

Thoughts on Indoor Targets: Type and Soaking

I may be the last knife thrower around to realize the benefits of soaking an indoor throwing target. Since all of our outdoor targets are naturally soaked, I never thought much about the benefits of a good soaking. Yes, I know, dry wood expands when wet, duh!

Regarding indoor targets, I originally built one for the many bad weather days in Georgia. It consisted of a set of 2 x 4 blocks glued and locked together. I designed it with mounting pins on the back so I could lift it off for repairs. It sounded like a good idea at the time.

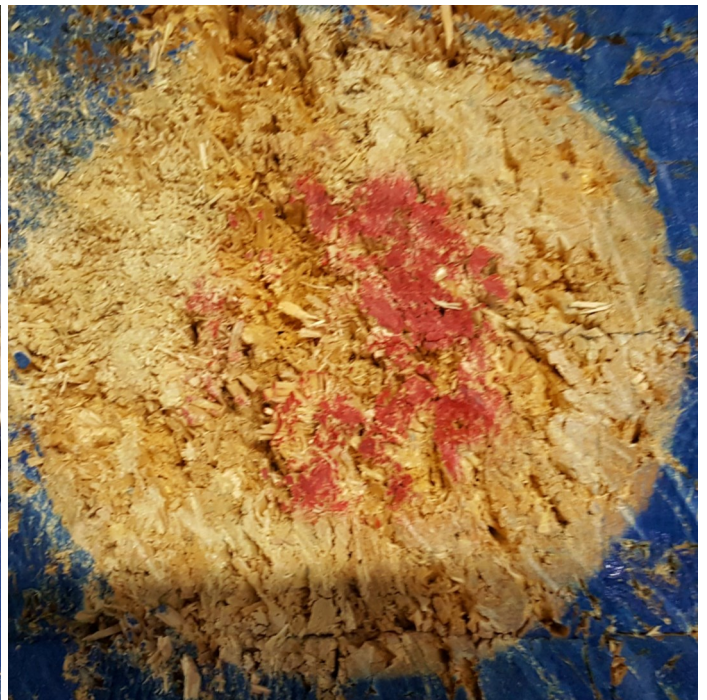
Over time, problems emerged. The large chips of wood all over the floor did not make me popular with my loving wife. Also, many sections developed soft spots due to multiple hits on the same wood blocks splitting off large chunks of the target. This resulted in good throws falling out of the target and big chunks of wood falling on the floor—frustrating! So, even though the blocks in each row were glued together, I often had to take the target down to rebuild/replace individual sections and blocks—a messy job at best!

The repair task was made even more user friendly by the weight (45 lbs.) of the target. I eventually tried to soak it with water to reduce wood debris and damage, but with minimal success and additional weight. This winter has been particularly nasty—rain, sleet and snow—and I'm not the U. S. Postal Service, so I am deterred from my appointed rounds—outdoor (tree) rounds, that is. Since we had already cut up a bunch of Poplar rounds for outdoor targets, courtesy of a vicious winter storm, I decided to try using one of them for indoor throwing.

Heavy, Old Indoor Target



Close Up View of Same



Since the Poplar round measured 22" in diameter and weighed 28 pounds, only one mounting pin was necessary. After a month or two of indoor throwing, (maximum indoor distance: 4 meters) the target began to show deep gouges and even some cracks. Yes, there were some small chips on the floor, but not at the level of the home-made target.

Our outdoor targets get lots of rain, so they heal from deep sticks and minor cracks quite well. Having designed the target to be removed, I have occasionally taken it outside, placed it face up, hosed it down a few times during the day and brought it in the next day. Results with this target are well worth the effort. Also, less chips on the floor means happy wife!

So I decided to retire my home-made target in favor of a lighter, easier to repair and less messy Poplar round. Just thought I'd mention it.

