Korea has a fine tradition of horseback archery. In 2007 the Korean government passed a law to preserve and encourage development of traditional Korean martial arts - including Horseback Archery.

In Korean archery competitions there are 5 disciplines that are competed separately. The major difference in Korean archery is that all arrows must be stowed somewhere on the archer or horse - unlike Hungarian style where the archer can take the arrows from the bow hand. Traditionally this is a quiver on the right thigh, but it may also be through a belt, a sash, a saddle quiver or even held in a boot or arm quiver.

**Shooting Static Targets from horseback**

The first competition is a single shot to the side. The track is 90 metres long and carries only one target set back around 5-10m from the track. This has a unique face - consisting of 5 square concentric rings which increase in point score from the outer to inner, with the inner (often decorated with a 'Tiger' face) being worth the maximum 5 points. Each archer has two passes to complete, each run of 90m has to be completed within 16 seconds, or penalty points are incurred.

The next competition is very similar but is known as the 'double shot' which features one target in the first 30m, slightly angled forwards, and a second target in the last 30m, slightly angled backwards.

The final competition for the static targets is the 'serial shot' which consists of 5 targets evenly spaced along a 110m track - approximately one target every 20 metres or so.

In all 3 static target competitions additional bonus points are awarded for style and form.

**Shooting a moving target from horse back.**

Another major difference in Korean archery style is the 'Mogu' or moving target competition. This consists of one rider towing a large cotton-and-bamboo ball behind their horse while another archer attempts to shoot the ball (with special turnip-headed arrows which have been dipped in ink). The archer attempts to hit the ball as many times as possible.

A second 'Mo Gu' event consists of a team of two trying to hit the target towed by a third rider. Points are awarded for how many arrows strike the ball (verified by the ink stains on the Mogu).
STARTING AT THE BEGINNING

Probably the most logical way for me to present the material would be as though you, the reader, just joined a club. I will show what would happen from first signing up to the end of your first competition.

First, you should learn some terminology. I will romanize Korean terms and explain them briefly. I will not go into detail or list terms that are not important to this discussion. For romanization, there are some conventions I will make and generally follow.

VOWEL SOUND

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For consonants, I will use the letter sounds that are closest in romanization, with the exception of names that are already well-established (with some exceptions to that, also). I think you should be able to catch on.

GENERAL TERMS

ARCHERY: GOONG DO
ARCHERY CLUB: JUNG (SA JUNG)
TARGET: GWA NYUK
SHOOTING LINE: SA DAE
PERFECT END: MOLGI
PERSON MAKING PERFECT END: JUB JANG
BOW TERMS
BOWYER: GOONG SA
HORN BOW: GAHK GOONG (HWAL)
BOW COVER: GOONG DAE
BOW STRING: GOONG HYUN
UNBRACED BOW: BU RIN HWAL
BRACED BOW: UNJEUN HWAL
BOW HANDLE: JOOM TONG
SIYAH: SAHM SAHM EE
ARROW TERMS
FLETCHER: SHI JANG
BAMBOO ARROW: JOOK SHI (HWA SAL)
POINT: CHOK
FLETCHING: GEET
SHAFT: SHI NU DAE
NOCK: OH NEUI
ACCESSORIES
THUMB RING: GAHK JI
ARROW CASE: JUN TONG
BRACE RING: SAM JI GGEUN
SA JUNG FLAG: SA JUNG GI
ARROW RETURN: SAL NAL I
TARGET JUDGE FLAG: HOIK JUNG

There are so many more terms, but these are the most basic.

Now that you have joined and learned some basic terms, it is time for you to start your training. As a beginning archer, a shin sa, you will not start shooting yet. First, you must learn how to hold the bow. We will use a modern bow for training.
The bow is gripped firmly, but not tightly. [Grab an arrow as you would grab an egg.] The middle, ring, and little finger are held together around the bow grip. The index finger is held a little higher and is crooked downward. The thumb is held near the top of the grip and is crooked in a little. There should be no gap between the thumb and index finger.

Next, you should learn how to properly draw the bowstring. For beginning training, you will draw with a three finger style, as it is easier than the Mongolian style. Pull straight back and hold for five seconds. After that, slowly let up on the string. Check the bow nocks to be sure the string is still centered. If not, keep trying. This practice should continue for a couple of days, preferably under the auspices of a trained archer. [The hand with which you hold the bow should be like pushing a high mountain; the hand with the thumb ring should be like pulling a tiger’s tail.] The bow should be pushed using the ball of the palm of the hand, with power being shared equally with the arm holding the bow from wrist to shoulder. If the bow is grasped so that the hand is bent back, power will not be distributed equally in the bow. This incorrect arm position will often make the arrow go wide of its mark. In this case, the bow should be regrasped. The knuckle of the middle finger grasping the bow should be pushed toward the target. The bow arm elbow should be straight, with the inside of the elbow perpendicular to the ground.

After you are able to consistently draw and relax the string, you are now ready to shoot a tethered arrow. The tether pole is usually made from a tall (~20ft.) bamboo shaft. A long line is attached to it and an old arrow is attached to the line, through a hole drilled in the point. Before shooting, you need the correct stance and the correct way to hold the string. Your feet should be positioned at a two o’clock position (ten o’clock if left handed) The standing position, when shooting, should neither be a Tshape, nor a ^ shape. The weight of the entire body should be evenly divided between the forward and backward feet. The abdomen should be tight. If the abdomen isn’t stretched to its fullest, it’ll cause a loss of balance due to the haunches being pushed backward. The abdomen is naturally strained by standing with power in the legs. Correct breathing is essential. Take a deep breath, then release it slowly, emptying your lungs. The chin should be positioned by the left shoulder (right handed). The neck should be held as straight as possible.

Now you should put on your thumb ring. Fit your thumb through the outer side of the ring and twist it so the pointed end is toward the end of your thumb. Draw back on the string with it resting against the ring. Wrap your index finger around the end of your thumb, as though you are going to flip a coin. Be careful not to rest your finger over your thumb nail. Raise up the bow hand to the height of your forehead, straightening out the bow arm's elbow. Your eyes should steadily gaze at the target, even with the lower bow nock. The jaw should be close to your bow shoulder armpit.

When you draw the string, you shouldn't give power to the hand holding the bow first. The string should be drawn first, then power can be applied to the bow. This should be practiced until it becomes a steady, fluid motion.

The string should be drawn back slowly to your thumb ring shoulder. When at full draw, hold that position for about three seconds before releasing.
The angle at which the bow should be held will depend upon the cast of the bow. Some archers will shoot at a forty-five degree angle, while others will have a more flat trajectory. The angle can be adjusted individually.

Release is made simply by relaxing the thumb ring hand. Don't jerk it. The follow-through should be a slow back and downward motion. Now you are ready to shoot the tethered arrow. Practice this for several days.

Now that you've practiced shooting the tethered arrow, it is time for you to shoot a live arrow at the target, positioned 145 meters (158 yards) away. Remember a few basic rules:

1. Check the wind.
2. Stand straight.
3. Breathe from your lower abdomen.
4. Draw slowly.
5. Hold at anchor for three seconds.

When you first arrive at your jung, you will stand in front of a sign with the Chinese characters Jung Gahn' carved into it. The meaning of the characters is literally Righteous Space.' The meaning is varied, depending on location. Generally, it is understood to mean you should be upright in both mind and body. Next, you will give a slight bow.

As for clothing, Korean archers will dress nicely. It is a widely held belief in Korea that the clothes make the person. In competitions, archers are required to wear white shirts, pants and shoes.

You should now prepare to shoot. First, brace your bow. As you are using a modern bow at this time, bracing is not a problem. It can be braced in a similar fashion to a western recurve. The horn bow will come later.

Next, your bow cover should be tied around your waist. The tie should be made on your thumb ring side. Start by tying it as though you were tying your shoe. Then loop the long end, bringing up the middle of the loop around the other side (ending up with half a bow, as though you tied your shoe and pulled too far).

After you have accomplished the last feat, it is time to tie your arrows in the bow cover. Take five arrows and slide them under your bow cover on the thumb ring side, points in, arrows out. Twist them in the cover once, so they are firmly in place.

The arrows should routinely be tested for straightness and soundness. The former is done first simply by sighting down the shaft; another way is to balance the shaft on your thumb nail and middle finger nail pressed together--spin the point in a manner like you were snapping your fingers. If it spins easily, it is probably straight and balanced. Soundness is tested by either bouncing the arrow on its point or dropping it flat on the ground, listening for a crisp, sharp sound. If the sound is flat, don't use it.

Before releasing your first arrow of the day, a Korean archer will say, "Hwal bae oom ni da," which means, "I'm learning the bow." If other archers are present, they would reply, "Mani ma chu sayo," which means "Have
many hits.” Whether others are present or not, you should still say this phrase, which is a reminder that, no matter how good an archer you are, you are always a student.

After you’ve practiced this for a time, you will eventually reach certain milestones in Korean archery. The first one is the first hit.

When an archer hits the target for the first time, it is a special occasion (A hit is defined as an arrow hitting the target without breaking the plane of the target). First, you should bow towards the target (a practice that all novice archers must follow after making the first hit of the day). The next time you visit the jung, you should bring refreshments for the other members. For the second, third and fourth hits, congratulations are in order, nothing else. However...

When you have a perfect score of five arrows hitting the target in a row, you have reached a very special level. This event is known as a molgi. The date and time should be noted. There should be witnesses.

You will now be given a nickname, known as a muho. Usually, this name is given by the director of the jung. The name will usually describe something out of nature. When I reached this level, my director gave me the muho of Chung Ho, which means Blue Lake. This was thought to be appropriate, as my hometown is in Michigan, the Great Lake State. Other members will call you by this name from now on.

You will also be given an elaborate ceremony by the other members. During the ceremony, many rituals are performed and you will receive a certificate and trophy commemorating your achievement.

**OFFICIAL RANKING**

Korean traditional archery has ranking similar to other martial arts, such as taekwondo. The dahn level system is used. At special ranking competitions, archers try to advance in rank. The first dahn level is reached when you hit the target twenty five out of forty five tries. The next levels (second through ninth) are 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, and 39, respectively. Only two level advancements are allowed per year. Rank is signified by moogoonghwa (Rose of Sharon) flowers embroidered on the archer’s bow cover.

When an archer reaches fifth dahn, another milestone is reached. This level is known as Myong Goong, or Famous-name Archer. At this level, the archer will be given another ceremony and the archer’s name will be registered nationally.

**THE GAME**

The archery competition is divided into team and individual events. At some competitions, only dahn holders are allowed; at others, the competition is open to all.

The competitions are further divided between city, province and jung matches. In the city match, seven members will represent a city; teams from other cities will send their representatives. In the provincial match, the top five archers from the province will compete against the other provinces. In the jung matches, the top five from the jung will compete. We will concentrate on the jung match. Only in the jung match are modern
glass fiber bows and carbon arrows allowed; in city and provincial meets, only the horn bow and bamboo arrows can be used.

We should, at this point, talk about the opening ceremony. Usually, several ends (soon) will be shot beforehand. At the ceremony, a moment of bowed silence is given to the national flag. Next, the precepts of Korean traditional archery are read aloud by an emcee, a pledge is made by a chosen representative and short speeches are given by VIP’s. The whole thing takes fifteen or twenty minutes (members will be standing in front of the sa dae in rank and file. Now, we can begin the competition in earnest.

First, there is the individual event. All members of all participating jungs can compete. The individual event is divided between the Men's Division and Women's Division. There is no difference in the rules between divisions.

In individual competition, archers will be arranged in shooting groups called dae. Each dae will shoot three soon (ends) of five arrows, for a total of fifteen arrows. The archer with the best score out of fifteen wins. In the case of a tie, there will be a playoff. In team competition, the top five archers from each Jung will shoot one soon of five arrows. This is the quarterfinal event, usually involving eight jungs. The semifinal event will be between the top four and the finals between the two winners of the semifinals (Is there any other way?).

After the competition is finished (most will take several hours), it is time for the closing ceremony. Many awards will be given, from grand prizes (usually large trophies and pennants) to honorable mentions. Certificates seem to be everywhere. When it comes to traditional events, Koreans tend to be more geared to honors than to cash.

Now would be a good time to explain Korean manners, both archery specific and general. Korea is a country with a very ordered society. This attitude comes from ancient Confucian teachings. You will find that many attitudes that are held in Western countries don't hold up in Asia. The opposite is also true. Let's look at some customs in Korea.

Never beckon someone with your index finger; use your hand, palm down, similar to a wave.
Don't drink directly from a bottle; use a glass.
Don't lick your fingers while eating.
Never give or receive anything with one hand; use two hands.
Stand when elders or superiors enter a room.
Pour drinks for others and let others pour for you (two hands).
When entertaining out, pick up the tab, if possible (Usually, everyone will vie for the bill).
The above-mentioned customs are just a few of the many. They are representative of those you will find in Korean archery.

**PRECEPTS**

Korean traditional archery was founded upon traditional values, much like that of the Hwarang of the Silla Dynasty. There are nine major precepts in Korean traditional archery that mirror those values.
1. In Ae Duk Haeng "Be seen as a model of love and virtue."
2. Sung Shil Gyum Sohn "Act with humbleness and honesty."
3. Ja Joong Jul Jo "You should solidly protect your integrity through discreet behavior."
4. Ye Eui Um Soo "Be courteous."
5. Yum Jik Gwa Gahm "When in a position of power, act with integrity and bravery."
6. Sub Sa Moo Un "Don't speak while there is shooting."
7. Jung Shim Jung Gi "Have a straight mind and straight body."
8. Bool Won Seung Ja "Don't resent someone who wins."
9. Mahk Mahn Tah Goong "Don't touch another person's bow."

<Horseback Archery>

Our race is a horse-riding race but now when we forgot about the culture, the fact is only conveyed as a story of long-long time ago. Although it is a land that belongs to other country named China, the forgotten land in that our ancestors were shouting commands over the continent on the back of horses in the past is now talking to us. I wonder if it is saying that the things really forgotten are 'the things that we did not seek find.' by revealing the once brilliant cultural heritages of our ancestors that have been hidden under the ground of it one by one as if they are coming out of the mist.

1. The horseback archery in the time of the Three States

The human power has become strong in hunting and war after humans began to use bows and after the horses were bred, the wars became to have the aspects of cavalry battles, information wars and conquest wars in the fighting with other races. The horse-riding race that had wide continent obtained food through hunting by horseback archery that means shooting on the horseback and executed wars also with horseback archery.

Beginning with the Muyongchong, an ancient tomb with wall paintings of the times of Goguryeo in Jian, Jilin, China, through the paintings in the ancient tombs such as Ssangyongchong, an ancient tomb with wall paintings of the times of Goguryeo in Anseong–ri, Yonggang–gun, Pyeongannam–do, the Anak number 1 ancient tomb in Sangsan–ri, Anak–gun, Hwanghae–do, the ancient tomb with wall painting in Dukheung–ri, Daean city, Pyeongannam–do, Number 1 ancient tomb in Jangcheon–ri, the ancient tomb with wall painting in Yaksoo–ri, Gangseo–gu, Pyeongannam–do, we can see the aspects that our predecessors were hunting deer and tigers running on horsebacks. Especially, there is a scene of horseback archery competition being held in the wall painting of the ancient tomb in Dukheung–ri which tells us that the horseback archery already positioned in the daily life in the times of the Three States. Also, the chapter of main record of Baekje in the chronicles of the Three States reads ‘good at horseback archery’ in indicating the bravery of king, Gye telling that horseback archery was an important criterion to evaluate feats of arms of individuals and that many warriors including kings practiced horseback archery.

In Goguryeo, hunting competitions were held in every spring and fall and the ones with excellent skill to shoot arrows on horseback who hunted many animals were advanced to the position of勇士 (brave warrior) and in Shilla, government officials participated in a horseback archery competition for the prize from king. The record of the customs in Gongju (孔州風土記) in summary of north fort (北塞記略) reports the customs of horseback archery that peoples generally liked shooting arrows on horsebacks and boys shot arrows running on horsebacks when they became 10 plus years old. Gongju is the old name of Gyeongheung, Hambuk.

Especially, the drawing of hunting in the wall painting of Muyongchong, an ancient tomb of Goguryeo shows the scene in that three warriors are chasing tigers and deer forcibly pulling the strings of bows.

The drawing of hunting in the wall painting of Muyongchong, an ancient tomb

This drawing of hunting depicted a scene of typical horseback archery with horses running forward, a fleeing tiger and a powerful dynamic posture of a bowyer with forcibly pulled bowstring that seems like to be about to shoot the arrow and catch the tiger. Also a posture of a warrior who shot left handed with his body turned backward aiming at a deer running over a mountain appears there. This posture is not a posture of a normal horseback archery but a posture that a left handed warrior pulled a bowstring with his body turned by 180degree to the right hand direction to the side of his back aiming at a deer which passed him in the hunting. As such, the drawings in the wall paintings only show our ancestors’ robust spirit and posture in the typical posture of horseback archery revealing dynamic nature. Like this, the motion paths of horseback archery include the direct line of 90 degrees angle to the front and 180degrees rotating radius of body for bowstring’s aiming at the objects. That is, the line of sight of the warrior following the target can be found and the posture may be considered as showing an awfully excellent horse riding skill that enables shooting on horseback in any circumstance along with the dignified appearance of the warrior. That is, the sense of speed or power created when a horse with the weight of 250kg~400kg is running at full speed may have served a great pressure not only in hunting but also in wartime to the enemies. As such, it is considered that the horseback archery in the hunting in normal times was utilized a lot for live education of warriors.
Also, unlike the drawing of hunting, the drawing of horse-riding shooting game (騎馬射戱圖) in the west wall in the black room of the ancient tomb in Dukheung-ri displays the scene of competition on horseback.

The drawing of horse-riding shooting game (騎馬射戱圖) in the wall painting in the ancient tomb in Dukheung-ri

This drawing shows 4 players, 2 umpires and 1 recorder. As for the aspects of the competition, there is a scene of a player taking the lead who turned his body to left hand direction to make a right handed shooting. This posture is an action shooting to a passed target turning the body to the back side and shows a posture of very excellent horseback archery. Also a following player is shown with the posture of shooting left handed to his front. This drawing depicted the postures of excellent horseback archery that can freely use right handed shooting or left handed shooting presenting very excellent postures of horseback archery of our ancestors at that time. Also one of the players is shown as coming into the starting point of the competition and another one is depicted as practicing before the competition. As for the targets, there are 5 poles and among them, 3 poles on the left side have targets in the shape of a square box on the top. The targets are laid ahead of the player on horseback and thus it is indicated that the player who shot and successfully hit the target earned point to determine a winner.

As shown above, the warriors raised the quality and power as warriors by and body and spirit discipline through hunting and horseback archery competitions.

2. Horseback archery in the time of Goryeo

Succeeding the times of the Three States, horseback archery was widely done in the times of Goryeo too.

Horseback archery was a criterion to determine the excellence of feats of arms of individuals in normal times and an important pivot of national defense ability exerting great power in battles in wartimes. Also, from the work of king Gongmin of Goryeo, the drawing of going for hunting (出獵圖) and the work of a scholar at the end of the times of Goryeo, Lee, Ja-Hee (李齊賢), the drawing of a big hunting affair (大獵圖), we can see that the nobles in the times of Goryeo primarily executed horseback archery in hunting. Horseback archery is found to have positioned as a culture of nobles already in the times of Goryeo.

Horseback archery was also a criterion to determine the excellence of feats of arms of military officers. The series of biographies in the history of Goryeo expressed the evaluation of the feats of arms of individuals with the abbreviated phrase 'good at horseback archery'. This means that horseback archery was the foremost among the feats of arms in the times of Goryeo and was perceived as an essence of general feats of arms and that being good at horseback archery meant excellence on feats of arms.

[HISTORY OF GORYEO] Seo Hee/Seo Gong

Seo Gong (徐恭) was a great-great grand son of Seo Hee (徐熙) and he was courageous and resourceful and good at horseback archery thus became the general commander of the soldiers & cavalry corps of two borders (兩界兵馬使) six times and the soldiers willingly respected him.

[HISTORY OF GORYEO] The series of biographies/Lee, Ja-Eui

Lee, Ja-Eui (李資義) greedily gathered fortune and raised scoundrels and regularly practiced horseback archery always saying 'The king has become sick and may die at any moment and there are ones who watch for chances from outside so you should duly support marquis Hansan (漢山侯) at your best so that the god's cavalry (神器) should not be transferred to another one's command.' and he gathered soldiers although it was prohibited with the intention to revolt at which time Sukjong knew this unnoticed while he was in Myeongbook palace after he became the duke Gyerim...

The section of Lee, Ja-Eui considered cavalry as the most important part of military corps and as a powerful corps like tank corps of these days, a phrase is shown in that Lee, Ja-Eui wanted to prevent the command of the corps from being transferred to other person.

3. Horseback archery in the times of Joseon

The horseback archery in the times of Joseon is evaluated in diverse ways.

As a means of appointing men of talent, it was one of most important means to determine success or failure of examinees (舉人) in the military service examination (武科).

In wartimes, with the fast movements using horses, they went deep into enemy's camp and killed enemy's general and horseback archery proved the power in chasing war.

In normal times, as the criterion to evaluate continuous discipline of military officers, the feats of arms of military officers and palace guards were evaluated through horseback archery. The archery in the times of Joseon was as popular as the sports of today and competitions were often held and the military officers who were good at horseback archery were awarded sometimes. Also, archery competitions were held on Sasin or Dano and this shows that archery took the position of a culture of feats of arms in the times of Joseon.

1) Horseback archery in military officer examination in the king's palace (武科殿試) and warrior appointment test (武取)

[True record of Joseon dynasty] dated August 15 of 26th year of king Youngjo reads 'As for men of talent (人才), there are ones who have a lot of knowledge about the Classics and are excellent in literature among scholars and there are ones who are excellent in horseback archery and have a lot of knowledge about tactics among warriors.'
In the times of Joseon, all of the tests to appoint warriors ranging from Gabsa(甲士) to palace guards(內禁衛) included horseback archery and it was an important subject in military officer examination in the king's palace (王林校試書) too. As such horseback archery was one of the feats of arms that was essential for warriors. Gyeonggukdaejeon, Daejeonhoetong and military officer examination in king's palace in Sejong's five decorum in true record of Joseon dynasty contains detailed description of test of horseback archery.

In [Military officer examination in king's palace in Sejong’s five decorum in true record of Joseon dynasty], there is a record reading “Because of poor control of horse, if a examinee shoot to right side holding the bow in left hand or shoot to left side holding the bow in right hand, he will get the point if the arrows hit the target. It means that an examinee in a horseback archery test could not control the horse well i. e. had poor horse-riding skill and he drove the horse to the right side although he should go to left side and shoot red target thus the red target was not in the way of the horse so he shot the white target in front of him. This shows that right handed shooting and left handed shooting were given of the same points. Based on these example, good control of horse was very important in horseback archery and shooting arrows left handed or right handed as needed were accepted.

2) Horseback archery in wartimes

Horseback archery in wartimes (戰時) uses the mobility utilizing horses and bows and in close battles, the cavalry corps may execute pincer attacks harmonizing with foot soldiers from the sides of foot soldiers and in making battle arrays, individual cavalry soldiers are distributed first around the battle array.

[True record of Joseon dynasty on July 9 of the 3rd year of king Sejong] reads “In making a battle array, if a whistle makes a sound in the center, the cavalry soldiers will come out from 4 positions in the back of the corps and will be distributed to 4 directions. Foot soldiers will stand with the interval of 6 cheoks from each other and the cavalry soldiers will have the interval of 2 times of it. ...” Thus the cavalry soldiers could kill enemy’s general in a moment with the fast mobility and demonstrated the power in chasing war.

The role of horseback archery in wartimes can be analyzed through the battle positions.

[True record of Joseon dynasty] On July 4 of the 15th year of king Sejong, Ha, Gyeong-Bok et. al submitted a book of battle arrays(陣書) pursuant to the order of the king. The content is as follows.

'When the foot soldiers go out of camps to fight against enemies, they are to go ahead altogether and stand with the distance of 10 steps from the enemies and the cavalry soldiers are to support them within the distance of 50 steps. If the enemies are defeated and flee, the drums and whistles are to make sound together and the cavalry soldiers are to go ahead and chase the enemies and the foot soldiers are to save the cavalry soldiers—'

In making battle arrays, shields are to be arranged successively on the out side of each arrays and then spears and long swords, fire guns and archers, and then the cavalry soldiers with spears and cavalry soldiers with bows are to be arranged in the order of precedence—'.

Considering the positions of cavalry soldiers in battle positions and the fact that the distance from enemies in fighting was 50 steps, the horseback archers seem to have used the tactic of killing enemies utilizing fast mobility and retreat to the back of colleague troops in actual fighting although they had bows to be used in long distance. The position of cavalry soldiers in the back was to utilize the fast mobility of horses and also was to block the colleague foot soldiers fleeting in fear. In [true record of Joseon dynasty] dated July 18 of the 4th year of king Sejong, there is a record saying that with the cavalry soldiers with spears and with bows arranged in the back, even the soldiers who are weak and timid will not turn around and flee.

3) Horseback archery in normal times(平時)

Because the horseback archery demonstrated significant power in wartimes, it was prepared thoroughly in normal times. Horseback archery was a feats of arms that any warrior had to learn without fail so much as civil officials were evaluated by five words rhythmical poems(五言律詩) and military officials were evaluated by horseback archery. (True record of Joseon dynasty dated September 25 of the 29th year of king Jungjong)

As the phrase in [True record of Joseon dynasty] dated March 4 of the 17th year of king Sukjong saying “horseback archery is a special skill of warriors” tells, all warriors ranging from low grade warriors to military officials had to continually practice horseback archery even in normal times as a means to evaluate the feats of arms.

In true record of Joseon dynasty dated September 8 of the 29th year of king Sejo, the king ordered like this—”from now, one of each of the court nobles in ministry of war and the nobles in duly(都護府) shall bring palace guards and 100 soldiers into back garden and execute horseback archery.”

Such horseback archery was often evaluated of warriors through Gwanmujae(觀武才) and Yeolmujae(阅武才) and excellent ones were awarded and the ones under criterion were appointed for services making the criterion of prize and punishment clear to encourage steady practice.

From the times of Three States and to the times of Joseon, the cavalry was considered as a powerful corps dominating the military power and the power lost the value after powerful western countries came into this country as all of the weapons were advanced. Also, the difficulties in breeding horses and the corresponding development of cavalry soldiers seems to have presented many unnecessary factors in modernizing means of military corps. Therefore, bringing the so far buried subject of horseback archery back to a modern competition may be deemed to be a very significant work. If restored to be suitable to the present times now when the traditions were lost, it will give us the opportunity to widely report our excellent traditional culture of feats of arms that has been thought as not existing and will have infinite educational value in the context of succeeding the spirit of our ancestor in this modern times and huge potential as a sport contributing a lot to creation of new culture in 21st century. Also, the potential energy of horse-riding culture is infinite.
The scene of the ground of horseback archery competition

Korean race’s traditional horseback feats of arms gyeokgu association demonstrated horseback feats of arms including horseback archery in many places and stood in the spotlight and horseback feats of arms revived as a culture containing history. Also through a lot of efforts in attempt to make horseback archery as a modern competition, it organized the 1st Hwarang horseback archery competition on October 10, 2004 in Hwarangdo experience tour complex in Youngrang lake, Sokcho and the 2nd competition on April 16, 2005 and the 1st international horseback archery competition & the 3rd Korea horseback archery competition held between October 1 through 3 attracted a lot of interest and praises and thereby the horseback archery competition implying our history and root was restored as a culture recreated into modern times passing over 2,000 years time and space.

Now horseback archery competition will be developed to a competition in which world’s people can participate altogether and will shine in the world as an excellent horse riding culture with live root of Korean race.

The competition items are one shoot(單射), fast shoot(速射) and successive shoot(連射).

Scene of one shoot competition

One shoot(單射): One target is installed and the point earned is compared. The point of 120m in competition ground becomes finish line and a target is installed on a midway point, at 90m point. The time to pass the finish line, the 120m point after start is set as 18 seconds for children and youth and adults should pass within 15 seconds and every 1 second of over time will be deducted of 1 point.

Scene of fast shoot competition

(Targets are installed to be shot going ahead.)

Fast shoot(速射): Two targets are installed in 120m competition line and the points earned are compared. One of the two targets is installed on 60m point facing starting point and 2nd one is installed to be shot in the posture turned around to the back side in competition. The time to pass the finish line, 120m point after start is set as 18 seconds for children and youth and adults should pass within 15 seconds and every 1 second of over time will be deducted of 1 point.

Scene of successive shoot competition

(A player is loading an arrow on the bow.)

Successive shoot(連速射): Total distance is set to be 160m and 1st target is installed at 30m point from start line and 4 more targets are installed with 30m interval in a row and the points earned are compared. The time to pass finish line, 160m point after start is set as 25 seconds for children and youth and adults should pass within 20 seconds and every 1 second of over time will be deducted of 1 point.

In 21st century, the competitiveness of culture is considered as showing the criterion of countries. That is, the intention of Korean race’s traditional horseback feats of arms gyeokgu association is to bring up excellent cultural human resource based on country’s cultural heritages as well as to develop a proud racial cultural heritage with live excellent history and the root that are not inferior to any other one in the world and

How do you brace the laminated Korean bow?

A: In Korean archery, we brace the bow with a step-through that is a bit different from the 'western' style. First, put the string loop around the upper limb's nock and hold it in place by pressing it against the bridge pad (making sure it isn't twisted and the loop fits on either side of the 'ridge'). Next, with the belly facing outwards, place the back of the lower limb above the left knee and the right leg over the bow, so the back of the right knee is against the belly. Next, flex the bow, so you can place the string on the lower nock. When placing the string on the lower nock, twist (rotate) the string to the left (CCW, as you're looking at it) several times and
place the loop on the nock, untwisting it as you did with the upper nock. Let up carefully, being certain the string is seated correctly on each nock.

Now, draw the bow back and look at the string loop, seeing how it lifts off the bow. If it turns at all, it needs to be twisted more, on the lower limb, just like you did before placing the loop on the nock. When you have a turn in the loop, it means the twist is off; it will tend to make your shots go a bit off, too, so you need to get it corrected.

Q: Are there rules about the type of bow you can use?
A: Yes. Bows cannot have sights, stabilizers or other additions; bare bow only.

Q: What type of arrows are used?
A: Just like the bows, Koreans use two types of arrows. The first, traditional type, is the bamboo arrow, called 'jook shi' in Korean. The second

Korean Traditional Archery (KTA)?
Answer: KTA is known as 'Gook Goong' in Korean. The general term for 'archery' is 'goongdo,' literally, 'The Way of the Bow'. To learn more about it, in detail, visit the article on KTA
Q: What type of bows are used in KTA?
A: Two types of bows are used in KTA. The first, the most traditional, is the horn bow, known as a 'gahk goong' in Korean. The second type is the laminated version of the horn bow, known as a 'gae ryahng goong' in Korean.

Bamboo Arrows

This is a condensed version, from the video I made of a Korean fletcher crafting arrows; some procedures were shortened or, in the case of points that will vary from archer to archer, omitted. In order to fully appreciate what is going on, you really need to see it being done. Still, this should give you an idea.

Note: You can use different length bamboo or cane and the number of nodes isn't written in stone; experience is the best teacher.

1. Choose bamboo. Find shafts that are about 36-40" long, with even diameters and three evenly-spaced nodes.

2. Using a circular table saw, even off the shafts; match nodes as best you can.

3. Weigh shafts, to sort them as much as possible.

4. Make an initial heating and straightening of the shafts. The Korean fletcher uses a compressed charcoal stove, with an opening on the top for this. He places two bricks (a little more than a shaft's width apart) over the heat. Using a simultaneous smooth twisting and gliding motion, the fletcher heats the shafts. Occasionally, he will use an arrow straightener (formed out of a large dowel, with
grooves cut in it) to work the shafts into straightness; he will sight down the shaft, checking for straightness. Be careful not to overheat the shafts, or the chambers may burst and/or the shaft may burn.

5. Sand nodes. On an electric abrasive wheel, make an initial sanding of all the nodes. Next, attach two paper sanding discs, facing each other, separated with a spacer, on the motor. Using the same twisting, gliding motion mentioned above, further sand down the nodes.

6. Sand paper the entire length of the shafts.

7. Perform a secondary heating/straightening of the shafts. This is done in another stove that has a cylinder horizontally through the heating chamber; there is no direct flame this time. As in the step above, glide, twist and straighten; this time, however, use a very fine awl (or pin) to poke each chamber at the node (this lets steam pressure escape) as the shafts heat up. When the shafts have been heated/straightened enough, the shaft color will be a medium brown in color.

8. Next, take all the shafts and lay them out flat with nodes matching. Evenly mark all the shafts where they should be cut off (using the shortest as the guide). The shafts are cut using a knife rolled over the cutting point (bearing down on the shaft).

9. Mark the nock end for sinewing (what length will be sinewed; about 1-7/8”).

10. Heated fish or hide glue should be put in a small ball in the palm of your hand; twirl the nock end in the glue. Add more glue as necessary.

11. Twirl wet sinew strands onto glued area (evenly).

12. After drying, roughen the sinew.

13. Repeat step 10.

14. After drying, use a tapered bit (looks kind of like a spear point) to hollow out the inside of the nock end; the end result being, only the skin surface of the bamboo attached to the sinew is left.

15. Take wood for nock inserts and taper one end; leave enough untapered wood for the outside of the nock.

16. Trim newly-made inserts to fit each shaft.

17. Apply fish/hide glue to taper of inserts and insert into shaft.

18. After drying, use an abrasive wheel to shape nocks.

19. Use a saw (circular, with a guide, is best) and cut in nock grooves.

20. Flatten ends of nocks on abrasive wheel; also, smooth nock insert sides.

21. File and sand further.

22. Twirl glue over sinew again.

23. Apply cellophane paper; allow to dry.

24. Remove excess paper (off nock insert and above mark where fletching will begin).

25. Brush on water, colored with weak coffee.

26. Attach points (may require footing).

27. Brush lacquer on nocks.

28. Sandpaper nock grooves.

29. Check for shaft straightness and adjust as needed.

30. Cut fletching. It should be noted that, for the most part, one arrow equals one bird. The Koreans use wild pheasant; turkey, etc. will work well, too. For right handed archers, use the left wing. The outer and inner feathers should be discarded. Use pruning shears to cut off ends of quills.

31. Make initial trim using scissors.

32. Separate the bulk of the quill from the feathers.

33. Smooth remaining quill with a sharp knife.

34. Match arrow weights, grinding point as necessary.
35. Mark shafts for fletching (lengths of fletch).
36. Apply white glue to fletching and allow to dry slightly.
37. Apply first fletch to each arrow.
38. Apply remaining fletches.
39. Trim the leading edge of the fletching even with each other.
40. Use a feather burner for final shaping.
41. Paint a band at the leading edge of the fletching.
42. Apply lacquer on shafts between each fletch.
43. Spin test each arrow by balancing the shaft on your thumb/middle finger (as they are pinched together) and flick either the point or (in the case where you have a sharp broadhead) nock. It should spin evenly. Adjust straightness as necessary.
44. Rub each shaft with car wax.