

Archery Business 2009 Archery University

ARCHERY SERIES



EASTMAN OUTDOORS 30 YEARS

Bob Eastman founded Eastman Outdoors three decades ago with one simple product—the Game Tracker. The Game Tracker was basically a 2,500-foot spool of string that attached to an arrow to aid in the tracking of wounded game. While a lot has changed since the release of the Game Tracker, Eastman's commitment to providing innovative products for the hunting enthusiast remains the same. That commitment has taken him and his company to unimagined growth. Today Eastman Outdoors

is a parent company to Carbon Express Arrows, Gorilla Treestands and the most recent development—Gorilla Gear.

Because Eastman Outdoors covers so many different aspects of the outdoor world they are constantly developing new products and adapting to market demands. The evolution and expansion of the company has led them to success in many facets of the outdoors world. About that success Gorilla's Director of Marketing Stephen Graham says, "Our success stems from a passion for our sport, a willingness to look outside our industry for ideas, and a strong focus on dealer base support."

Gorilla Treestands certainly seems to have hit on what consumers want, and with 2009 they are steaming ahead with their HX series of stands. The HX series relies on a load of new technology including the strong yet ultra-light "D Tube" Material Construction and the HX Platform Design, which enhances portability by streamlining the platform while providing more room. In addition to those features the HX Series also own the comfortable and advanced XPE Foam Seats, stealthy XT-6 Nylon Bushings and their own durable and slip-resistant Black Traxion coating.

Capitalizing on the success of the Gorilla

Treestand line Eastman and company recently introduced Gorilla Gear. Developed for hardcore hunters of all varieties, Gorilla Gear offers everything from hunting blinds to all-encompassing turkey hunting vests. About Gorilla Gear Graham states, "Gorilla Gear will continue to push the envelope in terms of innovation and product differentiation. Providing an undeniable advantage in the field will continue to be the driving force behind Gorilla Gear."

On the Carbon Express front, the Aramid KV arrows (\$199) have changed the way hunters look at their ammo.

Built from Kevlar, the Aramid KV's are five times stronger than steel, while the Built-In Weight Forward design promotes serious down-range accuracy. For hunters looking to tip their Aramids with something wicked, Carbon Express also introduced the F-15 broadheads. The F-15 is available in two styles—the Dual Blade and the Expandable. The Dual Blade features a 1½-inch cutting diameter while the Expandable features a 1¼-inch cutting diameter. Both are available in 100 grains and both own .030-inch thick #40 stainless steel blades ensuring that these broadheads will remain intact no matter the size of the quarry or the placement of the shot. (810-733-6360; www.eastmanoutdoors.com)



GRAYLING OUTDOOR PRODUCTS 30 YEARS

Ironically enough, it was Fred Bear's decision to move to Florida that caused Ray and Sharon Priebe to start Grayling Outdoor Products. Both worked for Fred in his factory for years before starting out on their own. "I wanted a job so bad at Bear Archery that I was outside of the personnel office every day for three weeks until they got tired of me and hired me," Sharon says about her introduction into the archery industry. "I started in the feather dye and drying process and moved on to the fletching and cresting area. Ray worked for Fred in the sixties doing design and mold making as well as plastic injection."

When Fred decided to head for warmer weather the Priebe's made the decision to start an archery company for themselves. Coincidentally, Ray's business partner had just purchased Fred's daughter's house and Grayling Outdoor Products was born in the garage of that very house. From those ironic beginnings, Grayling has grown by leaps and bounds. When commenting on the fledgling years Sharon states, "Things just seemed to take right off and we've expanded over the years having purchased the factory we are at in 1981."

Grayling has certainly followed in Fred's steps by designing products that would forever change archery and particularly archery hunting. As an example, Sharon talks about one of their earlier products. "We were the first to come out with a camo quiver—the Silent Hunter Camo—done with a paint booth and nickel masks that did three colors on both the cup and arm. It was covered in our own pattern of maple leaves."

A few generations of quivers later, Grayling has introduced the Jus 'N' Uff (\$15-Black; \$21-Camo). The Jus 'N' Uff is a four arrow

quiver that got its interesting name one day when Sharon commented that four arrows were, "Just enough arrows and if I need more I should just quit hunting and take up knitting." The Jus 'N' Uff features "fingers" that hold the arrows securely no matter what kind of weather they are subjected to as well as built-in broadhead wrenches. Another benefit to the Jus 'N' Uff is that it owns a soft and durable material that holds broadheads firmly in place while not retaining moisture like foam inserts, something that can eventually lead to rusty broadheads.



One product from Grayling that not only works for the average hunter but also benefits dealers is their Just-Right Broadhead Sharpener (\$15). Because the Just-Right Broadhead Sharpener positions in and out to allow point clearance and has three angle settings, dealers no longer need to keep several sharpeners on hand. A set-screw allows users to lock the sharpener width in place.

Sharon offered a few more words to sum up Grayling's intent for the future. "We will continue to design and produce new products as we think of things that will work well for the archer." Fred Bear couldn't have said it better himself. (800-426-8929; www.graylingoutdoorproducts.com)

