

## **Archery in Great Britain: CLASSIFICATION, PROGRESS AWARDS AND HANDICAPPING**

The various official Archery Bodies (and some unofficial ones too) operate systems that recognise levels of skill and achievement in the sport of Archery. Some of these schemes operate at club level and are available without having to travel to specific kinds of archery event, but others do require participation in major tournaments.

Some awards are intended to encourage Junior Novice archers, and are given to mark milestones near the start of the archer's development. Other awards are graded to the highest levels, where only a very few achieve the required standard. There are in fact some awards that are so difficult they have never been claimed...

The following schemes are operated by The Grand National Archery Society (GNAS), which is the governing body of Target Archery in the UK, and Federation Internationale de Tir a l'Arc (FITA) which is the International Governing Body.

### **FITA Beginners Awards**

Given to beginners who show by examination that they have reached certain levels of archery skill and technical knowledge. Unfortunately this scheme requires considerable input by archery instructors and is generally too resource-hungry for small clubs to operate.

### **Handicapping**

The handicapping scheme operated by GNAS serves two purposes. Firstly it provides a benchmark of comparison of skill for all archers, and secondly it allows competition between archers of different gender, age-group and bow style. The scheme is operated at Club Level by the Records Officers of all the GNAS-affiliated archery clubs, but requires the co-operation of the individual archers who must submit evidence of the best scores they achieve each year. Handicaps can be improved progressively through each year, and are re-assessed at the end of the year.

Dedicated Handicap shoots are fairly rare, but handicap-based awards are given at many tournaments.

### **Classification**

GNAS operates a Classification Scheme which applies to all archers Male or Female, Junior or Senior, using most types of bow. The scheme divides archers into seven grades, and the grade achieved depends on the best three eligible scores achieved during a particular year. Classification is not once-and-for-all, it has to be achieved every year. Score eligibility varies with the level of the classification, the variation depends on the distance shot, the number of shots in the Round, and the Status of the Event.

The seven grades are: Unclassified – Third Class – Second Class – First Class – Bowman – Master Bowman – Grand Master Bowman. The first five grades, up to Bowman, are administered by Club records officers and may be achieved at Club level events, and no special badges are given by GNAS, although some clubs will award badges or 'flashes'. The Master Bowman and Grand Master Bowman grades are administered by GNAS, and eligible scores must be achieved at major National or International Record Status events; GNAS awards special badges when an archer first achieves the grades, and archers achieving the two top classifications are invited to shoot at the UK Masters tournament the following year.

## **JAWS**

The GNAS Junior Award Scheme is run annually for all archers up to the age of 18, regardless of bow type or discipline. JAWS points are awarded for various achievements, and are recorded in the JAWS booklet. This is then submitted at the end of the year, and the entries ranked by the total points.

There are several trophies in the scheme. The highest points totals in the under-18 and under-15 groups, and the highest annual points increase in those groups all take a trophy. There is also one for the highest handicap improvement during the year. All entrants receive a certificate, and the top 100 receive a badge as well.

## **FITA Star**

These are awards given to archers achieving particular score levels at World Record Status FITA-Round Tournaments. There are no concessions for juniors.

## **GNAS Rose Awards**

These are GNAS awards given to archers achieving particular score levels at Record Status 12-dozen-shot Tournaments, the awards are given to senior Ladies for Scores achieved in the Hereford Round and to senior Gents for scores achieved in the York Round, and to Juniors for various Bristol Rounds depending on gender and age group.

Square-shaped badges are given to archers shooting Freestyle / Recurve Bows, round-shaped badges to archers shooting Compound Bows.

## **Arrow Awards**

These are GNAS awards given to Junior archers achieving particular score levels at Record Status 12-dozen-shot Tournaments, various rounds are eligible, both British (GNAS) and International (FITA and Metric), depending on age-group.

## **FITA Arrowhead**

These are awards given to archers achieving particular score levels at World Record Status FITA Field Round Tournaments. There are no concessions for juniors.

## **Clout Tassel**

These are awards given to archers achieving particular score levels at GNAS Tassel-Award-Status Clout Tournaments; awards are set at different levels for Ladies or Gents, Senior or Junior, and for most bow styles.

## **Six Gold End**

An award given by GNAS to archers who achieve six hits in the gold centre of a Target at or beyond the minimum distances prescribed for their gender, bow-style and age group. There are Junior and Senior versions of this badge, and an archer may hold both badges, but badges are not given to the same archer for six-gold-ends achieved with different bow types.

## **Six Clout End**

Given to archers who manage to land all six arrows of an end on the GNAS Clout Area at the distance prescribed for their gender and age group – probably the rarest of awards.