

## CHAPTER 6

### SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

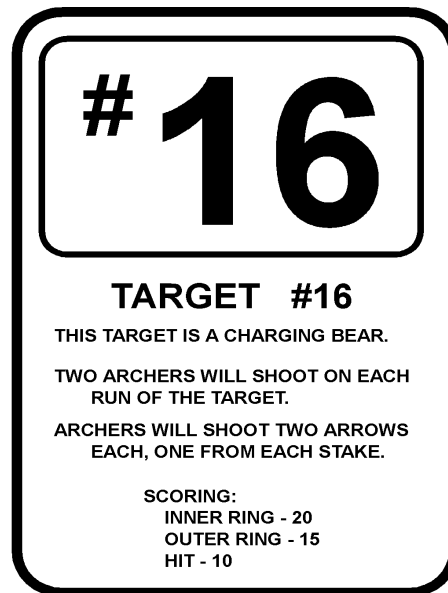
You have now designed the best 3-D course you have ever seen. The true test that awaits you is the upcoming open shoot your club is planning. But wait! What about the finishing touches for a professional appearance? What more could the course use? How about the finishing touches to make the course as easy to follow as it is satisfying to shoot. Your new course should have a uniform, complete and simple system of markings. The main ideas here are **simplicity** and **colours!** Each shooting lane should have a shooting station sign or number board, individual shooting stakes or ribbons, and trail markings. You may also plan for the siting of bow-hangers.

Station Signs. Individual shooting lanes should have readily identifiable signs to show where they are along the trail. Station signs could have space for shooting instructions or target scoring reminders. Figure 16 shows a sample station sign with all of these features. Consider how your lane signs will be mounted, screws (and a cordless screwdriver) will allow changes and removal during the off-season to protect them. Inexpensive signs can be made of bright plastic signboard material with stenciled numbers. They should be large enough to catch the eye and consistently placed for height. Be sure to position each sign such that, from the shooting station, it faces along the trail toward the direction from which each group of archers will approach.

Shooting Stakes. Shooting positions are usually marked by surveyors tape or stakes on 3-D courses. Different colours of tape are often used to establish positions for classes of archers based on age or equipment. I recommend stakes as preferable to tape for this purpose, they are less likely to be accidentally moved and they certainly can't be moved by bending a branch. Fresh white or fluorescent orange pickets of 2" x 2" lumber standing 12-18 inches high will suit most areas. For best effect, paint the top 3-4 inches of the stake and add a matching coloured tape flag about 12 inches long below this.

The Canadian 3-D Round Rules proposed by The FCA requires that stakes or ribbons mark the shooting position. Yellow stakes/ribbons for the Cub class and blue stakes/ribbons for all other classes. Shooters must be able to physically and comfortably touch the stake/ribbon from their shooting

# THE SHOOTING STATION SIGN



position. Stakes/ribbons furthest from the target are shot first. A set of the 3-D Round Rules has been included in the Guide at Annex A.

Trail markings. Surveyors' tape is the old standby for marking a course trail also, but care must be taken to avoid confusing trail marking and shooting positions. The trail should be marked at consistent intervals with a distinct and visible marking system. Ideally the next two marks should be visible from any point on the trail. This helps archers visualize the general direction of the trail, rather than mechanically walking from mark to mark. Ensure that the trail can be quickly located after scoring a target and take extra care if your trail sometimes continues from the target, and sometimes continues from the shooting station. A few additional markings can eliminate potential problems with finding the continuing trail. Alternatively, add some other indicator, such as bow hangers at the appropriate junction, to mark the continuing trail. When necessary, guiding signs can be posted at a consistent height to help archers keep the trail.

If trails are ever changed, the removal of old marks (tapes, signs, and clearly worn tracks) must be done completely so that no doubt exists as to where the archers are supposed to walk. On some courses the occasional leftover piece of tape or trail marker from past shoots can be dangerously misleading.

Leave nothing to chance with the marking and checking of the trail. If archers have difficulty with this during a shoot, they will be wandering where you least want them, into the danger areas. And don't take your own word for it, you already know where you are going. Obtain the help of someone who is not familiar with the new path. Brief him or her on the marking system and see if they can **easily** follow it around, (without hints!). Fix the problems as they are identified.

If you don't like to use surveyors' tape for trail marking, you will have to come up with an alternative. One possibility which is equally easy to employ are small markers of signboard material. Screwed to the trees, they can be recovered when the trail changes. But take care, this type of marking can only be seen well from one side of the tree. I have seen some clubs that used tree-blazing as a method of marking the course trail. This works for permanent courses, but they cannot be removed and archers following a blazed trail need **really clear** markings if the trail ever changes from the blazed route.

Bow-hangers. One of the conveniences most appreciated by archers on 3-D courses are bow-hangers. During wet days bows are kept off the ground and it ensures that your own brand-new camouflage bow won't be stepped on by a waiting archer (it doesn't get lost as easily either). Bowhangers could be sited at the point the trail continues, showing the way after each target. Some clubs construct wooden bow-hangers, either tree-mounted or freestanding. An effective alternative is the use of 5-6" lag bolts with a sleeve of plastic tubing on the outer 3-4". The plastic tubing protects bows and the lag bolts can be easily recovered and moved, if necessary. This ensures that no nails will be left in the trees, especially on leased or loaned land.

"Don't Shoot" Markers. A safety feature which can compliment any 3-D course, each permanent target butt can be equipped with a 6" red plastic triangle hanging on a few feet of chain. When an archer is searching for an arrow, this hangs in front of the target to warn following archers that someone is near that target butt. Unfortunately, plastic markers can be damaged by inconsiderate archers firing at them. My recommendation to anyone planning to incorporate this feature would be to use metal markers. This way, those with vandalistic intentions can pay for their irresponsible acts in arrows. A similar approach could be used with 3-D rounds, perhaps the use of a small bright flag to be draped over a target would suffice to prevent a tragedy.

Boundary Signs. Every club should consider marking the course property. Well-sited signs warning people of the club's presence and activities may prevent a tragedy. I've seen one club where the adjacent conservation area was a repeated source of concern as wandering mountain-bikers "discovered" the club trails. It's not just the road and open property boundaries that should be posted, any possible avenue of approach should be identified, marked and blocked if necessary, for the safety of all. See Figure 17 for a sample course boundary warning sign. The inclusion of a contact telephone number ensures that the curious have an alternative to wandering in for a quick look.

**ARCHERY  
COURSE  
BOUNDARY  
SIGN**

**STOP**  
**ARCHERY RANGE**

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YOU ARE ENTERING LAND USED BY THE TRADITIONAL  
ARCHERS OF STILLWATER FOR AN ARCHERY RANGE.

DO NOT PASS THIS POINT. YOU MAY BE PLACING  
YOURSELF IN DANGER.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: MIKE O'LEARY 555-9292

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**DANGER**