



FITA  
Coach's  
Manual

**CLOUT ARCHERY**

Module

Intermediate  
Level



# FITA Coaching Manual

## Intermediate Level

### Module

## CLOUT ARCHERY

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### The Clout Round

The Clout Round is a long distance shoot at a target laid out on the ground with a central flag, called the clout, and is mounted on a short flag pole.



*Setup of a local clout tournament with the flags at the three official FITA distances.*

There are two divisions recognised in the Clout Round, these are the Recurve Division and the Compound Division.

Clout shooting is a very old archery discipline derived from the desire to shoot at targets (opposing enemy) at extreme distances. Some older Societies shoot two-ways (targets at each end of the range, the archers shoot their arrows—and collect and score them then shoot back to

where they have just shot from). The FITA rules are for one-way shooting only.

A Round consists of shooting 36 arrows from one fixed shooting line and in one direction only. Six sighting arrows being shot in two ends of three arrows are permitted preceding the commencement of the competition. These arrows shall be shot under the control of a Director of Shooting and shall not be scored.

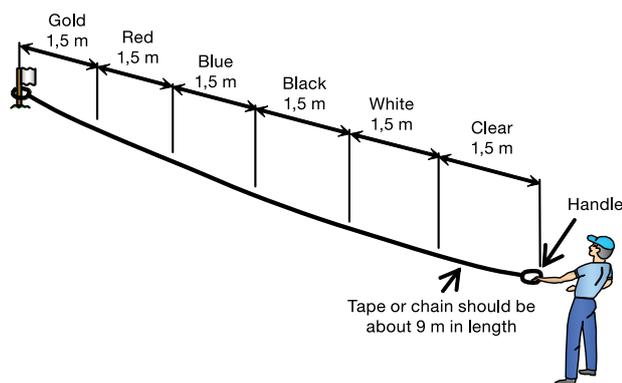
During the competition the object is to group your arrows as close to the clout (flag) as possible and achieve a score accordingly. The FITA distances are:

- 165 metres for Gentlemen shooting the Recurve Bow.
- 125 metres for Ladies shooting the Recurve Bow.
- 185 metres for gentlemen shooting the Compound Bow.
- 165 metres for Ladies shooting the Compound Bow.



The clout target shall be 15 metres in diameter with the clout (flag) positioned in the centre. This will be divided into 5 concentric zones each 1.5 metres in width, the scoring is 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, from the centre zone outwards, if an arrow lands in a line that divides two scoring zones the arrow will score the higher of the two zones. The flag shall not measure more than 80cm in length and 30cm in width and should be no more than 50cm from the ground.





Five persons are allocated one zone of the target and they take up their position along the tape. The person holding the end of the tape slowly walks round the flag (clout) keeping the tape tight at all times. The people allocated to the individual scoring zones walk round following the tape collecting the arrows that have fallen within their zone. When a complete 360 degree circuit has been walked, and all the arrows have been pulled from the ground, the tape is laid flat on the ground (still attached to the clout flag) the five persons then lay the arrows they have collected on the zone they were allocated. Then each person walks forward in turn to retrieve their arrows, in descending score order and calling out the score as each arrow is retrieved.



### Some rules

The competition organiser may choose whether the competition will be shot in ends of three arrows or ends of six arrows. If an end of three arrows is selected then the archers will have a maximum of 2 minutes to shoot their three arrows. If an end of six arrows is selected then the archers will have a maximum of 4 minutes to shoot their six arrows.

The archers may not raise their bow arm until the signal to commence shooting is given.

If an archer shoots an arrow before or after the allotted time they will forfeit the highest scoring arrow.

### Aiming

To obtain even a modest score it is essential to be sighted in correctly from the first scoring end.

If the system doesn't allow this (apart from luck) one can easily spend two or three ends just getting a group in the right place. As the round is very short all chance of competing or even obtaining a reasonable score can be over before begun.

Because of the elevation of the bow most people cannot see the clout flags to aim at so that they need to pick a spot somewhere in the back or foreground to aim at. While this can be fine once the spot has been determined there is often difficulty, at unfamiliar venues, to find out just where that is. In addition, with a long line, the background can vary significantly from end to end, thus presenting an unfair advantage to those with easily distinguishable spots to aim at, for instance an apartment building with lots of windows as opposed to say a blank concrete wall.

If a standard modern recurve bow as explained in a) & b) above is used. An extender sight bar coming below the bow hand can be used allowing the archer to approximate in the same plane as the clout but this is often to one side of the bow (maybe some part of the stabiliser) or a mark on the lower limb can be used.



*The extender sight bar coming below the bow hand.*

A mark on the lower limb can be seen directly below the hand and can be lined up with the clout unless wind allowance is catered for, in which case aiming left or right may be required. c) & d) can often use a standard sight. A small rubber/elastic band placed on the bottom limb can be used for a sight.



Mark (rubber band) on the lower limb.

A rule of thumb is approximately 1 inch (2.5 cm) of movement could vary the distance of the shot by as much as 5 metres.

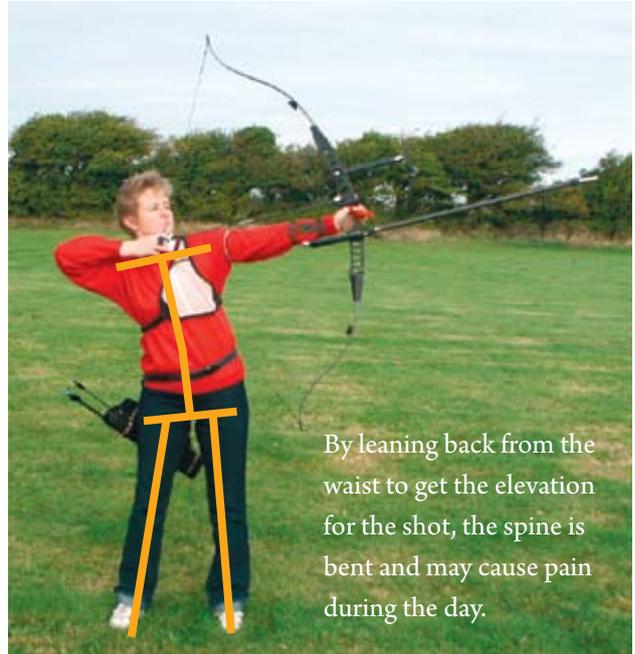
**Shooting Form**

Posture is the prime requisite as in target shooting as all errors are magnified by the distance.



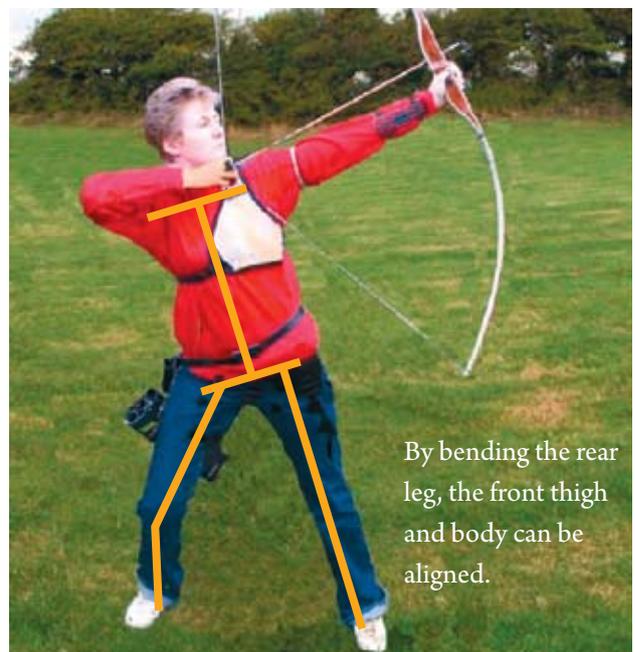
Ensure the body is upright before starting the shot.

Many archers bend back at the waist to keep the bow-arm, shoulders and drawing-arm in line to keep an efficient “draw force line” but this can create the spine to curve which may cause some discomfort during the day. For recurve shooters, since the shooting angle is not so great; hence they should be able to bend their waist enough.



By leaning back from the waist to get the elevation for the shot, the spine is bent and may cause pain during the day.

For longbow archers and light Recurve bows, an alternative and less stressful way is to take a slightly wider stance (than for target shooting) and bend the rear leg (string leg) slightly so that the whole body is leaning away from the target (clout). The bow-arm, shoulders and drawing-arm can be kept in line and at a right angle (90 degrees) to the spine whilst keeping the spine straight.



By bending the rear leg, the front thigh and body can be aligned.

A high anchor (reference point) as in Field Archery shooting with the forefinger coming to rest under the cheek bone may be tried as some archers may be more comfortable with this face location. Some may wish to continue having a reference point under the chin. Which ever method is used it must be adhered to minutely as all errors, no matter how small, are magnified by distance.



Using a kisser button allowing the drawing hand to be lower than a normal anchor position.

By using a kisser button in a position that allows the drawing hand to be lower than a normal anchor position to get the required elevation, the body can maintain an upright posture. Also the front sight could be used for aiming at the flag if the kisser button is set in the appropriate position.

A high anchor (reference point) as in Field Archery shooting with the forefinger coming to rest under the cheek bone may be tried as some archers may be more comfortable with this face location. Some may wish to continue having a reference point under the chin. Which ever method is used it must be adhered to minutely as all errors, no matter how small, are magnified by distance.

### Shooting Techniques

Most coaching points apply equally to clout as in target shooting, consisting of posture, minimal head movement, bow-hand movement and follow-through being controlled, a reaction not an action is vital and is of paramount importance. Good groups at the maximum range of the bow indicate superior technique which is highly desirable.

A clean physical follow-through where the string hand goes straight back in a natural reaction is to be desired, rather than a bicep/triceps, dead loose type of release.

The better the release the more consistent the arrow flight will be, and consequently better arrow grouping will be achieved.

Another important point is the bow verticality. For training your archer in keeping their bow vertical, you can affix a level somewhere on the bow. Your recurve archers will have to remove this device for the competitions.

### Strategies

In general it is a big help to ascertain the line the shot and to watch the flight of the arrow. This is done by looking away from the aiming point, immediately after releasing, up to the arrow and observing the flight then correcting the aim for the next shot. This will also help to see if the arrows match the bow or undue “kicks” or poor arrow flight is apparent.

The problem with this method is that the archer ensure a poor follow-through, this is why the coach should take care of the arrow flight, while the archer remains focussed on the aiming point.

To check the length or distance of the shot when shooting two ends of 3 arrows, between ends walk as far to the side as practical and with binoculars seek the distances of your archer’s shafts.

When coaching a Compound archer it is advisable to have them shoot very low to start with as many compound bows are capable of shooting vast distances and may even overshoot the safety area. There is also another problem that compound shooters may encounter, with the extreme power the arrows will have a flat trajectory and may be difficult to find if the grass is not kept quite short. If the ground is also very hard and the trajectory is very low the arrows may not stick into the ground but may “snake into the grass” and be difficult to locate.

Maximum distance is usually obtained by shooting at approximately 43 degrees, although there is liable to be a difference if a strong head or tail wind is blowing.

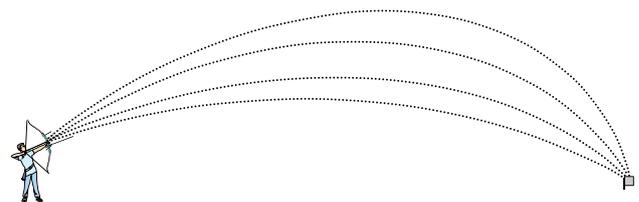


Illustration of various angles and trajectories.

An arrow from a Recurve bow not reaching the clout may have been shot at an angle that is too low; the angle of landing (landing angle-LA) can indicate this. As the arrow descends the parabolic curve will be steep (a high landing angle (LA), maybe as much as 60 degrees. If the arrow angle is 45 degrees or less then further distance will be obtained by shooting higher. Conversely “angle shots” i.e. shots above 45 degrees in a very strong tail wind will not go as far as a shot released at 43 / 44 degrees.

**Equipment**

The arrow weight may well have some bearing on a long range group. The heavier shaft could well group better than light weight shafts as the latter could be deviated by a light breeze.

(Especially for Longbow users) Shooting and spectacular results can be obtained with wooden arrows which are “cheded” i.e. the balance point is to the back and sometimes past the centre line of the arrow. Barrelled arrows can use the same principle of keeping the weight low whilst the spine rating is kept at a reasonable figure.



*A “cheded” arrow with a hard wood footing.*

Low profile fletchings keep drag to a minimum whilst providing enough steerage.

Aerodynamically a bullet point (pyle) may give some benefit but it is hard to put a figure on it. Reducing the fletching size is more readily noticeable in the benefit gained. Three fletch is far superior to four fletch if distance is required.

**The string**

High density polyethylene such as Dyneema will give about 10% more distance over Polyesters such as Dacron etcetera. Having a low bracing height can give more distance at the expense of smoothness. Reducing the number of strands in the string can also increase the distance of the shot. There might be some jarring/vibration felt although some stabilisation might take care of this.



*A nice shot!*

*(As per FITA rule, the flag pole should be round. A round shape minimizes the number of arrows in the pole).*