

Tukudika Bows and Hunting Blinds



The Tukudika, were well known for their craftsmanship in making bows from bighorn sheep horns for hunting. The bows were a highly sought after commodity when it came to trading and particularly prized for buffalo hunting. The bows were made from the long horns of older rams. The horns were heated over coals to straighten the curls. Each horn would average 18 to 24 inches long. Heat was applied again to make the horn semi plastic and then pounded with a round stone. A five-inch piece of bone was used for the riser. The bows averaged 44" in length. Wet rawhide was used to join the three pieces together. Sinew was glued at the back of the upper and lower limbs for strength. The glue was made out of boiled shavings from the hoof and bits of neck skin. The scum formed was skimmed off and used for glue (Dominick 1964). The arrow shafts were made from red osier dogwood or Syringa. Obsidian or chert were used for projectile points. The Tukudika mostly hunted from blinds. These blinds were built along game trails and mostly on talus (Kingsbury 2003). Even today the bighorn sheep use the trails where these blinds were built.

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