



Terry Wunderle

Compare Practice and Tournament Performance

By Terry Wunderle

Is there a difference between your performance in practice and what you experience during a tournament? Compare the two. Are competition scores lower? Do you see more pin movement? Are you over-aiming? Do you have a longer rhythm? Are your groups more open? Do you feel pressure to score? Do you have anxiety, feel nervous, or worry about the outcome? If several of these questions are answered yes, the symptoms show your thinking is different and that you are inflicting pressure on yourself.

Why has your mental approach changed in the tournament setting? You'll find that desires for a win, your best score, a trophy, the money prize, or recognition invade your thinking. All of these are the kiss of death. In essence, you have created a self-destructive mindset that allows pressure to control your shooting. In contrast, archers who are the most successful are found focusing on the same thought patterns they use while practicing. To achieve this feat, your thinking must also be identical.

Be process oriented. Think and focus on procedure and not on results. This is why I advocate shooting from the conscious mind. If your thought patterns are directed at executing optimal form, detrimental ideas concerning results will not be present to create pressure. Whether shooting in practice or at a competitive event, you have only one thing you can control and that is using your best form. Guide your conscious mind

through a step-by-step sequence to follow so it remains focused on the process. This reduces the external pressures and helps you to perform the same shot that you experience in practice. If your main goal is to shoot perfect form, the anxiety and pressure associated with "result oriented" thinking will be minimized, allowing you to shoot like you do in practice. Some of the archers whom I have coached have experienced the highest scores of their careers when competing at high-level tournaments. A few even exceeded anything they had ever accomplished in practice. Why? These athletes bumped up their game and focused more intently on perfect form because the competition was of greater importance.

Stay in the moment. The only thing that is worthy of your attention is the arrow in your bow. Concentrate and make sure you execute it with the best form you have to offer. Regardless of where it hits, dead center or out of the gold, put it behind you and move ahead to the next arrow coming

out of your quiver. Dwelling on the results of the good hits can be just as detrimental as the bad ones. Once the arrow is released, begin preparing for the great form you will use on the next shot.

When rehearsing, imagine that the arrows you are shooting are part of your next big competition. Feel the excitement and significance of the event. Then reorganize your thinking and focus on your good form. At the next important tournament, change your mental picture and see yourself shooting on the practice range. Again concentrate and use the best form you have developed. As your competition form and thinking become more like what you practice, so will your scores. Being in charge of your thinking can give you power over your form and the results you strive to achieve.

[For more help on mental control and shooting techniques see Terry's book, *Archery: Think and Shoot Like a Champion*, at wunderlearchery.com.]

CARBON PRO
CARBON ARROWS / STABILIZERS

Venom Bamboo
Constructed of the best carbon and hand painted to look like bamboo. A small diameter arrow with over 10 GPI for the 300 spine it is one of the smallest diameter and heaviest arrows on the market.

M100 21MM CARBON STABILIZER

LOCKDOWN MULTI ADJUSTABLE CARBON STABILIZER

M100 / NEW GENERATION BAMBOO CARBON STABILIZER

ROCKET An economy carbon target arrow made like the high end Advantage target arrows. Same carbon material. Fletched with 2 1/4" LW shield feathers.

FIREFOX Carbon composite arrow designed for intermediate youth and low poundage shooters. Fletched with Artzons EP 23 vanes, glue in point, Carbonpro in-nock installed.

130 Golden Street, Meriden, CT 06450 USA Tel. 203.235.0616 Fax. 203.235.0656 Toll Free. 800.337.1128
Website : www.greatreearchery.com Email : info@greatreearchery.com