



Wyke Archers

of Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire

Club Help Guides and Documents

The Main Types of Archery

Target Archery

It could be argued that all types of archery could be described as target archery (with the exception of Flight Archery). The archer is aiming to hit a target of some sort.

But Target Archery is the term used nowadays to describe the discipline whereby archers shoot a 'round' of arrows - a number of dozen depending on the round - at targets over known distances measured in yards (Imperial rounds) or metres (Metric rounds) over a flat field when outdoors (we don't call it Field Archery though) or over a level indoor surface during the cold of winter. These distances range from 20yds/18m to 100yds/90m for men, 80yds/70m for women.



There are scores of different rounds that can be shot. Some are shot at one distance - the FITA 70m consists of 6 dozen arrows over 70 metres (photo, right) - and some are shot at different distances. The Imperial York round, for instance, is composed of 6 dozen arrows over 100yds, 4 dozen over 80yds and 2 dozen over 60yds. Imperial rounds are always shot over multiple distances and reflect longbow archery from medieval times, where archers would practice shooting at reducing distances as they would at an advancing army. This tradition has been carried through to multiple distance Metric rounds. The longest distance is always shot first.

For each of these rounds there are different classifications relating to gender, age and type of bow used. This means that in tournaments, competitors of any age and ability can compete alongside one another. It is the only type of archery represented at the Olympic Games - and even then it is restricted to recurve bows. Both recurve and compound bows are used in the Paralympics however. A paraplegic archer won the Gold Medal at the 1982 Commonwealth Games, and paraplegic archers competed at the 1984 and 1986 Olympic Games alongside able-bodied archers.

The target consists of ten evenly-spaced concentric rings of five different colours - Gold, Red, Blue, Black and White - and they can be either 122cm, 80cm, 60cm or 40cm in diameter. The smaller distances are shot indoors.

There are two scoring systems used in Target archery, Metric and Imperial.

Field Archery or 3D Archery

....Doesn't usually take place in a field. Field archers shoot in a woodland setting or over hilly terrain or even quarries on rare occasions. If Target archery can be likened to the practice that was required of medieval war archers, then Field archery is akin to the practice required of bow hunters since Neolithic times.



Field archery today is, in effect, hunting with a bow. The quarry is not a deer or a hare but a substitute target set in a 'field' environment. These targets can be of the concentric ring variety or 2D representations/pictures of animals or even 3D replicas of animals. Shooting is often made



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more difficult by having to shoot up or downhill, by having to shoot 'around' a tree or an obstacle (so that you cannot shoot in the upright T-form as you would in Target archery) and by having to shoot across varying light - from full sun to shade or from shade to full sun.



As in Target archery there are many rounds which can be shot but, unlike Target archery, the distances can vary from one shot to the next. A typical field round will involve shooting at 14 or 28 targets, one after the other. The archer starts from the first 'peg', shoots at the target and then walks on to the next peg and the next target. Depending on the round, the distance to the target may be marked or it may not and can be anything from 20yds to 80yds. As often as not the distances are not marked and the Field archer has to rely on judgement and instinct for each shot.

Obviously, Field archery requires a lot more physical effort than Target archery. Scoring isn't as straightforward as in Target archery and very much depends on the round being shot. There are classes for all bow types, as well as age and gender.

Clout Archery

Clout archery takes place in a flat field, similar to Target archery, but in this type of shooting the target is marked out horizontally on the grass. A series of 5 concentric circles are laid out around a central marker flag and the archer shoots from a distance of 180yds (less for juniors). Alternatively, no circles are marked out and scoring is achieved by pivoting a rope or cord coloured for each scoring zone around the marker flag.



In a Single Clout 6 ends of 6 arrows are shot, and a Double Clout consists of 12 ends of 6 arrows. Scores are 5 for the innermost circle, down to 1 for the outermost. A large field is needed for clout shooting - at least 250yds to allow for overshoot.

'Clout' is an old name for cloth. Originally a piece of cloth would be set on a short pole as the central marker. Again, the origins lie in medieval archery practice - shooting at long range against a foe.

There are no Clout archery clubs as such. Most Target, Field and Longbow archery clubs will organise a clout shoot or two during the outdoor season. There are classes for longbow, recurve and compound bows, and Ladies, Gents and Juniors.

Flight Archery

Shooting for maximum distance - pure and simple.

This type of archery needs a lot of space and level space at that. Don Brown of the USA, shooting an unlimited Conventional Flight Bow, has an unofficial World Record of 1,222.01m/1,336yds 1' 3" (compared to the unlimited Longbow World Record of GB's Alistair Aston of 339.65m/371.45yds). Airfields or aerodromes are ideal, or the salt flats of the USA.

As in other types of archery there are various classes for different bow types - longbow, recurve, compound and specialist flight bows. Flight bows and arrows are at the cutting edge of archery technology as flight archers strive to get the maximum possible from them. It's like Formula 1 motor racing, where improvements to the cars and engines (like ABS or computerised engine





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management) can eventually be adopted by the mainstream car manufacturers. Metal risers, carbon arrows, faster strings and a lot more have come from flight archery.

6 arrows an end are shot, and then the archers go looking for their arrows. If they find them, the furthest arrow of the end is marked and another 3 ends are shot (in the USA, only one end is shot in competition). Furthest distance wins!

Papingo Archery

Also called Popinjay or Parrot archery. Not that common in the UK but incredibly popular in Belgium for some reason. It is mentioned here purely because of The Ancient Society of Kilwinning Archers from Ayrshire, Scotland who have hosted a Papingo Shoot since 1483 (or 1488 according to some sources), with a break here and there. This is the earliest recorded archery tournament in the UK by some margin.



In Popinjay, or Papingo, arrows are shot vertically to try and dislodge wooden 'birds' fixed to a wooden pole at height. There are usually a few birds, the 'Cock' scoring 5, four Hens scoring 3 each, and a minimum of 24 Chicks scoring 1 apiece.

In the Kilwinning Shoot, the pole extends 10ft out from the tower of Kilwinning Abbey, at a height of 116ft and is host to a solitary 'bird' or 'parrot'. Archers take turns with longbows and blunts - arrows with rubber tips to prevent any more damage to the tower - shooting from the bottom of the tower with one foot on the Abbey steps. The order of shooting is decided by a Butt round which is held beforehand. Whoever shoots the bird down first gets a very old silver trophy.

Here at Wyke Archers we shoot Target Archery both indoors and out throughout the year, with the occasional fun Clout shoot.