



Newsletter June 2006

TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER JUNE 2006

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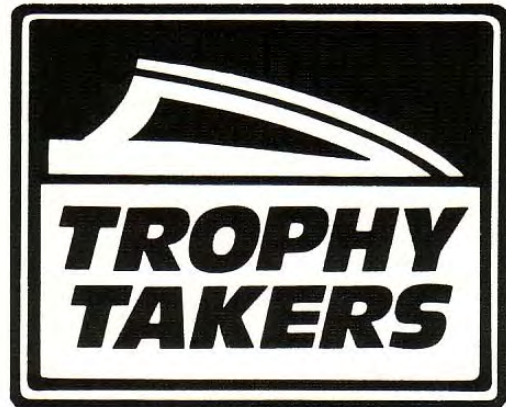
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Game Claim Report

The second quarter of 2006 has seen some very impressive trophies hit the books of Trophy Takers. Nathan Cocking, a young bowhunter from Barcaldine in Western Queensland joined TT with a great billy goat measuring 80 points.



Nathan's 80DP Billy



Similarly, Steven Gear from Roma QLD joined, rating a number of fine Billies and boars. The best of these was a 110 5/8 DP billy and 28 2/8DP boar both taken in early 2006.



Steven's 110 5/8DP Billy



Steven's 28 2/8DP Boar

Reverend Joel Pukallus of Pinnaroo in South Australia hit the jackpot in late April with his first billy shot with the bow, taking a monster goat out in central SA scoring 146 1/8DP. Wanting to gain maximum score for the big fella,

the un-boiled head was soon in the mail over to Peter Morphett here in Canberra, and he and I ran a tape over the big head. Being 47 3/8 inches wide and with heavy horns with deep curl, it's no wonder this trophy of a lifetime sits at number 3 in the Trophy Takers records. Isn't it nice to know that there are still animals like this in walking around in the Australian bush, Congratulations Joel!



Joel's Awesome 146 1/8 Monster!

Pigs Pad

My son and I recently went through the process of obtaining our shooters licence. After the mandatory course and the lengthy application process (plus the cash factor) we are now the proud owners of a piece of laminated plastic which says we are safe and legal to use certain firearms. The course itself was a mix of characters and to be honest I did feel myself questioning some peoples need or fitness to possess a firearm but anyway that's for the bureaucrats to sort out.

Guns you say, why the hell is he talking about guns in a Trophy Takers newsletter! Well I have several reasons which I will try and explain.

My father who previously stored and licensed the weapons is getting older and he continually bantered me about how the family will lose them once he passes. Not a bad reason and the initial kick-start to the rigmarole. We also like game meat and with price of super market critters these days I figured a rifle was a sure way to harvest game animals, especially deer when the freezer requested one. This has proved to be the case. However going through the whole licence process got me thinking about other more poignant reasons to possess a gun licence.

Firstly my kids have an interest in hunting (naturally) and they have a cousin whose fascination is obvious, this fascination extends to firearms. So I wanted to teach them right so when they turn 18 and can make their own decisions they have a solid base in firearms, their use and particularly their safety. In short I wanted to remove the curiosity factor and replace it with respect.

Secondly being a bowhunter I wanted the kids to realise that though rifle hunting can be challenging, any animal taking with a bow regardless of size is a worthy trophy. My son recently shot a deer for meat with the rifle, his first, a spike at about 80 meters. He stalked the deer for about 30 mins, got a rest and the .243 did the rest. He was happy but realised the advantage he was carrying after bowhunting for many years.

A nice 190 ish fallow stag was then offered to him with the rifle, he declined saying he would rather try and get it with the bow. I have no doubt he will shoot many animals with the gun in the future and I would never begrudge him that but at least now he will have a good reason to do it.

Thirdly I wanted to stick it to the groups who would have been happy to see our families firearms handed in. The groups and individuals who don't understand why anyone would want to hunt or own firearms and bows so think nobody should have them or that anybody who does is a serial killer. Let them know that the barriers of process they put in front of me will not stop me getting legally what I am entitled to. Another shooters licence on the books is another potential vote the government has to take into account when making decisions.

Though many of you might not have an interest in guns I think if the opportunity is there it benefits us as bowhunters to become a licensed firearms owner. What you do with that licence is entirely up to you but it is another step in the right direction for hunting in Australia. On that note so far I see the Game Council in NSW as a positive step, its early days but anything that promotes hunting in some form can't be all bad.

Well the hike hunt went well, very well in fact. I believe there is a story in this newsletter on the success of that week in the mountains. I won't deny it was hard, a few times I had to curl up in the sun and try and recoup some energy. I got lucky and got my goal

early in the week so I could afford not to punish myself too hard. Made me think that the little bit of (well not that little) extra effort is well worth it and you can often find places and animals that are rarely hunted. So all you young blokes grab a map, a back pack and start walking!

Chris Hervert.

Trophy Takers now an active Approved Hunting Organisation (AHO)

To cater for its members, Trophy Takers has become an Approved Hunting Organisation through the Game Council NSW. At present we have four Trophy Takers Assessors located in Canberra, Albury and Wollongong. They are:

Mark Southwell, Canberra;

Dale Furze, Albury;

Dave James, Albury;

Evan Scott, Albion Park;

Trophy Takers members wishing to sit the examination to obtain an R-Licence are encouraged to contact Computer Central at:

**LPO BOX 5129
University of Canberra
Bruce ACT 2617**

Conversely, current TT members can also organise to sit an R-Licence test with another AHO in their area. A full list of AHO's can be found at:

www.gamecouncil.nsw.gov.au.

Members choosing to go to another AHO to become assessed will have to quote TT's organisation Assessor number.

Camping costs for the weekend will be:

- \$7 Adults per night
- \$5 Children per night

Trophy Takers Annual Awards 29th Sept – 2nd October, Shallow Crossing via Batemans Bay, NSW.

**RED ROCK BILLY
That one week a year....
By Rev. Joel Pukallus**

I am excited to announce that in 2006 Trophy Takers will hold its 16th Annual Awards weekend. This year the awards will be held at the Shallow Crossing Camping Ground on the upper reaches of the Clyde River near Bateman's Bay on the south coast of NSW (see flyer at end of newsletter). This will occur on the weekend of the 29th September to the 2nd October, which is a long weekend for NSW, ACT and SA.

The Awards will be held on the Sunday night (1st Oct) with the Annual General Meeting to be held prior to this at 12 midday.

Awards that will be presented include:

- Literature award (for story published in the TT newsletter)
- Best photo album
- Best framed photo
- Best composite photo
- Best of species (goat, boar, fox, cat, all deer species)
- New number one trophies
- Paul Wheller memorial junior bowhunter of the year
- Yearly encouragement award
- Legend award

It's always the way, a friend of a friend finds out that you like to hunt with the bow and tells you of this magical place where billies with horns over 42 inches and feral camels run. Hard to believe? Well, you try not to let your imagination run away with you, but it isn't easy. I was sitting in the front bar of the local pub when an older bloke in town expressed his relief that even though I am a "God-botherer" (minister), if I like to bowhunt, maybe I am a normal person after all. I replied that I doubt that very much, but I *do* like to bowhunt. And so the conversation progressed to "I tell you what, I have a mate who manages this place. I'll give him a ring".

Now securing a hunting location is tricky but possibly rewarding work, as any bowhunter knows, so every time I saw the bloke, I would try to work the question into the conversation without sounding like I was nagging. "Have you called the mate yet?"

In the meantime, having no other keen bowhunters in my town, I introduced my neighbour and his brother to the art, and they took it up keenly, Ralph with a 60lb Fred Bear compound bow, and his younger brother Murphy with a 150lb crossbow. I had the hunting

partners, all I needed was the trip to be confirmed.

Finally I was given the manager's number, and a chat revealed that bowhunting would work in our favour, Occupational Health and safety meant no rifle shooters were allowed at all, but I think they thought we were fairly harmless with the bows.



Searching, searching.....

The planning took place and finally at 7a.m. that magical morning we were away, with a borrowed U.H.F., a borrowed 4wd, a borrowed G.P.S.. The only things that were ours were our bows and our determination to harvest our first billies each.

We arrived on dark, some 11 hours drive behind us, and were shown our dwelling for the week, an absolute Taj Mahal of a shearers quarters, with hot showers, gas stove, fridge, full kitchen, choice of 10 bedrooms, even a double bed! (I still don't know how Murph ended up with it, being the youngest.) We were given some advice on the south paddock, and two full days of fruitless walking followed, seeing a LOT of tracks and droppings, but no goats. Night time saw us trying to buoy up our spirits with the odd bourbon and coke, and telling ourselves we still had most of a week left. (That and the fact that Ralph is a bit of a chef worked wonders in the evenings.)

The owner had told us that these goats are starting to be worth a bit to him, as a market is developing for them, so he didn't want us to shoot too many. I think he was reluctant to let the manager put us onto the best spots. We offered to pay a trophy fee for a good one, but he said that wasn't necessary. Just take one or two each. We couldn't complain. We were staying on the property for a week for the cost of a carton of beer!

Later in the week, we were told to move from the sandy flats to the red-rock hills, and they are tough country to hunt. Cliffs and hills made of shaly, rocky scree that crunches underfoot on every step, giving you away to the goats that always sat on the high ground to watch you coming. Murph and Ralph dropped a few small billies, both with "Texas heart shots" and being their first, they were fairly happy. I was trying to tell myself that even if I didn't get one, it would still be a good week even if I went home empty-handed. These are the kind of lies you tell yourself at times.



Murph's Billy

The last three days around lunch-time we would drive back to camp and the young fellas (19 and 22) would complain about sore legs and how they weren't going back out. I was the old man of the trip (at 29) but I went back out every day, sore legs or not. I had to get a Billy! I only had one week a year. I had to make this count. The pressure was mounting. I was walking those hills for 6 hours a day, and sleeping like a log at night. I destroyed one set of boots in the process.



Ralph's Billy

The last day dawned. It was all or nothing. After half a day of slog, I was put onto another hill at about 3 in the afternoon, a hill that had sand and big granite boulders and slabs, perfect country for hiding goats.

I set off from the 4wd to the rocks, and was sprung 40 m away from

the rocks by a nanny jumping up from behind the rock I was walking to. What are the chances? After freezing for what seemed lie an eternity, and doing my best imitation of a tree for ages, I was able to back out and head for the highest point on the hill, a rocky fortress. Still, that was a good sign, there were goats in them there hills.



Still searching.....

The sound of goats calling to each other had my pulse racing, and I slipped out of my hydration pack, bum-bag and boots to go in on the rocks in my socks. Those tell-tale glimpses of white were beckoning me as I snuck in on my hands and knees at times, my breathing the loudest noise I wanted to make.

There was a fairly big group of them ahead of me, directly up-wind. That was good, the wind was holding. As I went in on them, using every boulder and shrub, I heard what sounded like flu season behind me. There were about 20 goats standing 50 m away on a rocky ledge sneezing that alarm sound they all make, great....

The ones in front of me were alerted, but didn't know the cause of the problem. They started moving to my left which covered me with a big bush, I knocked a

Gold Tip, attached my Scott Calliper release aid to my string loop and slowly stood. There was a good Billy, about 36 inch spread, good for my first, and as I was aiming, I caught sight of a big black mass to my left, swivelled slowly and froze. There, standing broadside at 20 metres was the owner of the biggest corkscrew set of horns I had ever seen!

It is amazing what runs through your mind at times like this: "Alright Puk, calm down. Breathe. Breathe! Damn bow, stop shaking! It never shakes like this on my target range! Pick a spot. Aim small. Small!? There is so much *big!* Don't punch the trigger, but hurry up already, the sound of your heart coming out of your mouth is going to scare them away!"

With a thwack the shot was away and closed the gap before I had a chance to blink. "Too high and forward Puk, how could you do that from 20 metres?"

The big fella dropped like a stone, his back legs kicked convulsively for a few seconds, and then nothing. Not a sound. He didn't bawl, he didn't thrash and roll, and there was no blood. The strangest thing was with a 70lb bow, the 125 grain single bevel outback supreme had only entered about 3 inches into his broad neck. My only guess was that it must have been a spine shot, because a few kicks and about 2 minutes later, there was no blink reflex as a fly landed on his eyeball. It was over: so fast and quietly that the other goats still stood and sneezed 50 metres away, having no idea what had happened. A Lucky shot, rather than a good one.

Then the goats all ran away, because all 100 kilos of me left the ground and let out a "Whoo-hoo!" that echoed of the cliffs and crags. Persistence had paid off in a big way. The perfect result for me.

The animal didn't suffer unduly, I didn't lose too many arrows, and boy was I glad I put that folding saw in the back of my hydration pack. An hour later the horns and top of the skull were off and I was walking back to the vehicle to call the manager's wife and ask if they had a measuring tape.

I wanted a billy of over 100dp on this trip.



Joel's Pukallus 146 1/8 Billy!

The big fella officially measured out to 146 and 1/8 Douglas Points, with a spread of 47 3/8 inches. And can you believe, my wife still won't let me keep them in the house! So they grace the shed wall, on a plaque with the arrow that harvested them, my first billy.

On the trip home, Murph kept falling asleep and dreaming of white specks in the distance on red rock hills, and how he would get downwind of them for a stalk. He even saw one in the bulldust on the back of the 4wd! I had thought

stalking in socks was a good idea, but all the fine little prickles that entered the bottom of my feet made my feet burn for days until they festered and worked their way out. I don't care though. I'm happy.



Oh, and by the way, as the goats were departing that afternoon, I saw one jump up on a rock that looked like a longhorn steer. He was bigger than my big fella, with horns that went straight out to the sides, then up and forward at 90 degrees. I am taking another week next year, and dreaming of another Red Rock Billy.

The author uses a 70lb Martin Phantom II with 75/95 Gold Tips, Archer's choice sights, Scott Calliper release, Woody's Outback Supremes and Hunters, N.A.P. QT 1000 rest.

The Toohey's deer has landed!

By Mark Southwell

"Gee's boys, these bloody hills aren't any smaller" I muttered as the old hilux bounced its way up the back of the property. It had been twelve months since we had hunted this property, and judging

from last years efforts, the next week was going to be special. Pulling up as high as we could drive, Chris, my brother Paul and I loaded up the hiking packs for a four day stint camped up the tops. Not sure if the springs would be running up the top, we each loaded up with 5 extra litres of water – dead weight in the pack, but a necessity. Donning the bags we headed off up and across the tussocky hillside. 45 minutes later we lay in a saddle panting and puffing, wondering why the hell we were doing this.



The Troops Head Out!

Another sharp pinch and we were up the top, and dropped the packs to check out a nice clearing that held good sign of ferals. Splitting up it wasn't long before Paul had found some hogs, and after a 4 metre stand off with a spotted sow, they were away and swallowed up by the bush. Meanwhile, I was closing the gap on a couple of good sized sows, with Chris on the camera. A 20 metre shot later we had our first kill for the trip, a healthy sow, which had succumbed to a razor sharp Blackstump. A little further on and Paul was in front of a small mob of goats and took out a meat goat to supplement our dehydrated meals over the next few days.

Back to the bags we followed the ridge along and made it to our intended campsite a few hours before dark. We quickly set up the tents and tarps before heading off towards the spring to suss out the water situation. On the way, Chris managed to stalk a good boar with no luck and I managed to grass another small sow with a 10 metre heart shot. We kicked up a couple of better pigs in the thick blackboys, then reached the spring to find that there was in fact water flowing, and filled the bottles.

In camp that night spirits were high, we had made it up the top relatively unscathed and had already opened the account on a few animals. Expectations for the next few days were high, hopefully we had timed this hunt to coincide with the red deer rut. Tomorrow we would find out.

The next day saw Paul and Chris head off down an open ridge where in past years we had seen a magnificent red stag. I would be hunting another face for some trophy billies. The day was relatively uneventful for me, I glassed a heap of goats with some good potential billies, and got a close opportunity on a gnarly mountain boar, but nothing fell to my bow. The story was different for the other boys. They had indeed got onto a good red stag, but weary eyes and a swirling wind resulted in the stag escaping unharmed. On his way back to camp, Paul managed to grass two fine boars, which he caught fighting with another boar over a sow on heat. Two shots from close quarters both caught on camera did the trick. Wandering back into camp, Chris brought back the good news that

the reds were indeed in full rut, with several stags seen and heard roaring in the tight jungle filled gullies.



Scanning and Planning!

The next morning saw Chris and I heading down a steep grass tree covered ridge, going slow, listening and looking for a red stag. Paul was about 2km away, navigating his way down another clear ridge with the same idea. As the sun worked its way higher, the sweet sound of a red roar rose up from the gully to our left. We were pretty sure we knew which small stand of timber the roaring stag was in, but 10 minutes of looking failed to locate the animal.

Chris wandered his way further down the ridge to try and get a better look, and then the stag showed himself, moved out onto the clear ridge, roaring like a lion and stamping his authority on this part of the country. He was a bomber to say the least, "it's the bloody toohey's deer for sure" I muttered to Chris over the little two way radio. At about 200 metres across the gully, this was surely the best animal I had ever seen in the scrub, and after doing a loop around the ridge, the stag made his way back down into the gully and

continued to roar his way below us over in Paul's direction.

A short radio discussion later, it was decided that I would follow the big fella down into the valley, while Chris would cut high around the range and try and get onto another stag that we could see. Paul was to drop down into the valley and try for an ambush on the big stag. 15 minutes later, Chris came over the radio "got a 4x5 stag coming my way, should I shoot it?" "Shoot the &%\$#" was the reply from Paul; a definitive answer!

After a while came "jobs done boys, got him on the ground, he's a 5x5" over the radio! Chris had made a great stalk and even better shot from 35 metres to put the stag down, his first red stag in many years of hunting. I worked my way back to him and after some photo's decided to poke up the hill and look for a stag that Chris heard roaring earlier. Cutting around the hill, I spotted a hind that was already alert due to dodgy wind. As she moved off a stag stood up – a handsome 6x6. I watched in disappointment as the small mob moved off, little did I know I would be back onto them later in the day, but again I was to be beaten by the wind and the terrain.

Spirits were good in camp that night feasting on 'venison pasta'. We had enjoyed good success that day. In addition to Chris's red, Paul got an opportunity on the toohey's deer', but winded at 20 metres before he could put in an effective shot. In addition, he managed to arrow a good boar and nice goat on the tops, both we would look for in the morning. I had a good afternoon as well, getting in on the

6x6 I saw earlier and decking a chunky little boar.



Chris Hervert 5x5 Red Stag



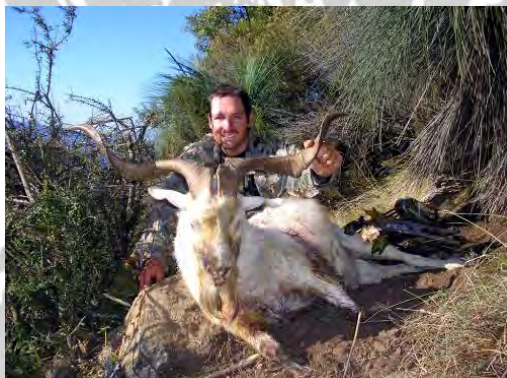
Mark's Chunky Boar 22 4/8DP

The next morning after recovering Paul's boar and billy, we again headed off in separate directions for a hunt. Making his way down the ridge that Chris had taken his stag the day before, Paul ran into a toothy old boar, which he grassed with an excellent shot from 40 metres. It was to be the biggest boar for the trip and while having

nearly three inches of tusk out of the jaw, pulled short scoring 26 4/8 DP.



Paul's Toothy Hog 26 4/8DP



Paul's Symmetrical 110 Billy

Soon after on a ridge further down the valley, I was in on some hogs feeding amongst the bracken and grass trees. Closing the gap on a nice spotted boar to 10 metres, I felt the wind on the back of my neck and he was gone. Cursing the wind, it was only a minute later when I heard a sow making her way down the track I was standing on. At 20 metres quartering on, the shot was effective putting her down in 70 yards.



Marks' Spotted sow

Further around the hill I got onto a mob of goats including a couple of better billies. Following the mob as they moved around the hill they were soon out of sight. Calling to Paul on the radio, he could see from the far ridge that the two billies had bedded under some trees, and while the camera rolled from the distant ridge, I closed to gap to 25 metres. Cresting the rise, an unseen nanny spooked, getting the mob to its feet. Now at full draw the pin settled on the closest billies chest. Letting the arrow go I knew it was on the money, and after a short run, the billy went down. On this, his mate made a charge and butted the hit billy, sending him down the steep hill, coming to rest at the top of a cliff. As I watched on, the billy made one last movement and pushed himself off the cliff! A quick radio check confirmed my suspicions; the billy had rolled some 70 metres down the cliff – no photos on this occasion.

The next day we headed back down to the truck. The plan was for Chris and I to carry the boar tusks and his red cape and antlers directly back down, while Paul would carry our full 10 litre water bag up the other end of the property where we would hike to later in the day and set up our second fly camp for the trip.

By mid afternoon we had made the truck and been into town for a wash and a hamburger from the local take away shop, and were ready to hit the hills again. The walk to our second camp was much easier, and we dropped our heavy packs and headed around the valley to listen for stags.

Dropping off the ridge, I was soon looking at two red doe's feeding in the tussocks to my right on my level around the mountain. As I watched, two small stags soon trotted into view followed by a nice 5x5 stag. At about 150 metres from me, the stag let out a couple of impressive roars to ward off the other two immature stags. As the stag and two hinds fed up the hill, I decided to make my move and stalked towards them. Closing the gap to 40 metres from the stag, he contently rubbed a small sapling behind cover. Steadying myself as darkness loomed I decided that if he presented a shot I would take it from 45 metres – easy!

As the stag walked out from the sapling he propped quartering away. The arrow was gone and to my disappointment, he through his head around at the sound of the shot, and the arrow struck the stag in the antlers. Unharmd, the stag took off down the hill, and out of sight. I couldn't believe it, two shots at red stags in two years and nothing to show for my efforts – when will the red deer gods ever look down on me? Sulking back into camp, the other boys were soon on the scene. They had a quiet afternoon, though did get a stalk on a small three-year-old fallow stag, who gave them the slip after attacking a small sapling, all caught on video.

The following day was exciting, although not overly successful. Paul and I headed up into the top of the valley and saw a few small fallow stags, and a cracker red stag that gave us the slip in the steep terrain. Later in the afternoon, the clouds came over and heavy rain set in. As the heavens opened, Chris closed the gap on a red stag and a couple of hinds in thick cover. Letting out a roar, the hinds came out for a look, followed by our old mate the Toohey's deer from a few days ago. Unfortunately, Chris was unable to get close enough for a shot, but he was happy enough to have had another close encounter with the majestic stag.

We were soaked to the bone and as cold as ice when we met back at out fly camp just on dark. It was soon decided that we would don the packs and retreat back to the truck as pitching camp in the wet conditions with all our wet gear could end in tears, and possibly hypothermia! Back at the truck we did our best to erect a 'tarp-mahal' and settled in for a wet night.



Strike a pose!

Rising early the next morning to clear skies a plan for the morning was concocted. Paul couldn't resist the temptation for one last look for the Toohey's deer, I decided to head down into the valley and check out a fallow stag we could hear and Chris stayed close to camp to re-salt his red cape and relax.

Making my way down into the valley, it wasn't long before I picked up the grunting stag not far off the creek holding about 6 or so does. He was a good deer, black in colour and sporting a representative set of antlers. Given that the mob was feeding in close proximity to about 40 odd head of cattle, I decided to stay put and watch from the opposite side of the valley. After an hour and a half the mob moved up the creek, and I decided to make my move. A slow and steady stalk down through the creek and up the other side of the valley had me within 30 yards of the mob of now bedded deer. For once the stag was the closest animal to me, but was bedded with his antlers lying on the ground – obviously asleep.



Paul second good hog 26 6/8DP

A lack of cover stopped me getting closer, so I decided to hold tight and wait till the stag got up for a stretch. After a long wait the stag stood and promptly started to walk out towards a doe that had called further up the creek. Drawing back and shooting in one movement, my arrow struck the stag in the chest and was down within 50 metres.



Mark's Excellent Fallow Buck!

After photos and capeing, I made my way back to the truck to be met by Chris who had just come back down off the mountain. He had spent the morning glassing the mountainside with the spotting scope and after seeing a good boar feeding out of the blackberry had climbed up high for a stalk. It wasn't to be, but he did manage to take out a small billy. Back in camp, we packed up and boned out a couple of goats Paul shot on his way back. We would drop them off to the property owner for his dogs. It was good to have a shower and dry things out a bit. After calling in at the house we made our way out to another block to camp the night and boil out our trophies.

Sunrise the next morning saw Paul and I sitting up in some tight gullies, watching a mob of fallow

does and a stag feeding out on the flats below. Wanting to cover more country we split up. Paul made his way further along the range to check out a couple of stags we could hear grunting, and I stayed put to hopefully get the drop on the light coloured stag feeding out with the does. We have a bit of history with this particular stag, who displayed a wild set of antlers which made him easy to identify. He had given us the slip for the last three or so years, but today was to be different.

Sitting for an hour or so, I watched the deer as they moved back into the cover of the thick gullies. The big stag followed them and moved up towards me. A change in the wind and he trotted off to be swallowed up by the jungle like vegetation in the gully. Beaten again I started to make my way back to camp, when from high on the range, the stag started to grunt hard. Busting back up to his level, I was soon picking my way through some thick cover towards the grunting stag. Coming out in a clearing I made several doe calls and the stag came running at me to check out his new "lover". At 20 metres he propped and I shot, hitting him hard and putting him down. I was stoked, my first common coloured fallow buck and my second fallow stag in as many days. I tried to ring and then radio the boys to help me with the photo's and capeing job – but alas all my batteries were dead!

With all the hard work done, I poked my way back to camp and noticed the boys raise their bino's as I came into sight carrying the stags antlers and cape. Getting closer, Paul said casually "nice

work mate, pity Chris's is bigger", "bastard" I thought as I cast me eyes on a ripper of a set of fallow antlers laying on the ground. "How far was the shot" I said "Nah mate found him dead in a fence" was Chris's reply. It appeared Chris's luck had continued coming onto the stag dead with its antlers in the fence, the stag we estimated to have been dead only a week or so and the antlers were in the 215-220 Douglas point bracket.



Mark's Second Excellent Fallow!



Bad Luck for This Buck!

Packing up our gear, Chris and I were soon on the road home. We called in on some of the boys hunting with Dave Whiting near Wellington, and spent a great night chewing the fat and relating the hunting stories of the past week. As we motored towards home the next day, Chris checked his phone. "the mongrel got one" he muttered. It was a message from Paul, who had stayed an extra night and managed a last ditch fallow stag, and a ripper at that scoring 219 DP. A 15 metre shot right on dark put the stag down, and he was a happy hunter as it was his best fallow to date.



Paul's Last Ditch Effort pays off!

This trip was one of the most physically demanding hunts I have been on, the country was big, but so were the rewards for hard work. We had a great time, took some good game and managed to get

Chris's red deer monkey off his back. It won't be long until I'm back in those hills again!

Motivation Anyone?

By Dale Furze

I was sitting around the other day thinking of the hunt where I took my largest Billy Goat to date. A mate of mine Anthony (Killer) had been out for a hunt a couple of weeks before and scored his biggest Billy Goat so far, being a cracking 125DP.



Anthony's 125 DP Billy



The view on the way out....

This being one of the few times he has been out for a hunt without me, a little bit of 'ribbing', and the start of withdrawal symptoms was all the motivation I needed to get out for a hunt. Between the both of us, after looking at work schedules it was decided that the following weekend

would suit us both.

Killer dropped into my place mid morning, and loaded me and my gear up. Whilst on our way out to our hunting property Anthony retold a story a young friend had told him during the week. Dave, one of our hunting mates had been out to the same property the weekend before, the same time Anthony and I had been dwelling over an appropriate time for us to go! Dave said that he had seen around 80 goats of varying shapes and sizes and had a shot at a good Billy that he thought would score about 110D.P. He thought he may have 'clipped' him high, though as the Billy ran off he showed no real sign of being hit.

This story gave me some hope for a decent sized Billy as Anthony had also seen a couple of other good trophies when he shot his good one. Things were looking good!

We parked the Ute at the usual haunt, donned our camo, grabbed the bows and set off for a few hours walk. About 20 minutes, from the car (it was bloody hot, so we weren't too far from the car) I spotted a few white specks through the Ironbarks. Casually I sat down, grabbed my bino's and started to check out what may be on offer.

The Goats were feeding from the left to the right and the specks that I had initially noticed were the tail ender Nannies. I crept forward to get a bit better view and further investigation revealed some medium Billies, Nannies and Kids in the middle and some big Billies at the forefront, which I just caught in the binoculars as they crested a

small rise through the trees.



Checking over the mob

As everyone else does when there are two of you, we hatched a plan where we would wait until they all fed past, circle around them and get a better view of the bigger Goats from above, where I would hopefully 'get a crack' at one of the bigger fella's if they were better than what I had. Killer already had a big one and declined any shot that would offer, instead he said he would take some 'live animal' or action shots with his new Digital Camera.

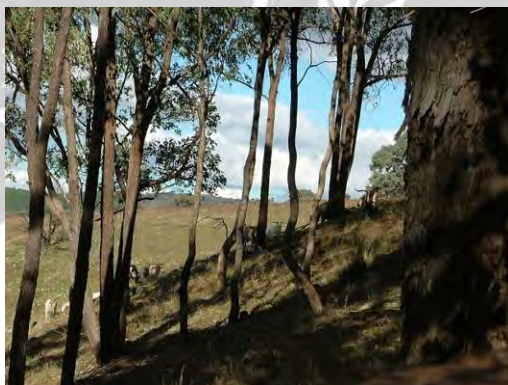
On our way to fulfil our plan we came across the mob a bit earlier than we thought (like us, they too were a bit casual in the heat) as they had stopped to chew on a bit of shaded green pick. This gave us a very good opportunity to check the mob out as they had bunched up and they were all very visible.

After some time and deliberation, both Killer and I had decided that a nice tan and black 'Saddle-back Type' Billy was the best of the bunch. We also noticed an out of place white patch high on his shoulder, we couldn't tell what it was from where we were sitting, but we knew it didn't look right. While we sat there in the shade quietly talking to each other, the

goats decided that they would move on, pity, I was very content just sitting there talking and taking some photos. Ah well, it was back to the old plan of getting in front of the mob and setting up an ambush. I had decided that should the biggest Billy present a shot I would take it, he looked around 115D.P. which was bigger than my biggest at 113DP.

Anthony and I found a great place to set up, it consisted of some sparse Ironbarks and fallen timber (that our 3D camo' blends in nicely with) on the edge of a small clearing, right in line with the feed/travel line of the Goats. Killer set up about 40m from me to the rear and above thinking this would be a good place for some photos.

We waited patiently and shortly after I heard the soft sounds of the moving mob. They slowly came into view, and as before, the Billies were leading the way. I scanned the front runners and noticed my chosen target was on the outside of the mob, and unlike normal scenarios he was actually on my side!



I let them feed into about 15m, then slipped a Satellite 3 blade broadhead tipped CarbonTech shaft into him between his neck and left shoulder, as the arrow

exited his hind quarter, he did 'an about face' and trotted back through the mob, over a small rise and into the clearing. The rest of the mob sensed something was 'fishy' and thought they should follow.



The best of the Billies is spotted!

Killer had seen what had happened as he had full view of proceedings, and decided that he would leave me to go and claim my Trophy while he would go and try for a couple of smaller 'meat goats' as both our freezers were nearly empty. I wished him luck as I sat there eating a muesli bar waiting for the effect of my arrow to take over.

Some time had passed when I finally decided to get off my backside and look for my Billy, the shot was very good and I knew that my trophy wouldn't be far away, so there was no real rush. I crested the small rise and saw one of the horns protruding from a small depression he had only gone 50m from where he had been hit. Whilst standing there admiring my trophy's skin and horns I noticed that Anthony had returned, where he then said that he decided that he didn't really need any meat (read between the lines, didn't catch up with the mob again) and had returned to help me find my trophy

and take some more photos. Whilst setting the Billy up for a lengthy photo session we ran the tape over him, confirming our guess that it was bigger than my previous best.



Dale Furze 119 6/8 DP Billy

During the photo session we checked out the white patch on his shoulder, upon close inspection it revealed a nice two blade through and through cut from a broadhead above his spine in the fatty tissue. Killer and I both looked at each other and simultaneously had a little laugh at each other, realising that this had been the Billy that Dave had 'clipped' the week before.

Later that week I rang Dave and got him to come around and have a look at the new Goat that I had scored myself, the look on his face when he realised that the Goat in the photo was the one he shot at was worth a thousand bucks, when I told him it scored 119 6/8 DP, the look was priceless!

The equipment I use consists of a Darton Maverick bow set at around 63lb, with adjustable single pin sight and CarbonTech arrows with Satellite broadheads, Although it isn't the fastest bow on the planet, it is very reliable.

Product review BowTech Tribute

By Peter Morphett

I spent most of week before the rut this year setting the 80lb **Tribute** up for my preferred style of shooting, I installed the d loop to give me the correct draw length (vital IMO) and the spent a little while shooting at long range (40 to 50 metres).

Now this was no real mean feet, but today with it blowing a gale, it took a little longer to satisfy that the rig was spot on so that accurate long shots could be taken with confidence.

I headed out to my mates place and walked to first sheltered gully just inside the timber line, as I thought the deer would be in these sheltered sections on days like this, bloody cold and blowing a gale!

Didn't take long and I found 5 does and young buck feeding slowing along. I took some snaps with camera, then watched as they head into a smaller stand in timber and bedded down, with the wind blowing that hard and covering most of my footsteps in the bark laden ground, using the big gum trees for cover I closed the gap to the group to 40 odd metres, now with no cover left and two of the does looking my way I was stuck.



The first mob of deer found

I knelt there for some time, until the buck moved to another position, this gave me a narrow window of opportunity for a long shot, and well this is what I wanted to test. With one doe bedded right in line with the tail end of the buck this made the shot even harder. I carefully removed some downward hanging tree bark, and then proceeded to slide myself out from behind the gum tree. With the arrow firmly in place on the new Vital Bow Gear Kazaway rest there was no need to worry about the arrow when drawing just set my hand into the grip and draw nice and smoothly.

I knew she would see this and she did, and like I wanted she stood and moved to right of the buck clearing my shooting lane, with the buck now looking at her to see why she got up, I aimed and held for some time because of the extra touches of wind slowing the aiming process, the pin found its mark, settled and I fired!

Like any doe she was fixated on me trying to make out what it was, normally with the old Maverick she would have jumped the string, but with the **Tribute** she didn't even flinch, as the arrow flew straight to its mark perfectly. The arrow disappeared into the buck's rear

flank heading towards the chest and heart area and disappeared, so did all the does in an instant!

The buck rose instantly and bolted, but he only made it some 15 metres, max and collapsed!



The young buck taken from 40m

I took a few pictures and took the head and back legs off, and placed them in a tree, so I could pick them up on the way out.

I made my way through the timber heading deeper into it trying to get to the section I heard the bucks grunting last week, I ran into a few more does and a spiker before I reached my destination some 2 hours later. With about 30 min of light left of light, I thought my timing was perfect. I stayed on the game trail and proceeded to carefully scan the scrub as I walked closer to where I thought the bucks might be tending their scrapes. It didn't take long and I found the first group of deer heading out to feed, with two nice bucks with them, but as I laid in wait the wind changed and they changed direction as one of the does higher on the hill bolted and took the rest with her, and of course with bucks in tow.

So I continued on, only five minutes later two more does walked past, I continued along the game trail, then I see another mob of does walking down the trail I'm on, I knelt and got set, with an arrow on, the lead doe, walks straight past me at 10 metres, the shot was perfect and she turned and ran back to the mob, only to collapse as she reached them, the rest of the mob fled.



A doe taken for Meat

This is when a buck started grunting! I made my way quickly to where I thought he was. I was slowed by a spiker, marking and freshening a scrape, not some 40 metres from where I downed the doe 3 minutes earlier, I carefully navigated my way higher onto the hill face to clear the him and before I knew it a I was homing in on the buck grunting, he was trying to round up a group of 10 does. He was in fine form, with plenty of deep grunting coming in succession after succession, I was on my knees edging into position for a shot, this was difficult, as the does were all around him, and I had to watch for them even though he was totally distracted, I knew

they will bust me if I move to quickly. So with the light really fading and with the cover on the trees I was surprised to see that I could still see my pins on my Trophy Right Matrix sight, but I know I didn't have much time, as I edged to about 25 metres and the buck moving back and forth between the trees, I was trying to get an angle for a shot. He then came a little closer and right into a laneway between the trees I could shoot though, I came to full draw and got set and started to line the big fella up, this is when I felt a large gust of wind right from behind me, with the pin now settling on its mark, and concentrating hard, they picked up my sent and they all bolted, oh well so close yet so far.

I headed back to the doe, and pulled out the trusty flash light and took some nice cuts of meat and headed back to the buck I had shot early in the day, so my test was complete, the **Tribute** is one awesome hunting rig and I think the old Maverick can be retired once and for all as I think I have finally found a worthy replacement!

Some specs for those interested in its overall performance.

Darton Maverick (CPS 6 03 Cam) set 80lbs (540g arrow) 279 fps
Tribute (Smooth Mod) set at 80lbs (540g arrow) = 283 fps
Tribute (Fast Mod) set at 80lbs (540g arrow) = 292 fps!

With the Fast Mod installed the bow has very little valley, and what seems like only 65% let off, but I checked this on a draw board with digital scale and found that it is 79.25% still, most will not like the fast mod installed as many

compound shooters like smooth drawing bows and with these mod installed it would take some time to get used to but with the best solid wall at full draw you will ever find, but at least with the 06 models you have a choice, none of this specific draw length requiring a new cam if you need to change Draw Length.

Along with Draw length adjustments, are all done though just changing the model on the side of the cam and done without a bow press, a big improvement from the 05 models!

Overall this is the quietest 80lb bow I have ever shot, it is AWESOME in this respect, and all this vertically no hand shock, also the finish and overall quality of the craftsmanship is second to none, only two little things I would like to see improved, one the bow quiver (all plastic construction) but is holding up pretty well so far, and I wish they could make there two top hunting rigs **Tribute** and **Allegiance** with a little more draw length in future, but I think this wishful thinking!

I would like to thank Archery Supplies (02 62883735) for the **Tribute**, and the BowTech accessories that came with the bow, mainly quiver and stabilizer, and also the super tough Carbon Tech shafts!

Visit them on their respective websites at:

www.archeryshop.com.au

www.bowtecharchery.com

Gadget of the Month

Well the gadget this month is a very new drop away rest made by **Vital Bow Gear**, (Vital Drop Model Shown) the reason why this rest is a cut above all others is it ability to hold your arrow in place while walking and stalking with more rattling of any other movement.

There is need for the normal stuck on piece of foam onto your riser which all fall off and some point and it also allows re-grabs your arrow when we let the bow back down when a shot is not offered.

It's a vert simple design with heaps of adjustment and is very, very quite and tough!



It also has a excellent designed cable guide side that gives you the choice of either tying into the downward cable bus or just running from the cable side, which ever your may prefer.

Check them out at:

www.vitalbowgear.com

Newsletter Contributions

Well another newsletter is out and the quality of the game has been outstanding IMO, Also welcome to our new members, Nathan, Stephen and Joel.

Again thanks to all that contributed to the newsletter this month we had a very good turn out this time, that good, in fact that I didn't use all the submissions and they will appear in the next addition, thank you every one from your effort!

But don't get slack now please send you stories and ratings in, as some might not know Mark is ways for a month so be patient if you have send ratings forms in.

Mail them to the TT Po Box or directly to me at:

Trophy Takers
LPO BOX 5129
University of Canberra
Bruce ACT 2617

Trophy Takers Website

As many would know is have been building the new TT website for some time now and all the HTML is ready and I've re-touched and re-done all the TT logo's and graphics, and after extensive searching I have managed to track down about 90% of the pictures for the top 50 of species with only about 140 pictures still missing, I will still try to locate these pictures so their will not be as many holes in the statistics.

A complete list may have already been sent to you, I expect the website to upload early into next month (July) and I will email every one there members user name and password so they can, from then on download the newsletter straight from the sight and browse the complete ratings list for Australian shot game, plus other forms and articles on how to score your trophies.

I would like to thank, Chris Hervert, Dale Furze, James Warne, and Doug Church and finally Mick Kernaghan for there extensive efforts in sending in many of the missing pictures, thanks guys!

Also I late news another Aussie record maybe broken from Vic, another Sambar stag falls to

I'll keep you in suspense till next issue once the head has been officially scored and rated.

Peter Morphett.

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