



WINTER TOURNAMENT TRAIL

The indoor season offers archers across the globe the opportunity to shoot in some of the world's biggest events – Duncan Busby reveals what's available for the winning

Now the outdoor season is drawing to an end it's time to look forward to the months ahead; the indoor season certainly provides the average archer opportunity to attend some of the biggest and brightest tournaments around the world, so here's your chance to find out where you can go to experience the best this sport has to offer – without even having to qualify first...

INDOOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Your country's National Championships are the first place to go to experience a large and well organised tournament with a deep and varied talent pool. The opportunity to shoot alongside the most talented archers your home nation has to offer will help set the bar for all your future national tournaments and

will allow you to observe the skills required to become one of the best – at least at in your own country.

BACK 2 BACK COVENTRY, UK / DECEMBER

In the UK the British Indoor National Championships are combined into one weekend with this professional prize fund shoot. Modelled on the 'shoot-up' format made popular at Amsterdam's world renowned Face 2 Face competition, archers are divided into groups where they must shoot matches against each other to work their way up to the final. Then the top six competitors from these groups join a shoot-up, where the number six ranked archer shoots against number five, the winner of this

match then goes on to compete against the number four ranked archer, and so on up the ranks until the final winner is decided. The unusual format of this competition makes for a fun and unique way to experience your first professional archery shoot in the UK.

www.archerygb.org/shoot-compete/compete/national-tournaments/back-2-back-tournament

KINGS OF ARCHERY WEERT, NETHERLANDS / NOVEMBER

The Kings of Archery tournament is the largest indoor archery event in the Netherlands and it's getting more popular every year. The format is based on the original Vegas round, but with some small differences. Qualification is shot over two days on a Vegas-style target

face; 60 arrows on day one and 30 arrows on day two with a total potential score of 900. The top eight archers, or anyone with a perfect score, will advance to the final, though if you didn't make it you can compete in the 'Joker round' to earn your place there. Last year 150 archers competed against each other in a giant one-arrow shoot-off in a similar premise to the Vegas Shoot's 'Lucky Dog' second chance tournament. The finals are shot in ends of three arrows and archers are eliminated when they drop an arrow out of the 10-ring. The last remaining archer walks away with the title and a top prize of up to €1,500.

The event also has an additional tournament called 'Nerves of Steel' where archers are invited to shoot their arrows through a small hole in the centre of a steel plate. The hole begins at 12cm in diameter and is gradually reduced to only 2cm in width. You are eliminated if you miss the hole or if your arrow breaks as it goes through; so be prepared to damage your equipment and steel your nerves when shooting this round!
www.kingsofarchery.com

THE ARCHERY COMPANY VERTICAL VEGAS SHOOT BEDFORD, UK / NOVEMBER

If you'd like to shoot a Vegas round with prize money in the UK look no further than The Archery Company's Vertical Vegas Shoot. Hosted in the Pro Shop itself, archers shoot 60 arrows at a World Archery 18m three-spot face, and larger 27 diameter arrows are allowed. Xs are scored as 11, and with a maximum score of 660 and only two divisions – one for the men and one for the women – you can be sure of some tight competition.

The tournament usually runs over an entire week so you can choose to shoot any session you'd like. You can enter as many times as you'd like as well, as only your highest score will count towards the final ranking. The top 20 per cent of archers will receive prize money, and there are additional prizes for the highest 11 count as well as for three archers drawn at random outside the top 20 per cent who will receive their entry fees back. This is a fun shoot to do with friends in a cosy and informal setting.
www.thearcherycompany.com

WORLD CUP STAGE 1 MARRAKECH, MOROCCO / NOVEMBER

Marrakesh kicks off stage one of the Indoor World Cup, the format is similar to that of the Outdoor World Cups, so this is the

perfect way to experience a World Archery international event without having to be on your national team. Qualification consists of 60 arrows shot at 18m on a 40cm three-spot face, archers are then cut to the top 32 and are eliminated in head to head match play in the usual four categories.

World Archery awards points to every archer who attends, ranging from 1 up to 50 depending on their finishing position. These points will then be added together with any you've achieved at any subsequent World Cup event and your best three will determine your final ranking position for the World Cup Final. The top 16 archers in each category will then shoot out at the final stage for the chance to claim the title of Indoor World Cup Champion and a cheque of almost \$4,000. And should you find yourself on the podium here in Marrakech you could find yourself up to \$1,000 better off, so there's even more incentive to come.
www.marrakech-indoor-worldcup.com

WORLD CUP STAGE 2 BANGKOK, THAILAND / DECEMBER

After first appearing in Africa, the second stage of the Indoor World Cup takes place in far-flung Asia. It's move on to Europe and then to America ensure these events truly are worldwide, and should you choose to attend this or any of the four stages you will get to experience some remarkable countries.

The format remains the same in stage two and the competition field just as difficult; last year qualification for the compound men's division saw the top archer dropping only one arrow out of the 10 ring for an overall score of 599! The elimination rounds in every discipline are a who's who in archery, so it's a great opportunity to shoot alongside the best in the world and to see how it should be done. If you keep up you could be in for a chance of winning up to \$2,500, but remember you get points for just showing up so why not follow everyone to France for stage three...
www.archeryworldcup.com

EUROPEAN ARCHERY FESTIVAL (WORLD CUP STAGE 3) NIMES, FRANCE / JANUARY

After the Christmas break the World Cup returns in Nimes. Now this is a great shoot for all archers to attend as the competition is only half the attraction – The European Archery Festival also features a major trade show, where manufacturers from around the world come to showcase their latest products. It's the

perfect opportunity to find out what's due for release later in the year as well as pick up a few sponsors if you feel you have something to offer them.

The head to head medal matches begin with a lively floor show which usually packs out the stadium; hundreds of spectators come to watch this tense, exciting display of skill as competitors battle for the chance of the title and a cheque of up to \$4,000!

But if you didn't make it that far the second chance tournament can offer the average archer the chance to win a prize with only 12 arrows; from a brand new bow to sights and releases it's well worth entering this extra event because you don't need to stand on a podium to avoid going home empty handed.
www.nimesarchery.com/en

NFAA VEGAS SHOOT (WORLD CUP STAGE 4) LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, USA / FEBRUARY

Considered the largest and most prestigious indoor archery tournament in the world, the Indoor Archery World Cup concludes here in Sin City, where the first two days of results count towards your final World Cup ranking. The top eight archers in each category then compete in head to head matches for World Archery's top prize of almost \$4,000.

Nearly 3,500 archers competed at the Vegas Shoot last year, over 217 competition targets, spread across six halls. The event has almost doubled in size over the last five years, as has its prize fund, which in 2017 amounted to over \$400,000 in cash and scholarships and a \$51,000 payout for the compound championship title alone!

The Vegas Shoot is unique in both its setting in a casino, and its structure; archers shoot three days of 30 arrows at this 51-year-old event, and the Vegas Shoot also boasts much higher compound scores than the average World Archery competition. That's because all archers at the tournament use the same target face; the recurve four-centimetre wide central ring scores 10 points, no matter the bow style. It's only at the Indoor Archery World Cup Final that compound archers have to switch back to the 2cm 10-ring.

The Vegas round itself allows a slightly wider arrow shaft of up to 0.422 inches, 1.4mm wider in diameter than the World Archery limit of 9.3mm, just to give you a bit more help catching those 10s.

A perfect score of 900 will get you into the Compound Championship shoot-down; even a score of 899 might be enough if you're chosen to be the lucky dog! The finals at Vegas

are something else; no one puts on a show quite like the Americans. The climax of the night is the compound championship shoot-down, where archers shoot in ends of three arrows and get eliminated when they miss the 10 ring. The excitement in the packed stadium really builds as the final few battle it out for the win. This tournament isn't for the faint hearted though; it may look easy, but the pressure to never to drop an arrow can really affect your game.

For those of more interested in the social side of the sport the Vegas Shoot also boasts one of the world's largest archery trade shows, where you can pick up new products long before they appear in your local shop. It offers a wealth of information on upcoming releases, demonstrations and meet and greets with the top pros – once you go you'll be wondering how you never went before!

www.nfaausa.com/tournament/the-vegas-shoot

NFAA INDOOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP CINCINNATI, OHIO, USA / MARCH

If you enjoyed the Vegas Shoot, why not try the second leg of the National Field Archery Association's annual 3 Star tour? The NFAA Indoor Nationals brings together the top NFAA archers from around the world to shoot at the iconic blue and white target face – nearly 2,000 competitors attended in 2017.

Archers can choose to shoot on a single or five-spot target face, in 12 ends of five arrows, at 20 yards to score a maximum of 300 per day. Prize money for the shoot tops out at \$10,000 for the professional male freestyle division, which is a nice little incentive for those who feel they've got the skills to win.

www.nfaausa.com/tournament/indoor-nationals

DAKOTA CLASSIC YANKTON, SOUTH DAKOTA, USA / APRIL

This is the third and final leg of the NFAA 3 star tour where archers compete in a NFAA Classic 600 qualification round. This consists of four ends of five arrows shot at three distances (40, 50 and 60 yards) beginning with the closest distance and all shot on a 92cm World Archery target face.

Archers then compete in a head-to-head competition; shooting three ends of five arrows at this same style target face. Winners are decided by their total score after these three ends, leading to a one arrow shoot-off in case of a tie. With a top prize of \$5,000 for the championship male freestyle division, the Dakota Classic tops off a total potential prize fund of \$66,000 on the 3 Star tour.

www.nfaausa.com/tournament/first-dakota-classic

But if that's not enough, archers who have competed at all three tournaments in Las Vegas, Cincinnati and Yankton will be invited to shoot off for a car or an additional cash prize of \$10,000 in June. Archers shoot a single arrow on a 40cm single spot target face at a distance increased by five yards after every arrow, up to 60 yards. The last archer remaining, without having dropped a single arrow, will walk away with the prize.

However, that's not as big a prize as the one you'd receive if you didn't drop a single point in all three tournaments. No archer has done it yet – but the first to shoot perfect scores at every 3 Star stage will get one million dollars!

LANCASTER ARCHERY CLASSIC MANHEIM, PENNSYLVANIA, USA / JANUARY

This will be the 15th year Lancaster Archery Supply has hosted this tournament. Last year

boasted the largest field in its history – over 1,000 competitors – which made it the biggest indoor archery competition on the East Coast of the United States.

The best from around the world compete in 15 divisions over three days. Archers shoot on a standard 40cm World Archery target face at 18m, however, things are scored slightly differently. The recurve 10 (4cm in diameter) scores 10 points, while the inner 10 (2cm in diameter) scores 11. For the 60-arrow round, that makes the total possible score 660.

The highest seeded archers in each division advance to head-to-head style brackets, where the top ranked face off against the lowest in 12-arrow match play, until only four or eight remain (depending on the division).

That's when things get different again... instead of a shoot-off, there is a shoot-up. The fourth-ranked archer shoots against the third, then the winner of that match shoots against the second seed – and then the winner of that shoots against number one to decide the champion. Top prize is \$15,000, but all totalled Lancaster Archery Supply gave away more than \$150,000 in cash and prizes last year across the divisions; this is a huge tournament and great experience for any archer.

<http://www.lancasterarchery.com/archery-classic>

There are so many large and prestigious tournaments to attend throughout the indoor season you could cover thousands of miles and shoot hundreds of arrows before returning home starry eyed and exhausted. Though if you shoot well you could also be a lot richer, so why not make a change and try something new? Remember, every new experience is an opportunity to learn and grow as an archer, and you never know where it can lead you. ☺

