

GNAS OPEN HEAD TO HEAD (H2H) TOURNAMENT.

At the end of June I went up to Lillershall in Shropshire to take part in the GNAS Open H2H tournament. Going to Lillershall is a real treat, because I meet up with archers from all over the country including those who shoot for Great Britain. Everyone is very friendly and just as welcoming as archers that I shoot with regularly at home (and in what other sport would you be allowed to compete with competitors who are at the top). Lillershall is the most amazing place with an atmosphere second to none.

On Saturday morning we shot a 70 metre ranking round (6 doz arrows a 70 metres) - this is for all archers ladies, gents and juniors. This enables the organizers to work out the H2H ranking's with no.1 seed against no.64, no.2 against no.63 etc. up to no.32 against no.33.

The competition consists of shooting 18 arrows in 3 x 6 ends, with the two H2H archers on the same boss, up until the quarter finals when you shoot 12 arrows in 4 x 3 ends with 1 archer per boss. It is quite an exciting thing to take part in, as the spectators are encouraged to show their support by shouting and cheering. I was really chuffed as I managed to get through to the last 8 before being beaten. This is a great improvement on my last H2H at the National Indoor Champs in Harrogate, where, because there were only about 50 lady recurves they took the cut down to the last 32. I missed the cut by 1 point and came home with the reward trophy (what I call the trophy for the best crap archer)!

The Sunday being a team H2H was very much an experiment as it was the first one to be run in this country, so for a bit of fun they lumped all Recurve archers together and all compound archer together. A team consists of three archers. In many cases this would be 1 female, 1 gent and 1 junior. My team was Fred Burgess (father of Charlotte one of our UK junior squad), and James Beckett, also one of our UK Juniors, who is extremely good (what a shame for him that I was on his team). Once again we shot a 70 metre round, in our teams, in order to get to know each other and for the organizer to rank us for the H2H.

Now, this was a real test of friendship, we had to shoot three arrows each in a time limit of 4 minutes. There was a waiting line, which you were not allowed to cross until the archer shooting had retired behind it. You were also not allowed to take an arrow out of your quiver until you were on the shooting line, breaking of these rules would incur time penalties for your team. Your other team members are allowed to call your score and are even allowed to give coaching advice whilst you are shooting.

The spectators really play a big part in this competition, as they are very vocal and try to put off the opposing team by shouting bogus scores like x or TEN when their archer has probably shot a 1 or even missed. This is when you have to concentrate very hard on your shooting (as you well know this is very difficult for me), and not to listen to the comments (sometime rude) behind you. Still its all good fun as was taken in the spirit in which it was meant.

Anyway we got knocked out in the 2nd round, but had a thoroughly enjoyable time, and I look forward very much to the next one.

CANDY,
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