

## THE MEDICAL PLAN

Medical Emergency Plan. What's this? - Nobody mentioned a medical emergency plan!

There is never any information given on what's to happen if someone gets hurt on a competition and/or an informal club shoot. Don't say "We won't need a medical plan because no-one will get hurt." That form of denial could be costly. We are planning to use bows and arrows, lethal by design, in the company of a large number of people. Bow accidents aside, what if someone falls and breaks a leg? What if that guy from that other club has a heart attack? Accidents, though rare, do happen. A little preparation on the part of your club could save someone's life!

The briefest way to sum up the best approach to first aid readiness is:

- A. First Aid training.
- B. A purpose designed first aid kit.
- C. A plan to give first aid and evacuate casualties.

### Training

Every club should keep track of who has done a first aid course (and CPR training too). Consider having your club arrange for a First Aid Course. For each event, your club should identify who will supervise and administer first aid. This person could be one of the archers (doctor, nurse ect.) or someone at the clubhouse helping with the organisation of the event as long as this person is informed as to his/her duties before the shoot starts. That way you can announce where they can be found throughout the day, they can also be in charge of the first aid kit.

### Equipment

An archery club's first aid kit should probably be a little more extensive than a pack of Band-Aids. You might want to seek some expert help in putting one together. Work from the point of what potential injuries might occur during the planned activities on the range. Broken bones, severe cuts, or even, heaven forbid, an arrow through the lungs are all very real possibilities. One approach is to list the activities which will take place at the range, then identify the possible injuries which may occur. From this, a pharmacist or doctor should be able to help you design a good first aid kit.

The following table gives examples of this type of process.

| ACTIVITY                                                                 | POSSIBLE INJURIES                                                                                                                 | FIRST AID KIT                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Movement through moderately rough wooded terrain in all types of weather | Sprains, strains or broken bones due to falls.<br>Punctures by branches (eye or other).<br>Heart attack.<br>Shock.<br>Concussion. | Bandages, triangular, gauze, tape, etc.<br>Ice, Splints, Stretcher, Blankets, etc.              |
| Use of archery equipment.                                                | Possible severe puncture wounds.<br>Minor wounds due to equipment failures.                                                       | Bandages, Cutting tool (embedded section of arrow should not be removed during first aid), etc. |

As you can see by the above table, archery, though not known as a dangerous sport, does have its hazards. The possible injuries listed against each type of activity can also be weighed against their probability of occurrence. Approach the building of a first aid kit carefully, it could be for you!

### Evacuation

From the first aid planning point of view, one of the greatest problems facing an archery club will be that of evacuation of a casualty. How are you going to get an injured person off the range and to a hospital? By ambulance, you quickly answer. Very good, only two questions left then.

ONE : How do we get the injured party to the ambulance from the far end of the range?

and;

TWO : Who calls the ambulance and how?

If your range has a good road through it and the first aid kit contains a cellular phone (and the right phone numbers), you are in luck. If not, you need to plan and prepare a little more. So, how are you going to get an injured archer, possibly unconscious, out of the back trails of your range? There is no comfortable way to be carried when you are injured, but a stretcher is better than nothing, and you won't mind having it as soon as you need it.

An ambulance is a good idea for serious injuries, but you need a plan to get one. For less serious injuries which might still need a trip to the emergency room, a designated safety vehicle with driver would be a nice touch.

To get that ambulance to the range, a cellular phone is an ideal solution. But you will have to identify before the shoot who has one, and where it will be throughout the day. Otherwise, someone should be appointed to go to the nearest phone if necessary. Ensure you/they have the numbers and the directions written out clearly in advance. A message is a lot clearer if it is prepared in advance and read out, poor directions could mean a long wait.

If you do intend to rely on the local ambulance service, a visit to the regional ambulance dispatcher by a club member with directions and a shoot schedule could be a valuable bit of insurance.

Someone with minor injuries may wish to drive himself to the emergency room. An information sheet with directions to the nearest emergency room from the range area should be part of your first aid kit.

### The Plan

So what should the Medical Emergency Plan in your briefing at a shoot include?

From the above we can see it should cover these points;

- identify the **designated first aid person** and where he/she will be during the shoot;
- the location of the **first aid kit**;
- the location of the **safety vehicle**; and
- the **general plan** for serious injuries.
- provide participants with the applicable contact numbers.