



National Archery in  
the Schools Program  
**EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS...**

# One Arrow at a Time

**By Roy Grimes**  
B&C Professional Member  
President, NASP®  
Photos provided by Author

It has been nine years since the commissioner and a deputy of the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) presented an idea to the commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). The idea was to use archery to inspire greater interest in the outdoors among young people by teaching them a skill most often practiced outside.

The KDFWR had been tracking user habits for nearly two decades with discouraging results, indicating trouble for the future of wildlife conservation if something wasn't done. KDFWR leadership knew the commissioner of KDE was equally concerned about decisions being made by young people as too many were failing to apply themselves or even graduate from high school. Many of you now know the "idea" became the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP®).

NASP has been met with more enthusiasm and support than ever imagined. The original three-year goal of establishing the program in one school in each of Kentucky's 120 counties has been so far surpassed there are few who even remember it. At the end of the most recent school year in June 2009, NASP had been adopted by more than 5,300 schools in 46 states, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. While we can't report any of the four states of Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, or Delaware having yet joined, we are pleased that two large provinces in Canada—Alberta and British Columbia—have brought NASP to their students. As reported by program coordinators from all NASP jurisdictions, we surpassed the 4.6 million-student mark this year. Even more exciting is the fact that this year was the first in which the annual number of participants topped 1 million. This is pretty amazing when you consider, for example, the decades-old institution of Little League Baseball entertains 2.4 million participants annually. At its current rate of growth, NASP could exceed this level of participation within three more years.

Of course NASP could be represented in all 50 states and 20 more countries and each of Canada's provinces if we didn't insist on identifying a coordinating organization before we train teachers and enroll schools. In most states, this organization is the wildlife conservation agency. In Canada it is either the Ministry of Education (Nova Scotia), the Wildlife Federation (British Columbia and Saskatchewan), or the Hunter Education Instructor Association (Alberta). We fear without agency coordination NASP will stagnate within a handful of schools so we work towards an administrative arrangement with an agency whenever possible.

While the number of participating schools often changes daily, currently 21 states have exceeded the 100-participating-schools level. Leading states include Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, and Minnesota. Another five states are very close to this century-level recognition. The state with the highest percentage of its schools participating in NASP is Kentucky. With 820 public and private schools enrolled in NASP, Kentucky has more than 40 percent of its schools in the program. West Virginia, Arkansas, North Dakota, and Virginia have 19 percent, 13 percent, 12 percent, and 10 percent of their schools, respectively, enrolled in the program. Some states with small numbers of schools such as

Alaska and North Dakota will likely reach the 50 percent participation level in just a few years.

At NASP we believe everyone deserves an opportunity to become a skilled archer but our focus is placed entirely upon 4th-12th grade students while at school. We believe if tens of millions of young people are taught target archery skills, millions will decide to become life-long archers. They will engage in many forms of archery using all types of equipment and accessories. As NASP succeeds, so will education, conservation, and the archery industry.

NASP is a nonprofit entity and is dependent upon the generosity of individuals, companies, and organizations that share enthusiasm for its mission. We are proud to have retained almost every existing donor to the program this past year, a list of which you can see in Table 1. New supporters include the Mule Deer Foundation (MDF), Safari Club International (SCI), Bass Pro, Mossy Oak, and Remington Outdoor Foundation (ROF). The MDF and SCI made donations to the national organization and are promoting an "adopt-a-school" effort among their nearly 200 chapters across the United States. These chapters are being encouraged to provide grants to local schools that want to join NASP. This will help school supporters as they often must raise money for the \$3,000 in equipment needed to teach the physical education archery class. Bass Pro Shops participated in a similar way this year by supporting schools within 50 miles of their Missouri retail outlets. This

**NASP believes everyone deserves an opportunity to become a skilled archer but focuses are placed entirely upon 4th-12th grade students while at school. Below is an 800-foot-long shooting line.**



While detailed results of the evaluation can be found at our web site [www.archeryintheschools.org](http://www.archeryintheschools.org), the evaluation discovered the following:

#### PERCENT OF TEACHERS SAY

- 93%—NASP is effective
- 84%—Promotes student confidence
- 78%—Increases student motivation
- 76%—Improves student attention
- 74%—Improves student behavior
- 40%—Increases student interest in other sports
- 79%—Increases student interest in target archery
- 56%—Increases student interest in hunting with bow and arrow

#### PERCENT OF STUDENTS SAY

- 88%—Like shooting the arrow and hitting the target
- 86%—Say their instructor teaches archery well
- 77%—Had not shot a bow before
- 78%—Say archery skills improved
- 83%—Like NASP
- 53%—Participated in archery again
- 51%—Who will participate in the future will do with father or brother (35%)
- 33%—Look more forward to school on archery days
- 32%—Say interest in hunting is greater after NASP
- 26%—Say they now have more confidence to try other sports
- 26%—Believe they pay more attention in archery
- 50%—Said archery taught them how to pay attention better in other classes
- 11%—Said program increased their family's interest in archery

As reported by program coordinators from all NASP jurisdictions, we surpassed the 4.6 million-student mark this year. Even more exciting is the fact that this year was the first in which the annual number of participants topped 1 million.



**TOP 4 PHOTOS:** During this past school year, more than 25,000 students participated in state NASP tournaments. **BOTTOM PHOTO:** NASP teacher training in New York.

Missouri-only effort will hopefully go national after a successful pilot period. Mossy Oak and the Remington Outdoor Foundation both supported the NASP National tournament and are considering ways to expand their support even as this article is being written.

As we thank our existing patrons and welcome new ones, we are excited to also have a couple of large corporate organizations contemplating their involvement with our youthful market. If we secure support from some of these large companies, our nine-year dream of having a national equipment grant for new and existing NASP schools could be realized. One such company has received our proposal to increase our growth rate by 500 percent. This would mean another 1 million students per year would be able to participate in the program. Our largest donors are “Medal-Level” contributors. These folks have contributed or pledged to contribute \$100,000 to \$1 million over a five-year period. These include Mathews, National Wild Turkey Federation, Archery Trade Association (ATA), Morrell Targets, and The Block. Mathews Archery continues to be the largest NASP contributor to date, having donated as much to the program as all other contributors combined! Most donations we have received are general in nature and can be used to address our greatest needs. The ATA, while having no role in the design or administration of NASP continues to donate about 40 percent of the cost of starting 10 school pilot programs in each new state or Canadian province.

Still, even with this myriad of generous donors, the number one limiting factor for schools joining NASP remains lack of funding for the archery equipment kit to outfit the physical education class. By the way, equipment for each of these kits comes directly to the school from the manufacturer through an order placement process handled by NASP. Each kit contains 12 Genesis bows; 60 Easton aluminum arrows; one arrow curtain backstop by BCY or Brownell; bow racks by Archery Shooter Systems, Hold Up Displays, or BowTree; five targets by Morrell, Block, or Rinehart; and a “supply kit” by Papes Archery. When replacement equipment, maintenance, or repairs are needed, the teacher will often cooperate with local archery shops. Of course,

when the 14-25 percent of NASP graduates (students) buys personal archery equipment, they visit these same local shops.

Thanks to agency personnel and an army of nearly 5,000 teacher trainers, more than 5,000 new teachers were certified in 500-plus workshops to present NASP lessons to students this past year. We expect this number to continue to climb as principals, teachers, students, and parents at one school motivate those at others to share the success. These workshops are organized and scheduled by the coordinating agency but are often delivered by or with assistance from archery enthusiasts who have volunteered their time to become certified and conduct such workshops. A school that wants to adopt NASP must first have at least one teacher undergo an eight-hour NASP Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) certification class. The teacher is trained by a Basic Archery Instructor Trainer (BAIT) or BAIT Specialist. All "trainers" must be certified, by invitation only, at a three-day workshop by passing practical and written exams.

During this past school year, more than 25,000 students participated in state NASP tournaments hosted in 38 of the 46 states and in Saskatchewan, Canada. Students who shot well enough individually or as part of 16 to 24-member archery teams were invited to participate in the 2009 NASP Nationals in Louisville, Kentucky. Many archery fans have heard about the tremendous success achieved by students at this latest national event where a record was set for archery tournament attendance at 4,565 student archers. If you haven't heard, an 8th grade boy, Taylor Knott, from Brandenburg, Kentucky, was tops among more than 2,800 male participants, and freshman Jessica Nystrom from Hartland, Michigan, shot the highest overall score of the tournament and tied Graham Cofield's NASP world record with a 298 out of 300. It is important to note that every student in this tournament shot the same arrow from the same bow without stabilizers, sights or release aids. Every participant shot 15 arrows each from 10 and 15 meters.

To conduct a tournament of this size required a large number of volunteers. More than 150 volunteers representing churches, archery organizations, and Mathews archery helped out. Already plans are being finalized for the 2010 NASP Nationals to accommodate up to 7,000 archers. The 2010 NASP National tournament will once again be held indoors at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville, Kentucky, on Friday and Saturday, May 7-8.

On the subject of NASP tournaments, the first World NASP tournament

was held at Disney's Wide World of Sports near Orlando, Florida, on October 8-11 2009. This event had been in the planning stages for nearly two years. The contest will take place indoors at the beautiful new Josten's Center with participants staying at Disney's All-Star Resort. To qualify for this inaugural event, archers and teams needed only to have qualified for the 2009 national tournament.

One of the most exciting accomplishments this past year was the conclusion of a two-year academic evaluation of NASP. This research was conducted by Responsive Management out of Virginia with cooperation from Hilarie Davis, Ed.D. The work was financed by NASP and state wildlife agencies in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota,

and Ohio, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Data for this evaluation were gathered from focus groups, teacher surveys, student surveys, and by examining school records. The study was conducted to compare findings from individual state pilot programs, a 2004 study by the ATA, and anecdotes reported by teachers and others since the program's inception.

By the time you read this report about the 2008-09 NASP school year, students will have returned from summer recess to begin the 2009-10 year. We have every reason to expect next year will see another rising of the bar for NASP as more students, in more schools, from more states and countries experience the life-changing affects of archery. ■

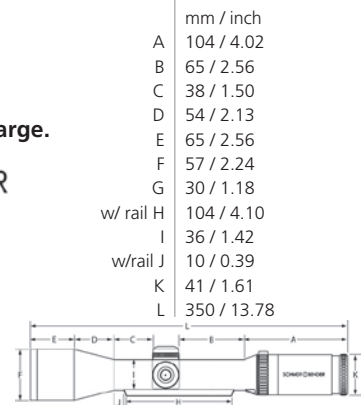
## Klassik 3-12 x 50

Ideal if you hunt small, medium and large.

SCHMIDT & BENDER



800.468.3450  
info@schmidt-bender.com  
www.schmidt-bender.com



Take our highly popular 3-12 x 42, add a larger objective lens for even more dramatic performance in near-darkness, and you have a riflescope appropriate for game of any size.

It is equally proficient at placing a shot in a tiny dik-dik at 300 yards, a pronghorn, elk, or sheep across vast distances, or a moose mere feet away in densest Alaskan bush. Some of the highest light transmission values ever achieved in a scope make the Klassik 3-12 x 50 equally at home in a leopard blind or squeezing out the last ounce of legal light when a massive whitetail appears in the shadows.

One African P.H. commented that "Schmidt & Bender are the only scopes I've seen that hold up." So the question becomes, would you trust your hunt—small, medium, large, or even extra large—to anything less?

Exit pupil (mm)	4.2 – 14.4
Twilight factor	8.5 – 24.5
Field of view (m@100m, yd@100 yd)	3.4 – 11.1
Eye relief (mm/inches)	94 / 3.7
Central tube diameter (mm)	30
Click adjustments (mm@100m)	10
Weight (grams/oz):	
Non-illuminated	576 / 20.32
Non-illuminated w/rail	600 / 21.17
Illuminated	614 / 21.66
Illuminated w/rail	640 / 22.58
Reticles	A7 / A8 / A9
Illuminated reticles	L7 / L9
Reticle focal plane	First