



Newsletter
December 2005

TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER December 2005

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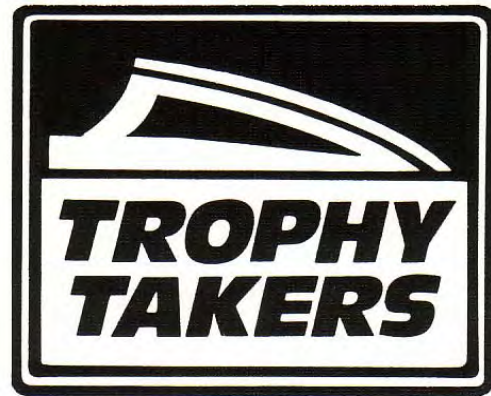
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Chairman's Report

Well it's been a few years since I've put pen to paper on behalf of Trophy Takers and whilst plenty has happened in that time I do intend to keep this report fairly brief.

For those not aware, 2006 will represent the twentieth year that Trophy Takers has been in the Australian Bowhunting scene. Back in the mid 80's a group of dedicated and very active bowhunting mates gathered at an 'Orange Walkabout' shoot in the central west of NSW and formulated a plan to cater for a perceived gap in the bowhunting infrastructure and services here in Australia.

With the help of bowhunting great and master organizer Ian Fenton and despite fierce opposition from some quarters of the sport, Trophy Takers was born, grew and prospered. Our first Easter award gathering was at Copeton Dam



near Inverell in northern NSW. With a theme of bowhunting, bowhunting and bowhunting we could see our efforts were well justified with Copeton and future awards being our yearly highlight.

On reflection, almost all those at the initial foundation meetings are still very involved in bowhunting and continue to have close ties with Trophy Takers. We'll have more on our history and traditions in future newsletters.

On a personal note it is great to see the swell of support and encouragement from all corners of Australia for the resurrection of Trophy Takers. The recent efforts by the Southwell brothers, Chris Hervert and Peter Morphett in Canberra, the strong contingent of Twin City Bowmen down Albury Wadonga way can only carry my full praise and appreciation. Further support from the likes of long time members and bowhunter's such as Doug Church, Garry Piper, Paul Hardy in Queensland, Col Graham, Wayne Anderson, Mick Kernaghan, and Damain Zienert from Victoria, the Ballards now living in the Snowy Mountains, Shane Dupille in South Australia and Adam Greentree in Western Australia gives me positive hope for our future.

Sadly we move forward without two of our best with Kenny Reichel and

Game claim report

Bill Hill having prematurely passed away during our couple of 'slow' years. Both these men brought their own uniqueness to Trophy Takers. Of thousands of bowhunter's I have met over the past 30 odd years, I rate Kenny as one of the most openly passionate about bowhunting and his Trophy Taker mates. Bill Hill was all but on par with Kenny in terms of his open love of bowhunting, the bush and his mates, but what I will always remember most about Bill was his colorful and excitable yarns about the campfire. In addition, Bill's knife and trophy making complimented by his world-class scrimshawing leave me in no doubt that he was one of the most talented craftsmen that I have met on my time on this earth. Hopefully we will also get the opportunity to do separate articles of recognition on each of these men in the coming editions of our newsletter.

Two final comments before closing, firstly I feel that the biggest legacy to come out of almost 20 years of Trophy Takers has been the introduction of likeminded bowhunter's to each other that has resulted in lasting friendships and many shared hunts. Opportunities created through these introductions to hunt have resulted in the harvest of a lot of quality and perhaps otherwise unobtainable game animals.

Secondly, I would like to see our future promotions built around the Trophy Takers banner and a few words penned almost two decades ago by Ian Fenton and still most appropriate "Trophy Takers – Bowmen of the Bush".

Have a good Christmas and great 2006

Dave Whiting.

As the weather warms up for another year, it seems the lure of hunting big boars and catching barra in the north of the country has been too much for a number of Trophy Takers members. The Hervert brothers, Chris and Stuart spent a few days on Cape York with some mates, including Col Moynihan, where they found some good boars in the dry creeks and swamps in the 25-28 ½ Douglas point range. The only sour point was the liking Stuarts dog took to the prized tusks on their return to Cairns, but that's another story.....

Not long after, Mark and Paul Southwell spent a few weeks cruising the Cape and bagged some toothy boars, and a couple of healthy scrub bulls. Paul managed a fine boar of 28 6/8 DP which rated in at number 52 in the Trophy Takers records. Not far behind, Mark took a boar of 27 6/8 DP rating at number 75. You can read all about it in this issue. Dodging the onset of the wet season, Peter Morphett snuck in a couple of day hunting, also on Cape York. In two days of hunting, Pete managed 12 boars and a scrub bull, the best boar measuring 28 4/8, rating no 56 in the trophy takers records.



Peter Morphett's 28 4/8 Boar

Steven Nowlan of Taree joined the club in August with a healthy goat measuring 136 6/8 Douglas points, making it into the new number 6 in the goat records of Trophy Takers. He has since rated an even bigger specimen he harvested in 2000, which pushed out his 2005 trophy at number 6 in the records, scoring an impressive 139 3/8.



Steven Nowlan's 136 6/8 Billy

Big congratulations to Steven on these great trophies. Further south, Damain Zeinert, rated some nice trophies he has taken over the last few years along with a good fallow buck measuring 213 5/8 DP taken this year which rates in at number 4. His other trophies included a Sambar Stag of 145 1/8 DP taken in 2004 and his red stag measuring 232 5/8 DP which is the feature trophy for this newsletter.



Damian Zeinert 213 5/8 Buck



Damian Zeinert 145 1/8 Sambar

Mark Southwell.

Extraordinary Meeting, Albury, 1st October 2005

The Meeting held at Albury was attended by 13 present and past members. A new board of directors was elected, with positions going to the following:

Chairman: Dave Whiting
Computer Central: Mark Southwell
Ratings: Mark Southwell
Marketing: Paul Southwell
Promotions: Peter Morphett
Membership: Mark Southwell

3 Associate Directors:

Doug Church
James Warne
Jarrod Vyner

In addition, a number of issues were raised, including:

- The present location of TT qualified measurers, and the possibility of running some scoring courses for members to attend.
- The production of a new set of Trophy Takers shirts.
- The possibility of TT becoming a club that could run hunter proficiency courses to allow hunters to gain a NSW R game license.
- The rating of game behind wire.
- Future annual general meetings.

Anyone wishing to obtain further information on the meeting can contact computer central.

Measurer's course

At the meeting in Albury, there was considerable interest surrounding the running of Measurers courses to allow members to score their trophies to rate with the club. Members that undertook these courses would then be able to measure all the Deer species as well as Goats, Pigs and smaller game. In an effort to organize one or more measuring courses, we need to know who is interested in attending and the location of interested parties to decide the best locations for the courses. If you are interested in attending a measuring course then you can contact Jarrod Vyner in Wadonga on 0438695410. If you cannot get through to Jarrod then please leave a message and he will get back to you.

PIGS PAD

Recently did a trip to the cape and through various means gained access to country none of us had been to before. So not sure what to expect we set off with that feeling of expectation and the hope of finding that nirvana of hunting spots. Not leaving all to chance we talked to plenty of people with knowledge of those areas and most importantly obtained a plethora of maps. I know I am probably preaching to the converted but it's amazing what a map can tell you and most importantly save you wasting time in country that is obviously unproductive. Drove plenty of km's, sucked in plenty of dust but in the end had a good trip and as a bonus got a few pigs so the homework paid off. We did the right thing by the owners no matter how trivial or hard it may have seemed at the

time. Hopefully it has led to access for years to come.

To pay to hunt or not to pay to hunt that is the question, some will some won't, some do a little of both. For me I know the one big factor is the money involved. In the aforementioned trip I rang a couple of properties and I tell you nearly keeled over when told of the daily rates, some upwards of \$350 a day! Now unless the guide is Pamela Anderson (yeah I am old maybe I should have used Paris) and she serves beers Baywatch style then no way would I pay that to hunt a few pigs. Sure the accommodation might be great but you can stay in some pretty swish places for that money.

Do the sums, that's a quite a wad of cash. Of the guys I hunt with I don't know too many that could afford that, or even pay it if they could. I realise for certain species you need to pay for access but how long before all paid places are out to reach the average hunter? I promise to treat myself one day but there is also something satisfying about doing it all yourself.

Some of you may have read the story of the Newcastle man (I refuse to say bowhunter) that shot a neighbour's cat. They caught him with the skin, Persian no less, and he has been charged with Aggravated cruelty. Now the act itself was pretty stupid, but just think about the charge for a second, that may have implications depending on the outcome.

How was the trip? Great! So you got a few? Nah but we had a great time! How often do you hear that from a bowhunter, not often, usually lack of critters means the trip was a dud. Sure it's great to get some game but that's not what it's

always about. You can have a top trip regardless of the tally.

Well another year is gone and it seems Trophy Takers is up and running with gusto again. Good to see a new committee in place and I know they are all keen to take Trophy Takers forward, the same good old values but with some fresh ideas and direction. Nice to see Dave Whiting stays on as Chairman. Dave has been a part of TT for years now and his experience and knowledge is vital for success, he's a great mentor for the club.

Have a great Xmas and very festive New Year.

Chris Hervert.

Rusa 2003

by Chris Hervert

It was the last arvo of a three day hunt on the South Coast Rusa, I had seen good sign and a few deer but as yet no chance for a shot. My local tour guide Nigel had managed to take a terrific 31inch stag a few days previous, his persistence and good shot placement paying off.


The stag was sprung on a sunny mid morning stroll between cover and Nigel had taken him with one arrow at about 35 meters. Nothing like a good mate taking a good critter to get you keen! The lengthening shadows suggested the sun was leaving for the day, having spent a few uneventful hours over a huge wallow it was time to do something a little different.

Though I had been told it was tough hunting in the bush I couldn't resist the numerous game trails and rub tree's that beckoned me in. Slowly I moved past the wallow,

stopping every few meters in an attempt to scan every little nook and cranny. There was a stag here for sure, apart from the physical sign the unmistakable odour of the rut hung heavily in the air. A few meters, untangle the leaf suit from the lantana, then a few meters more. It was then I went rigid with fright as the unmistakable HONK of a Rusa doe nailed me to the spot. I turned my head slowly, the large ears protruding over the mass of lantana unmistakable about forty meters up the hill. Still shaking slightly I figured it wasn't all bad, no stag in sight or flight so chances were that he was still here somewhere. It was then I figured I would do something else that maybe isn't in the Rusa rule books either, I decided to try and give a roar.

Once years ago I had asked a Red Deer guru when was the best time to roar? He said if you can get between a stag and his does then that is the ultimate time. With my first attempt I got nothing, the does honked again and slowly moved away. I crept forward carefully, two or three steps then a roar, still nothing. Maybe my impression of a Rusa was worse than I thought!

As I edged my way up past a small tree the very impressive, very loud and very close roar of a stag scared the beeegeesus out of me! If I was nailed before, this time I was hammered! It then all happened very quickly, sort of a like a dream when you try and look back on it. He came out of small gully thick with undergrowth, laid his head back and let another one go, the hair I have left I'm sure stood on end. Bloody hell he was moving fast about twenty five meters away and positioning himself for a better look at his adversary. Antlers back then another roar at about fifteen meters, I searched for a shooting




lane but nothing presented. I wasn't scared or nervous but filled with adrenalin and excitement I drew my bow and waited. At ten meters he stop lifted his head and challenged again, I could see his body through the undergrowth, thought it's now or never, picked the spot on his chest and let the arrow go. The stag literally exploded out of scrub his huge retreating rear and white topped antlers the last I saw of him. It became quiet as the noise of his departure mingled into the normal sounds of the bush around me. I gathered my thoughts, moved forward to where I hit him, yes blood, then a little further 10 inches of arrow. I marked the spot with tape took a deep breath and got on the radio to call the lads.

Nick and Nigel arrived then listened to the gibberish of a human who had just experienced something he reckoned was pretty amazing. After a half hour wait we took up the search and from the start I wasn't super confident but held onto the hunters hope. I had a pretty good feel about the shot and when I released the arrow it hit home hard but the nature of country put some doubt in my mind. Within minutes of following the blood trail we starting coming across more deer, it was surprising how close we got to them in the jungle. As we were keen to get some meat we decided to try and take one if we got a chance. The blood trail wasn't easy to follow but the boys did a great job tracking it though tunnels, bushes and wash-outs. It looked good at first though you could tell he was moving fast but once it started up hill I knew the chances of finding him had just decreased. Though we had probably only moved 400 meters from where I hit him it was not a good sign.

Suddenly a doe broke from cover and stopped in a small clearing partly obscured by trees. Nigel raised his bow but could not make the shot so I settled on the deer's chest and let the arrow travel over the thirty or so meters. The familiar thud indicated a good hit and a quick follow up found the deer in the lantana. It was a bonus, we quickly took piccys gutted and hung the animal then proceeded to follow up the stag. Another hour and no luck, Nigel was still confident, he knew the country and how easily the buggers can sneak and hide. It was decided as I had to head home that Nigel would come back in a few days for a look and Nick and I would return the following weekend. To cut a long story short we never did find that stag even though we looked several more times. We are pretty confident he was seen a week or so later in a mêlée with other stags so I must have missed everything vital which I guess is good in a way. It weighed on me as it does all hunters who miss a chance on a quality animal, but I would be back.

A year later and Nigel and I poke our heads over a familiar little ridge. Expectant as ever, this was a real hot spot, but we to quickly saw nothing and slowly turned to move away. Nick hushes us with an expletive I'm not sure he should be using as a 12 year old but I quickly forgave him. A spiky has moved out and was beginning to feed. Looking back it was all a bit rushed, Nick could probably have taken the shot but I still thought he was under powered, they are a big animal and lantana is close. We also didn't get the video out, a better chance we may never get again. In the end I shot him at fifteen meters and he died within twenty. The landowner wanted meat and this bloke's pre



rut condition fitted the bill nicely. It was a good start to 'Rusaering '2003. We went on to see some good stags that weekend including one that had us throwing our MacDonald's all over the place but alas no luck. As I drove home my head was filled with plans of the next assault.

Work was proving long and boring my thoughts constantly wandering to grass topped antlers and low groaning moans echoing from thickly covered hill sides. My condition worsened and by Wednesday I knew I needed a day off to recuperate! Thursday pre sun up found Nick and I getting our clobber on and listening intently for the sounds I had thought about all week, nothing, might have to find'em the hard way. Nick stayed low as I climbed the hill to where I thought they may be hanging out. Clambering up under the ridge line I slowed as I neared the sun soaked pasture I hoped would hold my quarry. Good management or good luck was on my side, a yearling fed out of the scrub about 100 meters away giving away the deer's position. I watched for another 10 minutes before the familiar adrenalin inducing swagger of antlers came over the ridge into view. He was good one, I guessed 30ish, and he was a mature stag so he was fair game in my eyes.

I thought about the video and even got it out for I reckon 10 seconds of terrible footage, then told myself, to wake up and have a go. A small gully leads up under the deer's feeding spot so this was my avenue. I 'socked up' and moved in quickly and quietly, the sun was rising and the air would be heating up, I didn't have much time. Within 5 minutes I reckoned I was 40 meters from the stag but having not been able to see him in that time it was now guess work. As I eased

over the ridge line the all familiar honk told me the game was up, a doe I hadn't seen earlier had me pegged and the rising air over my back confirmed the deer's suspicions. The stag did not hang around, one bound over a fence and he was gone. I looked hard at the doe but had to give credit where it was due, the bitch!

It was a good chance gone like so many when hunting deer, but the day was young so maybe I would get another one. With faint hope I worked my way slowly along a ridge, heavy cover providing many deer hidey holes below me most of the way. The sun was higher now and funnily the wind which was my enemy a mere hour before was now my friend, the light breeze wafting up and out of the valley below. All of a sudden a smell came up on the breeze that immediately got my attention. If I was in goat country it might have been a Billy but it had a subtle difference. Ever so slowly I eased up over a large rock over looking the slope below. I won't repeat what I muttered under my breath but there below me on a game trail was the stag I had seen earlier. He looked awesome but very alert as he stared below him into the valley. As I weighed up my options he suddenly swung his head to look behind him, bonus he thinks the danger is there, I may have a chance. It was too far for a shot, downhill at least I reckoned 60 meters I needed to get closer. Again I removed my shoes and left my pack (and video) then did a Gollum up onto the rocks and moved very slowly down. I tried to keep the dead tree between me and him, all the while keeping my eye on the moss covered rocks for loose bits. With heart wrenching speed he swung his head around and stared up to my position, he

obviously couldn't see me but he looked hard none the less. He was getting edgy, another 5 meters and I would take the shot.

Painstakingly I got to my pre-designated shooting spot as he again stared in my direction. He took a step forward and I thought that was the end but for some reason he stopped and looked back down the valley. I knelt and drew back the old compound letting my head do the maths, and then released the arrow. It arced terrible and I knew then it was further than I thought but the noggin had come good and the arrow buried into the stag angling forward, he ghosted off with barely a sound.

I sat and thought about things, partially conquering that feeling you get straight after putting an arrow in an animal like that. I was pretty confident the shot was good but with that lingering doubt that is a bow hunter's lot. I radioed Nick and told him to work his way up slowly keeping a keen eye out. Half an hour later I was looking for blood with little or no luck, and hour later I was in the same boat, no blood, no arrow (which was good I guess) and no obvious route of departure. It was becoming a little frustrating but he had to have left some sign somewhere. I then decided to stick on the game trails and walk 10 minutes each way. As I moved along the trail I thought most likely it didn't quite register what the big brown shape laying 30 meters ahead of me was until I saw the yellow flights. Quickly I put the bino's on him, no movement he was down and I was pretty sure he wasn't getting back up. Just to be sure I watched him closely for another few minutes then moved in arrow at the ready, though in the end there was no need. I had mixed emotions as I sat beside my quarry, what an awesome animal,

the remorse of harvesting him sinking in and to me to feel nothing but elation would be a little wrong. Funny how we admire such creatures yet are driven to hunt them, I guess 50 years of supermarkets can't take away 10,000 years of genetics and hunting instincts, that's is also a good thing as one day we may need them again.

Nick arrived and was suitably impressed, he had been scoping out the Rusa on many trips so it was fitting he was here when we got a good one. He then took some great photo's and video and together we caped the animal and headed for home. Two tired but happy bow hunters.



Chris's 30" Rusa Stag 2003

Cape York Capers

By Paul Southwell

“Bloody hell it’s hot”, were Mark’s only words as we bounced along a rugged dirt track in the old cruiser. We were following the map towards what we hoped was creek full of sleeping boars.

It was late October 2005 and day four of our long awaited Cape York trip. It was the first time we had hunted this country, and the mud map drawn by the owners indicated that we had a few hundred thousand acres in which to find a good boar or two over the next week.

We had already tasted success with a few nice Barra to around 650mm landed, and Mark shooting a small boar and his first cat. The previous night we had watched the build-up to a scrub bull fight, with both bulls moaning at each other, thrashing trees and kicking dust all over the place. This culminated in a ten second fight before the smaller bull retreated.



Paul’s first Barra for the trip



Mark’s small Boar



One of Mark’s good Barra

We followed the bigger bull, which joined a group of other bulls, and after a long, tense stalk, Mark pulled off a perfect 35 yard shot into the lungs of the bull with the best horns of the group. He ran less than 100 yards and piled up.



Mark’s excellent Scrub Bull

Anyway, back to the creek and the hot midday sun. We donned our packs, shuffled into the thongs and grabbed our bows before sidling over to the creek. When we reached the shade of the lush green trees that populate these creeks, we kicked the thongs off

and slowed our pace. Fifty metres along the creek, we spied a nice boar dozing in the shade.

It was my shot, and due to a branch covering the boar's lower chest, I aimed for a high chest shot at twenty yards. The shot hit where I had aimed, but unfortunately the boar was laying more on his side than it appeared and the arrow had angled up and through one lung only. The long grass that bordered the creek swallowed up the boar and he was never seen again.

Further along the creek another boar flicked his ear at the wrong time and revealed his presence. Mark again gave me the shot and this time I made sure I took out both the boar's lungs. He only made it five metres. The first hooky boar for the trip was on the ground and he went around 25 points.



Paul's 24 5/8 DP Boar

By now we were starting to overheat, so we decided that I would follow the creek back to the Ute and Mark would continue on down the creek to where the track crossed it. On the way back I hit another sleeping boar with a raking

shot, which I felt sure would have done the trick, but again I couldn't find him in the grass. This was frustrating but luck proved to be on my side as Mark ended up finding the boar back in the creek dead a few days later. He had awesome hooks that scored 30 6/8 Douglas points.

Later that afternoon I got the drop on a lone scrub bull, and after a few tense moments I had shot my second bull for 2005. While he wasn't a monster in the horn department, I was after a couple of red deer roaring horns and these would do nicely.



Paul's good Scrub Bull

The following day we headed into town for some supplies, shooting a couple of boars off water holes on the way. Mark grassed the best boar, and although he was really solid, the black and white boar was young and only had 21 4/8 point hooks.



Marks's solid young Boar

That afternoon we headed out to a new area to find a different creek. Here we found a real hot spot that consisted of a three to four km stretch of creek which still held water, and most importantly was covered by nice shady trees. With a couple of hours of light remaining we headed in different directions. By dark I had seen a couple of nice boars but had no luck while Mark had found an awesome small side creek. Out of four boars he saw in a hundred yards of creek, he shot a nice 27 6/8 pointer, his personal best to date. One of the boars he kicked up was a monster, the heaviest hog he had seen on this trip.



Mark's 27 6/8 DP Boar

Next morning we hunted the same area again. This time I stalked along the side creek while Mark looked further up the main creek. After some slow stalking I spied a boar lying under an overhanging tree. He looked like a big pig and after a hard, slow stalk in the dry leaves, I managed to get an angled shot into the front of his chest.

Following the good blood trail, I saw the boar up ahead, still alive but very crook. A finishing shot had him on the ground a few metres later. I called Mark on the radio and told him I had shot a big hog. He came over and confirmed my

suspicions, that I had nailed the big boar Mark had seen yesterday. He was the biggest pig I had shot and also had 28 6/8 point hooks, a pearler.



Paul's 28 6/8 DP Boar

During the heat of the day the temperature rose to 39 degrees and the humidity really sucked the sweat out of us. When it finally cooled down enough for us to move out from under the tree we were camped under, we got our hunting gear together and Mark dropped me on another creek to have a look.

I followed the creek for around five kilometres and, while there was no water, I managed to grass a small boar and lose a better hog to the long grass. Mark hunted a section of the good creek and by dark had two boars on the ground, one 26 pointer and the other around 22.



Mark's 26 6/8 DP Boar

The next day we headed back to the area where I had shot the 30

pointer a few days earlier, and set up camp alongside a few nice water holes. We fished the biggest hole and after a few catfish hit the lures, Mark hooked something big. It ended up being the biggest Saratoga we had both seen, easily 80cm long and around 15lb. The cray pots we had thrown in earlier also yielded a feed of large freshwater shrimp or cherabin.



Mark's awesome Saratoga

What really makes Cape York so fantastic is that every waterhole, creek or swamps teeming with life, and the best thing is most of it can either be caught or shot, sensational!

Over the remaining few days Mark had all the luck with a couple more good boars hitting the deck up to 27 4/8 points. The roads were extremely slippery after eighty millimetres of rain one night and with more storms predicted in the area soon, we gave it a day to dry out a bit and then made tracks for home. If the wet season set in early we could have been stuck for months.

During the fifteen hour drive back to Townsville we reflected on the successful trip. The really exciting thing is that there are plenty more new creeks and swamps waiting for us to discover next time.



One of Boars to finish the trip




One of Paul's many Bara

It's a long shot!

by Peter Morphett

It's December 2004, I am on the phone telling my mate about the birthday Billy I shot the other week, and hassling him on when is he moving to the farm, that he has just bought. "Come on mate, when?" I ask him, "soon mate, soon!" he replies!

Two months later in February of 2005, I am finally heading out there. He called to tell me that he had seen a dozen fallow deer in the back creek while he was exploring his new property. I had to have a look around the new house and stuff, yeah yeah yeah, you know all I am thinking is let me go for a walk mate!



As I am getting my stuff together my mate Steve asks, "Where's my camo stuff?" which caught me a little by surprise, "Yours I said, I said that's exercise we're talking about mate!" He said, "I've heard of it! My reply was "Not in a while by the look of it!" Well as we traded insults I explained to him the highly evolved senses of fallow deer and that I will probably be coming out every week for the next 6 weeks just too even get a shot at one! Now I'm thinking I should have arrived here earlier since I have extra baggage to carry, that way I could have put a few more km's on the trip so next time he wont ask to come again!

We simply followed the creek and with the wind in our favour started a slow and steady walk glassing all the creek line and the timber in the distance looking for movement, since it would be dark in 3 hours and my first trip I only just expected to learn the lay of the land so to speak. Well only 40 minutes in and I am looking at a doe under a tree in a section that was green, it must have been fed by some sort of under ground spring, since all the other country around is very brown and dry. Not long after a young buck turned up and started to make a scrape just on the other side of the same tree she was eating near, as I explain pre-rut behaviour to my mate, more does appeared.

As I started to glass into the timber's edge, I spot two bucks bedded down. The number of deer in this section started to really surprise me, not long later the two bucks where up and started to feed towards the first group of deer, as I glassed them we carefully slipped into the creek, the two bucks were not massive but I was going to put a move on them anyway. As we moved though the sandy creek,

that was now well below the level of the buck's we could make up some distance as they couldn't see us and the sandy floor was super quiet, we were now right between the two groups of deer that were only separated by 80 metres and the wind was still good. I could see the two bucks now feeding right in the middle of the paddock so I committed my self to just to have a go at them. As I walked up the rise, I could see that there was not any real cover to make a stalk, but there was only a small stand of trees I could use as cover for my approach to close the distance, to get close enough for a shot. With the light fading fast I simply tip toed half bent over, walking straight at the bucks using the stand of trees to my best advantage, the ground litter was also very light and I still had my old mountain boots on, how lucky was I , these boots are normally way to noisy for deer hunting! As I approached the stand of trees I could see the biggest buck only about 20 to 30 metres behind them, so I slowed to the snails pace and told myself that all I have to do is get to the trees and I'll take a shot from there, not matter what the distance is. As I reached the trees I took to one knee, I had a clear shot at the biggest buck that was only 21 metres away! I came to full draw and anchored and lined the No Peep up and tried to relax as much as possible, the pins of my Trophy Ridge Matrix sight were working brilliantly and I let the pin float for a short second or two and released! The arrow hit the buck perfectly behind the shoulder, he exploded and ran past me heading for the timberline, as he started to go over the rise I could see him starting to struggle, and then he disappeared from sight.

The sun had well and truly set as I quickly walked to where I saw him


disappear, I was so sure that the shot was good I knew he wouldn't be too far on the other side, with a little struggle from the low light condition's I found him! With Steve walking straight up behind me commenting "I thought you said they where hard to get!" I responded saying "I probably will never get a shot that easy on a deer ever again!" I was as happy as Larry to say the least! He was no monster but I could not have hoped for a better start, one stalk one buck. He was in perfect condition with not a mark on his cape and with a very swollen neck so I caped the buck and took as much meat as Steve could carry, yes as much as he could carry, I had to carry the head I told him and you know how heavy they are, NOT! As we hit about the half way stretch home all I could hear was Steve telling me the approximate weight of all the deer he was carrying, which seamed to be getting heavier every 50 metres! I had to keep a little distance from him so he did not see me laughing at him, now I knew I had solved my problem of him wanting to deer hunt with me.



Peter M 176 5/8 DP

A week later, I am back, and I checked to see if Steve wanted to come for a walk again as I would need someone to carry the meat! Nevertheless, he said he was to busy, you know farmers they're is works never done! 15 minutes later and I am walking down the same creek line heading past the section I shot the pre-rut buck last week. This time still on a mission to explore more of the property, I have access to, I find a section that has good potential and a large mountain range that runs for some 4 or 5 km, with lots of small-grassed gully's that run all the way up and into the ridgeline that turns into timber. I find a large stand of dead wattle trees, as I am walking along in the grassy plain for some good two km's I spot some 50 plus deer spread out along in entire length. I also spotted two bucks, one of which had a very good side with large palm and plenty of Spellers coming from it, but the other side was very weak! They were still in pre-rut mode, they did not stop moving I watched them move and freshen scrapes, rub there antlers as they made they way thought the open country, and heading to who knows where? I remember saying to myself I just stumbled onto a hot spot I think and it will hold a large amount of deer activity for the rut that is due to start anytime soon.

A few days later, I am back again! Yes I am keen, the thoughts of deer season running though my brains, this time the wind direction is less than ideal so I decide to look in the opposite direction from were I have been seeing large numbers of deer, and head right over to the boundary. I am a little reluctant, as I know that the property next-door employ two shooters that regularly control the roo's and deer on the property. I make my way up to the



boundary at the furthest point to get a better angle on the wind and start my search, after about two hours I have only managed to see two does. However, a bit further on I am sneaking along the timberline and manage to find a very good buck just sitting 20 metres inside of it. He is next to a gully chewing his cud, but the wind is marginal, so I try to get close but with the timber being so dry, it is nearly impossible. I am trying to make as little noise as possible, but even in my socks, this is impossible, but I manage to close the gap to about 50 metres. I am looking at the buck and trying to plan a way to use the large gum trees to cover my approach, since I cannot crawl across the ground because of the fallen bark, which would be like rolling around in a bubble wrap factory! Unfortunately, the wind swings straight to him and spoils my stalk, and he is off like a flash!

It's Sunday and I am walking into the creek heading to my preferred section again, the wind is good, it's slightly over cast overall, and it a bit cooler as it has still been quite warm, I was thinking this would help set them off. After I scanned many kilometres and walked to all the good vantage spots, I did not see a deer! I started to think the worst, that maybe the shooters had been last night and cleaned them all up? I started to walk back though one of the best section's I though would hold some of the bigger bucks when the rut starts. This section was a large stand of dead wattle that protrudes out into the grassland and runs all the way back and into the timberline some 500 metres away. I know the bucks seem to like this type of country, when their in the middle of the rut. In addition, I had seen large amount of tracks and scrapes though this section in the last week

or two. Still I did not see a thing! I was a bit bewildered when I heard the answer to why I had not seen anything, a dog started to bark some distance up in front of me, bummer! I headed in the direction of the barking thinking I bet he has got some deer bailed up, but this turned out to be wrong as the noise soon tuned in to two dogs and four people on horses, all talking loudly and carrying on! I waited on the side and the small track until they walked by, they got a bit of a shock when they saw me step out onto the track to say hello, but the male piped straight up and said "Oh you must be Pete, Steve said would be around here some place!" A small conversation started, I soon found out the whole family goes horse ridding on Sundays and they ride over most of the country in this mountain range, which covers some four different properties! Therefore, this meant in my mind that there would be no point coming out on this day anymore. Nevertheless, one small consolation was he said that I could hunt in his place too. However, I knew he had shooter's on there and as I had already covered the boundary just last week. I said thanks anyway, but I knew that my chances would be better right here, just not on Sundays by the look of things.

Two days later its lunchtime and I have come up with another lame excuse to knock of work and with my gear already packed, I am out of there! As I mentally plan the route, I would take on this day as I'm driving there. I am headed down the creek line again and I have just emerged out and into the open grassy plain, I am just blundering along and I see a buck just standing in the creek! Crap! I should have been more careful he is going to bolt now; he would have

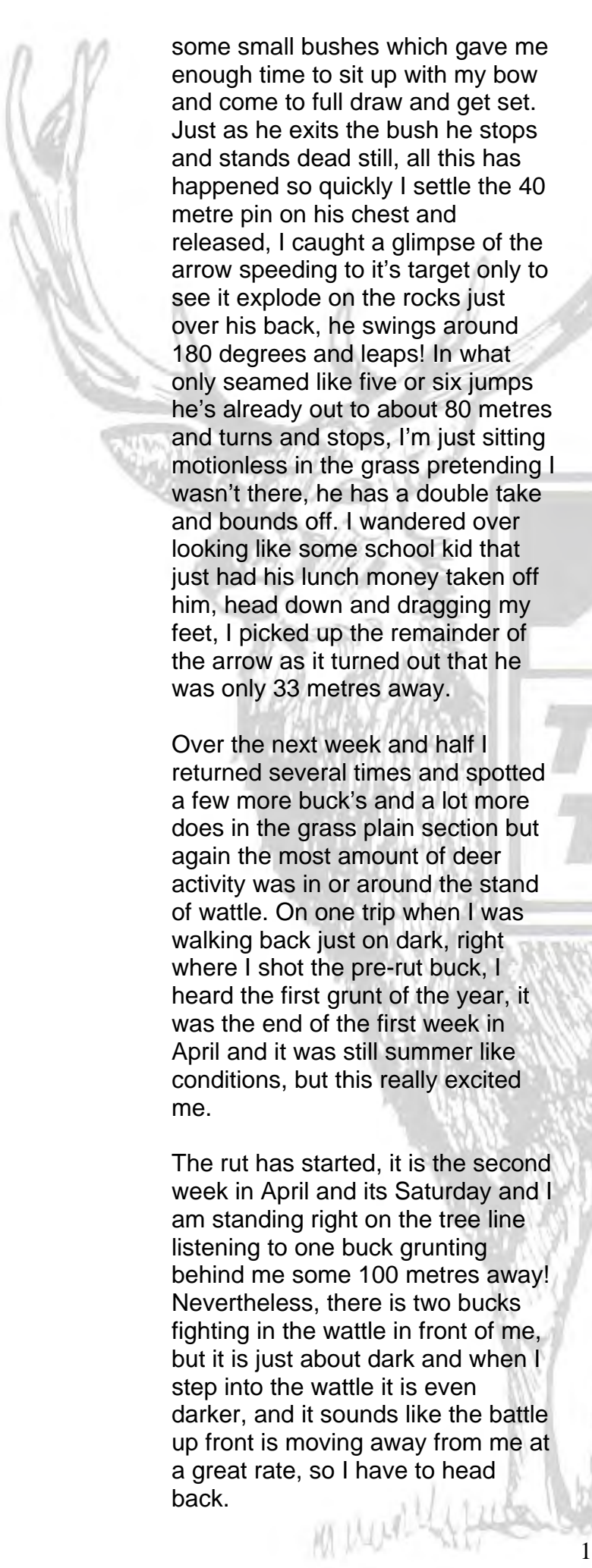
had to have seen my dumb ass walking along like that in the open with no cover? Now with only a three in high stubble of grass to conceal your shoelaces, NO he just stood there just staring up the creek line and not at me! He then turned and started preening himself, with his head now turned I hit the ground and crawled to a fisher of rock sticking from the earth.

I was about 150 metres from the 175 to 185 point buck. He now had moved up the creek a little and sat back down, I figured that he must have been half asleep and stood up just as I saw him, but now he was facing my way and the only cover was 100 metres of 3 to 12 inch high grass to try and conceal myself behind. I took my utility belt off, started to crawl inch by inch, flat out on my stomach as slow, and deliberately as possible toward the buck. I thought this is going to take me all day! Inch by inch I'm closing in, thinking of how the hell and I going to get to my knees and get a shot at him even if I close the gap as I'll still have a 50 metre shot even if he is in the same position by the time I even do get there? I as I hit a little dip in the grounds surface, a spiker came out of the gully above and behind him and started to feed, great! Now I have two sets of eyes to look out for, this slowed my pace, but it did not take long and the spiker, which was now in the buck's line of site. The buck jumped up as he saw the little fella, the spiker now spotted the buck also, he reacted very strangely indeed, he stood up on the tips of his toes and pronged his way a short distance on the hilltop and he looked as happy as to see him! As he made his way down to the buck, which had now moved a short distance to a bush just in front of him and was watching him intensely, he started to puff himself

up, as the spiker walked closer the buck started to smash the bush! I am thinking unreal I will get to see Mike Tyson crush the opposition in a minute and I have front row seats!

I used all this deer intimidation to close right in on a small section that had some decent length grass on it which now concealed my whole body. I watched the two stand off from each other for a while and I could see a bush even though it was a small bush, if I could get to that only another 20 metres I might be able to get to my knees and take a shot at the buck.

By the time I covered half the distance to the little bush the spiker had got the message and had turned and started to walk quickly off before the buck could get to close and give him a flogging. As the buck settled back down, I was at the little bush which now was really too small! There is no way I would be able to get to my knees without him seeing me, I knew he was about 40 metres away and so as I carefully pulled a Gold tip from my quiver and knocked it. While still flat on my stomach, I thought, here we go, over two hours of impersonating a snake in the grass is about to come to a head. I gripped my bow and started to move backwards to sit on my heels, with the bow flat on the ground and head down still, but with my eyes locked onto the buck for his reaction, and yes, he is straight onto me! He has his head right up and looking as hard as he can, with the look of what the hells that? The 3D camo is being put to the test again, and the buck starts to walk toward me, his eyes fixed on me trying to determine what I am. He's coming quite quickly and is still is about 40 metres walking parallel to me on the opposite bank of the creek, he had to walk though



some small bushes which gave me enough time to sit up with my bow and come to full draw and get set. Just as he exits the bush he stops and stands dead still, all this has happened so quickly I settle the 40 metre pin on his chest and released, I caught a glimpse of the arrow speeding to it's target only to see it explode on the rocks just over his back, he swings around 180 degrees and leaps! In what only seemed like five or six jumps he's already out to about 80 metres and turns and stops, I'm just sitting motionless in the grass pretending I wasn't there, he has a double take and bounds off. I wandered over looking like some school kid that just had his lunch money taken off him, head down and dragging my feet, I picked up the remainder of the arrow as it turned out that he was only 33 metres away.

Over the next week and half I returned several times and spotted a few more buck's and a lot more does in the grass plain section but again the most amount of deer activity was in or around the stand of wattle. On one trip when I was walking back just on dark, right where I shot the pre-rut buck, I heard the first grunt of the year, it was the end of the first week in April and it was still summer like conditions, but this really excited me.

The rut has started, it is the second week in April and its Saturday and I am standing right on the tree line listening to one buck grunting behind me some 100 metres away! Nevertheless, there is two bucks fighting in the wattle in front of me, but it is just about dark and when I step into the wattle it is even darker, and it sounds like the battle up front is moving away from me at a great rate, so I have to head back.

Tuesday afternoon and I am heading to the entrance of a long grassy gully that I have been scoping out for two weeks now and again I'm not concentrating hard enough and moving a little to quick and I have been seen by a large buck standing at the entrance looking straight at me, damm it! As he takes off up the gully I see that he is one of the bucks I've seen three weeks ago that is very strong on one side and totally poor on the other so this in the end didn't worry me to much but still I should pull my finger out and slow right down and concentrate harder! I am right along side the wattle and I am steadily sneaking up the length of the gully looking and listening. I get to about half way up and I spot a buck only 50 metres away feeding under a tree, so I quickly move to the other side of the gully to obscure his view and start my stalk. Using all the available cover I could, it did not take long to close the gap with the regrowth of wattle giving me enough cover to get to 23 metres with no hassle at all. The young buck is feeding under a larger tree as I take aim from behind another; I aim tight behind the shoulder. The shaft is away and it penetrates completely and he off like the starters gun, but the Magnus Stinger 4 blade broad head are devastating and he only make's it some 40 metres max before succumbing to it's effect's. Buck number two was on the deck! I was very excited again, as I started looking for my arrow which I guessed was some 40 metres further up the gully, I'm so consumed by this that I totally forgot there are plenty of other deer around especially at this time of the day so I shouldn't let my guard down. Just as a very loud bark wakes me from my intense searching, I see a large buck

standing on top of the gully bank looking down at me! Two mistake's in one day and I still shot a deer, sound's like more arse that class, I'm mumbling to my self. I get a good look at him as he steadily walks back in to the wattle, he is one of the better bucks I have seen and he was even and had good length. Anyway, after the self timed photos and cape removal I could hear two bucks grunting in the stand of wattle, I started the long walk out, as it is now twilight and too dark to see properly.



Peter M Young Buck

I know what the plan of attack will be on Thursday, work the stand of wattle and see if I can find the better buck.

It's Thursday and my boss is looking at me funny as I approach his office, he just yells out "GO, just go, See ya next week!" thanks mate, I reply, lucky there's not much on. I am in the wattle still hunting, I'm early but with luck something will walk past me on the way out or run into me fighting with each other. Only 10 minutes in and two young bucks materialize in front of me at 30 metres! I'm standing right in line with a small tree and with the bow at the ready, as one of the buck's is walking straight to me, his is no bigger that the one I shot on Tuesday so I decide not to shoot, but still an adrenalin rush. He's now walking

past me at only five metres, but the wind is still in my face so he won't be able to smell me, he walks another five metres past me and start's to make a scrape and rub his little antlers on the branches above him. His mate which was not much bigger and is doing the same thing is about 40 metres away for me, they where oblivious to my presence. I watched them freshen scrapes, rub, and walk right out into the grassy plain heading in the same direction as every other buck that I have seen, I'm thinking there must be some big buck magnet at the end of the mountain range. So I start still hunting again, the sun is starting to set, and I'm half way thought the wattle but I haven't heard any grunting. As I exit the wattle and out into the re-growth which open's out into grassland I spot a spiker feeding very quickly toward me, he seemed a bit scared for some reason but I'm not sure why? He is heading straight for me so I kneel down and get ready. As the spiker pops over a small rise at only 10 metres, he stops and is looking at me kneeling in the re-growth, but it is to late the Gold Tip shaft from my Darton Maverick RC set and 81 lbs. has completely penetrated his body length ways and he bolts for the safety of the timber. As a get up to take note of the entry point of the fatally wounded deer, to my amazement there is a mature buck walking out of the timberline to my right at about 100 metres! He is making a beeline for a bush in the open; I quickly knocked another shaft and hugged the few remaining trees along the timberline to get within stalking range. The buck was now just standing at the large bush bashing the crap out it, I carefully made my way down to him with the cover of the re-growth to about the 70-metre mark. With the light fading very fast and with him so

consumed about bashing the bush to death, I closed to within 50 metres but that is when the cover ran out. There was only one small tree about 15 metres out in the open now from me that I figured if I could get to there while he is so distracted I will have a only 35 metre shot. I am sneaking as slow as I can in the middle of no man's land, trying to take every step as he bashers the bush. I am about half way there, and BANG, he has busted me! One loud bark and he running past me and back up the rise heading for the timberline, at the same time I've taken to one knee and come to full draw and set, he stops to confirm what has spooked him, he's now at least 50 metre's away and standing broadside, it's a long shot! However, I have had my 50-metre pin of my Trophy Ridge Matrix sight floating on his chest from the start and I release! A second later, I hear the arrow penetrate and hit heavy bone, the buck collapses on the spot, thinking that I just have a spine shot I knock another shaft and quickly cover the open ground to finish the buck off.

The adrenalin was really pumping now, as I inspected the buck, I found that the arrow had not hit his spine but had hit tight behind his shoulder and angled forward and broken the shoulder joint on the opposite side! So the second arrow was probably not needed, I then realized that he was the buck that busted me on Tuesday, what a buzz! I was as happy as I setup for the self timed photos in total darkness which was very difficult indeed. I used the light on top of my sight and placed it on across the buck to check that my camera was aligned correctly. I spent the next 15 minutes running back and forth in the darkness pressing the camera button and trying to get

back behind the deer and hold his head up in positions I thought would look good before the camera went off! After all this mucking around, I decided next time I had better buy one of those AAA size torches and a digital camera! The buck's neck was massive and swollen, and boy did he stink! Man it was bad as I caped him out in total darkness trying not to wreck the cape and not cut my fingers off, while doing this I'm giggling to myself and thinking I wish that Yates was here to do this, since he's really good at this type of thing! It is easier to make fun of people when they are not here to defend themselves hey! Just jokes Kevin, just jokes! Since it was, so dark and no torch I would have to wait until tomorrow to recover the spiker I had shot just before the excellent buck.



Peter M 187 3/8 DP

When I returned the next day, picked up an arrow or two, and checked the distance I shot the buck from yesterday, it ended up being 52 metres, not bad. I recovered the spiker as well, he had only made it just in inside the timber before collapsing. I took

some photos and took some of his meat for my mates dogs since I would not eat it because it had been over 12 hours and the day was quite warm.



Peter M Spiker

I headed around to the start of the gully again working my way up the same as yesterday. I came upon a fox as he was hunting for mice or grasshoppers, he was jumping up and down in the grass, so I snuck up behind him and nailed him at 10 metres!



I spent the rest of the day sneaking up the side of the timberline and spotted one good buck, but he looked like he was late for a hot date, and again still heading in the same direction as always. I sat just off the stand of

wattle waiting to see if there would be any grunting, but none eventuated. The rut seemed to have finished already. The rut was only hot for 2 weeks. Now I returned only on the weekends and the deer had found their places and settled down but were still mating, they seemed to be back to the full switch on state of mind, which was probably half my fault! I did see a few more bucks but none were really worth the effort, since I thought I had done so well this year.

I spent so much time hunting the fallow this year I had missed the red season, well so I thought. That's another story!

Gadget of the month

This month's gadget is one that a friend from Weipa pulled out when I needed to sharpen some of my retrieved arrows while on hunt at the cape this year. It's called the Redi-Edge Tactical, and is a small compact twin tipped carbide sharpener. Now it may seem small but boy is it awesome for re sharpening your broad heads and knives, and it even does the points of fishing hooks. The unit is safe and easy to use, which unlike the normal AccuSharp tool I carry when in the field to re touch heads is just placed against a tree rock or what ever suitable surface. It effortlessly brings edges back to a very clear feathered edge so then all you have to do is steal or strop them off to be back to razor sharp in record time. The unit is available through most good knife shops but like most I got mine through the internet through the Archery supplier I use for about \$30 Au.



<http://www.klawhorn.com/rediedgetactical.htm>

Computer Central

For all game ratings and membership renewals please contact:

Trophy Takers
LPO BOX 5129
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Bruce ACT 2617

Mark Southwell.

Newsletter Contributions

As this newsletter is only as good as the material provided, please those with a little spare time, all of the other members would love to see and read about your hunts, no matter what the quality of the game. As I would like to keep the newsletter as full as possible, I know we all are busy people in this busy world but some stories other than mine every issue will go to making our newsletter something special that we all eagerly await and enjoy to see and read about other members success, like I used to in the early years of TT newsletter.

For all those with no computer access that would like to contribute to the TT newsletter please send stories hand written also or on disk or CD (word Doc) to the TT Po Box

We have also added a Gadget of the month section, so members again if you have something that you think that the other members would find useful or even indispensable please email them to me. The products details, and if possible the web page or link and or pictures so it can be used here.

I Look forward to putting the next issue together with some highly sort after game, and they know who they are right Mr Moynihan and Mr Debreceny who I think still haven't rated some top trophies for this year, why I don't know but we would all love to see them here!

Again all have a safe and happy X mass and good New Year!

Peter Morphett.

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