

## The Genesis of Field Archery

With the recent influx of recruits to the SFAA, we thought it valuable to detail the history of our sport – competitive marked distance field archery.

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a handful of American outdoorsmen re-introduced game shooting with the bow and arrow. In the closed season they and their friends kept their hands in by practising shooting at inanimate targets set out at varying distances and over all kinds of terrain. This appealed greatly to both hunters and non-hunters who welcomed an enjoyable alternative to target archery.

America's target body, the National Archery Association (NAA) was approached and asked if it would be interested in the new sport. They were not, so the enthusiasts formed the National Field Archery association (NFAA) in 1939 and set about promoting their chosen sport. After a few years, it was noted the *new kid on the block had clicked* on the American sporting scene and the NAA added field archery to their programmes.

Unfortunately, this pattern of delayed acceptance appears to have been repeated over the years by other bodies that have initially distanced themselves from field shooting before finally embracing it.

Field archery arrived in Europe via US Air Force personnel based there after World War 2 and in 1966 a Scottish contingent took part in a major NFAA event in Munich - Germany. Fired with enthusiasm they returned home and drew up plans for an autonomous Scottish body. Launched in July 1966 the Scottish Field Archery Association (SFAA) subsequently made a successful bid host to the first European Field Archery Championship staged in the United Kingdom. Held in 1967, within a Forestry Commission plantation at Cullaloe - Fife, it was such a success it inspired English archers to form their own NFAA style field association in November 1967.

In 1968, talks involving Sweden, Germany, Scotland, England, Wales, Canada the USA and an advisory body called the Archery Association of Europe (AAE) took place to discuss the formation of an umbrella body for all NFAA national bodies. The 7<sup>th</sup> of August 1970 saw the inaugural meeting of this new organisation, the International Field Archery Association (IFAA), in Heidelberg - Germany. Seven nations enrolled and over the years others joined until, at the time of writing, there are now thirty eight making the IFAA the largest archery body in the world.

The SFAA is very proud to have been one of the IFAA founding members along with the other home nations England (EFAA) and Wales (WFAA).

Information on the SFAA *Firsts* web page shows how we, as the governing body for field archery in Scotland, have consistently led from the front both hosting and attending major IFAA tournaments. We are recognised by the IFAA as their representative body in Scotland.

Over the forty two years since our inauguration a host of SFAA members have travelled the globe returning with European and World honours. This is in large part due to the formation of IFAA with its *open tournament* policy which permits each and every interested member to compete at the highest level without any pre-qualification or grading/ selection scheme. It allows individuals to compete, enjoy and shine.