through on your draw hand and paint your face
- 12) Relax, clear your mind and prepare for the next arrow

By focusing on each and every step, for each and every arrow,

You will gain Consistency, Good Groups & High Scores

Through the recreation of a perfectly executed shot,

Or

By having perfect form for each and every shot

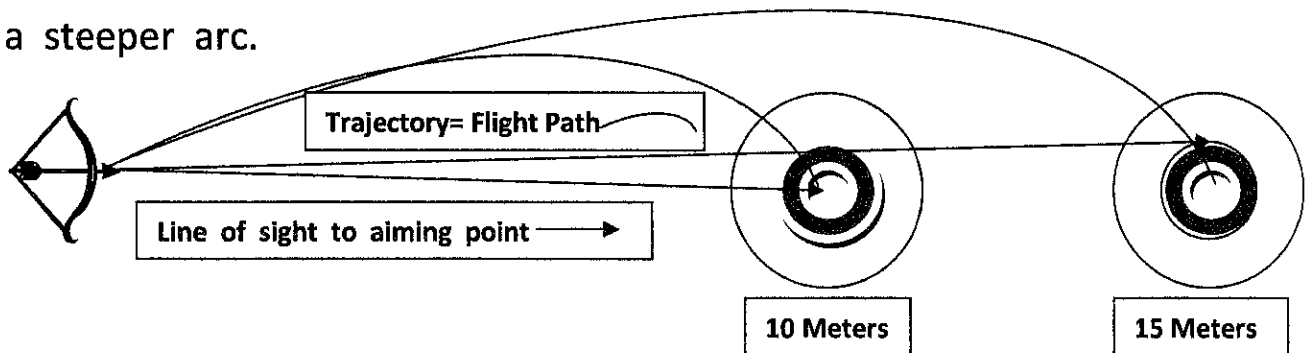
**GOOD FORM = CONSISTENCY,  
GOOD GROUPS & HIGH SCORES**

### In Archery

**PRACTICE DOES NOT MAKE PERFECT  
PERFECT PRACTICE (CONSISTENT FORM) MAKES PERFECT**  
Practice your form mentally for consistent muscle memory

## The Relationship Between Your Aiming Point and Trajectory

Trajectory is the exact flight path of an arrow, which is an arc, as the arrow leaves the bow it actually rises up until the force of gravity begins to bring it down, as the arrow loses speed and energy (velocity) it begins to drop more rapidly, longer shots have a steeper arc.



Your aiming point is a straight line of sight to a specific spot or point on the target, the trajectory of an arrow and its path, will rise up above your line of sight and aiming point and then drop back down in an arched path, below your aiming point.

The key is to adjust your aiming point at 10 and 15 meters to compensate for the arrows flight path (trajectory). The farther away the target is the more drastic the drop or arch will be, due to the effects of gravity and the arrow losing both speed and energy. At 15 meters you will have to aim a little bit higher than 10 meters to compensate for the extra 5 meters and drop in the arrows flight path or trajectory.

Every archer will have a different aiming point, everyone must establish and memorize what their own aiming point is at both 10 and 15 meters. **Know your aiming points.**

**Don't Forget To Check Your Arrows** After Each Round (End) Check Nocks, Tips and Fletching Shooting a Bad or Damaged Arrow Will Only Cost You and The Team Very Important Points.

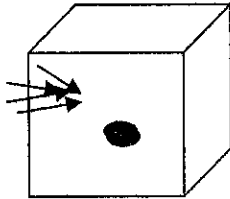
**Don't Forget to Check Your Bow, Cables, Rest, Cams, Nock Point, Wax and String Wear**

**MAKE EVERY ARROW COUNT** For Your Team, By Using The 11 Steps and Focusing On Your Form

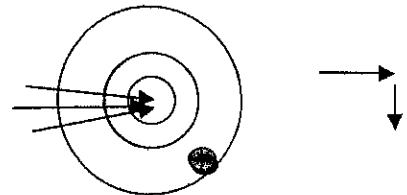
## ADJUSTING YOUR GROUP INTO THE 10 RING

### *GROUPING DRILL*

- 1) On a blank face target use a laser dot or piece of colored tape for an aiming point and shoot a group at 10 meters.



- 2) Once you have a good consistent group at 10 meters, either measure or mentally note the vertical and horizontal distance from your point of aim (laser/tape) and the actual group (example 4 inches High and 6 inches to the left).
- 3) Using the information above on the difference between your aiming point and group, place your group into the center of the 10 ring on a target face and then measure backwards, to place your aiming point on the target so that your group will hit the 10 ring.



In this case you would move your aiming point 4 inches low and six inches to the right. Using the face of a clock determine the exact spot on the target (5 o'clock center of the red ring).

# NASP TOURNAMENT SCORING RULES & REGULATIONS

## SCORING PROCEDURES

### Shooting Lane and Target Numbers:

Check your lane assignment and make sure you are in the proper lane and in front of the target that was assigned to you, match the lane numbers and target numbers, locate the clipboard and place your score card on it at the target. Clipboard's and score cards **MUST** remain at the target.

### Pacing Off Your Target:

For confidence, pace off your target each and every time you walk up to pull your arrows and on the way back, at both 10 meters and 15 meters. The lighting and size of the Expo Hall in KY will make the distances seem different even though they are exactly 10 and 15 meters like our setup in the gym.

### No Kneeling:

NASP regulations do not allow any kneeling at the targets for scoring or pulling the arrows, one archer at the target, one archer on the target line. This is a Safety Regulation, No Kneeling.

### Scoring:

Archers are not allowed to touch the arrows or pull them until all the arrows are scored, one archer at the target calling out his own arrow scores, the other archer on the target line checks the arrow scores and records them. The archers then switch places and repeat the scoring with the archer at the target calling out his own arrow scores and the other archer checking and recording the scores. Archers are not allowed to bubble in their own arrow scores. or touch the arrows in any way until they are all scored, if they have any questions they can raise their hand and a range official will assist them.

### Verify:

Before the arrows are pulled, archers should check their score cards to insure each arrow score was bubbled in correctly by the other archer. Failure to do so will cost the individual and most importantly the team, valuable points. Verifying the scores is one of the most important things an archer needs to do during the tournament

### Pulling:

Once the scores are verified and agreed on, each archer will pull his arrows, once again no kneeling and one archer at the target pulling the other on the target line.

### Check your Arrows Nocks, Fletching & Tips:

After your arrows are pulled and while you are walking back to your floor quiver (pacing) visually check your arrows for any defects, inspect the nocks for cracks or missing chips, insure the nock is fully seated into the arrow shaft. Check the fletching for loose and ripped vanes, inspect the tips/ points to make sure they did not come loose in the target or fall out.

Lastly look at the shaft for obvious defects such as bends or dents from other arrows striking them. If an arrow is damaged, ask a range official to switch it out, with a good arrow, from one of the teams back up quivers.

### Sign Off:

When the final scoring end is complete insure that you get the other archer to verify your score card by signing off on it, in the proper place provided, your entire tournament score could become null and void if your card is not signed off by the archer you shot with. The range officials will collect the score cards at the end after they have been finalized and signed.

These procedures need to be followed each and every time you shoot and retrieve your arrows.



# Are You Wasting Practice Time?

by Terry Wunderle

Editor's note: Terry Wunderle is *The Shot Doctor* (217) 482-3670 call "For All Your Archery Ailments." Schedule shooter schools at your range or club or take private lessons at Terry Wunderle's residence in Illinois. Learn how to: handle pressure, shoot higher scores in practice and in tournaments with relaxed, trouble-free form, gain mental control to stay calm and focused, and judge yardage accurately. See *The Shot Doctor* ad on page 45.

One of my more accomplished target archers was on the practice range preparing for an upcoming championship. Observing a difficulty in his shot process, I commented, "Didn't you feel your form breaking down and the shot going down the pipes?"

"Yes, but I thought I could save it," he replied.

"Why didn't you let it down?" I inquired.

"I should have. I would have let it down if I were in the tournament," he concluded.

I countered that he probably would have continued with the shot in competition. When bad habits and lack of self-discipline are reinforced on the practice range, they unfortunately become patterns that are repeated on the tournament field. Practice is the main foundation that any athlete has to build upon in order to be a successful competitor. An archer has to be able to repeat each shot with precision. This means that the same amount of back pressure and the same degree of muscle tension must be executed. The only way that they can be consistently duplicated is by practicing and shooting the same shot that you will use in a tournament.

A good form of practice is blank bale shooting, where there is no target at which to aim. The archer strives to shoot each shot with perfect form. At the moment of release, the feeling of the shot indicates whether or not you've been successful. Blank bale practice provides you with the opportunity to identify the muscles and muscle tension needed to execute this perfect shot. Since there is no target present, your concentration is directed only toward being able to duplicate the shot. This form of practice is very important when you are starting a new season after a break. It is also an excellent way to start and finish every practice session.

When using blank bale shooting, do not be concerned where the arrows are hitting, other than staying on the practice butt. Be very aware of what your bow arm is doing. Over 90% of the bad shots by an archer can be contributed to the bow arm. Make sure it goes through the shot and finishes in the same place every time. The bow arm is controlling and guiding the path of the arrow until it leaves the bowstring. Make sure you finish your

shot so the arrow will continue straight at the target. Also be certain you shoot every shot with the same degree of backpressure. If an archer fails to maintain back tension, the bow arm will break down. When the muscles producing back tension to the string are relaxed, they will automatically relax the muscles to the bow arm and cause pin movement. A good way to find out if you are losing backpressure is to have someone watch your arrow on the rest. If the arrow creeps forward, you are losing the backpressure and probably will not shoot a consistent group.

Be aware of your rhythm. Nearly all of the top archers release their arrows at approximately the same time during their rhythm. Some archers may shoot a five-second shot, while others may use ten or twelve seconds. Whatever their rhythm, the shot is usually released within one second of this time frame. If the shot is held much longer than the normal shooting rhythm, the form begins to breakdown and a bad shot will follow.

Once you are satisfied with your form, put up a five-spot target at ten yards. Shoot the same shot as you did when blank baling. If it is not the very same shot, then shoot one arrow at the

target and the next at blank bale until the two shots are identical. Many times the presence of the target "short-circuits" the brain, because there is too much emphasis placed on aiming. Let the pin float on the target and execute the same shot as you do while blank baling. When the shot is the same, back up to twenty yards and repeat the process. The only really important thing is to shoot identical form with every shot. Let the pin float and it will hit the mark.

Practice is also the time when you learn to develop your mental control and concentration level. Treat every shot as the most important shot you will shoot that day. If you think the shot isn't there or you have negative thoughts, let it down, refocus, and start over. Do not shoot shots in practice that you would not want to shoot in a championship. Practice is where you teach yourself the required discipline that you will need in a tournament. You only have one chance with each arrow in a competition. You owe it to yourself to make sure you shoot it with the best form that you are capable of shooting. Fifty quality practice shots are of more value than five hundred undisciplined shots.

## Maintain Your Grades

**Let The Coaches Know If You Need Help**

**Stay Out Of Trouble**

**Be Respectful To Your Teachers And Classmates**

**Focus During Practice On Improving Your Form**

**Respect Your Teammates While They Are Shooting**



# Master Mental Imagery

by Terry M. Wunderle

Editor's note: Terry Wunderle is *The Shot Doctor* (217) 482-3670 call "For All Your Archery Ailments." Schedule shooter schools at your range or club or take private lessons at Terry Wunderle's residence in Illinois. Learn how to: handle pressure, shoot higher scores in practice and in tournaments with relaxed, trouble-free form, gain mental control to stay calm and focused, and judge yardage accurately. See *The Shot Doctor* ad on page 18.

The finals of the Junior World Trials were over, yet they weren't. I walked up to one of my young archers and explained, "I've got good news and bad news. The good news is that you made the Junior World Team. The bad news is the tournament is not over. You are tied for third and are in a twelve-arrow shoot-off." The major difference between third and fourth equaled about \$2,000, because the third place position was a paid trip.

The pressure and tension were obvious, as the archers prepared for their final match. I placed my hands on Brenda Temperley's shoulders to calm her and said, "Do your mental imagery." She then shot some arrows with her arms and some more with only her mind, until she reunited the bond between her mind and her muscles. The competition was very close, coming down to the very last shot. Brenda looked at the target and shot the arrow using mental imagery. Next, she drew the bow and executed the most valuable arrow of her short career. It was a ten, worth a couple thousand dollars. Brenda used this same mental approach at the Junior World Championship, helping the U.S.A. girls' compound team capture the gold medal.

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Mental imagery can calm fraying nerves and refocus an archer's thinking, so he or she can shoot the best possible shot. Since your mind only focuses on one thought process at a time, make it a positive one concerning your performance. Think and concentrate on producing a shot with perfect form. How do you go about mastering this mental imagery? It's seeing and feeling the experience, as you learn to shoot a perfect shot with your mind. To begin, practice shooting your bow until your form feels just right and the arrow is hitting the mark. Set your bow down and then make the shot with your arms. Replicate the shot numerous times until it feels the same as it did when the bow was in your hands. If you have trouble doing this, pick the bow up and release a few shots to reacquaint yourself with the feeling. Keep going back and forth shooting the shot with and without the bow until everything feels the same. Now look at the target and create the shot using only your mind. Feel the shot. Notice your back muscles pulling through the release. Feel the bow arm explode through the shot. Try to visualize the arrow hitting the mark. If you have trouble experiencing the shot when shooting with your mind, go back and make some shots with just your arms until you re-establish the feeling. Produce some shots with your arms and some only in your brain until these senses become very familiar. Being able to duplicate the feeling in your mind is more difficult for some people. Keep practicing the steps and your awareness will grow stronger. The more you use mental imagery, the more pronounced the feelings of the shot process will become.

Once you think that you have mastered mental imagery, start putting it to the test. When you are watching

TV, turn your head over your bow shoulder and see if you can shoot a shot in your mind using perfect form. You should be able to see and feel the shot. The noise of the TV will be in the background, but it should have no importance. You might try the same process the next time you are in a large, busy store. Stop and put your head over your bow shoulder. Picture a target down the aisle and see if you can mentally create a perfect shot. In your mind, there shouldn't be anything in the store other than you and the target. Once you have mastered this approach, go to the next level. When someone has made you upset or angry, look over your bow shoulder and try to privately make a perfect shot. Any anger or frustration with the situation should be repressed and have no importance in the thought process. If you find this difficult, repeat the procedure until it becomes easier. Yes, blocking out emotional feelings and then mentally shooting a perfect shot can be very challenging. If you work to master it, you will then be ready for the big test.

Picture the start of the Indoor National Championship when the announcer says, "The next end is for score." This is the moment that many archers "go mental." Now you have a tool you can use to regain focus and shoot a shot with perfect form. Look at the target, shooting it in your mind several times. Let the process help calm you and give you a new perspective on the task you need to perform. Then step to the line and physically shoot each shot with exact form, just as you do in practice. Know that your most important piece of archery equipment is your brain. It can work for you or against you. Learn to use it to your advantage. Stay focused, use mental imagery, and shoot each arrow with perfect form. ©



## Do You Need Stronger Mental Control?

by Terry Wunderle

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Do you shoot consistent scores in practice, but your performance falls far short of that at a tournament? Are you extremely nervous and unable to control the excessive pin movement? Is your thinking process running rapidly in all directions? When the tournament is over, are you embarrassed or completely disgusted with your performance? If the answers to these questions are "no," I am happy because I know that you are comfortable with our great sport and will have an enjoyable future shooting. If the answers are "yes," it is obvious that what you are doing is not working and maybe it is time for a change. I would suggest that you develop a mental program.

Developing a mental program that will maximize the performance is a challenging endeavor for most archers. Many archers make it appear easy and natural to stand in front of a crowd and shoot a tournament. Most of these people will tell you that it took time to develop such a demeanor. In order to have a solid mental program and maintain it, several facets of the mind have to work in conjunction with each other.

First, let's look at the conscious mind. It can only concentrate on and handle one thought process at a time. Too often, during competition an archer will let the mind dwell on thoughts that will erode the relaxed, smooth form that is used on the practice range. When the thinking process is directed at concerns of one's ability to successfully compete, the self-doubt will quickly produce tension and anxiety that will alter the normal shot sequence. The archer will no longer be in a comfort zone and the performance will suffer. Since the conscious mind can only process one thought pattern at a time, make that thinking a positive influence. Most shots that are missed are due to a breakdown in form. If an archer can eliminate form errors, then he or she should have a good performance. I am not saying they will win. Instead, I am saying they should be able to perform at the same level as they can on the practice range. Isn't that what you really want to accomplish? To eliminate the form errors, I maintain the archer should focus consciously on shooting the best form possible. If the conscious mind is engrossed in nothing but shooting perfect form, there will be no room for detrimental thinking to hamper the process. In order for this mental approach to be successful, it has to be developed on the practice range. Become completely involved in the shooting process during practice as well as at the competition. Feel your muscles relax as you allow the pin to settle in on the mark. When the pin is floating in the desired location, execute the shot. Feel yourself pull the bow apart. Continuously direct the pressure in the bow arm straight toward the target. Since most breakdowns in form are due to the lack of pressure, make sure you continue pulling the bow apart until the arrow is released. If the mind is totally engrossed in shooting perfect form, there will be no room for self-doubt or other negative thinking to disrupt your consistent form.

The subconscious mind processes many thoughts instantly. Let it control the aiming. Stare at the spot you want to hit and allow the pin to float on that area. Let the pin drift in, out, and around the spot. Do not try to guide or correct this movement to hold it on the mark. Instead, let it float and allow the subconscious mind to make the corrections. If the float area becomes too big, this is usually an indication that you have lost forward pressure. Either pull the bow apart with a little more pressure to

stabilize the pin movement or let it down and start again. The emphasis on hard aiming is drastically over-rated. The perfect form is what drives the arrow into the mark. Let the subconscious do the aiming, trust your form, and shoot.

Another part of a good mental program is confidence and self-image. If you truly have the confidence that you are the best archer in your division, this is good. Most people look at the situation from the viewpoint that there are many good archers in their division. If this is the case, put your confidence in what you are good at doing and what you can control, which is executing a shot with the perfect form. By placing your total conscious focus on perfect shot execution, you will realize this is the main and only thing that you can control, and this is what allows you to shoot the tight groups. Treat every practice session as if it were a tournament. This will help you build stronger concentration and focus skills, which will build your confidence for competition. The mind will develop a positive picture of your ability to execute perfect form. Note, I never emphasized putting the confidence on your ability to score. Score is the result of shooting excellent form; so the emphasis needs to be placed on your abilities and not the results of those abilities.

The conscious mind, subconscious mind, and confidence all need to be developed and utilized so that your mental program can maximize your performance. I realize this is a different philosophy than most of you have been exposed to in archery. I am not saying it is the right way or the only way to shoot. I am saying this is the philosophy that my shooters use; and they have won over 300 national and world championships. It works! If what you are doing is not successful, then perhaps it is time to make a change.

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# Quit Aiming!

by Terry Wunderle

Editor's note: Terry Wunderle is *The Shot Doctor* (217) 482-3670 call "For All Your Archery Ailments." Schedule shooter schools at your range or club or take private lessons at Terry Wunderle's residence in Illinois. Learn how to: handle pressure, shoot higher scores in practice and in tournaments with relaxed, trouble-free form, gain mental control to stay calm and focused, and judge yardage accurately. See *The Shot Doctor* ad on page 45.

Once at an indoor national tournament, one of my students had been battling it out for first place. The score was tied with only fifteen arrows remaining. Noticing that his rhythm was slowing down, I called him over and instructed, "Quit aiming and shoot form!" He knew exactly what I meant, as he proceeded to capture the title.

When a competition heats up and the scores are close, archers tend to place more pressure on themselves, often trying to be too precise with the shot placement. By doing this, they add several seconds to their normal shooting rhythm and cause a breakdown in their form. Usually, the added time results in a weaker follow-through with the bow arm producing a low or low-right shot. When over-aiming happens, the bow arm loses forward pressure and more sight movement occurs. A weak shot is likely to follow.

Many archers and some coaches put far too much emphasis on the aiming process. Put the pin on the target; then let it float and shoot a good, strong shot. Aiming is over-rated. If the pin is floating on the desired impact point, a strong shot with your normal form will hit the mark.

The problem of over-aiming starts when ones thinking process is centered on score or winning. Such pressure often begins days before a tournament and intensifies after

the competition gets underway. Focusing on scores and first place is an excellent blueprint for a poor performance. Where should you direct your attention? Picture yourself shooting your best possible form. This process will build a positive image, help you relax, and produce a more excellent shot.

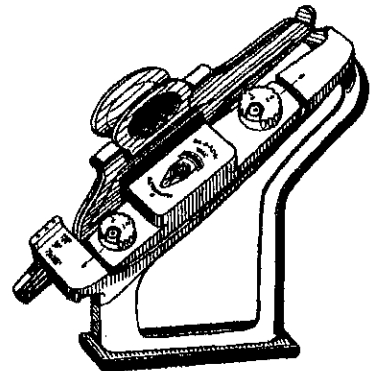
Many archers put their confidence in the sight picture, not their form. When they get nervous and see sight movement, their game begins to deteriorate. Very few archers are steady enough to "lock on" to the x-ring and have the pin stay there. They keep waiting for the shot, wanting the pin to hold on the mark. Before long, they have added several seconds to their normal shooting rhythm, which allows the back pressure to decrease. The stage is set for an ineffective shot.

How can you remedy the problem? Trust your form, not your sight. Quit aiming! Hold the pin as close to the desired impact point as possible and let the pin float. If you tighten muscles in an attempt to guide the sight pin, the effect of this tension will be reflected in the shot execution. Concentrate and make sure you produce a shot with perfect form. If the form is good, the result will be much better than if you had continued aiming.

Prove this idea to yourself so you will trust your form. Place a 40 centimeter target at 40 yards

and shoot twenty arrows for score. Now, repeat the process, but let the pin float as you shoot a rhythmic shot and concentrate on perfect form. The scores should reflect where to place your trust. The next time you find yourself in a pressure situation, you should have the confidence to make a good shot. Instead of worrying about erratic pin movement, the focus is on perfect shot execution. The confidence and trust in your form will help you perform like a champion.

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# Don't Shoot a Bad Shot

by Terry Wunderle

Editor's note: Terry Wunderle is *The Shot Doctor* (217) 482-3670 call "For All Your Archery Ailments." Schedule shooter schools at your range or club or take private lessons at Terry Wunderle's residence in Illinois. Learn how to: handle pressure, shoot higher scores in practice and in tournaments with relaxed, trouble-free form, gain mental control to stay calm and focused, and judge yardage accurately. See *The Shot Doctor* ad on page 21.

How many times have you said, "I shouldn't have shot that arrow?" Is your answer frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never? Your answer to this question probably reflects the level at which you shoot.

Archery is a sport of concentration and discipline. The lack of either of these two mental processes hinders an archer from having a consistent performance. To understand a bad shot, we need to look at what creates one. The main factor is bad form. Seldom is it produced because the pin is not on or near the desired mark. What is the source of bad form? It is a breakdown or deviation from what you normally use during practice. This change is frequently caused when the thinking process alters during a competition. The concentration and focus become misdirected towards score, winning, or other distractions. When this happens, you become tense, extra muscles tighten, and excess pin movement results. To compensate for the pin movement, more muscles are tightened in an attempt to steady the pin. As a result, several seconds are added to the normal shot sequence and the process begins to break down. At this time, the shot should be stopped and started over. Though this isn't the only source of a bad shot, it is by far the most common cause.

Many issues can become a distraction and hinder the concentration of an archer. Maybe it is the pressure of a big tournament, something a friend or opponent said to you, or simply daydreaming about something other than shot execution. You need to train your mind to think the same thoughts in practice as you do in a tournament. As you grow mentally strong, your practice and

tournament shots should become the same.

Occasionally, you will draw on a target and your mind will say, "Something is wrong." You don't have a clue what is different, so you go ahead and release the arrow. Too often you discover that your thinking was correct. Something was wrong. Listen to your inner voice. You wouldn't have felt something was amiss if it wasn't. Deviating from your normal shot set-up in some way triggered the thought.

A variety of factors can cause a breakdown in concentration. The more you work at developing your level of focus, the more consistent you will be in your performance. To prevent shooting a bad shot, you have to first recognize when it is going to be unsuccessful. Then comes the discipline. Don't shoot! Let the bow down and begin again. When you think your shot is going to be ineffective and you proceed anyway, the arrow will probably hit the mark less than 50% of the time. Those are poor odds. Self-control is learned during practice. If you shoot bad shots during training, chances are you will make them in a tournament. Implement the discipline in practice so it will become more automatic during tournaments.

When you read the title "Don't Shoot a Bad Shot," you probably thought, why would anyone do that? As you objectively look at your own situation, you may discover that you do shoot an occasional bad shot. Eliminate those from tournament play and your level of success should rise. If you evaluate your performance and find you do not shoot bad shots, I would most likely classify you as a disciplined, high-level archer. ©

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# Video Your Shot

by Terry Wunderle

Editor's note: Terry Wunderle is *The Shot Doctor* (217) 482-3670 call "For All Your Archery Ailments." Schedule shooter schools at your range or club or take private lessons at Terry Wunderle's residence in Illinois. Learn how to: handle pressure, shoot higher scores in practice and in tournaments with relaxed, trouble-free form, gain mental control to stay calm and focused, and judge yardage accurately. See *The Shot Doctor* ad on page 34.

All archers would like to improve their shooting skills. Some can afford the luxury of a private coach or attend a good shooter's school. Others cannot. Any person can become a good archer with or without a coach. The advantage of having a coach is to shorten the learning curve and to get you back on track quickly when you encounter trouble. The whole key to becoming a good shot is consistency. There isn't necessarily a right way or a wrong way to shoot. The use of certain muscle groups when executing a shot can make it much easier to develop consistency. When I work with an archer, I am looking for inconsistencies in his or her form. If the person is doing something in a different way than the mental picture I have of perfect form, I do not worry about it as long as the individual does it the same every time. This is what you need to look at and evaluate in your own form.

The archery shot is actually relatively simple. The bow arm needs to have consistent pressure towards the target and the release arm needs to maintain consistent pressure away from the target. First, let's look at the bow arm. The forward pressure should be executed with the same amount of force and in the same direction on every shot. Examine your form by shooting numerous shots at a bull's-eye target at ten yards. Pay attention to how your bow arm reacts. If done properly, it should move to the same position each time the arrow is released. Once you have mastered this, shoot the target at twenty yards for score. Set up a video camera in front of you and film a shooting series. Afterwards, evaluate the reaction of your bow arm and see

if you maintained consistency. A common problem that occurs is when an archer attempts to over-aim the shot. When this happens, the degree and angle of forward pressure is changed and the bow arm reacts differently. With a compound bow, over ninety-percent of the misses come from the bow arm. If this happens to you, strong concentration and form work will help remedy the situation.

Next, look at the release arm and hand. Shoot a series of shots from ten yards at a bull's-eye target and video the process. When viewing the tape, examine it to determine if your release hand took the same path and ended in the same position on each shot. If not, continue shooting at ten yards until you achieve consistency. If you are trying to maintain backpressure with your arm muscles, it will be difficult to be consistent. The process is much easier if you pull with the muscles in your back. Once you have established a good release at ten yards, shoot at twenty yards for score. Again, video and evaluate the sequence. A benefit of recording your shots

is having the proof that consistency is present. If you are not replicating your shots, you can identify where you are having difficulty.

Once you have cleaned up both the bow arm and the release arm, it is time to evaluate the whole shot process. Shoot, score, and video a series of twenty shots at the same target, but this time move back to thirty yards. After each shot, call out the score of the arrow, in order to record it on video. At the longer distance, it is common for an archer to over-aim the shot in an attempt to fine-tune the sighting. When this occurs, the shooting rhythm slows and the form starts breaking down. Go over the video and identify where your form changed on any missed shots. Once you have identified the problem, you will be able to correct it. By becoming more involved in the shot process and examining it through videotapes, you can develop a more consistent form and successfully shoot tighter groups.

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# Trust Your Form and Shoot

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When he was younger, Braden Gellenthien was shooting the first end of seventy meters at the beginning of the Junior World Trials. As he finished his six arrows, he came off the line and shook his head in disgust, even though he had made a perfect score of sixty. Then he approached me and said, "I know. I'm aiming too much and it will stop."

I responded with a firm warning, "Trust your form and shoot." Braden quit aiming and went on to set a new world record at 70 meters. Why were we both upset by his over-aiming? This practice is what had gotten him into trouble in the past. When he had over-aimed, his scores had plummeted. The best piece of advice that I can give any archer is, "Trust your form and shoot."

One of the biggest problems most archers face is over-aiming. Why do they develop this habit? They believe or have been lead to believe that the pin has to stay on the dot for the arrow to hit its mark. This is not true. Archers who rely on this practice put all of their emphasis and concentration on keeping the pin on the dot. Let me describe what I call over-aiming. This is the process that an archer goes through to keep the pin affixed to the dot. When it drifts off, muscles are tightened in order to guide or force the pin back onto the mark. These extra-tense muscles then affect the reaction of the bow arm when the arrow is released, resulting in a different impact point. How do you keep the sight pin on the mark? You put it on the bulls-eye and let it float. Stay relaxed but keep strong backpressure. The pin will remain on or close to the dot. If you execute a shot with perfect form, it will be successful. Trust your form and release the arrow. If you tighten muscles in an attempt to guide the pin, the extra muscle tension will produce additional pin movement. Over-aiming not only causes muscle tension, it also adds extra time to the

shot sequence. As seconds are added, the form begins to break down and the entire shot process goes awry.

When an archer puts all of the emphasis on, "aim, aim, aim," the subconscious mind, or in some cases the conscious mind, gives the muscles a "yes-no" effect on the shot execution. When the pin is on the mark, the archer's mind says, "Yes," but as it floats the mind responds, "No...yes, no, yes." Finally, the form breaks down and the results are a poorly executed shot. Over-aiming is not only the major cause for a breakdown in form, but in my opinion, the major cause of target panic. By placing the primary emphasis on aiming, how can you execute perfect form?

You are looking forward to a major tournament and you want to do well or even win. During practice, you have been shooting great competition scores and now you are faced with the moment of truth. Since you want to succeed, you start over-aiming and attempt to hold the pin on the mark. In the end, your tournament score isn't even close to your practice scores. Does this sound familiar?

Most shots are missed because there was a breakdown in form. Very few shots are missed because the pin wasn't on or near the mark. Place your emphasis where it counts. Concentrate and execute a shot with perfect form. Now, I realize this concept sounds quite different from what many of you have been lead to believe. I am not saying it is the right way or the only way to shoot. What I am saying is that it works and produces champions. The archers I coach have won over 300 national and world championships and in the process have set or broken over 400 national and world records. I will guarantee you one thing. These archers did not place the emphasis on aiming. They put the pin on, let it float, and concentrated on shooting the best possible form. If you are not satisfied with your tournament level of

performance, try it. Trust your form and execute a first-class shot. ©

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# Get Ready for the Nationals

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As the first day of the Indoor National Tournament drew to a close, a fellow archer could not conceal his frustration and embarrassment. For the past three years, his worst performance in an indoor round had been a 57X, with his average scores hovering around the 59-60X range. Feeling ready to tackle the national level, the gentleman was mentally unprepared for the 298, 52X he saw on his initial score card. He had reason to be upset. The mighty power of competition pressure had thrown my friend into a tailspin, though I'm quite sure he was not the only archer in the arena who was experiencing the dreaded phenomena of bulls-eye shrinkage, where the ten-ring looked like an aspirin.

The only way to get use to coping with pressure is to subject yourself to it frequently and to learn to repress it mentally. If you do the majority of your practices in calm surroundings, you will find it very difficult to perform well at the national level, when hundreds of people are around you and you think you have to hit the X-ring. Begin looking for opportunities where you have to practice under pressure. When you go to the local range, select a lane where others will see you and everything you do. Have you noticed there are often open lanes near the entry where archers frequently stop and observe the shooters? Select one of these and practice ignoring the commotion and spectators as you shoot your game.

Try getting together with some friends who shoot close to your level of performance. Make a game of putting a dollar into a pot for each ten arrows shot, eventually awarding the money to the person with the highest score. Before long you will grow accustomed to the pressure, improve your focus, and enjoy the experience. If not, make

sure you bring a lot of dollar bills!

An archer I have coached once told me that each night at the practice range he walked up to the counter and told the attendant "This \$5 is yours if I don't shoot 5 Xs this end." Interestingly enough, his level of concentration began to improve.

Simulate the start of the national championship. Have people shoot right next to you on both sides. Mentally work yourself up and make yourself nervous by acting as if this really was the first day of the competition. Then shoot for score. Sometimes pretend you have a great score going and the next arrows are your last five shots. You have to have them in order to win. Tell your friends so they can watch. Calm yourself mentally and then shoot good form. Try to make the practice as if it were a tournament and then try to make the tournament as if it were the practice.

When playing in league, tell a family member that if you do not shoot a certain score, you will do the household chores the next day. Now, most of you who are familiar with my coaching know that I do not want archers to put emphasis on score. I still don't, but score is part of the game. You know you have to shoot a certain score in order to place. During competition, don't worry about the numbers; worry about shooting the best form you can execute. You can always think about the score when you are done with the tournament.

To be successful, learn mental imagery and practice it daily. Use it not only in archery, but also incorporate it into your daily living. The art of practicing mental control will make you an accomplished archer, a better worker, and a stronger person. Most of all, remember that archery is a sport to be enjoyed. Lighten up and make

sure you are having a great time! ☺

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# Pre-Tournament Preparation

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When I was talking with a good target archer at the Las Vegas Shoot, he said, "I was too nervous to perform well. I would love to be able to simulate the excitement level that I experienced the first day on the line, so I could prepare for it."

Some tournaments are won and many are lost weeks before they occur. At the big competitions, most people experience the effects of too much apprehension. The nervousness starts long before the event and builds until the tournament is underway. Most people think of the contest in terms of winning or producing a high score. This is what creates anxiety. The uneasiness in turn causes muscle tension and/or loss of focus. An archer must limit the anxiety level by putting more emphasis on the performance, rather than the results of the performance.

Every time you think of an important tournament, picture yourself executing every shot with perfect form. True, nearly everyone wants to win or shoot a high score. This is not the problem. The difficulty develops when you give winning more attention than producing a perfect shot. Winning and score are part of the game; however, they are not the primary component. Shooting the best that you are capable of performing is the main element. The next time you think of participating in a large tournament, place your first emphasis on the most important part. Tell yourself, "I will shoot each shot with perfect form." Make this the goal that you strive to achieve. If you do execute each and every shot the best that you are capable of doing, then you will have the tightest group possible. That, in turn, will transfer into the best score that you are capable of shooting. You can't ask more of yourself than that.

I like the way my son, Vic, responded to a reporter after a

gold medal match at the Olympics. The interviewer asked, "How does it feel to lose the gold medal?"

Vic replied, "I didn't lose the gold. I shot good and won the silver. He shot better and won the gold."

As you prepare for the large tournaments, give practice more importance. While on the range, pretend you are starting a national championship. Try to feel the anticipation associated with the event. In your mind, raise the level of excitement and the value of each arrow that you are preparing to shoot. Then concentrate on creating perfect shot execution. Rehearsing in this manner will teach you how to control your nervousness and focus your attention in the right direction. As you make preparations and attend the next small tournament, treat it as a national championship. Practice dealing with the anxiety and maintaining your concentration. Then when you think of a big championship, picture yourself shooting every shot with perfect form. In your mind, competing in the championship and using your best possible form should become synonymous. These steps should help you mentally prepare for the challenges of the important tournaments. You will have experienced the apprehension and you will know how to get it under control. This in turn, will foster the confidence you need in your ability to concentrate and duplicate the shot.

An hour before the start of a big competition, sit down and shoot the whole tournament mentally. See and feel the process as you work through every shot with perfect form. Visualize the arrow hitting the desired mark. This style of discipline will place your priorities and thought patterns where they should be...on shooting perfect form.

