

Rob DiStefano

AIM Samick Legend Longbow

AIM Internature Viper Longbow

Equipment Review

While perusing a popular online archery store website, I noticed several longbows were being offered at very low prices – far lower than the usual going rate for production longbows. Intrigued, I did some further checking and found that the bows were distributed by AIM Archery (www.aimarchery.com), founded by president Eric Hall, a noted archer in his own right. AIM stocks recurves and longbows crafted by two Korean bow manufacturers, Samick and Internature. These longbows piqued my interest, so I took the plunge and bought them both! Here's my review of these "offshore" longbows.



The Samick Legend

Length 69" AMO nock to nock
Labeled draw weight 40# @ 28"
Actual measured draw weight 43# @ 28" (measured to the front of the arrow shelf)
Note Samick stickbows are typically a few pounds more draw weight than indicated on each bow.
Brace height 7" to depth of handle (with a 65½" bowstring)
Price Listed at \$215/US – \$165/US at FS Discount Archery (www.fsdiscountarchery.com)

Average Arrow Velocity, Kinetic Energy and Arrow Grains per Draw Weight

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1½"	5" feather	28"	525	151	26.60	12.21
1½"	4" feather	28"	478	157	26.18	11.12
5⁄16"	4" feather	28"	432	164	25.82	10.05
5⁄16"	3" feather	28"	370	171	24.04	8.60

A = POC wood arrow shaft diameter

B = arrow fletching

C = arrow and draw lengths

D = arrow weight in grains

E = average speed (fps)
F = kinetic energy in ft-lbs
G = arrow grains per pound of draw weight (GPP)

Chronograph criteria:

- Shooting Chrony Model F-1 chronograph, shot indoors w/special lighting
- test conditions—72 degrees Fahrenheit, 47% humidity
- arrows released approximately 3 feet in front of 1st chrono screen
- 10 strand BCY Dyneema'02 bowstrings used exclusively
- finger release (latigo leather tab)
- arrow length measured from depth of nock to back of head
- arrow released when back of head flush w/forward edge of arrow shelf (28" draw)
- speed is an average of 10 shots per arrow type
- arrows were of Port Orford Cedar (POC) shafting
- arrow nocks were non-pinch, loose fitting
- arrows had flat blunt points & helical fletched feathers



The Scoop

The Legend longbow is nicely crafted, with very dark brown glass over maple limb cores, and a riser of walnut with an Asian hardwood called "karisen." The limbs exhibit a mild reflex/deflex design and the limb tips are capped in a single layer of black phenolic. When braced, the limbs form a classic "D" shape—this bow would meet the IFAA



longbow rules.

The handle section has a “boxy” feel to the grip, with rounded off corner edges. For the most part, the grip is straight but with a little “locator” dip nearest to the arrow shelf. The arrow shelf is well cut to within $\frac{1}{8}$ ” of the bow’s centerline and is lightly crowned, as is the arrow plate. No arrow shelf material was supplied with the Legend, and I created a shelf rest by applying double stick tape to one side of a piece of thin leather and cutting it out with a pair of sharp, stout scissors. Stuck to the arrow plate side of the riser, the leather rest drapes down and over the arrow shelf.

A very, very stout 18 strand Dacron string came with the bow (this is mega overkill for a 43# bow). Eric assured me that both the Legend and Viper longbows are capable of handling modern low stretch, low creep bow fibers, so I spun up a 10 strand BCY Dyneema’02 endless bowstring, 65½” from loop end to loop end.

Comments

I found the Legend longbow to have a pleasingly smooth draw out to my 29” draw length. I didn’t particularly care for the squared handle, it felt somewhat bulky and unnatural in my bowhand.

As expected with most mild reflex/deflex longbow limb designs, there was some amount of hand shock that decreased as the arrow weight increased. It was easy for me to get a variety of shaft weights and spines to fly nicely. Influenced by the cost, this bow is a fine value.

The Internature Viper

Length 68” AMO nock to nock

Labeled draw weight 45# @ 28”

Actual measured draw weight 43# @ 28” (measured to the front of the arrow shelf)

Note Internature stickbows are typically a few pounds less draw weight than indicated on each bow.

Brace height 7” to depth of handle (with a 64½” bowstring)

Price Listed at US\$195 - US\$158 at FS Discount Archery

Average Arrow Velocity, Kinetic Energy and Arrow Grains per Draw Weight

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1½”	5” feather	28”	525	152	26.95	12.21
1½”	4” feather	28”	478	157	26.18	11.12
5/16”	4” feather	28”	432	165	26.14	10.05
5/16”	3” feather	28”	370	172	24.32	8.60

A = POC wood arrow shaft diameter

B = arrow fletching

C = arrow and draw lengths

D = arrow weight in grains

E = average speed (fps)

F = kinetic energy in ft-lbs

G = arrow grains per pound of draw weight (GPP)

Note Same chronograph criteria as with the Legend longbow

The Scoop

Good craftsmanship in the clear glass over zebrawood and hard rock maple limb cores, and riser of walnut with a rosewood accent stripe. There’s a mild reflex/deflex in the limb design and the limb tips are capped in a multi layer of walnut and karisen hardwoods. The braced classic “D” shape will meet the IFAA longbow rules. A laced leather grip surrounds a nicely rounded handle section that has a slight locator dip. Lightly crowned, the arrow shelf is cut to within $\frac{1}{8}$ ” of the bow’s centerline. As with the Legend longbow, no arrow shelf material was supplied with the Viper, and, as with the Legend, I made one up from a piece of leather and double stick tape. The supplied, overly heavy 16 strand Dacron bowstring was replaced with a 10 strand BCY Dyneema’02 endless bowstring, 64½” from loop end to loop end.



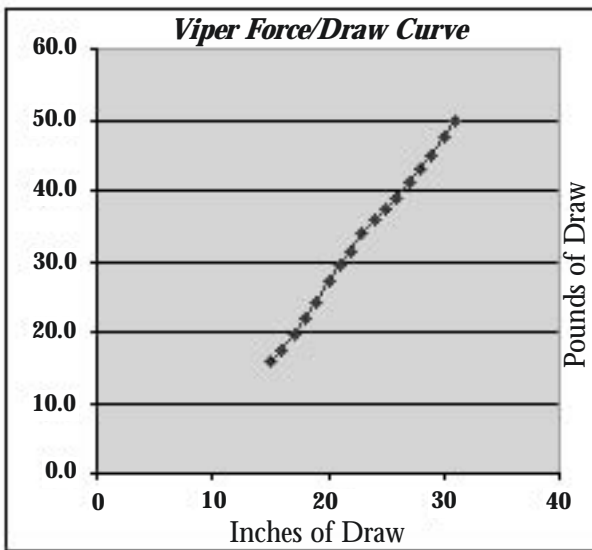
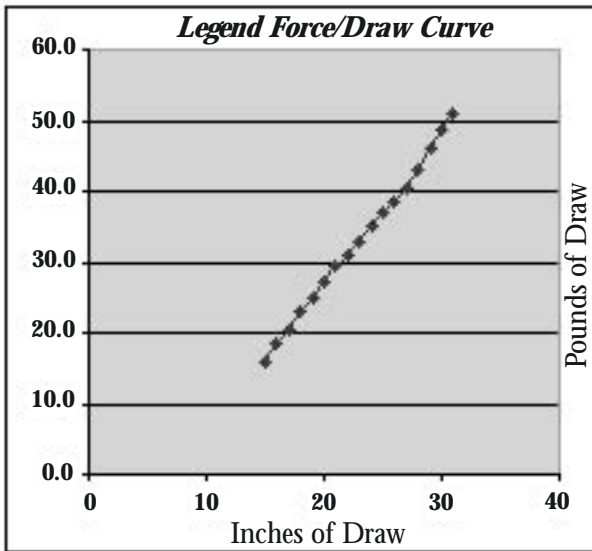
Comments

This is a fun longbow! Aesthetically, the look of the zebrawood outer laminations under clear glass, the multi-wood limb tips, the riser laminated wood accent, and the leather wrapped grip, all just beg you to pick up this longbow and pull some string! The icing on the cake is in the performance—smooth drawing, little to zero hand shock, it can spit an arrow out with authority and would make a fine 3-D or hunting longbow. Overall, this is a fine longbow in terms of workmanship, materials, performance . . . and value. Highly recommended . . . I even bought a second one!

Epilogue

The simplicity and aesthetic beauty of traditional “stick-bow” archery continues to gain interest and appeal from both seasoned archers and newbies alike. Simply put, the Legend and Viper are quality longbows that will get you





into the game for the smallest amount of dollars—and keep you pulling string for years to come.

Legend Force/Draw Data

draw length (inches)	draw weight (pounds)	draw length (inches)	draw weight (pounds)
15	16.0	24	35.0
16	18.5	25	37.0
17	20.5	26	38.5
18	23.0	27	40.5
19	25.0	28	43.0
20	27.0	29	46.0
21	29.5	30	48.5
22	31.0	31	51.0
23	33.0		

Viper Force/Draw Data

draw length (inches)	draw weight (pounds)	draw length (inches)	draw weight (pounds)
15	16.0	24	36.0
16	17.5	25	37.5
17	19.5	26	39.0
18	22.0	27	41.0
19	24.0	28	43.0
20	27.0	29	45.0
21	29.5	30	47.5
22	31.5	31	50.0
23	34.0		

Rob DiStefano has been involved in archery since the mid 1950's when his Dad got him started in shooting, and crafting bowstrings, arrows, and quivers. A very active NAA and NFAA competitive tournament archer through the 60's and 70's, he started the Pelham Archers archery club that held outdoor NFAA field and NAA target tournaments at their own large New York City chartered outdoor range. The club participated with other archery clubs in NY/NJ/CT tri-state archery tournaments. Today, Rob is a consultant in the telecommunications industry and enjoys the revival of traditional archery—shooting longbows for target and roving fun, and offering his Custom Endless Bowstrings.



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