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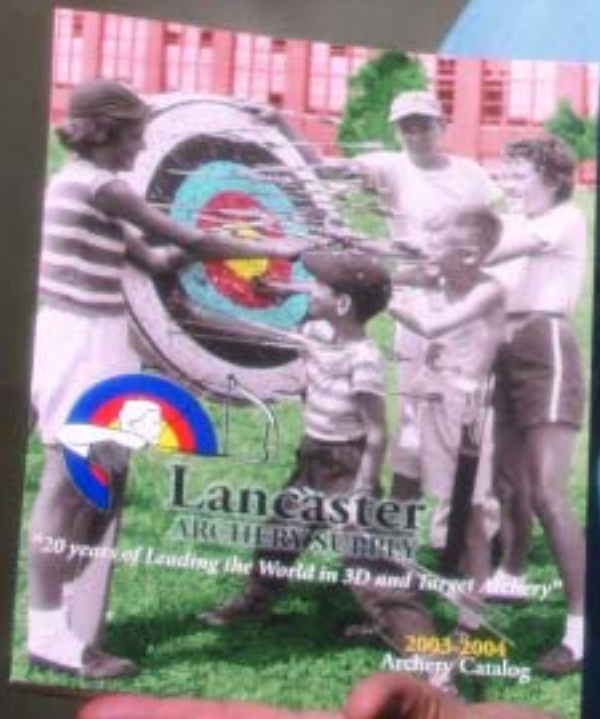
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Inside Archery

THE ARCHERY INDUSTRY

EIGHT DOLLARS

Lancaster Archery
Rob Kaufhold
Archery at the Center



Inside: Best Broadheads • Trendy Treestands

Rob and Carole
Kauffhold are
the principles in
Lancaster Archery
and CR Archery
Products.



Rob Kaufhold



ARCHERY AT THE CENTER

If you don't know what you want to do, it's harder to do it. "I was fortunate," says Rob Kaufhold. "Even as a kid growing up, I had archery. Shooting a bow and arrow was all-important to me. Archery was something that I could always depend on. It gave me self-esteem. It provided me with purpose. It helped me set goals. Archery was, and still is, my center," says Rob Kaufhold.

In 1966 Rob Kaufhold was a five-year-old shooting a bow and arrow in his backyard. At age seven he was shooting in the Pennsylvania state archery championships. At age 18 he was the top-ranked high school archer in the country and received several scholarship offers from colleges with archery programs. Just one month after he graduated from college with a degree in Business Management, he opened his own archery shop. The sign above the front door read Lancaster Archery.

Today Lancaster Archery is many things, and all of it archery. Lancaster Archery is one of the largest and most successful archery pro shops in Pennsylvania, in this country, and probably the world. Another way to look at that is that in the last four years Rob Kaufhold's Lancaster Archery has been the largest Mathews dealer anywhere.

But there is more. Lancaster Archery has also become one of the largest distributors of high quality target archery equipment worldwide. It distributes to all fifty states and countless foreign countries. Its expertise in the technical aspects of shooting accurate arrows is world renown. As a distributor, Lancaster Archery is rapidly expanding its base of dealers and its selection of both target and better bowhunting equipment.

There is still more. In 1998, Rob and his wife Carole formed CR Archery Products, a separate company dedicated to the manufacture of unique and innovative archery products.

Archery retailer. Archery distributor. Archery manufacturer. Rob Kaufhold has become all of those things.

There are two things in life to aim at. First, get what you want. Second, enjoy it.



Lancaster Archery, located in southeast Pennsylvania, is a multi-function archery operation. Lancaster Archery has become one of the largest worldwide distributors of high quality target archery equipment. It is also one of the largest archery pro shops in the nation. Its sister company, CR Archery Products, manufactures innovative archery accessories for serious shooters.

BILL AND SHERRY KRENZ



Rob Kaufhold's archery roots go way back. He began shooting with his father, a championship-caliber archer, when he was barely old enough to hold a bow (top right). As a senior in high school, Rob was the number-one-ranked high school archer in the country. Subsequently, Rob attended James Madison University on an archery scholarship and competed on that school's intercollegiate archery team (top left).



"I come by my passion for archery and my bent for business honestly," Rob reveals. "My father was an archer of note in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. He was an eleven-time Pennsylvania state archery champion. He and my grandfather participated in the first deer season for bowhunters in Pennsylvania in 1953. In the early 1970s, just as

compound bows were bursting onto the scene, my father and a friend of his named Truman Smith developed the very first double-slot hunting sights. Since my father was a tool and die maker and owned and operated his own machine shop, he began manufacturing those sights and other archery products under the company name of Full Adjust Archery Products. He also continued to specialize in tool and die work for the computer, food and telecommunications industries.

"My mother was also a businessperson following her passion. She kept the books for my father for years. Then in 1979 she started her own business, founding what was to become a very successful crafts studio and teaching center for tole and decorative painting, and folk art. She has since expanded that to also include a craft and gift retail operation, including an internet presence.

"With that sort of entrepreneurial influence from both my father and mother, it isn't far-fetched to say that I practically grew up in business. When I was barely old enough to hold a broom, I began sweeping up metal chips in my father's machine shop. I eventually graduated to cleaning the machines, and then to drilling the same hole in an endless line of the same parts for hours and days and entire summers. Maybe it was drilling all those holes in all those parts, but by the time I was sixteen I had pretty much decided that I wanted to find some way to make a

Rob and Carole Kaufhold form a potent business pair. "My forte is sales and marketing. I'm all shake, rattle and roll." says Rob. "Carole has an MBA in finance and accounting. She's plot, plan and diagram. Together we complement each other very well." Two-year-old son Conner is already taking to the bow (bottom right).





Archery and bowhunting have been a central focus in Rob Kaufhold's life for as long as he can remember. He's bowhunted widely all across the United States and Canada, and in South Africa. This fall there's elk, moose and lots of whitetails in his plans.

living doing something that I truly liked and would enjoy. And by then I already had an inkling that that something was archery.”

In 1979, as a senior in high school, Rob won the NAA National Intermediate Archery Championships, making him the number one ranked high school archer in the country. College archery scholarship offers followed.

“I elected to attend James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. They had both a strong intercollegiate archery program and an excellent business school.”

By his junior year, Rob was deeply involved in his business courses at James Madison.

“During my last two years of college I was actually polishing my business plan for the archery shop I planned to open as soon as I graduated. My professors loved the idea that the papers I wrote and the business models I created for my classes were based on my real-life plans, and not merely on fictitious pizza shops and widget manufacturers like all the other students. I was focused and I was determined.”

In 1983 Rob Kaufhold graduated

from James Madison University with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Graduation ceremonies were on Saturday. On Monday morning Rob started tearing out walls and pounding nails, remodeling a building his father owned, fashioning it into an archery shop.

“I opened Lancaster Archery on June 1, 1983,” says Rob with a hint of pride in his voice. “That was twenty years ago, and I'm still here. I started with a \$30,000 loan from our local bank and the notion that if it didn't work out, I'd have to pay back the loan and get a real job.

“That first building was pretty modest. The main level showroom was maybe 900 square feet. We also had one other room about the size of a single car garage that served as stockroom, fletching room and office. Upstairs were four shooting lanes, although those were in what was basically the attic. The roof had a pretty good pitch to it and recurve shooters, especially those with longer target recurves, had to shoot in the middle two lanes to take advantage of the extra ceiling height.

“My first employee was actually my college roommate, Johnny Grace.

Johnny had competed with me on the university archery team and believed enough in my business vision that he joined me almost from day one. Johnny went on to own his own archery shops and today is the National Sales Manager for Parker Compound Bows and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Archery Trade Association.

“My second employee was Alan Richards. Alan joined me later that first summer. Alan, Johnny and I somehow made it through that first selling season and then hatched a plan to keep customer interest up through the winter months. We launched an aggressive plan for winter leagues.

“Believe it or not, we ran an early league and a late league five nights a week. The late league ended at 11:00 p.m. and most nights we were there until well after midnight. Because we only had four lanes, we had to run multiple lines of shooters for each league. By the end of the winter we were pretty exhausted, but the leagues put us on the local archery map and really drummed up the interest. We ran that way for nearly two years, building up our business

and growing our customer base.”

In the summer of 1985 Rob and his father put up a new and larger building. The spacious upstairs would house Rob’s archery operation. The downstairs would become the new home for dad’s machine shop.

That was eighteen years ago. Today Lancaster Archery occupies the entire building, having recently also taken over the lower level. Rob’s father passed away recently and the machine shop, now run by Rob’s younger brother Alan, has moved elsewhere.

“The business had grown steadily,” Rob affirms. “We currently have twenty full-time employees and bring in an additional ten or so part-time people during seasonal spikes. We now have our retail and distributor operations spread out over 45,000 square feet in three buildings. Our manufacturing operation is in yet another location with an entirely different set of employees.”

Retailer, distributor and manufacturer. Those could be three very tricky balls to keep in the air all at the same time.

“It does take lots of work,” admits Rob. “But they are all three archery, and we run all three with the same guiding principles. First, make sure you have the right staff. That means people who care about archery and archers, and are willing to work hard. Next, pay attention to every detail of each operation. And lastly, pay extra special attention to every customer. Those three things keep everything up and running.

Three measures of the vitality of an archery pro shop are the strength of its leagues, the nature of its product lines, and the reach of its marketing.

Shooting leagues can echo the enthusiasm of any archery shop. This past winter Lancaster Archery had 102 archers shooting the target league, 63 archers shooting the Tech-

“Our biggest strength is our people,” says Rob Kaufhold. “Our key people are all avid archers who care about the sport, our company, and every one of our customers.”
Nat Gilchrist (top) is Lancaster Archery’s General Manager. Steve Yoder (center) is Purchasing Director. Alan Richards (bottom left) has been with Rob from the beginning and today handles Information Services.



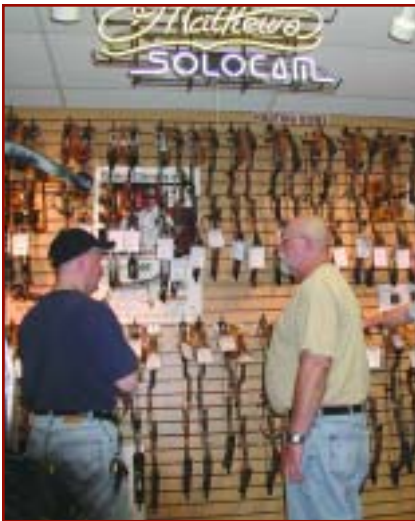
noHunt video league, and 70 kids showing up every Saturday January through April for youth classes and JOAD. That last number is particularly revealing. Not only is this archery shop servicing customers, it’s building them.

“We spend a lot of time selecting the best product lines,” Rob reveals. “Take, for example, bows lines. We currently carry Mathews, Hoyt, PSE, BowTech, Martin, Parker and Jennings. That’s determined by what our customers want and who’s producing the best equipment. Every bow line we carry is strong. The same goes for every product category we sell, from sights to treestands.”

Retail reach is something that Lancaster Archery has gotten very good at.

“More than a decade ago we

decided to extend our reach. We put together a traveling sales and service trailer and began attending local archery tournaments. We showed up with the very best in target and 3D equipment and the expertise to help



Lancaster Archery is one of the largest and most successful archery pro shops in Pennsylvania and the country. It stocks a wide variety of quality bows and is the largest Mathews dealer in the world (left). Customers also enjoy its expansive indoor range (center). After twenty years in business, owner Rob Kaufhold (right) still enjoys time behind the counter helping customers.

any archer with their shooting. The response was terrific. We offered gear and help that many had never seen before. Before long we were attending key tournaments all up and down the eastern seaboard, in the Midwest, and in the south.

“Then an unexpected thing began to happen. Local archery dealers began to come to us asking for help with their target selection. They needed a particular sight or a scope for a particular customer. They needed just one, they wanted the best, they needed it now, they maybe had a few technical questions as well, and they came to us. Gradually the word spread. If you were a dealer and needed target or 3D gear, or had technical shooting questions, call Lancaster.

“Twenty years ago my earliest business plans had a distributor component to them. When I started Lancaster Archery, I already had access to the dealer contacts my father had originally developed with Full Adjust Archery Products. Barely six months into Lancaster Archery I was already talking with those dealers, coordinating group buys and the like. Over the years, as our target and 3D expertise and

selection grew, more and more dealers began turning to us for those and other needs. So for twenty years our distributor business has grown, based primarily on our unique focus on the best in target and 3D gear. Little by little, dealers began to refer to Lancaster as ‘The Target Archery Distributor.’ If someone needed X7s or target carbons, or a special scope or 3D stabilizer, or any sort of Olympic-type shooting equipment, they called us. And the calls didn’t come from just within the United States, or even from within North America. They began coming from all over the world. We had the equipment and, maybe even more important to the callers, we had the expertise that target archers seemingly wanted worldwide. My old NAA, collegiate, U.S. Archery Team contacts didn’t hurt either. I knew many of the international coaches, shooters, and dealers. The result was that our international distributing took off along with our domestic sales. We discovered an underserved niche—target archery—and capitalized on it. And while target archery in general is certainly smaller than bowhunting, it’s still a vital and exciting area of archery. In many

countries it’s actually everything. Outside of North America very little bowhunting exists. In many countries target archery is everything. We’ve tapped into those markets.”

Always the innovator, Rob is currently working to further and broaden his distributor reach within the United States.

“We’ve taken our traveling trailer concept and adapted it specifically for dealers. We now have a traveling distributor trailer that is making calls on key dealers in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, all the Mid-Atlantic States basically. With that trailer (and more to come) we can offer archery dealers what no other distributor can. We can cost-effectively deliver large items (like 3D targets, block targets, treestands, and even fletched arrows) that are otherwise shipping-expensive. We can instantly and effortlessly fill inventory gaps. We can answer a myriad of technical questions. In essence, we’re raising the bar on the service that distributors provide. At the same time, we are increasing the communication between dealers and the manufacturers of the products we carry in the trailer. We’re becoming a



The goal at Lancaster Archery is to turn every customer into a satisfied customer. Lancaster Archery sales and service trailers can be found at many of the major archery tournaments in the country. The company owns three such trailers and each is fully stocked and expertly staffed (above). Customer Service Archery Techxperts (left) man the phones at Lancaster Archery, expertly answering all technical questions.

powerful, instant delivery vehicle (pun intended) for innovative manufacturers. Many dealers have long thought of us as The Target Archery Distributor. Now many of those same dealers are starting to refer to us as ‘those face-to-face service guys.’”

Rob and Carole Kaufhold’s manufacturing company, CR Archery Products, is also doing well.

“Like most manufacturers, we began with an idea for a product. In our case it was a braided bowsling. The product advantages were many. A properly braided bowsling was reasonably rigid so it was easy for a bowhunter to slip his bowhand into place.

They looked classy and they didn’t hold human scent. We also incorporated a leather mounting component and that fits well with the bowhunter’s sense of tradition. In the beginning no one else offered such slings and we worked hard to build awareness and acceptance. Today our slings are very popular, and we have expanded the CR product line to include other unique and beneficial archery products, primarily for the target archer. We’ve added top-quality Apex scopes, a stabilizer quick-disconnect, finger slings and binocular products for target archers.”

CR, by the way, is a double play

on words. On the surface it says “See Our” products. Behind the scenes, the letters also stand for Carole and Rob, who jointly started and own the company.

The opening page of the Lancaster Archery distributor catalog says to dealers, “We share your love of archery, whether you enjoy Olympic FITA, NFAA field or target shooting, competitive or recreational 3D shooting, bowhunting, or just shooting for enjoyment. We are the archery Techxperts (technical experts), ready to exceed your expectations of what an archery distributor should do for you.” Lancaster Archery has long enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for technical expertise in archery.

“Our roots and our ongoing passion lies in helping people shoot arrows well,” says Rob. “Over the years we’ve devoted a great deal of time and energy into analyzing a wide variety of archery equipment and shooting styles. Based on hands-on experience and testing, we know what works and what doesn’t. As a result, equipment manufacturers frequently consult with us, and dealers and shooters come to us with their questions and problems. As a measure of our commitment to this aspect of our business, we are about to add very expensive and very sophisticated high-speed photography equipment to what we call the Lancaster Archery Shooting Center. That center is an equipment analysis and training facility designed to help dealers and archers learn to set up and use archery equipment at peak performance.”

With such longstanding expertise, Lancaster Archery’s views on equipment are much followed.

“Archery today is such a fascinating sport because of its unique blend of traditional values and equipment advancements,” Rob avows. “Muscles still draw the bow and power the

arrow. But oh how those arrows have changed.

“Everything has changed in the last few decades, and continues to change. We love it and continue to stay right on top of it. Arrow rests are a good example. Look at how much bowhunter arrow rest preferences have changed in just the last few years. Total containment arrow rests, like the Whisker Biscuit, have changed the way bowhunters view arrow rests. So have drop-away arrow rests that provide improved fletch clearance. Right now every new bow buyer seems to want to try a drop-away, and they’ll gladly drop \$40 to \$100 for the privilege of doing so. We’ve had particularly good shooting results with Trophy Taker drop-aways, the new DropZone from Trophy Ridge, NAP Quik-Tune drop-aways, Muzzy’s Zero Effect rest and Cavalier’s Avalanche drop-away.

“Another area where drastic changes continue to take place is arrows. Carbon is currently king, at least it is with the type of high-end shooter and dealer we deal with most. Our high-end business is at least 80% carbon. But dealers shouldn’t be fooled. Aluminum remains strong in specific market segments. Many old-line bowhunters still prefer aluminum, as do schools, camps and clubs. Both are significant markets. We do extremely well with the quality carbon and aluminum arrows from Easton, as well as the carbon arrows from Beman, Game Tracker, Black Hawk, PSE and Gold Tip, to name just a few.

“Broadheads, and broadhead preferences, also continue to evolve. At one point expandable broadheads were coming on like gangbusters. Bowhunters loved them for their flight characteristics and accuracy. Last year we sold in the neighbor-

hood of 75 to 80% expandables. But I’m beginning to get the impression that that may soften somewhat. Most expandable broadheads probably cost you about 20% in penetration power. For an archer shooting one of today’s better bows and pulling 60 pounds or more, that’s generally not a problem because such setups typically have kinetic energy to burn. The end result is still a complete pass-through. But for archers pulling less weight, or with lesser bows, that penetration deficit can indeed be a problem. That group, and bowhunters going after even bigger game than deer, are beginning to reconsider their broadhead choices. They’re looking harder at cut-on-contact broadheads, like NAP’s Razorbak, and exciting new heads like the Crimson Talon, which innovatively addresses accuracy and arrow flight with a fixed-blade broadhead design.

“Then there’s hunting bows. In recent years hunting bows have been getting steadily shorter. Today 31 to 34 inch axle-to-axle length bows are selling best, although 35 to 38 inch bows are staging something of a comeback. 70 to 80% letoff is clearly most popular, in spite of what Pope and Young says. Few archers care a wit about the Pope and Young Club’s 65% restriction. Great-shooting one-cams, like those offered by Mathews, certainly offer the shooting characteristics (quiet, vibration free, fast and easy-to-tune) that archers want, although Hoyt’s new Cam & ½ system is turning heads and seems to be proving incredibly popular.”

Beyond a unique selection and well-founded expertise, Rob is quick to point out that it’s the staff at Lancaster Archery that makes things go.

“Our biggest strength is our people,” Rob emphasizes. “Our people

are avid archers. They care about the sport. They provide the type of personal, one-on-one service that our dealer and consumer customers want and deserve. My wife Carole is our Vice President and CFO. She has an MBA in finance and accounting, and masterfully handles that side of the business. Nathaniel Gilchrist is our General Manager. He’s brought improved structure to our company. Alan Richard, who started with me way back when, is our Information Services guy and does a great job with our ads and catalog work. Steve Yoder handles all of our purchasing. And there’s a great cast of others who expertly handle every customer, every question, every request.”

Ask Rob Kaufhold why he works so hard, and why his businesses wear so many hats in the archery industry, and you’ll get a rapid fire answer.

“Because I love it. I love archery. I always have. When I was young, archery provided a solid base for me. It helped build my self-esteem. Later it gave me direction and a career. But at the root of everything is the fascination I still have for simply shooting an arrow.

“My son Conner is two years old, and he’s already shooting. Together we shoot just one arrow. We shoot that arrow into our lawn. There’s no target. We just shoot and watch that arrow fly. Then we go get that arrow and shoot again. I’m trying to teach Conner just how much pleasure there is in simply shooting an arrow. He’s got the rest of his life to worry about hitting anything. For now, the fascination and pleasure that lies in seeing an arrow fly is all that’s important.”

When Rob Kaufhold was about sixteen years old he consciously decided that archery would be his center. It’s pretty obvious he’s still enjoying that. 