

archery

By WAYNE JONES
124 Hazel Ave
E. Syracuse, N.Y. 13057

*The Laser is another high performance contraption, but
it is the best looking one I've seen.*

"It sure works great, but I just wouldn't want to use such an ugly contraption." Comments like this were common when compound bows first appeared on archery ranges and in the woods. Often the noise came from old-time hunters who might be having a rough time pulling that 50-pound bent stick. Thus some of those who could best take advantage of the easy-to-hold compound bows were most often turned off, due to the appearance of the new bow.

Bowmen of all shapes, sizes, and ages shared this opinion.

If only somebody would make a nice-looking bow that could behave like one of those "banjos" with all the whools and wires.

NEW BOW INVENTED IN NEW YORK STATE

Around 1973, Central New Yorker, John Ialas (designer of the popular Mohawk Magnum broadheads) put his inventive mind to work on the problem. After a few months of mental gymnastics, he sat down at the drawing board. Four days later, the basic design of a brand new type of bow was on paper. The new bow that John built from this design had some "bugs" but it worked! -- A bow that behaved like a compound, but had recurved limbs, a single string, and no exposed cables.

After going through the rigamarole of getting a patent for the new bow, the idea was snatched up by a large sporting goods manufacturer that was starting to develop the bow when the "big shots" decided to pull out of the archery business. Another leading archery company is now the proud owner of rights to the patent, but so far they haven't been able to come up with a finished product.

Meanwhile, John's own company, Mohawk Archery, which had retained the right to manufacture the bow, has spent four years developing and testing the new machine. Today's production model, which went on sale last year on a limited trial run, is the product of over 40,000 test shots.

The first sales, to bowhunters in the Syracuse area, and a few interested western bowmen, brought back some comments about "bugs" encountered in field testing. Right now, the problem appears to be licked, and the early bows are being revamped at the factory. At last the new bow, dubbed the Mohawk Laser, is in full production. You may see the Laser this Spring in archery pro shops and better sporting goods stores. (They won't be sold to the big discount conglomerates and chain stores.)

How It Works

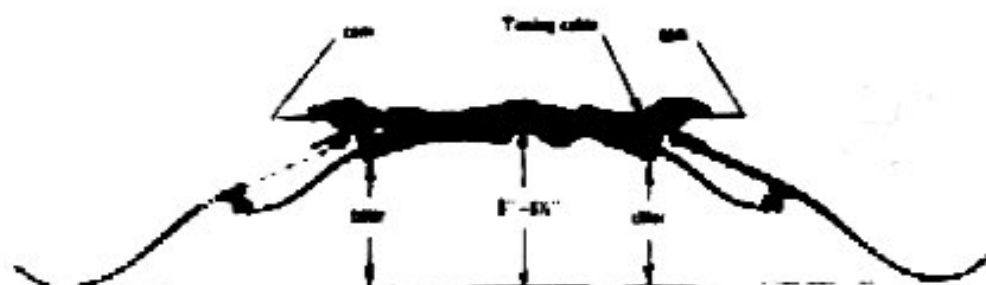
Like any hand-held hand-drawn bow, the Laser gets its power from the guy who pulls the string. The difference is, in this bow, much of that power is stored in a set of short "power limbs" which press outward against the main recurve limbs (which Mohawk calls the "outboard limbs"). The startling mechanical action of this

bow is the teeter-totter action of the main "outboard" limbs. At rest, the bow looks a lot like a recurve stick bow. When it is drawn, however, the similarity ends...and the mechanics become apparent. The butt ends of the limbs are not rigidly attached to the handle section. They glide on tiny wheels, along a track called the cam, while the hinged attachment on the ends of the short "power limbs" acts as a fulcrum for the see-saw recurve limbs.

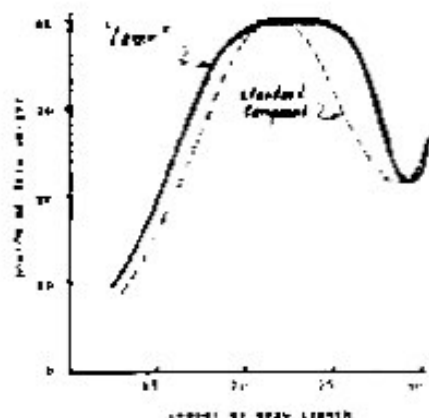
The "hill-and-valley" shape of the cams is responsible for the drop-off in tension at full draw.

A set of low tension cables, tucked into the handle section, connects the opposite ends of the bow, so that it is synchronized, allowing balanced action no matter where you place your drawing fingers on the string. This is a good feature if you shoot with all three fingers under the arrow, or "walk the string."

Draw weight, and tiller (limb balance) are fully adjustable up to 60 pounds, using regular weight adjustment bolts on the butt ends of the power limbs. Draw length, however, is not adjustable, so you must buy a bow to match your size. There are four sizes allowing draw lengths from 27 to 31



The Mohawk Laser — a compound bow in disguise?



inches. The long-draw model is 69 inches from tip to tip when strung, which is a popular length for hunting. The shorter draw models are each a little less in total length, the 27 inch model measuring about 55 inches.

Fast Performer

Unlike eccentric wheels, the cams of the Laser can be shaped to control the way the weight of the draw builds up and drops off at full draw. As you can see on the force-draw curve, the Laser applies the maximum force (peak draw weight) over a longer distance than a

normal compound bow. This results in a faster, more powerful shot. When you draw the bow it feels more like a recurve than a regular compound, since the weight doesn't drop off at half-draw. Instead, it stays constant until you approach full draw. This shape of force-draw curve is possible with a couple of other bow designs I have seen, but they are even crazier looking than a regular compound bow.

Overall, the Laser seems to be a very efficient shooting machine, and quite pleasant to shoot. It is faster than most bows on the market, including some very good four wheelers. But when you come down to details, the Laser is another high performance contraption. It has some exposed parts which I would feel nervous about in the bush. I would like to cover the cams and rollers, but several people I know took deer last fall with these bows and had no problems.

So even if it is a contraption, it is the best looking one I have seen. Priced in the same range as top four wheel compounds, it may be the "Laser of two evils" for performance freaks who appreciate good looks. **A**

Guns

Continued from page 24

job out to eighty yards—but it is difficult to make the head or shoulder shots necessary for clean kills on squirrels using the open sights usually found on revolvers. I have reports of the successful use of the .22 WMR from handguns by professional cougar hunters to take treed cats with head shots in order not to damage the pelts. Far from being an unnecessary addition to the modern cartridge line-up, the .22 WMR has, in a comparatively short time as such things go, carved a comfortable niche for itself. **A**

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