



## Crossbow Myths

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The North American Bowhunting Coalition and every one of our state, provincial and national bowhunting organization members that have taken a position, are universally opposed to crossbow use by the non-handicapped/elderly in archery-only seasons and zones. There are several reasons why, but we all recognize that this change would dramatically alter bowhunting as we've known it.

However, there are some well-funded and well-organized groups that have a huge financial interest in forcing crossbows into existing archery seasons. And these groups have spent a lot of time and literally millions of dollars promoting several myths to convince the general public that that's where crossbows belong.

Over the next few columns I will "bust" some of these myths.

Myth # 1:

***"Crossbows are just bows held horizontally".***

Facts:

All **archery** equipment is hand-drawn and hand-held by human power. Bows must be drawn at the time of the shot, cannot be pre-loaded, and once drawn, are not normally rested or supported in the process of aiming or shooting. All of the power imparted to the arrow comes directly from the human power applied to the bow. This is true of **all** archery

equipment, from the smallest kids stick bow to the most sophisticated compound bow.

Crossbows are very different. They are not hand-drawn and hand-held. Modern crossbows are normally drawn with a winch assembly (and recently with compressed air) and are braced across a fixed, high-strength stock. Their projectile is locked in a preloaded position - where it can remain indefinitely. Because a crossbow's power is not limited by the power of the shooter and is only dependent on the strength of the crossbow itself, its potential performance is almost unlimited. The ancient Chinese made crossbows with over 1,000 pound draw weights, and repeating crossbows; imagine what is possible with modern materials.

Crossbow are often rested like rifles for long shots, some even come with built-in bipods; and most are now designed for use with telescopic sights. Again, very different from archery equipment. And most bowhunters can understand the tremendous advantage of tracking one's quarry through a crossbow scope before pulling the trigger, compared to those exquisitely intense moments just before an archery shot when the bow must be drawn at just the right moment while the quarry is within blinking distance, when any one of a hundred things can go wrong, and often do.

The **truth** is that regardless of whether the limbs are horizontal or vertical, crossbows and archery equipment are very different types of weapons. Archery equipment, which in many ways is a physical and personal extension of the shooter's own skill, will, strength and abilities; compared to crossbows, which are, like a firearm, less personal, pre-loaded, mechanical devices, dependent on little more than squeezing one's trigger finger. Archery equipment has pretty well reached the limits of what can be wrung out of a human powered tool, while crossbows, unencumbered by such limitations, have just begun to show their potential.