

Shooting Calendar

The Archery Club Diaries

This is the third in a series of articles about setting up and operating an archery club – primarily focused on target clubs, but many principles are suitable for field clubs. Far from instructing how clubs should be set up, I am writing these as an aid for those who are setting up a new club, or eager to identify ways that their clubs can improve the services delivered to their members. The end goal is to attract and retain more members, and build a strong grass-roots structure.

This article's focus is on setting up a shooting calendar. By all sounds, not the juiciest of topics, but I can assure you that having a shooting calendar is gold. It is your one-way communication highway when it comes to organising a club! It shouldn't be standalone, but if you have to choose just one method of communication with your members, let this be it.

Shooting Times

First, you need to work out what times you've got available for your club members to come together and compete or practice. Most clubs will have the structured shoots on weekends, with weekdays being available to for members to practice. However, bear in mind that some members may be keen for some mid-week competition – I can only recommend that you canvas your members and find out what they want. The busier your club gets, the more shooting times you will need to plan for.

With shooting calendars, the range of personal preference dictates that you will never please everyone. But proper consultation will ensure that you can do the best job possible.

Juniors

The JAMA programme has long been the stalwart of junior competition nationwide, with many clubs opting to run a weekly JAMA session (with the best score of the month submitted).

Remember, however, that there are other options, and it doesn't hurt to mix it up a bit. There is the Archery in Schools postal shoot which is gathering momentum, and run once per term. Also, you may choose to run fun shoots for the juniors (or maybe the seniors too, we all like to shoot balloons, don't we?)

My key problem was trying to get juniors involved in more than just JAMA – to get them progressing into club shoots as well. We have done this more recently by running achievement programme shooting in place of a club shoot once a month, which gets seniors and juniors shooting together. Mainly, though, it comes down to club members taking ownership and encouraging the juniors to shoot the club shoots as well. If you have two club shoots a week, I recommend having one of them regularly at a shorter distance to make it more accessible for juniors – no more than 30m.

Types of Shoots

The hardest part may be not knowing where to start! I have dozens and dozens of types of shoots in our database, from NZ, Australia, UK, America and FITA. However, in recent years, I've whittled it down to some of the more common ones that are shot worldwide, and also the ones most useful for our club members. On our club day, Sunday, we often run one of the following:

- Full FITA Rounds
- 50m or 70m FITA (FITA 720)
- Short FITA
- FITA 900
- Canadian 900 (also used as the League round)
- Canadian 1200
- Burton
- Matchplay

For our Saturday club shoots, which are made to be more accessible for our novices and juniors, we use a variety of shoots around 30m (some existing, some made up) that are short enough for our newer members to reach, but challenging enough to maintain the interest of the more experienced members. If you're after my database of rounds, I'm more than happy to share it with you – email me on andrew@russellnz.net

Tournaments

I'll cover off the types of tournaments you can run in the next article, but not only should you plan your own tournaments into your shooting calendar, but also make allowances for other tournaments around the region. If there's a major tournament in the next town across you know most of your competitive archers will be at, don't schedule in a full FITA round!

Remember!

Make sure you include times for working bees on your calendars, and also schedule in club events such as social gatherings – perhaps a fun Christmas shoot or a club championships.

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