Archery

Archery is Bhutan’s national sport and dates to the time when bows and arrows, and the country’s rugged geography, were the principal means of defense.

Traditional Bhutanese bows and arrows are made from locally available bamboo. In recent years, more powerful factory-made compound bows have been introduced into some archery competitions. Small wooden targets are placed at either end of regulation-sized archery fields—approximately 120 yards for traditional bows and 140 yards for compound bows.

Archery contests are very colorful community events that feature highly skilled competitors and dancing and singing cheerleaders, who poke fun at the opposing team’s performance. Virtually every village in Bhutan has an archery field nearby, and the sport forms a part of regular weekend recreation for many people. It is also an important part of all major festivals in the kingdom.