

Nostalgia Corner

30 Years Ago ... by Paul Davison

The first IFAA WFAC held in the US



Lots of NFAA members don't realize that they're automatically members of the IFAA ... the International Field Archery Association. The IFAA is a worldwide organization of national field archery associations. In 1975 there were six member nations. Today there are nineteen.

Since field archery originated in the US, it's only natural that the first IFAA *shooting* rules were identical to NFAA rules. IFAA *equipment* rules, however, were closer to FITA rules.

The first IFAA World Field Archery Championships (WFAC) were held in Sweden in 1969, the second in England in 1973, and the third in the US in 1975. It was decided by the IFAA to hold the 1975 WFAC concurrent with the NFAA's National Outdoor in Jay, VT. Since the IFAA and NFAA field, hunter and animal rounds were identical in those days, it was no problem for one to shoot both tournaments simultaneously and harmoniously. Not so, today! At the combined WFAC-NFAA Championships in Watkins Glen last year, the rounds did not blend well because of subtle differences in scoring rules and animal target faces.

The real differences between the IFAA and NFAA rules in 1975 were associated with amateurism and "amateur" equipment. Here's a summary:

1. Must be a recognized amateur.
2. Compound bows illegal.
3. Mechanical releases illegal.
4. No binoculars, and no aid from a person using binoculars.
5. No lens or prism in the bowsight
6. No Cub Division.

7. Youth Division for those under 16.

Because of Rule 2, not many NFAA members participated in the 1975 WFAC. [See Apr/May 2005 *Nostalgia Corner* regarding compound bow popularity in 1975.] Rule 1 had some effect on the low turnout, too. Both US and international amateurs with Olympics aspirations were hampered by FITA Article 201, which essentially said that a FITA shooter could not participate in any international event not controlled by a FITA Member Association. [See Aug/Sep 2004 *Nostalgia Corner*.] Neither the IFAA nor the NFAA are FITA members

Needless to say that in order for the WFAC to survive, the IFAA needed to modernize their rules. Today, none of the seven foregoing restrictions exist; i.e.,

1. An IFAA shooter is either a professional or an "amateur," which is anyone not a card-carrying professional.
2. Almost all NFAA-legal bows, release aids, and bowsights are also IFAA-legal.
3. There are four age groups: Cub (under 13), Junior (13-16), Adult (17 and older) and Veteran (55 and older).

The IFAA recognizes the sovereignty of its member nations to do "their own thing," and since the NFAA steadfastly refuses to change its rules to agree 100% with IFAA rules, we may have seen our last concurrent WFAC-NFAA Championships held in the United States. A stand-alone WFAC in the US, however, is still possible.