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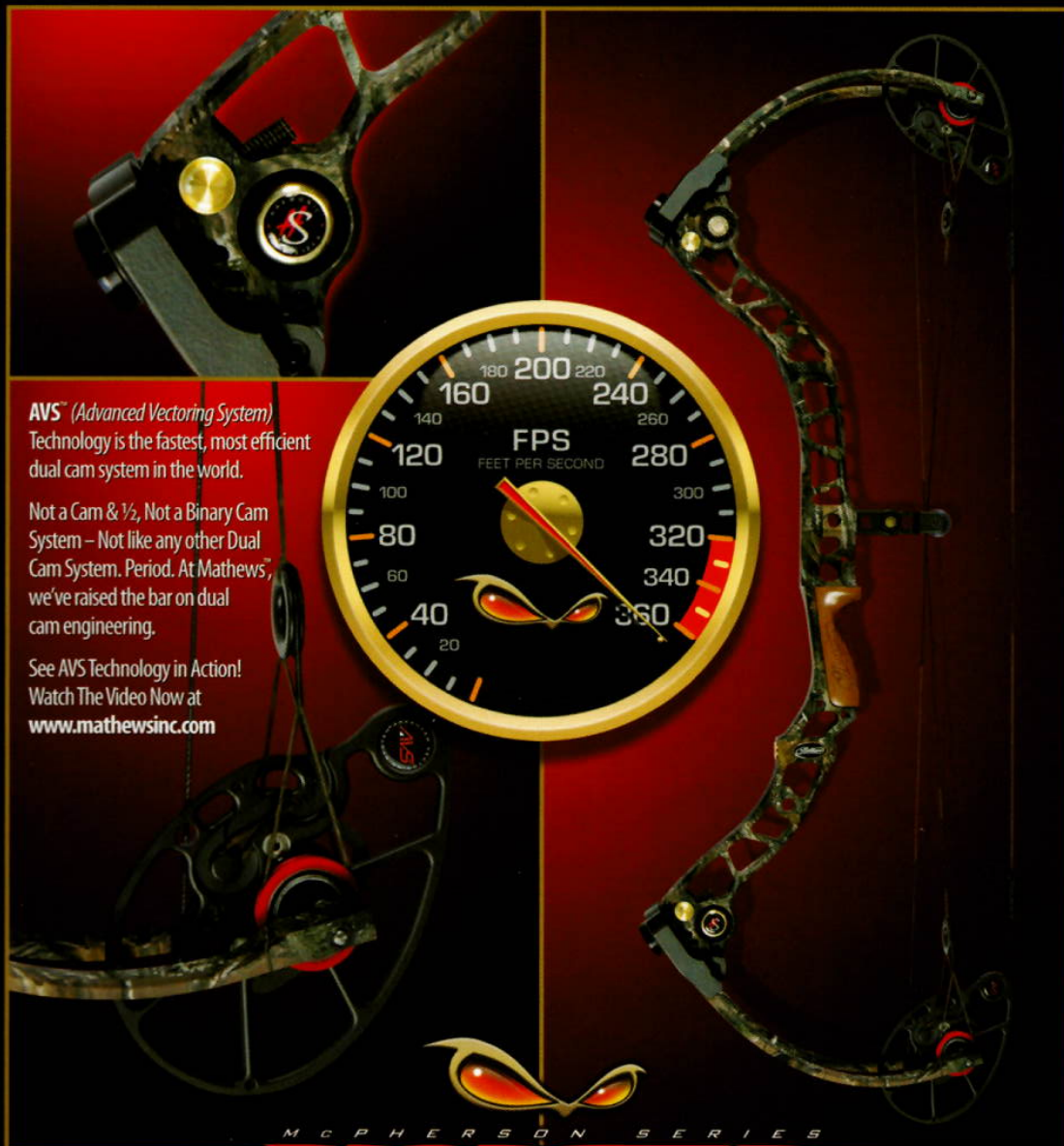
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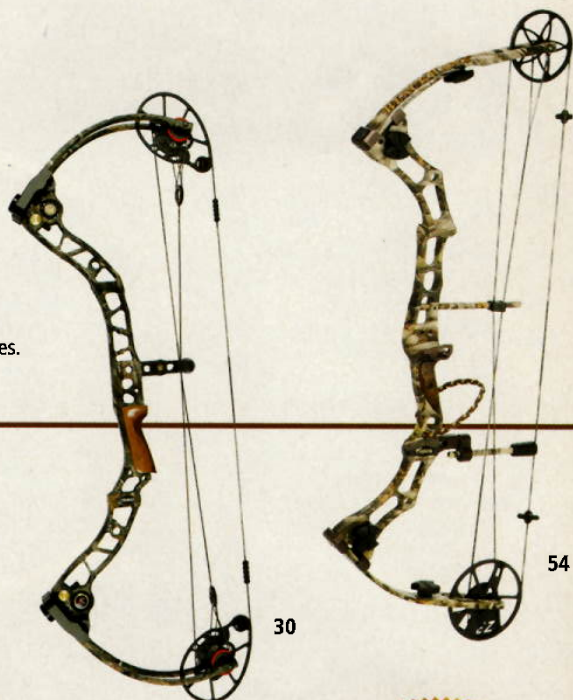
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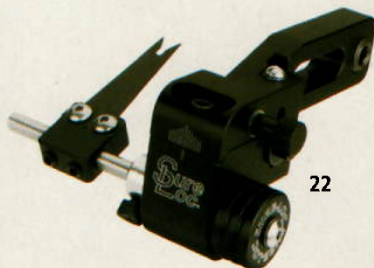
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Inside Track

Return Customers

For most archers, shopping for new archery equipment is as much a recreational activity as it is a necessity. Customers just love an entertaining archery shop or department.

Like it or not, the arrangement, décor and atmosphere of any archery retail establishment plays a huge role in the degree of return customers. If retail customers feel comfortable, entertained and encouraged, they will likely return. If they don't experience any of those things in a particular retail setting, it's likely they'll attempt to take their business elsewhere.

Customer surveys show that three things most discourage retail shoppers—a dirty store, a surly salesperson and a lack of on-hand merchandise. Keep retail spaces clean, salespeople eternally positive and helpful and the shelves stocked.

Beyond that, there are other tricks to creating return retail customers.

Keep the retail space visually interesting. The addition of inspiring taxidermy (big bucks, strutting turkeys, standing bears, etc.), exciting bowhunting photography and even monster shed antlers can help keep people coming back.

Rotate and restock merchandise frequently. A huge part of the entertainment value of any store hinges on the promise to customers that you can show them something they've not yet seen. Move things around to keep things fresh and exciting.

Stay right on top of the latest equipment trends. Create an atmosphere wherein customers trust that you'll know all about the latest in bows, broadheads, releases, scouting cameras and everything else. Stock reasonable amounts of the newest gear.

Be sure to also have the appropriate merchandise displayed for the current season. Archery is very seasonal. Spring may be turkey season, summer becomes practice season and the fall is definitely deer season. Create merchandise displays to reflect those seasons.

There's more to successful retailing than just selling stuff. Make customers feel comfortable. Entertain and inspire them. Do that and they'll return again and again.



Bill and Sherry Krenz

Editor and Publisher

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Pat Durkin, ATA Contributing Editor

After School Archery Program: ASAP Spans Archery Bridges to Keep Kids Shooting Bows

NADA works with a variety of archery groups to operate a flexible "next step" program that begins where the National Archery in the School Program ends.

Most sports have standard equipment and rules everyone recognizes. When you give kids a football, they know the game is played on a 100-yard field with goal posts and 10-yard end zones at each end. A touchdown is six points.

When you give kids a baseball, bat and glove, they picture a diamond-shaped field with an outfield, three bases, home plate and a pitcher's mound. If they get on base and make it home, they score one run.

And when you toss kids a basketball, they picture a court with 10-foot-high baskets on each end. Goals score two or three points, depending on the distance, and a free throw scores one.

But when you hand a kid a bow, few things about archery are certain once they get beyond flinging arrows. After all, only a limited number of kids live in an area where they can be turned loose to practice on their own. Most require a designated place to shoot and an adult to supervise, so interest often fades in all but the most ardent archery fans.

The reality is that archery offers various games, gear and scoring systems. Kids can shoot field archery, paper targets, 3D animal targets or Olympic-style archery. They can keep score in each of those formats. With a bow, a young person can go bowfishing or bowhunting. They can shoot recurve bows, compound bows or crossbows.

All those choices underline archery's dilemma: Its variety is both its enduring strength and its constant weakness. Overcoming that quandary has become increasingly important in the last five years because of the popularity of the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). This program alone has introduced archery to more than 3.6 million youths so far while expanding into 46 states and four other countries.

"NASP has been extremely successful at introducing archery into schools across the country," said Jay McAninch, CEO/president of the Archery Trade Association. "As all those youngsters come out of NASP's two-week program and realize how much fun archery can be, we need to make sure they have convenient opportunities to shoot after school, in the evening, on the weekend and throughout summer and other vacations."

That's why many in the archery and bowhunting industry recognize the need for the After School Archery Program (ASAP) to ensure we don't squander the introduction beginners gained from NASP.

Building ASAP

Enter the National Field Archery Association (NFAA), which created ASAP in 2006.

"We want to bridge the gap between NASP and archery's organized

sports programs, whether it's NFAA, USA Archery or ASA (Archery Shooters Association)," said Bruce Cull, NFAA president. "In all my years in archery, nothing rivals NASP in introducing millions of kids to archery. NASP works because it has structure, and it's coordinated by educators and professionals in state agencies."

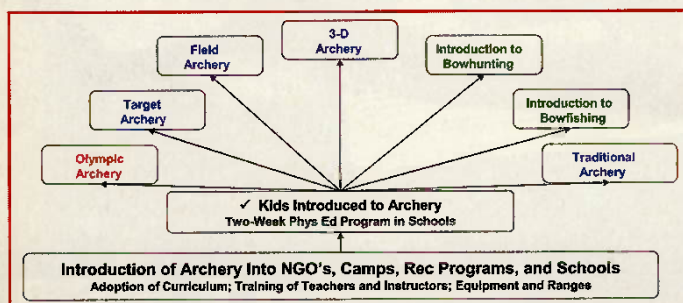
As NFAA gave ASAP its structure and mission, other archery organizations pooled their talents and specialties to help drive it forward. NFAA, for instance, is the leader in conducting community-based archery events. ASA is the nation's leading 3D archery organization. USA Archery is the governing body for the U.S. Olympic archery team and oversees the popular Junior Olympic Archery Development (JOAD) program. In addition, ASAP receives direct funding from the Easton Sports Development Foundation, and the Archery Trade Association (ATA) provides state agencies with funding that can be used for ASAP.

"All of these groups realize it's very important to introduce kids to archery, but we can't stop there," Cull said. "We can't assume kids will take the next step on their own, because that just isn't easy or even possible for many of them. That means the industry, schools and wildlife agencies must work with cities, counties, rec programs, archery clubs, archery dealers and archery organizations to keep kids interested in archery."

Early on, NFAA turned to another group, the National Alliance for the Development of Archery (NADA), to implement ASAP and develop lesson plans, print materials, targets and easy scoring systems. NADA also recruits and trains archery instructors and



A number of archery groups work to provide a flexible "next step" program that begins where the National Archery in the Schools Program ends. Above, ATA Board member Ben Summers offers an archery demonstration to NASP kids.



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New Club Pricing for 2009

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directs ASAP's promotional campaigns.

With funds from the Easton Foundation, NADA also launched a partnership with the National Recreational Parks Association to solicit grants from this group's members. Since forming the partnership, NADA has distributed about 100 grants annually worth \$500 each to help recreation departments train instructors, buy lesson plans and buy or rent equipment for ASAP projects.

Long-Term Fun

To ensure it provides fledgling archers their second step in the sport, ASAP offers a flexible curriculum that can be used to introduce recruits to different equipment, archery styles and scoring rules. Instructors and archers can include the different formats as they desire, expanding or condensing them based on their interest. For instance, if they want to consider

forming a club for JOAD, field archery or 3D archery, they could concentrate on those programs in the ASAP curriculum before making a commitment.

"I think everyone reached the point a few years ago where they wanted to band together behind a single banner like ASAP for the sake of archery," said Doug Engh, NADA president. "We're viewed as a neutral party for instructor training and facilitating other people's programs, and instructor training is our specialty, so this works well for us. In any given year, we train about 6,000 basic and about 1,500 intermediate instructors."

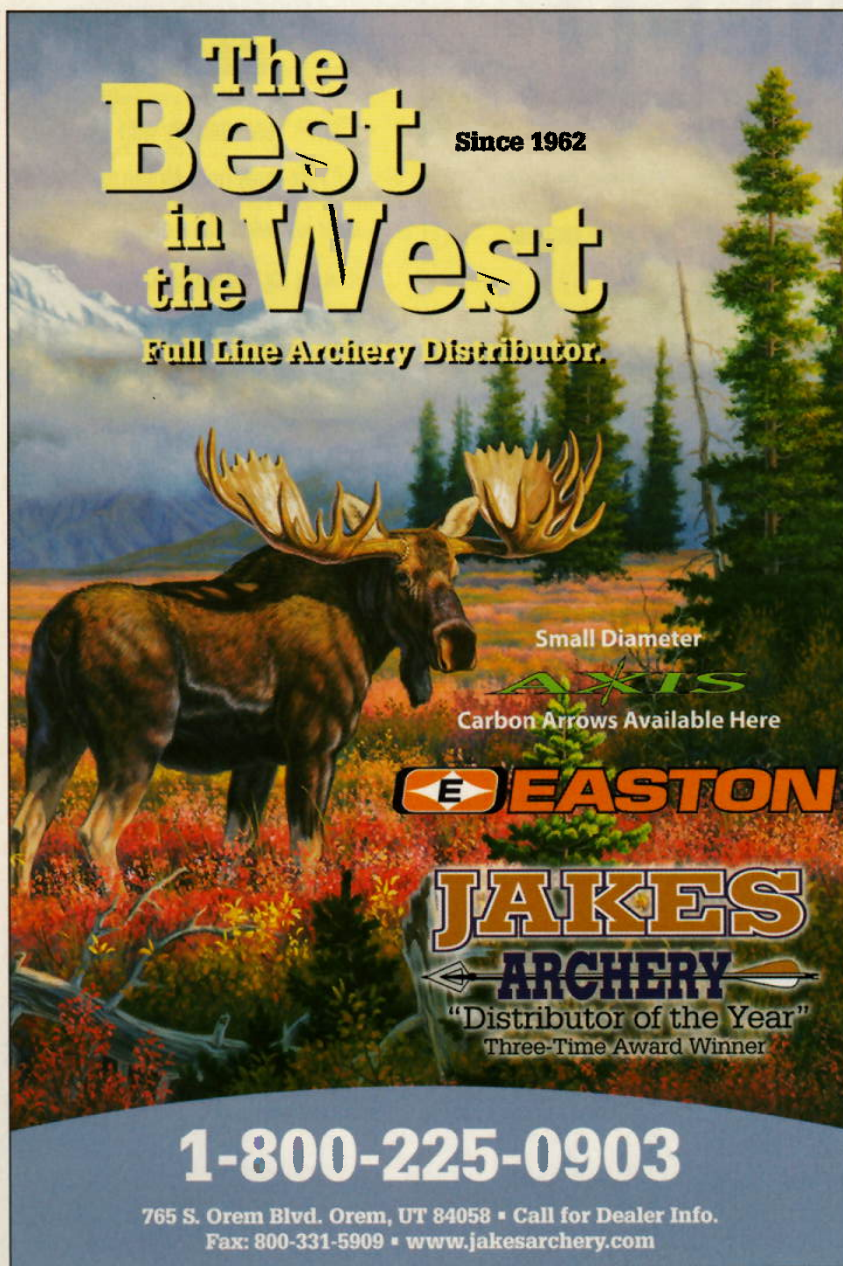
Engh said ASAP also helps instructors and young archers make the transition into longer-running programs. Most introductory classes only last a week or two. ASAP provides flexible lesson plans that can stretch to 16 weeks. That gives kids a chance to try additional types of archery for longer time periods. It also gives instructors several lesson plans that keep kids excited and thus involved in archery. By going through entire lesson plans on a regular basis, many realize archery is a long-term, well-balanced sport that remains exciting and challenging whether they shoot by themselves or join a club.

ASAP also allows students to use equipment based on their interests and skill levels. Generally, equipment used in ASAP is lightweight and easy to use. Recurve bows or universal-draw compound bows work best because they don't require individual sizing. These bows tend to have 15- to 20-pound draw weights, and the arrows are sized by the instructor according to each archer's physical stature. ASAP targets are generally 32 to 48 inches across.

For ASAP's basic lessons, heavier bows or equipment aren't recommended because the instruction is focused on learning proper shooting form at short shooting distances. However, instructors in more advanced ASAP classes might encourage students to bring and use their own equipment once they demonstrate their skills. Students are encouraged to ask about equipment choices when they register, especially if they're leaning toward a particular archery style.

"That flexibility in training and equipment is itself a hopeful sign for the program's future," said Michelle Doerr, ATA's director of archery and bowhunting programs. "A lot of this started about five years ago with a meeting ATA called to get all the organizations to agree to one basic approach to teaching introductory shooting techniques. It's not as easy as it sounds because

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Action

Continued from page 14

there are so many types of bows and so many shooting styles. What we're seeing today with ASAP is a result of everyone uniting with an eye on the future."

Breaking Out

Denise Parker, CEO of USA Archery, said she expects ASAP to keep growing. She also

expects it to strengthen JOAD, not compete with it. "It's important that these programs work well together because the more people we have shooting archery, the healthier our sport will be," Parker said.

She believes that no matter what the program, the goal is to help archers develop their skills and interest in the sport. "My

hope is that as ASAP, JOAD and community archery programs evolve, archery transitions into year-round programs across the board," she said. "Right now we want to capitalize on NASP graduates, but that's not the only transition we need to assist. We can't afford to let archers get stuck at any level. We want to fill the archery pipeline and keep everyone moving forward."

As the sport's top shooters excel, Parker hopes they grab the public's attention.

"One thing we talk about at USA Archery is that we need more role models so young archers have someone to inspire them," she said. "Most of our country's big sports have celebrity players who kids look up to. They see them on TV playing at a high level week after week. It would help archery if we had role models who show kids a path they can follow."

Getting Started

Engh said the more local groups start ASAP clubs, the greater the chance archery will grow and generate its own superstars. Initial ASAP sites are being set up nationwide thanks to an equipment grant from the Easton Sports Development Foundation. Each pilot site has a contact person, and each site receives a specially created Bow Box, targets and development assistance to help launch ASAP.

All that's needed are kids who are interested in archery, along with an adult instructor trained and certified by USA Archery, NFAA, 4-H or NASP. NADA can also train people to begin ASAP clubs and put them in touch with instructors. If a community wants its own staffers or volunteers to become instructors, NADA can train them for that, too.

"This entire concept has progressed from the ideas stage to the actual program stage," Cull said. "It's young, but it's now an actual program with plans and materials that work. NADA is equipped to help everyone find an ASAP nearby or to launch one if there isn't one in place."

Engh agreed. "All of this might only be 2 ½ years old, but we have a pretty good reach because of our existing contacts with instructor-training classes. But there's a big market for ASAP, and we're just getting started, really. My hope now is that we'll generate a lot of interest from the state and federal wildlife agencies. The more they get involved, the more rooted archery will be in the nation's outdoor and recreation programs."

To learn more about participating in an ASAP program or to find out how to launch ASAP in your area, visit afterschoolarchery.com.

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Dealer School

A few weeks ago, my long-suffering vacuum cleaner finally gave up the ghost. Assuming that I could get the best price on a replacement at a large discount chain, I headed over with a few ideas about what I needed in a new vacuum. I found myself staring at a wall of boxed vacuum cleaners, with no real understanding of what made one vacuum better than any of the others. The store employee I'd flagged down knew less about the difference between a Dyson and a Hoover than I did.

Knowledge-Based Selling

“A knowledge-based sales strategy can help you boost your sales and increase the chances that a one-time customer will become a regular customer.”

Unwilling to spend that kind of money without really knowing what I was getting, I finally gave up and went to a local appliance store. As soon as I walked in the door, I was greeted by a salesperson who asked a number of intelligent questions about my vacuum cleaner needs. Then he narrowed down his store's large selection of available vacuums to three models that he felt best suited my needs and went over the differences. The price of my final selection was only slightly higher than the price of the same model at the discount store, a difference I felt was well worth it considering I was able to get exactly what I needed.

Many of your customers view their archery equipment as a significant investment. Just as with any other investment, your customers want as much information as possible before they commit their hard-earned money. They're looking for an expert who knows what questions to ask and understands which products will solve their

specific archery equipment problems the best.

You and your staff can be that expert. A knowledge-based sales strategy can help you boost your sales and increase the chances that a one-time customer will become a regular customer.

PROVIDING INFORMATION

Internet retailers have learned that what shoppers really want is information. The best Internet retailers provide their customers with detailed product descriptions, multiple product photos from different angles, customer reviews and the ability to compare different models side by side.

Unfortunately, many brick-and-mortar retailers have not caught on to the benefits of providing expert service. Capitalizing on your customers' need for information can set you apart from your competition and, because you have the benefit of face-to-face interactions, help you capture sales that might have gone to an Internet retailer.

Your knowledge-based selling strategy begins with your sales staff. They need to know everything about the products you carry, and they also need to know something about many of the products you don't carry. That means continually educating your staff about your merchandise, preferably by allowing them to try out new products as you decide to stock them.

A thorough knowledge of each product doesn't just end with the unique features of that product. Instead, your sales staff should understand and be able to explain how those features will benefit an individual customer. It's great if you can tell a customer that a particular arrow rest features

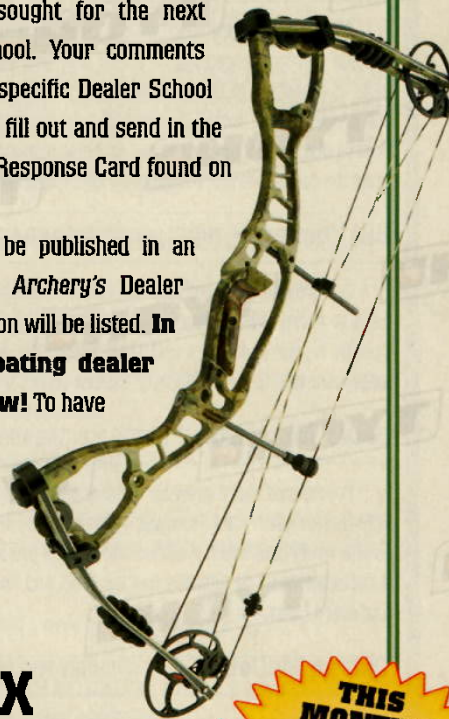
a launcher that stays up longer than the launcher of comparable models. It's even better if you can explain that, because the arrow is supported by the launcher for a longer period of time, an archer using that rest can expect greater downrange accuracy. Don't assume that your customers will know immediately what each feature means to them.

DEALER SURVEY QUESTIONS

Archery dealer input is sought for the next *Inside Archery Dealer School*. Your comments are invited on a variety of specific Dealer School topics. All you need to do is fill out and send in the easy-to-use Dealer School Response Card found on this page.

Selected comments will be published in an upcoming issue of *Inside Archery's Dealer School*. Your shop and location will be listed. **In every issue a participating dealer will win a new Hoyt bow!** To have a chance at this bow, all you have to do is participate.

WIN!
ALPHAMAX
BOW FROM



THIS MONTH'S WINNER!
Dustin Burdine
Broken Rack Archery
Williamsburg, OH



WHAT SORTS OF THINGS CAN YOU OFFER YOUR CUSTOMERS THAT THE BIG BOX STORES CAN'T?

The following are selected responses from the *Inside Archery Dealer School* Survey presented in our March 2009 issue. Are you interested in participating and possibly winning a FREE 2009 Hoyt bow in the process? See page 19 of this issue for more information.

“Our customers tell me they appreciate the candid information we provide, as well as our personal knowledge of the products and my 34 years of experience in archery. They feel they can come in to our shop and not have a shoe salesman trying to sell them archery equipment. I don't try to sell my customers the world-only what they actually need and want. They also enjoy the small pro-shop atmosphere.”

Mike Barrandey • BOWLERO ARCHERY - VAN HORN, TX

“As an archery pro shop, we can offer personal service. We can set up equipment and provide pointers, especially on a new bow and accessories. We can also help a customer sight-in a bow out to 20 yards and teach them how to sight-in other pins. We cut arrows to the proper length, install inserts and help customers choose their broadheads. We firmly believe that, even if our prices end up being higher than those of a big bow store, our service after the sale saves our customers a considerable amount of money.”

Bill Kaufman • THE ELEGANT IRIS AND MEN'S DEN - SUSANVILLE, CA

“We provide personalized, one-on-one customer service. Some of the big box stores have to carry the product lines their corporate offices mandate, but we offer products specific to our customers and their needs. We also carry some top-of-the-line archery equipment that is not available in big box stores.”

Wade Winchester • FOUTZS HUNTING AND FISHING SHOP - CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO

“I've noticed that a growing number of big box stores are carrying higher quality products than in years past. However, very few of these stores can offer the expertise and tools to effectively tune bows. A skilled and trained pro shop employee can answer any questions a customer has and typically has the tools and know-how to provide good service to each and every customer.”

Darron McDougal • J'S ARCHERY PRO SHOP - ANTIGO, WI

“Our archery department is relatively small, and in many ways that has helped my sales through one-on-one time with my customers. I have many regular customers who stop by every day. Knowing your customers by name goes a long way, and the fact that I'm able to visit with them about their last hunt makes them feel more comfortable than they would in a larger, more impersonal environment.”

Rob Titus • RANCH & FARM - GLENDIVE, MT

PROVIDING EXPERT ASSISTANCE

Being able to provide lots of detailed information is great, but alone it's not enough. Successful retailers are also learning from high-end retail establishments like jewelry stores. These high-end stores don't make their money from moving large quantities of merchandise every day. Instead, they focus on providing superior service and selling a few high-dollar pieces to a handful of customers.

Obviously, your situation is dramatically different from that of an upscale jewelry store. But that doesn't mean you can't make your customers feel like they're the most important people in the world. Train your sales staff to provide a warm greeting, a sincere offer of assistance and an unobtrusive but available presence.

Really good high-end retail salespeople—or any salesperson, for that matter—are excellent listeners. They may get the conversation started by asking questions, but then they let their customers talk. By paying careful attention to the answers their customers give, great salespeople can start to put together a few options selected specifically to meet each customer's needs.

This kind of service is something that most customers have grown used to doing without. And there are some

who know enough about what they want and what they're purchasing that they are fine navigating an archery shop on their own. But for those who are new to archery or even just a little unsure of what to buy, this type of attention and service is a godsend.

THE COST OF KNOWLEDGE-BASED SELLING

Establishing a knowledge-based selling strategy probably won't be cheap or easy. The costs of educating your staff and maintaining that educated sales force might seem overwhelming, but this particular sales strategy has a profitable upside.

First, a store that offers specialized knowledge and attentive service will draw a lot of customers that are tired of wandering up and down aisles looking for someone—anyone—to answer a quick question for them.

Second, by really listening to what your customers want and providing them with the opportunity to buy what they need, you may find that you increase your sales per customer.

A knowledge-based selling strategy may not be as cheap and easy to implement as a self-service strategy. But, in the end, you may find that a little extra service will go a long way toward boosting your bottom line.

HOW DO YOU AND YOUR STAFF ATTEMPT TO STAY UP TO SPEED ON ALL THE LATEST PRODUCTS?



The following are selected responses from the *Inside Archery* Dealer School Survey presented in our March 2009 issue. Are you interested in participating and possibly winning a FREE 2009 Hoyt bow in the process? See page 19 of this issue for more information.

“Shows like the ATA Show and the Kinsey's Dealer Show are a great place to start. We also read *Inside Archery* to get new product information.”

Jeff Shaw • BLACKWATER SPORTS - VINELAND, NJ

“We go to the ATA Show and all the dealer shows. We also keep in touch with our sales reps and read trade magazines like *Inside Archery*.”

Gregg Johnson • JOHNSON'S HUNT & FISH - MCCUTCHENVILLE, OH

“We read both trade and consumer magazines, go to the ATA Show every year we can and watch hunting TV shows. Most of all, though, we listen to what our customers are talking about.”

Marvin Batson • BATSON ARCHERY - SPRINGFIELD, MO

“We stay informed about the latest products by attending the ATA Show, reading magazines and visiting Internet forums.”

Dustin Burdine • BROKEN RACK ARCHERY - WILLIAMSBURG, OH

“We read *Inside Archery* and a couple of other archery publications, watch some hunting television programs and visit other archery pro shops.”

Gary Prescott • DICK'S SPORTING GOODS - WILLISTON, VT

“We try to stay up to speed through all means available: TV, magazines, trade shows and conversations with other dealers. Customers, though, are by far our best source of information.”

Robert Howard • OUTCAST FISHING & HUNTING - PENSACOLA, FL

“We use *Inside Archery*, *Bowhunt America* and customer input. If a new product looks promising, we'll purchase one to see if it is indeed worth stocking.”

Bedeliah Presnell • THE SPORTS SHOP - CLARKESVILLE, GA

“We get a lot of information from magazine and television advertisements. The ATA Show is another great place for new product information.”

Randy Riggs • GIRTS ARCHERY EAST - STRAUGHN, IN



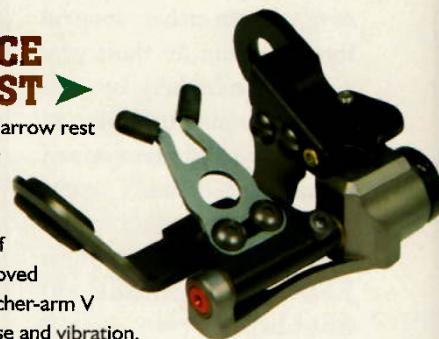
New & Notable

New & Innovative Products to Watch

MATHEWS DOWNFORCE POWERRETRACT ARROW REST

The new Mathews DownForce PowerRetract Arrow Rest is an innovative fall-away arrow rest that stays up longer to better guide the arrow and then drops up to five times faster when it needs to drop in order to provide complete fletch clearance. That process is achieved with an advanced design and by attaching the DownForce triggering cord to the bow's up-cable (the inside portion of the bowstring). The net result of the DownForce launcher arm staying up longer and guiding the arrow better is improved downrange accuracy, coupled with perfect arrow flight. A deep, cushioned launcher-arm V cradles your arrow, while an integrated Harmonic Damper absorbs shot noise and vibration.

For more information, log onto mathewsinc.com or call (608) 269-2728.



G5 META SPEED STUDS

Who wouldn't like to get a little extra speed from their bow without having to give up forgiveness? The new Meta Speed Studs from G5 increase arrow speed by up to 10 feet per second. Not only that, but the Speed Studs also serve as a peep-sight tuner,



ensuring proper peep alignment for every shot. Easy-to-install Speed Studs come in packs of two. Use one Speed Stud for single-cam bows and two for dual- and binary-cam bows. Simply install the Speed Stud one inch from the serving and adjust up or down as necessary. For more information, log onto g5outdoors.com or call (866) 456-8836.

SPORTSMAN SCENT SYSTEM

Doc's Deer Scents teamed up with Mace Security International, a company known for its personal protection products, to produce the Sportsman Scent System. The Scent System is comprised of a water-gun-like device and a cartridge containing Doc's Sweet Demise #7 Liquid

Attractant. The Scent System gun features a range of up to 25 feet so you can lay scent trails without laying down human scent. Refill cartridges are also available in Doc's

Dominant Buck Urine, Doe In Season Urine and Acorn Scent Attractant. Not only is the Sportsman Scent System highly effective at delivering scent exactly where you want it, but it's also fun to use. For more information, log onto mace.com or call (800) 255-2634.



TENPOINT TITAN HLX

New from TenPoint is the Titan HLX, a faster, high-performance version of TenPoint's popular Titan crossbow.

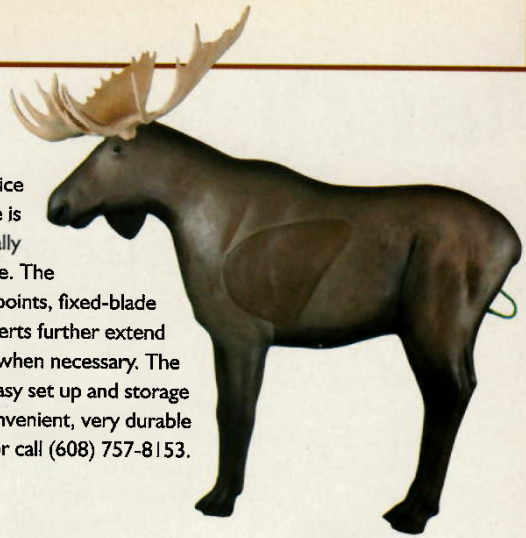
The Titan HLX achieves speeds of up to 305 fps by incorporating 175-pound HL limbs equipped with Fast Flight string and cables and machined-aluminum wheels in place of the older Titan's traditional steel-cable design. In addition, the Titan HLX's Verton-molded combination stock and barrel design houses a lighter and smoother patented Power Touch 10 trigger. The Titan HLX can also be equipped with TenPoint's patented ACUdraw or ACUdraw 50 cocking mechanisms. A convenient Titan HLX package that includes a scope, quiver and six Easton aluminum arrows with practice points is available. For more information, log onto tenpointcrossbows.com or call (800) 548-6837.



Inside Archery 22 June 2009

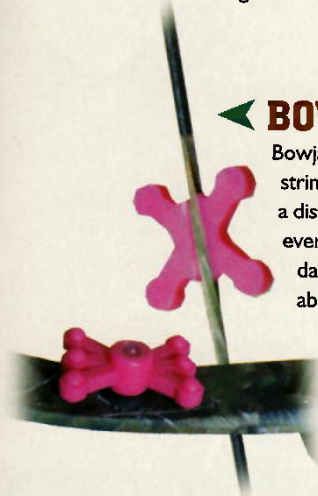
RINEHART 3D MOOSE TARGET ▶

Three dimensional archery targets help bowhunters create true-to-life practice scenarios and are just plain fun to shoot at. The impressive Rinehart Moose is one great 3D target. At just under 7 feet tall and 7 ½ feet long, this anatomically correct target will allow bowhunters to improve accuracy and gain confidence. The Rinehart Moose's solid, self-healing foam body can take hit after hit from field points, fixed-blade broadheads and mechanicals with easy arrow removal. Patented locking inserts further extend the life of the target by allowing users to simply replace the core "vitals" area when necessary. The lightweight Rinehart Moose features a simulated weight of 1,000 pounds, easy set up and storage and extreme resistance to sun, heat and cold for a very convenient, very durable target. For more information, log onto rinehart3d.com or call (608) 757-8153.



◀ BOWJAX PINK DAMPENERS

Bowjax has long been known for its top-quality dampeners and silencers for bow limbs, risers, strings, cables, stabilizers and even cable guards. Bowjax dampeners and silencers feature a distinctive multi-arm shape and enhanced durability, earning them accolades from archers everywhere. Archers who want to show off their feminine side will be thrilled to learn that Bowjax dampeners are now available in pink. Showcasing the same great noise- and vibration-squelching ability as the original dampeners, these additions to Bowjax's lineup are a must-have for serious bowhunters who like a little color on their gear. If pink isn't your thing, Bowjax dampeners are available in other colors, including red, blue and black. For more information, log onto bowjax.com or call (208) 762-3692.



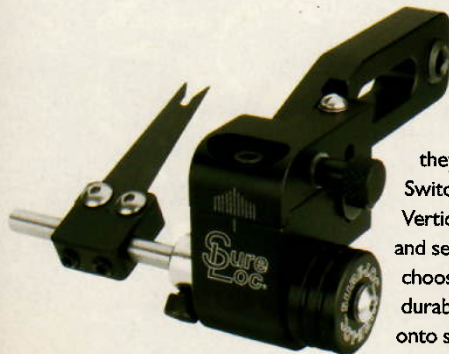
PARADIGM ARCHERY B.A.S.E. ▶

Adding a sight, rest and quiver to a bow creates a top-heavy bow. A shooter with a top-heavy bow must fight against gravity to keep the bow from tipping off-axis, while a shooter with a bottom-heavy bow is aided by gravity when the bow gets off-axis. The new B.A.S.E. (Below Axis Stability Enhancer) from Paradigm Archery is designed to lower a bow's center of gravity for greater stability and accuracy, adding functional mass without adding length. The B.A.S.E. utilizes the super-stiff qualities of the riser as its mounting platform, eliminating the extra weight of an attachment rod or bracket. The weight of the B.A.S.E. can be adjusted from 4 to 22 ounces, and the B.A.S.E. is completely tunable for lateral stability simply by adding or removing weights from each side of the bow. B.A.S.E. weights feature an embedded O-ring to isolate them from the bow and each other, allowing them to reduce shock and vibration. For more information, log onto paradigmarchery.com or call (610) 285-1535.



◀ SURE-LOC SWITCHBLADE

Top archers have been relying on Sure-Loc's quality sights for years. Now they're quickly discovering Sure-Loc's impressive arrow rests as well. The Sure-Loc SwitchBlade rest features a spring steel launcher with simple launcher angle adjustments. Vertical and horizontal micro-adjustments make the SwitchBlade extremely accurate, and set up is ultra-easy. Blades are available in .008, .010 or .012 thickness. Archers can choose between a universal or a Hoyt mount. The SwitchBlade is available in a durable matte-black anodized finish. For more information, log onto sureloc.com or call (812) 689-9926.



New&Notable

GORILLA EXO TECH SAFETY HARNESS

Everyone knows that wearing a safety harness dramatically increases your chances of survival in the event of a fall. Unfortunately, because of the high-impact forces involved in a fall, hunters who wear traditional safety harnesses can still be injured. This, of course, isn't a reason to skip the safety harness, but it could be a very good reason to check out the new Gorilla EXO Tech Safety Harness. The EXO Tech features a patented dynamic-energy-absorbing lanyard material that reduces impact forces in a fall by more than 82 percent. The four-point buckle system is easy to use, and XPE foam padding provides for all-day comfort. The EXO's super-long tether system provides 360-degree range of motion. Everyone who hunts from a treestand should wear a safety harness, and the EXO Tech is a safety harness that is definitely worth a look. For more information, log onto gorillatreestands.com or call (877) 685-7817.



BUCK BOMB ACORN RAGE BOMB

Bowhunters love far-ranging, easy-to-disperse Buck Bomb scents. For 2009, Buck Bomb teamed up with Wildgame Innovations to introduce the Acorn Rage Bomb. This potent attractant, based on Wildgame Innovations' popular Acorn Rage formula, packs food-grade acorn scent into a convenient aerosol can. Acorn Rage Buck Bomb can be sprayed intermittently or locked down to empty the can in a strategic location. Like other Buck Bomb scents, Acorn Rage is capable of drifting long distances, will cling to everything it comes into contact with and creates a powerful scent trail back to the can. Acorn Rage Buck Bomb can be used with Wildgame Innovations' Acorn Rage for a particularly deadly combination or used alone in states where baiting is illegal. For more information, log onto buckbomb.com or call (866) 850-6653.

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Industry News

Family Tradition Treestands Partners with Lost Camo by Mathews

As Family Tradition Treestands starts its 17th year of manufacturing strong, comfortable treestands in the United States, the company is pleased to announce that it has a new partner in camouflage: Mathews Lost Camo.

"In 2008, Family Tradition Treestands decided that we wanted to find a new partner for our camouflage," said Family Tradition Owner Jack Turner. "While talking with Lost Camo, it was almost shocking how similar our companies are. Both companies were founded on innovation that radically changed a fundamental product line within



the industry. We both hold integrity to be a founding principle that is unwavering. That integrity includes retailer protection and producing our lines 100 percent in America. Neither company is willing to sacrifice quality while we strive to have a positive impact on our customer base. As far as camouflage goes, Lost Camo is just outstanding and you would expect nothing less from the folks at Mathews. This is a perfect fit for Family Tradition Treestands, and we're looking forward to a highly successful partnership well into the future."

Family Tradition Treestands specializes in heavy duty ladder-style stands and enormous tripods. In addition, Family Tradition also offers a rugged and stable portable stand and a portable ladder.

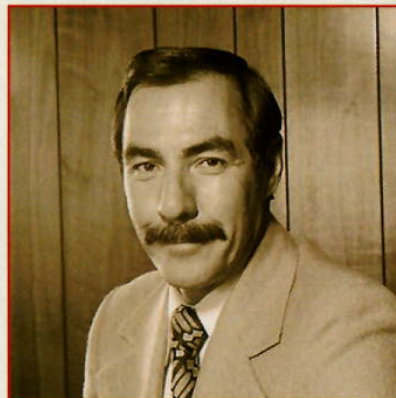
For more information, log onto familytraditiontreestands.com or call (517) 543-3926.

Archery Community Mourns Joseph Johnston

Joseph Johnston passed away on April 28, 2009, from complications related to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Johnston and his wife, Kirstie, were at his son's home in Park City, Utah, when Johnston passed peacefully in his sleep.

Born in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1933, Johnston moved to Phoenix, Arizona, in 1949. At eighteen, Johnston enlisted in the Marines. He served in the Korean War and was held as a prisoner of war. After his military service, Johnston worked at a number of jobs, including running his own archery retail shop, and became active in archery. He performed in numerous trick-shot exhibitions with his children from his first marriage with Mary Ann Tally, won several state and regional archery tournaments, served as president of the Professional Archers' Association and became an accomplished bowhunter. In 1980, Johnston married Kirstie Kaiser, who shared his love for archery, scuba-diving, skiing, flying and travel. Together, they flew their own airplane to visit customers and friends in 49 states, traveled to more than 80 countries and attended eight Olympic Games and numerous Archery World Championships.

Johnston began working for Jas. D. Easton, Inc. in 1973 and was a huge contributor to the growth and success of Easton. As vice president of sales and marketing, Johnston was one of the original directors and officers of the Archery Manufacturers and Merchants Organization and worked with the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association to grow the team sports business. Johnston served as president of Hoyt from its acquisition by Easton in 1983 until 1989 when he moved to Amsterdam as managing



Joe Johnston

director to set up the new Easton Sports Europe operations. In 1998, at the time of his retirement, Johnston was the vice president of Latin American sales. His contributions helped Easton to not only achieve business success, but to establish a strong bond and friendship with many industry associates and customers throughout the world.

After retiring, Johnston and his wife lived in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, and became Mexican citizens. He attained the Master Instructor golf teaching credential through the United States Golf Teachers Federation and donated the teaching fees for his golf lessons to the Make-a-Wish Foundation for many years. He was proud of regularly "shooting his age" in his early 70s, held a +3 golf handicap in his youth and had four holes in one. Johnston is survived by his wife Kirstie, four children, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Donations may be made to the Make-a-Wish Foundation, which Johnston personally supported for many years, at wish.org.

New Archery Products Hires Brady Arview as New VP of Sales and Marketing

New Archery Products announces the hiring of Brady Arview as its new vice president of sales and marketing.

Over the last 10 years, Arview has

held various management-level sales and marketing positions with some of the most highly recognized brands within the hunting and shooting industry. Arview is a graduate of Southern Illinois University with a degree in business and marketing. He is an avid bowhunter and has harvested many Pope and Young animals throughout his lifetime of hunting. An Illinois native with deep roots in the state, Arview is passionate about bowhunting whitetails.



"We are extremely excited to have Brady as part of our team," stated Andy Simo, president of New Archery Products. "With his vast knowledge in sales and marketing within our industry, as well as his experience in the field, he is sure to be an asset to the growth of this organization."

For more information, log onto newarchery.com or call (800) 323-1279.

Jim Eubank Joins the Blue Ridge Marketing Team

Blue Ridge Marketing of Morganton, North Carolina, recently announced the hiring of Jim Eubank.



Jim Eubank

Eubank brings a lifetime of experience in the hunting industry to the Blue Ridge Marketing team. Eubank previously worked as a sales

representative for a major archery manufacturer, as a sales manager for two large sporting goods distributors in the southeast and as the district sales manager for Marlin Firearms.

Blue Ridge Marketing represents several archery-related companies in the southeastern part of the United States. Eubank will be responsible for

Blue Ridge's accounts in West Virginia and Kentucky.

For more information, log onto blueridgemarketinginc.com or call (540) 206-2874.

Ben Pearson Archery

The newly formed Ben Pearson Archery, LLC has purchased the assets of Ben

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Industry News

Pearson Archery from the Brewton, Alabama-based Ben Pearson Archery Co. Inc. Ben Pearson Archery, LLC will maintain its current manufacturing facilities in Brewton, Alabama, to continue producing the finest quality bows in the industry.

Jeremy Blackmon, president of Ben

Pearson Archery, LLC, has nearly two decades of experience in the archery industry. As an avid bowhunter and championship archer, Blackmon will bring the experience, perspective and commitment to quality products that will propel Ben Pearson Archery to new heights.

Blackmon has assembled a leadership team to ensure that Ben Pearson Archery maintains its cutting-edge quality in an ever-changing market. This team represents over 100 years of bowhunting and archery experience. In addition, Richard Batdorf, the inventor of the patent-pending twin track R2B2 cam system, and Roger Templeton, former director of research and development at Ben Pearson Archery, have joined the team in a consultative role to bring cutting-edge technology and high-performance bows in the future.



WINNER'S CHOICE CUSTOM BOWSTRINGS

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NO PEEP ROTATION GUARANTEED

UNPARALLED COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

COMPLETELY PRESTRETCHED FIBERS

NO SERVING SEPARATION GUARANTEED

CHAMPION SHOOTERS LIVE BY'EM... POPE & YOUNG TROPHIES DIE BY'EM...

WINNERSCHOICESTRINGS.COM

Blackmon said, "The great quality, workmanship and personalized customer service that made Pearson one of the most respected products in archery will continue to be the focus of this company. Pearson has always produced one of the highest quality bows in the world. With less than a one-percent warranty claim rate, Pearson's quality is unquestioned. It is this reputation and commitment that has allowed us to maintain and grow our global network of dealers."

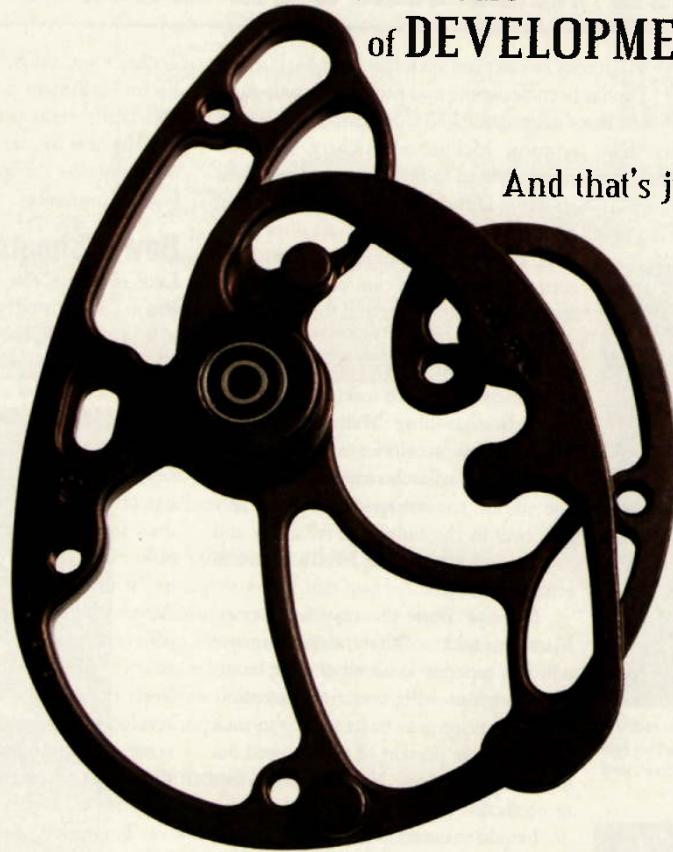
To insure that this company continues to provide the best product and customer service in the industry, Blackmon will be personally engaged in day-to-day operations, including product sales and dealer relations. For those dealers already familiar with Pearson's products and customer service, long-time employee Carolyn Settle continues to provide the unparalleled customer service they have come to expect.

"Our philosophy is simple," Blackmon explained. "Give our dealers the best product backed by personalized, quality customer service and a competitive price point, and we will earn the continued loyalty of our great dealers and customers."

For more information, log onto benpearson.com or call (251) 867-8980.

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Bow Report

By Bill Krenz

Mathews McPherson Series Monster

Mathews founder and President Matt McPherson has been designing and producing compound bows since about 1970. He launched his very first bow company, McPherson Archery, in 1985. That company specialized in fast two-cam bows with unusually high letoff. Difficulties with partners caused Matt to sell his shares in that company just three years later. But in 1992, armed with an even better idea (the one-cam concept), Matt founded Mathews Inc., and the bow world was forever changed.

For the next 16 years the golden logo of Mathews stood for inventive solo-cam bows. In that time Matt continuously improved his eccentrics and his bows, while legions of archers and nearly every one of his competitors were eventually won over by the simplicity, reliability and superb performance of Matt's one-cam eccentric system.

"I knew from the very beginning," Matt once told me, "that the one-cam system was superior to all other compound-bow systems...with one tiny exception. That exception was in its ability to milk that last three percent of arrow speed out if a compound bow. Not everyone wants or needs that sort of max speed, but some do. I could make a smooth, accurate one-cam system go surprisingly fast. But to push the arrow speed that last little bit, I recognized that I needed a new and truly advanced two-cam system."

And so, after 16 years of focusing on cutting-edge, solo-cam bows and 20-plus years after McPherson Archery, Mathews has debuted its first dual-cam bow—the Mathews Monster.

Actually, to be correct, it's the Mathews McPherson Series Monster. In a strange twist of fate, Matt recently bought back the name of his original bow company and is now using that moniker once again for his revolutionary two-cam creations. In that sense, Matt's bow designs have come full circle.

The McPherson Series Monster is one of the fastest, most efficient dual-cam compound bows ever produced. It features a full 80-percent letoff, highly pre-loaded Quad V-Lock Limbs, Harmonic Dampers, Mathews Angled Roller Guard, In-Line Grip, String Grubs and an innovative Harmonic Stabilizer, and it introduces AVS

Technology. AVS, which stands for Advanced Vectoring System, is a totally new and revolutionary two-cam system that's faster than lightning. AVS and the new Mathews Monster are helping to dramatically raise the bar on dual-cam engineering and bow performance.

How It Shoots

Like everyone else, I'm interested in how a bow shoots in terms of how it draws, how quiet or noisy it is at the shot, how much hand shock it possesses when an arrow is released, how much arrow speed it generates and how easy it seems to shoot accurately.

The draw cycle of the Monster is unique. It begins surprisingly smooth for a bow this radically fast, loads up a bit near the end and then promptly lets off to a comfortably firm wall. If anything, the draw feels smoother to me than most other really fast bows. That slightly odd weight buildup near the end of the draw cycle is easily explained. The Monster's Advanced Vectoring System includes two oversized, off-center cam bearings, which are distinctively red in color and located on each side of the upper and lower cams on the Monster. Those red bearings are revolutionary. As the Monster is drawn, the off-center red bearings rotate, first toward the archer and then, near the end of the draw, inward toward the opposing cam.

The striking benefits of the system are threefold. To begin with, the Advanced Vectoring System stores more energy for more arrow speed. It also maximizes the bow's letoff for more shooting comfort. And it synchronizes the two cams together for easier tuning and enhanced accuracy. I could feel that seemingly perfect, smooth cam synchronization every time I drew the bow.

At the shot, the Mathews Monster is surprisingly quiet and shock-free, even with the fastest arrows. The sound seems duller and more muted than with many super-fast bows. Adding the company's new DeadEnd String Stop (it mounts quickly to the Monster's rear stabilizer bushing) further dampens shot noise and especially vibration.

Arrow speed with the Mathews Monster is simply astonishing. Just a few years ago archery engineers would have told you that it wasn't possible to build



The unique, oversized red bearings located on each side of the cams on the Monster are revolutionary. They help the system store more energy, maximize the bow's letoff and synchronize the upper and lower cams.



Dramatically pre-loaded 14-inch limbs on the Monster are locked into self-aligning limb pockets, and their past-parallel configuration helps dampen shot vibration and noise.



Specifications

Mathews Monster

Axle-to-Axle Length	33.5 inches
Brace Height	6 inches
Riser Geometry	4.6 inches reflex
Mass Weight	4.4 pounds
Letoft	80 percent
Draw Lengths	25 to 30 inches
Draw Weights	40#, 50#, 60#, 70# & 80#
Camo	Realtree AP Camo, Black Riser

For more information, log onto mathewsinc.com or call (608) 269-2728.

Arrow Speed

2009 Mathews Monster set at 29 inches (by factory) and adjusted to 70 pounds

28-INCH ARROWS	SHAFT: GRAMS/IN	ARROW: TOTAL WEIGHT	KINETIC ENERGY	ARROW SPEED
EASTON XX78 ALLOY 2512	10.3	448 GR.	92.0	304 FPS
EASTON FULL METAL JACKET 400	10.2	426 GR.	91.5	311 FPS
CARBON EXPRESS ARAMID KV 350	9.8	415 GR.	90.9	314 FPS
CARBON TECH WHITETAIL 65/80	9.5	411 GR.	91.1	316 FPS
CARBON EXPRESS MAXIMA HUNTER 350	8.9	398 GR.	90.5	320 FPS
EASTON ST AXIS N-FUSED 400	9.0	392 GR.	90.3	322 FPS
BEMAN ICS HUNTER ELITE 400	8.4	390 GR.	90.3	323 FPS
GOLD TIP XT HUNTER 55/75	8.2	385 GR.	89.8	324 FPS
PSE RADIAL X WEAVE HUNTER 300	8.1	376 GR.	89.8	328 FPS
EASTON LIGHTSPEED 400	7.4	363 GR.	89.4	333 FPS
GOLD TIP ULTRALIGHT PRO 400	7.4	361 GR.	89.4	334 FPS
CARBON TECH CHEETAH 400	6.4	346 GR.	88.8	340 FPS
HIGH COUNTRY SPEED PRO MAX	5.5	303 GR.	88.2	362 FPS

Bow weighed with an Easton Bow Force Digital Scale. All tests conducted with a Spot-Hogg Hooter Shooter Portable Shooting Machine and a Competition Electronics Pro Chronograph.



New for 2009 and located near the bottom of the Monster's riser is the Mathews Harmonic Stabilizer. Its 3-ounce weight dampens shot vibration like never before and better balances the bow.

a bow this fast while being this shootable. And the Mathews Monster is most assuredly shootable. It does take consistent shooting form to master any bow this fast with a riser this reflexed, but I found the Monster a breeze to tune and arrow groups to be pleasingly tight all the way out to my 80-yard target.

This Monster does indeed deliver monster arrow speed, but it's far from being an ogre when it comes to overall shooting performance. In fact, I could see it becoming a very good friend.

Key Features and Benefits

Advanced Vectoring System

There are five things you need to know. The AVS dual-cam system on the Mathews Monster is blazing fast. It's completely synchronized for a smooth draw and easy tuning. It's beautifully balanced for negligible cam and limb lean.

It utilizes interchangeable modules for draw length adjustment. It is totally revolutionary. Fast, synchronized, balanced, adjustable and trendsetting. That's Mathews AVS.

Pre-Loaded Quad V-Lock Limbs

The highly pre-loaded Quad V-Lock Limbs on the Monster are tough as nails. They're medium length to spread draw and shot forces, and they're locked securely into self-aligning limb pockets. They're also past-parallel-configured to dampen shot vibration and noise.

Harmonic Stabilizer

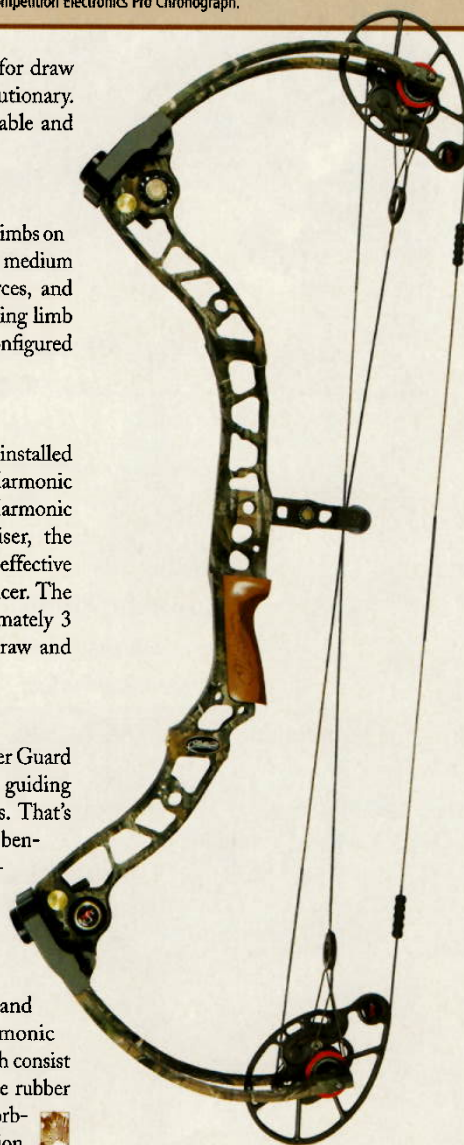
Brand new for 2009, and factory installed on the Monster, is the Mathews Harmonic Stabilizer. Located in the bottom Harmonic Damper hole on the Monster's riser, the Harmonic Stabilizer is both a very effective vibration dampener and a bow balancer. The Harmonic Stabilizer weighs approximately 3 ounces. It steadies the bow at full draw and dampens like never before.

Angled Roller Guard

The now-much-copied Mathews Roller Guard reduces cable-system resistance by guiding each cable within low-friction wheels. That's the technical advantage. The practical benefit is that this is the shortest, trimmest, most out-of-the-way cable guard ever.

Harmonic Damping System

Integrated into the Monster's riser and Roller Guard are Mathews Harmonic Dampers. These unique dampers, which consist of a weight suspended within a flexible rubber spiral, are wonderfully effective at absorbing and dissipating residual shot vibration.



The Power of

Archery Industry Members Participating in the Sport



Al Messner

*Archery Manager—Scheel's All Sports
North Dakota Whitetail*

Bow: Hoyt Katera
Arrow: Easton Full Metal Jacket
Broadhead: NAP HellRazor
Sight: Toxonics
Scent Control: Ozonics
Clothing: Ground Swat

Bud Aultman

*Owner—LC/Bishop Sales
Texas Water Buffalo*

Bow: PSE Dream Season GX
Arrow: Gold Tip
Broadhead: NAP BloodRunner
Sight: Spot-Hogg Hogg-It
Rest: Spot-Hogg Whammy
Fletching: Norway Fusion Vanes



Participation

Steve Calderwood

*Owner—Edge of Time Trading Post
New York Whitetail*

Bow: Mathews DXT
Arrow: Carbon Express
Aramid KV
Broadhead: Rage
Sight: Sword Acu-Site
Arrow Rest: Vital Gear Mathews
Vital Drop
Clothing: ScentBlocker



Jim Bruns

*Pro Staff—PSE Archery
Illinois Whitetail*

Bow: PSE
Arrow: PSE Carbon Force Radial X Weave
Broadhead: NAP Spitfire
Sight: PSE Slider
Rest: Trophy Ridge DropZone
Clothing: Scent-Lok

Mark A. Fagerland

*Owner—Prism Plastics, Inc.
Wisconsin Whitetail*

Bow: Bear The Truth
Arrow: Gold Tip Vapor
Broadhead: G5 Tekan II 100
Rest: Trophy Ridge
Whisker Biscuit
Nock: Lumenok
Food Plot: Biologic Maximum



Inside Archery's

The 2009 "Best Buy" Awards Voting

Your V.I.P. Ballot is Attached!

Each year, dealers, buyers and retailers from all across the archery industry participate in voting for the best archery products of the year.

Voting is Easy

Simply fill out the attached card, indicating selections for **Best Sellers** in the wide variety of archery equipment categories. Return the completed card to *Inside Archery* for tabulation.

Feel free to explain or otherwise elaborate on your answers. This is your program. You decide the winners. Your votes send a clear message to the manufacturers.

Why You Should Vote

Buying the merchandise that will sell best is critical to your retail success.

Every dealer, buyer and retailer understands that some archery products sell better than others. The best products rarely linger on your shelves, displays or pegboards. You order them, they arrive promptly and your customers snap them up, making your cash register ring and your bottom line glow.

Those cream-of-the-crop items are what savvy retailers call "**Best Buys.**"

Unfortunately, identifying the **Best Buys** in every key archery product category isn't always easy. It can take much

trial and error. Sorting through, say, all of the new broadheads to find the specific heads that will sell the very best can take considerable time and effort.

Many retailers keep meticulous sales records, grouped by product category, to help them with this task. Such records are an excellent idea, but those one-store records may not reveal the whole story.

To get the big picture on what's selling best, you should combine your own sales data with the experiences of as many other archery retailers as possible. It may be that Brand X broadheads sold best for you, but everyone else was having even better success with Brand Y broadheads. Imagine what your sales would have been if you'd only known about Brand Y broadheads!

The *Inside Archery* **Best Buy Awards Program** is all about helping you combine your own data and feelings with the experiences of as many other archery retailers as possible.

Archery dealers, buyers and retailers from all across the country vote. *Inside Archery* tabulates the results and reports it back to you in a future issue.

Make your vote count.





2009 BEST BUY AWARDS PRODUCT CATEGORIES:

■ Bows

Compound Bows Retailing Over \$600
Compound Bows Retailing Under \$600
Kids' Compound Bows
Traditional Bows
Crossbows

■ Arrow Rests

Total-Containment Arrow Rests
Open Fall-Away Arrow Rests
Containment Fall-Away Arrow Rests

■ Broadheads

Rear-Deployment Expandable Broadheads
Front-Pivot Expandable Broadheads
Blade-Point Fixed-Blade Broadheads
Chisel-Point Fixed-Blade Broadheads

■ Targets

3D Targets
Bag Targets
Layered-Foam Targets

■ Sights

Multiple-Pin Hunting Sights
Single-Pin Hunting Sights
Competition / Target Sights

■ Hunting Scents

Attractants
Scent Eliminators

■ Hunting Arrows

■ Hunting Quivers

■ Hunting Releases

■ Hunting Stabilizers

■ Hunting Silencers

■ Fletching (Vanes and Feathers)

■ Treestands

■ Ground Blinds

■ Bowhunting Clothing

■ Scouting Cameras

■ Bowhunting Optics

■ Bowhunting Packs

Tink's tight-knit management team includes (left to right) Controller L.D. Bean, Marketing Manager Terry Rohm, President Phil Robinson, Office Manager Julie Sumner and Operations Manager Tom Greene.



Inside Archery 36 June 2009



LISTENING TO HUNTERS

When you talk, you repeat what you already know. When you listen, you frequently learn something. In business, listening to your customers can teach you how to be successful.

"For forty years we've been very good listeners," says Tink's President Phil Robinson. "We've listened carefully to what hunters have told us they wanted and needed. We've also listened to our many dealers, working hard to understand what would make them more successful in their efforts. And for forty years we've responded. We've offered innovative and effective deer lures and related products that worked in the field and sold in the stores. There's no substitute for paying close attention to your customers."

Tink's was founded by Aubrey "Tink" Nathan in 1969. "Tink really did a remarkable job with the company," adds Phil.

"He formulated Tink's #69 Doe-in-Rut Buck Lure, one of the very first estrous lures for deer hunting, and he did a superb job of promoting and marketing that lure nationwide. Today, fully four decades later, Tink's #69 Buck Lure is still among the best selling and most effective deer lures in the country. Hunter confidence in

By Bill & Sherry Krenz
with Interviews
by Travis Reginek

Tink's



Tink's #69 is both well founded and simply amazing. Tink's #69 Buck Lure worked in 1969, and it works just as well today. Legions of hunters and their trophy bucks are ample proof of that."

Tink's is also a company that has evolved with the years. Tink Nathan actually sold the company to Wellington in 1989, stayed on as an official consultant for a year and then moved to Africa for nearly a decade to hunt, lecture and write. Today Tink communicates regularly with the Tink's team on marketing and new-product ideas.

Wellington built the brand, expanded the product line and further enhanced consumer awareness of Tink's. But Wellington was a much larger company specializing in, oddly enough, rope and cordage. Within Wellington, Tink's was a part of a small but promising outdoor division.

No one knows more about those middle Tink's years than the company's current marketing director, Terry Rohm. Terry grew up in a hunting family on a farm in Pennsylvania. Early on he developed an instinct for hunting and a particular talent for turkey calling. It was that talent, in a roundabout way, that led Terry to Tink's.

"In the mid-1980s," explains Terry, "I became one of the youngest callers ever to win the Pennsylvania state turkey calling championship. Later, at the Harrisburg Sportsman Show, I met Ben Rogers Lee, a world champion turkey caller and call manufacturer, and Ben encouraged me to attend the World Turkey Calling Championships in Mobile, Alabama. I went to Mobile, called in that event, nearly won it and then simply stayed on, guiding with Ben and working in his turkey call business.

"In 1988 Wellington bought Ben Lee Turkey Calls. They already owned a small scent company called Old Timers, and they were looking to expand their outdoor division. As a Ben Lee employee, I shifted over to working for Wellington. Then in June of 1989



RIGHT: Tink's was founded in 1969 by Aubrey "Tink" Nathan. Nathan guided the company and worked on building the brand until he sold the company in 1989. Today, he still consults with Tink's.

ABOVE: Tink's is owned by Frist Capital, which is headed up by Billy Frist (not shown), Tommy Frist and Rawls Butler.

BELOW: The team and staff at Tink's pause for a moment in the company's warehouse and production facility in Covington, Georgia.



Wellington acquired Tink's, and I was chosen to run the new company. The learning curve was steep. I'd never run a company before, but in short order I learned the business from the ground up. That included sales, manufacturing, shipping, accounting, even working with the media. I had to learn it all, and it proved quite an experience. I remained in that position with Tink's for almost a year."

Wellington's rapidly expanding outdoor division suddenly included two deer lure companies (Tink's and Old Timers) and a turkey call company (Ben Lee Turkey Calls). The mix proved a struggle.

"The difficulty lay in differentiating and adequately marketing all three brands," Terry clarifies. "It's a common problem for companies with multiple brands in the same industry. Over the course of maybe a year, however, it became abundantly clear that Tink's was a much stronger brand name than Old Timers. Consumers and dealers recognized and trusted Tink's products, and eventually we folded up the tent on Old Timers and just ran with Tink's and Ben Lee Turkey calls. It was a fairly good seasonal approach. Ben Lee Calls was strongest in the spring and Tink's really took off in the summer and fall."

Things were about to change, though, with Tink's emerging even stronger. In 1991 Ben Rogers Lee was tragically killed in a car accident. Lee was the gregarious company spokesman for Ben Lee Turkey Calls. His absence and dramatically increasing competition in the call market severely undercut Wellington's venture in turkey calls. Eventually the Ben Lee company was disbanded by Wellington and the brand name given back to Ben Lee's son.

"That placed all the focus on Tink's," remembers Terry. "In the next decade

we built and enhanced the Tink's brand at every turn. We significantly expanded the Tink's product line and we developed one of the most successful marketing campaigns

A company that listened to hunters from day one, Tink's President Phil Robinson (below) and Marketing Manager Terry Rohm (left) also manage a fair number of field days themselves.



Inside Archery 39 June 2009

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the outdoor industry had ever seen. That campaign involved two talking deer, Hank and Larry.

"To further enhance brand awareness, we knew that we needed a marketing campaign that was both distinctive and memorable. Our overall goal was brand recognition. With over 50 different Tink's products, it was impossible to advertise each one. We wanted something that would represent and promote the entire product line. With that concept in mind, we struck on the idea of a talking deer. That grew into two talking, interacting mounted trophy deer, and the idea snowballed. The first talking Hank-and-Larry print and television ads hit in 1998, and created a phenomenon. Hank and Larry were an instant Tink's hit.

"We expanded on the concept in 1999 when we created and installed two animated, talking deer mounts in the Tink's booth at the SHOT Show. That created a sensation on the show floor and Tink's won an award for Best Booth, 'Under Two Bucks,' which was presented by *Shooting Industry* magazine.

"Everyone loved Hank and Larry. Hunters loved them. Kids adored them. Even wives got a kick out of the two madcap deer. At shows, people wanted their photos taken with the pair. The Tink's Hank and Larry Off the Wall Campaign, which today is still as strong and impactful as ever, is ongoing. Over the years its innovative and entertaining nature has generated tremendous brand recognition for Tink's."

In spite of that success and Tink's leadership position in the hunting scent industry, Tink's was to undergo another upheaval in 2004. Wellington's rope and cordage business was floundering in the face of stiff foreign competition, and Wellington was forced into bankruptcy.

"Fortunately," says Phil Robinson, "a group of farsighted individuals recognized the Tink's business potential and purchased Tink's from Wellington. The new group, Frist Capital, saw in Tink's an industry leader with a core group of very dedicated and talented employees and an incredibly strong brand name and product line. Frist felt that Tink's could go on to create something quite special in the outdoor world."

With guidance from Frist Capital, Tink's has once again leapt forward, solidifying its leadership role within the hunting-scent industry and reaffirming

The right, capable people are a big part of Tink's ongoing success.

Left to right are Controller L.D. Bean, Operations Manager Tom Greene, Office Manager Julie Sumner and Production Coordinator Laura Griffith with Customer Service Representative Gail Stewart.



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its standing with consumers and dealers everywhere. It's done that by fortifying its management team, focusing on quality, dramatically improving its packaging and by continually introducing new and innovative products for success-minded hunters.

Shortly after acquiring Tink's, Frist Capital hired Phil Robinson as the company's new vice president of sales. The youngest of six kids of a Texas Baptist minister, Phil graduated from Southeastern Oklahoma State University with a degree in industrial engineering and business. His engineering and sales career included stints with UPS, Wal-Mart, Proctor and Gamble and most recently with Daisy Outdoor Products.

"My entry in the outdoor industry was circuitous," says Phil. "Right out of school I went to work for Wal-Mart, and while there got to know the young store manager quite well. Decades later, while working for Proctor and Gamble, I again bumped into that same store manager, only by that time he had become the president of Daisy Outdoor Products. We rekindled our friendship, began hunting and fishing together and eventually he convinced me to join his Daisy sales team. Daisy Outdoor Products is the world's oldest and largest manufacturer of airguns, ammo and accessories.

"Working for Daisy was great, but when the opportunity to join Tink's came up, it was just too good to pass by. Late in 2005 I joined Tink's to head up their sales efforts.

"Once inside the company, I quickly learned that the core employee group at Tink's was really quite special. It's a tight-knit group in which the key people all wear a lot of different hats and view the company almost as if it were their own. Julie Sumner is our office manager, which also includes managing inside sales and customer service. Tom Greene is operations manager. He oversees production, all warehouse functions and also purchasing. L.D. Bean is our new controller. Terry Rohm is our longtime marketing manager. Terry oversees all of the marketing efforts, works constantly on new products, is Tink's hunting pro and over the years has become the face of Tink's in the public eye. After the Frist acquisition, this capable team set out to remake Tink's by raising the standard on everything we did.

"Consistent product quality had long been a Tink's hallmark, but we nevertheless revisited every quality-control yardstick we had in place, and we added quite a few new product quality benchmarks. We also looked closely at the packaging we were using across the entire Tink's product line."

"Packaging can make a huge difference in how products and even an entire



Inside Archery 41 June 2009

WHEN IT ALL RESTS ON ONE SHOT.

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A person wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a white baseball cap is shown from the back, aiming a bow. The cap has "Staff Shooter Bryan Jackson" written on it. The shirt has "Staff Shooter Bryan Jackson" and "Gray's Archery" with a logo. The person is aiming at a target that features silhouettes of a buck and a pig. The background is a dry, open field under a clear blue sky.

By Trevon Stollzius

2 Keys for Selling More Targets!

The buck is close and in the open. He looks the other way. It's time to shoot!

The quality of your practice, more than anything else, will spell the difference between glorious success and bitter disappointment.

That's what you explain to customers looking for a new practice target.

There are two keys to selling more practice targets to your customers. First, you must stock and offer a variety of different styles of practice targets. Second, you must sell your customers on the idea that they need more than just one type of practice target.

Today, there are four chief categories of practice archery targets: bag targets, compressed bale targets, layered-foam targets and 3D targets. I believe that serious bowhunters—those who genuinely want to improve their shooting—need access to at least three of those target types. Those bowhunters will likely need a good bag or compressed bale target for repeated field-point practice. They'll also need a quality foam target for broadhead practice. And if they really want to polish their skills, they need access to a 3D target as well.

Here's why your customers need—and you should be selling—targets in all four of the main target categories. Included are specific target suggestions in each category.

Bag Targets

Consistency in archery comes from hours and hours of practicing. For years, bowhunters have chosen bag targets as the easiest and most affordable way to pound arrows and work on their form. While there are a plethora of bag targets available today, what follows is a selection of the standouts.

Morrell Manufacturing teamed up with Michael Waddell and Lee and Tiffany Lakosky to introduce the new-for-2009 Bone Collector Series of targets. Included in the exciting Bone Collector lineup is the **MLT-1** bag target. Backed with a two-year guarantee, the 24x24x14-inch MLT-1 features Morrell's Nucleus Center for exceptional toughness and an Internal Frame System that allows you to shoot every square inch of the target for maximum longevity. Archers who want to support the fight against breast cancer should check out **The Crush**, a bright pink field-point target developed with the help of Tiffany Lakosky. What's not to love about this target? The 24x24x12-inch Crush is ultra-durable and offers easy arrow removal, and a portion of the proceeds from sales of The Crush goes to breast cancer research.

A number of ultra-fast compound bows have been introduced over the last couple of years, much to the delight of speed-bow fans. But while fast bows can be deadly in the field, they can also be hard on your practice targets. Luckily, **Delta's** new **Speed Bag Series** was specifically designed to stand up to today's high-speed, high-performance bows. Three Speed Bag targets are available. The original Speed Bag is 24x24x10 inches, the Mini is 20x20x8 and the XL is 28x28x12. All three feature a heavy-duty replaceable outer shell and tough synthetic filler material for extended target life and can stop arrows from bows shooting at 300-plus feet per second.

Another excellent bag target for archers shooting especially fast bows is the **SpyderWeb 400 FPS+ Series Target**. The 400 FPS+ Series was built to withstand the tremendous pounding generated from today's fastest bows, while still guaranteeing easy two-finger arrow removal. These free-standing bag targets feature self-healing Spylar facing. Because of Spylar's unique woven design, arrows leave little damage to the target face, so your SpyderWeb target will last and last.

If you're looking for a versatile bag target for year-round practice, you can't go wrong with the **McKenzie TuffStop**. The TuffStop is large enough for fairly



Top to Bottom: Morrell MLT-1, Morrell Crush, Delta Speed Bag, SpyderWeb 400 FPS+.



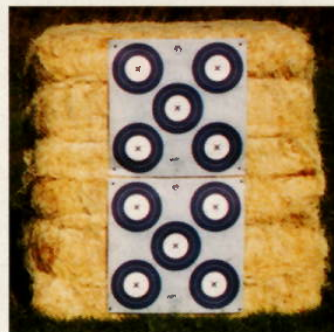
Top: McKenzie TuffStop 100
Bottom: Magic Stop Infinity Target

Targets!

long-range practice but is also lightweight enough to be easily portable. The durable TuffStop 100 measures 20x24x16 inches.

Magic Stop's free-standing **Infinity Target** offers an immense shooting surface and six shooting sides for a long-lasting, durable practice target. This 25x25x25-inch target combines unbelievable stopping power with two-finger arrow removal. Magic Stop adds other thoughtful details to its targets, including a UV-coated poly bag and nylon straps for carrying, making the Infinity Target everything a serious archer could ask for in a practice target.

B.U.P Sports comes to the table in 2009 with the **B.U.P. Bag Target**, a durable bag target with an affordable price tag. Known for their heavy duty arrow backstops, B.U.P. Sports also offers a new portable target for checking accuracy in the field. While this is not a true bag target, the **Field Test Target** fits nicely in a bowhunter's pack and is an



Top: B.U.P. Field Test Target
Bottom: American Excel/Cor Curlex Power Stop

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Top to Bottom: McKenzie ShotBlocker Bowhunter Target, Morrell Bone Collector Broadhead Target, Viper Barrel, Field Logic Block Fusion.

easy way to check your accuracy in the field rather than shooting into a clump of brush or a mound of dirt.

Compressed Bale Targets

Compressed bale targets represent a viable alternative to bag targets. They're noted for their rugged durability and weatherproof nature.

American Excelsior's **Curlex Power Stop** is a banded bale target featuring highly compressed excelsior for outstanding stopping power. Tough and durable, the Curlex Power Stop can be left outside year round. Heavy construction deters theft. Available in several different sizes, the Curlex Power Stop is perfect for both commercial and individual use.

Layered-Foam Targets

Layered-foam targets are extremely popular because of their versatility. The best can handle both field points and broadheads... and your customers do need to practice with their broadheads. Many layered-foam targets are also surprisingly compact and portable. They're a great choice for practice in the backyard, at the range or even in a hunting camp.

McKenzie's **ShotBlocker** targets are a quality choice in the layered-foam practice target category. Patented Welded-Core technology actually welds the foam layers together, eliminating the need for plates, wires, straps and bands and reducing foam slivering. Several ShotBlocker models are available, including a travel model and a crossbow model. ShotBlocker targets can be shot on four sides and allow for easy arrow removal.

The **Morrell Bone Collector Broadhead** target is packed with innovative foam-target technology. At the core of this broadhead target is a Nucleus Center made from super-dense rubber with flex back foam. An EZ-Tote carrying handle makes the free-standing Bone Collector Broadhead target extremely portable. The 20x20x18-inch Bone Collector is 100-percent weatherproof and stops both fixed-blade and expandable broadheads.

When you think of **Viper Archery Products**, you most likely think of high quality archery sights, durable stabilizers or handy tools. Once you've tried the

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Targets!

new-for-2009 **Barrel Target**, however, you may have a hard time remembering that Viper is brand new to the target scene. This innovative target is constructed from layers of foam wrapped in a circular fashion to form a barrel shape. Even the fastest arrows are stopped with minimum penetration. The unique shape of the Barrel provides a 360-degree shooting surface, and by spacing shots out around that surface, you'll have an especially long-lasting target.

It's hard to have a conversation about layered-foam targets without mentioning the Block by **Field Logic**. The Block uses compressed layers of foam to create arrow-stopping friction. New this year is the **Block Fusion**, a target featuring proprietary Polyfusion Technology. This new technology fuses together the various materials inside the target, eliminating the need for internal banding. That increases the ease of arrow removal by 50 percent over



Top: Rinehart Targets 18-1
Bottom: Magic Stop Legend

other Block targets. The Block Fusion offers four shooting sides, including two sides featuring the Block Game Face for better short- and long-range target practice.

Okay, so **Rinehart Targets' 18-1** isn't technically a layered-foam target. It still belongs in the durable, rugged foam target category. With 18 different faces to choose from, you'll find this compact broadhead and field-point target to be one of the longest-lasting archery targets on the market. The 18-1 is constructed from Rinehart's weatherproof, self-healing foam and is an outstanding take-anywhere practice target.

The **Magic Stop Legend Series** includes a variety of six-sided, layered-foam targets that can be shot with both field points and broadheads. All Legend models are weather-resistant and portable and offer easy arrow removal. Legend targets come in a wide range of sizes, and each size is available with either higher-density or lower-density foam.

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Top to Bottom: American Whitetail Hybrid King A/P, Hips Pro Series Big Chief, Black Hole Large Target, Field Logic GlenDel Full Rut.

is the latest layered-foam target from American Whitetail. The Hybrid King is built with alternating layers of low-density foam and special high-density elastomer, giving it the healing properties of a low-density target with all the stopping power and longevity of a high-density target. You'll have a hard time deciding what you love most about this target—its versatility in stopping both field points and broadheads or its surprisingly affordable price tag.

The new Pro Shop Series from Hips Targets was designed for archers who want a quality target that won't break the bank. The Pro Series Big Chief target can handle both field points and broadheads. Heat-welded vertical foam layers provide superior stopping power, while a weatherproof outer shell with a removable front panel protects this 17x17x14-inch target from the elements for longer target life.

Black Hole Targets offers a versatile and economical option for that archer looking for a combination broadhead and field-point target. With its loose-layer design and easy arrow removal, the Black Hole's vertical layers let you shoot the target from above—perfect for practicing from a treestand. The Black Hole features a galaxy of small, medium and large spots, because, after all, more spots mean more shots.

3D Targets

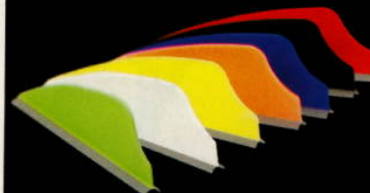
After your customers have perfected their shooting form with a bag or bale target and run their broadheads through their paces with a foam target, they then may want to get down to business with a good 3D target. Life-like 3D targets offer your customers the opportunity to "pretend" to hunt. They teach the importance of being aware of shot angles, of tricky shot placement and even of the feel of shooting at a free-standing animal. By building a practice regimen based on simulated hunting scenarios with quality 3D targets, an archer will develop both more skill and more confidence.

Field Logic's GlenDel Full Rut target is one of the most popular whitetail 3D targets on the market. This realistic deer target stands 37 inches at the shoulder and features an oversized four-sided vital insert. Four unique target faces and offset shooting zones provide you with exactly the practice you need. The insert utilizes Field Logic's

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Targets!



Top of Bottom: Delta Elite Series Trophy Whitetail Buck, Rinehart Green Cobra, McKenzie XTreme Corsican Sheep, Longhorn Archery Black Buck.

Layer Trap System to hold internal layers in place and eliminate slivering. Shoot your GlenDel Full Rut target with field points, fixed-blade broadheads and expandables and still enjoy easy arrow removal.

Delta 3D targets are known for their quality and realistic details. A complete line of Delta 3D targets is available including a wide array of deer targets, big game targets and small game targets. The **Delta Elite Series** includes a number of North American big game animals. Full-sized Elite targets feature an oversized, replaceable core and the Microcellular foam system for incredible stopping power and healing properties.

Looking for something a little out of the ordinary for your 3D practice sessions? Then check out **Rinehart's** innovative 3D targets. In addition to a complete line of traditional hunting targets, Rinehart also offers an exotic target line that includes everything from dinosaurs to poisonous frogs to cobras to a monstrosity large mosquito. Kids—and kids at heart—will love shooting at these colorful, unique 3D targets. Besides being a lot of fun to shoot, these exotic targets are constructed of Rinehart's self-healing foam. Patented locking inserts extend the life of Rinehart 3D targets.

McKenzie Targets manufactures several phenomenal 3D target lines. Featuring replaceable cores made of E-Z Flex easy-release foam, the **XTreme Series** is one of the most popular 3D target lines. The expanded-for-2009 lineup includes several exotic species, such as the Corsican Sheep and African Hyena, and ultra-realistic details will make your target practice more enjoyable.

Longhorn offers a full line of long-lasting, true-to-life 3D targets. These PolyFoam self-sealing targets are available in a wide array of animal choices, from whitetails to alligators to bobcats. Cost-effective Longhorn targets can be shot from two sides, and a 3D target repair kit is also available from Longhorn to extend target life even further.

Selling the Right Targets

Helping your customers select the right practice targets isn't all that difficult. They'll need a good bag or compressed bale target for everyday shooting, a quality foam target for honing their skills with broadheads and, ideally, a 3D target for really polishing up their shooting. That's what they'll need.

To sell more targets, you'll need to offer that sort of target variety and you'll need to sell the notion that variety in practice targets is the best way to go. 

LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH TARGET

To learn more about quality archery practice targets, contact these leading target manufacturers.

American Excelsior Company	americanexcelsior.com	800-777-7645
American Whitetail, Inc.	archerytargets.com	888-233-1976
B.U.P. Sports	bupsports.com	877-855-0094
Black Hole Targets	blackholetarget.com	800-282-4868
Delta Targets	deltatargets.net	800-708-0673
Field Logic	fieldlogic.com	800-282-4868
Hips Targets	hipstargets.com	800-979-0915
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McKenzie Targets	mckenzie3d.com	800-708-0673
Morrell Manufacturing	morrelltargets.com	479-632-5929
Rinehart Targets	rinehart3d.com	608-757-8153
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Southeast Marked 3D Sectional

July 11-12, 2009 • Gainesville, FL

Southeast Marked 3D Sectional

July 11-12, 2009 • Fort Lauderdale, FL

Outdoor National Field Championships

July 22-26, 2009 • Mechanicsburg, PA

Big Sky Open

October 30-November 1, 2009 • Mesquite, NV

North American Field Archery Championships

December 12-13, 2009 • Homestead, FL

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2011 Vegas Shoot / World Archery Festival

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BY DATE

JUNE

June 5-7, 2009

NFAA Big Sky Open • Grand Junction, CO

June 6-7, 2009

NFAA Southeast Outdoor Sectional • Clemson, SC

June 6-7, 2009

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June 12-14, 2009

I.B.O. National Championship Triple Crown - 2nd Leg • Fairview, PA

June 13-14, 2009

NFAA Unmarked 3D National Championship • Yankton, SD

June 13-14, 2009

NFAA First Dakota National Archery Classic • Yankton, SD

June 20-21, 2009

NFAA Northwest Outdoor Sectional • Billings, MT

June 20-21, 2009

NFAA Great Lakes Outdoor Sectional • West Allis, WI

June 20-21, 2009

NFAA Southwest Outdoor Sectional • Farmington, NM

June 26-28, 2009

ASA Mathews SoloCam Pro/Am • Metropolis, IL

June 27-28, 2009

NFAA Southern Outdoor Sectional • Oklahoma City, OK

June 27-29, 2009

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JULY

July 10-12, 2009

I.B.O. National Championship Triple Crown - 3rd Leg • Nelsonville, OH

July 11-12, 2009

NFAA Southeast Marked 3D Sectional • Gainesville, FL

July 11-12, 2009

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July 22-26, 2009

NFAA Outdoor National Field Championships • Mechanicsburg, PA

July 23-26, 2009

ASA Team Realtree ASA Classic • Columbus, GA

AUGUST

August 13-15, 2009

I.B.O. World Championship & Archery Festival • Ellicottville, NY

OCTOBER

October 30-November 1, 2009

NFAA Big Sky Open • Mesquite, NV

DECEMBER

December 12-13, 2009

NFAA North American Field Archery Championships • Homestead, FL

Field Test

By Bill Krenz

2009 Scott Releases

A company or product line has really gotten somewhere in this industry when it is widely known that they can be implicitly trusted. Pro shops and experienced archers trust Scott releases and have done so for years. They trust that a Scott release will be state of the art. They trust that a Scott will be of a quality level above and beyond. They trust that a Scott release will be easily adjustable and deliver unsurpassed accuracy. They trust that a Scott release will last and last. For more than 20 years Scott Archery has been true to every one of those trusts.

Remaining state of the art in the release world isn't easy. Bows change. Bowstrings change. Certainly preferences change. Yet Scott Archery always seems in the forefront, always seems in tune and up to date with an almost continuous flow of new and/or improved releases for bowhunters and target archers.

I recently secured four of Scott's most popular releases for field testing—the single-caliper Wildcat and Mongoose and the double-caliper Sabertooth and Shark. A debate has long simmered over which style of release is more accurate, a single caliper or a double caliper. With Scott quality, both deliver excellent accuracy. The simpler single caliper is a bit less complicated and therefore a bit more economical to produce and purchase. That, combined with its accuracy, makes it very popular. The slightly more costly double-caliper releases are cited by some as maybe a bit more forgiving to shoot because both jaws move when the trigger is pulled. I've shot both and with quality releases, like Scott, it's really hard to tell the difference. If pressed, I suppose I personally prefer the

double-caliper releases. But when shooting Scott, I'm happy to go either route.

The **Scott Wildcat** is among Scott's most popular releases ever. Its single-caliper design allows it to be trimmed down to a streamlined shape. Four other things make the Scott Wildcat an ideal pick in my book—its trigger adjustment, its length adjustment, its forward trigger and its wrist straps. A good release must be adjustable for length and trigger tension. The Wildcat's trigger is easily adjusted with a simple set screw located at the base of the trigger. Turn the screw in to increase trigger pull. Back it out to decrease it.

Adjusting release length to properly fit your hand is crucial. When correctly adjusted, your index finger should fall naturally onto the trigger at full draw, with the tip of that finger pointing straight down and contacting the trigger at approximately the first crease of the finger. That release length enables the most consistent shots. The Scott Wildcat is easily adjusted for that length. Actually, there are three models of Scott Wildcat releases, and each offers precise length adjustment. The most common model is the fixed-connection model. It features a four-hole body. After removing a beefy set screw, the body can be slid forward or backward to any of the four length settings. The Wildcat is also available with either a nylon (NCS) or rope (RCS) connection system. Both are infinitely adjustable for length.

The Scott Wildcat features a forward-positioned trigger. That makes it ideal for use with a string-loop. String-loops typically cause you to lose a bit of draw length (power stroke, really) with any bow. A forward trigger helps you gain that length back. Scott Archery wrist straps have long been superb. They're designed to be comfortable and quality-made. The Wildcat is available with either a buckle or a Velcro strap.

The **Scott Sabertooth** is essentially a double-caliper version of the Wildcat. It's a simply superb



SCOTT
ARCHERY

Inside Archery 52 June 2009

release with convenient trigger-tension adjustment, easy length adjustment (four-hole body, NCS or RCS), a choice of buckle or Velcro strap and a forward trigger for string-loop use. I particularly like the hand-polished, stainless-steel jaws and reasonably trim release head. Those elite stainless-steel jaws are very hard and very smooth. That means they're harder to mar and will deliver less string and string-loop wear. In my hands, the Sabertooth is a forgiving double-caliper release that looks, feels and shoots like a million bucks.

The **Scott Shark** is a very similar, although a bit more economical, double-caliper release. It sports anodized aluminum jaws (like most releases nowadays), a forward trigger, either a buckle or Velcro strap and a four-hole solid body for convenient length adjustment. Trigger tension is easily adjusted with the set screw located at the base of the trigger. If you aren't concerned about the luxury of stainless-steel jaws or the option of an NCS or RCS connection system, the Shark is a great way to go.

The fourth release I tried was the **Scott Mongoose Deluxe**. The Mongoose is a standard single-caliper release crafted with typical Scott Archery quality. It features a fully adjustable trigger and Scott's four-hole solid connection system and is available with either a buckle or a Velcro strap. The basic Scott Mongoose would be an excellent choice for any bowhunter.

The "Deluxe" designation, however, turns it into a whole other breed of cat. The Mongoose Deluxe comes complete with three interchangeable trigger posts—a slimline trigger post, a medium-sized knurled post and spring trigger post. Each trigger post delivers a completely different shooting feel.

This really is a great system. It allows you to easily customize the feel and shooting characteristics of the Mongoose release. The slimline trigger post is what most index-finger releases have sported for many years. Switching to the larger diameter knurled trigger post delivers a completely different feel. For me, it does a better job of locking my trigger finger into a consistent pre-shot position. Its larger surface area also seems to lighten the trigger pull without actually decreasing the trigger tension.

The spring trigger post is altogether different once again. While the two other triggers are solid triggers, the spring trigger post is actually a flexible coiled spring. As you pull the spring trigger, the shaft bends slightly, which encourages you to slowly squeeze the trigger to activate the shot. Using the spring trigger post, if even just occasionally in practice, is a great way to develop the tendency

to slowly and smoothly squeeze the trigger on the release. When done correctly, you'll hardly know when the shot will break.

To be trusted may be the greatest compliment of all. Scott Archery has long been producing releases that archers trust. For more information on high quality Scott releases, log onto scottarchery.com or call Scott Archery at (606) 663-2734. 

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Bow Report

By Bill Krenz

Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw

Not everyone wants to go as fast as possible. Not everyone wants to strain to draw their bow. Not everyone wants to worry about letting down slowly on a cold morning or how noisy their bow might be in the woods. In fact, a growing number of bowhunters are revolting against overly fast, overly difficult to draw, overly tough to let down, overly noisy hunting bows.

A growing number of archers are looking for something easier, something a good bit more pleasant, something just like the brand new Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw.

"I don't get it," a very experienced bowhunter told me at the recent Pope and Young Club Convention in Denver, Colorado. "My old compound bow, shooting around 250 feet per second has been consistently putting trophies in the bowhunting record book for years now. What's all this uproar about dramatically increased arrow speed? How fast do I really need to shoot an arrow to kill a deer, a bear or even a bull elk at 20 to 30 yards? Sure, I'd like a new bow and maybe a little bit of extra arrow speed would be okay, but I'm damned sure not willing to give up an easy draw and a quiet shot for anything. I also like the easy-tuning, forgiving and accurate nature of my current bow. Why in the world would I switch now?"

Bowhunters, as a lot, are aging. And a growing number are firm in their bow requirements. "I've tried a few of today's speed bows," my friend went on. "My goodness they're stiff to draw. I can imagine that on a hot summer day you could warm up to them. But what about in a cold, wet November treestand when you have to twist around a bit to the right and draw slowly? And have you ever tried to let one of those speed bows down? They sneak up on you, surprise you and purposely try to throw your drawing arm and shoulder into next week. Quite a few of them also sound comparatively like a car wreck when you release an

arrow. Doesn't anyone make a genuinely smooth-drawing, easy-to-let-down, quiet bow that's maybe just a bit faster these days?"

"I already bought just what you want," said a voice behind us. We turned to face another bowhunter who had been listening to our conversation. "Parker," the bowhunter said. "That's the name of the company. And the model is the BlackHawk EZ-Draw. Good

folks. Good bows. The Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw does exactly what you want."

To visualize a 2009 Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw all you have to do is imagine a state-of-the-art compound bow with all the bells and whistles of an artfully machined aluminum riser, parallel limbs, broadhead shelf design, integrated dampening systems, adjustable string stop, burl wood-grain grip, next-generation camouflage finish, maintenance-free sealed ball bearings, a bit more arrow speed and—maybe most important of all—an easy, silky-smooth draw and letdown cycle! That's a whole lot, but it's an accurate, swift description of this remarkable bow.

In a world gone mad for arrow speed at all costs, the new Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw represents grassroots sanity.

How It Shoots

After years of drawing and shooting much stiffer, faster compound bows, I found the 2009 Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw almost shocking in how smooooooooooooothly it draws. I set my test BlackHawk EZ-Draw at 70 pounds, drew it repeatedly, then checked the draw weight with my digital scales at least three more times. It drew so smoothly that it didn't feel like 70 pounds. To be honest, it felt like maybe 60 pounds. Yet the scales confirmed and reconfirmed the 70-pound setting. Easy, gradual and silky-smooth is how this bow rolls back and lets off.

At the shot, with even the lightest arrows I could scrounge up, the Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw is exceptionally quiet and subdued. With normal-weight hunting arrows, the bow is deadly quiet. Attribute that to good bow design, tight part tolerances, Parker's parallel-limb technology, effective dampening systems and the bow's mild and gentle EZ Cam System.

Given the gentle nature of that cam system, I was a bit surprised at the EZ-Draw's performance at the chronograph. My typical carbon hunting arrows usually weigh in the neighborhood of 390 grains or so, and at 70 pounds the test BlackHawk EZ-Draw



The attractive two-piece burl wood-grain grip on the BlackHawk EZ-Draw is crowned by a safety-oriented broadhead shelf.



Dual Sims LimbSaver Dampeners are located at both the top and the bottom of the EZ-Draw's innovative Cross Vent riser.



Specifications

Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw

Axle-to-Axle Length	31.75 inches
Brace Height	7.1 inches
Riser Geometry	3.5 inches reflex
Mass Weight	3.8 pounds
Letoff	75 percent
Draw Lengths	27 to 31 inches
Draw Weights	60# and 70#
Camo	Next G-1 Camo

For more information, log onto parkerbows.com or call at (540) 337-5426.

Arrow Speed

2009 Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw set at 29 inches (by factory) and adjusted to 70 pounds

28-INCH ARROWS	SHAFT: GRAMS/IN	ARROW: TOTAL WEIGHT	KINETIC ENERGY	ARROW SPEED
EASTON XX78 ALLOY 2512	10.3	448 GR.	64.7	255 FPS
EASTON FULL METAL JACKET 400	10.2	426 GR.	64.5	261 FPS
CARBON EXPRESS ARAMID KV 350	9.8	415 GR.	64.2	264 FPS
CARBON TECH WHITETAIL 65/80	9.5	411 GR.	64.1	265 FPS
CARBON EXPRESS MAXIMA HUNTER 350	8.9	398 GR.	64.0	269 FPS
EASTON ST AXIS N-FUSED 400	9.0	392 GR.	63.9	271 FPS
BEMAN ICS HUNTER ELITE 400	8.4	390 GR.	63.6	271 FPS
GOLD TIP XT HUNTER 55/75	8.2	385 GR.	63.3	272 FPS
PSE RADIAL X WEAVE HUNTER 300	8.1	376 GR.	63.2	275 FPS
EASTON LIGHTSPEED 400	7.4	363 GR.	62.8	279 FPS
GOLD TIP ULTRALIGHT PRO 400	7.4	361 GR.	62.4	279 FPS
CARBON TECH CHEETAH 400	6.4	346 GR.	62.4	285 FPS
HIGH COUNTRY SPEED PRO MAX	5.5	303 GR.	60.6	300 FPS

Bow weighed with an Easton Bow Force Digital Scale. All tests conducted with a Spot-Hogg Hooter Shooter Portable Shooting Machine and a Competition Electronics Pro Chronograph.



Interchangeable modules make for convenient and easy draw-length adjustments with the Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw.

was generating a bit over 270 feet per second with those arrows. Compared to my fast bows, that was bicycle speed. But like my friend at the Pope and Young Convention, I've taken a lot of very big animals over the years with compound bows that shot considerably slower. This super-smooth bow definitely has the necessary punch for serious big-game hunting.

In the process of speed-testing the bow, I also had occasion to let the bow down. What a treat! The valley is relatively long, there are no surprises and you can let the bow down as slowly as you want.

As you would expect, the Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw also proved wonderfully forgiving to shoot and superbly accurate. Stacking arrows seemed an easy matter. In fact, everything about this alternative bow seemed easy. Which, of course, is where the name comes from.

Key Features and Benefits

EZ Cam System

Parker's EZ Cam System is a forgiving one-cam

arrangement that was specifically engineered to deliver an incredibly smooth draw and easy let-downs without giving up too much in arrow speed. It's also unusually quiet, a snap to tune, draw-length adjustable with modules and both forgiving and accurate.

Cross Vent Riser

The artfully machined riser on the BlackHawk EZ-Draw features a unique Cross Vent design that both lightens and strengthens the riser. At just 3.85 pounds, the BlackHawk EZ-Draw is a joy to carry anywhere.

Broadhead Shelf Design

Boosting safety and peace of mind with the Parker BlackHawk EZ-Draw is a bolted-on machined-aluminum broadhead shelf. It looks a part of the bow and prevents mishaps should a hunting arrow get inadvertently bumped from your arrow rest.

Parallel-Limb Technology

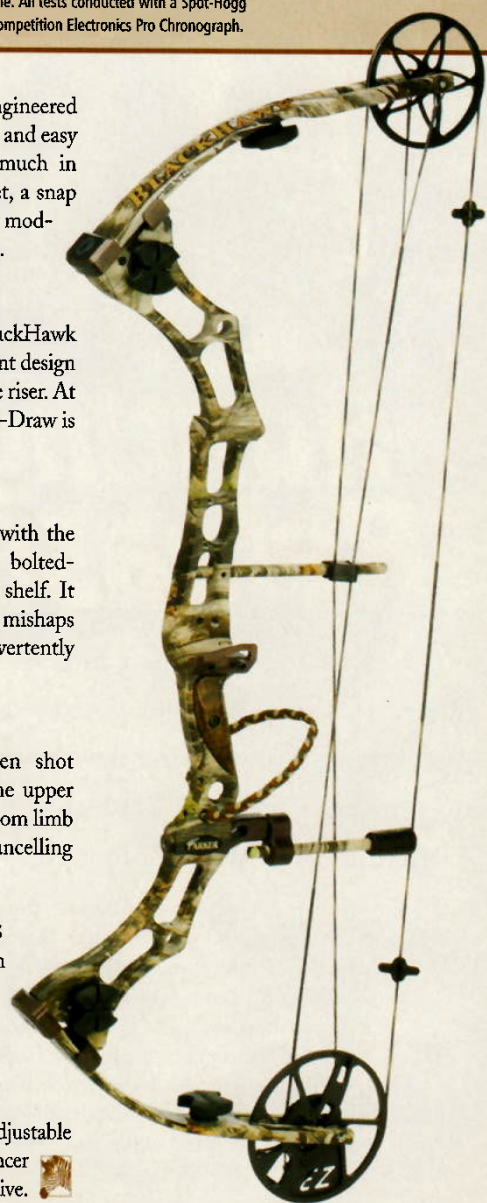
Parallel limbs significantly dampen shot noise and vibration. At the shot, the upper limb rebounds upward while the bottom limb rebounds downward, effectively cancelling each other out.

Integrated Dampening Systems

Sims LimbSaver dampening units on the riser, the limbs and the bow-string of the BlackHawk EZ-Draw squelch shot noise and vibration.

SS String Silencer System

The EZ-Draw also features a fully adjustable string bumper, called the SS String Silencer System. It's lightweight and very effective.



A close-up photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing camouflage clothing, aiming a bow. He is using a finger release, with his index finger hooked over the bowstring. The background is a soft, out-of-focus natural setting.

The State of Hunting Releases!

Does anyone still shoot fingers? Or maybe the question is better asked—does anyone who is actively buying new bowhunting gear still shoot fingers? The answer, outside of the traditional crowd, is not many.

Today the vast majority of bowhunters shoot with some sort of a release. Ten years ago it would have been easy and accurate to have simply said that bowhunters used a wrist-strap release that was index-finger activated. That's it. That was the state of bowhunting releases back then.

But times have changed. Plenty of today's bowhunters are more sophisticated (heck, they've simply been bowhunters longer), and they're more adventuresome to boot. Where once almost every modern bowhunter used an index-finger release, today the lines are blurring a bit between releases designed for bowhunters and those designed for target archers.

By
Tracy
Breen

While the majority of hunting archers still lean toward a convenient, nearly unloseable index-finger release, a growing number of bowhunters are now trying other release styles. Namely, they are now considering, purchasing and trying thumb-activated and back-tension releases in addition to conventional index-finger releases. And all of this for bowhunting use.

Helping your customers select the perfect release often involves many things. One bowhunter may crave a firm trigger pull, while the next may dream about triggers that go off with the lightest of touches. For some, convenient adjustments are paramount. For others, simplicity or cost are the big things. Today's best release manufacturers are working double-time to continue to develop and improve hunting releases that are more comfortable to use, easier to operate and more adjustable than ever before. Many are now offering quality hunting releases in at least two out of the three common release styles.

Savvy retailers are jumping on that broadening hunting-release demand. They're stocking, demonstrating and selling index-finger releases, thumb-activated releases and even back-tension releases for their bowhunter customers.

To help you with those efforts, let's break down what's hot and selling well in the three basic bowhunting-release styles.

Index-Finger Releases

Index-finger releases are among the easiest of all releases to use. They're easy to clip onto a bowstring or string-loop, the wrist strap tends to make them almost unloseable in the woods and they're capable of excellent field accuracy. Because of all that, they remain today's most popular form of bowhunting release. Here are many of 2009's hottest models.

Tru-Fire develops innovative new release designs almost every year, to the delight of bowhunters. The brand new **Tru-Fire Edge** is a quality bowhunting release that's small, lightweight, easy to use and convenient to adjust. The head on the new Edge is smaller than a dime, making it wonderfully trim and compact. Other notable features include lockable length adjustment, adjustable pull weight and a linear-motion bearing that delivers an extraordinarily smooth feel to the trigger. The Edge can be purchased with a wide array of straps, including a buckle foldback strap that allows the bowhunter to fold the release backward to get it out of the way when not in use. The **Tru-Fire 360 Extreme** is a dual-caliper release that features 360-degree head rotation in front of the trigger. That allows you to rotate your hand to the most comfortable and repeatable anchor position without torquing the bowstring or the string-loop. In addition, trigger sensitivity can be dial-adjusted all the way from 4 to 26 ounces.

New and exciting from **T.R.U. Ball** is the **Super Hornet**, a smooth-as-silk release that's especially easy to operate. Pull the trigger to open the jaws and let the trigger go to close them. The Super Hornet has a durable, camo-anodized head and is available with either a Velcro nylon strap or a leather buckle strap. Also new is the **T.R.U. Ball Sniper 2**. The Sniper 2 is an index-finger release that is both forgiving and more adjustable. Its unique jaw-and-a-half design utilizes a single moving caliper and a floating second jaw that makes the Sniper 2 more forgiving than the typical single-jaw release. The Sniper 2 is also adjustable



**Tru-Fire
Edge**



**Tru-Fire
360
Extreme**



**T.R.U. Ball
Super
Hornet**



**T.R.U. Ball
Sniper 2**



**Scott
Little
Goose**

Hunting Releases



**Scott
Shark**

**TruGlo
Tap Out**



**Hot Shot
Caliper**



**Jim
Fletcher
Fletch
Hook**



**Cobra
Mamba R1
Swing
Away
E-Z Adjust**

for hand size and comes with two interchangeable triggers. The first trigger is a forward design for use with string-loops. The second is a spring trigger that will allow archers to slowly squeeze the trigger to eliminate the tendency to jerk or slap the trigger.

The **Scott Little Goose** is one of the most popular and precise bowhunting releases ever. Its quality, compact size, easy adjustments and smooth trigger action have made it a tried-and-true winner. For 2009, Scott has improved the Little Goose to make it even better. The Little Goose now features an improved jaw radius and angled jaw design, making it a great option for bowhunters using a string-loop. The Little Goose goes onto the bowstring or string-loop quickly, and the internal roller-sear mechanism delivers a silky-smooth trigger pull. It's no secret that short axle-to-axle bows are all the rage these days. What you may not know is that the **Scott Shark** was designed especially for those short bows. The Shark has a super-compact dual jaw and a forward trigger that helps shooters get every bit of power from their short bows. The Shark is easy to adjust for hand size, and its unique roller sear produces an easy trigger pull.

The brand new **TruGlo Tap Out** release is a dual-jaw release that is tough and forgiving. The **Tap Out** features an especially wide trigger that's easy to feel, even when wearing gloves. The jaws on the release are polished to reduce string wear and to ensure a smooth release every time. Trigger pull is easily adjustable. The TruGlo Tap Out is available



**Cobra Pro
Caliper Jr.**



**Pro Release
RollAid**



**HHA Zero Gap
HCW-Buck**



**Winn
C-10
Free Flight**



**Carter
Rx1**



**Carter
Strapless**

with either a nylon strap with a Velcro closure or a leather strap with a buckle.

Corolla Capital Management, the owners of Cajun Archery, recently purchased Hot Shot Manufacturing and will offer an amazing new index-finger release for 2009. The most unique feature of the brand new **Hot Shot Caliper** release is its extra-long trigger. That trigger was specifically designed to be shot with the middle finger, thereby reducing the tendency to punch the trigger and miss the shot. The Hot Shot Caliper trigger is as smooth as butter and shoots like a dream. The Caliper comes with an adjustable Velcro wrist strap. Look for more new releases from Hot Shot in the future.

Jim Fletcher is a name that regularly rolls off the tongues of archers when talking about quality releases. Many bowhunters believe that Fletcher releases help them shoot tighter groups. New from the Fletcher experts is the **Fletch Hook**, a release designed specifically for use with string-loops. The Fletch Hook features an open hook for lightning-fast string-loop hookup. No more fumbling. It also sports a forward-positioned trigger that will enable you to gain back the draw length and bow performance otherwise lost with the string-loop. The Fletch Hook is specifically designed to release the string-loop



cleanly, resulting in a consistent, smooth shot every time. The trigger is infinitely adjustable from heavy to a hair trigger and comes with a removable, knurled sleeve that slides over the trigger pin, offering yet another shooting feel.

Cobra Archery makes state-of-the-art sights, rests and a whole raft of excellent bowhunting releases. The **Cobra Mamba R1 Swing Away E-Z Adjust** is a release that bowhunters looking for a hunter-friendly release will be pleased with. The Mamba R1 has a forward-mounted trigger for string-loop use and can be easily adjusted for hand size. The Mamba R1 has a hand-polished, stainless-steel trigger that eliminates serving wear and provides years of worry-free service. It also features a 360-degree swing-away attachment system so the release can be swung out of the way when not in use. The Mamba R1 is available with either a Velcro or buckle strap. Also of note is the **Cobra Pro Caliper Jr.**, an index-finger release designed specifically for small hands. Like many Cobra releases, the Caliper Jr. has a rotating head which eliminates bowstring torque. The **Pro Caliper Jr.** also has a scaled-down padded strap to better fit smaller wrists.

The **Pro Release RollAid** features a unique roller-bearing caliper system that channels the release of the bowstring onto a

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Hunting Releases



**Stanislawski
SX2**



**T.R.U. Ball
Pro Diamond**



**Carter
Ember I**

straight path to eliminate string deflection and enhance accuracy. The clean release created by the roller bearing also reduces serving wear. This release is designed for bowhunters who prefer to shoot without a string-loop. The Pro Release RollAid can be purchased with a Velcro strap, a buckle strap or a handheld pistol grip.

HHA Sports is well known for top-notch archery sights, but they also offer excellent releases. The HHA Zero Gap line of releases all feature twin-caliper jaws, USA-made construction, tight tolerances and easy adjustments. HHA Zero Gap releases are available with a variety of straps, including a buckle strap, a nylon loop strap and a padded Velcro strap.

The Winn C-10 Free Flight continues to be Winn Archery's number one release because of its unique feel and performance. This glove-style release has an oversized trigger that makes finding and pulling the trigger in the moment of truth a piece of cake. What bowhunters appreciate most about the Free Flight is the glove-style wrist attachment strap. This unique strap provides a snug fit that won't wiggle around on the wrist, and it also helps support the draw weight of the bow as the bow is drawn. The trigger and the rockers are file-hardened steel, and the travel and trigger pull can be adjusted.

Carter Enterprises is best known

for making many of the world's finest tournament-type releases. Carter also offers exceptional releases for bowhunters, including the new **Carter Rx1** and **Rx2**. The Rx series was inspired by well-known bowhunter Randy Ulmer and champion target archer Michael Braden. These unique releases feature a magnetic hook return that automatically cocks the release with the squeeze of a finger. The open-hook design and unique self-cocking system make the new Carter Rx releases particularly fast and trouble-free to use with string-loops. The Rx series comes with an interchangeable tension system, so archers can be sure the trigger is as hot or stiff as they want it. Really unique is the **Carter Strapless**. The Strapless is an index-finger release with a sculpted T-handle. If you like the feel of a hand-held release but want the convenience of an index-finger release, you can have it with the Carter Strapless.

Thumb-Activated Releases

Now more than ever, thumb releases are finding their way into the woods. A growing number of release manufacturers are now designing thumb-activated releases specifically for hunters. Bowhunters who take the time to learn how to use a thumb release are often rewarded with enhanced accuracy. Yes, thumb-activated releases may be slower to load onto a bowstring or string-loop, but they can also be a god-send for someone who has engrained the tendency to punch the trigger of an index-finger release. By switching to a thumb release, the shooter may be able to get back to a slow and accurate squeeze and shot. Eager bowhunters are discovering that.

The **Scott Ibex Thumb Trigger** is an incredibly advanced thumb-activated release. The Ibex features a three-axis adjustable trigger. That means that you can adjust the position of the thumb trigger so that it's in the exact, perfect place for your particular hand. It can be adjusted forward, backward and up or down, as well as rotated 360 degrees. The Ibex also features a stainless-steel hook, a micro-adjusted fixed jaw and an ergonomically correct handle so the release fits snugly and securely in your hand.

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**T.R.U. Ball
Hot Tension**



**Stanislawski
Micro III Trio**



Tru-Fire hit a huge home run with the Tru-Fire 3D Hunter thumb-activated release. The handle on the 3D Hunter is CNC machined out of aircraft-grade aluminum and is 100-percent American made. My favorite features are the 360-degree rotating head, adjustable trigger travel and adjustable thumb bar trigger position. This amazing thumb-activated release is also priced to please.

Jim Fletcher's Jimi T thumb-activated release sports a three-finger handle and a crisp, adjustable thumb trigger. That trigger is micro-adjustable for pull and features zero trigger travel. Fletcher's exclusive over-center linkage system dishes out a super-smooth release every time, and the sleek look of the Jimi T is especially attractive.

Stanislawski offers a thumb-activated release called the SX2 that is as stylish as it is functional. The SX2 comes with a multi-positional thumb trigger that is adjustable for projection, tilt and thumb angle. The SX2 has extremely fast locking time, and the internal heat-treated 440 sear components are hardened to 62 Rockwell to create a super-crisp trigger that is also super strong. The SX2 can be micro-adjusted without changing springs or taking the release apart. The SX2 is available in a Trio and Quattro version in large and medium sizes.

Some of the best tournament archers in the world depend on T.R.U. Ball releases, and hunters can now get a thumb-activated release from T.R.U. Ball that looks, feels and acts like a tournament release but was designed specifically for bowhunting. The T.R.U. Ball Pro Diamond clips straight onto your string or string-loop, where it can hang until needed. That keeps your hands free for looking through binoculars or warm in your pockets. At the moment of truth, simply grab the release and draw your bow. The thumb trigger is adjustable for tension and position.

When it comes to thumb-activated releases that can be customized to better fit your hand, the Carter Ember 1 is hard to beat. The modular designed handle allows this release to be configured and shot as a two-finger, three-finger or four-finger thumb-activated release. That's versatility. The Ember 1 also has a stem that's a half-inch shorter than most other

hand-held thumb-trigger releases, making it ideal for string-loop use. The Ember 1 features an Interchangeable Tension System (I.T.S.) for quick and easy spring changes.

The Friday Night Delight by Spot-Hogg is a thumb-activated release designed especially for bowhunting. It features an open jaw to aid in fast and easy bowstring attachment, an adjustable hot trigger that

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Back-Tension Releases

With a back-tension release, the shot is activated by slowly increasing the amount of pull or rotation with your back. When a back-tension release is used properly, the archer won't know exactly when the arrow is going to go. The idea is that you focus entirely on aiming and the shot itself becomes something of a surprise. While that may sound strange to many bowhunters, it totally eliminates the tendency to anticipate the shot and punch the release. Back-tension releases have been winning tournaments for years and now are being picked up by a gradually growing number of accuracy-conscious bowhunters.

The **Longhorn Pro** from **Scott Archery** got a facelift for 2009. This popular back-tension release is made of durable polished brass, and now it has a slimmer and more ergonomically shaped handle and an

optional fourth finger attachment. It also has a new bracket stop for quick and easy loading. The Longhorn Pro also features an adjustable thumb peg and micro-adjust bracket, with a draw-optimizing stainless-steel hook and auto-locking band.

One of the smoothest and fastest back-tension releases available is the new **Carter Only**. Carter goes so far as to claim that this new release will be the only back-tension release you'll want to shoot. The Carter Only takes the simple principles of a hinged-style release and re-does them to create a silky-smooth rotating back-tension release. The head angle can be adjusted to control the firing speed. That's important for bowhunting. With the Carter Only, you can easily tune the release to fire within a prescribed window of tension and rotation. The Only also has a magnetic head-return so that it's very fast to reload to your string-loop. The new Only is available in two-, three- or four-finger models, and in either standard or mini size.

T.R.U. Ball also offers a superb back-tension release. It's called the **T.R.U. Ball Hot Tension** because the shot-activation tension is micro-adjustable, so that you can set the release to be as hot as you want. One of the most impressive features of the Hot Tension is the adjust dial which makes adjusting the tension effortless. The

Hot Tension also features a two-position thumb-rest handle design. A handy V-lock strap or lanyard can be easily added to this release. The T.R.U. Ball Hot Tension comes in two-, three- and four-finger models and in medium and large sizes.

The **Stanislawski Micro III** series of back-tension releases are for those who want to be able to fine-tune their release. The Micro III has a set screw that can be easily loosened. Once the set screw is loosened, simply slide a hex key into the hole to adjust the release. If you want a slower release, turn the screw clockwise. If you need more speed, turn it counterclockwise. The Micro III is available in four models: the Deuce, the Trio, the Quattro and the Smoothie.

Selling Today's Hunting Releases

Shot placement is everything when bowhunting, and a better release can help bowhunters to better place their shots. Most bowhunters still prefer an index-finger release, but more and more bowhunters are also now trying thumb-activated and back-tension releases. Study what's available, stock a reasonable selection of all three hunting-release styles and encourage your customers to try something new. They will thank you for it. 

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Solutions

by Greg Staggs

Profits and Friends • “I have never understood how an archery shop can become profitable when they spend so much time doing things that make them so little, if any, money,” my archery friend Jim Davis explained. A group of us listened intently as Jim expounded further on his line of thought.

“If you buy a gun in a gun shop, they hand you your gun, tell you there are no returns and out you go. If you want optics on it, then you better put them on yourself. You want to sight it in? Well, that will cost you an hour of range time. However, we all—and I say ‘we’ because I do this as well—expect the archery shop to spend 15 minutes to put the new \$5 peep sight we just purchased into our bowstring, get it turned and settled correctly and ensure that it’s at the right height for us before we walk out the door. The shops around me all do this for free. Wow!”

It was an interesting thought, although the more we verbally kicked the idea around, the more it turned from “wow!” to “why?” In our lifetimes, we’d all seen a lot of neighborhood archery shops disappear. Maybe that explained it. Too many archery shops weren’t profitable enough.

That initial conclusion made us wonder. Why try to run a business and not make money on service work? When any professional in any field that I know of performs a service for their clientele, they get paid handsomely, and yet archery customers are notorious for expecting work to be done for free or at best-friend charges.

We mused over the situation for a while before Jim spoke up again, expressing the real dilemma of the situation.

“You know,” he said, “it’s simply amazing that so many shops somehow get away with not charging for these services. Yet I must admit that I fully appreciate that no-charge service every time I go in there and use it. Largely because of that, I repay them with my return business. To be honest, that extra service is the reason I don’t buy broadheads, sights, releases and a whole lot of other stuff online. I buy it from my favorite, service-oriented pro shop instead. To put it in an odd way, it’s their seemingly bad business practice when it comes to service work that wins my business.”

Another friend, Greg Goodrich, took another tact. “I worry,” said Greg, “about having a place to go to in the future if my local archery shop doesn’t charge me for service work. When I walk into any business I expect to spend money if I want quality service. The bottom line for me is that I want my local archery shop to be there next week, next month and next year, and I’m willing to pay more now so that he can pay his bills and keep his doors open.”

Tim Wilson, manager of the archery department at Mega

Sports in Farmington, Missouri, said that they strive to find a happy medium between the two thought processes.

“Typically, we don’t charge to install items that were purchased in the store,” said Tim. “We’ve actually built a small, additional service margin into our merchandise prices to help accommodate the time and labor that might be involved. For example, the price of an installed D-loop is \$4, while the material for a D-loop runs just \$2.”

At Mega Sports, the main ingredient in a pleasant customer experience is consistency.

“It’s very easy to establish a bad precedent,” Tim warns. “Say Joe Customer comes in and needs some work done, and you don’t charge him for that work for whatever reason. Maybe he’s a friend of a friend. How can you then charge him for the same or similar work when he comes in the next time? You can’t. He’s going to be pretty upset.” Tim said the key to avoiding instances like that is to set expectations up front.

“Posting a clear schedule of fees for service work is a solution that’s worked well for us. Detailing the price for routine service tasks, like installing peeps or tying on a D-loop, are clearly outlined for all customers to see.”

“I like that idea,” said Greg. “No surprises that way. Everyone knows up front what things are going to cost.”

Bruce Lanthier felt the same way. “When you take your car to the auto shop, they have a schedule of fees and charge you for everything they do. When you take your computer to the computer shop, that same thing happens. Ditto the TV repair place. I could go on, but you get the idea.

“Now,” Bruce continued, “if you are a loyal repeat customer, you may occasionally get a break on a particular service at any of those places. That’s just good business for those establishments. But I don’t expect them to just give away their services all the time. I do expect, however, that if I pay for it, it’s done well and fast.”

The conversation started dying off when Matt Miller summed up with one final thought what most of us were feeling.

“No one is getting filthy rich owning an archery shop. In the end, it’s probably important that customers somehow understand that they’re investing in the future solvency of the business by paying reasonable services fees. Unfortunately, too many bow shops seem to have trained their customers to expect free service work all the time. Nowhere else do I see this. You can’t buy brakes for your car and expect those brakes to be installed free. Archery shops need to charge for their services so that they can stay in business. I want them around, and I’m willing to pay fair rates to make that happen.”

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