



Interview with the Trafford family—six archers competing at the World Field Championships

Llwynypia Wales – 16 September 2008

The Trafford Family in Llwynypia

At the recent Field World Championships in Llwynypia (GBR), we had the chance to meet with a wonderful family of six, all of them competing! Explanations with Skip TRAFFORD, the father!

Skip, how is it possible that your entire family has shot in this event?

I actually have been in archery for 47 years. I had the pleasure of meeting former FITA President Jim EASTON and even his father. When I met my wife Charlene, I figured out that the only way for me to keep shooting was to get her excited about archery too. Fortunately, she was a sports woman already (playing basketball) and she really enjoyed archery. When our three daughters came, Rachael, Heather and Miriam, as well as the little boy, Hardy, we had them try archery at a pretty young age and obviously they liked it too! Although some categories are not official here, we all had the possibility to earn a place in the US team. It may seem like a family trip but in fact we do take this competition seriously.



Trafford girls playing national anthem for gold medal ceremonies

Have you done this before?

Yes! I have been travelling and living abroad for a long time due to my work (retired army colonel, now in the steel business). For instance, we have lived in Budapest for six years and we had the chance to do some tournaments in Eastern Europe, including the Field World Championships in Croatia in 2004. We also took part in a major competition in South Africa. Again, although it's a wonderful family experience, we really don't take it as a vacation. We want to compete the best we can.

How do you all get ready for competition in the early morning?

Well... it takes some organisation but here I must thank my wonderful wife and the kids. Sometimes, Hardy and I must be really, really, quick in the bathroom in order to free the place for the ladies, but overall they do a wonderful job to get ready on time. I guess when you have a passion for archery it also helps you going out there early, ready to shoot on the course.

Multi-talented: Rachael and Heather playing the USA national anthem

Five of you shoot barebow and Rachael does recurve, why?

I think barebow is the easiest way to learn archery when you are a child. It's also a bit more instinctive, a lot fun. Miriam for instance is a very fast shooter with her barebow. Archery is a school for life. The kids learn how to set goals for themselves, how to handle their own equipment. Then, when Rachael turned 14, we wanted her to try shooting recurve, because it is the Olympic discipline. She is doing pretty well and she is now in the US youth team and trains with the famous coach Kisik LEE. Heather actually will have an interview this fall with the coach to see if she can enter the team as well. We all dream that one or some of them will make it to the London 2012 Olympic Games or later.

How do you train at home?

We actually have a very large place behind our house in Louisiana, where we could install a 16-target

course! So we are all ready to shoot at home whenever we want. I just hope the hurricane will not destroy everything right now... (Redaction note: at the time of the interview a hurricane was on its way there).

Here comes Hardy, the son, running around from one bow to another!

Hello Hardy, how did you enjoy the competition today?

I just love shooting at targets! Unfortunately, I aimed a bit high a couple of times but overall it was a lot of fun.

Do you think you are in vacation here or in a competition?

For me it's a kind of vacation but I want to shoot well. I am always in a bit of a kind of competition with Miriam who is only two years older than me.

What do you expect for the future?

It would be cool to be a famous archer one day, to shoot really well. I watched the Olympic Games last month, it was awesome! I hope I will be there one day!

Turning back to Skip

So Skip, Hardy is quite a boy... anything to add?

Sometimes, he has won the top actor position in his school play... He was actually named after Hardy Ward the 1969 World Champion. Back then, it was common to have big families shooting altogether on the range. Right now, a family of six seems a bit fantastic, but somehow it is a tribute to these families back then. It perpetuates the tradition of archery! So thank you for interviewing us and putting this tradition forward!

Thank you Skip!

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