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## Crossbow with spiral wound cam system


### Abstract

A crossbow includes a frame, first and second limbs, first and second cams, a drawstring, and first and second power cables. The frame includes a first side and a second side. The frame defines a projectile axis. The first limb is coupled to the first side and the second limb coupled to the second side. The first cam is coupled to the first side and configured to rotate about a first cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis. The second cam is coupled to the second side and configured to rotate about a second cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis. The drawstring is engaged with the first cam and the second cam. The first power cable is engaged with the first cam and the first limb. The second power cable engaged with the second cam and the second limb.



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## Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS (1) This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 17/973,258, entitled CROSSBOW WITH SPIRAL WOUND CAM SYSTEM, filed on Oct. 25, 2022, which claims the benefit of and priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/272,030, entitled CROSSBOW WITH SPIRAL WOUND CAM SYSTEM, filed on Oct. 26, 2021, each of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

BACKGROUND
(1) Crossbows utilize a drawstring that is drawn backward and released to fire a projectile. A common projectile is called a “bolt,” which is a type of arrow that is often stiffer and shorter than those used in archery bows. In crossbows, flexible limbs may be loaded with force by the drawstring being drawn, and limbs are unloaded with force when the crossbow is fired that powers the movement of the drawstring toward the front of the crossbow.
(2) The more aggressively the drawstring travels to the front of the crossbow, the faster a bolt can be fired from the crossbow. As such, the higher the force required to load the flexible limbs, the faster the flexible limbs become unloaded when the crossbow is fired. Similarly, the higher the

force it takes to load the flexible limbs the higher the force—draw weight—required to draw the drawstring. Drawing aids and let-off cams are often used to aid the shooter in both drawing the drawstring and keeping the power drawstring drawn until it is released when fired.
(3) As such, there is a need for a crossbow that fires a projectile at sufficient speeds, while also maintaining a compact form factor and allowing the shooter to more easily draw the drawstring when arming the crossbow.

SUMMARY

(4) This application generally relates to a crossbow. In particular, this application relates to a crossbow having pulleys and cams to improve performance of the crossbow.
(5) The disclosure is directed to a crossbow. The crossbow includes a frame, first and second flexible limbs, first and second cams, a drawstring, and first and second power cables. The frame includes a first frame side and a second frame side. The frame defines a projectile axis. The first flexible limb is coupled to the first frame side and the second flexible limb coupled to the second frame side. The first cam is coupled to the first frame side and configured to rotate about a first cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis. The second cam is coupled to the second frame side and configured to rotate about a second cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis. The drawstring is engaged with the first cam and the second cam. The first power cable is engaged with the first cam and the first flexible limb. The second power cable engaged with the second cam and the second flexible limb.
(6) The disclosure is also directed to a crossbow that includes a frame, a flexible limb, a drawstring, a power cable, and a cam. The frame includes a frame side. The frame defines a projectile axis. The flexible limb is coupled to the first frame side. The drawstring is coupled to the flexible limb and configured to move within a first plane. The projectile axis extends within the first plane. The power cable is engaged with the flexible limb. The cam is coupled to the frame side. The cam is configured to rotate about a cam axis that extends within a second plane. The second plane is substantially parallel to the projectile plane. The cam includes a first portion configured to engage the drawstring and a second portion configured to engage the power cable.
(7) The disclosure is also directed to a crossbow that includes a frame, a first flexible limb, a second flexible limb, a first cam, a second cam, a drawstring, a first power cable, and a second power cable. The frame defines a projectile axis. The first flexible limb and the second flexible limb are coupled with the frame. The first cam is coupled with the frame and configured to rotate about a first axis positioned vertically below the projectile axis. The first cam includes a first portion and a second portion. The second cam is coupled with the frame and configured to rotate about a second axis positioned vertically below the projectile axis. The second cam includes a first portion and a second portion. The drawstring is engaged with the first portion of the first cam and the first portion of the second cam. The first power cable is engaged with the first flexible limb and the second portion of the first cam. The second power cable is engaged with the second flexible limb and the second portion of the second cam.

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## Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

(1) The following drawings are illustrative of particular embodiments of the present disclosure and therefore do not limit the scope of the present disclosure. The drawings are not to scale and are intended for use in conjunction with the explanations in the following detailed description. Embodiments of the present disclosure will hereinafter be described in conjunction with the appended drawings, wherein like numerals denote like elements.
(2) FIG. **1** is a rear perspective view of one embodiment of a crossbow according to the principles of the present disclosure, showing the crossbow in an undrawn position;

(3) FIG. **2** is a side view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(4) FIG. **3** is another side view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(5) FIG. **4** is a top view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(6) FIG. **5** is a bottom view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(7) FIG. **6** is a front view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(8) FIG. **7** is a rear view of the crossbow of FIG. **1**;
(9) FIG. **8** is a rear perspective view of a riser, flexible limbs, and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position;
(10) FIG. **9** is top view of the riser, flexible limbs, and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position and also showing the drawn position of the flexible limbs;
(11) FIG. **10** is a rear perspective view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position;
(12) FIG. **11** is a top view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position;
(13) FIG. **12** is a rear view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position;
(14) FIG. **13** is a rear perspective view of one embodiment of a riser, flexible limbs, and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, shown in the undrawn position;
(15) FIG. **14** is a rear perspective view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system of FIG. **13**, shown in the undrawn position;
(16) FIG. **15** is a rear view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system of FIG. **13**, shown in the undrawn position;
(17) FIG. **16** is a rear perspective view of one embodiment of a riser, flexible limbs, and cam and pulley system for the crossbow of FIG. **1**, according to the principles of the present disclosure, showing the crossbow in an undrawn position;
(18) FIG. **17** is a rear perspective view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system of FIG. **16**, shown in the undrawn position;
(19) FIG. **18** a rear view of the flexible limbs and cam and pulley system of FIG. **16**, shown in the undrawn position; and
(20) FIG. **19** is a diagram illustrating the principle of wheel-axle mechanical advantage.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

(21) Various embodiments will be described in detail with reference to the drawings, wherein like reference to numerals represent like parts and assemblies throughout the several views. Reference to various embodiments does not limit the scope of the claims attached hereto. Additionally, any examples set forth in this specification are not intended to be limiting and merely set forth some of the many possible embodiments for the appended claims.
(22) The crossbows disclosed herein can be used in a variety of different arrangements to improve efficiency, improve balance, improve safety, shoot different projectiles, and improve accuracy. The draw weight of the drawstring is the pulling force required to draw the drawstring to a rear of the crossbow. By introducing a mechanical advantage to the draw weight of the drawstring, power cables can load powerful flexible limbs with less pulling force. Because a powerful flexible limb can be loaded, the flexible limb can power the drawstring more aggressively (i.e., move faster) toward the front of the crossbow when firing, thus leading to firing a projectile at a faster speed.
(23) FIGS. **1-12** show one embodiment of a crossbow **100** according to the principles of the present disclosure. Crossbow **100** can be configured in a variety of different ways without departing from the principles of this disclosure.
(24) In the embodiment shown, crossbow **100** includes a frame **102** to which various components are attached. The frame **102** can be constructed of materials including carbon fiber composite, wood, aluminum, or other suitable materials. As shown, a stock **115** is attached to frame **102** at a rear end **105**. In some examples, the stock **115** may be integrally formed with frame **102** as a

singular unibody component without departing from the principles of this disclosure. In other examples, stock **115** may be removable. Stock **115** can also be made of a variety of materials, including but not limited to those materials used to make frame **102**.
(25) In some examples, crossbow **100** does not include a stock **115** and can be fired like a pistol. In other examples, frame **102** has a multiple-piece construction. Frame **102** may include a variety of mounting points (which can be part on one or more rails etc.) for various modular accessories such as a quiver, a scope, a flashlight, or other attachments.
(26) In the embodiment shown, a riser **107** is attached to frame **102**. Riser **107** provides additional mounting locations for components, including flexible limbs **112**, **116** and string stops **176**, **178**. In certain embodiments, riser **107** and frame **102** may be formed as a singular component without departing from the principles of this disclosure. Riser **107** is made of a glass/carbon fiber composite but may alternatively be made of aluminum or other suitable materials.
(27) Frame **102** further includes a projectile axis A for supporting and guiding a projectile. In some examples, a projectile rest may be included that is positioned along projectile axis A to provide additional support for the projectile. In some examples, the projectile rest can include bristles or arms to cradle the projectile.
(28) The crossbow **100** can include a plurality of accessory rails **124**. In some examples, the accessory rail **124** can be a picatinny rail. In some examples, the accessory rail **124** is configured to receive a sighting apparatus, such as a scope **190**. In some examples, one of the accessory rails **124** is configured to receive a lighting device, such as a flashlight. In some examples, one of the accessory rails **124** is configured to receive a quiver.
(29) The grip **128** provides a point of support for a user of the crossbow **100**. The grip **128** can be held by the user's hand, including when operating the trigger assembly **122**. The grip **128** assists the user in stabilizing the crossbow **100** during firing and handling. In some embodiments, the grip **128** is mounted to the frame **102**. In some embodiments, the crossbow **100** has a plurality of grips **128** mounted to the frame **102**.
(30) Crossbow **100** includes a frame **102**, a riser **107**, a first power cable **104**, and a first flexible limb **112**. Crossbow **100** further includes a second power cable **106**, and a second flexible limb **116**. In certain embodiments, crossbow **100** may include additional or fewer power cables without departing from the principles of this disclosure. Crossbow **100** also includes a first cam **119** and a second cam **121**. A drawstring **108** is connected to and extends between the cams **119**, **121**. In some embodiments, additional or fewer cams may be included without departing from the principles of this disclosure.
(31) The Projectile moves within a horizontal projectile plane and travels along a projectile axis A when crossbow **100** is fired. Crossbow **100** fires the projectile from a front end **103** of the crossbow. In certain examples, crossbow **100** is generally symmetrical about the projectile axis A.
(32) In certain embodiments, the power cables **104**, **106** are coupled to the flexible limbs **112**, **116** and the cams **119**, **121**. The flexible limbs **112**, **116** are the source of power for crossbow **100**. However, the power source can be provided by any suitable source including but not limited to—spring(s) and/or motor(s). In certain embodiments, the power cables **104**, **106** are replaceable, such as when they are worn, for example. In some examples, the crossbow **100** is provided without power cables **104**, **106**, and the power cables **104**, **106** can be subsequently added by a user or technician. The power cables **104**, **106** can be constructed of traditional bowstring material such as, but not limited to, composite and/or natural fibers.
(33) FIG. **9** is a top view of the riser **107**, flexible limbs **112**, **116**, and cams **119**, **121** of crossbow **100** shown in the undrawn position and also showing the drawn position of the flexible limbs. As shown, crossbow **100** can fire a projectile, such as an arrow. One example of an arrow is a bolt. In certain embodiments, the projectile is an arrow with a pointed tip and fletching to help stabilize the projectile as it moves through the air when the projectile is fired from the crossbow **100**.
(34) As shown, when the crossbow **100** is drawn, the power cables **104**, **106** cause the flexible

limbs **112**, **116** to bend toward the projectile axis A, thereby loading the limbs.
(35) Each flexible limb **112**, **116** is attached to riser **107** at a first end **127**. Second ends **134**, **136** of power cables **104**, **106** are attached to second ends **129** of the flexible limbs **112**, **116**. Limb pivots **113** are positioned between the first ends **127** and second ends **129** of the flexible limbs **112**, **116**. In the embodiment shown, limbs **112**, **116** are elastic and spring-like in nature. As shown, limbs **112**, **116** are made of a glass/carbon fiber composite, but any other suitable material may be used without departing from the principles of this disclosure.
(36) Limbs **112**, **116** extend in an outward direction from the projectile axis A and in a rearward direction toward the rear end **105** of the crossbow **100**. The limbs **112**, **116** are positioned at either side of the projectile axis A such that the projectile passes between the limbs **112**, **116** when the crossbow **100** is fired.
(37) In some examples, the limbs **112**, **116** extend in an outward direction from the projectile axis A and/or in a forward direction toward the front end **103** of the crossbow **100**. In some examples, the limbs **112**, **116** extend in an upward direction from projectile axis A and/or in a forward direction toward the front end **103** of the crossbow **100**. In some examples, the limbs **112**, **116** extend in an upward direction from projectile axis A and/or in a rearward direction toward the rear end **105** of the crossbow **100**. Limbs **112**, **116** may be positioned in a variety of different ways relative to the projectile axis A without departing from the principles of this disclosure.
(38) Crossbow **100** has three separate cables—two identical power cables **104**, **106** and a drawstring **108**—coupled together by cams **119**, **121**. Cams **119**, **121** are rotatably attached to frame **102** and positioned on opposite sides of projectile axis A Cams **119**, **121** each include an axis of rotation that is substantially parallel to projectile axis A. In certain alternative embodiments, the axis of rotation of cams **119**, **121** may be positioned at an angle between zero degrees (0°) and ninety degrees (90°) in either the vertical or horizontal direction with respect to projectile axis A without departing from the principles of this disclosure. In certain embodiments, cams **119**, **121** may also be positioned above or below the projectile axis A relative to the frame. As shown, cams **119**, **121** are positioned below projectile axis A Orienting the cams **119**, **121** so that the cam axis of rotation is substantially parallel to projectile axis A allows the cams to be positioned closer to the frame than would be possible if the cam axis of rotation were perpendicular to the projectile axis.
(39) As shown, each cam **119**, **121** includes a larger diameter portion **170** and a smaller diameter portion **172**. One larger diameter portion **170** and one smaller diameter portion **172** are coaxial and —in the embodiment shown—are integrally formed as one cam **119**, **121**. Both of the smaller diameter portions **172** and larger diameter portions **170** include helical grooves **174** that guide the power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** as they selectively wind around the cam **119**, **121**. By decreasing the diameter of the larger diameter portion **170** and smaller diameter portion **172** of cams **119**, **121** while maintaining the necessary arc lengths for helical grooves **174**, the overall mass moment of inertia representing each cam, **119** and **121**, can be reduced and the angular acceleration is thereby increased. This effect can lead to improvements in dynamic efficiencies and increased performance attributes as compared to more conventional cam sizes and arrangements.
(40) Smaller diameter portions **172** provide anchor locations to power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** is connected to and extends between the larger diameter portions **170**. In certain embodiments, power cable **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** selectively wind around cams **119**, **121** a plurality of complete rotations. In the embodiment shown, the diameters of power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** are the same, so the helical grooves **174** are the same size, whether they are on the larger diameter portion **170** or smaller diameter portion **172**. In certain embodiments, however, the cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** may differ in diameter. As such, helical grooves **174** may vary in size to accommodate cables of different diameters.
(41) Each cam **119**, **121** relies on the principle of wheel and axle mechanical advantage. The smaller diameter portion **172** and the larger diameter portion **170** rotate at the same rate and complete one full rotation in the same period of time. However, due to the size difference in the

radius of the wheel and axle-larger diameter portion **170** and smaller diameter portion **172**, respectively—the distance the two parts rotate through is different. The basic equation for wheel and axle ideal mechanical advantage is

(42) $\text{IMA} = \frac{R}{r}$,

with R=radius of the larger diameter portion **170** and r=radius of the smaller diameter portion **172**. Of course, in the real world some of the advantage is lost due to the friction of the system, but it is sufficient to illustrate the wheel-axle principle as shown in FIG. **23**. The mechanical advantage of the cam **119**, **121** can be selected by choosing the radii R and r, and may vary as desired.

(43) In certain embodiments, limb pulleys **110**—which freely rotate—are positioned near the ends of flexible limbs **112**, **116** and can freely rotate to guide the drawstring **108** as it extends from the larger diameter portions **170** on cams **119**, **121** and across projectile axis A. In certain embodiments, string stops **176**, **178** are positioned on either side of projectile axis A limit how far the drawstring can travel toward the front **103** of crossbow **100** when a projectile is fired. In the embodiment shown, string stops **176**, **178** are mounted to riser **107**, but may alternatively be mounted to the frame **102**. In certain embodiments string stops **176**, **178** may be integrally formed in either the riser **107** or the frame **102**. The power cables **104**, **106** are attached at first ends to the flexible limbs **112**, **116** and at second ends are attached to the smaller diameter portion **172** of the cams **119**, **121**.

(44) FIG. **8** shows a top detail view of a portion of the crossbow **100** including the riser but with the frame **102** removed and the power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** undrawn. FIG. **9** shows a top view of the same portion of crossbow **100**, with power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** drawn. As shown, the first and second limbs **112**, **116** each include separate members **112***a*/**112***b*, **116***a*/**116***b*. The separate members of each of the first and second limbs **112**, **116** are configured to flex together by way of the power cable **104**. It is considered within the scope of the present disclosure that the first and second limbs **112**, **116** can include any number of separate members.

(45) In certain embodiments, when crossbow **100** is drawn—with drawstring **108** cocked and ready to fire—power cables **104**, **106** are wound around smaller diameter portions **172**. In certain embodiments, the power cables **104**, **106** are wound around smaller diameter portions **172** a plurality of complete rotations. As drawstring **108** is drawn, the cable unwinds from larger diameter portions **170** of cams **119**, **121**. The unwinding of larger diameter portions **170** causes cams **119**, **121** to rotate, thereby causing power cables **104**, **106** to wind around smaller diameter portions **172**.

(46) As shown in FIG. **9**, when crossbow **100** is undrawn—with drawstring **108** uncocked-power cables **104**, **106** are attached to the smaller diameter portions **172** but are not wound around the smaller diameter portions significantly. In certain embodiments, power cables **104**, **106** may be wound around the smaller diameter portions **172** any suitable amount without departing from the principles of this disclosure. Meanwhile, when the crossbow **100** is undrawn, drawstring **108** is attached to larger diameter portions **170** and wound around them—in certain embodiments—a plurality of complete rotations. Drawstring **108** may be wound around larger diameter portions **170** any suitable number of times without departing from the principles of this disclosure.

(47) The mechanical advantage between larger diameter portions **170** and smaller diameter portions **172** reduces the draw weight necessary to draw the drawstring **108** to the cocked position. To draw crossbow **100**, it is stabilized and drawstring **108** is pulled to the rear end **105** of the crossbow **100**. A cocking system may used to draw the drawstring **108** from an uncocked position to a cocked position. One example of a cocking system in accordance with the present disclosure is described in U.S. Pat. No. 10,077,965, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes. In certain alternative embodiments, an arming device, the user's arm, or other like mechanism can be used to draw the drawstring **108**.

(48) Two alternative embodiments of power cables **104**, **106** are shown in FIGS. **13-15** and **16-18**, respectively. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **13-15**, second ends **334**, **336** of power cables **104**, **106** are split such that there are two attachment points **350** at second ends **129** of the flexible limbs

**112**, **116**. Splitting the second ends **334**, **336** more evenly distributes the force applied to the flexible limbs **112**, **116** by the power cables **104**, **106**.
(49) In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **16-18**, first ends **140**, **142** of power cables **104**, **106** are attached to opposite sides of frame **102** at mounting locations **144**, **146**. Power cables **104**, **106** are routed around power cable pulleys **460**, **462**—which are positioned at the second ends **129** of the flexible limbs **112**, **116**—and back to smaller diameter portions **172** of cams **119**, **121**. Routing power cables **104**, **106** around the power cable pulleys **460**, **462** reduces the force needed to draw the drawstring **108** to cock the crossbow **100**.
(50) In certain embodiments, crossbow **100** includes a cocking system that includes a drawstring holder **180**. In certain embodiments, the drawstring holder **180** slides along frame **102** toward the riser **107** to engage the drawstring **108** while it is in the undrawn position. That is, the drawstring holder **180** is slidably attached to frame **102** and moves in a single degree of freedom along the projectile axis A. The engagement of drawstring holder **180** with the frame **102** substantially prevents the cable carrier from moving in any other direction relative to projectile axis A and the riser **107**.
(51) After drawstring holder **180** has captured the drawstring **108** and is engaged with trigger assembly **122**, it is almost ready to fire. Next, a user loads a projectile onto crossbow **100** along the projectile axis A and engages with the drawstring **108**, which is still captured by the drawstring holder **180**.
(52) Once the projectile is engaged with drawstring holder **180**, it is ready to fire. A user may actuate trigger assembly **122** to fire the crossbow **100**. The trigger assembly **122** is in communication with the drawstring holder **180** so that upon activation of the trigger assembly **122** when firing (e.g., pulling the trigger toward the rear end **105** of the crossbow **100**), the trigger assembly **122** moves portions the drawstring holder **180** and the drawstring **108** is released and free to travel toward the front end **103** of the crossbow **100**. In some examples, the trigger assembly **122** includes a safety and/or anti-dry fire protection. As the drawstring **108** travels toward the front end **103** it carries the projectile with it until the projectile is fired from the front end **103** of crossbow **100**.
(53) FIGS. **8-12** show the arrangement of the cables **104**, **106**, drawstring **108**, limb pulleys **110**, and cams **119**, **121** in greater detail. The limb pulleys **110** and cams **119**, **121** may include grooves sized and shaped to receive a power cable **104**, **106** or drawstring **108**. The limb pulleys **110** and cams **119**, **121** are made from a material to minimize any slippage between the power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108** and the pulleys and cams. Any suitable material may be used without departing form the scope of the present disclosure. For example, the groove can be textured, e.g., lined with a high grip material or mechanical feature to grab the power cables **104**, **106** and drawstring **108**. In certain embodiments, the limb pulleys **110** may be constructed of low friction material. In such an example, the limb pulleys **110** can be fixed rather than freely rotating. As shown, limb pulleys **110** are shown as circular, but the pulleys can also have other shapes, such as lobe-shaped.
(54) Although the embodiments herein described are what are perceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, this disclosure is not intended to be limited to the specific embodiments set forth above. Rather, modifications may be made by one of skill in the art of this disclosure without departing from the spirit or intent of the disclosure.

## Claims

1. A crossbow, comprising: a frame including a first frame side and a second frame side, the frame defining a projectile axis; a first flexible limb coupled to the first frame side and a second flexible limb coupled to the second frame side; a first cam coupled to the first frame side and configured to rotate about a first cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis; a second cam

coupled to the second frame side and configured to rotate about a second cam axis that is substantially parallel to the projectile axis, a drawstring engaged with the first cam and the second cam; and a first power cable engaged with the first cam and the first flexible limb; and a second power cable engaged with the second cam and the second flexible limb.

2. The crossbow of claim 1, wherein the first cam includes a smaller diameter portion and a larger diameter portion that respectively include a groove configured to receive one of the first power cable and the drawstring.

3. The crossbow of claim 2, wherein the larger diameter portion and smaller diameter portions of the first cam and the second cam are coaxial.

4. The crossbow of claim 2, wherein the first power cable is engaged with the smaller diameter portion of the first cam and the drawstring is engaged with the larger diameter portion of the first cam.

5. The crossbow of claim 1, wherein, during operation of the crossbow as the crossbow moves from an undrawn position to a drawn position, the drawstring is configured to wrap around at least a portion of the first cam and the second cam.

6. The crossbow of claim 1, wherein, during operation of the crossbow as the crossbow moves from an undrawn position to a drawn position, the first power cable is configured to wrap around at least a portion of the first cam and the second power cable is configured to wrap around at least a portion of the second cam.

7. The crossbow of claim 1, further including: a drawstring holder; and a trigger assembly configured to release the drawstring from the drawstring holder when the trigger assembly is activated.

8. The crossbow of claim 1, wherein, during operation of the crossbow as the crossbow moves from an undrawn position to a drawn position, the drawstring is configured to wind around the first cam at least one full rotation.

9. A crossbow, comprising: a frame including a frame side and defining a projectile axis; a flexible limb coupled to the frame side; a drawstring coupled to the flexible limb and configured to move within a first plane, wherein the projectile axis extends within the first plane; a power cable engaged to the flexible limb; a cam coupled to the frame side and configured to rotate about a cam axis that extends within a second plane, the second plane substantially parallel to the first plane, the cam including: a first portion configured to engage the drawstring; and a second portion configured to engage the power cable.

10. The crossbow of claim 9, further comprising: a limb pulley coupled to the flexible limb and configured to engage the drawstring.

11. The crossbow of claim 9, further comprising a projectile rest positioned at a front end of the frame.

12. The crossbow of claim 9, further comprising a drawstring holder configured to selectively receive and retain the drawstring at a rear end of the frame.

13. The crossbow of claim 9, wherein the first portion and the second portion of the cam are coaxial.

14. The crossbow of claim 9, wherein the first portion includes a first diameter that is larger than a second diameter of the second portion, the first portion and the second portion including each including a groove configured to receive respectively receive a portion of the drawstring and the power cable.

15. The crossbow of claim 9, wherein the second plane is vertically below the first plane.

16. The crossbow in claim 9, further comprising: a power cable pulley coupled to the flexible limb and configured to engage the power cable.

17. A crossbow, comprising: a frame defining a projectile axis; a first flexible limb and a second flexible limb coupled with the frame; a first cam coupled with the frame and configured to rotate about a first axis positioned vertically below the projectile axis, the first cam including a first

portion and a second portion; a second cam coupled with the frame and configured to rotate about a second axis positioned vertically below the projectile axis, the second cam including a first portion and a second portion; a drawstring engaged with the first portion of the first cam and the first portion of the second cam; a first power cable engaged with the first flexible limb and the second portion of the first cam; and a second power cable engaged with the second flexible limb and the second portion of the second cam.

18. The crossbow of claim 17, further comprising: a first pulley coupled with the first flexible limb; and a second pulley coupled with the second flexible limb; wherein the drawstring is routed from the first portion of the first cam to the first pulley, from the first pulley to the second pulley, and from the second pulley to the first portion of the second cam.

19. The crossbow of claim 17, further comprising: a first power cable pulley coupled with the first flexible limb; and the first power cable including a first end coupled with the frame and a second end coupled with the second portion of the first cam; wherein the first power cable is routed from the frame to the first power cable pulley and from the first power cable pulley to the second portion of the first cam.

20. The crossbow of claim 17, wherein the first axis is substantially parallel to the projectile axis.