

# COMPOUND: STEPPING UP

*Duncan Busby rates the current intermediate compound bows on the market*

Archery is unique in the world of sports, unlike football, tennis or even athletics if you want to compete you must do some pretty heavy investing first. For this reason it's often been said that archery is elitist. All sports have different spending options, depending on the brand name and quality of the item you're buying, but for us it's rarely as simple as picking up a standard size ball, a racket in your price range or a pair of trainers in your shoe size. Compound competition bows often nudge over £1000 or \$1300 and they come in a massive range of sizes and features, so it's no wonder that many find the sport inaccessible. So what options are there for the youth shooter who'll outgrow their bow in a year or two, the older archer who's having to constantly adapt their set-up to accommodate their physical limitations, or even the up and coming future pro who is continuously making adjustments to themselves and their equipment?

Bows that offer adjustability at a low price

will often be described as intermediate, but don't be put off by this term; it's no longer associated with compromise. Many manufacturers offer an affordable bow range that have all the performance and quality of their flagship models but with enough features to make the bow relevant to you for as long as possible.

With the most expensive compound target bows now selling for £1600 in the UK and \$1800 in the US, top of the range professional equipment can seem out of reach for a lot of archers. Competition ready beginners' bows are available for less than \$200, but these often don't quite fit the requirements of more serious and seasoned shooters. The intermediate market is the perfect way to level the playing field without having to continually break the bank and for those of us who love this sport it's great that we can all be a part of it.

So here are my top choices for competition ready target bows that really do have it all.



## > PSE - SUPRA FOCUS

**Brace Height:** 7"

**Axle To Axle:** 37"

**IBO Speed:** 328 - 320 fps

**Let Off:** 65 - 75%

**Mass Weight:** 4.7 lbs

**Draw Length Range:** 26" – 31 1/2"

**Max Draw Weight lbs:** 50, 60

**Price:** £850/ \$1100

PSE are a huge name in the archery market especially with their compound bows; renowned for producing high quality equipment which is used by some of the world's best archers they are a force to be reckoned with. PSE's range of compound bows is massive but one of their more

popular target models is the Supra Focus and with good reason. With its long deflex riser design the Supra Focus's stable 37" axle to axle length makes it both steady to aim and deadly accurate. The smooth drawing Evolve cams give a huge range of draw length adjustment and their sliding module design, which is quick and easy to adjust without the need of a bow press, allows you to customise your let-off; an invaluable feature when it comes to fine tuning your bow. A 7" brace height helps make the Supra Focus a forgiving bow whilst still delivering good arrows speeds. Its mass weight of 4.7lbs means you won't be struggling to make it through a day's shooting and for those of you who prefer a longer bow the

Supra Focus also comes in an XL model. This stretches the axle to axle length to 40" with a 7.5" brace height, perfect if you are looking for a little more stability on the target range. PSE also offer short or long draw length options on the Supra range making it easy for you to find a bow that fits. The Supra Focus is one of PSE's premium bows and with all those features and a fast growing fan base amongst the Pro's its price tag is rather surprising.

[www.merlinarchery.co.uk](http://www.merlinarchery.co.uk)  
[www.psearchery.com](http://www.psearchery.com)

## > MYBO - ORIGIN

**Axle to Axle:** 35"

**Brace Height:** 7.75" (Cam 1)

**Brace Height:** 7.25" (Cam 2)

**Mass Weight:** 4.5lbs

**IBO Speed:** 318fps

**Draw Length Range Cam 1:** 27" - 31"

**Draw Length Range Cam 2:** 24" - 27"

**Let off:** 65% - 80%

**Max draw weight lbs - Standard:**

40, 50, 60

**Max draw weight lbs - Custom:**

35, 45, 55, 65

**Price:** £500

Coming in at 35" axle to axle and with a 7.75" brace height Mybo's first bow release is a perfect choice for both target and field shooting and weighing in at 4.5lbs in the hand it's light enough for most archers to handle. It offers a huge range of adjustability; the Origin's simple sliding module draw length adjustment allows you to quickly alter your draw length without the need of a bow press or cam change. The super smooth cam system delivers an easy draw cycle and plenty of arrow speed, with the added bonus of having a fully customisable wall. This clever design allows you to easily adjust your holding weight and change the feel of that wall from a hard dead stop to a softer spongier one, making it one of the most comfortable feeling bows you'll ever shoot. Available in eight striking target colours the Mybo Origin will stand out on any shooting line putting the other bows through their paces at a very affordable price.

[www.merlinarchery.co.uk](http://www.merlinarchery.co.uk)



## > MATHEWS - CONQUEST 4

**Brace Height:** 7"

**Axle to Axle:** 40 5/8"

**Mass Weight:** 4.4lbs

**IBO Speed:** 310 fps

**Let Off:** 65%

**Max Draw Weight lbs:** 40, 50, 60, 70

**Draw Length Range:** 24" - 32"  
depending on cam

**Price:** £870/\$1100

Mathews is a company that needs no introduction: they've been making top quality tournament and hunting bows for over 25 years now and have never failed to impress with their offerings. Famous for pioneering single cam technology, Mathews have recently moved into the twin cam world with their seemingly unstoppable market leading range. That said it would be foolish to discount the merits of one of their older models, the Conquest 4. Still featuring in Mathews current range, the Conquest 4 uses the single cam technology that made the

brand famous all those years ago and it's just as relevant today as it ever was.

Measuring in at 40 5/8" axle to axle the Conquest 4 is an extremely stable bow, ideal for target shooting, however its slim profile and 4.4lb mass weight make it a decent option for field archers as well. A forgiving 7" brace height ensures the bow is easy to shoot and the Max cam does exactly what a single cam should, giving the Conquest 4 a silky smooth draw and making it one of the easiest tuning bows on the market. A slightly slower IBO speed of 310 fps and the need for a new cam and sometimes idler wheel, whenever you need to alter the draw length outside of 1/2" or so makes the Conquest 4 a little less adaptable than some other models but these things aren't deal breakers. The Conquest 4 continues to be a great option for anyone looking for a solid, stable bow which is easy to set up and tune, and at that price you get a lot bang for your buck.

[www.clickersarchery.co.uk](http://www.clickersarchery.co.uk)  
[www.mathewsinc.com](http://www.mathewsinc.com)

## > BOWTECH - SPECIALIST 2

**Brace Height:** 7 1/8"

**Axle to Axle:** 38"

**Mass Weight:** 4.5lbs

**IBO Speed:** 322 FPS

**Let Off:** 80%

**Max Draw weight lbs:** 40, 50, 60

**Draw Length Range:** 23"- 32.5"

**Price:** £680/\$750

Bowtech are another big beast of the compound world; many of their technical innovations are now commonplace on the majority of our bows and it is this dedication to design and development that has made them a leading force in the archery industry. Bowtech offer a wide range of compound bows to suit every archer and application and their latest

offering, inspired by the original Specialist, has all the makings of a classic target bow. Its generous 38" axle to axle length and 7 1/8" brace height give it a stable and forgiving platform, and the new Clutch Performance Grip system which alters the angle of the grip, allows you to sit the bow perfectly in your hand. Bowtech's superb Binary cam system is used to great effect on the Specialist 2; not only do the rotating modules give the bow a huge range of draw length adjustment but it delivers fantastic downrange arrow speeds with no sacrifice to comfort or consistency. All this on a bow that weighs just 4.5lbs and retails for a very reasonable price; the Specialist 2 is a perfect intermediary choice.

[www.cbarchery.co.uk](http://www.cbarchery.co.uk)

[www.bowtecharchery.com](http://www.bowtecharchery.com)



## > WIN & WIN/WIAWIS - ATOM X PRO 37

**Brace Height:** 8 5/16" (39 is 7 3/4")

**Axle to Axle:** 37"

**Mass Weight:** 5.29 lb (39 is 5.4lb)

**IBO Speed:** 321 FPS

**Let Off:** 60 – 80%

**Max Draw Weight lbs:** 40 50 60 70

**Draw Length Range:** 26 1/4" – 33 1/2" depending on cam

**Price:** £515

Win & Win are a household name in the archery business and a giant in the recurve world. Several years ago they decided to turn their attention to creating a compound bow and now offer several different models in their ever growing range. Released under the WIAWIS brand, the Atom-X Pro is one of the latest offerings from this iconic company. With axle to axle lengths of either 37" or 39" and generous brace heights of 8.25" and 7.75" respectively, the Atom-X Pro is a perfect choice for the serious target archer. Fitted with a smooth hybrid cam system the Atom-X Pro promises

to be easy to tune and smooth to draw, the advertised IBO speeds of 320+ fps will ensure it is no slouch when it comes to downrange speed either. There is an impressive range of draw length adjustment available across the range, although you would need to swap the cams if you required a big change so choosing the correct one for your approximate draw length is important if you want to avoid spending further money. A particular quirk to the brand is that they don't offer the Atom-X Pro in a left handed option, so this bow is only suitable for right handed archers. Despite this the Atom-X Pro looks to be a well built piece of kit with some interesting features, like the ability to 'press' the bow using the limb bolts, so no need for a bow press. It is on the heavy side weighing in at 5.3lbs; the trade off for a super rigid riser, but with a price tag of just over £500 you really are getting a lot of bow for your money.

[www.merlinarchery.co.uk](http://www.merlinarchery.co.uk)

[www.wiawis.com](http://www.wiawis.com)



## > BEAR – REVIVAL

**Brace Height:** 7"

**Axle to Axle:** 37 1/2"

**Mass Weight:** 4.4 lb

**IBO Speed:** 320 fps

**Let Off:** 75%

**Draw Weight lbs:** 45-60 and 55-70

**Draw Length Range:** 27" - 30.5

**Price:** £630

Bear Archery are an established company with over 80 years of experience in the business; although less known in the UK they have a huge following in America where many seasoned archers put their

trust in their high quality equipment. Bear offers a good range of compound bows which cover every style of shooting; the Revival is particularly suited to target archery. Measuring in at 37.5" axle to axle with a comfortable brace height of 7" the Revival is definitely at home on the target range and at 4.4lbs in the hand it would equally be an ideal field bow as well. Equipped with hybrid cam technology the Revival is simple to tune and delivers a smooth, easy-to-draw experience, while offering a good amount of draw length adjustability. It also boasts 15lbs of draw weight adjustment so you can be sure it will adapt to your needs for years to come.

## > SANLIDA – HERO X10

**Brace Height:** 7.5"

**Axle to Axle:** 40"

**Mass Weight:** 4.6lbs

**IBO Speed:** 330 FPS

**Let Off:** 70-75%

**Max Draw Weight:** lbs 50, 60

**Draw Length Range:** 27"- 29.5"

**Price:** £675

A slightly less known manufacturer in the archery world, Chinese brand Sanlida are fast making a name for themselves for producing top quality equipment at a very reasonable price. They offer a range of archery kit including several compound bows for both the target and hunting market; their advanced target compound is the Hero X10. Its shoot-through riser design gives the bow a strong, rigid platform; usually found on much more expensive models. This feature adds to the consistency and accuracy of the bow and weighing in at a respectable 4.6lbs it hasn't added much to the overall mass of the bow either. A 40" axle to axle length and 7.5" brace height add to the Hero X10's shootability and help to make it an extremely stable and forgiving option. The hybrid cam system allows for a smooth draw cycle and easy tuning process; it gives a reasonable range of draw length adjustment, although those with a longer or shorter than average draw length may struggle. The IBO speed of 330fps means that you shouldn't have any problems with downrange arrow speeds though. Despite

being relative newcomers, Sanlida have put time and effort into their bow design and materials, which should help to establish them as a quality brand and it certainly makes the Hero X10 a bow to consider.

[www.cbarchery.co.uk](http://www.cbarchery.co.uk)  
[www.sanlidaarchery.com](http://www.sanlidaarchery.com)