



## Sylvan Archers Newsletter - March 2020

Please Note:

Our website address **HAS CHANGED.**

It is now [sylvanarchers.com](http://sylvanarchers.com)

April member meeting is April 2nd at 7:00 pm. Location TBD.  
Please keep checking the website.

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### Covid-19 and Sylvan Archers

I am sure everyone is a bit worn out by all the emails and notifications businesses are sending out regarding Covid-19 (aka the coronavirus) so I will keep this brief. At this time we are not planning to close access to Sylvan, we just ask that you follow some pretty easy guidelines you already know about.

1. Social distancing- still shoot with your family and friends just remember to keep some space on the line or take turns if necessary to maintain about 6ft between each person. It might take a bit longer to finish a course that way, but is that really a bad thing?
2. Wash your hands often- harder to do on the course so if you have some, carry some hand sanitizer, or wash before and after leaving the courses.
3. Don't touch your face- you never know if you may have touched something contaminated.

My suggestion for archers specifically- Don't handle anyone else's equipment or pull their arrows. Just good common sense for all parties involved right now and not meant to offend anyone.

**Nikki Underwood**  
*President (Interim)*

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**JOAD - Practice Ideas While Stuck at Home**

Greetings all,

Let me start by saying this will be a bit of a long one as not all of the suggestions will apply to every one of you. I will try to provide a decent descriptive header so if you see a section that doesn't apply go on to the next - Note you may fit more than one so don't stop at the first one.

**For everyone:**

There are a variety of practice tools you can make that will allow you to work on/practice your form that do not require space to shoot.

The most basic is the string bow - simply a loop of string or nylon cord made into a loop long enough for you to reach anchor and practice your draw and release. The loop can be sized so you can hook it between the thumb and fingers and run down your palm on your bow hand or you can make it a bit longer and just let the excess hang down from your hand.

You can use paracord but I usually remove the inner core so the cord is a bit more flexible as it is more comfortable for your hands.

For recurve shooters you use it to practice your draw, back tension, release and follow through - working specifically on just relaxing your fingers for the release (fingers should drop down not extend out).

For compound shooters, if you have some D-Loop material you can add one so you can work on your release techniques. If you don't have actual D-loop material, find some heavy duty thread or thin enough string to work the same way. When you work on your release, practice a slow steady pull.

For those with wrist releases, have a relaxed release hand so the pressure is just from your index finger and from your back tension.

The other can be used by any shooter but does work best for recurves (barebow and olympic) and it is the PVC bow. Get a 5 foot or longer piece of schedule 40 PVC (try to avoid any that's been baked in the sun) and drill a hole at the top and bottom end (same side) and tie a piece of paracord to make a bow. It is a good form tool as it offers some resistance but not a huge amount.

Practice your form - particularly getting to anchor with proper alignment of shoulders and draw arm relative to bow hand. A mirror works great as you can see if your elbow is chicken winging out or is dropping into line.

NOTE - you can dry fire a PVC bow without risk of it blowing up but it will transfer A LOT of hand shock and will likely slap your wrist hard so I don't recommend it. For compound shooters, adding a D-loop will let you practice your drawing technique for

alignment but you will not get much practice using the wall.

**For those who can shoot at home even if very limited in range:**

For the lucky ones who can shoot at distance, go for it. And if you have a wide range of yardages, shoot as many as you can and collect your site, crawl or gaps as it will be useful when we go out on the field or 3D courses.

If you are like me and can only manage short yardages at home (I can mainly only get about 3 yards - well its a bit less but I like to think its more) one drill I've started doing is a 3m 30X. The drill requires a three spot target (if you don't have any there are sites online you can use to print your own targets) and the drill is to shoot 30 arrows in a row (3 at a time) where they all hit in the X ring.

If you miss, you need to start over.

If you have the room, once you successfully shoot 30Xs in a row you can move the target back 2-3 yards/meters and try again. It is a good drill for working on your mental focus. The key is the ability to focus on one arrow at a time and really build the feel of a good shot so you can repeat it over and over again.

**For the recurve archers (barebow and olympic):**

It is best if you have a form or shot trainer so you don't have to worry about having a target or backstop and there is no chance to dry fire the bow. So if you do, use that in the following drill. (NOTE: if you have one and also have a compound, DO NOT USE the shot trainer with a compound - the transition from the valley to the peak is to sudden and will likely cause injury).

For those without, you can still do the following drill but it is best if you have a good backstop so you can nock an arrow.

If you don't have either, the drills can still be done but be very careful to not dry fire the bow.

The drill is a hold and let down drill. Draw the bow back using your proper form and hold as long as you can. The moment you feel your form starting to fail (can't keep your bow arm back or the bow starts dancing around because you can't keep it steady, etc) then let down. Do a count in your head and see if you can get up to a hold count of 60 - it is HARD so may take a long time.

Take at least a 90 second rest then try again. When too tired, stop.

Do this no more than once every other day as your muscles will require rest time to rebuild.

This drill will help build confidence in your ability to control the bow.

**For compound shooters without a place to shoot:**

Its tough to keep up the strength to shoot properly if you cannot shoot the bow. Some of the form drills can help but nothing beats shooting.

Two options you can try to help with form and strength are the following. NOTE - the drill in this section will require pulling just enough on the string to set the bow into your grip. This means barely any.

If you are pulling hard enough that the cams start to move YOU ARE PULLING WAY TOO HARD.

The second option is in the following "For Everyone" section - basic strength building.

Go through the first few steps of your draw process. Go through the steps up to bringing up the bow to address the target. Make sure you are not drawing the bow (unless you have an arrow on the string and a place to shoot it) and hold. You need enough pressure to pull the bow into your grip so both shoulders are helping hold the weight but not enough to get the cams rolling.

While not perfect this will help build/maintain strength of your bow arm shoulder. Hold until the bow starts to drop which should happen before the shoulder starts to hurt.

Another warning - never draw a compound bow with a release without an arrow on the rest and somewhere safe for the arrow to go if the trigger releases. If the trigger is pulled or the release fails someone or something is going to get hurt.

**For Everyone:**

This is a good time to work on your shot sequence - yes that does mean writing it down and going through it in your head while practicing and while sitting around bored.

It is also a good time for general exercise to build strength and stamina. Good all round exercise will help you maintain strength and be better prepared to get back to full shooting form faster if you can't shoot in the interim.

**In Closing:**

It can be tough as things get more restrictive in the efforts to reduce the potential impact of this new virus. As a number of people have noted - It will be hard to determine if we over-reacted but easy to tell if we under-react. So I hope you all stay healthy as this progresses.

For the future JOAD sessions, I will keep up to date with the recommendations from a number of sources to determine when we will start back up. I am holding out hope for mid April but have my doubts.

I will update all on this list as I know more. If you are in doubt and haven't seen any

updates, assume we are still on hold.

As always, if you have questions or want more suggestions just reach out and ask.

Mike Ellerbe



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