

# Aiming too high?

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Judges' Committee Chairman

**A** number of archers have been spoken to this season about their draw and told it needs to be modified. Why?

The issue is important because archers with dangerous/high draws can, and will, be removed from competitions. This is to protect all archers and to ensure our sport remains safe and insured.

The rules talk about a draw that if accidentally released would cause the arrow to exceed the safety boundaries of the venue. Does that mean there is a difference between compound and recurve or senior and junior "high draws" given the differences in poundage and techniques?

Each case has to be assessed on an individual basis. This will determine when the archer is spoken to. If the problem is immediate then expect to be told to rectify it at once, even if it is the middle of the shoot. If it is not urgent but could cause you problems in the future, the judge may deem it acceptable to speak to you or your coach or parent at the end of the shoot so you can change it for the next time.

So what is a high or dangerous draw? What are the judges looking for at the shoot?

As a really rough start, check the line of the bow hand and the draw hand. If the bow hand is above the draw hand at any point during the draw phase then it could be considered high. Then have someone look at where your arrow is pointing – does it look like it is pointing excessively high when compared to where you would aim for the long shot.

What about the "dangerous draw"? Here we look at archers who draw the bow in such a way that the arrow is not pointing at their target – those who pull away from the body and then back in to the face. If the arrow is not pointing at your target it is likely you will be spoken to.

Illustrations should help make things much clearer.



Here we see the archer drawing away from the face. Look where the arrow is actually pointing. It is to the side, not at the archer's target. Also note where you have to stand to notice it – judges, you will have to look from different angles to make the full assessment!



This type of draw that is becoming more popular. However, archers have to be careful. Dropping the drawing hand too far will increase the angle of the arrow and thus create the "high draw" even if the bow hand isn't particularly high. This example is a little exaggerated to make the point, so be aware what the draw hand is doing as well as the bow hand.

**Disclaimer:** These pictures were taken for demonstration purposes only, they do not necessarily reflect these archers actual draws!

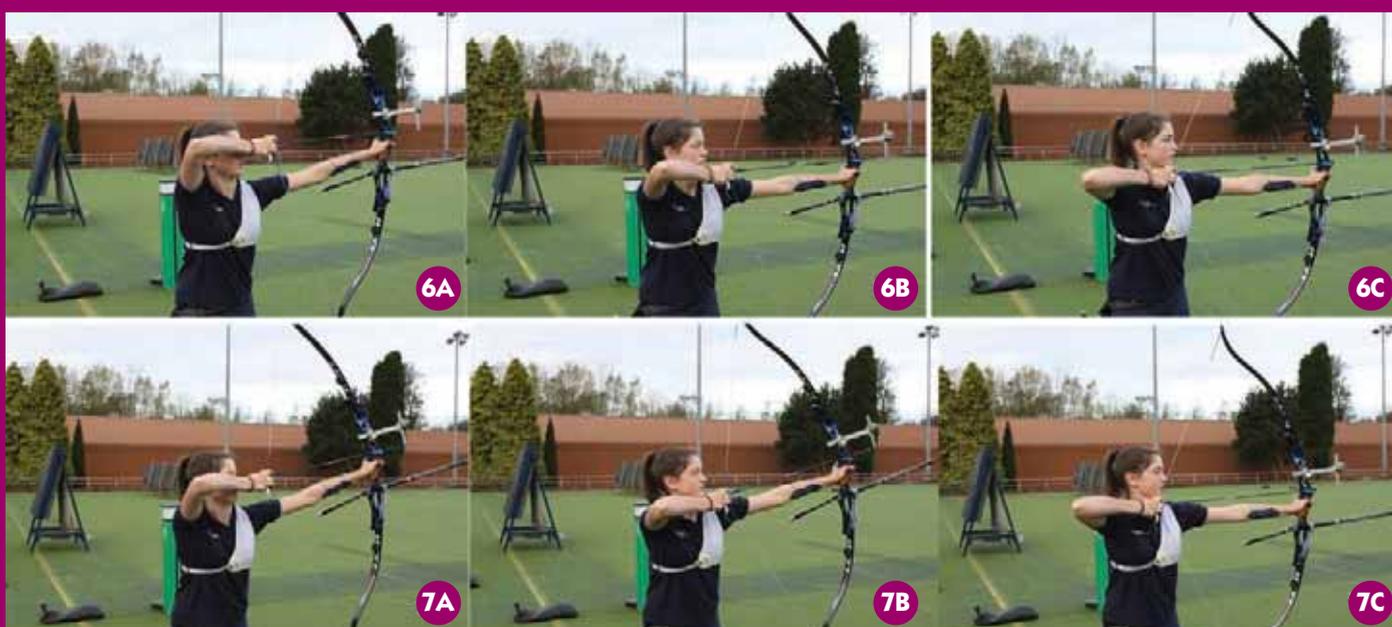


Now look at this draw. At first glance on image 3 the angle of the bow arm is such that it makes the draw look high. Look at the arrow though, look at how flat it actually is.

In image 4, the archer is coming back below his chin and then moving up to his reference point – now the bow is fully loaded, if the distance from the chin is significant, it could be deemed a dangerous and high draw.



Another popular drawing technique where the bow is raised above the head at the pre draw stage – look how much pressure is on the string – if accidentally released would it really exceed the safety boundary? Then the height drops as the archer draws into a perfectly acceptable position.



Two draws from the same archer. The acceptable draw in Image 6 to the classic high draw in Image 7. Look at the angle of the arrow in 6 as they draw compared to the angle when the archer is aiming – this takes into account the distance they are shooting. Don't forget the lighter the bow, the higher it has to be, so we have to be aware that some archers will have higher draws than others.



Here the archer displays the classic high draw - look at the angle of the arrow as the archer comes back over the peak compared to its aim position.



On this shot, look at the arrow - it is level. However it is too high. It is well above where you would "expect" the line to be. Unlike image 5, the archer has drawn the bow all the way back with it held high then settles down, if accidentally released this could exceed the safety boundary.

Another dangerous draw similar to image 1. Look where the arrow is pointing - the scope helps here - look where that is aiming. It is nowhere near the boss. Right up until the last move the archer is pointing the arrow between the bosses. Again, look where you have to be standing to see this.



The principles apply equally to compounds. Remember that an accidental release is far easier with a compound and that the arrow can travel further and faster. This means it is far more likely that a compound archer displaying a high or dangerous draw will be spoken to before the recurve archer. So what about indoors? It's a brick wall

behind the target. Even compounds cannot shoot through that, can they? Well first make sure it is brick - you will be surprised at what some of the hall partitions are made of. Then think about the consequences of hitting that brick wall above the net, where are those shards of arrow going to end up? So yes, it can be just as important.

High or dangerous draws can develop through the day, as archers get tired, it is possible then that you could shoot most of the day before the judge speaks to you - you haven't noticed the change in your draw, but they have...

Now we have the winter months, take some time, check your draw, and make sure you are not "aiming too high". ●