

Nostalgia Corner

30 Years Ago ... by Paul
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Happy Thirtieth Birthday, NFAA Professionals!



At the 1972 NFAA National Outdoor Championships in Ludlow, MA, a large group of the top shooters met with NFAA officials and interested manufacturers to discuss formation of a new “society of professional archers.” The founding committee, led by John Williamson, believed that the future of *competitive* professional archery was with the NFAA and its more liberal equipment and shooting rules. The “other” pro organization, the PAA, allowed neither releases nor compound bows in competition. Moreover, the PAA was a “full-service” professional organization with considerable emphasis on archery instruction and coaching. Consequently, the Ludlow group agreed, “... to create a home for those archers who wished to shoot for money, yet retain the right to make their own choice of equipment and shooting style.” Archery instruction would be left up to the PAA and NAA (and later, the NFAA).

The founding committee met several times during 1972. Membership guidelines, style breakdowns, dues and purse allocation structures, and a code of ethics, were drafted. Even a name was selected: “*Toxophilites*, The Society of Professional Archers.” The entire package was to be submitted to the NFAA Board of Directors at the February 1973 annual meeting. Actually, a proposal for a professional division was submitted to the Directors at their 1972 meeting, but was tabled “for further study.” John Williamson and his committee had now done their homework.

The NFAA Board of Directors met in Portland, OR, in early February 1973, and the NFAA Professional Division became officially “born.” Since

the name “Toxophilites” was a little extreme, it was dropped in favor of simply, NFAA Professional Division, or, “NFAA Pro.”

NFAA Pros were required to pay pro division dues (\$50 then, \$75 today) in addition to their regular NFAA membership dues paid through the state associations. A separate account was maintained for all pro division finances. It’s the same today.

It hasn’t always been a bed of roses during the past thirty years. There have been a few arguments among the pro members concerning recognized shooting styles, purse allocations, and pro-only targets and rounds. Some rule changes were even tried for a few years, but most were rejected in favor of the original guidelines drafted by John Williamson and his committee thirty years ago.

NFAA Pro logo here?