



**Newsletter July - Sep 2009**

# TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER Jul-Sep 2009

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### Game Claim Report 9/6/09

Well, we have had a stack of game claimed over the first half of the year, with 50 ratings from nine different species. Changes to the top 10 in five of these species are testament to the outstanding quality of game that T.T. members have been taking with their bows.



**Pete's Monster Buck, 245 DS!**

The Fallow rut was kind to a number of members. Pete Morphett took a monster light coloured buck scoring 245 DS putting it in second spot in the ratings.



Not far behind him was Dave Whiting with a long and heavy spotty fallow scoring 239DS. Sneaking into 20 odd yards from the buck Dave was able to hold his composure and put a fatal arrow into the buck with his trusty old Badlands recurve. Just rewards for many miles done in the hills over the years – well done Dave.



**Dave with his Monster Buck, 239 DS!**

Several of the guys managed their first deer this rut and what a way to start.

James Warne got a goodun' scoring 224 2/8 DS, and Ron McGrath smacked a pretty head scoring 215 7/8DS. Robbo was out poking around again and got a nice one scoring 218 3/8 DS – his second best deer behind 'poppa moose', currently sitting at number 13 in the ratings. Jordy Appleby of Bungendore was also in the action taking his PB fallow buck scoring 211

3/8 DS, and to round off the fallow ratings for the start of '09, Casey McCallum rated a 201 7/8 buck he shot in SA during last years rut.



**James Warne First and P.B. Buck 224 2/8DS!**



**Jason Robinson with his best for 09, 218 3/8 DS!**



**Jordy Appleby with his P.B. Fallow Buck, 211 3/8 DS, well done mate!**



**One happy camper, Ron McGrath with his first and PB Buck also, 215 7/8 DS, well done Ron!**



**Casey McCallum with a battle scared Buck taken last year, 201 7/8 DS, nice one!**

There was also three red deer rated that changed to top five significantly. As always, Mark Wills was out and about during April, taking a beautiful 6x6 red stag scoring 302 2/8 DS. I was lucky enough to cross tracks with a bomber as well that came in at 300 DS neat. On the same trip my brother Paul got lucky on a long shot to secure his best red – a nice and even 6x6 scoring 291 3/8 DS.

These are currently two, three and four in the red deer ratings.



**Marks P.B. and awesome red stag, 300 DS!**



**There's a smile hidden under there some where we are sure, Mark Wills with his P.B. Red Stag 302 2/8 DS, brilliant trophy!**



**Paul Southwell's excellent red and P.B. also, 291 3/8 DS!**

A number of nice chital trophies have been rated with us since Christmas. The best of these was shot by Paul Southwell just before Christmas. At over 31 inches in length, this stag scored 180 DS and was shot from 20 yards while rubbing a tree in northern QLD. Pauls luck continued on Anzac day this year when he had a respectable stag run up to him while he was glassing a big mob out on the flats. At 12 yards he was too good to resist for Paul, and sent an arrow on its way to put the stag down in 50 yards. Final score 164 5/8 DS and now sits in eight position in the ratings.



**Paul with another top Chital Stag, 180 DS!**



**Paul's stacking them up, this fella scored 164 5/8 DS!**



**Another very good Stag for Ben, 151 5/8 DS!**

Pete Morphett travelled north several months ago for a week chasing the spotted ones. He came home a happy bowhunter taking a beauty scoring 177 1/8 DS, Well done Pete!

Several other Chital were taken by a couple of new members, Rod Collings and Ben Sallares, both from the Townsville area. Rods stag was a nice one scoring 141 6/8 DS and Ben's came in at 163 2/8 DS and 151 5/8 DS. Welcome to the club lads.



**Pete's PB Chital Stag, taken at 55m and scores 177 1/8 DS, awesome!**



**Rod Collings with his best chital to date, 142 6/8 DS, good stuff!**



**New T.T. Member Ben Sallares with his PB Chital Stag, 163 2/8 DS, well done!**

Further north, several buff have been taken and recorded. Casey McCallum put in a long shot on a NT billabong in late 2008 to secure his first buff, and a good one at that scoring 94 2/8 DS. At a

similar time, Tom Baxter from Cooma, was poking about the NT scrub with his trusty recurve when he nailed a good bull buff scoring 75 4/8 DS. Tom also managed a nice boar on that trip scoring 25 4/8DS. Well done to both of you.



**Casey McCallum with his first and P.B. Buff, 94 2/8 DS!**



**Tom Baxter with his first and PB Buff also with the recurve, 75 4/8 DS!**

While we're up north, there were a number of boars rated from both Cape York and NT. The best of these was Luke Edward's 29 point pig shot on a trip to the Cape. An impressive walking shot put the rangy boar down in no time, and I can tell you the big fella had a smile from ear to ear. Great stuff! Luke also took a couple of other nice boars on his first trip to the Cape, scoring 27 4/8 and 26 6/8 DS. Dave Keable dusted off one of his raven recurves and put it to good use on a Cape boar scoring 28 DS. Nice one Dave. John Bates from Canberra was also into the action taking

a Cape boar scoring 27 6/8DS. Further south, Albury member Dale Furze rated a mountain boar he shot in the hills of central west NSW scoring 23 2/8, rating at number 231.



**Tom with a excellent boar, top picture and trophy, 25 4/8 DS!**



**Luke Edwards with his PB boar, 29 DS! Well done mate!**



**Luke with another good Boar, 26 6/8 DS.**



**Dale Furze with his P.B. mountain Boar, 23 4/8 DS.**



**And excellent trophy for Luke, 27 4/8 DS!**



**Dave Keable with his 28 DS Boar.**



**John Bates with his P.B. Boar, 27 6/8 DS!**

Further south, Mick Kernaghan and Pete Morphett have taken Sambar hind's with their bows and rated them this year. Not an easy feat!



**Mick Kernaghan with another Sambar for the year, awesome mate!**



**Pete Morphett with his first Sambar, woohooo!**

As always, a few goats have fallen to T.T. members this year to date. Most notably, are goats taken by Shane Dupille, Dave Whiting and Mark Wills which scored 125 7/8, 114 7/8 and 112 1/8 DS, 107 2/8 DS respectively. Another good goat to hit the ratings was shot by Darryl 'Dash' Warren from Cobar back in 1992 scoring 126 DS. Nice one Dash and welcome back to T.T. We also had new member David Hardy join with T.T. having shot his best Billy to date scoring 60 4/8 DS.



**Shane Dupille with a excellent Billy, 125 7/8 DS, Bute!**



**Mark Wills with a very good 112 1/8 DS, Stinker, he still happy on the inside!**



**Dave Whiting with another very good Billy to add to his impressive collection, 114 7/8 DS!**



## Chairman's Report



Mark "Smiley" Wills with his 107 2/8 DS Billy.

In terms of small game, Goulburn member Steven Holgate has been into the foxes and cats, rating several good foxes (10 and 9 14/16 DS) and cats (7 13/16 and 7 10/16) since Christmas.



Steve Holgate holding a nice Fox, 10 DS.

For a full list of recent ratings with T.T., go to [www.trophytakers.org](http://www.trophytakers.org). The website is updated as soon as ratings come in, so no need to wait for the newsletter to see who's been rating what.

It should also be noted that for trophies to be included in the 2008/2009 rating year, they should be received before the 1st September 2009, to allow time to finalise the awards for presentation in October.

Until next time, good hunting

**Mark Southwell.**

Well the first half of 2009 has flown past and the October Awards will be on us before we know it. As can be seen from the content of this, yet another great newsletter, our members continue to live up their reputation of being active trophy bowhunters and real "Bowmen of the bush". This issue contains stories reaching to the far north of Australia chasing Buffalo and Boar through to the southern states where our members relate stories around testing their skills with the bow against deer, goats, boar and fox. Well done to Pete Morphett for putting it all together and many thanks to the regular contributors as your support is invaluable. Also well done to those that have contributed for the first time, keep your stories and photo's (my favourite part) coming. Contributions, of any type, from any member are welcomed and contribution options are even greater now that Pete has introduced the "AROUND THE TRAPS" segment of the newsletter for photos and short stories.

The past 6 months has seen a strong contingent of members attend "archery" type events, promoting the bowhunting side of our sport and giving outstanding support to the traditional shoots at both Gladstone and Newcastle and stealing the show at the Bowhunting Hall of Fame formal gathering and Awards night at the St George Leagues Club in Sydney in late February. The presence of a united group of bowhunters from ABA, T.T. and Bowhunters Group of Australia amongst some 200 plus notable and long serving archers from other facets of our sport really opened the eyes of many of those into target archery etc who readily admitted that they had previously looked at bowhunting as part of the "dark side of our sport". It's great when you over hear

archery administrators of forty years or Olympic medallists saying “....these guys really have fun.....know their stuff.....I did not understand bowhunting.... might give it a go” etc, etc.

The whole night was very beneficial in uniting our sport and a huge congratulations must go to all those involved in organising, particularly one of our founding members and bowhunting great Ian Fenton.

On a sad note for the sport we lost one of our real workers and all round great blokes when an all too young Barry Briggs passed away in Gladstone earlier this year. I had only known Barry for a couple of years and whilst his name may not be as well remembered as say Billy Baker, Sid Green, Kev Whiting or Dallas Conway it must be said Barry's tireless behind the scenes work for the annual Gladstone Traditional shoots was second to none and I have no doubts he would have been sorely missed by good friends Paul and Roslyn Hardie and other club members as they prepared and then ran this year's event.

THANKS BARRY your efforts in making the 2008 T.T. Awards at Gladstone such a success did not go unnoticed. The 2009 T.T. Awards will (if you don't already know) be held at Upper Sandy Creek in North East Victoria, just outside Albury Wodonga on the first weekend in October. I am pushing big time for a record attendance and provide the following sweeteners;

\* Real opportunity to catch up with or meet likeminded bowhunters.

\* Trophy and photo displays are continually the best on show Australia wide year in year out.

As usual we ask that each member that attends brings at least one of their favourite trophies or framed photos for inclusion in the display.

\* We have hired a high quality community hall at the foot of the Victorian Alps, with all of the modern conveniences including power, toilets, showers, fridges, micro waves etc, etc.

The venue and above listed amenities will be particularly handy for any members bringing along their families. Heaps of camping space available and we have booked for the full week before the Awards for any one that wants to show up early to play tourists, visit snow (only an hours drive), fish nearby and by then filling Hume Weir and local streams for trout etc, plus enjoy a bit of quality local hunting for anything from rabbits to Sambar (which have been sighted from the campsite). I will be there for the week and let me tell you I won't be playing tourist or going to the snow but I will be visiting nearby Tallangatta to purchase my Victorian game/deer licence for about \$50 or \$60.

We have a growing list of those that will be camping for the week, so if you're thinking about it, do it, you won't regret it.

\* Monster raffle (so if you have anything to contribute bring it along). Wayne Anderson has already and once again donated one of his custom knives and I am sure I heard Manuel Agius mention something about a set of his famous custom arrows whilst at this year's deer camp, THANKS GUYS!

\* View other member's footage and bring along and show your own video of favourite hunting footage. Last year we introduced a new segment whereby members put up a 2/3 minute bit of their best footage for judging and an Award.

The footage from last year was outstanding from Mark Wills, Mark Southwell and Milton Cunningham with Milton winning a tight contest with his footage of Cashy taking a Red Stag with the longbow. I seem to recall that Mark Southwell suggested that if we get enough entries we may be able to organise a composite disk of each year's entries to be made available to members.

\* By special request the Twin City Bowmen at nearby Albury/Wodonga have agreed to put their renowned annual invitation shoot on the weekend before the T.T. Awards to give all us guys that are coming in the week before an opportunity to enjoy their unmatched hospitality. The Twin City Club has a rich bowhunting history, possibly only matched by the Tully Qld and Darwin NT clubs, and has some of the most capable and experienced Bowhunters in Australia. Hope to see you there.

\* For anyone that wants to fly, bus or train in to Albury please let us know and we will be able arrange pick up and organise camping gear such as a swag and tent for you.

Mick Kernaghan who (with his wife Kath) have done most of the legwork for this year's event, also has some writings on the venue in this newsletter however if you want to know a bit more about how to get to the Awards, what to bring, or just to let us know who will be there then you can ring Mick on 02 60718612 OR myself Dave W on 02 68871352. If you wants more details re the Twin City shoot then ring Dave James on 02 60401071.

We have paid out a bit for the hire of the Hall and facilities so be warned that as usual a camp fee will be collected and is likely to be around \$100 for the week for a family, \$50pw for an individual, \$40 for

the awards weekend only for a family and \$20 single for the Awards weekend. If you want to attend and feel this cost may prohibit your attendance please give us a ring and we can negotiate in genuine cases.

So get your ratings in, plan your holidays and hopefully we will see you all in the spring.

**Dave Whiting.**

## **TROPHY TAKERS AWARDS SANDY CREEK VICTORIA**

As most people probably know, this years Trophy Takers Awards will be held at Sandy Creek Victoria at the Hall, for those who do not know where Sandy Creek is it is half an hour's drive from Wodonga or a 5 minute drive from Tallangatta. If you logon to Google maps and type in Sandy Creek Vic this will give you a better idea of where we are. The Sandy Creek Hall has been booked for the week prior to the Awards, for anyone wishing to come down early.

Twin City Bowmen have there 2 day invitation shoot on the weekend before Trophy Takers which always proves to be a great weekend, for anyone who may wish to attend both functions this is a great opportunity to make a week of it, and fit in a hunt or two.

For those who wish to hunt Sambar there is access to crown land with local Trophy Taker Members willing to point you in the right direction. Just remember you are required to hold a current Victorian Deer License, which you can obtain through the DSE Office in Tallangatta or Wodonga.

Hope to see you all then.

**Mick Kernaghan.**

## PIGS PAD

Funny how things pan out, I recently had some time off work to chase a few deer in some pretty big and remote country. Saw some good animals, managed to bag a nice buck, and generally had a great time. It was a really educational experience to watch the fallow rut from start to stop. I also kept my eye on another spot which was about 300 clicks away, different country completely. More of what I term a 'boutique spot', OK for a couple of days but normally not the place you would spend too much time.

Eventually as the peak of the rut approached I had to hedge my bet and decide where my best chance was. I chose the more remote bigger country, good numbers of deer, plenty of hidey holes and a bit of history as far as size goes. As April wound down I hadn't shot a monster but was happy with the critter I managed to take. I decided to have a look at spot B and just see if I could catch the tail of the rut...

April 24, there was still a little noise but it was winding down and in fact the next day it was like a switch had been turned off, the bucks were gone and the does were alone except for a few spikes and stickies sniffing around. I had a semi permanent tree stand here and usually threw a few apples around the base of it, when they started to disappear I get in the stand for an hour or two late arvo (this had worked nicely earlier in the season taking a nice doe).



**One for the table.....**

Well the apples were going. to what I wasn't sure but there I was, cool arvo sun going down and the Civil War taking place on the neighbouring property, not too much chance I thought. Fifteen minutes of light left and I was getting a touch casual but still scanning the tree line intently. Watched the antics of a couple of Roo's to my right then starting to look back and there as if he had just fallen out of the sky was possibly the biggest fallow buck I had ever seen in the wild! It all happened so fast, I knew straight away he was a ripper and that's where I stuffed it. I moved to fast for my bow. Now it was only a very small movement of my elbow and hand, but he caught it...bummer I thought! He didn't bolt but moved back in the tree line and arced around my position, then disappeared. I wondered how he picked me up, it was quite a windy arvo, the trees were swaying, he was just edgy I guess and really looking hard for anything out of place (maybe it was the pink strings).

Next day I went and stood where he was and found he had put himself on a little rise, his field of view now obviously including me. I was surprised and excited that this spot could hold a deer of that quality, I always suspected one or two where in there but now I had seen one, needless to say I will be visiting the apple shop again!



..... and the other the wall!



Would you have taken the shot.....?

**Chris Hervert.**

**Stories of Two Reds and a  
Fallow  
by The collective**

*Three mates hit the hills for the deer rut and come home not so empty handed.....*

**15 pointer.....  
by Mark Southwell**

Stirring from a snooze in the morning sun, I remember thinking how good it was to be in these hills again. It was late March, and my brother Paul and mate Warney had hiked up into the range the previous day to spend a week or so searching for the red and fallow deer that call these hills home. The trip had started well; the red rut was in full swing and Warney had already had a good opportunity, closing the gap on a nice 6x5 red stag the night before only to have his vitals covered by a grass tree offering a marginal shot at best, which to his credit, he didn't take.

Perched high on the sunny cliffs where the goats normally hang, I contemplated my plan for the day and decided to check out a large mountain that we rarely hunt. This mountain is one of the steepest and gnarliest on the property and as I scaled around one side hanging on for grim death, I wondered if it was going to be worth all the effort. Coming to a nice looking ridge line covered in tussocks and large gum forest, I was just getting my breath back when I came upon a nice 5x6 stag staring at me from 80 metres. He looked at me and I looked at him and then he took off around the hill taking a hind with him; maybe this walk may be worth it after all.....

Taking a break on the ridge, I had just finished a le-snack when a loud roar echoed up from down in the valley below, Pisser!! Looking at my watch it read 1 pm, so I had some time up my sleeve to have good crack at whoever was making the racket down in the valley below. Over the next hour or so I carefully descended the steep face through the cliffs and rocky outcrops and slowed as I came into a series of benches. With old mate still roaring every 10 minutes or so, I reckoned I was within a couple of hundred meters when I laid eyes on a couple of hinds and fawns poking around below me. Getting the video out for a quick bit of footage, I

took my boots off for a slow and stealthy approach from here on in. The hinds moved off and the same nice 6x5 I had seen earlier materialised out of the thick gully and had a bit of a scrape around before following the hinds into the next gully.

At a snail's pace I made my way around the hill and as I came up out of the gully and poked my head over the rise, I laid eyes on a massive set of antlers. In seconds the big stag roared and proceeded to circle around the hill underneath me. "F\*%k! I'm a chance here" I thought and took several steps back and knelt down. With the stag making his way around below me I put an arrow on the string with very shaky hands. "If he goes too far he'll cut my scent" I thought as the adrenalin built. The big fella passed a log which I estimated was 40 metres downhill from my position and stopped to let out a roar looking further down the hill. Now or never..... I ripped the BowTech back and readied for the shot. I don't remember too much about the shot other than there was very little control on my behalf, and as the 30 pin hit his chest I let her go and in a split second the arrow hit the stag in the ribs. "Well, I got him" I thought, but it looked a fair way back.

On the shot the stag took off down the hill and out of sight. Now for the hard part, the sit and wait. After I calmed down enough to think straight, I got onto Warney who was hunting in the next valley. "How you going?" "Good mate just whacked a massive red!" "Sweet, I just shot a nice fallow and I'm on my way back up to camp" " Nice one, I'm going to give this bloke a good half hour and see how I go, I'll let you know". It was 2.30 by now and I reckoned I had about an hours walk back to camp, so hopefully there would be a good blood

trail – otherwise I would leave him and come back with the boys in the morning.

After an eternity (30 minutes in reality) I went down and found my arrow covered in really good looking dark blood. Walking further downhill on little to no blood trail I came over the edge of the bench and could see an antler top hanging out of the brush. On closer inspection it had 5 points on it – you bloody ripper!! After some dribble into the video to capture the moment I went down to claim my prize. No ground shrinkage here. Standing beside the fallen beast I was stoked with his length and mass – he had to be near 40 inches long and sported 15 points all up with five on one top and three on the other with an extra trez tine on his left hand antler.



**Marks awesome Red Stag 300 DS!**

With the camera and video duties out of the way I started into the caping job – not easy on the side of a steep hill with such a big animal. By 4.30 I had the cape off and some meat recovered and headed for camp. Cresting the ridge I made a sympathy call to Warney who had by now made it back to camp. "I'm not sure the legs have got too much more in them mate" I said "No worries, I'll come along the ridge and help you with the carry out". "Champion!" That lifted the spirits, and I continued on with a bit more gusto.

The rest of the carry out was rather uneventful, other than me gaining a new appreciation for how heavy a red cape and antlers really is. Back at camp we met up with Paul who had done a few k's without much luck, other than a nice fox early in the morning. We continued the caping duties before having a feed and hitting the sack three exhausted but happy bowhunters.

## **East to Mistakes, Mates, and Monsters** by James Warne

All three of us headed off in different directions into the darkness, all keen to get an early jump on the deer that had been going off intermittently since we had hiked in the day before. I was going out onto a spur aptly nick named "the clit" as it was a great vantage point to glass grassy flats and scrubby gullies below.

I'm a novice as a deer hunter, which caught up with me early as I dropped down onto a stag that was roaring every five minutes or so. I didn't quite pin point where he was and eventually came out into the open too early just to see him looking at me from 60 metres. Of course he ran off with his lady friend and left me to reflect on my approach. At least he had given me an exciting descent down to my glassing position.

From "the clit" I was able to make out half a dozen red hinds some distance away and a nice stag chasing away another smaller contender. I described him to Paul over the radio as a big stag with nice wide seemingly round rack on him (the stag Paul would track down a few days later).

After half an hour or so I had glassed another two small Stags and a few other Hinds, a small Fallow buck also grazed in some light timber below. During all

this I talked to Paul via the UHF radios quite a bit, he has heaps of experience around these mountains that I needed to tap into. He could also see parts of the country I could see from where he was perched further along the range.

I remember asking the question "I can see all this game way down below me but what am I to do about it? How do you get down there?" It is alright to see heaps from a vantage point as good as this one, but another thing all together to drop off that edge and make something of it. Anyway, after some umming and aarhing I decided I wouldn't drop off and disturb the hot spot, as time had slipped away and there would be a better opportunity for one of us to get down in there earlier another time. It was the first morning and we had time to work out where they were and make the most of opportunities, rather than scenting up the whole area and disturbing their routines.

I worked my way back up to the ridge, a little unsure of where to hunt. The days were still hot enough to feel like everything sensible would be bedded up but I was anxious to be out and about to give myself a chance.

In trying to make something worthwhile out of the middle of the day, I came out above some more open country and saw a heap of goats. On inspection one looked like a pretty alright goat, good enough to drag me off the mountain and give up my hard earned height anyway. I snuck down through grass trees and seams of boulders. The goats were pretty onto me and gave me a good look at their head gear. After loosing some height I eventually decided they weren't worthy of a shot, so started back up the mountain. I had reclaimed about 70 metres of height when I happened to look back at the goats and saw a ripper fallow buck amble under the shade of a

particularly average gum and lay up ten yards from the goats I had just left. I was able to go back where I had come from, which I did at a much slower pace this time, just sliding along in the tussock.

His lovely palms were like bowls as he looked out into the valley below and they clearly told me which way he was looking. Sixty yards from him the ground levelled out just enough for me to utilise a small rise to cover my approach. At thirty yards I told myself that I didn't need to get any closer. It was a steep down hill shot to him so I aimed low. He was surrounded by tall tussocks which made aiming difficult, but I did the best I could and took the shot.

On contact he was straight up, the shaft waved in the air very high like I hadn't penetration much at all. I was sure in fact that I must have smacked his shoulder blade and everything was too high. He bolted sideways for thirty yards then went down off the side of the mountain out of sight. As he was well out of sight I also ran down to where I had last seen him hoping to see which direction he was headed. I scanned way out in front of me, 100, 200 metres down into the paddock. What a buzz when I saw him piled up just thirty yards in front of me hidden in the long tussock. I watched him through the glasses for any breathing or movement then made my way down.

He was bloody big and I was ecstatic. I'd done it! Secured my first deer and he was a pearler. The shot had in fact entered high on the uphill side and come out his low side arm pit, perfectly centring his chest. The lack of penetration was actually due to the shaft hitting the ground under his leg.



**James is over the moon, 224 2/8!**

I photographed and caped him under the shade of the eucalypt and braced myself for the climb back up. It was the first time I'd climb mountains with a rack and cape on my back, it was a nice change from goat horns and about time too.

From the ridge I started radioing the boys. Paul heard my desperate calls of rejoicing first but said he was hours away, I would have to wait to share the moment with him (and get his fine caping skills on loan!). Eventually I got Mark on the phone and he kind of stole my thunder when he said he had shot a huge red. Thirty two years it took me to shoot a deer and he went and shot a P.B at the same time, inconsiderately taking my moment in the lime light ah!

Anyway we were all hours away from each other and left each other to sorting out our individual predicaments. I made my way up, dropped off the cape and head so I could drop down another ridge to get salt, which we had earlier stashed on our hike up the hill. I went down and packed 8 kilograms of salt and trudded up again. I sorted the head, cape and salt load and headed up to camp which was still half an hour walk away. I was buggered, excited and nervous about the cape, I was anxious to get the experts onto the cape as soon as possible.



Upon reaching camp the rest was short lived. I used my ten minute break as a chance to talk to Maxy again and he was struggling under the weight of his trophy (smart ass). So I went off to help. Fancy having a head that need two people to carry out! He will pay dearly over the years to come, don't you worry.

Even when Paul got his huge red later that week my poor little fallow (in comparison) was still picked up the most in camp. Neither of the boys could quite believe the score that they kept coming up with so it got appraised again and again, Paul at one point saying 'yeah, I can see 210 but not 224pts?' But, those points were there plus some and are official. A great trophy, an awesome week, thanks to both of them for the opportunity, I learnt heaps and I am even more in awe of their skill than I was before, great hunters, top blokes!



**Paul with a big Fox!**

### **Rays Red by Paul Southwell**

A low roar greeted me as I stopped for a spell on my way up a steep spur. Since hearing his first roars before daybreak, this stag had dragged me down from the top of the range and across numerous feeder gullies. I had not sighted this bloke yet, but I had a hunch it may have been the nice 12 pointer I had missed a few days prior. This stag was the dominant one in this patch and held a dozen or so hinds, a big mob for the area.

Easing further up he groaned again, however this time a bit further away, up a tight and very steep little gully. Due to the wind drifting downhill, I was forced to close in from underneath and following the noise I stalked past a couple of pigs that were rooting in the tussocks but an unseen sow caught my scent and the hogs scurried off making a racket, damn swine!

I climbed up one side of the tight gully, scaling near vertical cliff sections in socked feet, hoping to get a glimpse of the now quiet stag. Easing around a grass tree I spied three hinds about 80 metres away. They looked real edgy and I wasn't all that surprised to see them sneak off up the hill.

More hinds followed then the big 12 pointer brought up the rear. He looked bugged after a hard couple of weeks of rutting, and trotting directly up hill was probably the last thing he wanted to do right now. But the lure of the ladies and the instinct that something wasn't right kept him going.

I watched the mob cross the head of the gully up high and crest the next spur. Now out of sight I hurried uphill and through the vine choked gully in hot pursuit. As I followed their marks over the spur I sighted the mob on the next ridge, walking further around on a mission. The lead hind was still flighty,

and I knew she would drag them another couple of ridges around the main range yet. But, if I could keep up with them, I may be able to pinpoint their location when they settled, and get a chance for a stalk.

Well that's pretty much what panned out and three hours later, although I couldn't see the mob from the good vantage point I had found, I was pretty sure they were holed up low down in a tight gully that led onto a grassy bench where my previous encounter had transpired a few days earlier.

After a feed and a short powernap, I got my gear sorted and settled in for a glassing session. It was around 3:00pm and I was a little surprised when the sound of a solid roar floated up from a few gullies over. Another couple of roars by the same stag and a low moan from closer to me gave away the position of a second stag, and right where I expected the big 12 pointer and his harem to be.

This was music to my ears and as I scanned the area in detail with my Steiner 8x30's, I picked up three hinds making their way out of the heavy cover for an afternoon feed. Gearing up I slowly made my way down off the ridge and through a feeder gully. Now I had one lower ridge to sidle over and it would be game on.

Stalking past a big old roo, my senses were on full alert but the fickle wind alerted an unseen hind and yearling below me, and they took off down the gully. Luckily this noise worked in my favour as it made the stag roar and walk out into the open a bit further up to see what the noise was about. As two hinds wandered up and over a rise out of sight with the stag in toe, I knew I was now in with a show.

This was my chance and putting in the big ones I scurried down through the

shallow gully and up the rise. As I crested the rise with an arrow on the string and release clipped on, one of the hinds, who had fed lower down than I expected, caught my movement and barked. I could see the stag now through the tussocks and he was downhill, quartering away slightly at 50 yards, looking uphill over his shoulder.

This was it, and as the arrow sped out of the old Hoyt, I got that awful feeling that the shot was off the mark. All I saw was the arrow hit and the stag lunge straight off the edge of the ledge he was standing on and out of sight. Moving down towards the ledge to have a look I saw the two hinds running away flat out, but where was the stag?



**Paul's excellent Red Stag 291 2/8 DS!**

Hearing some thrashing under the ledge I climbed down to find the stag in his death throws. Luckily for me, the arrow had taken the big fella just in front of the shoulder, slamming into the spine, the

wide Tusker Aztec severing a major artery in the process.

He had only rolled ten yards down hill after the shot, and although I put another arrow into his heart, it wasn't needed.

After it was all over, I sat down and took it all in. The feeling was relief mixed with excitement, as we have been hunting this property for seven years and I had finally harvested one of the "next level" stags that called these mountains home.

The job of photo's, video, caping and butchering was done as quickly as possible. Light was fading fast and as I hoisted the 25 kg's or so of cape and head onto my shoulders, I knew I had a very steep climb back to camp. It was one very tired but satisfied bowhunter that trudged into camp after dark with his prize, a 40 inch long, nice and even 6x6 red stag.



**The Collective with there spoils!**

**One of those days**  
by Casey McCullam

Every now and then in hunting you just get one of those days where things just work out, I had one this years rut and this is how she went....



**Thick as Pea Soup the saying goes...!**

Getting out on the scrub line in the early hours of the morning we were engulfed in the thick fog just as we set foot out of the cruiser. I had Benno down from Alice on his first deer trip and we had yet to down one of these spooky critters. We could hear a couple Fallow croaking over the hill to our left and a red stag roaring in the same area so Benno decided to head in that direction as he had yet to shoot his first deer. I went and walked the quiet side with only a few fallow making noise off in the distance.

I was making my way along the bush edge when I saw movement ahead of me. I knocked an arrow and noticed the Fallow spiker making his way towards me. Drawing back nice an early he didn't even notice me standing there and when he came into 30m I pulled him up with a doe call and sent an arrow his way. He took about 10 steps and disappeared into the thick fog and I soon heard his bounding end with a dull thump as he hit the deck. What a gift I thought and a nice bit of meat for the rest of the trip.



**Casey with the first to go down for the table.**

I thought I would just have a sneak over the rise and check if anything was at a couple scrapes I knew about and not 10 minutes later I was sneaking over the rise and spotted a set of antlers moving through the fog. He was coming my way as well so I got to my knee and readied for a shot. The buck came right in to about 17m and copped a 3 blade head through the boiler room putting him down real quick. I was pretty happy with the morning so went and got the cruiser and got Benno on the 2 way. He had no luck so came and helped me retrieve the meat skin and antlers from my deer.



**The second Buck to fall to Casey's well placed arrow, a nice Fallow Buck.**

That afternoon saw us about 100m apart sitting off a couple of game trails each as we had seen the deer using these trails for a couple days now. Benno had a big red hind walk past him but things didn't work out and right on

dark the sound of fighting bucks in front of me was too hard to just sit there so I slowly stalked in on the clashing of antlers. Just as I got to about 60m from the noise the loosing buck came running over my way I doe called and he came right in to about 10m and I hit him while he was still moving a bit. He ran 100m and fell over, got back up and walked over the ridge into the thick stuff. Just then I heard a crack behind me and swiveled my head around to see a big menial stag about 18m away. I knocked an arrow and doe called bringing him right in like a fox! I was at full draw as he came around the bush I was behind and let him have it from 4m! Man it was a rush getting that close to a buck! He ran straight towards Benno and collapsed mid stride about 40m from him. After returning the next day I was unable to locate the other buck, which was a shame as I saw his antlers silhouetted against the sky and he looked GOOD!



**Casey with the best Buck taken for the trip!**

The big-bodied menial buck still had an all right set and it topped off one great day of deer hunting for me. I still have to get the menial bugged scored; he's not the biggest I have shot but an old battler all the same and has a bit of character about him so I'm stoked. Can't wait until the month of April again when I'll be back out chasing those antlered critters.

## The Last Hot Walk by Rory Smith

I was actually becoming accustomed to the heat. It didn't seem to have that instant drain on my body as soon as I awoke like the nine mornings previous. The mosquito net cocoon that was my resting place each night was aligned with other similar stretchers and makeshift beds hurriedly set about the dusty floor. The open sided machinery shed, one of three others like it, was now home not only to the spiders and occasional goanna, but also an assortment of unshaven men. The nights were full of snoring and farting, with the days full of walking and sweating, possibly not the perfect holiday for many, but for a bowhunter I couldn't have thought of a better place to be in late September of 2008.

I sat up and unzipped the mesh sided enclosure reaching out onto the dusty, un-rendered concrete floor slab for the pair of thongs which had clung to my feet since leaving the nation's capital airport nearly two weeks prior. The thongs were so worn down in the heel and 'big' toe area that the lack of shape and foam signalled their end, and fittingly today was to be our last day bowhunting Cape York. I slipped into the well worn grooves, grabbed my water bladder and headed for the tap on the other side of the shed to where I slept.

Walking in the semi-light I snuck around old spring beds, sleeping mats, the central table for cooking ingredients and the occasional outstretched arm of one of my dreaming companions. I filled the bladder, and threw a small handful of the precious water onto my gritty face as I looked over towards where the sun was flickering above the dense stand of paperbarks not too far from the camp sites. This was the last morning I would

experience a Cape sunrise for some time, so as I passed my bedding I dropped off the bladder and headed out to the far side of camp to take in the bird calls and clean, crisp morning air.

By nine o'clock the weary mob were up and organising themselves for the last day of hunting that was ahead. Some were eager to get away, in fact there was one four wheel drive already gone, headed for a far off corner of the property that had held a few pigs the day before. I was eager too, not wanting to waste any of this final day and get stalking the creek banks looking for the allusive sleeping boars so typical of Australia's north. This trip the pig numbers were well down in comparison to usual as there had been the odd rain shower in the earlier weeks of September, something I, and some others from the southern states had not counted on. Not for lack of trying I hadn't yet secured my first boar, let alone Cape York boar, with my 'pig account' being opened with a couple of skinny sows, memorable, but not sleeping, angry, and tusk wielding.



**Rory with his first pig!**

Andrew 'Mozza' Morrow waltzed into our shed quarters and by the intent look on his face I could see he had something in mind. He proposed we team up for the final day, allowing the guys we had hunted with for the majority of the trip to do their own thing, and give us an

opportunity to have hunt together, no doubt making the last day on Crosby Station memorable. John 'Batesy' Bates was happy with the arrangement as he had an idea spawned two days prior, to sit off a large wallow that we had disturbed a massive bodied boar out of, in addition to giving his legs a break from the standard hard slog across the sun baked plains we so affectionately named 'Chernobyl'



**Rory and his second pig!**

Spending all week with Batesy had been some of the best day's bowhunting I'd ever had. Not for the game number seen or taken, but for the hard work we put in for the little reward. A 'brothers in arms' mateship I suppose. He'd taken his personal best boar earlier in the week; a well deserved 27 6/8ths Douglas Points. His stalk that afternoon I will never forget.



**John Bates and his best pig to date!**

With plans set, it didn't take more than half an hour for Mozza and I to be packed and ready, then tumbling out of the four wheel drive at a point along a track that we knew gave us close access to a sizeable dry creek system that hadn't seen very many hunters through it of late. With a '*av a good one*' and a '*yeah we'll walk all the way back to camp*' once again I felt a sense of abandonment and vulnerability in such a harsh and endless landscape.

The Cape seemed early on to me to be such a monotonous environment, with the only variation being along the dug out creeks and watercourses made by the wet seasons' cutting run-off. However it is these thin green belts that not only provided home and habitat to most of the flora and fauna of inland Cape York, but also creates a range of diverse environs like the oval shaped billabong we first encountered after being dropped off by the vehicle. Pushing through the tall and leg slicing grass edging the evaporated billabong we entered the desolate ring which was clearly crying out for the rains to come. All of a sudden I saw Mozza grab at his Mathews bow quiver and pull an Easton Axis shaft from it, lodging it frantically onto his string. I was surprised to say the least, and when he drew and began to circle around to his right, roughly aiming into the brown, thirsty rushes on the side of the muddy bank I didn't know what to do. "There's a, ..... (Whump! goes his arrow),..... a bloody pig in there" he muttered.

The rushes came to life and with a 'huff, huff, huff' the back end of a fat old sow disappeared into the paperbarks. Nocking another shaft and drawing Moz now took close aim at the black shape still in the waist high grass and before I could get the video camera recording his arrow caused the black shape to

squeal and dash out into the muddy lifeless bowl we were standing in.

Arguably the smallest pig from the trip was set up for photos, and Moz had begun a great day's hunt, a winding walk from east to west, arriving back at our camp just after dark.

Skirting around a deep black pool which sat without a ripple in the shaded corner of a major bend in the creek I mentioned to Moz that 'the next stretch looks bloody good' and my grip on the handle of my bow tightened just a little. A wide section of the creek opened up before us, deep on each side with an 'island' as high as the banks, - which walled entire length of what we could see - sat prominently in the middle, dominating the scene. Atop the 'island' was a stand of waxy, rich green leaved saplings that looked like a Mo-Hawk; a nice cool spot for pigs to be bedded no doubt.

With not much action so far (other than Mozza's piglet excuse for a hog) we quickly agreed to split up, with Moz heading to the right side of the 'island', while I would poke up the left. We both put an arrow on our strings and nodded for good luck. Like so many times in the trip leading up to today it was now a matter of shuffling along the coarse sandy floor of the creek and avoiding any noisy piles of leaves that seem at times to totally blanket your path forward making things tricky to say the least.

I took my time, scanning the dense patch of growth on top of the 'island' now to my right, making sure I checked the base of every plant for a sleeping pig. It was very still with hardly a breath of wind and I had no idea if I was keeping pace with Mozza's movements, but I kept telling myself to stay focussed and not be tempted to hurry forward and pop out the end of the 'island' to see what my hunting partner was up to.

Not one step further when a shower of sand and leaves erupted forward of me some thirty odd meters from off the 'island's' bank. Squeals and the sound of beating of hoofs filled the creek and the moment of chaos caught me a bit off guard. I hastily clipped my release aid onto my d-loop and lifted the bow ready to draw on any pig that tried to cross my portion of the depression. The pigs were obviously anxious to get away from the source of the smell that had disturbed them but it was as if they were waiting on one of their own to make a decision on which way to flee. A young fat sow, nipples swollen like she had been inflated by a bike pump, came clumsily down off the high bedding area followed by four younger specimens. I drew back and anchored, gathering myself to settle the sight ring in the large peep, adjusting to put my second pin on the same level as the sow's chest. She paused only momentarily as if frozen by a spell, front leg bent up mid prance, and looked straight at me. The red pin hovered on her front end and feeling the release aids trigger under my forefinger the arrow was as good as gone...

About fifty meters on from where the pigs stood looking back towards the camouflage statue with the bad smell {me} was where Moz and I met up since parting ways around the 'island'. We wriggled our day packs from our sweaty shoulders and fell into the soft sand for a brief rest. I was first to share my experience from up the left 'flank'. I told Moz about the sow and her friends who had come down near me, and how I was about to shoot when with a 'grunt' and a 'snort' they took off up and out of the big ditch. Moz had apparently seen the bedded group quite early on, but they caught his movement and ran the other way, obviously the mob was bigger in number than the few that I had encountered.

We each sat, once again in the silent creek bed and crunched on a dry muesli bar, with only the odd sip from the 'camelback' replacing any moisture to my dried out mouth. The constant heat of the day, and the many day's before made sure you were mindful of the precious 'H2o' carried close to your back.

Another few bends in the creek, another kilometre quietly trodden, and I was beginning to sense the end to bowhunting Cape York for 2008. I hadn't killed a boar by arrow and the thought of not even get a shot of at one was becoming a real possibility.

Moz made a move to our right, obviously wanting to alter the way we would hunt the remaining section of creek heading back towards camp. So out of the shady creek and onto the crunchy leaf covered edge we clambered, a noticeably hotter place. But the stinging sun didn't bother us too much, and our new higher path gave us a different perspective, and hopefully the change would bring us some luck in finding a hunt-able pig or two.

I bit down lethargically on the tube from the water bladder, sucking in a mouthful of warm, tasteless water just as I noticed Mozza freeze mid-stride. I imitated without any hesitation. He had obviously seen something, so I followed his gaze with my eyes down towards the base of the shaded sandy bank approximately thirty meters away. It was hard to focus, with the mixture of bright white sun light poking through onto the dark soil almost creating a checker-board effect upon the area of Mozza's concern.

"Pig....! think it's a boar,...., arrow, quick!" hissed my good mate, and I obeyed with a sharp tipped, black carbon shaft clicking onto my bow

string. "Hang on, this thing won't bloody focus, just wait" quietly whipped Moz as I ranged the far bank at "34m" with the Bushnell.

Through the rangefinder I got my first look at the sleeping pig, whose wire like mane began to move. The beast was clearly old, and as he fidgeted to a more upright position more akin to a dog I drew back and hoped that the camera was ready to go. "Yep, when ever your ready, I'm recording" whispered Moz and I let the sight settle onto the asphalt coloured target.

The shaft was gone and into the broadside pig, with the fletches on the rear end of arrow highlighting a solid shot entering the high lungs, but importantly on a downward angle presumably centre punching the opposite side lung. The old pig lurched forward and 'huffed' loudly, running a few meters forward, actually pulling the arrow completely through him as it was stuck solidly into the shallow bed where he had been sharply awoken from. His body shape made it clear that I had shot a boar, and an old one at that, with blood now adding to the mixture of mud and filth that covered his fore quarters. Turning straight up the bank the pig was faltering in the loose sand of the incline, with Mozza and I fixated on his every move. With a squeal the thin old boar lost his footing, and flipped onto his side, gravity now forcing him down, tumbling to the bottom of the creek.

I turned to my mate and shook his hand, and as if looking into a mirror it was obvious that Moz was as excited as I was. We stood their grinning and congratulating for a couple of minutes before heading down and over to the resting place of the boar. Ugly, thin and stinking we found the pig, who had tumbled down into the branches of a lifeless tree probably swept down the



creek in a wet season run-off torrent some years ago. Probably the last thing I did was check for his tusks, something I had seen so many successful bowhunters go straight to on approaching their boars in the number of video's and DVD's. However it didn't seem that important to me as the realisation that I had finally taken my first boar was overcoming any lust for a trophy.

Mozza actually grabbed his snout first and pull his long dirty jaws apart...Possibly the most damaged, worn, and least impressive brown little tusks were revealed, and I laughed thinking about how hard I had hunted just to shoot one boar all trip to be trumped by this old war-horse. A 'Cape York rattler' as bowhunting guide and all round great guy Mick Baker would say. We set him up for some photos and also got some footage explaining the stalk and shot as is customary.

The couple more kilometres back to camp had some other memorable encounters, with an arrow or two being loosed successfully on some other resident ferals of the creek line we followed. However the sleeping boar I had arrowed with Mozza by my side capped off the ten days bowhunting on Crosby Station perfectly.



**Rory and Mozza with Rory's first and PB Boar!**

I was chuffed with this boar, though short on tusks, was in everyway an embodiment of what Cape York is, tough, challenging and enduring. I cannot wait to return!

## **Around the Traps**

Even though time has been hard to come by lately, I have been out on a few hunts with some of my close as well as new friends (I guess why we all have to wait for newsletters - I hunt too much! but not enough I say). Like most, I love getting out every week, even just for a couple of hours around home and while they are not the big adventure, they still provide some very memorable moments. The local Fox population is always a fun and a challenging pursuit, and makes a nice brake from chasing deer all the time. So here is a collection of some of the better pic's from some mixed hunts I have been on over the last 6 months.



**Trevor with the first animal taken with the bow he won for the in the T.T. story writing comp and nice solid Boar!**



**Another Boar I shot with hunting Sambar in Vic with Trevor, these are harder to locate than the Sambar!**



**A nice Fox for an arvo hunt!**



**Ron McGrath with a nice Boar taken while we were hunting the Spotted Devils (Chital) in QLD last month.**



**Shot the bunny at 60m, then called the Fox in from the same spot, priceless!**



**Jordy breaks a 2 year drought with a good 50m shot on this 186+ Rutting buck!**



**Jordy taking aim!**

**Peter Morphett.**

The boars were taken in central Queensland were the numbers seem to be well and truly on the come back since the chiller boxes have closed down. The biggest boar took allot of effort and time to track down, over three weeks of afternoon hunting to finally get eyes on him after tracking his prints each afternoon. He unfortunately had one tuck broken off at the jaw otherwise he would have gone over 31 Douglas points. His guess weight by the local pig dogger was over 150kgs.



**A real nice fox called in while scouting for deer.**



**A big Sow with the curve!**



**One Buck I took for its cape, and he just came a little to close for me to resist!**



**Testing out the new bow.....**



**The big bruiser, pity about the other tusk!**

The fallow deer was taken from close quarters after a long day's hunting, I arrowed him angling forward while he grunted at his harem. He travelled no more than 15 meters from the hit and his antlers measured up a little over 190 Douglas points.



**My best Buck for 09.... 190+**

**Adam Greentree.**

**Newsletter Contributions**

First off, thank you to all who contributed to this bumper newsletter and in such short notice also, awesome effort guys!

Welcome to all the new members of T.T. (Rod Collings and Ben Sallares) and welcome back to some old ones also it good to have you all on board.

Well its good to see our little new section "Around the Traps" is becoming very popular and is a grate way to add to the newsletter and share some of your hunts and success without taking up so much of our precious time, so please continue to send your trophies pics. Please don't hesitate so send us your pics. Not every hunt requires a lengthy story so just send it to us with some details about the pics, or maybe even a short story and we will add them into this section.

I'm in the process of building a new T.T. website, the basic website which I built some 4 years ago as a novice website builder has served us well, but keeping up with current designs and formats standards take time, and a bit more effective way to reach us on line will be introduced, after old methods resulted in to much spam email and attacks from other sources and some unauthorized use of T.T. logos and pictures, resulted in me removing the T.T. contact and merchandise emails.

New emails address will be operational in the new website and as well as some protection of out members pictures, a more dynamic looking website, and all members will receive new **Members Only** section passwords also, but other than that the same basic function and main content will be the same and it should be up and running in the next few months.

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Colour Black: \_\_\_ Lt Grey: \_\_\_ Navy: \_\_\_ Dk Green: \_\_\_ Maroon: \_\_\_

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