



**Oct 30<sup>th</sup> 2022** won't go down in history as one of the better weather days in Ireland but it will always be a day that I will remember fondly. Aos Dana were putting on a SIFA SBG shoot in their woodland course and I was looking forward to going to it no matter what the Gods were going to throw us. I have to confess to having an ulterior motive though, which was to try to

achieve a Gold Gain score to secure the prestigious SIFA 'Hot Shot' award. I just needed one more. More on that later. Looking out the window that morning at 6.50am, it was dumping it down. I cross checked the time with a few other clocks in the house as the hour went back that night. Thankfully it was actually 6.50am, phew ! and deffo going I said to myself. My new young Kharkiv comrade was due to join me but couldn't be roused the poor fella so I left him to his bed. Maybe next time, more on that some other day maybe too. The trip from my gaff in Murroe to Aos Dana, Ramsgrange just north of Duncannon was about two uneventful hours except in my eagerness I missed the last turn left into the Aos Dana

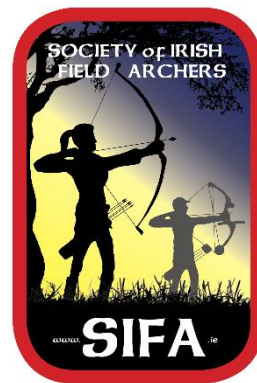


Figure 2 Liam McDonnell (purple) and Ruth Knox (pony tail), ready some of the troops for reveille.

archery grounds but yet was pleasantly rewarded by the view at the end of the road where I u-turned. Down onto Duncannon Beach a rough sea 'roar' with whites blowing off the peaks came into view, a big sky with a few blue patches beginning to show and the fresh

breeze picking up. I took a minute



Figure 1 Charlie Kelly lets loose on the warmup range

to take it all in, the archery beckoned though, so up to the club for God's sake! Found the turn this time, car parked, bow set and down to base camp for registration. After a hearty handshake with shoot organiser Liam McDonnell, it was catch up time on all the news with Liam and the gang and a hot cuppa to warm the body. The social aspect to Field Archery in particular is something I think that maybe is not as highlighted as much as it might be. There's a hum of conversation that I am well used to at my own club at Limerick Field Archery Club, with the occasional roar of laughter. I've heard this same hum over all the SIFA events that I've had the privilege to attend,



*Figure 3 Dave McCaffrey takes cover with some of the other archers*

and again on this damp late Autumn morning in the beautiful woods at Aos Dana, I hear it again. Maybe I'm an old sentimental to say it, but there's a feeling of home to it. We're happiest in the places we love the most. I had participated in Aos Dana's 1x36 SBG shoot earlier in the Spring and I was happy to be back shooting in Aos Dana again in the late Autumn. Warm up!. The usual warm up shots on the practice butt confirmed for some, that they really were that bad, and for others, more warm up was needed! A promising up and coming young archer showed his skills too, great to see. A few more cars rolled in and after the last of the stragglers arrived in Liam called reveille with instructions and starting targets for the named groups. At this point those Gods decided to intervene with one of the heaviest showers of the day. We took cover for a few minutes and all of a sudden, the blue skies were back.



*Figure 4 Ruth Knox and Marjan Boers make that downhill owl look easy.*

A shotgun start was in play on the day and I was delighted to find myself hooked up with Dave McCaffery (Ashgrove Archers), and Tony Eady (Irish Archery Club), all of us in the Bowhunter Recurve Classification. This was going to be interesting! We got on like houses on fire though, a day of great company throughout, thick skins were thoroughly tested! The archery amongst us was pretty decent too even if I do say so myself, nip and tuck all the way to the end. But I think Mr Eady made a grievous mistake by changing into his so called 'lucky cap' on for the afternoon round, although maybe it was his lucky cap after all !! 😊

What sets Aos Dana apart from some of the other SIFA courses on tour is the diversity of uphill and downhill shots on offer. The downhill owl at target 16 is quite deceptive, you have to steal yourself to go low enough, and this was straight after target 15, a steep uphill boar shot. There's no let up to it so you have to be on your game literally, continually adjusting your height perception. A particularly nice shot was the uphill mountain goat shot. There's a fantastic Irish Slip Jig



tune called '[The Kid on the Mountain](#)' which perfectly names the below snap from the day.

I suppose I have to put in at least one pic of our group of three, also aptly named '4 old crocs'. The gods were with us too throughout the rounds. Only one other shower fell, for which we were all fairly ready for anyway. The sunny southeast had it's say again for us for the rest of the day.



Figure 6 'The kid on the mountain' played well by Andrew Smith, Eric and Charlie Kelly



Figure 5 Four old crocs! Tony Eady, Andreas Callanan & Cave McCaffrey

The three of us were the first to come in at half time and we were all reasonably happy with our efforts. Liam put out some dry seating for the crew and the grub and tea was had. The hum started again along with the whistling kettles, and others too seemed similarly satisfied with their morning's efforts on the course. Dave McDermott laid on a few sandwiches and bickies for the forgetful.



Figure 7 Happy campers at the half time break



After the lunch we were off again in nice sunshine and what is nice about a 2x18 round is that you can possibly make amends for some of the damage done on the first round. Or so one might like to think at least. For our happy threesome the afternoons round was as tight as the mornings. We each came back with the same three arrows that we started with, usually a reasonable sign, usually. Fair enough too given the prices of decent arrows these days.

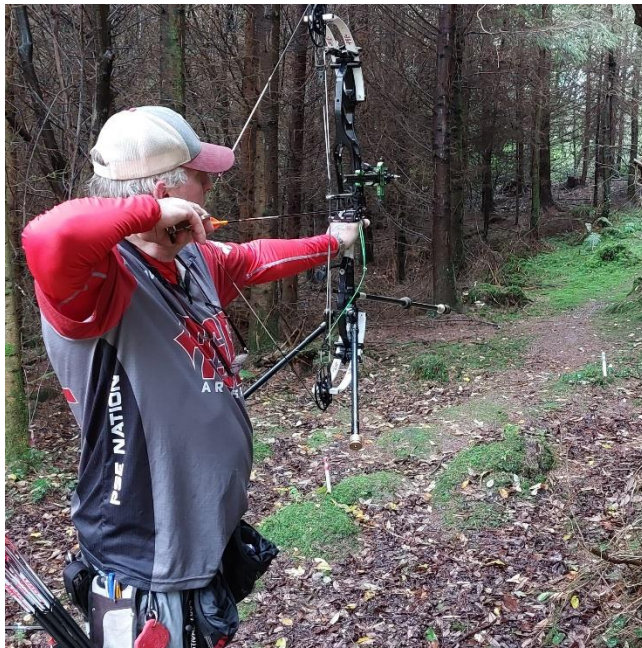


Figure 10 Dave Leigh lines another one up



Figure 9 Thumbs up Mia Knox!

We were double scoring but I also tend to use a scoring app on the phone '3D Score Buddy', which is useful just to check the maths and in the end there was only one arrow between the three of us. Before the final scores were formally called out there was the matter of the raffle ably executed by Mia Knox. Big thanks to Dave again at [D3D Targets](https://d3d-targets.com) for sponsoring (controversially 😏) some **2D** targets for the raffle. Again, I like to note that clubs live and die on what resources they can bring in and without the sponsorship of businesses like Dave's, the sport would be in a poorer state for sure. I think the Kellys two apt prizes booze 'n sweets, won the raffle !



Figure 8 Raffle goodies

were the three old croc Bowhunter musketeers and the other categories too. But I'll hold you in suspense here and point you to <https://sifa.ie/> where you can see all the results of the day.

The final order of business was the results. Eagerly awaiting potential bragging rights



But for my ulterior motive I know you've been rucking through this article to see what happened 😊. Suffice it to say that in the end the author managed to get the precious Gold Gain Score and had a pretty smug look on his face all the way home.



Figure 11 Liam Mc announcing the winners

One last thing. Eric Kelly (IAC), prompted all on the next SIFA shoot at the Irish Archery Club. By all accounts will be a very interesting round indeed. It looks like I'll need to bring my glasses for that one, see further details at <https://sifa.ie/> Here's the flyer below.

'Till the next time.

Andreas Callanan SIFA Tournaments Officer

