

## **CLUB RECORDS, INCLUDING HANDICAPS**

This system might look complicated and pointless. It is complicated but it isn't pointless. I want to explain how it works and why it is useful. Handicaps and classes tell you how you are doing. Handicaps allow us to have competitions where everyone stands the same chance of winning. Your overall handicap is a good guide to how well you shoot. It is never as good as your very best, but is about your average at present.

### **Where do you get the information?**

They are all in the Archery GB Rules of Shooting (ROS). You can buy this from the usual suppliers or Archery GB. There are, of course, always copies at the club for you to look at.

### **How does it work?**

There are **sixty-eight** standard target rounds recognised by Archery GB and listed in the ROS. Rounds have different distances, face sizes, and numbers of arrows. So how do you know if a score in one round is better or worse than a score in a different one? You need to know this to find out whether you are improving or not without having to shoot the same round all the time.

In the ROS is a set of tables. To look up a handicap find the table in the ROS for correct round and type of bow. Look up the score you got. Probably the exact score will not be in the table, so find the next one down. For example if you got 546 and the table has 548 and 545, you will settle on 545. Then look across and find the handicap. It's as easy as that.

The handicap is just a grade. The maximum is one hundred and the minimum is zero. The lower it is the better you have done. If, for example, last week you scored 514 on a Portsmouth round using an Olympic recurve bow, you get a handicap for that round of 44. If, this week, you score 248 on a Bray II this gives a handicap of 39, so you know that you have done better this time. Without a handicap there is no way of making such a comparison. If you shoot different types of bow, for example recurve and compound, you have a handicap for each.

### **Club handicap recordkeeping**

We keep a record of all rounds that you have shot at club meetings or contests, even those shot elsewhere. Please tell me about them all. It is your responsibility to let us know. Rounds shot at home or without a witness do not count. You must get your witness to write down your scores and to countersign your score sheet. We work out the handicaps for your rounds and calculate your overall handicap. You can do this for yourself as well, of course. At the start of the season your handicap will be the average of your best three handicaps from the last season. If you are new to the sport, your handicap will be the average of the first three rounds that you shoot. In this case, therefore, you will not have a handicap until you have shot three rounds. The average is always rounded up to the next highest number.

Each week you give us your score and we work out the handicap. If the new round handicap is lower than your overall one we add the overall and new handicaps and find

their average, again rounded up. Handicaps never go up, only down! The exception is the new season's handicap you get, based on the previous year.

You can see that the new handicap must be lower by at least two to reduce your overall handicap.

For example:

First three rounds:	Round 1	Handicaps	45
	Round 2		42
	Round 3		46
	Average		44.33
	Overall handicap rounded up		<b>45</b>

Next round	42
Average of this and current overall of 45	43.5
New overall handicap rounded up	<b>44</b>

### How handicap contests work

In a handicap contest you start with a number of points called an 'allowance'. The allowance is found by looking up your handicap in 'allowance tables' in the ROS. Whatever you score is added to the allowance. If you shoot exactly as well as your handicap you will finish up with 1440. Therefore someone who shoots better than his or her handicap will score more than 1440 and is likely to win. An expert with a low handicap will have to work really hard to do better, and is therefore less likely to win.

For example: Windsor round

Archer A	Handicap 21	Allowance 486
Archer B	Handicap 54	Allowance 796

In the competition:

Archer A scores 941	Allowance = 486	Total = <b>1427</b>
Archer B scores 650	Allowance = 796	Total = <b>1446</b>

Archer B beats A, even though he or she got a lower score.

### Classifications

Alongside the handicap scheme are Archery GB classes. On outdoor rounds you can gain Bowman third, second, and first class, Bowman, Master Bowman, and Grand Master Bowman classifications. For a given round the qualifying scores for these are different for different ages, sexes, and bows, and again are in the ROS. The higher classes, Bowman and higher, can only be achieved with certain, longer distance rounds. Indoor rounds have a simpler system of letters A to H with no distinction for age. At the end of each season the club will give you a badge or medal according to what class you have achieved. You have to shoot three rounds to gain a particular class, and you only get the highest you earn.

### Club records

The records that I keep for the handicap scheme allow me to find out who has made the best score for each round. If two or more people have the best score then the one with the most hits gets the record. If these are the same, then the number of golds decides it. If these are the same then the 'X-rings' are compared in the round allows them. If these are identical then the person who got the record first holds it. If the rounds were shot on the same day and at the same time, I don't know what happens.

### **County reporting**

The people who select the County team need a record of how Norfolk archers are doing. Unless you say otherwise, I send details of scores gaining Bowman first class or better, on certain long-distance rounds, to the County Records Officer.

Peter Scott    2 May 2021