



DIY

Well hello again and welcome to the next brilliant load of old twaddle. I'm sorry you're unable to ring in and complain about it, but it was first prize in the prize draw we recently had and there's only one complaint allowed for the winner. So there!

(Does re-enactment salute and blows raspberry).

If you're interested, second prize was a years supply of used toothbrushes. From the Old and Wisdom toothbrush company.

Third prize was a once and once only, free trial in a genuine electric chair. That made somebody's eyes light up I can tell you.

So what have I been up to lately? Well recently I spent lunchtime in the newly refurbished watering hole renamed, (Wait for it!)

"Ye Olde Whistling Oat Stuffer." I was told it was named in honour of an old departed local man. A happy soul who baked a special type of oatcakes, which were hollowed, out and stuffed in a unique way. Fortunately for us Heath and Safety banned them when they found something a bit unsavoury in the mixture.

The spit had been towed away and sold for scrap. In its place the Landlord had employed a semi retired chef. A Monsieur Luigi von Ramsbottom. A former part time U-Boat mechanic, who trained as a dishwasher in Ethel Albrights Franco/Italian cookery school in Hull.

His Father was a stationary engine driver by profession. His Mother wrapped lettuce and anything that stood still in cling film for the supermarkets.

Gave up U-Boating when attacked and sunk by the Faroe Islands Navy in 1998, was rescued, changed his name and went back to cooking. Bankrupted when his restaurant "The Barf Bag" went under due to a rubbish name and undercooked Botulism.

Well anyhow, I sat down with a cup of coffee and a Kit Kat, the only thing edible from what I could see of it, picked up an old copy of O.K. Arching and started reading The Letters Page.

One letter in particular caught my eye, it read: Dear Auntie Wanda I think I'm going blind through excessive.....! No, that's not it! Ah here we are.

How and when can I start shooting tournaments? Hmmm time to investigate. I think I'll have a word with our research librarian Ava Stoogie at BCoA HQ.



The next day I made my way down to the field and sauntered into the library. You know where it is don't you? Yes of course you do. That's it! You big clever smarty pants you.

Anyway there was this large pile of books on the floor, from which a little face with owl like specs peered out from the middle. She had been stacking the bookshelves and an overloaded shelf came away from the wall, creating a toppling domino effect. Swearing worse than a certain chef we know, she handed me some books on the subject. Unfortunately some had got muddled up in the avalanche.

I had: "Ow to Shroot Wress Clap" by Harold Carrie. Some far eastern coaching manual. English translation by Wey-Wey Wong.

"Sport for All, Fun for the Few" by Archery GB.

"Compound Maintenance" by D. Cameron.

"Blind Bosswork" By Jimmy Wonder. With a feature on aiming techniques for guide dogs.

And finally I found the book I was looking for: "The Old and Wizeded D.I.Y book of tournaments" by A Sage. Professor of Oldness.

Wow! Well I settled down to read. In the book it describes how to have your very own tournament in your back garden.

First of all you need a circular table, paint or stick a paper face target on it. Then nail the table onto a high wooden fence. Block walls are no good, as they tend to destroy all of your arrows after the first end.

If you must insist on having tent and waiting lines, as well as a shooting line.

Make sure you're garden is big enough. Because having too small a garden would mean having to drill a hole in your fence in order to fit your longrod. Also it would mean creating new shooting rounds such as: The amazingly short York. The 2 metres FITA. Bristol's 12,13,14,etc.

Alternatively, for more space you could just have the shooting line and do away with the other two.

But how to do the line? Well it's quite simple, all you have to do is find the nearest field and dig up a section of grass big enough to stand on. Next dig up the same size section of your lawn and put to one side. Next put the field grass in its place. Trim it down a bit and after measuring paint a line across the middle. This is all highly unnecessary, but it does give it that archery field feel. Don't forget to put it all back again when you've finished.



Next requirement is a judge. Well you could use a blow up doll, trouble is, so I'm told, the stoppers tend to come loose. You know there's nothing more embarrassing than hearing a judge slowly deflating during assembly. So I suggest using a neighbour who has some experience with whistle blowing. Don't forget to explain the fast rule, then there can be no complaints when their treasured pet moggy strays onto the range, gets shot at, and leaves poste haste with a look on its face like someone having a prostate exam with a pointy stick.

Finally I suggest making your nearest and dearest Lady Paramount. As a thank you for slaving away all day making a bacon buttie and a mug of tea in the two man camping tent. Don't forget the flowers for her and a bottle of plonk for the judge. That might stop them thinking of you as several sandwiches short of a full picnic.

Alternatively you can always do the real thing. But When? Ladies and Gentlemen, we have reached the point of no return known as: (Fanfare) The Sensible Bit. (Screams of people running away, jumping off buildings, desperately trying to log on to the Samaritans). I'm sorry, I tried but I get told off if I don't. There has to be a point to all this. So, as they say if you don't want to know the result look away now. No peeking! Or listening.

I've given it some thought. Depending on good coaching, the right equipment, reaching that all important distance to start shooting rounds, practice, ability and enthusiasm. I reckon it takes about a year to attain a reasonable standard that will enable a new archer to take part in outdoor tournaments that include shorter rounds, eg Westerns, Nationals, Windsors etc. And maybe half that time for indoor shoots. OK, you're score might, or might not be all that brilliant it doesn't matter. But they will be much better than if you started too early, shot badly and lost heart. It's the experience and encouragement that counts. You will get better honest.

Good shooting
Nigel.