



Yorkshire Archery
Association



Coaches Forum - 30-3-24. Arrowhawks, York.

Attendance:

Kath Fitzpatrick, Arrowhawks	Helen & Bryan Woodcock, Pennine Archers
Jean Clarkson, Arrowhawks	Sheila Taylor, St Georges
Joe Brown, Arrowhawks	Paul Heaps, Scorton Archers
Thomas Keane, Thirsk Bowmen	Alistair Newman, Scorton Archers
Linton Austen, Thirsk Bowmen	Ian Burns, Ebor Archers
Ed McGee, ABBA	Ian Foster, DeLacy
Dave Shaw, York Archers	Gwen Smith, Barnsley Archery Club
Wayne Horner, Aire Valley	

Apologies

Danny Cameron, Thirsk Bowmen
Roger Smart, Thirsk Bowmen
Deborah Whitehead, Harvester Archers
Allan Warren, Harvester Archers
Karen Dales, Targeting Archery

1. Minutes: matters arising
 - a. Kath fed back that Rob Francis had left Archery GB 3 months ago.
 - b. Blain Nicholson, Archer / L1 coach / S&C coach for NTDP North has offered to run a half day session on fitness for archers / coaches and how to train effectively at Haxby in the summer. Date TBA.
 - c. Access to L1 courses: Kath has set up a face-to-face Session Coach course at Haxby, York starting 6th April – 2 places left.
2. Coaching an archer in a wheelchair – guidance sought by Ed from ABBA.
 - a. Ed started coaching a wheelchair archer who is having difficulties – his equipment that was provided at the shop he went to is not appropriate the bow being too short. He has visited wheelchair archers at Thirsk.
 - b. Jean and Sheila both have experience and offered some guidance, in particular making sure the bow was correct for his draw length.
 - c. Kath outlined AGB support via Learning Curve / Edutrain, workshops and occasional F2Face courses.
 - d. Sheila reported also having difficulty getting information about visually impaired archers.
 - e. *Note – this sounds like a good workshop opportunity for YAA if suitable experts can be secured. Also if we could get archers with lived experience this could help coaches understand how to work with them more effectively.*
 - f. Sheila also brought up difficulties with dealing with behavioural issues. While coaching at the Army apprentice college with Army recruits, she has been noticing an increase in really bad behaviour, mental health issues, ADHD and potentially undiagnosed Autism. Paul (ex-military) explained the military often do their own courses with unqualified staff and the emphasis is on



discipline. If working with the military, it is essential to know/understand what their expectations and standards are as anything less could be interpreted as a weakness. Kath suggested that clear expectations need to be established about where the behavioural lines are drawn with consequences for infringement that you can stick to, supported by the military staff, with clear reintroduction criteria.

3. Workshops.

- a. Ian Foster/Dave Shaw wished to offer a stabilisation workshop (both are from a Physics background) This would include some theory, practical application with basics such as grip shape modification and impact on the bow, how stabilisation works and transferring from theory to practice in a practical session.
- b. Ian also offered a workshop looking at statistical analysis of scores, then examining datasets for points of change and what may have caused those points of change. How much is natural variation and how that changes according to the level of capability of the archer. Once this level is set its then about looking at scores that sit outside the range that need to be examined more closely.
- c. Kath outlined two workshops she has been piloting recently in NCAS (Cheshire) to refine them.
 - i. The first is “Coaching the novice archer” which covers some basic knowledge about skills acquisition, how this impacts on training and development for novices, Getting the basics right - fundamental skills, Motivation schemes - e.g. 252 awards, Progress awards, coaching methods that can be used to help novices progress (As well as those not yet appropriate) This is a half day mixed theory/group work and practical session.
 - ii. The second follows on, or is stand alone, and is “Coaching the Developing Archer” – moving from club participation to competition archer. This includes further understanding of skill acquisition at this stage, moving through the stages of skill progression – from learning fundamentals to refining skills, learn to train, train to improve then train to compete and has elements for both coach and archer to understand their role. Again it’s a 3–4-hour session with practical session exploring some coaching methods and skill areas focusing on assisting the archer in progressing along a performance-oriented path.
 - iii. A third is in preparation on “Coaching the Advanced competitive Archer”.
- d. There were concerns expressed about the cost of learning, however it was discussed that this doesn’t always need to be by working towards a qualification as these can’t cover everything that coaches need to know or be able to do. Reliance on self-learning was mentioned however several people expressed concerns or caveats that you can’t always trust something on the Internet – even some Olympic archers don’t fully understand some things



- that coaches know and do. Coaches need to confidence and guidance to allow them to explore and experiment and learn what works.
- e. Dave suggested there needs to be a pro forma to make it easier to book venues, dates, specifying level of coach/archer a workshop is aimed at /appropriate for; booking online was seen as a way forwards to manage this too.
 - f. Gwen suggested a workshop on tuning – Dave thought it would need to be separate from the stabilisation one but could be difficult to set up. Compound bow set up and tuning by someone with considerable expertise as this needs more breadth and depth for a varied audience. Kath suggested Tony Drabble from CBA, possibly Andy Arnold or Craig Hobin, who had both worked with GB Compound squad.
 - g. Paul suggested that a small amount on tuning is better than none. An archer wants less breadth, more depth for their own set up, a coach needs more breadth to be able to help a wider range of archers. Kath mentioned the difference between a coach and bow technician and the difference between diagnosis and cure. Dave suggested that archers need to understand that their bow needs tuning whereas coaches need to understand how wo tune different bows- hence the focus needs to be different for each type of audience.
 - h. Jean brought up issues of engagement with these sessions – perhaps small number at each session but lots of different people overall; there could be clashes with dates or difficulties with geography so workshops might need to be at different locations and possible repeated a couple of times in a given year. Kath reiterated that we need to get back to face to face delivery of CPD as so much had gone online since Covid. Wayne also expressed the need to have a programme with a series of dates in different locations for the workshops.
 - i. Paul asked if minutes of these meetings could go onto the website so that people who can't attend can find the information. Kath pointed to the YAA Coaching website (which few knew about) as this could be used as a coaching resource website (for which it was originally intended) rather than have people trawl the main one. Gwen pointed out that there is a sub-group of YAA committee looking at the website for a possible complete restructuring.
4. Kath brought up an issue that seems to be missing from current coach development - a basic understanding of biomechanics in relation to the shot process and coaching at different ages. Bryan said he had been doing some research into coaching "Special populations" such as children, the elderly, disabled/long term illnesses and that there was a particular book he could recommend on working with older athletes – lifestyle considerations from sedentary to active. Post-Covid there has been a higher entry at retirement age and strength varied greatly. Jean suggested its not just strength but joint health and muscle mass as well as flexibility. Joe suggested that we need a scheme for older people like the WA Junior awards. The big issue is the balance between social and performance basis. There are also lots of people coming back into archery who had previous experience and both Joe and Bryan agreed that



it's hard to get over to people that the sport and equipment have changed, training methods have trained and it's difficult to manage expectations – there will be backward steps before moving forwards. Jean asked that with the prevalence of instant gratification among younger participants were people finding that they became more easily demotivated if progress or success wasn't coming quickly? Lots of general agreement that this could be an issue. There clearly seems to be a need for something in this area but it needs careful structuring with people with professional expertise as well as coaches with experience in different age groups contributing. It was suggested that Bryan could lead in developing this as he has been studying the area. Bryan to send titles of two books he recommends on this subject.

5. Format for workshops: Half day or 10-4. Need to factor in geography. In summary we need to establish
 - a. A programme of workshops
 - b. A pro forma to describe each and say who will lead and the context.
 - c. Level of coach /archer appropriate for
 - d. Whether it is a "sound bit" or "deep dive"

This does need to be coordinated and it would be best put together and published as a programme rather than a series of one-offs. In that way suitable venues could be secured and ensured that they were accessible to the attendees. -so for example Chris Noble had offered the South Leeds Archers indoor as a venue but access is via two steep sets of stairs which would be impossible for anyone with serious mobility issues or wheelchair to get up. AT the moment there is no lift. This needs to be detailed for each venue used as standard so that people know which sessions they can access- hence the need for workshops to be repeated to widen access.

6. Kath briefly brought up the issue of verbal safety commands for control of shooting – the use of "safe to shoot" and "safe to collect" have crept into use; this was discussed by the group rewriting the Instructor Award resource manual and deemed not safe – as both phrases start with the same words there could be confusion. The recommendation n was to use only one-word commands – shoot, collect, fast/stop can all be clearly differentiated.
7. Kath mentioned the next British Transplant Games would be in Nottingham with the archery event on 1st August. Volunteer coaches are needed (around 25 in total) and loan of lightweight bows/arrows/bracers for the day. Any volunteers to contact Kath as Sport Manager for Archery.
8. Next Forum – Thirsk Bowmen will host in July/August 2024.