

Tournament Setup

Tournaments can be useful value-adding additions for a club. They help to engage members, to give them something to look forward to and aspire towards. For some members, it will assist them in gaining qualifying scores for national representation as well.

Sure, some of your members won't want to shoot tournaments, and that's absolutely fine. Catering for all of your members, however, includes providing opportunities for those members with a competitive streak, or who enjoy the social nature of catching up with other archers from around the country.

For some clubs, it can also be source of income. While I don't advocate going as far as pricing to maximise profit, I believe that clubs are right to aim for a small profit from organising shoots - these funds can be directed back into developing tournament or club infrastructure.

Types of tournaments

While I'm going to focus on running major registered competitions in this article, it's important to remember that there are a range of tournaments that can be run. At our club, we currently run the following, among others:

- 2-3 major tournaments per year
- Club championships (target, field, clout)
- Opening Day
- ANZ League (interclub) and JAMA shoots
- Ryan and Fraser Shield, Royle Hutton Memorial shoots (postals)
- Junior Team Tournament
- Auckland Inter-School Champs
- Fun shoots

For those clubs that haven't had a lot of experience with running some of the larger tournaments, I'd recommend giving it some thought. It's healthy to share the event around rather than having the same folks do it all the time and burn out. If a small club like Whitianga can run the Nationals, so can you! Some suggestions of events your club might like to consider are:

- Outdoor Nationals
- Indoor Nationals
- North/South Island Champs
- Junior Trans-Tasman (every 4 years in NZ)
- Regional inter-school shoots
- Tournament Planning

First off, you need to elect an organising committee well in advance (preferably 12 months minimum). Get the right mix of experience, enthusiasm and time to make it work! Among the committee, decide your roles, and have a planning session for how you intend to roll out the tournament. Before the tournament, key things to organise are to:

- Register the shoot, finding a date that doesn't clash with other major tournaments
- Organise a Director of Shooting, and find available judges
- Distribute an entry form early (9 months prior at the latest if you want people to plan well for travelling)

- Determine what infrastructure you need, such as shade for the archers – do you need to contact ANZ to borrow the timing lights?
- Order target faces, score sheets and medals
- Secure volunteers to assist with range set up, administration and support
- Contact past trophy winners to return their trophies
- Contact media to arrange coverage of the event

I can't stress enough how important it is to advertise the tournament early. It pains me to see clubs who only advertise 2-3 weeks before a tournament, and are disappointed with poor turn-out. People are getting busier and busier these days, give them notice to book something into their calendars!

On the day

Repeat customers are the measure of how successful a tournament is. If you want archers to return to a tournament, put effort into catering for them, and approach the challenges with a proactive attitude. During the day, some things to focus on are to:

- Ensure the range is set up safety and parts cordoned off if need be
- Prepare ample blank butt warm up targets for archers
- Keep a metal detector on hand for finding arrows
- Arrange scoreboards before the shoot so that there isn't a last-minute panic
- Put up a target draw early before everyone arrives
- Spare a thought for where spectators can watch from, put out seats
- Update results regularly – it is a competition after all, so the athletes should know where they stand!
- Make the shoot memorable with a fun shoot while results are being sorted or afternoon tea before the medal presentation
- And of course, remember to thank your volunteers!

After the Tournament

I'm going to go out on a limb here, and say that in this day and age, there is no excuse for not publishing results next to immediately. At the latest, the day after the tournament, but people want to see results, and it's good to have them submitted in a timely fashion.

It's good to send results through to local/national newspapers to raise the profile of the sport.

I'd recommend that the organising committee gets together after a shoot to review what went well and what could be improved on when it's still fresh. This will help you build on the event in future years.

Good luck with the tournament organising! If you want to ask any questions or need some advice on tournament organisation, please don't hesitate to drop me an email, andrew@russellnz.net.

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