

Flight Path



No 8, April 2014

Editors comment:

Welcome to edition 8 of Flight Path. Welcome too to Cumbria, who are planning to hold their first flight shoot. Anyone interested, please see the details below.

I am not adverse to taking criticism if it is deserved, it can only serve to make things better for all, and last year I missed the deadline for someone's record claim. For that I am sorry, and to make sure it does not happen again, I have drafted up a certificate of achievement. In future, if you feel you have shot a new county or regional record and need to make a claim, please let me know **ON THE DAY**. I will fill out a certificate with the details of class/weight/distance so that this may be given in support of any claim made to your relevant county or regional officers.

Winter is never a quiet time for me, but this year has been busier than most. As well as organising the Summer shoots, I have had a long, hard look at the current classification scheme to try and make it fairer (see later), and following a disastrous year distance-wise have spent some time researching what went wrong and making new equipment ready for July, so my apologies if this issue seems a little thin. As always, I welcome your comments/articles etc.

Let battle commence.

Dates for your Diary: 2014

1st Cumbrian Flight Champs: Sunday July 27th
Frenchfield Playing Field
Penrith
Cumbria

Contact Chris Battersby
Aysgarth
Eamontbridge
Penrith
Cumbria

West Midlands Flight Champs: Sunday 10 August (provisional)
Parachute Centre
Tremblows Stud Farm
Whitchurch
Shropshire
SY13 2EZ

Contact Mike Willrich
5, Broughton Close
Fillington
Stafford
ST16 1QS

National Flight Champs: August 23th
Elvington Airfield
Elvington
Nr York
World Record Status

Contact A.Bakes
332, James Reckitt Ave
HULL
Yorkshire
HU8 8LJ
01482 375033
tbakes@tbakes.karoo.co.uk

NCAS Flight Champs August 31st
Elvington Airfield
Elvington
Nr York
World Record Status

See National Flight Championships for details for contact details.

NCAS/National Flight Championships: If anyone is planning to attend, is arriving in York by public transport, and requires transport back to York train or bus Station, please let me know your departure times from the station and I will try to arrange a taxi for after the event(s).

From the Archives: Classifications:

Arguably the father of Flight Archery in the UK was one Jack Flinton. He was a prolific maker of flight bows from the late 1940's and was the National record holder for many years. Here, taken from "The British Archer", October/November 1953 is his vision for flight:

Flight Shooting Society By "Jack"

Now that Flight Shooting is becoming very popular it is about time it is about time to consider forming a society, and I suggest calling it "The British Flight Shooting Society". We have had seven National Flight Championships and it is surely time we got really organised to further the interests of flight. A nominal subscription of 2/6d (12 ½ p in today's money (ed)), for postage, a rubber stamp, badge dies etc., would not hurt anybody. With that doyen of flight archery, Ingo Simon as our President, and K Ryall Webb, the popular Flight Field Captain, as our Secretary-Treasurer, we could get a good start.

For a badge, a flight bow at full draw, with a winged arrow against a blue sky background, seems appropriate. The arrow

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should be shown at an angle of 45 degrees, and then no lettering would be necessary.

With regard to Flight Classification, I suggest the following:

Men –

Master Flight Archer	400 yards
1 st Class Flight Archer	350 yards
2 nd Class Flight Archer	300 yards
3 rd Class Flight Archer	250 yards

Women –

50 yards less for each classification.

Further, we could have the equivalent of the "Six Gold Badge". At ANY meeting held under GNAS rules, whether National, Area or Club Flight Shoot, any archer certified to have shot a quarter mile (an Eagle Flight?) would receive from each archer a shilling, when the field captain called for "Eagle Fodder". This would pay for the "Eagle Wings" badge from the society (of which the archer must be a member) and he will then be considered one of the "Eagle's Brood". If that archer has already gained his "wings", the field captain will give the distance, but announce "The Eagle has already fed" and no collection will be made. The Eagle Wings Badge would have outstretched wings, joined to the shaftment of a flight arrow, with or without "1/4" in the centre (see drawing)



Taken from "The British Archer", October/November 1953, which leads me into a review of classifications.

The classification system was proposed in 1953 (see above). As it stands now, current classification distances are:

Gents –

Grand Master Flight	550 yards
Master Flight	440 yards
1 st class Flight	375 yards

Ladies – 100 yards less, and no classifications for juniors

These distances are regardless of bow-type.

I have not been able to find out when these distances were adopted, but I have been shooting flight now since 1976 and they have remained the same since then, nearly 40 years. In that time, flight has become more and more popular, equipment has developed beyond all recognition (we didn't have compounds shooting in 1976, carbon arrows where the domain of the recurve flight bows alone, strings were Dacron, Kevlar at best). Once the realm of dreams, more and more recurves and compounds are attaining the classification distances, yet other groups such as longbows barely able to reach 300 yards. Are the current classification distances "fit for purpose"?

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Over the past year, I have reviewed all the distances shot at the three main championships in the UK over the past 7 years – the National Flight Champs, the Northern Counties Champs and the West Midlands Champs, in terms of bow type/weight, gender and age. With the help of Mike Willrich, we have drawn up a proposed set of classifications based on this review. Not a straightforward task, we did not want to set the bar so high that no-one stood any chance of making the grade, but didn't want to make it too easy either. These would be reviewed every two – three years to ensure that they are still fit for purpose. The proposed distances are tabled on page 4 – how you would measure up?

A set of classification badges to accompany the new scheme (based on the popular "Tassel" Award Badges, but incorporating Jack Flinton's badge design) have been designed. I welcome any comments on this (or any other topic), good or bad.

Focus on Arrow points:

After every shoot, I like to do a post-mortem to see what went well or not so well. I had a disastrous year, distances were well down. Why? Over the years, my arrow points have suffered quite a lot of hammer, and were starting to look quite battered so I decided to change them. Having not much time, I decided to use in the main 32 grain Easton ACE Bullet points with minimal work on all my target arrows, both carbon and longbow. I believe this is the problem, and trawling through the internet, a couple of papers gave me evidence to back that up.

The arrow can be thought of as 4 separate parts, the pile, the shaft, the fletchings and the nock. The points can have a diameter ranging from the same diameter and the shaft, to considerably larger (bulge piles), and herein lies the problem. It has been shown that for bulge-points, where there is a reduction in diameter of the point from it's widest part down to where it meets the shaft, the sharper the decrease in diameter prior to their join with the shaft the more there is turbulent airflow (hence increased drag) along the full length of the shaft, with greatly reduced down-range speed and so loss of distance.



If points that are the same diameter as the shaft are used, there is much less turbulence, drag is reduced and the down-range speed is improved.



My shafts are 4.6mm diameter, but the Easton ACE bulge points were up to 7mm diameter. I rest my case.

Any one up for....

The World Archery (FITA) flight rules as we know them were finalised in the late 90's, and the first World Record status flight shoot was held in the Mohave Desert in 1999. Now, 15 years on and we have world record status events in America and the UK. Flight is shot by archers all over the world. FITA state that a world championships may be held every two years,

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yet we have never had a true world championships. I am fortunate to have been invited to join a facebook page on Flight, and recently floated the idea of holding a formal World Championship Flight Tournament, and have received positive feedback from other members of the group. Given the scope of organisation (more than one can cope with), I would suggest looking at maybe 2016 or 2017.

Not sure how suitable Elvington would be yet, but they certainly have the length to cope with everything recognized by World Archery, and with York close by could offer easy accommodation. Bonneville in America could certainly cope, and at an altitude of a little over 4000 ft could give some really great distances.

Whatever venue is proposed, I think it would call for more than a one day shoot. Off the cuff, a possible format could be:

Day one: Free practice, registration, opening ceremony
Day two: FITA classes (adult?)
Day three: FITA classes (Junior?)
Day four: Non-FITA classes (egg Primitive, Broadhead)
Day five: Closing ceremony/prize giving.

Any ideas folks?