



New Zealand's Latest Sport

DRAWING THE LONG OR SHORT BOW:

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An unusual close-up of Russ Hoogerhyde, five times national champion archer of America. Note how he sights down the arrow as if with a rifle



HAVE you ever drawn the long bow — or for that matter, the shorter American flat bow? If you have, you have been one of a fairly numerous company, for archery is New Zealand's latest sport, and it is growing rapidly in popularity. From Dunedin, where there is now a flourishing body of bow-men and bow-women with their own butts and club-house in one of the city's reserves, the sport has been spreading northward in the past year or so. There is a club in Christchurch; in Hokitika a nucleus of enthusiasts among the staff at the hospital has attracted many adherents from the townsfolk; in Wellington people carrying bows and arrows have begun to appear on the streets and a new club is rapidly gaining membership; there is, or there was, a club among Air Force men in Auckland, and a club is being formed at a Dunedin camp. And probably in many other places not mentioned the twang of the bow-string may now be heard.

Nor is it likely that New Zealand's interest in this antique pastime is just a local craze, something that will boom and bust as rapidly as yo-yo or miniature golf. Not, that is, if the experience of other countries is any guide, for the revival of archery overseas during the past decade is one of the most interesting and incontrovertible facts of the modern sporting world. Those who prophesied that its rapid growth in the United States was just another example of the American passion for novelty have long since had to keep silent before the accumulating evidence of clubs springing up (and staying up) in every state, national archery championships with hundreds of contestants, archery golf clubs, archery groups in nearly all

colleges and schools, official approval by leading physical educationists, and such a growth of big-game hunting with the bow and arrow that one American state after another has had to set aside special game preserves for archers—areas into which the man with the gun is forbidden to penetrate.

The Maoris Had No Bows

In New Zealand archery is also, of course, a revival. It is our latest sport, not our newest. For, although the Maoris were one of the very few races on the earth who never discovered the use of the bow, the fact that, to this day, one of the best-known spots in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens is known as the Archery Lawn is a reminder that the sport was brought to this country in the baggage of the pioneers. And paradoxically, though it was largely the invention of gunpowder that put the bowman into the discard as a fighting man, it is the present shortage of gunpowder for sporting purposes that has done a good deal to encourage the renaissance of his ancient weapon. Members of rifle clubs whose activities have been curtailed by the war are finding that it takes just as straight an eye to put an arrow in the gold at 100 yards as it does to hit the bull at 50 with a rifle. In fact, it takes a lot more than a straight eye; it takes some physical strength and a nice calculation of air currents, as well as a good deal of walking to and from the target. And even in New Zealand more and more huntsmen are finding that the satisfaction of bringing down a deer or a pig with a .303 is more than equalled by that of stalking him and putting a hunting arrow into a part that counts. Or take the lowly rabbit: he's a pretty small target at 30 yards, and there's a lot of skill as well as a lot of sport in potting him with a feathered

shaft, even if he is a sitting shot. And since an arrow is silent, if you do miss one bunny you can move on with the pretty fair certainty of finding another one nibbling undisturbed just over the next rise.

Romantic Boloney

It is fitting that archery in its revival in New Zealand, Australia, America, and England should be associated to some extent with the revival of another almost equally ancient sport—that of sword-play. In Christchurch and Wellington, to name only two places, the new archery clubs have been fostered by the already-established fencing clubs.

Apart from the sword and the fencing foil, the bow has probably had more romantic boloney written about it than any other instrument in the history of sport and war. Anybody who ventures into the open these days with a bow in his hand and a quiver on his shoulder must face the certainty of being addressed by the idle mob as "Robin Hood," or "Deerfoot," or "William Tell." But all the authorities agree that the merry men of Sherwood Forest and the American Indians would have hung their heads in shame when confronted by the achievements of many present-day archers. And as for William Tell, he used a mechanical contrivance called a cross-bow which put him right outside the sporting pale.

Pictures in the Paper

Many of the public's romantic misconceptions about archery—and particularly the belief that it is a gentle, la-di-da pastime—are probably gained from all those pretty pictures in the rotogravure sections of overseas magazines showing co-eds and Hollywood cuties who are more concerned to display their figures than their prowess with the bow. Archery is a sport for women—one of the few in which they can compete on almost equal terms with men—but a truer impression of its possibilities would be gained from pictures of such an archer as Stewart Edward White, who put an arrow clean through a charging African lion (and killed it), and of others who have successfully hunted the grizzly bear and the terrible African water-buffalo with bows and arrows; or from the statistical facts that in an ordinary York Round of target shooting, you would, with a bow of 50-pound weight (weight: pounds required to draw a 28-inch arrow to the head), be lifting the equivalent of more than three tons, and would walk to and from the target a total distance of nearly three miles!

In the York Round, the archer fires 72 arrows at 100 yards, 48 arrows at 80 yards, and 24 arrows at 60 yards. As long ago as 1848 a bowman named Horace A. Ford shattered the Robin Hood myth by scoring 137 hits on the four-foot target out of his 144 arrows.

Most people think of archery only in terms of target shooting, and indeed that is its most popular form, and one which can be practised either on indoor or outdoor ranges. But, in addition, there is roving and snap-shooting, clout shoot-

ing (firing into the air on to a target flat on the ground), flight-shooting for distance, archery golf, and, of course, hunting.

Archery Golf

The game of archery golf has developed greatly in America in the past 10 years or so, and in some States there are special archery golf clubs with their own courses but some elements of the game (particularly the roving element) date back long before the beginning of golf. In Wales and England it was once required of all soldiers as a part of their military training that they should spend several hours each day at the roving course (generally two or three miles in length), walking along shooting at targets at unknown distances.

Under modern conditions a game between an archer and a golfer is usually a pretty even contest. They start from the tee together, the archer firing his second shaft from where the first lands, and counting the number of shots it takes him to land an arrow in the cup in the same way as the golfer counts his strokes. A good flight arrow

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With My Bow And Arrow

(By WHIM-WHAM)

"The popularity of archery as a sport is increasing. . . . Caretakers have had to warn off youths practising this pastime in council parks. . . . The present by-laws forbid such a practice, the by-laws reading as follows: 'No person shall take, carry, or use . . . bows and arrows, or catapults, or shanghais, within the limits of a park, except with the permission of the council.'"—Christchurch City Council report."

NO Bows shall be permitted,
No Arrows, in the Park.
Why, Someone might get spitted,
Supposing some half-witted
Toxophilite let fly
And smote a Passer-by
For Want of better Mark!

YES, Archery, not warlike
As once it was of Old,
Now subject to the Law like
A Game of Chance, is more like
A Public Nuisance than
A Pastime for a Man,
And has to be controlled!

THE cruel "A" who shot at
A Frog (so People say),
And Tell, who took a pot at
An Apple, would be not at
All respected now.
We really can't allow
Such Practices To-day!

BUT here's a Proposition—
I've thought it out Myself—
The Home Guard might petition
Some Person for Permission
To take and use the Bow
Against a Foreign Foe—
Not leave it on the Shelf!