

In Korea *Part 1 of 3*

Spring Break 2002 in Seoul, South Korea

This is my best effort to record the events of my trip to Seoul with Guy Krueger over March 7-17, 2002. I'm going to classify my experiences not by date or person, but by category. First, I will note all of the form changes that I made (or am currently working on) during the trip, with a note on the coach that made those changes. Second I will write down things of a mental training nature that I learned during the trip. All of these things came from Mr. Park, Kyung Rae during our taped seminar and over dinner. Finally, I will document the training methodology that I witnessed in Korea. As far as people outside Guy and I are concerned, this section may be the most beneficial.

Section 1—Form Adjustments

1) I began by meeting Mr. Lim, In-Teak at the Kyugki National Physical Education High School. (Mr. Lim coached Yun, Mi-Jin, and was also involved with Kim, Soo-Nyung and Kim-Chung Tae.) Mr. Lim noticed that I had an s shape in my back from putting all of my weight on my heels while shooting. He instructed me to place my weight on the balls of my feet instead, as this gave me more room to use my back as well as improving my balance. (I am in no way leaning forward. My stance is still very

upright, but my balance is on the balls of my feet rather than leaning back on my heels.)

2) Mr. Lim proposed that the pressure point of the grip should be at the throat, close to the center of the riser. His students use a very high grip to achieve this. I did not change my pressure point, but thought this was worth noting. The whole idea is to make a line from the target through the contact point of the grip, through the arrow and back out the elbow, all in one plane. You draw with your elbow along the plane and extend your bow hand forward along the plane upon the release. Your draw should not exit this plane, i.e. no excessive motion away from the line previously mentioned.

3) Mr. Lim instructed me to make my bow-hand “soft.” Translation, let it go with the riser. Watch any of the Korean women and you can see what he means. Their bow hands really go limp.

4) Mr. Lim noticed that I had a very slight fade in my bow arm to the left, and he promptly grilled me for that. This ties into number 2 above, everything runs along the axis of target to

hand through the back to the elbow.

5) Mr. Lim and Ms. Oh at the Kyung Hee University both noticed that I had some problems with my bow arm lurching forward upon the release. You can see this in a Win and



Win web page video. Mr. Lim addressed this by making me square my torso to the target bale as I am drawing. Doing so will lock my left scapula down, in addition to my left shoulder. This locks down the root of the bow arm, and Mr. Lim says it will fix some vertical grouping problems. Upon my return from Korea, this is the biggest thing for me to work on, as I believe this is one of the biggest problems with my form. I have to really rotate my torso hard and push my arm forward hard while I draw. My left and right scapula will almost touch if this is done properly. Even better, my bow arm will be super stable.



Mr. Lim's ability to see small but critical things like this is what makes him a great coach. I never would have noticed this problem. Over the past nine months I have been attempting to replicate Korean technique, but now I realize that I'm really just been attacking the cosmetic things. You have to pay attention to bone alignment, and this can be very difficult for me to see by myself on video. Working with a good coach is the best way to rectify these sorts of things. Now I will be aware of such oversights.

6) Mr. Park touched on this same problem, sort of by accident. As you will see from my tape of his talk with Guy and I, the scapula is the root of the body. The shoulder blades attach to your arms, your core, your waist, your neck, your everything. If you don't have perfect shoulder blade positioning, you don't have anything. If you line up your scapula, everything else will follow.

7) Ms. Oh noticed that my chest was really high while shooting, preventing good clearance from the bowstring. This was occurring because I was breathing in all the way during draw, and not releasing any of the air. Ms. Oh directed me to inhale and expell $\frac{2}{3}$ of my breath before drawing. This lowers my chest and tightens my abdominals, making me very stable. The problem is that I now find myself running out of breath while shooting. This still needs work.

On a random note, Ms. Oh also suggested a few equipment improvements. First, she and Yun, Mi Jin said that there should be no play between the nock and top and bottom nock locators. She removed my old serving and replaced it with a style that all the Koreans are using (including Yun and Lee Kyung-Jung, 30 meter world record holder) She used a small polyester twine, sort of like a cheap serving material, to literally serve on top and bottom nock locators, both about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch long. She began each with an overhand knot to establish the correct position without slipping, the she served it like a standard

serving. It works well, but provides no nocking point to line my Cavalier tab up on. (I'm talking about that little notch on the tab.) She added a small kisser button to my string as a check to make sure that my finger tab was in the same place each time. This was done with a narrow strip of paper and super glue, wrapped around on top of itself several times. All the girls were using this type of kisser button. Ms. Oh said that my finger tab leather should not touch the nock, and that I should line it up even between the top and bottom of the leather. The kisser is supposed to be a check to make sure that the tab is in the correct position. I'm not sure that I buy into this as being very consistent, because I feel that it takes a fairly large movement of the kisser to be noticable at your lips. I admitadly have ignored this portion of her advice and have chosen to line up my Cavlaier tab with the leather touching the top of the nock. (Or, if I'm shooting my Win and Win 360 tab, I line up the bottom of the leather with the nock.)

Overall, however, Ms. Cho and Mr. Lim were very positive about my shooting, and seemed confident that I could be a champion at the Olympics. My-Jin, Eun-Na and Kyung-Jung wished Guy and I "victory" as we left.

8) Finally, Mr. Lim instructed me to squeeze my bicep while shooting, in order to keep my release tight and fast. You can see in the girls that when this is done correctly the release is very tight to the neck and punc-

tual. Watching Yun on tape is a great way to get the idea. This is not pulling with your arms, don't mistake it as such, it is simply a method of preventing a flyaway release. Mr. Lim had me work on this by placing about three inches of an alluminum arrow shaft under my elbow with a piece of elastic and making me squeeze the shaft as I drew back. I have not yet mastered this, and should continue to drill it at home.



at the waist. I think this was a side affect of my attempts to get my weight over the balls of my feet. Make sure you keep a balanced center.

The next installment involves those aspects of mental training I picked up on the trip. This will be in the next issue.

With all of these changes, I think that incorporating them over the next two weeks will go a long way towards my becoming a consistent 1320 to 1330 shooter this year. I think that once I have mastered these things that I should stick to them throughout the season, focussing more on timing than technical changes during the competition season through August. I have to feel the shot inside out, and that is impossible to develop if major changes are made all year long. This is evident in last year's weak performance at the National Championships. I changed too much during the summer, and never really got a true feel for the shot.

Chris Shull is a member of the U.S. Archery Team. He currently lives and trains at the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, CA, having recently graduated from college.

9) I was having a typical plague of windage adjustments between distances, and I asked Mr. Park about this. He looked at my sight from the front and said that it looked a little off, but Guy told me the next day that I was canting my bow way to the right, about an inch and a half, which was sending my arrows that direction more and more as the target got farther away. I workd at it for a day or two and straightened up the bow, thus eliminating the tracking problems.



Here is Chris (far right) with his Pan American Team mates. Photo Courtesy of the NAA.

10) Finally, Mr. Lim brought up my long standing problem of leaning backwards while shooting. It seems that no matter how hard I try, this always comes back to haunt me. Mr. Lim said I should focus on correcting this by thinking of pitching my hips back (to my right) rather than bending my torso to the left.

11) Ms. Oh stressed the point of having perfect string alignment each shot. She felt that this becomes more and more important the better you get. The ideal place, she says, for the string is just inside the riser, where you can see it, but it doesn't block your view. I realized that I have been rather lazy with my string alignment, sort of believing that it isn't really a problem. In the future I will need to be more attentive.

12) Ms. Oh also noticed that I was leaning over a bit