

# Nostalgia Corner

30 Years Ago ... by Paul Davison

## The Compound Bow in 1975



The “I-gotta-have-one-of-those” syndrome probably peaked around 30 years ago. Almost all archers in 1975 had learned how to shoot before the compound bow was introduced in the late 1960’s, primarily as a hunting weapon. Then, once they saw how easy a compound bow was to draw, hold, aim and release, nearly everyone, except the dedicated recurve or longbow purist, wanted one. Shooting 100 or more arrows at a field or indoor range was no longer a tiring chore.

Scanning all 1975 *Archery* magazine issues, I counted eleven different companies advertising compound bows. This excluded Bear Archery, who made compounds, but only advertised recurves in 1975, as well as Hoyt, who had yet to introduce a compound bow. Here are the eleven companies who had ads in the twelve 1975 *Archery* issues:

Allen  
Ben Pearson  
Bonnie Bowman  
Browning  
Carroll  
Jennings  
Lee’s Archery (made by PSE)  
Olympus  
PSE  
Ramco  
Robin Hood (made by PSE)

Although all compound bows offered by these companies were manufactured under the Allen patent, there were some differences. Most were “4-wheelers,” but at least Carroll, Jennings and PSE (and later, Bear) introduced second-generation, “2-

wheeler” designs, none of which included the now-common cable guard. Ramco advertised a compound ideally suited for the finger-shooter — it had a whopping 58” axel-to-axel length. Sadly, to this old stringwalker, it never caught on.

Robin Hood and Groves also advertised “cable” bows, which were like compounds, but which had pulleys instead of eccentrics. These bows were not licensed by Allen, and could not legally be called “compound” bows.

1975 was a pivotal year for the compound bow companies. It’s obvious that only a handful of the foregoing companies are still making (or selling) compound bows. During the past thirty years, however, several new and some old (like Hoyt) companies have emerged from the fray. Some have done quite well manufacturing compound bows. Some have done better in the accessory market, most notably in sights, arrow rests, and release aids. Some advertise in the media, and some don’t.

There’s one thing for sure: We’ll never have another feeding frenzy like we had in 1975.