

On Beginning a Coaching Library

Special Feature

Aspiring coaches can attend training workshops, seminars, listen to CDs, and watch DVDs and videotapes, but there is still a great deal to be said for books. Regular readers of this magazine probably have heard that I am working on a book for beginning to intermediate archery coaches. The reason for this brash undertaking is, well, there aren't any books directed specifically to archery coaches. I know this because I searched extensive through online, new, and used bookstores and came up with almost nothing. And, instead of making you wait until the book comes out, I decided to share with you what books I have found to be genuinely helpful to archery coaches. If this interests you, read on!

Introduction

I have broken my recommendations into sections that address as many of the technical, mental, physical, emotional, and social aspects of archery as I can recommend. The first section is just those rare books that were written for archery coaches which are absolute "must reads."

"Must Reads"

Sadly, there are just two books in this category and one is out of print, so you will have to scour online bookstores or search your areas used bookstores for a copy (*see the sidebar Shopping for Used Archery Books*).

Peak Performance Archery by Al Henderson (with Dave Staples) This is a book entirely about coaching archery by a gifted archery coach. Most people are aware of Mr. Henderson's other book, *Understanding Winning Archery* (recommended below) but that book is more for archers than it is for coaches. Find a copy of *Peak Performance Archery* somehow (as it is out of print) and read

it. If I had the rights to this book, I would get it back into print as a public service.

Archery Anatomy by Ray Axford This is more than an anatomy book! Most of what an archery coach needs to know about the physical aspects of shooting a bow are covered here. The author struggles mightily to take a technical subject and make it accessible and, by and large, succeeds. It is still technical and may be slow going when you read it, but it is all highly valuable information.

Shooting Technique

This is where you will find the bulk of the books published for target shooters. I break these books into two subgroups—for compound archers and for recurve archers.

Shooting Technique-Compound Bows

Core Archery by Larry Wise The core teachings of one of archery's finest coaches.

Professional Archery Technique by Kirk Ethridge The author was the first to publically blow the whistle on "illegal" rangefinding techniques. It also is a textbook on compound bow technique.

Idiot Proof Archery by Bernie Pellerite Bernie can be controversial, but that doesn't keep him from being a master coach and he poured his heart and soul out in this book.

Mastering Compound Bows by James Park An elite archer takes it all apart and puts it back together.

Precision Archery by Claudia Stevenson and Steve Ruis (Editors) This may be a shameless plug, but it is also a darned good book featuring your favorite AFm authors. Covers both recurve and compound archery.

Shooting Technique-Recurve Bows

The Simple Art of Winning by Rick McKinney A classic for Olympic style archers. Dan Quillian, a foremost authority on traditional archery, commented that, "This was the first book I have read in which the author got it pretty much all right." This book still sells well (around the world!) for good reason.

Understanding Winning Archery by Al Henderson This book is a little disjointed and a little dated but still a very valuable read. Now back in print.

Total Archery by KiSik Lee Olympic style archery by the most successful Olympic coach of today.

The Heretic Archer by Vittorio and Michele Frangilli Olympic style archery by one of the world's most successful Olympic style archers and his father/coach, somewhat controversial.

The Fundamentals of Recurve Target Archery by Ruth Rowe The author not only describes how to perform the shot but lays out a step-by-step plan for building championship form.

Traditional Archery by Sam Fadala A classic for traditional archers.

Precision Archery by Claudia Stevenson and Steve Ruis (Editors) This may be a shameless plug, but it is also a darned good book featuring your favorite AFM authors. Covers both recurve and compound archery.

The Mental Game

There are myriad books on the mental side of competition/performance and all of them have something to offer. These are my recommendations:

With Winning in Mind by Lanny Bassham This is a must read, and it is not just because Lanny writes for Archery Focus! There is a reason this book has sold over 100,000 copies and is being read by everyone from Olympic hopefuls to dog agility trainers. Read it, then read it again.

Winner or Loser? by Shig Honda and Ralph W. Newson Valuable for the twelve pages in the back on the mental game. The rest is somewhat dated. Very hard to find.

Golf is Not a Game of Perfect by Bob Rotella I know it is not an archery book, but if you read it thinking of archery, it all applies.

The Inner Game of Tennis by W. Timothy Gallway This is the bestseller that introduced the mental game to the general public. I know it is not an archery book, but if you read it thinking of archery, it all applies.

Equipment

A coach who hasn't mastered our equipment isn't going to be very helpful, so here are some aids to all of archery's equipment issues.

Simple Maintenance for Archery by Alan Henderson and Ruth Rowe This outstanding reference has almost everything you need to know about building arrows and bowstrings and maintaining archery equipment in a clear, step-by-step format with text and explanatory photos.

Bow and Arrow by Larry Wise Chock full of technical wisdom from one of the world's best compound bow mechanics/coaches/archers. A long time best archery seller on Amazon.com.

Mastering Bow Tuning by James Park A tour de force on tuning both recurve and compound bows.

Coaching

There are myriad books out there for coaches . . . of other sports. Many of them focus on team sports and thus are limited in their application to archery but here are some I have found useful:

Coaching Kids for Dummies by Rick Wolfe This is one of the now famous ". . . for Dummies" series. The author is the Chairman for the Center for Sports Parenting, which is a big clue as to why this book is immensely valuable for those of us who work with kids.

Coach's Little Book of Wisdom by Ron Quinn This tiny book is full of aphorisms for coaches of children, e.g. "Don't talk to your players about their parents unless you have something wonderful to say." A wonderful source of inspiration for youth and adult coaches.

The Parent's Guide to Coaching Physically Challenged Children by Richard Zulewski There is a limited number of books written to assist coaches of handicapped athletes. This is one I found that was helpful to me. There is even a small section specifically on archery, but the general information all seems quite good.

"The Holes"

There are three major "holes" in the archery coaching literature, from my viewpoint. One of those holes is books by successful coaches on how to coaching (like *Peak Performance Archery* mentioned above). I have become a major pest to many in the archery community by begging coaches to write about their coaching techniques. I will continue in that endeavor.

The second major hole in the archery literature is in the form of "drills." In all of the other sports, one can find books full of exercises, drills, and activities to build

the skills of the practitioners of those sports. In archery, one can occasionally find a drill here or there (double draws, reversals, clicker checks, Bernie Pellerite's target panic exercises, KiSik Lee's SPTs) but one has to read wide and far to accumulate even a few such coaching tools. In just one issue of *Golf* magazine, you can read more golf exercises/drills than archery exercises/drills I have been able to identify in all of my reading.

The third hole is help for coaches of handicapped archers. The Olympic Training Centers have been directed to expand their support for handicapped athletes, but the coach training programs haven't bolstered this aspect in their training programs yet and I haven't found much literature to recommend.

As editor of *This Magazine*, I can virtually guarantee that any article submitted on any of these three topics will get published. Please let me know if I have missed some treasure trove of information!

Other Media

I have planned a followup article on the audio and video materials that are becoming more and more abundant out there. I may combine that with an article on the web resources that are useful to coaches, but that may have to be an article unto itself. If you think I have missed any important books above, or you have a favorite video or audio program to recommend, please let me know at steve@archeryfocus.com.

Addendum

At my recent Level 4 Coach Training Course (and after writing this article) I asked if there were any information on archery-related injuries. One of the trainers plopped down on my table a book produced by FITA (in 2004!) on just that topic! (Thanks, Bill!) I will be reviewing the book, available from FITA on their website (www.archery.org), but it is irksome that none of the organizations I am affiliated with deemed it important enough to bring it to anyone's attention.

Steve Ruis is Editor of This Magazine.

SHOPPING FOR USED ARCHERY BOOKS

Here are three good places to start any used book search—Amazon.com, Abebooks.com and your local bookstores.

Amazon.com Yes, Amazon.com has used books as well as new ones. It even has a book searching function that allows you to indicate a book you want to buy (and how much you are willing to pay) that will spend weeks looking for your book. The way to start is to use Amazon.com's search engine. If the book is available new, it will tell you, and it will also tell you if it is available in used condition (including a rating of the physical condition of the book). If it is unavailable in either new or used condition, you may be able to order it.

Abebooks.com Abebooks.com (ABE stands for Advanced Book Exchange) is not a store in itself, but a site where used bookstores can market their inventories and stores they do have—over 13,500 of them! So, when you search this site you are rummaging through a huge number of used bookstores! The procedure is much like that of Amazon.com; there is a search engine (the advanced search functions allow you to set price ranges, publication dates, issues (hard or soft cover, etc.)) that works very nicely. All of your choices go into a shopping cart and one payment pays for all. Abebooks then pays all of the individual stores and you get emails from those stores acknowledging your purchases and giving shipping details. Be careful, though, since many of their stores are from far flung places (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, etc.), the shipping can be more than the price of the book (sometimes much more) and the shipping costs don't show up until you reach the next to last stage of the checkout procedure.

Abebooks.com has a companion site, www.bookfinder.com, that searches even more sites for your book (even Amazon.com).

Your Local Used and New Bookstores Be sure to check in with your local bookstores. They may not have the book you are looking for, but they tend to be well connected and can either order it or refer you to a place more likely to have it. And, like local archery pro shops, if you don't spend some of your money locally, that store may not be there the next time you need something.