

A double-blind experiment into dowsing for a laser

The initial idea arose from the question of whether classical dowsing techniques would respond to variables of modern apparatus, such as a laser beam, toward the notion that any dowse-able phenomenon could be defined with the precision of scientific language. The initial experiment in this path was the setup of a double-blind test to determine if a laser beam was able to be located using the dowsing technique. It was reasoned that if the laser beam was able to be dowsed due to an electromagnetic field of some nature, that field should be discernible through cardboard.

The setup for this experiment was a pen-sized battery operated laser, six identical cardboard tubes, some miscellaneous cardboard cut to allow the laser to be suspended in the center of a tube, and a wooden table. The tubes were pre-bent at the ends to be folded closed - this was done at the manufacturer and there was no discernible difference between any of the tubes.

The procedure of the experiment was carried out on the second floor of a house in Sewickley, PA; Latitude: 40.5454, Longitude: -80.1927 on August 9, 2002 between 2pm - 5pm, local temperature was 82° F. The table used was approximated 50 x 36 inches on which 6 tubes were placed; two along each long side and one at each short side. The laser assembly was kept turned on for the duration of the experiment. While a dowser would wait in a separate room, the observer would place the laser arrangement in one of the tubes and the verbal signal that they had finished and had left the experiment room. The dowser, using two L-rods, would enter the room from the door on the left (see Fig 1) and begin to take readings by letting the rods swing to point in a direction. Several such measurements would be taken allowing for a 'triangulation' of the laser's loca-

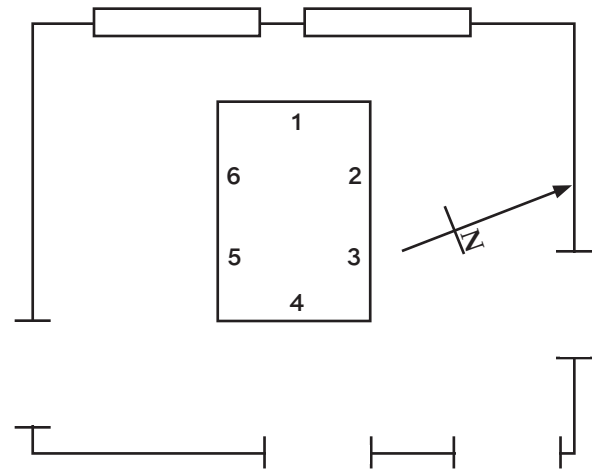
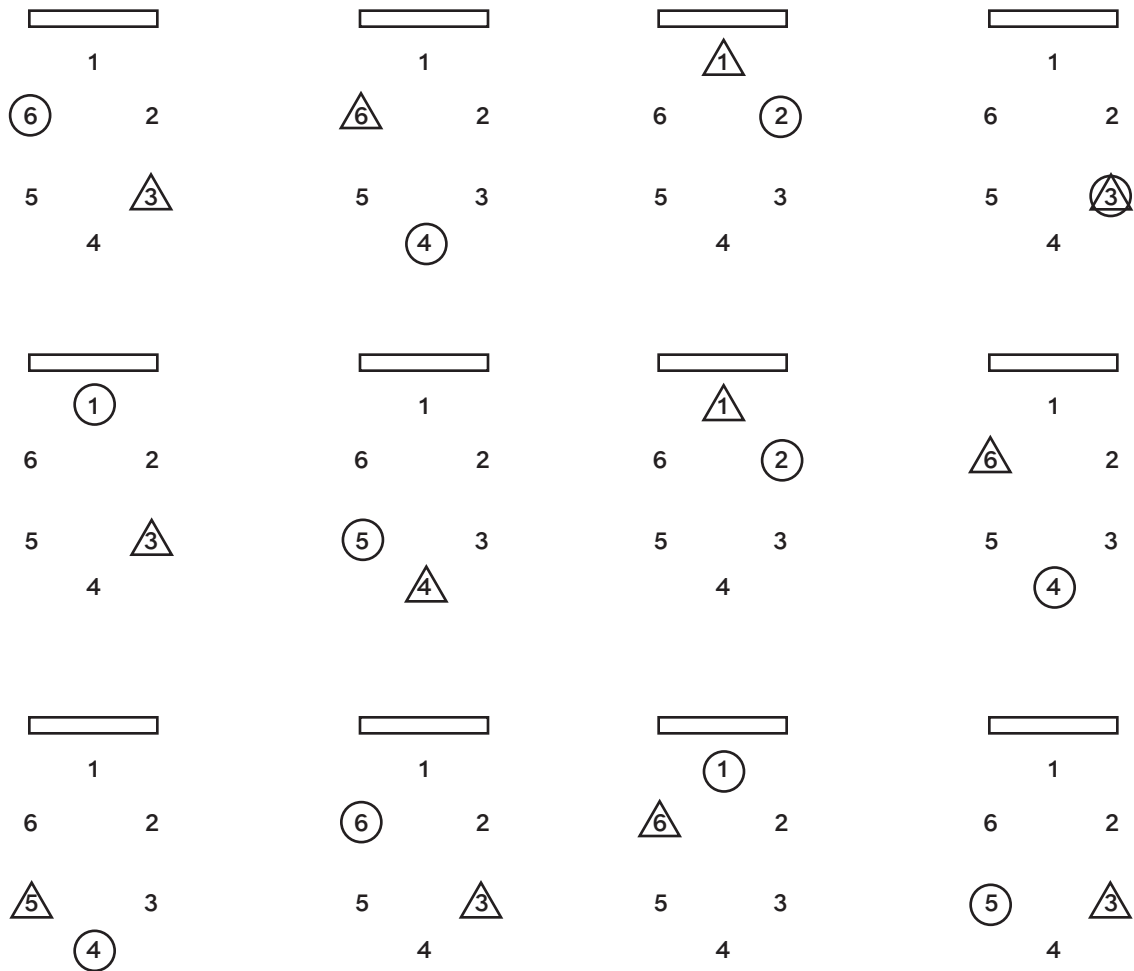


Figure 1

tion. After the dowser had selected the location of the laser, they would announce the tube number which they believed it to be in and would leave the room. The observer would then re-enter the room, change the laser's location and make any other tube re-arrangements they felt inclined toward, making sure to retain an identical position for all tubes between trial runs.

Each trial run took about two minutes to complete and twelve such runs were carried out. The results are illustrated below. The rectangle at the top of each diagram represents the windows in the room (for orientation). The tube which contained the laser for each run is indicated with a circle and the location arrived at by the dowser is indicated with a triangle.



The results of this experiment indicate a strong correlation between the location determined via dowsing and the actual location of the laser. This method of 'triangulation' produced 1 true hit, 5 near hits (one tube away), 4 semi-hits (2 tubes away), and 2 complete misses (opposite tube). The near hits were felt to be within a high degree of accuracy for the experiment due to the method of determination used. The triangulation method indicates a general area, and with only six tubes, slight variances for error could easily lead the dowser to believe that the laser was contained in a nearby tube, rather than the one which actually contained the laser. Greater spacing between tubes would allow for screening of this error, however, this could not be performed in this trial due to space limitations (size of the table). A similar experiment could be performed in any scenario which allowed any number of tubes to be placed at the same height relative to the floor or ground.