



“My best guess is hypothermia but go and get the brandy anyway. Might as well have a Christmas drink while we try the electric shock gizmo on him!”



“Close surveillance now lads. He’s got previous for breaking and entering. His modus operandi is gaining access via the chimney!”



BOURNE
55

BOURNE 55 NEWSLETTER

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MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL



Amazing revelation explodes long held belief about Santa’s reindeer. Exclusive to Bourne 55 Newsletter. A Christmas scoop that will both shock you and shatter your cosy image of the festive season!

CLUB NEWS

First of all, I'd like to apologise to all of you for not putting out the autumn edition of the newsletter. I appreciate that you must have felt utterly bereft at this blip in your eagerly awaited quarterly treat but it was beyond my control. Blame it all on that energy sapping summer heat wave. I'm not very good with hot weather (nor cold weather either, come to that!) and I spent most of it cowering in whatever shade I could find. I had neither the energy or inclination to stir myself to anything more energetic than switching our many fans on at full blast.

Happily, most of our archers are made of sterner stuff and willingly went forth into the furnace to help out at the summer shows and events around the area. Without our volunteers, this would be an almost impossible task and, to all of you who stepped into the breach, a huge thank you for your efforts. Without you, the running of these events would prove very difficult indeed. Happy shooting to you all in 2019.

BARBED ARROW

At this time of the year, when goodwill abounds and peace and harmony fills the air, a little reminder about the newsletter shouldn't come amiss.

I appreciate that it's open to either praise or criticism regarding its content, punctuation or grammar and if you think I'm open to all of that, then you'd be wrong! Praise is very good. Criticism is very un-good. I can't take criticism in any shape or form and it's no good coming out with that load of rubbish about it being constructive criticism either. There's no such thing! You may ask why I'm harping on about this. Well, it all came about when I received an email from someone who shall remain anonymous. It went thus:

That was a really good newsletter. In fact it was the best rag of yours so far!

Yep, you read it right. He called my pride and joy a *RAG!* Took me ages to get over it I can tell you. I've forgiven him now but all I'm getting at, is that it wasn't the sort of thing for a coach to be saying to someone so sensitive...!

A MAGIC 187 FOR ALICE

Putting Bourne 55 firmly on the country's archery map, our Alice achieved a superb 187th place in the National rankings for women's recurve. This is an outstanding achievement, not least because Bourne 55 is now on the rankings list for all to see. Great effort, Alice. I won't mention that you also entered the Alton and Four Marks competition and came 1st in the Lady's Recurve!



Alice at the Halloween shoot, showing all the dignity and exemplary behaviour required of a National standard archer! It didn't help either, when all the girls at the shoot were shouting, "Go, Alice!"

IF YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT...

I know it's the depths of winter and I know we're all shooting with ice crystals hanging down from our eyelashes but the issue of that summer heat wave just has to be addressed.

Personally, I don't think I can remember anything as hot as that in this country and yes, I do remember 1976! This was, without doubt, the most uncomfortable weather experience I've ever endured in the UK. Our house was so hot we couldn't even cook in the kitchen. The heat being generated by our conservatory turned it into something resembling a greenhouse in the Sahara. The bedrooms were like saunas and sleep wasn't a whole load of fun either!



"Unless you've got a serious bowl of ice cream or a very large glass of iced Pimms, you can just shove off out of it and wake me when summer's over."

Then there were the unhinged sun worshippers, smiling happily and saying things like, “Isn’t it beautiful weather—makes you glad to be alive, doesn’t it?”

A lot of these misguided souls could also be found of an evening, lying on the floor in screaming agony whilst being embalmed with Calamine Lotion for blistering sun-burn. In a vain effort, of course, to ease the pain of a pasty white body that’s been cooked on a high heat setting on the beach for most of the day. Never mind though, pleasure has its cost. I mean, in fairness, who’d have thought that lying fully exposed to the heat of a very large ball of fire in the sky that could incinerate the whole world in micro seconds if it happened to float just a few hundred miles closer, would burn you to a crisp?

“That’s the last time I’m shooting at 50 metres in this heat. I just can’t go on. Could somebody collect my arrows? I don’t care if it was only the second end—I’m going home to put my head in the freezer!”



“When you think about it, delivering the perfect presents to all the children in the world in a single night would require careful planning, world class organisation, meticulous scheduling, huge amounts of common sense and vast reserves of energy. Of course they’re all female. We should have guessed that years ago. Tell me, sisters, have you *ever* seen a male with any of those qualities, let alone all of them?”



“Will you stop moaning, Agnes. It’s not my fault you pulled standby reindeer shift on Christmas Day, is it. Nobody anticipated all eight of the duty crew being off with morning sickness did they...”

BAND OF SISTERS

Has anyone ever given any thought as to how many of Santa's reindeer are boys and how many are girls?

It matters not because I'm going to tell you anyway. They're all female. Not only that but they're probably pregnant as well! Scientists at the Institute of Arctic Biology in Alaska explain their findings by pointing out that male reindeer shed their antlers in early December whilst females sport their antlers throughout the winter until their calves are born in May.

Fascinating really. Opens your eyes to new wonders and makes you realise what they all get up to in the long months before Christmas!

A young lady veterinarian concurs with the findings and adds her own biased viewpoint.



Here's a few tips for coping with the heat when we start shooting next summer.

1. Wrap your bow up and put it in a cool spot until autumn. Don't forget to email the committee and advise them you'll be absent for a while.

2. Become a Christian. It's lovely and cool in those churches.

3. Shop regularly at a supermarket. I rate Sainsbury's as the best air con provider. Take a deck chair and sit in the freezer aisle.

"It's a nice sunny day, you said. Let's go to the seaside and get away from it all, you said..."



On average, it takes a good twenty minutes before security cottons on and throws you out.

I don't know why I'm bothering with all this advice to be honest. I don't suppose anyone will take a blind bit of notice. Ah, well—at least I can't be blamed for not trying to help when you go and barbecue yourselves.



THE DYNAMIC DUO

On the 12th of August, Bourne 55's own Aaron and daughter, Ebony, beat all comers at the Sussex County Clout Championship. Gold medals were awarded to both our archers, with Ebony scoring 288 with 24 clouts and Aaron notching up 294 with 28 clouts. With an impressive number of tournament wins already under their belts, it's a safe bet that there's more to come. In fact, just after starting this piece, the two of them crossed

at 18 metres on a 40cm face. As for the rest, cop a look at this lot. Study it carefully because there'll be a written exam to complete on Christmas Eve! Okay, that's a joke but how many of you flinched when you read that? Here we go:

<http://www.hertsarchery.org.uk/pdfs/RSHC.pdf>

Best of luck and may it bring you peace, joy and enlightenment.

"My fellow Americans, I pledge to you a complete ban on all rounds except the Portsmouth round. I'll make it an



act of congress, non negotiable. Now, gimme my recurve and let's get to it."

ARCHERY ROUNDS TORMENT

Does anyone have problems with the various rounds we shoot? There's been many an occasion when I've been told, "It's a Portsmouth round tonight," or "It's a WA18."

I tend to smile happily and give the thumbs up, whilst having no idea whatsoever what we're supposed to be doing! Seeking guidance, I approached our Coach.

"Quite simple really," he told me before rattling off what can only be described as an introduction to the inner workings of a Space Shuttle main computer – totally baffling. To clarify a few things, I've cut it down to two rounds and added a link for those who want to know all. If you want simplicity or just want to be pointed at where to shoot without too much strain on the brain cells, then ignore this completely.

"Our two bread and butter rounds are the Portsmouth round and the WA18 (World Archery) round," I was told. The first one (Portsmouth) is quite easy to remember to be honest. 5 dozen arrows at a distance of 20yds on a 60cm face. Likewise the WA18 is also pretty straightforward. 5 dozen arrows

borders to take part in the National Clout Championship in Bradford. This can only be applauded as an act of extreme heroism for southerners but both archers wore flat caps and Bradford City football shirts to avoid detection!

Our Eb came 3rd in the Junior Recurve, with only 7 points separating her from 1st place, whilst Aaron came 15th in the Gentlemen's Recurve



National Clout Competition in Bradford. Note the radar pylon in the background, used as an early warning system against marauding southerners and Bourne 55 Special Forces...!

SPOOK SHOOT

It was a solemn and momentous occasion for the club, on a cold and windy day in October. The Bourne 55 Inaugural Halloween Clout shoot on the school field was attended by a goodly number of hardened archers, defying the elements with a laugh and a merry quip. Something like that anyway.

The targets took the form of Pumpkins, suitably carved with demonic faces. Set a few feet in front of them were a few guys (Bonfire Night guys, not some of the lads!). Hit them and you were rewarded with a two point penalty loss.

Before the start, Aaron gave a rousing speech extolling the virtues of King Edward the 1st whose military methods led to modern target archery as regulated by the World Archery Federation. He delighted in the fact that the king was so impressed by the use of heavy bows by Welsh Insurgents (known in Wales as freedom fighters against the English dogs!) that he introduced tactics which proved lethal against larger armies.

I was shooting on the same target and as we both turned to walk back to the line I happened to, very briefly, catch a dull flash of blue in front of me. I thought it was a sweet wrapper or something but a closer look revealed the missing arrow. It had landed absolutely ruler straight right in the middle of one of the black court lines. Had it been even half an inch outside the line, it would have stood out against the lighter wooden floor. To land like this after bouncing and spinning back off the boss was an amazing fluke. It was even more amazing that nobody had trodden on it as they traipsed back and fore.

I told everybody how amazing it was but they showed a remarkable lack of interest. Why I think it'll be of any interest to you crowd, I don't know but I've related it anyway!

One final bit of amazing co-incidence. The first arrow lost under the net was fired by my wife, Sue. The second one was loosed by my son, Andrew. The fact that I found his made it into a real family affair. Go on, admit it—that's amazing!

The second incident was even stranger. The archer (Andy) claims he definitely saw the arrow bounce off either the boss or wooden stand. Apparently, it didn't just bounce but did an acrobatic spin before it disappeared. Again, the search for this arrow proved fruitless.

Shooting continued for several more ends and still the mystery of the missing arrow remained. After the last end we all trudged down to the targets to collect arrows for the last time. Bear in mind that there were archers walking up and down the range on several occasions, with some wandering about in an aimless fashion, either chatting to others or looking for their own arrows.



Andy with camouflaged missing arrow. Can you spot it?

On hearing that the king severely duffed up the Welsh in 1285, several pumped up archers cheered wildly and one even suggested that we should drag the club token Welshman up to the target area and offer a ten point bonus for anyone scoring a hit! Thankfully, this was stopped by the treasurer, who reminded everyone that he hadn't paid his annual subs yet...



On the left is an archer who ignored advice about getting back behind the shooting line before the next end started. On the right we see seven club members carrying out the scoring and a cowled monk. Nobody knew who the monk was but he was seen taking names before disappearing!

It was great fun, briefly interrupted by a heavy downpour that left most of us (the slow ones) soaked to the skin before reaching the

sanctuary of the storage container. Despite this minor setback the shoot re-commenced with great enthusiasm.



The first to hit the pumpkin. Ebony caught it dead centre whilst Reece managed to catch it right under the chin. This was the 90 metre target and to hit something that small at that range is no mean feat. Well done both.

Scary Halloween cakes and toffee apples came courtesy of Reece and Alexis, although I didn't get any. I left a bit early and asked our chairman to drop my share off on his way home. I'm not sure what route he took but I'm still waiting...

Suddenly! (Suddenly - great word that. Makes the reader think something dramatic's about to happen!) a great shout went up from our leader, who was scouting around behind the net. He'd found the arrow! Naturally, we all stood enthralled as he explained what had happened. Apparently, the net had a tiny snag at the bottom and a triangular gap was formed that was no more than about two inches high and two inches across at the bottom of the triangle. With unerring accuracy, the arrow went clean through this tiny gap and slid, straight as a dye, through the partially open store cupboard door, where it settled comfortably among all the gear therein.

If it hadn't been for our coach thinking outside the box and searching where all logic said it shouldn't be then it'd probably still be there now!



"I've got no idea why he thinks clout shooting is suitable for the North Pole, Rudolph but get ready for another complete waste of time arrow search!"

‘IT FELL TO EARTH, I KNOW NOT WHERE.’

I think most of us have lost arrows at one time or another, especially when shooting outdoors. Happily, most of them have been found, with just the odd few disappearing without trace in mysterious circumstances. Others however, can be ‘lost’ within feet of the target area and still manage to avoid detection.

Two such incidents occurred recently and you may well find yourselves gasping with astonishment when you find out where they were found. If you don’t gasp with astonishment then you’ve got no sense of wonder or amazement, which makes it terribly difficult for me to hold your attention, so pull yourselves together!

Both incidents happened at the Quivers shoot up the college. On the first occasion, the arrow fell short and slid towards the net, where it usually ends up caught in the folds. A search was carried out by several archers but to no avail. It was nowhere to be found.

A CHRISTMAS REALITY CAROL

Good King Wenceslas looked out, on the Feast of Stephen.

It was cruel out there as well. Snow all over the place, freezing frost, mist and not nice at all. The King thought, “It’s a night in for me then. Couple of ales and a few mince pies while I check out what the Court Jester’s got for entertainment.”

When a poor man came in sight, gathering winter fuel.

“PAGE, get in here, son. There’s a peasant out there nicking firewood. Any idea where he lives?”

“Sire, he lives a good league hence, underneath the mountain. Right against the forest fence by Saint Agnes fountain.”

“Right. Get a couple of guards out and sling him in the dungeon. Brutalise him a bit, then go and trash his house!”

“Sire, the night is darker now and the wind blows stronger. Fails my heart, I know not how. I can go no longer.”

“Just get out there and man up for pity’s sake. By the way, how’d the wife like my pressie this year?”

“Loved it didn’t she, sire. She’s always wanted a soup bowl. Says she’s going to have her Christmas dinner in it.”



“Let me explain it to you again, son. I’m a noble and you aren’t, so stop asking for your coat back.”

Therefore, Christian men, be sure, wealth or rank possessing. Ye, who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing.

“By the way, when you’ve done all that, go and tell the idiot who penned that Carol about me not to make himself comfortable. He’s fired. I’d be expected to go dishing out food and wine to every peasant in the parish if it catches on. Can’t see it myself to be honest. Not very catchy is it? Be long forgotten before next Christmas...!”

For anyone who’s recently joined the club, this little bit of blasphemy is an innocent bit of fun. I did something similar last Christmas and a lot of my fans begged for more this year. Alright, maybe not a lot but one of them did, so blame him if you don’t like it.

Apologies if King Wenceslas is a distant ancestor of yours and you’ve taken advantage of his fame to make money. If this is you of course, you’re a rogue anyway and the apology is withdrawn...! Happy Christmas!