

TRADITIONAL FOCUS

By Dale Karch & Todd Smith

Trends For 2008

Traditional archery is in the grip of nature's law of inertia. It's a body in motion and not only is it maintaining that motion, it's gaining momentum. Traditional archery is becoming more and more mainstream. No longer perceived as a novelty, longbows and recurves are finding their way into prime-time hunting shows and all the top rated retail hunting magazines. For this reason the entire traditional archery industry is bracing itself for another big year in 2008.

Throughout this last year we've noticed a few distinct trends and growth "hot spots". Traditional archers themselves always seem to be in a state of transition, like individual planets in their own orbits around traditional archery as a whole, they move through the various offerings and levels available in the sport. Traditional archery is unique in that it offers a full-circle approach to archery. From the most primitive to the most modern and everything in-between, the traditional shooter has unlimited choices. Interestingly enough, the shifts in buying patterns seem to run true for most members of the traditional archery scene. Certain segments of traditional gear ebb and flow like the tide. Based on what we've seen in 2007 and what's new for 2008, we're confident of another very strong growth year. Three specific seg-

ments are on the rise for 2008, modern-traditional, primitive, and the youth market. Of course we'll include specific products that have either been selling exceptionally well or are new and promise to be good performers.

Modern Traditional? That phrase almost seems counter intuitive, but it has become a mantra for many traditional bow shooters in the USA. The science and engineering of traditional archery gear is reaching all-time highs, pushing the envelope of performance and modern traditional is the name we've given to one of the most exciting growth areas in traditional archery. Soon you'll be hearing more about FITA and ILF when listening to traditional shooters discuss their sport.

Like most

other years, bows always seem to be the main attraction. This year the more notable newcomers are the Venom and re-vamped Hunter recurve from Martin Archery and the Dalaa-21 from DAS Kinetic.

The Venom is a stretched version of Martin's Bamboo Viper introduced in '07. The Venom's 66 inch length is ideal for this style of reflex/deflex longbow and long-draw shooters will appreciate its smoothness and



At left, the compact Cherokee bow quiver from Eagle's Flight Archery.

At right, the new GFA hip quiver is by G. Fred Asbel.



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the performance-core of bamboo with carbon fiber backing, and a clear glass belly. Following on the heels of the popular Bamboo Viper, the Venom enjoys instant credibility. Look for strong sales of this new longbow from Martin Archery.

The Howatt Hunter recurve has been a top choice of traditional shooters for generations. The extra length of the 62" Hunter is perfect for those shots taken under pressure. The riser is black-dyed birch, with an attractive inset of bubinga at the grip. The Hunter recurve has been

our most consistent selling recurve of all time and with this fresh new look we predict another strong year.

Last year the DAS Kinetic Dalaa take-down recurve with its adjustable bow weight and adjustable tiller rocked the traditional bowhunting community. Never before had a bow been engineered with such precision and accuracy potential specifically for traditional bowhunters. David Soza deserves the credit for bringing to market a bow so ahead of its time. The original 17 inch riser Dalaa combined

with efficient competition limbs for incredible performance in compact 58 inch, 60 inch, and 62 inch recurve hunting bows. The Dalaa-17 gained instant acceptance as a proven performer on big game worldwide and also turned heads in the 3-D circuit.

For 2008 there's a new Dalaa in town. The Dalaa-21 with its 21 inch riser bridges the gap between the ultra-compact Dalaa-17 and the longer FITA style risers like the Win & Win offerings and the Hoyt Medalist. The Dalaa-21 utilizes the same proprietary DAS limb design for bow lengths of 62 inch, 64 inch, and 66 inch, perfect for those with longer draw lengths or those who like the silky-smooth draw of a longer recurve. Anyone shooting ILF limbs will be pleased to know the Dalaa-21 is available with an ILF pocket too. With the ILF pocket in place, any set of ILF limbs will fit. They'll be able to take advantage of all the benefits of the Dalaa-21 riser and still use their favorite limbs.

Carbon arrows continue to gain in market share in traditional circles. No longer is it taboo for a stick bow shooter to have carbon arrows in his or her quiver. Most longbow and recurve shooters do however like a heavier arrow. Most carbon arrows, even those built with the traditional archer in mind need a little boost to get to optimal mass weight. Weight tubes are the quick and easy answer. With just a year under their belt, our weight tubes are really catching on with traditional bowhunters. They're easy to install and equally distribute the weight the entire length of the arrow. Available in two diameters, one is made to fit 9/32" carbons like the Easton Axis series and the Beman MFX Classic, and the other for standard 5/16" carbons like Carbon Express, Gold Tip, and the Easton Epic. Choose from 3 grains per inch, 5 grains per inch, and 8 grains per inch to add some punch to your carbon arrow sales. These are manufactured and distributed through 3Rivers Archery exclusively.

Speaking of carbon arrows, you'll be hard pressed to find a prettier one than the Grizzly Stik from Alaskan Bowhunting Supply. The

The 2008 Martin Venom longbow is a longer version of the Bamboo Viper that was new for 2007.



Woodsman head.



Wood Screw Adapters.



3Rivers Weight Tubes.



Beman MFX Classic shafts fletched with shield cut feathers.

The Howatt Hunter recurve is a long-running favorite from Martin, and sports a new look for 2008.



translucent brown almost glows in direct sunlight and the full-tapered design results in one of the most stable and straight-shooting hunting carbon arrows we've seen yet. They're available in three weights,

the Sitka, the Alaskan, and the Safari. Like they say, "Walk softly and carry a big Stik." If you're looking for a serious hunting arrow for traditional archers, consider the Grizzly Stik.

Fortunately for the entire industry, youth archery is booming! It's our third segment with the most significant growth. We all know the future of our sport is our kids so we're excited. For the kids, there are two very noteworthy bows available, the new Shadow longbow from 3Rivers Archery and the re-vamped X-200 from Martin Archery.

The Shadow is a true deflex-reflex longbow that packs a lot of energy into a small 60 inch package. It's perfectly sized for kids and offers a multi-colored hardwood riser with a dished locator grip and radiused shelf. It's the spitting image of an adult custom bow. Kids will go nuts for the Shadow!

The 60 inch X-200 isn't just for kids anymore. For a Made in the USA, handcrafted recurve you'd be hard pressed to find a better value. The new X-200 boasts a colorful laminated birch riser, while limbs of laminated eastern hard maple and black fiberglass will provide years of faithful service. Reinforced limb tips now accept any modern string material. The X-200 available in weights

from 25 pounds to 55 pounds is a good choice for anyone interested in a good deal on a handcrafted recurve bow, made by Martin's traditional bowyers in the old Damon Howatt plant in Yakima, Washington.

Woodsman broadheads rocked the traditional archery world when they were first introduced many years ago. Easily recognized by their long lean profile they quickly earned a reputation for dramatic penetration and deadly wound channels. It's no wonder they're our best selling broadhead of all time. Even so, we recognized room for improvement and completely upgraded the manufacturing-grinding process and we're very pleased with the results. Never has the factory grind on a Woodsman been so precise and sharp right out of the package. Sure, bowhunters still have to touch them up with a bit of final honing before heading into the field, but the foundation is now there for a perfectly balanced broadhead that flies true from any bow.

Though not new in concept, single bevel broadheads like the Grizzly have been in the spotlight lately. Extensive testing has shown that single bevel broadheads, when matched with the proper wing feathers, actually rotate as they penetrate! This rotation increases the effectiveness of 2-blade broadheads. They're blowing through bone rather than wedging in, and leaving a "J" shaped exit wound that bleeds more freely than the straight slit normally seen with double-bevel 2-blade broadheads. Perhaps you've heard of Dr. Ed Ashby's work, perhaps not, but the results speak for themselves. Single-bevel broadheads like the Grizzly are making quite a name for themselves and we anticipate a large lift in sales this year.

New books and DVD's are always

Shadow youth longbow by 3Rivers has limbs that go from deflex to reflex.

The revamped X-200 from Martin has been reinforced for modern low-stretch strings.



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Grizzly broadheads are beveled from one side.





The third season of Easton Bowhunting has been released on a 2-DVD set designed to retail for under \$20.

a big draw and this year is no exception. There are many new titles and they're selling strong. Modern Traditional from Dead-On Traditional and Ty Pelfrie covers in detail shooting techniques and bow set-up for FITA style outdoor shooting. A fairly straightforward string-walking system is described along with bow set-up and tuning tips for serious field archery recurve shooting. The guys at Traditional Vision Quest have released their Masters of the Barebow Volume 2 and it's the perfect follow-up to their first volume. Packed with one-on-one shooting tips from various top shooters, they cover everything from shooting self bows, to a fluid Howard Hill style, to face-walking, string-walking, gap at bow and many others. Two hours of intense how-to instruction from the best in the business. Both volumes of Masters of the Barebow will be strong sellers in 2008.

Hunting DVD's are great sellers and Fred Eichler has been working hard to entertain bowhunters in America. He's the host of Easton Bowhunting's TV show and they just released the entire third season on a two-disc set that retails for under 20 bucks. You won't want to miss the bone-chilling charge by an aggres-

sive grizzly! Then, on his own, Fred released Traditional Adventures V, his fifth traditional bowhunting DVD. It's true Fred Eichler style too, so if you've liked his previous DVD's you'll be pleased with this one too.

Even though it's not a traditional-only product, we discovered Odor Xterminator this year. We tried it and it's fantastic! We tested it on burlap Shaggie Suits, Double Bull Blinds, hunting clothes, and even garbage cans. It works! One of the guys here got anise oil on his hands during a bear hunt and as a test sprayed Odor Xterminator on the spot. Instantly the strong licorice-like scent was gone. This product is safe to spray on your clothes, your skin, your hair, etc.

If you look at all quiver sales to traditional bow shooters you'd find two main schools of thought. One group has been moving to get their quivers off their bows. They prefer over the shoulder quivers that can be used in conjunction with daypacks or slung over your shoulder when carrying in a tree stand. They like the idea of shooting a naked bow so they tend to purchase over the shoulder quivers like the new Timo-Lite from Dawgware or the versatile GFA from G. Fred Asbell.

The other group prefers the convenience of having their arrows right where they can see them. They know if they have their bow, they will have their arrows. The trend we're seeing is that many traditional bowhunters have adopted a bit of the minimalist approach. When it comes to bow quivers these days the trend is toward

smaller lightweight models. One top seller is the Cherokee, from Don Ward at Eagle's Flight Archery. This quiver is an ultra-light but classy 4-arrow strap-on model with a hand stitched leather hood. Another top seller is the 3Rivers Mini-Boa. Not as lightweight as the Cherokee, it's still considerably smaller than a full-sized bow quiver. Its rubber strap mounting system holds it solidly to your bow and the 5-arrow capacity makes it the perfect in-between quiver. Not small and ultra-light, but not as large and bulky as normal full-sized bow quivers either. Sure you should always keep a good inventory of the tried and true bow quivers like those from Great Northern and Selway. They'll always be strong sellers, but you may already have them. The trend, you'll find is in the smaller lightweight bow quivers.

With the increased popularity of three-blade broadheads the timing of the new 3-blade CC Sharpener is perfect. This new ceramic-carbide tool offers just the right angle for 3-

blade heads on two carbide teeth that actually pull metal shavings from the broadhead bevels, aligning the edge to a very sharp edge. Then, lay the tool flat on a table and lightly hone the broadhead, flat to flat. If you do your part, you should have shaving sharp broadheads.

Another sharpening system that has really impressed us is the self-aligning KME system. As the KME sharpener glides on its roller base the rotating clamp pivots maintaining perfect blade-to-stone alignment to produce true razor-sharp broadheads. You can sharpen fixed two-blade broadheads and any replacement blades or bleeders. The KME system is proudly made in the USA and carries a lifetime warranty.

Tred Barta is sort of like the Energizer bunny isn't he? He keeps going and going. His Tred Barta line of signature gear keeps growing too. He expanded his arrow line this year with his own "Wilderness Flu-Flus". Plain and simple like his Wilderness Arrows, these flu-flus are like the

ones he takes duck and goose hunting. All wood and with Trueflight Feathers, these arrows, like all Barta Gear, can handle tough hunting conditions.

The Barta Pack from Eberlestock is quality through and through. It comes ready for dual hydration units, has an internal organization design that's perfect for day-trekking or base camp, and perhaps the most intriguing feature is a fold-down flap you can attach your longbow, recurve or even your compound to. If that's not enough, every pack comes with an earth-tone poncho/pack cover and a bunch of parachute cord that Tred figured would come in handy. Keep an eye out for the Tred Bart pack, it's going to be a top-pick in packs.

People are going primitive! We

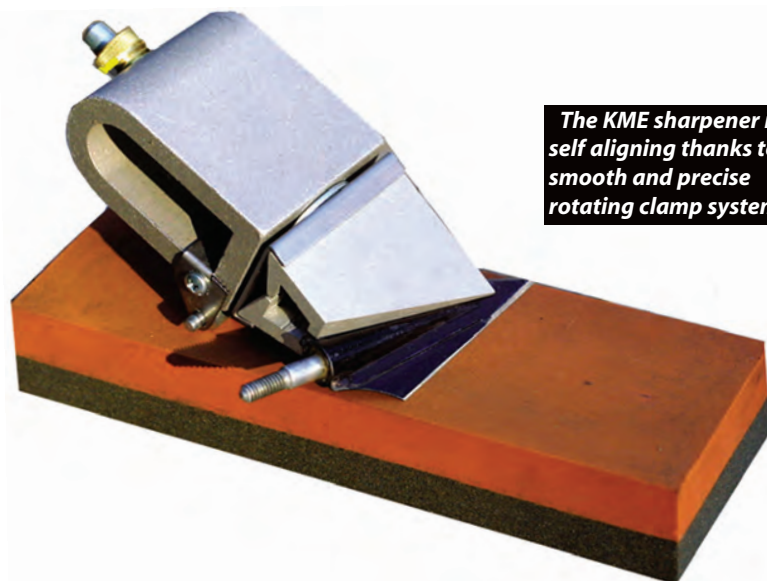


The new No Mercy head is the first new design for years from Zwickey.

mentioned that the modern side of traditional archery is growing, and interestingly enough, the other segment with the most noticeable increase is the primitive side. To meet the growing demand we've more than doubled our all-wood bow and bow kit selection. From pre-planned bamboo, to pre-glued bow blanks, to English style longbows complete with horn nocks, it seems like we're adding items daily. To help with building these bows or completing the kits we've added several new bow building rasps and other bow building tools as well as new books, booklets, and DVD's. Bow building is big business in traditional archery circles. It seems everyone wants to make his or her own bow. With these new kits and a few strategic tools you don't have to stock too much to take care of a lot of folks. Who knows? You might want to build your own bow too.

Along with primitive bow building we see an overall shift to getting back in touch with earth skills or primitive skills as

The Barta Pack



The KME sharpener is self aligning thanks to a smooth and precise rotating clamp system

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always a myriad of new products every year. We hope we've been able to shed some light on which items are our top picks for best sellers in 2008. Have a great year and we'll see you in the field.

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some call them. Recently there have been a bunch of new survival and primitive skills books released and the traditional community is gobbling them up. When it comes to primitive skills, you may shoot a compound but still have an interest in knowing how to build a fire by friction, or how to set a Paiute trigger on a deadfall. Primitive skills books appeal to a wide segment of the archery industry. Place a few in your shop and test them. You might be surprised.

With the overwhelming acceptance of the Easton Axis and the Beman MFX Classic shafting came the need for 9/32 screw-in points. We had a difficult time finding them so we decided to have them made. Now we've got them in good supply in weights of 100 grains, 125 grains, and 145 grains. If you're selling a lot of the Easton Axis and Beman MFX carbon arrows you'll want to have plenty of these on hand.

There are two main reasons traditional shooters use woodscrew adapters. First, they like wood arrows but want the convenience of using screw-in points. Woodscrew adapters offer just that. You cut to length and taper your wood arrows like always but instead of gluing on a point you're gluing on an adapter that accepts screw-in points. Now switching from field points to broadheads is quick and easy. The second

reason is to get a little extra length on wood arrows. Since the threaded female portion of the adapter requires some length, folks with 31" draws that previously couldn't use wood arrows now can. That little extra length can make all the difference.

I'm not sure any of us, no matter how old, can remember the last time Zwickey Broadheads introduced a new head. Well they just did! It's called the No-Mercy and it's a totally new design. At first glance it resembles a slimmed down version of the venerable Delta, but on close inspection you'll see that Jack Zwickey implemented subtle changes. The reason it has taken so long is that Jack refuses to release a new product until it has his blessing. Everyone at Zwickey Archery is excited at the potential of this new broadhead. If you're a fan of 2-blade broadheads, and especially if you're a long time Zwickey fan, take a close look at the No-Mercy. Better yet, try a pack and see for yourself why the sun never sets on Zwickey broadheads.

Every archer needs a target and if they shoot broadheads a broadhead target too. You probably have your favorites but we've settled on targets from Morrell. The top sellers are their Yellow Jacket targets both in a field point and broadhead model. In 2008 you'll be able to pick up a pre-packaged set. One field point and one broadhead target packaged together. We've found that the Morrell targets are excellent quality and a good value.

That will get you started for a big year in traditional archery. Trends are always changing and there are



New 9/32 inch point for Easton Axis and Beman MFX shafts.