Robin Hood



Just what motivated Earl Mason to don the mantle of the Golden Archer in 1999 is not something he has ever discussed with anyone, no matter how close they have gotten to him. He has been much franker about the origins of his talents -- his family has often produced people with unusual abilities, as far back as their family history records. None of them, up to the current generation, ever used these talents for any real purpose, instead just keeping them secret and viewing them as proof of their superior qualities. He once admitted to his sister that he felt that this was a great waste but would not explain what changed his mind.

What changed his mind was being told to change his mind by his bosses at **Argus**. Two years before that, while attending Dartmouth, Earl had been taken in for questioning by campus security concerning certain events at a frat party he had attended. While he had nether done nor witnessed anything, he nonetheless panicked and asked to have a lawyer present. This apparently alerted Argus to his situation. Argus, having access to information about the Mason family, immediately sent someone to pose as a lawyer from the firm his family had on retainer, and promptly kidnapped him as soon as he was out of custody.

Argus operatives outlined for Earl what they knew about the Mason family, based on an incident

where his **grandfather** had been tricked into a confrontation with the original **Captain Mystic** in the early sixties. They were prepared to publicize this information, as well as implications that the Masons had used their powers to enrich themselves in highly illegal ways, unless Earl agreed to work for them. Frightened out of his mind, Earl agreed to their terms, and underwent agent training.

In 1999, with a new wave of superheroes becoming prominent, Earl was given his first major assignment -- to create a costumed identity for himself and pose as a hero, as part of a long-term operation to infiltrate the subculture that Argus expected to eventually form. (He was unaware that this was the *backup* plan to the handler operation.) Thus, he became the Golden Archer, using the skill at archery he had developed since his childhood and some gimmick arrows that Argus provided him, and started fighting crime in his native Portland. He found the entire experience somewhat ridiculous, but also somewhat thrilling.

The first real test of his talents came in 2001, during the assault of **Cerebron**. Fighting evil robots with a bow and arrow was completely insane, but Earl fought with confidence nonetheless, sure that he was being supported by fellow Argus agents operating more covertly. He only found out that he had been completely on his own after it was all over, and nearly blew a gasket at his supervisor, who basically told him to suck it up. (Argus management has changed quite a bit since then. So they claim, at least.)

A month after the attack, the Golden Archer was contacted by **the Powerhouse** and asked whether he would be interested in joining. As this was exactly what his supervisors were hoping would happen, he naturally agreed, and sat through an extremely uncomfortable interview with the other members of the team, feeling wholly inadequate even after he revealed his actual super-power, a healing factor that had kept him on his feet throughout the battle. Despite how minor that power was, and how absurd his ability set was, the Golden Archer was welcomed as the ninth member of the team. He contributed quite a bit in the years that followed, but never felt like he belonged -- partly due to his increasing dislike of his role as a spy.

Things started to look both up and down in 2004, when he started working with **Songbird**, one of the few heroes from before the current era who was still active, and who had recently relocated from Las Vegas to Portland. They had a close, intimate relationship, and the only reason he chose not to propose her for membership in the Powerhouse was that she shunned that level of publicity, particularly since she was raising **a teen-aged daughter**. At the same time, his own family relationships became extremely uncomfortable when his much younger sister, **Patricia**, discovered his secret identity and demanded that she be allowed to accompany him on his missions. Thus began the career of the Burgher, sidekick to the Golden Archer.

In 2006, the Golden Archer played a key role in upending the scheme to murder the Powerhouse during the coup devised by **Billie Zane**. What almost no one knows is that he did so

by refusing an order he received from his supervisor at Argus (part of the conspiracy) to murder several friends and loved ones of the membership of the team, and went over their head in order to confirm it. This led to some of the most dangerous fights he and his fellows had faced up until this point, and Burgher was severely injured in one of them. In the wake of this, with Argus desperately cleaning house, Earl was put on an indefinite leave of absence from the agency, which suited him just fine.

Unfortunately, the worst was yet to come. Within a year of that, Songbird was killed by a ring of corrupt Portland cops, and Earl discovered that his sister had developed a serious drug habit. It was all too much for someone who had only ever been in this situation because he had been forced into it. The Golden Archer resigned from the Powerhouse -- so far the only member to ever do so, though some of his fellows have considered it since then -- and Earl Mason, after getting his sister into rehab, disappeared from Portland, viewing himself as the single worst influence on his sister.

He resurfaced six years later, in England. When events teamed him with **Blakestone**, he refused to discuss what he had been up to in that interval, but his skills had clearly been honed to an even greater degree. He assisted Jennifer and her allies in a fight with agents of corrupt entrepreneur Guy Gisborne, and, when one of the thugs demanded if the cloaked archer was supposed to be Robin Hood, he resisted the impulse to reply, "No, I'm Albert Einstein in disguise," and just nodded before letting fly. By the next day, the return of Robin Hood was in all the papers, and he was stuck with the name.

A year or so after that, he teamed up with a teleporting martial artist who, yes, goes by the name **Maid Marian**. (Their relationship is completely platonic; Earl is still not over Songbird, though he felt a strange shock of recognition and attraction when he first met **Prydwen** that she clearly shared.) He has wryly commented that he expects to end up working with "**Little John**", "**Friar Tuck**", and "**Allan-a-dale**" any day now. He has heard about his sister returning to superheroics, and working with the daughter of Songbird, but has made no attempt to contact her. At bottom, he still thinks that he is bad news ... an opinion shared by the CID, who hunt Robin Hood as determinedly as the Sheriff of Nottingham ever did.

Update 2021: Robin Hood recently reconnected with his sister and the current Songbird. Having done so, he returned to the United Kingdom to continue his struggle alongside **the Merry Men**.

Robin Hood - PL 10 *(3rd Edition)*

Abilities:
STR 3 | **STA** 4 | **AGL** 6 | **DEX** 7 | **FGT** 6 | **INT** 1 | **AWE** 4 | **PRE** 2

Powers:

Healing Factor: Immunity 2 (disease, poison); Regeneration 5 - 7 points
Rapid Shot: Ranged Multiattack Damage 5, Easily Removable (bow and arrows, -6 points) - 9 points

Advantages:
All-out Attack, Defensive Roll, Evasion, Improved Aim, Improved Critical (bow and arrows), Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Initiative, Jack-of-all-trades, Power Attack, Precise Attack (Ranged, Concealment), Ultimate Effort (Aim), Takedown, Uncanny Dodge

Skills:
Acrobatics 7 (+13), Athletics 8 (+11), Close Combat: Unarmed 6 (+12), Deception 10 (+12), Expertise: Streetwise 9 (+10), Expertise: Survival 9 (+10), Intimidation 9 (+11), Investigation 8 (+9), Insight 8 (+12), Perception 6 (+10), Ranged Combat: Bow 8 (+15), Stealth 8 (+14).

Offense:
Initiative +10
Unarmed +12 (Close Damage 3)
Bow +15 (Ranged Multiattack Damage 5, Crit 19-20)

Defense:
Dodge 13, Parry 12, Fortitude 7, Toughness 6/4, Will 8

Totals:
Abilities 66 + Powers 16 + Advantages 13 + Skills 48 + Defenses 20 = 163 points

Offensive PL: 10
Defensive PL: 10
Resistance PL: 8
Skill PL: 9

Complications:
Thrills--Motivation. Hunted by the Authorities. Prejudice (American in the UK). ***Secret Identity.***

Note: As the Golden Archer (PL 9), his Rapid Shot power was part of a 15 point array that also included the following additional abilities:

- ***Taser Arrow:*** *Ranged Multiattack Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated) - 1 point*
- ***Flare Arrow:*** *Ranged Burst Area 2 Affliction 5 (Resisted by Fortitude; Visually Impaired, Visually Disabled, Visually Unaware), Limited to One Sense - 1 point*
- ***Net Arrow:*** *Ranged Burst Area Affliction 5 (Resisted by Dodge; Hindered and Vulnerable, Defenseless and Immobile), Extra Condition, Limited Degree - 1 point*

However, his Acrobatics, Close Combat: Unarmed, Ranged Combat: Bow, and Stealth skills were 2 ranks lower, as were his Dodge and Parry defenses. He did not have a Hunted by the Authorities or Prejudice complication, but had a Secret beyond his Secret Identity.

Robin Hood - PL 10 *(4th Edition)*

Abilities:
STR 3 | **AGL** 6 | **STA** 4 | **INT** 1 | **AWE** 4 | **PRE** 2

Combat:
Attack 11 | **Defense** 12 | **Initiative** 14
Close Attack 12 | Specialized Attack: Bow 15

Resistances:
Dodge 8 | Fortitude 7 | Toughness 7/4 | Will 8

Powers:
Healing Factor: Immunity 2 (disease, poison); Regeneration 1 - 4 points
Rapid Shot: Piercing Blast 5, Multiattack; Easily Removable (bow and arrows, -6 points) - 9 points

Advantages:
Blind Shot, Contacts, Defensive Roll 3, Determination 2, Direct Action, Elusive Target, Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Aim, Improved Critical (bow and arrows), Improved Evasion, Improved Initiative, Jack-of-all-trades, Partner Bond (Maid Marian), Takedown, Ultimate Aim, Uncanny Dodge

Skills:
Acrobatics 7 (+13), Athletics 8 (+11), Deception 9 (+11), Intimidation 9 (+11), Investigation 8 (+9), Insight 8 (+12), Leadership 8 (+10), Perception 6 (+10), Stealth 8 (+14), Streetwise Expertise 8 (+9), Survival 7 (+11).

Offense:
Initiative +14
Unarmed +12 (Close Damage 3)
Bow +15 (Ranged Multiattack Damage 5, Crit 19-20)

Totals:
Abilities 40 + Combat 51 + Powers 13 + Advantages 19 + Skills 41 + Resistances 9 = 173 points

Complications:
Thrills--Motivation. Hunted by the Authorities. Prejudice (American in the UK). ***Secret Identity.***

Note: As the Golden Archer, his Rapid Shot power was part of a 18 point array that also included the following additional abilities:

- ***Flare Arrow:*** *Dazzle Sight 5, Sphere Area*
- ***Net Arrow:*** *Snare 5, Sphere Area*
- ***Taser Arrow:*** *Stun 7, Ranged*

However, his Acrobatics and Stealth skills were 2 ranks lower, as were his Attack and Dodge; his Partner Bond was with Burgher, and he had a rank of Equipment to purchase a Powerhouse Commlink. He did not have ranks of Leadership or a ***Hunted by the Authorities*** *or* ***Prejudice*** *complication, but had a* ***Secret*** *(Argus agent) beyond his* ***Secret Identity.***