

**SAINTS**



**ARCHERY**

# 404<sup>th</sup> Silver Arrow Competition



**– 1618-2022 –**

**OPEN MEETING | ST GEORGE & ALBION**

**Sunday 3rd April 2022**  
Sports Centre, St Leonard's Road  
St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DY

HOSTED BY

**The University of St Andrews Archery Club**

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## HISTORY OF THE SILVER ARROW ARCHERY COMPETITION

The Silver Arrow is Scotland's most ancient archery competition with a history stretching back over 400 years. The competition has a long and distinguished history; an early legend purports that the Marquis of Montrose, while an undergraduate at St. Andrews, sent an arrow flying over St. Salvator's Tower to land on the Dean of Arts. This mild oversight was, however, more than compensated for by his winning the Silver Arrow in 1628. The competition has had many distinguished winners over the centuries, including Robert son of Struan (1687), Tullibardine (1706), Dempster of Dunnichen (1750) and the grandson of Archbishop Shairp (1710-1714). The oldest medal in the University dates from 1618.

In 1318 King Robert the Bruce ordered that every man who possessed goods equal to the value of a cow should own a spear or 'a gud bow with a schaft of arrows'. The statute of 1457 banned football and golf and decreed that every parish should have a bowman, and that 'wappennshaws' were to be held four times a year, which came to be looked upon as recreational and social occasions. The growing popularity of archery as a recreational sport towards the end of the sixteenth century resulted in the introduction of the Silver Arrow Competition in St Andrews.

The earliest known references are from the diaries of James Melville, but the first detailed description comes from Mackay's 'Journey through Scotland' of 1723: "in St Leonard's is kept a silver arrow that is shot for by the students every year to keep up that noble and ancient exercise of archery, and he that wins it appends to it his coat of arms on a silver plate. This was brought to such a height by the emulation of scholars that some plates are as large as platters, which discouraging the poorer sort, who although good archers, dust not shoot their best for fear of winning and so exposing their poverty, the University suppressed this ponderous arrow and set up another rule that no plate appended to it should exceed an ounce".

The competition, which was held under the auspices of the Faculty of Arts in June of each year, seems to have been open to all students of the university, and the winner had the privilege of presenting a silver medal to be hung upon the Arrow. The contest normally took place at the Bow Butts on the edge of the links, though both St Salvator's and St Leonard's Colleges had butts in their own grounds. The relics of the competition consist of three arrows and seventy medals. The oldest arrow covered the period until the Civil War, the second from the Restoration to 1703; the third from 1704 to 1754. The second and third arrows have each twelve rings for suspending the medals. The second arrow bears an inscription along its length: "Ter praemia primus Accipiet, flavaque caput necteur Olivia," and this is repeated (with a slight variation) on its successor. The third arrow alone is dated (1704). The medals, while varying considerably in size and shape, follow a fairly standard design, the obverse generally bearing the coat of arms of the winner, and the reverse a figure of an archer. Most of them were made either at Edinburgh or Dundee.

For the first period (1618-1642), there are eleven medals. All are comparatively small, the commonest size being about a half by a quarter inches. The series includes the medals of Argyll (1623), David Leslie (1626) and Montrose (1628). For the second period (1675-1703), there are twenty-four medals of very much larger dimensions and more elaborate design. A favourite size is 5 1/2 by 4 1/4 inches, but Lord Leslie's medal for 1694 attains the monstrous proportions of 8 by 5 7/8 inches. Among the winners, the best known name is that of Alexander Robertson of Struan (1687). For the third period (1704-1754) there are thirty-five medals. Until 1707 these were still very large, but hereafter restrictions were imposed on this extravagance by the University authorities, and from 1710 few medals are larger than some 3 1/2 by 3 inches, and all are of a simple oval design.

The competition ceased in the mid-eighteenth century, and was not revived until 1970 by the Kate Kennedy Club. The competition was then taken over soon after by the University

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**of St Andrews Archery Club and it has been the designation of the President every year to run the competition up until the present day.**

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<b>Dates</b>	Sunday 3 <sup>th</sup> April 2022
<b>Venue</b>	Sports Centre, St Leonard's Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DY (Park at Observatory)
<b>Organiser</b>	University of St Andrews Archery Club Email: <a href="mailto:archery@st-andrews.ac.uk">archery@st-andrews.ac.uk</a>
<b>Entry Fee</b>	One Day: Seniors £15, Juniors/Students £12 Students must bring a valid student card for inspection. LATE ENTRIES WILL COST AN ADDITIONAL £2 PER ENTRY <b>Attendees under the age of 18 MUST be accompanied at all times by a responsible adult.</b> <b>Bank transfers to ST ANDREWS UNI ARCHERY CLUB</b> <b>80-09-55, 00811802</b> <b>All entries must be paid by BACS and returned electronically to <a href="mailto:archery@st-andrews.ac.uk">archery@st-andrews.ac.uk</a></b>
<b>Closing Date</b>	Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
<b>Rounds</b>	St George (Senior Gents), Albion (Senior Ladies/Novice Gents), Windsor (Novice Ladies), Windsor variant (Juniors – age dependent) Juniors/Novices may elect to shoot senior rounds at no additional cost.
<b>Scoring</b>	Double scoring
<b>Inspection/Assembly</b>	Inspections will begin at 09:30, assembly at 09:45.
<b>Start of competition</b>	Competition will start at 10:00 with one end of 6 sighters.
<b>Archery GB rules</b>	There will be four archers per boss 5 zone scoring applies - i.e. 9, 7, 5, 3, 1 on 122cm face  St George Round consists of 3 dozen arrows each at 100, 80 & 60 yards Albion Round consists of 3 dozen arrows each at 80, 60 & 50 yards Windsor Round consists of 3 dozen arrows each at 60, 50 & 40 yards Other Windsor variants: Short(50,40,30), Junior(40,30,20), SJ(30,20,10)
<b>Awards</b>	Medals will be awarded in each category subject to the minimum entry of: 1-2 Gold, 3 Gold & Silver, 4+ Gold, Silver and Bronze  N.B. medals will be ordered at the designated closing date, medals may be delayed for late entries which alter medal allocations.  The Silver Arrow trophy will be awarded to the highest score from all non-compound categories.
<b>Judges</b>	TBC
<b>Lady Paramount/Lord Patron</b>	TBC

**All archers are requested to aid with setting out the field, moving targets between distances and helping to clear the field at the end of the shoot.**

All Archery GB cards will be inspected. Archers who cannot show a card or receipt will NOT BE PERMITTED TO SHOOT.



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**ENTRIES WILL NOT BE PROCESSED UNLESS ACCOMPANIED WITH THE APPROPRIATE PAYMENT**

Closing date for receipt of entries: **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022**