

1,2,3,4 – go Croatia!

A few days before the World field championship in Zagreb, we had the opportunity for a short interview with Croatia's most prominent archery competitors. On last World field championship in Val'd'Isere Ivana Buden won the 1<sup>st</sup> place in women compound division, while Croatia's junior compound stars were led by 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked Maja Orlić, Domagoj Buden who won the 3<sup>rd</sup> place and following with Mario Vavro in 4<sup>th</sup> place.

We tried to find out how they feel before the championship, what are their hopes and does a home ground bring extra comfort or stress?

The interview started with Ivana Buden.

**Ivana, so the World Field is happening in your home town this year, how do you feel about it?**

I admit I love it! Not only because it is in my home country, and my home town, but because the competition field and the hotels are situated in the center of the town! For us competitors, next superb thing is that we are all settled in two hotels, only 10 minutes walking distance apart. So, after competition and training obligations, you have the opportunity to take a walk to the town and just enjoy its spirit, which is spectacular during summer months! Plus, I must say I feel very proud that Croatia is the host of this competition.

**Since you are the reigning World Field Champion, does this competition bring more pressure for you?**

For now, I am still not thinking about it. In my calendar there are three more competitions before this one, and at the moment, I am concentrated on one in Poland. On the other hand, I absolutely love shooting field because it is so versatile and challenging, and I'm very much looking forward to this competition. Sure, there is some additional pressure which comes from the surroundings, but through years I managed to find my own way, I matured a lot and I always try to stay motivated and just remain the positive attitude.

**What are your wishes for the WAFC?**

I wish to have fun, good weather, and just to shoot good. At the beginning of the year I couldn't quite find my game, but now my bow and arrows are very well tuned up, and I have a good feeling.

**Do you have some special rituals before the competition, any lucky charms?**

Well, I like to wake up slowly, and just start the day with ease, nice breakfast, cup of coffee. I am a bit of a "slow starter", so I like to come to competition field a little early so I can properly warm up. About the lucky charm..it's a work in progress (smiles), since I travel a lot my current charms simply got torn apart, so I am waiting for a new one to take over the empty space.

**The Buden family is very well known in archery, besides you, your brother Domagoj is upcoming young star, and your father Dubravko is your technical and logistical backup. In a typical family lunch is archery a main course or desert?**

(smiles)..I would say breakfast, lunch and dinner. My mother and sister are not shooting but they are both involved in archery indirectly. During our time together it's really hectic sometimes, from telling

how the competition and the trip went on, to reminding not to forget to pack the socks for the next one.

**In your personal opinion, in men compound division who is the archer to look out for?**

Hm... I'd say Jessie (**Jessie Broadwater**), and Dave Cousins, but something tells me that Chris (**Chris White**) is ready to do something interesting..

We continued the interview with Maja Orlić.

**Maja, how are the preparations for the next WAFC Zagreb going on? Are you excited?**

I participated mainly on target tournaments this year, so now we are shifting the focus to field. Just before the final part of preparations, I will take a short break, and enjoy a couple of days at the seaside. For me this year and schedule were really packed, so I need some time off and just to relax. When I return, I will concentrate on practicing angles and other field specific characteristics. Also, I plan to go to two more field tournaments here at home, so we can check if everything is ok, and finalize the preparation process. I am excited about the championship, and I always can't wait to go to a tournament, but at the moment it still seems far away.

**What does a big event like World Championship in your own country represent to you?**

I like it because it is a good opportunity for archery promotion in Croatia, but also promoting our country to other people. I hope there will be some spectators and that this will be a good chance for a lot of people to see and maybe try archery on the spot!

**How do you cope with your competition on tournaments?**

In field tournaments in my category, competition changes a lot. So, I try not to think about other girls and try just to be focused on myself. I don't even believe in lucky pencils or lucky arrow pullers (smiles). I try not to take into consideration expectations of others, and just give the best of me every time.

**Is there something special you are looking forward to on this WAFC?**

I wasn't really thinking about it, but I always like the final party! (smiles).

After nice time with girls, we asked Domagoj Buden a few questions.

**Domagoj we tried to contact you in several occasions, but you are very busy?**

Yes, very busy practicing and training hard. My two biggest daily occupations are archery practice and going to the gym. I am really committed to my training sessions, and I train a lot. The gain I get is dual: you have a strong body and a strong head. At the moment there are still a few target tournaments that I am going on, but afterwards I will make a short break to maybe catch some sun at the seaside and then continue with the final field preps. My equipment is superbly tuned up, so I feel confident in both equipment and me. At this level I think that for a successful shot, the ratio between an archer and equipment is 50:50, that's why I take care of my equipment by myself, and like to know every millimeter of it.

**WAFC in Zagreb for you?**

Home crowd, home city, what more do I need to say. I am looking forward to it, and for now I don't feel any pressure. I try not to put myself under any expectations, cause it usually ends in a bad way.

**Did you check the competition for the WAFC?**

Ohhh yes...(smiles), although I know I shouldn't be already making projections of matches, but it seems that I still cannot quite do that (smiles). I like shooting elimination rounds, and for me qualifications are perfect as a situational training. I don't know, somehow in eliminations I just get very pumped up and very competitive. A lot depends on the feeling, though. If I have a good feeling, I know I will be shooting good, and it always ends that way. Sure, there are matches where I can feel unusually loud pounding of my heart (smiles), but then I try to focus on my breathing and just to stay in the line.

**Do you have any special procedures before and after the matches?**

Nope, nothing special. I like to perform some exercises in the gym before the competition and watch some motivational videos. Afterwards, well, it depends...if I shot well I write a nice post on Facebook, and just relax for a couple of days.

**What are your plans for the future, what does a 17 year old dream of?**

First of all, I have an alarm clock set at the time and date of when I can start working on getting my driver's license. I really can't wait. Furthermore, I would like to get a scholarship from Edinburgh University, where I would have a chance to study and shoot archery. I would like to live in USA, I have a lot of friends there and archery is extremely well developed. That would be a dream comes true. Oh, did I say, shoot archery all the time? (smiles).

We finished this interview with Mario Vavro.

**Mario, we caught you in the middle of the national field championship, how do you feel?**

I feel great, I am happy how I shot today on unmarked distances and it keeps me confident. I am at the last stage of my preparations before the championship in Zagreb and I am totally in the Field mode. I train on two different locations, one more suitable for target practice, and the other one more field challenging (angles, shadows, steps).

**What is you feeling for the WAFC in Zagreb?**

Oh, I am looking forward to it. Last World field championship was among my first better results, so I can't wait this one to start. I have a good feeling and I would like to take a position at the podium. I am a very simple guy, I try not to overload myself with too big expectations or overthink too much. I do not have any special rituals or lucky charms. I like to start shooting and see how it goes, if it goes good I feel good.

**Did you check already your competition?**

To be honest not yet, but I always respect my opponents. I feel no pressure at the moment, and the thing that we have such a big tournament at home is great. My family and friends will finally have the

opportunity to watch me live. Besides school and archery, I spent 90% of my free time with my girlfriend so I am happy we will be home, cause she will be there as my no.1 fan.