



NEWSLETTER

April-May 2013

TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER

April – May 2013



In this issue:

- **Game Claim Report**
- **Chairman's Report**
- **2013 Annual Awards Information**
- **Pig's Pad**
- **First Stag Down**
- **Boulder Creek Archery**
- **My 2013 NZ Roar**
- **Around the Traps**
- **Newsletter Contributions**

Game Claim Report 2/12/2012

The ratings have been coming strong since the last newsletter back at the start of the year, with most ratings coming from the NSW/QLD channel country. Cobar bowhunter Sean Walsh has been very active of late, rating a number of good goats around the 110-113 DS range a few western boars, including his PB boar scoring smack on 29 DP's. Sean also rated a cracker of a wild dog scoring 13 3/8 DS and a 28 3/8 DS camel. The man's on fire!

Mark Wills also had a productive trip out west in February, taking a few goats around 116 DS, some smaller boars and three cats, the biggest of

which scored 7 14/16 and just scrapes in the top 10 at number 9. However, his most prized trophy of the trip was a solid bull camel scoring 26 4/8 DS – in Marks words “that was the one I wanted! That completes my goal of every species of game in Australia”.



Sean Walsh and his 113 5/8 DP goat (above) and 13 3/8 DP wild dog (below).





Willsy and a 116 DP billy.

managed to shoot my personal best chital at 181 2/8 DS. I was also lucky enough to take a mature chamois doe on a NZ hunt in March.



James Warne with his 39 5/8 inch wide, 121 DP billy.



Mark Wills with a bull camel

While we are on all things western, Bourke bowhunter James Warne rated several goats and a fox that he has taken this summer as the water dried up. These included a cracking 121 2/8 DS billy and a nice curly 110 4/8 DS billy that he shot from close range with the recurve. Still got it Warnie!



Paul with a nice 29 2/8 DP Cape York boar (above) and 186 3/8 point chital stag (below).

We have also had a few ratings from the north of the country. Townsville hunter Paul Southwell rated a solid 29 DS boar he shot up the cape last year, as well as a couple of good chital stags which come in at number 5 and 6 in the ratings at 185 1/8 and 186 3/8 respectively. I was lucky enough to spend a couple of days hunting with Paul and another TT member Rod Collings just after Christmas and





Maxy's 181 2/8 DP chital.



Marc Curtis and his cracker Hoggie.



Maxy and the NZ chamois.

Since Christmas we have had several new members join our ranks. Pascal Savary from the ACT joined back in March with a nice mountain billy scoring 97 5/8 DS. Also more recently Victoria bowhunter Marc Curtis joined TT with a monster 94 2/8 DS hog deer he shot in last year's hoggie season. It ranks at number 2 in the ratings. Welcome Pascal and Marc.



Pascal Savary with a nice billy

SPB
www.southpacificbowhunter.com

As always the fallow rut has seen a number of fine animals fall to well-placed arrows from TT members. Early in the season Glenn Payne closed the gap on a nice wide palmed fallow, and got the job done to score himself a PB at 228 1/8 DS. This Victorian deer slots in to number 18 in the fallow ratings.



**Glen Payne and his velvet beauty,
228 1/8 DP**



Robert Stanleys nice buck.

Randal Sullings was also in the action grassing a nice black fallow buck scoring 209 7/8 DS. Randal also rated a buck shot back in 2011 scoring 190 3/8DS. Canberra bowhunter Shane McNaughton was lucky enough to shoot a respectable buck scoring 190 DS neat. Another Canberra based hunter Robert Stanley was in the action as well, rating a 190 3/6 fallow buck and two foxes taken on the same day scoring 9 10/16 and 10 DS. Well done guys.

To round out the ratings for this period, Ben Salleras put a few kilometres behind him to travel south for the rut and came up trumps by finally securing his first fallow buck. Hunting with Dave Whiting and co in deer camp, Ben got the job done on a nice 190 5/8 point fallow buck, and 9 13/16 point fox. Good to see you managed a few hunts in between all the rum consumption Butcher! Dave also got into the action, knocking over a few foxes and cats – the biggest fox a cracker at 10 10/16 DS, and a couple of moggies scoring 7 11/16 and 7 7/16DS.



Randal Sullings and a 209 7/8 DP buck.



Dave and a bird eater, 7 7/16 DP.

Chairman's Report



Ben and his Fallow buck.



Dave's thumper fox, 10 10/16 DP.

Be good in the bush,

Mark Southwell.

Hello fellow bowhunter's, I hope all those members that got out for this year's rut had an enjoyable and successful time in the Bush.

I have done plenty of time and miles in the bush throughout April trying to satisfy the addiction and whilst another year has ticked over without putting another notch on the old recurve, I have no regrets. I shared some great camps with long time and new friends, enjoyed some real challenging stalks with some excellent Red and Fallow stags and bucks and picked up a few beaut foxes and bunnies along the way. I also walked many, many kilometres through some great NSW countryside. Bring it on in 2014 as I THINK I am a little wiser from this year's experiences with a tough adversary.

I understand James Warne will have writings elsewhere in this newsletter re the 2013 Annual Awards in Bourke, NSW, however I would like to mention a couple of items in support of what should be a great venue over the October weekend.

Firstly, whilst acknowledging it will be a long haul for almost all members, it is central to most of our members in Qld, SA, Vic, ACT and NSW, and we are giving plenty of notice. Yes, you can bring your families, as there is plenty for all to do and see in and around Bourke at that time of year.

Secondly, this year's Awards will be my 25th as Chairman and I am very

keen to see a good solid attendance and a successful weekend at what I see will be a very special venue (thanks Darren and Warnie).

Also, a big congrats to James and Berdina Warne on the birth of their second son, Julian.

In closing, I would like to make mention of a good friend of mine that has been with Trophy Takers in every way since day one, way back in 1986.

Way back in those early days, we at TT had a black and yellow sticker that simply read "ANSWER THE CHALLENGE" with a TT logo alongside.

At the time I thought that catch cry was little ambiguous and simply broad brushed those hunters of the world who chose to trophy hunt with a bow and arrow, rather than simply harvest trophies with minimal effort via a high powered rifle etc.

As time has marched on and the inevitable changes to our sport have happened (it is the way of the world with everything), we started to hear about 60m, then 80m, then 100m, and recently I read about 125m and 150m shot options with the modern excellent and lethal archery equipment, you have got to ask. "Is the challenge that was once there, still being answered?"

Well one bloke that seems to do so, year in year out, with a basic longbow and handcrafted wooden arrows, is Canberra based bowhunting veteran Manuel Agius. Plagued with some debilitating work injuries from years gone by, and possibly as our oldest

active member, Manuel gets through each rut with another fallow buck under his belt. The country he hunts is steep and challenging, the gear he uses is a further challenge but it has not stopped Manuel from doing it the hard way and it has not lessened his success with another gooden in 2013.

Manuel shared the prestigious Ian Fenton Traditional Award with Mark Pitts in 2012 and it is going to take a big effort and outcome from someone hunting with a "bent stick" to rest it off of him in 2013. Well done Manuel, you have the respect of us all.

Perhaps it's time for a few others amongst us to "answer the challenge".

To all members, please enjoy good safe and successful bowhunting and hopefully we will catch most of you in Bourke.

Dave Whiting.

Aside: Dave has recently travelled to New Zealand and caught up with Brian and Jessie Henwood. Both now in their 80's and not actively bowhunting, they still keep their finger on the pulse with a wealth of bowhunting friends both in NZ and Aussie.

Brian was president of the NZ Bowhunters Society for 30 years, while Jessie was PR and Secretary for over 25 years.

Dave sent the photo on the following page back showing him and the Henwoods in front of TT's first number 1 Red stag and number 1 shield, proudly displayed in the Henwood's

archery shop/ trophy room located at their home in Hamilton.



2013 Trophy Takers Annual Awards – Bourke NSW

I am sure most of you have heard by now that the 2013 Awards weekend will be held on the Queen's Birthday long weekend in October (Friday the 4th to Monday the 7th of October). A great local Bourke character 'Maggoty' Mick Davis has kindly offered his property to host our awards weekend this year. 'Myandetta' is around 25km out of Bourke. A Map showing directions to Myandetta is located at the end of this newsletter.

This property has extensive Darling River frontage on the western side of the river, downstream from Bourke. This has two main pluses, firstly, the camp for the awards will be on a big bend in the river so there will be a great atmosphere in camp from the landscape alone. It is a great river to

camp on, to get that outback feel. Secondly, any spare time, down time of family time can be spent fishing the occasionally mighty Darling River. Myandetta has some of the best fishing in the district so everyone will have a chance of catching yellowbelly and cod.

The owner Mick Davis (Maggoty Mick) is a very keen fisherman and has looked after his stretch for many years, so everyone will be in with a good chance on the native species. He likes to share his country with people keen to have a look, so everyone is welcome to bring along a roof topper or small tinny, canoe etc, to give the fishing a real chance.

Being only 25 Km's from Bourke, another plus with this location is that it is close enough to duck into town if you run out of a necessity (bait, beer, ice, sausages), or to take the family in if they need coffee (yes, Bourke even has good coffee - it has come a long way), ice-cream or if you or the family just want a change of scenery. Bourke also has a bit to see and do for the family, if they think talking on the bank of the Darling River for three days seems a bit slow for them. For example, Bourke now has a very professional and elaborate Back of Bourke Exhibition centre (www.backobourke.com.au/) that was developed to rival the stockman's hall of fame in Longreach. It is incredibly well done and worth a look for anyone with even the slightest bit of interest in Australian History.

Hopefully many of you will make the trip to Bourke, people that have been

out west before will tell you there is a special atmosphere out here that all everyone should get out and experience. Others of you would already hunt out west once or maybe a couple of times a year.

The awards are a family affair of relaxed and social camping, as well as hunters talking hunting and a lot of catching up with mates. They are a special event; I hope to see many of you out here in October so I can share my little neck of the woods with you.

James Warne

Pigs' Pad

Well the 2013 fallow rut has come and gone, and for us it was quite a good one. No monsters taken but a nice sprinkling of mature fallow bucks amongst a few younger models.

Roger Charnock got his first fallow and then got on a bit of a roll and added two more to the tally. Well done to Rog, it's been awhile coming. My son Nick got a nice spike early in the season then wrapped it up with a beautiful light coloured buck on Anzac Day, we were both pretty happy.



I managed a couple of rugged bush heads, old fellas that I am always happy to take. Saw plenty, passed up a few with a mind for the future so things are looking good for next year, can't wait!

When you think of an All Nighter what springs to mind (now settle down)? Well if you spend a bit of time in the bush then it usually refers to a log that will make all those around it start to shift back once its put on the fire, then in the morning a bit of push and shove and we are ablaze again. I love the search for one, when I was a little younger I would man handle one into camp, and if I found a really good one, get the lads to lend a hand.

Nowadays, the trusty Nissan and the snatch strap do a wonderful job, just wheel one gently into camp, ready to roll onto the fire. I love to hunt and

part of that love is time around the fire, the entire ambience that surrounds it is mesmerising, and like moths, we are all drawn to it. To sit back after a good day gazing into the flames and reminiscing, it's hard to beat...it's in our genes right next to the hunting one I think.

Chris Hervert.



First Stag Down

By Josh White

It has been a bit over four years now that Dad (Dave White) and I (Josh White) have been chasing fallow deer without any success, but this year was a whole different story.

Tuesday 3rd of April 2012 Dad and I were on our way down to the snowy mountains for the fallow rut, we arrived down there about 11.30pm Tuesday night after the 5 hour trip down. Not long after we were settled in and were fast asleep.

It was the first day of our hunting trip and we could already hear a stag not far from camp. After getting all our stuff together and filling our packs with

water, we were off into the rugged mountains.

Dad and I had a long hard first day of walking up and down mountain after mountain to only seeing two little kid goats, but that's hunting and it's just great to be out in the bush.

Second day of our fallow hunting trip, Dad and I decided to head over the back of the property. It wasn't even 100 metres from camp and we had spotted a nice little doe but you know how it is, they always spot you before you spot them, so she was gone like the wind. We headed on to the top of the ridge. Stopping at the top I said to Dad "let's go stand on that big rock and have a glass around". After having a quick look around with the binoculars, we didn't see anything so we kept trekking on.

Dad and I walked for about 2-3 hours and heard a goat bleet out like it was in pain, it was a weird sound for a goat. Due to me previously shooting a record class goat of cause it was Dad's turn. So Dad got out his bino's and looked around. After spotting some movement through the leaves of a small bush about 80 metres away, Dad got an arrow out and ready. We both moved into about 30 metres of the little bush and had another look it was a black/white/brown billy goat. The billy goat must have got a bit of our wind and stood up, he had a bit of trouble getting up. Dad crept about 10 metres closer and the goat hobbled up the hill about 5 steps. Dad drew back and took the shot hitting the billy behind the shoulder from around 25

metres, the billy then sat down on the spot and didn't move an inch.

We then headed up to the goat to get some photo's, yet did we realise he had a busted front leg and was fly blown. I said to Dad "I think you've done him a favour" after the photo's we were off again.



Not far from where Dad had shot his goat we had found some really amazing scrapes and a nice game trail right through the centre of all the trees. We still hadn't heard any more stags grunt since the first day. It was far off getting dark and we had about a 3 ½ hour walk back to camp, so we started to head the long way back. Walking a different way to when you started out this morning.

We stopped at an opening that had a dried out dam in it. We had been coming here for a while now and have seen lots of different game past through here. We both decided to have a whistle to see if we could get a fox in. Ever since I started hunting I've wanted to bring a fox down, and today

was my lucky day. We got ourselves in position and started whistling.

It wouldn't of been 10 minutes and we had two young fox's come running in together. They were playing around while they ran in, biting and rolling around in the grass, I had my bow drawn back and was ready to shoot. They came into about 10 metres and they were still playing in the grass, the closest fox stood up out of the grass and was facing our way which gave me a perfect opportunity to shoot. Releasing the arrow it hit the fox fair and square in the nogan and dropped him on the spot. The second fox didn't like what had just happened and made a run for it.

Dad and I walked over and saw him lying there on the ground. I have never shot a fox before so I was so excited. Dad shook my hand and congratulated me. After some photo's we were on our way down the trail back to camp.



We settled in for the night and went off to bed.

The next morning was Thursday and our 3rd day of the trip, and finally we could hear a stag grunting. What a relief just to hear a stag again. Faster than ever, we both got our stuff together and headed up the trail we walked the afternoon before. Dad and I got to the top and the grunt was getting closer till it stopped. Walking along the tree line towards the open paddock where I got my fox the day before, I popped up on a little rise and saw movement out of the corner of my left eye. There he was a big brown and white spotted stag 20 metres quartering away from me. Dad was behind me and said 'what's going on?' I whispered 'there's a massive stag right there'.

There was an alleyway between some little black wattle trees, I drew back slowly lined it up and pulled the trigger. I watched the arrow float all the way and then it disappeared in behind his ribs. I've never seen an animal move so fast, off he went, and about 30 seconds later we heard a crash and thud he was down. I had never felt so good, my first stag ever. I think Dad was more excited than I was, shaking like a leaf, it was great. We gave it 20 minutes and we headed down after him, following the blood trail, and there he was, lying on his back. I ran over and just stood there in shock. It was the best feeling I've ever had in my entire life.

Dad gave me a big hug and said it's about time we got one down we have been chasing them long enough. After a billion photos, capeing him, and taking some meat, we were on our

way back to camp to finish off the cape.



When all of the hard work was done Dad and I sat down for some lunch, after lunch we were back out there.

We got to about the third ridge away and there was a small mob of goats half way down the gully. It was back to Dad, so off he went on the stalk down to 40 metres away from the biggest billy which was bedded down in the mob. Waiting for the right shot opportunity can be a long wait and we had the time and patients to wait. After 45 mins to an hour the billy stood and turned broad side. Smack, Dad's arrow hit and the goat ran over to the other side of the ridge before dropping. We took some more photos for the album and we were ready to head back.

The next morning Dad and I decided to pack up camp and hit the road back home to get the cape to the taxidermist.



2/196 Gladstone St, Fyshwick ACT 2609
(02) 6228 1668
info@broadsidearchery.com.au
Tues-Fri 10am-6pm
Sat 10am-4pm
www.broadsidearchery.com.au



Gear Used

Josh – Hoyt CRX 31 (65 lb)

Dave – Hoyt Alpha Max 32 (65 lb)

Boulder Creek Archery Accessories

Recently, long time bowhunter and TT member Pat Tydings and his wife Deb, from Willow Tree in NSW, decided to put Deb's supreme sewing skills into action and start producing a range of accessories for the serious bowhunter.

Boulder Creek archery was born, and initially the range included high quality fletch and sight covers, along with a selection of calico meat bags to keep that hard earned wild game meat in top condition. The meat bags come in a range of sizes perfect for both whole legs, hind quarters or backstraps.

The fletch and sight covers can be custom made for your needs out of a variety of hard wearing camo materials from the states, with waterproof material available for the feather shooters out there, and blaze orange patterns also in the range. All covers come with elastic cords to secure the covers in place on your bow.

Myself and Maxy recently put the fletch and sight covers through their paces on our Fiordland adventure in NZ. The country we hunted would be some of the most punishing on gear imaginable, and the covers proved vital in keeping our fletches and sight pins in good shape. On the last day, I actually ripped the sight completely out of the dove tail joint on the bracket of my bow, and thought I had lost the sights completely. However, they were still tucked up in the cover and swinging down off the bow. If the cover had not been there, I would have been up for a new set of expensive sights, so thanks Deb!



Boulder Creek Archery will be expanding their range over the next few months, and will also be producing cushions in various camo and other hunting related material patterns, perfect for the trophy room or man cave alike!

Pat can be contacted on 0408383731 or panddydings@bigpond.com.

Paul Southwell.

My 2013 NZ Roar

By Hardie McLaren

I started planning the roar of 2013 months in advance, as any hunter does (trips organised, camp sites pencilled in and hunting areas scouted using satellite mapping). This year I wasn't hunting with my usual roar hunting mates, so it left me with a great opportunity to hunt areas that I usually wouldn't get to. Often we would chopper in and hunt from a camp site, or hut for a week or two. This would mean a lot of dead-ground covered travelling to and from the camp each day. This year I would change my strategy by going light, being mobile and all on public land.

Here's a couple of short stories from my 2013 roar.

Reds

The end of March saw me travelling across the North Island to one of my favourite red deer hunting areas. This would be a solo hunt; camping high on leading ridges, moving my camp each day to hunt fresh ground, and hopefully fresh stags.

That night at midnight, with a 7hr drive and a 2hr walk under my belt, I set up the fly-camp on the bush edge. Sleep came easy with the sound of distant red stags bellowing their roars into the night air.

The next day I had a few hours of walking through untracked bush country to get to the first camping site of the trip. I set up my fly and bivvy bag before getting ready for an afternoon hunt. For fun I gave a few hind calls down a gully right next to camp. Surprisingly an instant reply was returned with a low moan from a stag. He was only a short distance away. I grabbed my bow and set up for a few roars. He came in quick so I didn't have time to get the wind right. As the stag closed in on me he cut my wind and that was the end of it.

I pushed on for a decent afternoon hunt, heading for a high hill with steep narrow ridges that cut the hill in a cross. The hunting was limited to ridge tops and roaring down into the deep gullies hoping to spark up a bit of interest. With no luck in the likely looking areas I cut down across one of the gullies and creek heads to a long flat ridge that I thought would offer a good route to cover a bit more country. I hunted the full length of this with no

replies to my roars. It was getting on in the day and so I headed back towards camp.

Halfway back I finally found my first opportunity for some decent roaring action. The stag bellowed across from the ridge I had been hunting just a few hours before. We roared at each other making some good loud noise. It felt good to be in contact with a worked up stag. It seemed I would need to close the gap as he was reluctant to come to me. I dropped down into the steep gully. The bottom had a nice open-grass area where an old slip had cleared the way for fresh grass and ferns to grow. I could hear the stag stomping around in the scrub on the opposite side of the open ground - he was not going to cross this without a good reason.

I set up, tucked up under some water fern with an arrow nocked and with the hope he would come straight out at me. I gave a hind call and got the reaction I was looking for. He roared loudly and the crashing sound of the stag making his way towards the open could be heard. Unfortunately he decided to go high, trying to cut my wind while coming in. I spotted a beautiful set of antlers push through the fern 30m away. I saw my mistake straight away, so I darted across the back of the ferns hoping to see him coming down that way. I waited with my bow drawn ready to fling an arrow with the first killing shot presenting itself, but he didn't show. I had got to my feet to see him gapping it with a nose full of my dangerous sent.

Well my hunt had started with a hiss and roar. Not to be beaten I headed back to camp for a hot meal and to plan the next day's hunt. The new day saw me packing up camp to move a few kilometres along the ridge to another hunting ground. I run into a couple of stags while shifting camp, one quietly snuck into my roars and the other I snuck in on his roars, but with no shots available I moved on.

I heard some distant roars down a steep creek system. I dropped my backpack and marked it on the GPS for an easy find later on, then travelled out a ridge and down toward the roaring animals. There seemed to be a few stags going hard at it. I targeted the best roaring animal and closed the gap. I stopped roaring as I got close, not worrying about noise too much. I got into the creek and headed up the other side into the punga face where the stag seemed to be holed up. I slowed to stalk, listening for any signs of the stag. He was quiet now as well. He must have heard me dropping down to him and was coming in to investigate. From below me, back in the creek, I heard a low grunt. Bugger - he was trying to cut my wind. I ran back the way I came to get the wind more favourable and gave a low moan. All was quiet - it felt like I was getting stalked now.

Looking around the surrounding forest I spotted a gap in the ferns. There, quietly looking around, was the stag. I could see his face and chest. Well that was all I needed and my arrow was sent on its way. He bolted down the hill on the sound of the shot and I could

hear his noisy departure which ended with a solid crash.

I never saw if it was a good hit or not. My arrow showed good blood from broadhead to nock. I waited the usual half hour or so and followed him up. I only found three drops of blood and started to doubt my shot. I searched and searched following his fresh marks in the soft dirt which seemed to die out leaving me scratching my head.

I was nearly ready to give up and leave the intensive search when I smelt the smell of a rutting red stag. I figured it must be his rut pad just up the hill a bit, so I followed my nose and found the very dead stag. I had only looked low, he had gone high. I was rapt to get my stag and he turned out to be a small 10 pointer.



I had the next camp set up higher on the main ridge just below the 1000m mark. The next day dawned with light misty rain and low cloud that wrapped round the surrounding hill tops. With my gear readied for a big day hunt I dropped straight down from camp and

into a large basin. The plan was to hunt a circuit through the basin and over into the next catchment, then hunting a gully where I've had some success in the past with pigs and deer.

I had only gone a few hundred meters when roaring could be heard close by. I quickly got in close, getting the wind right as I made my approach. I could hear the stags loud bellowing close by and could see a nice open terrace as I pushed through some pepperwoods on the edge of the open terrace. The plan was to get into the clear zone and set up for a roar; hopefully the stag will come straight in.

As I crept around that last big beech tree I spotted the stag standing there waiting for me. He was a big bodied stag with a nice thick mane and tall thick antlers. I was forced to take the shot available, which meant a tricky one finding a gap through some fallen foliage. Luck was on my side and the arrow hit him hard but was a bit low. He turned and bolted.

I found my broken arrow with plenty of blood and the shot seemed good. After a good wait I followed him up. He was close by, bedded up and on his last legs. I quickly got another arrow into him to close the deal and secure a nice 9 point trophy.

I headed out for home the next morning, a day earlier than planned. My pack was fully loaded with head skins and meat. It was a hard walk out back to my wagon but worth every bit of sweat.



Fallow

The closest deer hunting to where I live is the Wanganui fallow herd. This herd is also the largest in New Zealand that mainly resides on private farm land but if you know where to look, low numbers can be found in the surrounding public forests and scenic reserves. This is where I would be hunting for a short overnight hunt.

With the pack-in over and camp set up I headed upstream for a look around. This block only had a small area where the deer live so I would have to take my time, only hunting in the evening and the next morning before heading for home.

I stalked a short way upstream and found a fresh buck scrape on a bush clad river flat. He had only just sprayed his scent in it. I decided this would most likely be my best chance for a fallow buck, so backed out of it and set up on the hill behind the scrape. If he turned up it would be a nice close 18m shot. Perfect.

While sitting in the ambush the wind never blew right. It actually blew in every direction other than the best to hide my smell. A light drizzle set in and things got cold. Nothing apart from a goat was seen for couple of hours of still hunting. The cold got the better of me so I decided to push on.

Just as my gear was packed up I glanced around and was surprised to see a young fallow buck bolting down the river flat, but unfortunately in the wrong direction. As fast as he arrived he was disappearing with my only chance to get a fallow buck for the rut. Either he had smelt me or he was on the scent of a hot doe - I wasn't really sure.

I had with me an elk cow caller I was playing around with. Quickly a cow squeal was blown out from the caller, I nearly fell over with shock when he did a 360 at full run and headed back to his scrape. Another call was used to stop him and he offered a nice broadside shot. As the arrow hit him hard he let out a deep grunt, running across the nearby stream. The bush swallowed him up and I was left in silence again. The fast action left me shaking with adrenalin.

He was found a short distance inside the bush edge, just a young buck but a pretty one. Fallow meat is my favourite type of venison so not much was wasted.





Sika

My last hunting trip for the roar of 2013 was to hunt sika deer. The last few roars I had really worked hard trying to shoot my first rutting sika stag. I have killed a few sika over the years, just nothing in hard antler. Each roar I would come home with my tail between my legs but with some awesome memories of close encounters with vocal and aggressive sika stags. They are a fun but cunning species to hunt.

This hunt was with my good mate Jason. This was his first trip after sika during the roar. He is a rifle hunter so we would be hunting separately during the day and swapping stories in the evenings.

The walk in was a half-day affair which was broken up with a couple a sika encounters. The first was in a kanuka clad gully with about 5 sika stags roaring at full strength and could clearly be heard from the track. This gully was only a 30 minute walk from

the road end and was super tight scrub with zero visibility. The animals close to the road ends are usually hunted hard and the stalk always ends with the deer winning! We enjoyed exchanging roars with the sika and a red/sika hybrid then moved on. The other encounter was a hind, spooked off the track as we dropped down into the river valley we would be hunting. She just squealed at us from across the gut to let us know she was safe over there.

I had hunted this valley many times and would fly camp in several different spots or just drop in for a day hunt from above. I had heard a rumour of a hut in the valley, made in the 70's by some old time hunters and was hidden away on a high bush terrace. Jason found this hut during that afternoons hunt so we moved in for the rest of the trip. It was a home away from home with a nice open fire place and 4 comfortable bunk beds.

The next morning we went our separate ways. I was going to cover a bit of ground sidling through the gullies and cherry picking places where I had found roaring stags in previous roars. The first encounter was while stalking through a clearing, I just caught a bit of movement as a deer of unknown sex departed for safer ground.

I moved on up the creek I was stalking and found a few scrapes, set up on each one and let out a few roars. After 10 minutes of waiting I would move on and look elsewhere. It wasn't long until I heard the first roar for the day. It was a heehaw roar which can make the hair on the back of your neck stand up

at close range, it's awesome stuff! The heehaw roar is a territory roar for the sika.

He was just across the creek within 100m but I would need to get the wind right before I could close the gap. I dropped into the creek and headed up stream at a quick pace and hooked back into him. Heading up towards the bush flat I had heard him heehaw from, I looked up on a deer trail I was about to climb up to, walking down it was a large bodied sika stag.



He was moving through the looking for hinds. I readied for the shot but things went downhill from there. Buck fever set in and I couldn't shake it. All the pressure of missed opportunities on sika hit home. As he came into a clear shooting lane I let out a mew to stop him. An easy broadside chest shot was presented but buck fever really had its grip. I had trouble with completing the usually simple tasks

like loading an arrow, getting my release sorted and by the time I had the pin on his chest I was a mess. The bow went off with the arrow missing the 20m shot. I was gutted. Not another roar.

I was hard on myself and spent some time making sure I would be more prepared in my head next time I had a sika stag in bow range.

The rest of the morning took me to a couple of familiar areas, one where I had roared up a big trophy 8 pointer. We had exchanged roars and mews for an hour then only to miss out on a 15m shot as he walked out of the shooting lane - he didn't know how close he was to getting an arrow through his chest. Unfortunately these areas were empty of roaring stags this time round.

Early afternoon saw me hunting a steep spur that held rutting sika last year. I set up and let out a couple of roars. The wind was blowing a gale so it was hard to send out or hear roars. I was pleased to get a single call back, a hind in heat must be in the area. He was only one ridge away and the wind was good. We exchanged a few more roars, it seemed like a stale mate as he wasn't coming in to check me out.

Just as I figured that I would need to stalk in a bit closer I heard an animal moving about just up the spur a bit and out bolted a hind. She was going flat out, only seconds behind her was the stag. He was all loved up and hard on her trail. I tried to stop him with a single call roar but he didn't even look my way. They both then disappeared.

I decided to hold tight, letting out a few roars and to see what would unfold. A few minutes later, back came the stag with his nose to the ground. I got my bow up and readied for a shot. He spotted my small movements this time but it was too late. The shot looked good and he stumbled as he ran into the gully he came out of. I heard rocks rolling and a few sika calls out of the gully then it was quiet.

A short time later I found my first rutting sika stag! He was just a young 4 pointer but a real trophy for me - I was stoked!

The photo session and butchery job took up most of the afternoon. I headed down stream to the main valley and back to the hut loaded up with the head, meat and skin.



I only travelled a few hundred meters downstream when I put up another sika stag. He was snooping around the river flats, maybe fleshing up scrapes. He ran off not really knowing what had spooked him. I let out a quick mew to

hopefully stop him, which did and he stopped behind some pepper bushes.

I wanted to have a crack at him but the only problem was I had my hands full with the head of the 4 point stag. I dropped the head and nocked an arrow. I couldn't believe it, he was still there looking at me from 10m away - this doesn't happen often with sika. I put it down to the low light conditions. A quick shot secured my second sika for the afternoon.

He ended up being a really old stag and another 4 pointer. His ginger shaggy mane and dark dorsal strip showed his age. He was a much larger bodied stag than the 4 pointer shot earlier. After a quick couple of photos I gutted him and left the butchery job for the next day as night had closed in. It was a dark slippery walk back to camp with most of it being in the creek.



To top the trip off, Jason shot his first sika. He was chasing a stag that could be heard roaring from camp. He found the stag but missed out on a shot. He

carried on hunting and spotted a spiker feeding head down unawares of his presence, just out of the river. I heard the shot while carrying my stag back to camp. We had a good excuse for a couple of drinks that night back around the fire. All good trips have to end and the next day we reluctantly headed for home.

All these deer were hunted on public land where anyone can access, a trophy may not always be secured in these places, but you can be sure of one thing - some great adventures and memories that will last a lifetime. All it costs is some time and sweat.

Around the Traps

From most accounts, the fallow and red rut was a bit patchy in most areas, with some good action in places, while others seemed a little quiet. As Chris described in this edition of Pigs' Pad, the Herverts and Roger Charnock got amongst some croaking bucks with a few nice ones hitting the deck.

**AUSTRALIAN
BOWHUNTING
FORUM**



Fallow master Pete Morphett spent most of the rut on poacher patrol, but did slip out early in the NSW season and bagged a beautiful spotted buck.



culling operations. The boys found the hunting quite challenging but had a top trip and ended up taking a number of solid animals.



A few reds have been taken this year, including the first for young Harrison Tydings from Willow Tree. Under the guidance of his old man Pat, Harry snuck in and did the business on a nice 5x5. A super effort from a very promising young bowhunter, great stuff.



Rod Collings and Ben Salleras made the most of some down-time in January by embarking on a 6000km road trip to a remote community west of Alice Springs to hunt camels for the first time, helping the locals with their





James Warne has also been poking around the sand hills and overflow country out west, and sent this spiel about a recent hunt:

The cat came in on the second whistle, straight out of some logs 50 metres away on the edge of the waterhole. In what felt great as a shot, I hit that little white patch on the front of the chest for a bulls eye. Have never had much luck with cats this was a buzz.

Later the first goat, the straight model was seen amongst maybe a couple of hundred for the morning. He was a little smaller than thought (yes I know I should be able to pick them by now). Anyway he scored 113 neat, 38 2/8 wide.

The next day I kept looking over the goats as there were heaps of old ones and I knew if ever I was a chance of a cracker this was it. It was way out of the way and not mustered ever and locked up by flood water whenever a flow came in. Anyway, just after a dip during the mid day heat this old fella walked down for a drink, I grabbed the recurve and shot him at about 5 yards (my non hunting mate had my re curve and was shooting blunts around), therefore the recurve was there. First time I think I have passed through on anything with the curve I reckon. He will be a new best with trad gear 110 4/8 at only 33 2/8 inches wide so he had some shape.



Late that afternoon I had the nice dog fox come to a scotch predator call.

I didn't have any luck with the penny whistle all day and this guy took some time but I got him as he came around behind me trying to be sneaky.



Some time over night my camera died (after quite a few years of abuse). The problem was the next day I was arsey.

We had seen a cat sitting off a Lignum island in the dam area. He wouldn't come to a smooch or whistle. Eventually we lost him. We ended up walking that way and my mate saw him still looking out from under a lignum bush. I thought 40 yards, lined him up and shot a pearler of a shot and he went about a half a foot. Camera found to be dead so carried him (a good tom).

Whilst perched up on a steep bank another cat walked underneath me at 5 yards. He caught my draw, ran out to 40 and propped, and he too got an unlucky straight shot that I declared to my mate "must have been close" to which the cat responded by running 15

yards and kicking his last. It seems I have broken my cat hoodoo, although those two shots may have used up another 5 years worth of cat luck.

Later in the day after looking at heaps of goats, one caught my eye, you know that glimpse of game you get that allows you to instantly gather you gear and self and launch into it without all the umming and arrhging. Anyway, I went around the back of the dam, caught up with him as he grassed off. He has awesome shape, heavy and even, though he only goes 38 6/8 inches wide he is my second best goat at 121 2/8. Surely anything over 120 is proper big (after all Weepy eye was only just over ah Chris).

Anyway I carried the 2 cats back for a photo as I thought two cats in a walk was not going to happen too often. Unfortunately the 121 pt goat didn't get photographed. At least he is big enough to look good as a trophy in the shed in his own right.

Newsletter Contributions

As many of you read this, you will be sitting back after hopefully some good luck during the 2013 red/fallow rut, or gearing up to chase a rusa or sambar around. The foxes pelts will be starting to thicken up and the dry season will also see many travel north to try their luck on a toothy boar over the coming months. Whatever you're up to, please be safe and very importantly, appreciate and be grateful

for the fact that we have these opportunities available to us all.

Thanks to all of the contributors this issue, it's great to see a couple of stories from newer members. We would really like to encourage the newer and younger members of TT to have a go at writing about their bowhunting adventures. This keeps the newsletters fresh and interesting for all.

I hope as many people as possible make the trip to Bourke in October, it will be a great event and just a nice place to camp with the family for a few days and catch up with old mates and make new ones.

We are in the process of updating our merchandise inventory, and will produce a new list of the merchandise available and prices in the next newsletter. In the meantime, for any merchandise enquiries, please give Shane Dupille a call on 0406 013 130.

As usual score sheets, photos and membership enquiries should be directed to Mark Southwell at the TT Mailbox.

Please ensure photos are attached to all ratings submissions, and sent to:

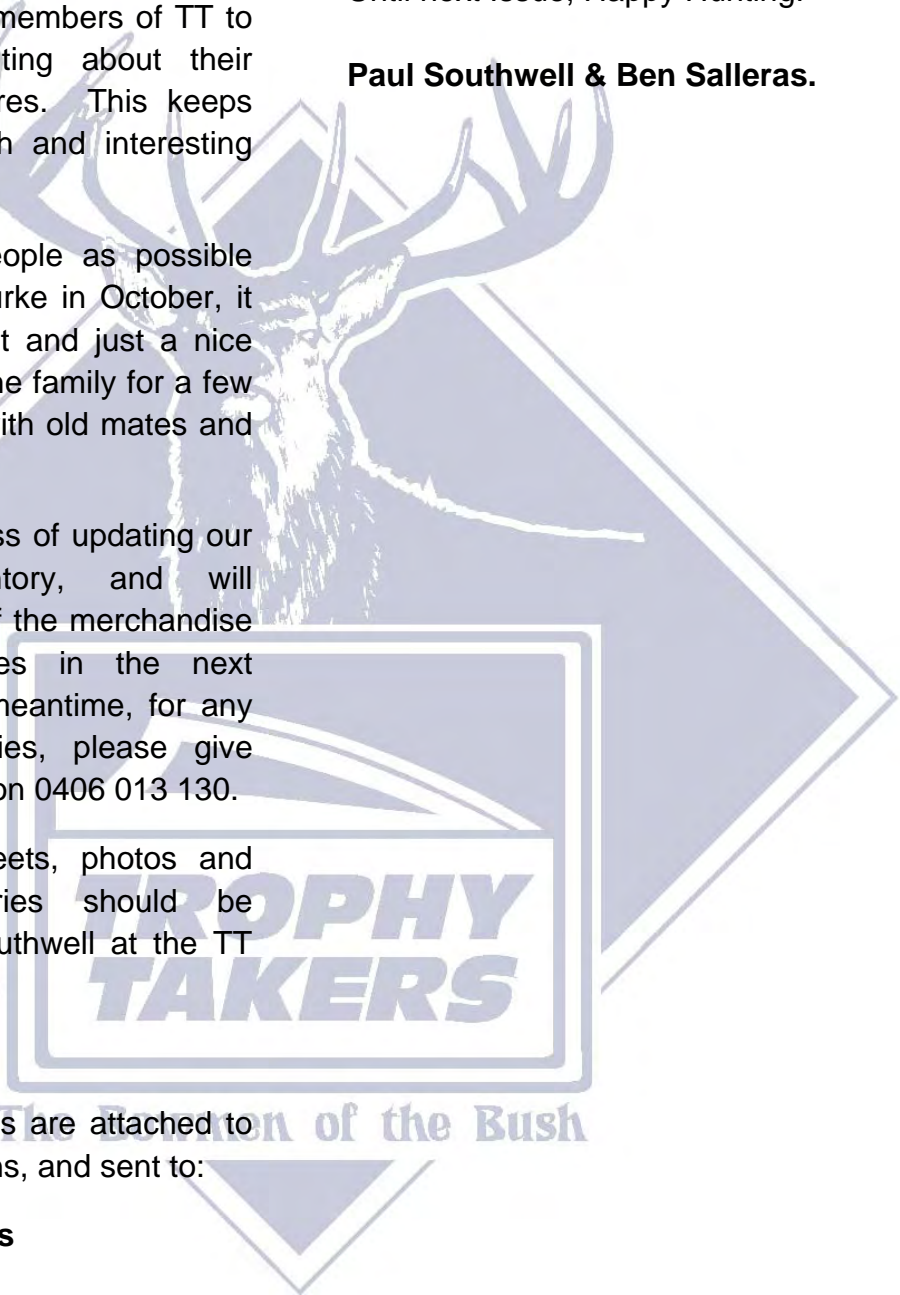
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Until next Issue, Happy Hunting!

Paul Southwell & Ben Salleras.





You can contact me on:
 (02) 8003 6385

Or via email:

customstrings@trophytakers.org

peter@killerbowstrings.com

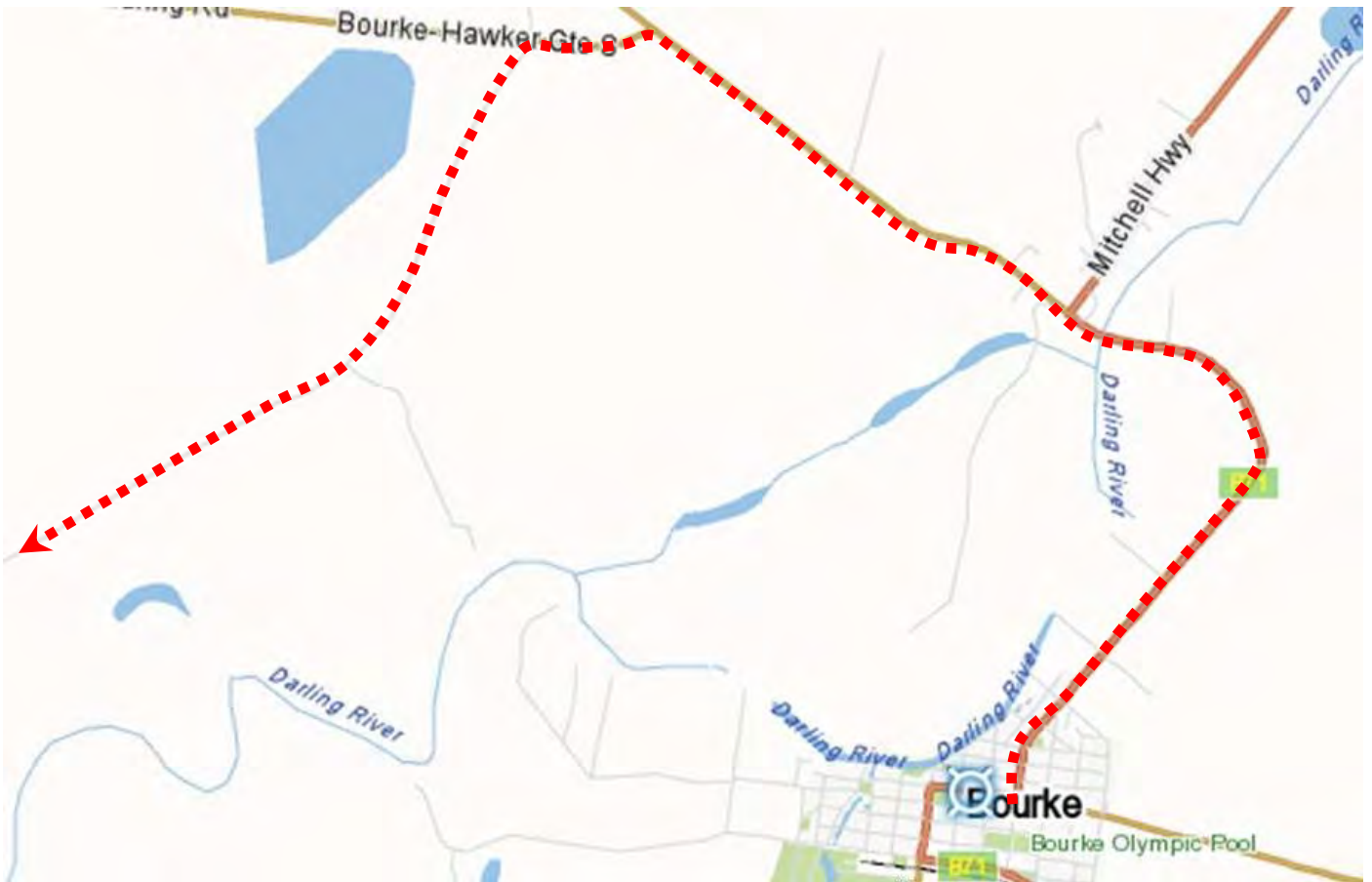
Peter Morpheff.

I'm still making custom strings featuring the mainly BCY Fibres the NEW 8190 is the best performing and stable and well as the most durable string material available at the present time, I highly recommend it. I still carry BCY 452X and the BCY Trophy String material, all materials are quiet, have far less creep and stretch over time. I also have BCY 8190 (low wax), it's estimated to be the fastest string material ever made and on average be between 5-10fps faster than 452X and Trophy respectfully!

Prices for 8190, 452X, Trophy string/cable/s complete sets are \$85 and \$5 postage. All come with 2X end serving and 62xs centre servings, Halo end serving only \$5 extra a set. I also make Teardrop and recurve strings out of B50 Dacron for \$20 each.



Directions To TT Awards
“Myandetta” Station – Bourke NSW



1. North out of Bourke to North Bourke.
2. Go straight ahead over the bridge on the Hungerford Rd
3. After about 3 km, turn left onto Wanaaring Rd (Bourke-Hawker Gate South Rd).
4. After about 400 metres turn left onto Jambeth Rd, follow this south for around 20km.
5. Trophy Takers signs will direct you to our camp on the river.

THE ROAD IS SUITABLE FOR 2 WHEEL DRIVES AND CARAVANS