

Nostalgia Corner

30 Years Ago ... by Paul Davison

When “Fingers” Still Ruled



As we remember, release aids weren't really accepted in NFAA competition until about 1970, and finger shooters (FSL) weren't separated from release shooters (FS) until 1973. While the “new” freestyle shooters grabbed the headlines with near perfect scores at the 1973 Aurora (IL) Outdoor Nationals, a vast majority of the competitors shot with their fingers. For example, of the 684 total shooters, 133 were registered in the adult barebow divisions. Likewise, Freestyle Limited was the dominant “freestyle” division.

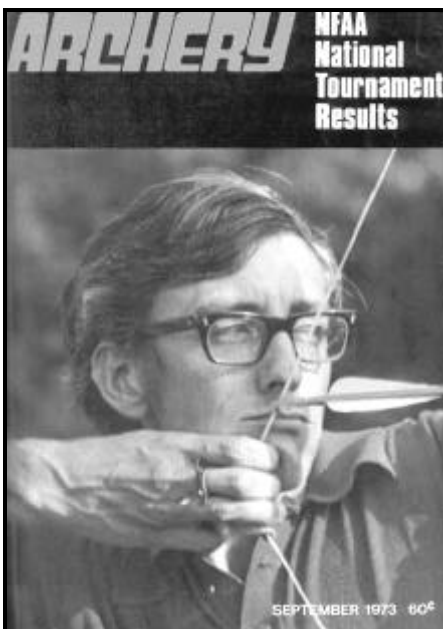
We mention barebow because in the 1973 Nationals, the featured match was in Open Male Barebow with defending champ (and Auroraland member) Dennis Cline nocking heads with then 4-time winner, David Hughes. [This head-to-head match was essentially repeated annually from 1968 through 1985, with Dave winning nine Open Barebow (plus one Pro BB) championships to Denny's six.]

What made the 1973 match particularly exciting was that Dave and Denny alternated high score-of-the-day from Monday through Friday. Dave “won” Monday, Wednesday and Friday, while Denny took Tuesday and Thursday — and yet Denny was the eventual winner by 22 points ... 2606 to 2584! Can you imagine a freestyle shooter being behind by 5 points on Monday and yet winning by 22? Denny's remarkable achievement landed him on the cover of the September 1973 *ARCHERY* magazine.

There was also a “bragging rights” competition among the three top barebow styles. Denny's aggregate score of 2606 was nearly matched by Open Bowhunter, 6-time winner, Cal Vogt's

2586, and Amateur Barebow, 5-time winner, Mike Flier's 2597.

Of these top four barebow shooters, only Cal Vogt shot a compound bow. In 1973, not many stringwalkers felt sufficiently comfortable with drawing a compound bow 2-to-3 inches off center. It wasn't until a few years later that stringwalkers discovered that the long axle-to-axle, asymmetrically tuned, compound bow was ideally suited for their style of shooting.



**1973 Open Barebow Champion
Dennis Cline**