

# Trophy Takers Newsletter



**DAVE WHITING**  
Chairman



The Bowmen of the Bush

**June - July 2007**



# TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER Jun-Jul 2007

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### Game Claim Report 5/07

The TT ratings have continued to grow over the last few months, with members rating 33 animals from 9 different species. Some impressive trophies fell to the bow, with a few members enjoying a successful deer rut. Fallow deer were a target of choice for a few of our members, with 4 bucks over the magic 200DS hitting the deck. Of these, Danny Batj's stag of 218 6/8 DS was the biggest, taken on a foggy morning in the ranges of southern NSW. His hunting partner Andrew Morrow also got lucky on a couple of very good bucks rating his best to date at 212 DS (if it had both guard tines it would have been close to the number one), and another nice head of 195 2/8 DS. These deer currently hold the number 4, 8 and 22 positions in the records respectively. Well done to both boys!

As usual Pete Morphett spent a good part of the rut harassing the local fallow herd, securing a nice buck of 209 6/8 DS with a good shot on dark, well done Pete.



Danny Batj's Awesome 218 6/8 DS Buck!



Andrew Morrow's Impressive 212 DS Buck!

Over in South Australia, a keen young bowhunter by the name of Casey McCallum was out chasing the fallow.

He was lucky enough to get a cracker of a buck, scoring 212 4/8 DS his first we might add! He also rated a beaut 120 1/8 DS goat, which just snuck into the top 60. A nice way to start with Trophy Takers, and he has only just turned 18, welcome Casey he has won himself a



dozen Blackstump broadhead's kindly donated by Brett Simpson in our first junior ratings competition! We will be running this for junior bowhunter's in the upcoming editions of the newsletter, so get out there and into' em juniors!



**Andrews nice 195 2/8 DS Black Fallow!**



**Well what can we say but all at T.T. are impressed with the skill showed by this young Bowhunter, Casey McCollum's 212 4/8 DS Buck!**

Paul and I spent a couple of weeks over this years rut in the hills and had a great hunt taking some good game. I managed to secure my first red stag scoring 203 4/8 and my personal best boar of 28 2/8 DS. Not to be outdone, Paul had a dream hunt, taking two nice red stags, the biggest a long 5x5 scoring 234DS filling the number 6 position in the ratings, and another 5x4 stag scoring 187 7/8 DS. The arsey bastard also shot three foxes in 5 minutes off a goat carcass the best of these was a dog that scored 10 4/16 DS. On the second last day he closed the gap on a rutting fallow buck and took the shot from 30 yards putting the 192 5/8 point buck down for the count.



**Pete Morphett with the best Buck to fall to him in 07, 209 6/8!**



**Casey's very good outback Billy 120 1/8 DS!**



**The Monkey has been kicked out of camp Mark Southwell's excellent Red Stag 203 4/8 DS!**





**Marks P.B. Mountain hog to date, 28 2/8 DS, well done!**



**You have to see the video of this to believe it, but its true, awesome shooting and an impressive bag of foxes, well done Paul!**



**Paul Southwell's first stag to fall in 07 a very nice 187 7/8 DS, Excellent!**

The goats have also been copping some attention from our members. Out at Bourke James Warne continued his good run on the Billy's getting a couple of personal bests. The first was taken on a hot 50 degree day and cracked the 110 mark scoring 111 6/8DS. A couple of months later Warney bowled over another nice billy of 111 7/8 DS. Unfortunately a fight between Warney and his digital SLR camera resulted in the field photos of this goat being deleted before they hit the printers; better luck next time mate.



**Paul's second Red Stag for 07 scored very well an impressive 234 DS, Awesome mate!**



**James Warne P.B. for only about a month or two, a very respectable 111 6/7 DS!**





**Jame's latest P.B. 111 7/8 DS, we are sorry to hear about the technical fault with the camera mate, or was it the driver, you didn't tell us how many beers you have at the house the night before you went hunting?**

The Barcaldine connection of Doug Church and Peter and Nathan Cocking spent a few April days on the goats and came home with some nice sets of horns in the 75 to 95 DS range, junior Nathan's also scored a Billy of 84 4/8, good work once again fellas.



**Junior Nathan Cocking with a 84 4/8 DS Billy, well done Nathan!**

Trevor Willis the well renowned Victorian taxidermist joined the Trophy Takers ranks in April, rating a cracking chital of 147 6/8 and also a good boar scoring 31 4/8, welcome to you Trevor!



**Trevor Willis with a awesome Chital Stag, taken at 55 yards, an Awesome trophy Trevor, 147 6/8 DS!**



**And taken on the same trip Trevor with a very impressive 31 4/8 DS Boar, what more could you ask for!**

We also had a number of other new members join us in the last while, namely Mr. Blackstump - Brett Simpson rating a billy he shot back in 98 scoring 104 DS and Kevin Dolbel, Justin and Peter Eather from Wollongong rating three good boars of 24, 27 and 23 6/8 Douglas point score respectively. Welcome aboard.



**Mr. Black Stump himself (Brett Simpson) with his PB Billy, 104 DS, well done mate!**



Nearly made it through a game claim report without mentioning the Wills name, but I just couldn't do it. Mark dusted off his Sambar antlers and got Pete to run a tape over them finally getting a score of 160 5/8 DS, which puts this deer at number 3 in the Trophy Takers records. Mark also rated a Banteng he shot back in 95 scoring 36 3/4 DS.



**Marks Wills, with his Awesome Sambar Stag, as always Mark's dedication and skill shine 160 5/8 DS!**



**Mark with another exotic trophy a Banteng from a while back, 36 4/4 DS, well done!**

Well time to leave you and go and pack some gear for a Sambar hunt this weekend, hopefully have something to report to you next time,

Be good in the bush.

**Mark Southwell.**

## Chairman's Report

After much discussion it has been decided to hold this year's Awards at the Community hall at Neurea a gazetted district some 20 kilometres south of Wellington NSW on the picturesque Bell River, in Central Western NSW. I utilised the Hall during the late 90's and ran a number of very successful invitational club shoots and I must say the basic facilities which include a dance hall for Trophy and Album display plus Awards Presentation, coupled with a large flat camping area with a couple of flushing toilets, nearby access to firewood and a small servo/truck stop just a couple of kilometres up the road with meals, fuel and shower facilities for a small fee, all lay the foundations for us to hold yet another enjoyable Awards. A few target butts will also be placed on a roped off area of the Grounds.

I have arranged to book the grounds and hall for a week either side of the actual Awards weekend and anyone wanting to come early or extend there stay for a bit of hunting and fishing would be most welcome. Neurea is also only 10 kilometres from the Wellington Caves one of the biggest cave systems in the state and around 60 kilometres from the Dubbo Zoo, both are very popular tourist attractions.

As many members are already know the Wellington district is a great area for we bowhunter's however I need to mention that unlike previous years I will not be arranging specific hunting properties but will be happy to point members in the general direction to do a bit of door knocking. It is suggested that all those intending to hunt have some form of insurance cover in place through one of a number of hunter based Organisations that provide such cover.

**Awards will be held on the NSW  
Labour Day weekend commencing  
Saturday 29 September 2007.**

I would like to try and dedicate this years Awards to the likes of the late Kenny Reichel and Bill Hill, two of the most dedicated bowhunter's and bushmen that I have ever encountered within our membership or hunters generally. One of the ways I would like to give this recognition is by trying to put on our biggest ever trophy and framed photo/photo album displays. For the past 20 years I have carted some of my best trophies and albums to every Awards from Darwin, Barcaldine and Maryborough in the north to the likes of Albury, Canberra, Goulburn and Bateman's Bay in the south. This has not been done without some wear and tear on my albums and trophies however I feel it is a very important part of our Annual Awards and the whole TT culture and charter of PROMOTING quality hunting outcomes with the bow and arrow. I therefore ask that we all share the load this year and bring at least one of your hunting trophies to this years Awards. We already have a massive display board in place at the hall and I want to fill it to capacity with a little bit from everybody. PLEASE make the effort to contribute. Bring your DVD's and Videos as we will be showing them throughout each day for the enjoyment of both members and visitors Also if you have any trophies not yet rated please get them in ASAP so that they can be considered for this year's Awards.

During the early years of the Awards we always held a wild game banquet whereby each member brought along their favourite cut of game and prepared it at either their own campsite or at communal campfire utilizing camp ovens, spits etc and then sharing with all members on the night of the banquet. I would like to reintroduce this concept

with a view to it happening on the Sunday night immediately prior to the Awards. The Sunday Night Awards will, as usual, be the only formally organised part of the Awards weekend.

For sake of your budget I mention that all TT Market items will be on sale over the weekend, plus we will have a camp fee of around \$20 per individual and \$50 per family to cover hire of the hall and grounds and necessary insurance cover. TT is famous for its great Awards raffles with plenty of quality prizes, so set aside a few dollars to buy a few tickets. Raffle is drawn at the conclusion of the Sunday night presentations. Whilst on the subject of our raffles we all need to be on the lookout for suitable prizes. So any one that thinks they can get together some donations or wants to gift us something such as custom arrows, custom knives etc please start giving us some thought now and let a Director know your intentions. By the way a special thanks to the boys from Albury and Shellharbour who ensured we had some wonderful prizes which greatly complimented the outstanding set of hand crafted hunting arrows generously given to us by long time member Manuel Agius, for last years Awards raffle.

Another long time tradition at the Awards has been for members to trade, barter and sell goods such as bows, arrows, knives, camo, photo's etc to fellow members. This activity will again be encouraged.

An indication of those intending to attend would be handy and I would appreciate a call in coming weeks re your intentions. Jenny or I can be contacted as follows;

I work away during the week, so an after dark weekend call may be the best. If you miss me leave a message on the



answering machine re numbers and likely arrival and departure dates.

## **HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE!**

### **A Few Thank's**

As we came into the new millennium it was common knowledge that Trophy Takers high profile on the Australian bowhunting scene, had for a number of reasons, faded considerably from the heights attained in the late eighties and 1990's. But for the efforts, determination and persistence of a band of new generation bowhunter's led by the likes of Mark and Paul Southwell and Peter Morphett the slide may have continued. By pressuring the likes of Ian Fenton, Mark Ballard, Doug Church, Chris Hervert, myself and a few other old timers we now see TT going ahead in leaps and bounds with, a new hardworking forward thinking Board of Directors, numerous recent quality ratings and membership, better than ever newsletter, more accredited measurers, membership to NSW Game Council, great website, solid sponsorship, greater choice of merchandise from the TT market and a very enjoyable and successful 2006 Awards at Bateman's Bay on the NSW south coast.

So thanks to every one for the belief and effort that once again has us heading in the right direction and setting the example for trophy bowhunting in Australia.

In closing I mention that at the time of writing this report Jenny, the kids and I plus good friend Wayne Anderson have travelled to the home of Paul and Roslyn Hardy to attend the Traditional Longbow and Recurve Muster at the Gladstone Bowhunter's course on the Capricorn coast area of Central Queensland. The Club, which must be

one of the oldest in Australia, is celebrating its 40th year. At this time the TT board is leaning towards having the 2008 Awards up here so keep this in mind when planning future holidays. We will discuss options at the Neurea Awards and keep you all informed of developments in the next newsletter.

**Regards Dave Whiting**

### **PIGS PAD**

Over the last two years I have been involved with Currandooley Station just west of Canberra. As many of you may know this property is famous for its fallow deer. I must admit it was quite exciting to be part of this and I never thought the day would come when I would term it 'work'. Well that day hasn't come,....yet, but there have been some trying times out on the old deer block.

It didn't take long for us to come to the conclusion that the deer herd as a whole was suffering from lack of management. Not entirely as many claim from the culling that has been going on over the past few years (though this no doubt has not helped) but more from the unmanaged approach to the trophy hunting and the deer in general.

Thousands of deer does not mean big heads in fact studies prove that a much smaller managed deer herd will produce heads that actually reach their full potential. Age is a crucial factor here, of the deer taken this year a 215 Douglas point head was aged at 4.5 years.

Fallow deer are in their prime through ages 6, 7 and 8 years of age. So it does not take Einstein to work out that the deer are just not getting old enough.

The oldest was taken by Colin Moynihan and though a nice deer was not genetically sound and that fact probably accounted for him making it to 5.5 years.



Genes play a big role but they rely on environmental factors and age to be fully realised. Quality of feed (drought has ravaged this area) and even peer pressure affect antler growth. Antlers are an after thought in deer biology; basically the left over resources are channelled there.

The bottom line was that hunters had been taking all the young stags out of the herd, either through eagerness, greediness or bad advice. Don't get me wrong I have nothing against somebody taking an immature animal in the right circumstances but in this case we have a herd that potentially could be anything and the lack of management and hunter direction was spoiling that.

OK so what to do, well first of all we contacted the Tasmanian Deer Advisory Unit. The TDAU through a plan called Quality Deer Management or QDM, has successfully turned around the fate of many of Tassie's deer herds over the last 10 years. In fact many leading biologist believe Tassie has the best managed deer herd outside of the USA. In short antler size has increased dramatically, through basic herd management techniques.

These techniques often involve reducing the overall herd size, obtaining a doe to buck ratio of 3-1 or better and removal of older less productive does. The harvest of non antlered animal's increases dramatically, hunters have to understand that this is vital to the programs success. Keep in mind that nature pretty much produces a male to female ratio of 50/50. We found on Currandooley that the ratio of does to antlered animals was 7:1 however the overall ratio of females to males was closer if not quite 3:1.

Conclusion, many of the spikes and immature males are copping a lump of lead or an arrow way too early in their careers. If it was the indiscriminate culling alone causing the imbalance the ratio would conceivably stay around 3:1.

This is an uphill battle, surrounding properties are not entirely onside, uninformed hunters carry on oblivious to the herds future and the cockies need to see some sort of income for the deer. We have written a management plan which basically calls for a very limited harvest of antlered animals over the next few years, increased harvest of does and a complete ban on taking spikes, which are without doubt the future. This is being based on statistical analysis of sighting data over extended periods. Then a computer program Harvest Calculator aids in deciding the number and type of animals to be removed from the herd. Animals taken are weighed and measured to provide a benchmark for future analysis. We even send jaws to Tasmania for accurate aging.

We have high expectations and to be honest this is not a selfish pursuit, more a hope that this famous herd, one of the first in Australia, can once again reach its true potential. The obstacles are there but nothing worth doing is ever easy. At present there are seven Trophy Takers involved in some way with this project, with possibly more in the future. It is very likely few will get the chance to take a trophy buck over the next year or two purely because the mature animals are not there and the buck harvest quota may only allow client based hunting. In saying that there is still ample opportunity to take cull animals and does. If all goes to plan those that put in will reap the rewards a few years down the track and have a genuine opportunity to not only take a mature buck but to see what can be



achieved with some vision and genuine passion to achieve.

**Chris Hervert.**

## **The Deer Bug**

By Casey McCallum

The deer bug really only hit me after the rut last year in 2006. My number one goal for 2007 was to ground myself a fallow stag. I was not worried about what size, if it had antlers then I was going to be happy with it. Where I hunt in the Southern Flinders Ranges and even south of there you are very lucky if you have a good deer spot and even if you have some good numbers of deer the dense scrub and miles of good country means finding and shooting one is a challenge in itself.

My season started for me with my first scouting trip on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Feb. It was at my local deer property and I had high expectations of seeing some good deer numbers. I was in at the hot spot before daylight and soon came across a mob of bedded goats. I was so close to where I wanted to be for the deer I decided to wait for some light to see what the quality of the goats was like.

I belly crawled to about 15m from the edge of the mob and waited. The sky was just starting to turn a crimson colour as the shadows of my surroundings slowly lightened with each minute and soon the goats started to lift themselves from their beds. As they fed towards me I slowly rose off my belly to my knee's and position my bow in front of me ready to draw. I couldn't work out which was the bigger of the two front Billies so just chose the closest. At about five meters the sound of my BowTech was followed quickly by the thump of the arrow entering in the centre of the Billies

chest front on and passing through and out its back leg.

The mob scattered and ran down the hill but with one less feral in the mob. I could see the Billy was down so I moved on in search of deer and would come back later for some photo's.



**Another Billy bites the dust from Casey's BowTech Tomkat**

My plan of attack was to follow a creek along which gave me cover to glass over a big clearing that the deer frequently graze on. As I got to my glassing spot straight away I picked out three white shapes across the clearing at the bottom of the ridge. I used the creek to stay out of sight and moved about 500m down wind of them before I stalked up into the timber.

Slowly moving through the scrub above them I frantically searched to get a fix on their position. Antlers moving above a small olive tree gave them away and I was pleased to see a stag in the mob. After a look through the bino's the stag had a good length but only skinny palms. I was happy with anything this early in the season so I started my stalk.

Moving towards them on my belly I pushed my bow further in front of me with every movement forward until I reached a large stump which was the end of my available cover. Luck was on my side as it looked like they were



starting to feed on an angle up past me. The stag was in the lead with two spikers in tow, my hands started to shake as I tried to get a range on him with the finder.

The range came back at 40m I drew my BowTech Tomkat back and brought the blazers back past my cheek. I had a fair bit of wobble going on as I touched the shot off and yep you guessed it I pulled the shot. It went just high above his shoulder. Trust me to come unstuck when you put a set of antlers in front of me.

The deer scrambled for a bit but then propped within 40m of me. The stag was behind a big gum tree so I ranged a spiker at 40m and sent a blazer-fletched shaft his way slicing through his boiler room. He only ran about 15m before he was finished. I thought to myself at that point what a great scouting trip and a good lump of venison for the freezer.

Over the next couple weeks I spent quite a few mornings in there scouting and managed a couple goats a hunt but nothing huge. Then one weekend a mate Daniel and I had arranged a hunt to try our luck with the deer and maybe give the goats another touch up. We walked in very early but with the wind in the north it was useless trying to approach the deer and we only saw one all morning. Ah well we thought where are those bloody goats.



**Casey with his first fallow of the year a nice spiker, great eating and skin**

We smelt them first before we saw them and stalked down into the breeze to find a mob of Billies feeding at the foot of the hill. There wasn't anything above 30 inch in the mob so we weren't real worried about which goat to go for. Daniel had the shot so with me on the video camera we made it to 20m from a couple of bedded white Billies and he angled a shot through the goat giving the best shot. The shot looked good so I swapped the camera for my bow and nailed a big shaggy goat from 40m.



**Daniel with his young Billy**

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**Casey with the shaggy Billy**

All the goats disappeared off into the scrub and after following them up we found brownie's still standing his shot had exited its armpit but the goat wouldn't quit so he put another in him for keeps. We found my goat about another 50m further along the hill stone dead and he had the longest shaggiest coat I had ever seen. I might have done him a favour as the temp was meant to be in to 40's later that day.

My eagerness to ground a stag grew each day closer to the rut and later that day I decided to go and check out my uncle's property the following afternoon on the Sunday. Daniel had to work so it was yet another solo hunt for me.

This place has a few small rocky hills on it but is mostly cropping ground with the odd patch of scrub, which the deer take refuge in and feed out from during the night. The deer are not always on the property, as they only seem to pass through. So I was not really expecting to see much but more to give the waterholes along his creek a good fish with some spinners for some red fin.

The fishing soon became a small part of my mind as I drove past a thick patch of planted black oak tree's about 400m long by 60m wide and saw a fallow stag feeding out the front. I quickly brought my Ute to a stop and hurried to get all my gear on. I was planning to drive in

and set up camp before dark but now with 20mins before dark I was stalking my way to the south of the plantation of tree's to keep the scrub between me and the stag. I reached the edge of the scrub and slowly stalked my way through.

As I reached the last few trees before the other side I took a deep breath and drew my bow back. Stepping out I locked my eyes on the light coloured stag about 30m away feeding directly towards me. With my heart just about pounding out my chest I moved out the tree's a bit more to get a clear shot and he lifted his head to look straight at me.

I settled the pin right in the middle of his chest and squeezed the release aide. The arrow flew very high as I used the wrong pin and smacked him in the throat and stopping at its spine. The big stag rolled over and got back up running straight through a fence before disappearing into the stand of trees again.

My hands were shaking and my legs were jelly as I walked back to my Ute. The light was too poor to follow the stag up so I decided to wait a couple hours before following the blood trail with a torch. I couldn't get the shot out my head I kept thinking that I had stuffed up the best opportunity I was ever going to get. The worst thing was I had still not really had a proper look at its antlers and wasn't sure what size he was.

I knew it was a big mature animal but I couldn't have described his antlers if I tried. It was the slowest 2 hours of my life waiting to go and look for my deer but when I saw the blood trail it had left I knew I had grounded my first stag. I followed it through the scrub and found him up on the ridge stone dead.



The shot was effective even though shooting them in the neck on purpose is not really much of a kill zone. I just could not get over the size of the antlers on him I knew he had a set on him but these things were better than I could ever imagine. Well I am still walking on air now as I write this and even though I didn't end up going fishing it ended up being my most memorable hunting moment so far and I don't think I'll ever better this stag but I'm going to try.

I left him until the morning to get the photos and to recover him. All this and the rut hasn't even started yet I can't wait to see what it will bring.



**Casey McCallum's Awesome Fallow buck, 212 4/8 DS!**

My stag officially scored 212 4/8 DS I dropped my stag to Merv Rabig at Quorn for the taxidermy. I can't wait to see the finished result and hang him on my wall. After all the miles and km's travelled to my regular property I went and shot this beauty on my first trip to my new one, I guess you can just be lucky sometimes.

During the rut I gained access to a ripper of a property not far from where I shot my stag, although I did not ground another stag during the rut it looks like I will have some great fallow deer hunting ahead of me for years to come.

## HIGHLANDS OF THE HEART

A Fictional Story,  
By Pastor Joel Pukallus (Puk)

Dale had been coming back here every year for as long as he could remember. First with his dad when he couldn't draw enough of a bow to swat a fly with. Then he came alone as he grew, after his father hung up his bow, was confined to a wheelchair in their home at the base of the mountains and eventually lost all of his old stories to the haze of Alzheimer's disease. The end when it came for him was a blessed relief.

Now he brought his own son, partly from tradition, partly for his old man, and partly to spend some time with his boy away from the rush of the world and the schools that teach boys by making them write things down. He recalls that he didn't learn well that way when he was a boy. He was born to run, born to learn by doing, by smelling the musky soil, the crisp sweetness of the earth after rain. He remembers the joy of it all when he was a boy, learning to love his land and this Australian mountain country, to love the animals that ran here. He watches his boy now with pride swelling his chest, as he sees him turn and take in the virgin bush-land.

Ryan seems to be drinking in the atmosphere, absorbing the bush through his skin by osmosis, until the look on his face tells his father that all his senses are overloaded.

Ryan can tell that it is pointless trying to explain everything that he is feeling, smelling, seeing, hearing. At school, he is "just a kid", gangly, not the best student, he feels kind-of "caged". But out here, well, he feels like he belongs out here.



Dale can tell that finally his son has stopped categorising his world, trying to make sense of it, and has surrendered to simply becoming a part of it. He has become one with the bush. His senses are sharpening. He is listening, smelling, tasting the bush like a bloodhound picking up a trail. He is finding that thing inside him which Dale hoped was there. Something that harks back to the cavemen, with their spears and stones.

He is ready, finally ready. He is ready to hunt. "You see that deer sign, mate?" "Yeah Dad, you thought I had missed it, didn't you? One doe with a good stag following her. Not one of the giant reds you and Granddad used to tell me hid in these mountains, but he wouldn't be too bad. Should we head up the mountain and glass for a while? Might even see the ghost!" He said with a cheeky grin back at his Father.

"Smart-arse kid" Dale thought to himself. He had tried to explain to his son about the other reason that he kept coming back to the mountains behind their ancestral home, but Ryan had looked at him like he was telling a fishing story.

The ghost he was real! He had seen him once last year and a few times before that and Dale was determined to take him before something or someone else did. They only let a few mates bow-hunt these hills, and didn't allow rifles, but you never can tell these days. That and the fact that The Ghost only got smarter every year meant that he had to get him soon or he might miss his chance. 'Well...' Dale thought to himself with a wry smile. 'Maybe he will get that smart that no hunter will ever take him, myself included. Kind of seems right in a way, that a majestic phantom of the bush like him should die of old age peacefully. It would be better than what happened to the old stag that had to have been his

Father. Boy, had he heard that story a thousand times...

Ryan broke into his ponderings with an urgent hand signal which Dale caught out of the corner of his eye, and his answer was one raised eyebrow, which from a man that never said much was enough to ask "What is it, son"?

Ryan cupped a hand to his ear and this time Dale heard it: a distant roar, answered and then answered a second time. There were some stags about, but still a good distance. Not "The Ghost" (he could tell by the roar) but not bad, and definitely worth checking out. Cursing himself for being so deep in his thoughts that he had failed to hear it, the older man thought to himself that if he was ever going to be able to teach his son anything, he had better get his game face on. "My boy is ready to hunt, am I?"

"The Ghost" wasn't just a name that described the way the massive stag moved through the bush like a wraith, silent and ethereal. It was also a name that described something that lived deep within Dale, something he had never even told Ryan about. That deer haunted him. Every time he thought about it, which was often, it left him with the memory of his Father, a man he had loved and respected. He wanted to take the descendant of the stag that had escaped his Dad. To do it for him. For dad. To finish the story. To lay that ghost to rest.

"I only ever got within range of him once" his Dad used to say. It was the classic precursor to the story, and the whole family would roll their eyes, groan to themselves and settle into their chairs to let the old man tell his tale. The details were the same every time, and they had memorised every word, but they loved him enough to let him tell it, because the light that came into his



eyes, and the excitement in his voice when he spoke of his time in the bush chasing that demon red stag were wonderful to see and hear.

“I had hunted him for four seasons, four ruts, and never got close. I had only seen him a few times. The first time I didn’t believe my own eyes. It had been just an instant, a glimpse, and my pulse had run fast. I knew then that I had a quest to fulfil up here. I had to take him. No matter how long it took. But man he was smart. He used the wind like a tall ship and he seemed to watch where his big old hoofs hit the dirt, to make sure that he wouldn’t leave too much sign for a determined bowhunter like me to follow. I swear he had a sense that the books don’t tell you about, he always seemed to know when I was there. I would have the wind right and make no sound and still he would swivel, and those big eyes would stare right into me like he knew what I was trying to do. He would melt away like a wisp of smoke.”

A roar that shook the air had Ryan spinning to look at his Dad. “Boy”, Dale thought, “do I look as excited as him?” Ryan’s mouth was open like he was panting for air, and his eyes were like saucers. “Was it him?” He mouthed, and Dale simply nodded. “Let’s go find him Son” Dale uttered out of the side of his mouth, and the 11 year old nodded jerkily. The Ghost was calling.

It was still early morning, and the roar had come from lower than them on the mountainside. Good, the wind was into their faces and the thermals would keep it coming up the hill as the ground heated up with the promise of some high country sun. Dale surveyed the rugged outbreaks of rock, thick choked gullies and white, gnarled mountain gums that writhed skywards gasping for the pale sunlight like a hanged man gasps for his last breath. He felt that if

he had to choose where to run and hide, it would be here. This was a primal, tortured part of the bush, where the fight to survive took no prisoners. It was the way it had been since time eternal. He had to be here. Here in the heart-land. Here where the screeching of the nectar-eating birds and native wrens let you know when you were moving too fast, where the noise through the scrub that sets your heart pounding against your chest is just a departing kangaroo, where the world spreads out below, but could be a million miles away. There is only “here”. There is only that big deer.

As Dale prepared to once again battle with The Ghost, he thought “I hope I don’t blow my chance like Dad did” and his father’s story came to him again:

“That one time I got close enough I had seen him walk up a gully in the hills and something in my gut had told me that he had to come back down it. He might have gone out the top over the hill, sure, but I just had this feeling. It was nearing evening, and as the earth cooled the air was moving down the hillside, so my scent wouldn’t go to him, I waited, and I waited.

When he roared I thought I was going to faint, what a sound! The hairs on the back of my neck stood up and a shiver went down my spine. There was no question as to who owned these mountains, and I felt like a trespasser in his domain. Then as I watched from behind my tree he was there. I didn’t see him move, just all of a sudden there was a deer where there wasn’t one before. He was massive, and he had to lower his antlers to get between some of the trees.

I raised my old hunting recurve (Not like the fancy compounds you youngsters have these days) and drew the bow while I was still behind the tree. As I



stepped out to clear the bow the rock I put my foot on rolled on its side. I sprained my ankle and he was gone. I don't which hurt the most, the ankle or the blown stalk.

It was a long and painful walk home, and I promised myself to be more careful next year."

"He moves well in the scrub", Dale thought to himself with surprise. He had wondered if Ryan would be a bit clumsy, as he was a gangly youth who didn't look like he had grown into his feet and legs yet. But he didn't make much noise in the scrub, he watched where he put his feet, he didn't complain about the long hours taken without the chance to have a shot. "He might be a hunter after all", he thought, knowing that not all men were born to the hunt, and hoping that his son had inside him "what it takes". "But I still have to remember that he is only 11", Dale thought as he watched him growing tired with the long hours of following this stag that may as well have been as invisible as the spirit after which Dale had named him.

"Sit down and take off your pack, mate." Ryan looked at him gratefully, his legs hurting. Dale knew Ryan needed to rest, "but I can't spare the wasted time" he thought. So he left Ryan to sit and rest, to have a nap for an hour if he needed to, marked the spot on his hand-held GPS and set off. After all, they had the radios. If there was any trouble he would come for him. And Ryan knew not to move away from the GPS mark.

Dale moved up the hill and was glassing the next ridges. He had spent about 40 minutes scouting over the next ridge and moved his way back to the crest above where he had left Ryan, walking all the time with an arrow nocked and his release attached. Sometimes you

didn't get a second to prepare. You had to be ready.

He was about to give up on The Ghost for another day, when all of a sudden his UHF crackled: "Dad, dad, I woke up, and there was a huge stag standing 20 metres away! It had to be the ghost! He ran as I went for my bow, he is racing up the hill from me!"

Crouching on the well-worn game path a few hundred metres directly up the hill from Ryan, time slowed down for Dale. He looked up at the sound of clattering hooves, like might be made by a deer in full flight, and there, at a full run, came The Ghost, spooked from being as close to a human as he had ever been, and intent on being in the next post code.

As it ran straight at him, Dale wondered if he would end up like his own Father. He started to flinch in fear. Do I shoot? Will I have time? What if I miss? The end of his Dad's story flashed through his mind. The sad part, the part that defined his dying years:

"So I prepared like I never had before. Practicing on the target butt all through the off season. Fletching those wooden shafts and cresting them until they were works of art. A stag the size of "him" deserved nothing less. Near the end of the rut I found him, after worrying that he was gone. I had worked so hard, and there I found him, it had to be him, but how I wish that it wasn't. I knew it was him from the scars on his face and his sheer size, but he was ruined, desecrated in the worst way. This is our land, it has been for generations, and no one hunts with rifles here. But there he was, wasted. Two bullet holes illustrated his fate. He had died thrashing in pain, and made a mess of the patch of shrubs where I found him, almost like he was taking his rage out on the mountain. Whatever mongrel poacher shot him

didn't even take his cape, didn't allow him to be seen in his full glory, as a mount to admire. They hacked out his antlers, sawed them off at the skull and left him there. Left him like a lump of meat, not the regal ruler of these hills. The foxes and wedge-tails had begun to take him back in to the life-cycle of the mountains, and so I walked away and left some of my youth up there with him. Sure, I took lots of other deer in my time, even taught you how to take 'em too, and you can see the mounts I have in the den, but none of these even come close to that big fella. Son, I was robbed that day, cheated not only of an animal, but of a quest, a purpose. Take your chance when it comes, boy, because you might not get another one"

Dale had always felt sad for his Father after he told that story. Every time he got to the end his face that was shining with conviction and passion and fire would seem to shrink a little, and the strength that coursed through him when he recalled his days as a mountain man would flow out of his shoulders until he was a little, hunched old shell of a man again.

As all this went through his mind in an instant, Dale's thoughts returned to the moment, and his vision crystallised like a camera lens snapping into focus.

"Not me", Dale thought. "Not this time". He stood his ground, and with one fluid motion he threw up his bow and drew. His old friend felt like a falcon coming home to roost as it worked into its deadly curve, and as his fingers hit his lips his release seemed to trigger of its own accord as all of Dale's practice, all the years of mastering this ancient art distilled into one poetic action. The Ghost was looking back over his shoulder, and when the bush in front of him made an unexpected and lethal

move he spun towards it and tried to stop. But it was too late.

As soon as his brain sent the signal to flee he was normally gone, but this time the signal wasn't obeyed. His heart had stopped sending the blood that his legs needed to move properly. It had been transfixed, pierced by a shaft that bore, strangely enough, the same cresting that this mountain had seen 30 years before, on the arrows of Dale's father. Dale had found an old arrow and copied his Father's pattern, on carbon rather than cedar, resolving that The Ghost would fall to an arrow that would make his dad proud.

Dale wanted to leap aside but was paralysed at the sight of 14 deadly points coming at him like a spike-encrusted avalanche. "I'm dead", he thought. Suddenly he saw The Ghost stagger, and at a dead run, he ploughed into the dirt, coming to rest so close that after 30 racing beats of his own heart, Dale reached out from where he stood and touched him with the bottom limb of his bow, It was over. The journey was complete. Passion, purpose, betrayal, loss and now fulfilment. The Ghost had been laid to rest.

The usual emotions felt after a great shot and a quick humane death washed over Dale. Joy, relief, excitement as well as sorrow for such a magnificent animal. Gratitude to The Ghost, for "choosing" him as the one who would take his life, almost like he had known that the respect Dale had shown him in life would carry on in death, and he would be treasured as the trophy of a lifetime, actually, of two lifetimes.

Then Dale felt something burst inside him, and he could not control himself any longer. For some reason he didn't understand Dale sank to his knees and wept. He couldn't fathom why. What



was his son going to think: An Aussie bush hunter crying like a little child over a deer!

Ryan came running up and looked at his Dad. He saw the tears streaming down his face. Quietly he rested his bow on the ground and put his arm around his dad's shoulder and said three words. Lost in the swirling whirlpool of emotions: of joy and grief and some others that he couldn't identify, Dale didn't hear him for a minute, or at least, the words didn't register. Then he realised what Ryan had said: "For Granddad, hey?"

How had this boy known what had been going through him for so many years? He thought that he had kept it to himself. Had he been that easy to read? Then he understood what it was. Ryan had heard the stories. It dawned on Dale that his son was sensitive to the traditions, to the land, to the mixed emotions of the kill but also the love his Father had for his own father. He realised that Ryan understood.

"Yeah mate," Dale said, "for Granddad."

Whatever else he had to teach him, he knew this much already. In the best sense of the word, his son truly was a hunter. And his journey was just beginning.

### **Shaking the Red Monkey!**

By Mark Southwell

Like most blokes that enjoy chasing deer with a bow, one of my long-term bowhunting goals is to take representative trophies of all the 6 deer species in Australia. Easier said than done I know, and with only a handful of blokes to successfully achieve this with the bow, it remains the focus of the majority of my hunting. Of the six, maybe the Sambar or Hoggies pose the

biggest challenge for many, but for a while there I was convinced my nemesis would be the mighty red stags - let me explain.....

Growing up in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, it was the fallow that were the first to grab my bowhunting attention. A few years in the hills and I had myself a representative buck over 200 DS - number one ticked the list. Having a couple of good mates down the south coast meant access to the Rusa and a few July sessions in the lantana saw a nice 29 incher fall to an arrow of mine - number 2 down. Moving up to Queensland in mid 2002 gave me a chance to hunt the Chital, and 10 months later I was caping out a 24 inch chital trophy - number three gone. But it was to be 12 years of chasing deer with the bow until I got number four - a majestic red stag.



**Mark's P.B. Fallow Buck 204 2/8 DS**



**Mark's best Chital Stag 143 DS**





Marks P.B. Rusa Stag 18 7 6/8 DS

My red deer hunting experiences first started on a week long hunt in the steep hills of the Mary Valley. A few of the boys and I had worked hard to raise the funds for an interstate hunt with the RIDGE group, centred around Baroomba Dam in South east QLD. We were put on a large rough block, because Clark knew we would be willing to walk. The hunting was hard as the rut had not kicked into gear, and although I was able to put a couple of stalks on some nice red stags, I was to travel the 1500 kilometres home empty handed.

The second full on trip after the reds was in 2003. I had become a member of the Tawoomba branch of the ADA, and they had lined up a property in the Brisbane Valley, where members could have a crack at the red stags for a modest fee. A good mate from home was lined up and April saw us camped down beside the creek in anticipation of what the following week would bring.

This property had several hundred deer in a pen, and the plan was to hunt the steep hills in the vicinity for any wild stags that may come in with all the ruckus of roaring stags in the pens. A

couple of days of hard yakka in the hills behind the pen, and we had only seen a handful of stags, one cracker of a 5x5 which had eluded up on several occasions – time to change attack.

The next afternoon we decided to check out the country on the other side of road, so we headed off up the hill and dropped into a lush looking valley. Not long into the walk we spied an old 3x3 with a mob of hinds out in the open. Belly crawling in to about 150m the big fella, the wind changed and sent him and his ladies bolting into the jungle on the other side of the valley.

Moving his way we could hear two stags roaring at each other high in the lantana chocked gullies. Splitting up to suss one stag each, I climbed high above one of the roaring stags, before spending a good hour picking my way through the lantana to get on top of him. As luck would have it, he shut up shop as I approached so my tactics were now to slowly stalk my way down through the thick stuff to where I thought he was. Moving slowly I came out into a patch that was rubbed and torn up to buggery, definitely the pad of a rutting stag.

Spying movement down the hill from me I decided to give my best impersonation of a roaring stag and on my effort, he started to come at me. I drew my bow when he was maybe 30 metres below me and as he approached he let out a roar that would make even the most experienced hunter shake in his boots. Stopping at 15 metres, I decided it was now or never and let him have it – only to have the arrow deflect harmlessly beside the stag. Red stags two, Maxy nil!

Easter of 2005 saw Paul, Mick and I in the hills of northern NSW, chasing reds, fallow, billies and boars. We had hunted hard for several days and seen a few



good stags, when Mick managed to stalk in and shoot a cracker of a 5x6 one afternoon. That was enough to get me out of the bag early the next day and back at em. A kilometre or so from camp, the faint sound of a red roar came from the valley below, so I closed the gap without hesitation.



**Micks P.B. Red Stag**

Crossing the hill, I soon spied the shapes of several red deer in a gully, on closer inspection a 4x4 stag could be seen rubbing his antlers on a tree. The video came out to get some shaky footage as proof of the sighting, and then I began a stalk in behind a large gum tree that would see me get within 30 metres of the tree rubbing stag.

About 5 metres off my big gum I was using for cover, things turned ugly, the stag decided he had had enough rubbing and walked further around the hill to his girls. Knowing I had run out of cover, and maybe being a little hasty, I decided to roar at the stag and see what happened.

I gave a roar, which immediately turned the big fella round for a look. He roared in challenge, and for the next few minutes we had a roar off with the stag holding at about 60 metres from my position. One more roar and he decided I was enough of a threat to his harem that he needed to come and investigate, and at 50 odd metres I drew my bow as he came towards me. Stopping at what

I thought was 45 metres, he looked back to his ladies and offered me a quartering on shot, which was too good to resist. Letting the arrow go, I could tell straight from the start that it was going high – miss number two for me on the red stags.

The following Easter Paul and I were back in the same hills, this time accompanied by Chris Hervert. The week started well, with a couple of cracking animals seen and old man Hervert even decking his first red stag with the bow. Mid ways through the trip, one cold afternoon I finally got my chance. I had dropped over the edge and onto a huge steep face where we could hear a stag roaring. Making my way across the face, I laid eyes on the stag, a representative 5x5 with two hinds. Closing the gap, the stag fed into a small patch of shrubs, and with the wind circling, I quickly closed the gap to around 40 metres. As the stag rubbed a sapling I redied for a shot and decided to give him one when he stepped into a shooting lane to his left. Three more steps and he was there, he propped, I shot and to my disbelief the arrow hit him square in the left antler and stuck there. He took off down the slope for parts unknown and I had just blown my third shot opportunity on the reds – not happy Jan!



**Chris Hervert's P.B. Red Stag**



Easter 2007, and with arrows sharpened, packs loaded and hopes at an all time high – Paul and I once again set off into the hills in search of red stags. Dropping into the valley, we immediately heard the sound of several stags roaring, music to our ears and a good sign given that it was 11.30 in the morning. Dropping the packs and setting up camp, we spent the afternoon strolling down to the spring to get water. Due to the dry conditions we had to scratch for the water at 'goat shit spring' aptly named as the healthy goat population also drink from here. On our way back to camp we had an encounter with a small 3x3 red stag, which I hind called to within 30 metres!

Being the first arvo he was allowed to go on his way unharmed. He will be bigger next year. A couple of days later, Paul and I were stalking the roaring stags again, we had split up for the morning but were still within radio contact. Making my way around a steep face, I spied a healthy looking boar feeding in among a tangle of vines. I stalked up and around the old fella, but just couldn't get a shot. I ended up shooting him several days later and he would be my best boar to date at 28 2/8DP, but that's another story.....



**Mark with his excellent mountain boar  
28 2/8 DS!**

Making my way further round the hill, I decided to have a spell and listen to the

stags roaring in the distance over towards where Paul was hunting (always the way!). Looking down the hill after a few minutes, I picked up a 5x5 stag, making his way around to my left. He was a candidate and was moving quite quickly. I let him get around and out of sight and then I started to drop down above him. My logic was to follow him as he was working around into the wind maybe 200 metres below me. As I quickly stalked my way down and across he went over the ridge in front of me, so I sped up, trying to close the gap.

Cresting the rise, I looked across to see the stag standing on the next ridge, staring back in my direction. I'm not sure whether he saw me or just heard a noise, but I was stuck out in the open with nowhere to go. Pressing the point I gave a couple of hind calls to stir things up. Letting out a long roar, the stag put his head down and started heading back towards me around the side of the hill. A couple more hind calls and he was now well on his way. Reaching for the shot, the stag moved around below me, and as he came into view I was already at full draw. At 25 metres, I touched off the shot and the stag raced off down the hill before getting the wobbly boot and collapsing about 150 metres below me.

The Blackstump tipped GoldTip arrow had done the job well, entering just in front of the shoulder and exiting in the middle of the 'triangle' on the other side.

To say I was ecstatic was an understatement, many years of trying and finally the red deer monkey was off my back. I got a bit of quick video, and was straight on the radio to Paul. "Mate I just cracked a 5x5 red stag" I blurted into the radio "yeah, me too" was the reply! Paul had taken a nice 4x5 stag with a 25 metre shot not 5 minutes from the time I shot mine – we couldn't be



happier. That night we celebrated with a few quiet beers – it had been a long day of hiking the antlers and capes back to the truck and to the salt.



**Mark finally achieves his goal, a 203 4/8 DS Mountain Red Stag!**



**Paul with the fist of many deer to fall to his very skilled hands, 187 7/8 DS Red Stag!**

A few days later we were back up the mountain and mixing it with the stags. This morning was cold and foggy and as we made our way along the ridge top we could hear several stags in a gully below roaring as only they can. As Paul wanted to check out another gully further up the valley for a stag he had tangled with in years gone passed, I eased my way down towards the roaring stags. Closing in I soon had a small 5x5 skirt around under me, he was no bigger than the one I had already taken so he was safe. Making my way further into the gully I was soon below the fog and looking at two stags and a spiker doing

their thing below me. Sitting there wondering whether the bigger 5x5 was worth a stalk, another stag came into the gully and proceeded to have a cracker of a blue with the other smaller stag. As they fought I had the camera rolling, capturing some sweet footage of the fight.

Later in the day I met back up with Paul and we headed back towards camp. Cresting a rise which gave us a good vantage point to glass the face where I had hit the stag in the antler the year before, it wasn't long before we picked out about 8 hinds and a good solid looking stag. We watched the mob for about half an hour and decided that this stag looked good enough to put a stalk on. As the mob bedded down, we flipped a camera lens to see who would make the stalk and Paul came up trumps. The plan was for him to circle around and come down on top of the stag, which was happily bedded in the tussocks, and I was to sit off and capture the action on film, giving advice via UHF if needed.

What seemed like an eternity later, Paul had closed the gap to 40 metres and was on the final approach. All of a sudden several unseen hinds started to bark around the hill and this got the stags attention and brought him to his feet. This was the angle Paul needed and from 35 metres directly down hill he shot at the stag hitting the big fella in the spine and putting him down. Due to the steepness of the terrain, the stag made it several hundred metres down hill before Paul caught up to him and put a finishing arrow in to seal the deal.

This stag was a truly magnificent old beast, being a very solid 34 inch long 5x5. He had several massive scares on his back and hind quarters, testimony to his battles in these mountains. With the easy part done, it was time for photo's



and capping of the head. This over, it was a slow trudge back to the Ute that afternoon, with Paul carrying the 20 odd kilo's worth of antlers and cape, and me carrying most of the other gear. We slept well that night knowing we had achieved a couple of bowhunting goals, me with my fourth species down, and Paul with a magnificent trophy red stag.



**Paul Southwell's best Red Stag to date, a very impressive 234 DS, awesome stuff!**

## **We Need a Bigger Ballroom**

By Chris Hervert

Reading Jarrod's stories on hard luck made me think of a chain of events that one of my mates still has the greatest enjoyment in reliving time and time again, it's guaranteed to get a run every time after a few amber refreshments. It's not purely a hunting story but we had our bows and had intentions of using them but basically I reckon it's a tale worth telling.

Anyway it all happened I reckon about 10 years ago during the family summer vacation to Burrendong Dam in the NSW central west. The plan was to take the mates boat up there do a bit of fishing, water skiing and check out a few likely spots for critters.

To help set the scene the mates boats was a monstrous ocean going vessel called Sea Dog. Basically it looked so out of place amongst the V8 inboards, tinnies and runabouts that it incurred the wrath of the Aussie sense of humour most places we went. 'Boys are you lost the ocean is 300 k's that way 'or ' Doubt the Marlin currents will reach here ' and ' when does the Queen arrive '. You get the idea.

Anyway first night and Garry and I had travelled up alone, with the family to follow soon after. The trip was slow the little Hi Lux diesel belching out plumes of black smoke every time we needed a little more grunt, and I use that term loosely. It was bloody hot but we used natures air con instead of risking any more drain on the already over worked donk. Upon arrival it was the decided the best thing for the heat was to have a beer or twenty and ensure you woke up dehydrated and with a thumping headache. All seemed good at the time.

Next morning amongst the delirium haze and sweat of an on-site van heating up nicely in the morning sun I heard a meek yet urgent call from the 'oven' next door

***"Chris you need to take me to the hospital"***

***"What!"*** " I replied.

***"You need to take me to the hospital"***

***"What the hell for"*** "I grumbled

***"My ball is swollen "***

Well I'm thinking what is he going on about? So asked again,

***"You're what? "***



**“My bloody left aggot is the size of a grapefruit! “**

**“Geez that’s what I thought you said “**

He has gotta be kidding but I wasn't checking it out for confirmation. I get up have a quick chuck in the closet shrubbery then haul myself into the Hi-Lux. Garry gets in, I just look at him as he perches himself precariously so as not to sit on his swollen testicle, even in my state of nauseam I had to laugh and make comment on his in built air bag. Politely he tells where to go!

The trip to the hospital was mostly silent though I think I mentioned they may have to castrate him, again he tells me where I should go. Thirty bumpy k's later and we are parked at the Wellington Hospital. Garry swaggers in alone. I should mention here I am not big on hospitals or anything remotely smelling like antiseptic, very prone to having natural power naps anytime someone with more than three letters after their name comes into my personal space. In my defence I was pretty crook (self inflicted yes) and tried my best to find a dark corner of that lux to hide in. A rapid tapping sound and I look out to see a white light, no it was a nurses uniform, awesome a fantasy! More tapping and I soon realise it is actually a real nurse and Beryl on the name tag soon dispels any illusions. She informs me the doctor would like me to come inside and have a chat with him. Bonus, but what are mates for, so in I go.

The waves of nausea amplify as the swinging doors of the emergency ward reveal Garry laying half naked (was tempted to say knackered) on the gurney. The alarm bells really start ringing when the guy in the white coats and name tag ' Dr Pass Out ' turns to me with a 10 inch needle (maybe not that big but phobia's do that to you) in hand. He explains this is a nice dose of pethadene to help Garry with the pain. Great I say, he then explains I will have to drive him to Dubbo where the ball doctor will do his stuff. Fantastic I reply, the mind racing as he plunges that syringe into Garry's body.

Oh god I know what's coming, the heart beats a little a faster and sweat gathers on the brow but amazingly I keep it together if only to get out of that house of horror! They wheel Garry out and pour him into the twin cab. I get behind the wheel and steel myself for the trip. Off we go and Garry actually enquires if I'm OK. Geez mate you're the one with the elephant testicle!

Well no more than 300 meters down the road and I'm feeling z grade. Garry chirps up with a slurred **“The SHOTS kicking in”** bonus don't mention the needle but too late I know the feeling well. A little dizzy and light headed and no doubt white as ghost. Gotta pull up mate, check the tyre it feels flat. No worries Garry replies in a drug induced haze, head lolling back and forth, the dribble rolling down his chin.

I get out and that's pretty much all I remember till I wake up on the road. The head was really thumping now as I haul myself up against the wheel. I reach up to feel blood soaking from a head wound courtesy of Liverpool Kiss with the bitumen. A little warm fuzzy feeling in me pants to but better not to go there! In my semi concussed state I remember chariots of beautiful angels floating passed offering aid. Later I realised this was car loads of the locals bowls group on their way to the club! Garry started to notice the heads in the passing vehicles having a real good look so started to get a bit curios. He stumbled out and found me having a really close look at that tyre! I eventually rose feebly and we both lent against the car and discussed our options. Would the man with the giant ball and high as a kite drive or the sorry looking street bum. It was mutually decided Garry was less risk so would do the steering to Dubbo!

Don't remember much of the journey which is probably a good thing. It was quick but I'm reckoning not all that safe. Once at Dubbo Hospital Garry and I entered. At first the staff were a little confused as to who was the patient but a quick reveal of elephantiasis and Garry was whisked away.

I found the coolest place in the hospital grounds and parked myself under that big tree next to the tap and went in out of a comatose state for what must have been hours. I was awoken by another angel that turned out to be another nurse. She explained Garry had sent her out to check on me. I thought at the time what a good mate he was but I now realise he was doing it for ammo that would last well into the future!

Anyway Garry's big aggot got untangled but he got a lot of attention from the curious nurses which I think he enjoyed. Not so much his new love who was there in flash, driving 300 k's in record time, to protect her claim. I ended up going back to the caravan park and at Garry insistence decided to launch Sea Dog and do a bit of fishing and possibly chase a few goats. Back then I was not much of a boat person and things that come naturally now did not then. Anyway got the big sucker off the trailer and into the drink. Crowd gathered as it always did in those days with such an unusually big boat in such a place. Went and parked the trailer, all's going good.

Anyway jump into the boat and start to notice an awful lot of water above the floor. My father calmly asks if that's normal, I reply yeah this is one of those self draining floors once you get up and going she clears out. Well luckily I could not get the motor started and with the water now at my ankles I realised there was a problem, the dam bung plug! I had no idea where he put it but I knew it that is was the size of a pal tin so old Sea Dog was going down fast! I dove overboard and jammed my shorts into the hole hoping to stem the tide. I yelled at the missus to get the car down here (with trailer on) of which she had no chance of doing. As Sea dog started to list I was elated to see the beer drinking yobbo's stop yelling advice but actually starting to realise the situation was beyond the captain and came to the rescue.

They backed the car down and as the winch snapped trying to load the boat they backed the car down further. When finally extracted the newly named Titanic II from Davy Jones locker the water hosed out of her, I swear Burrendong rose 10 percent in those few minutes!

Relieved and shaking I drove back to the van and promptly sat there and cried tears of joy into my beer. My mothers comments on me not be very good with boats did not help but I diluted those in time. While sitting there we received a call that one of our relatives had passed away, they say it comes in threes but I reckon we were well over that mark by now!

Anyway Garry finally makes an appearance, we did a bit of skiing, caught a few redfin and ventured up the arms of the dam to chase a few critters. Finally, thank god, our holiday came to an end and we headed for home. However the drama had still not ended, coming into Boorowa there is a loud unnatural bang from the under carriage of the Hi-lux. The little diesel had packed it in and so was to begin a long roadside vigil and a couple of freaky tow trips but that's another story...

## **Fallow of 2007!**

Part 1 of 5

By Peter Morphett

With the knee all healed and myself back at full mach fitness from many hours of gym work and pre season scouting, this year I planned to hunt the fallow hard, almost like a man possessed, or on a mission, for whatever reason I am driven!

With the place I have been hunting soon to be sold in a messy divorce and the blocks next door soon the but subdivided and sold, the future of my beloved Fallow deer hunting is soon to come to crawl, with this in mind I am of the opinion of make hay when the sun shines and this year I took every opportunity that presented itself, some



where taken because their genetics were weak, others were just pure luck as they passed with metres in very low, low light conditions, while others were calculated and well thought out stalks and some were new techniques used in various stages of the rut to their best advantage!

As most would know I started off by filling the freezer with 3 fine does from various distances, one at 43 metres, the next at 50, and the last at 33 metres, and they have gone down well in roasts and some very nice tasting stew.

The first buck of the year, was a bit of a surprise, I found him beaded in some light scrub with one of his antlers obscured; the shot was angling forward at 37 metres. This buck was the first to hit the deck for 2007, didn't notice the broken antler until the total confused buck passed me and 10 metres and after jumping from his bed when the heavy CarbonTech Rhino shaft suddenly appeared in his chest, I generally try to put a second arrow into any animal with frontal shots as we all know this is the hardest shot in bow hunting and can sometimes have mixed results.



**Pete with the first buck to hit the deck of 07**

The second buck was taken after he would not stop grunting some two hours later, (it was the 28 of March) and you

would think it was peak rut, again my choice on weapon this time, the old doe call this technique works well in pre rut and early stages of the rut before the bucks have a harem together. With a large expanse of open ground to cover to get within range of the unsighted buck as he was proclaiming his territory in all his vocal glory, from within or around the back of a small patch of bush, some 80 metres from my chosen ambush point. There was no way I would be able to get across this open ground, without him busting me, and also the time was the factor, which would also play into my hands even though it could possibly limit my chances also.

I gave 3 quick doe calls, with immediate results the buck appeared from straight out of the bushers and was fixed on my position, with myself totally hidden in a depression in the ground; I could see he was extremely interested. I gave one more call and he started to run straight in my direction, I immediately drew and got set waiting and looking, trying to spot the buck as he would appear, and was holding at full draw, the old heart pumping like mad, waiting and straining to spot the buck as soon as possible, so I could align up for the best possible shot placement, as this technique is just like fox whistling, he is looking for you and will turn and bolt as soon as he identifies you not what is meant to be, again frontal shots are the general rule so placement is critical.

I was holding the 80lb Tribute for what seemed like an eternity with no sign of the buck, so I had to let down, and I carefully looked over the bank searching for the buck, now as soon as I saw the tips of his antlers I stooped! He was now only about 28 metres away and had stopped, he looked like he was trying to come in from down wind (smart bugger) I stopped and carefully drew my



bow while saying to myself pin one high. As I ever so slowly aimed and raised from my position until my bow was clear from bank, in the almost faded light the true worth of the FitzFibers came into their own, the pin settled high the buck which was standing slightly quartering towards me and the shot was away, with in that fraction of a second the shafted hit home hard! I heard a very loud bone punching sound, and I could see my fleches stopped against his shoulder as the buck turned and took off and at frantic pace, the last vision of the buck I could see was him diving off the large embankment into a erosion gully, the same one that had him stopped him from circulating down wind!

I immediately knocked another arrow and ran to where I saw him jump, thinking that my shot had entered a little low; I was concerned about its placement. As I came the banks edge I was straining to see the fatality hit buck, almost frantic and I scanned the bottom on the gully looking to place the final blow, and all I could hear was some moaning, but I almost could not locate the source of the sound, my eyes soon adjusted and found the buck piled into he deep erosion in the bank from where he had more than likely passed out mid air and landed head on into he riven wall and was now totally incapacitated and unconscious. I realised that no second arrow was needed and carefully made my way into the ravine from a different point, and removed him. And boy I was one happy camper, the arrow had broken the front shoulder on entry and exited perfectly behind the opposite shoulder, the Magnus Stringer had really performed well this late evening!



**Pete with his excellent local Fallow Buck  
209 6/8 DS!**



**The other side and exit wound**

To be continued.....

**Gadget of the Month!**



The Bowmaster® portable bow press puts all the capabilities of a full size bow press **in the palm of your hand**. The Bowmaster is small enough to fit easily into your belt pack or even your pocket, making it "the truly portable bow press". The Bowmaster portable bow press allows the pro shop or archer to easily replace the string or cables, install peep sights, adjust draw length, replace wheels or cams, install limb mounted



## Newsletter Contributions

quivers, replace the limbs or even replace the handle. Try the Bowmaster today.....there is no other bow press like it!



Figure 4



Figure 5



Check it out at:

<http://www.prototechind.com>

Again this was a bumper issue of the T.T. newsletter I have received some very good support, thank you to all that took the time to contribute, well done and thank you!

Welcome to all our new members of T.T. again, its defiantly good to have new people from relatively new to the ones with many years of hunting skill and knowable, so welcome Brett Simpson, Kevin Dolbel, Justin and Peter Eather. We are also lucky to have one very experienced deer hunters and Taxidermist Trevor Willis on board, he also has boosted the ranks of the T.T. scorers from down south as Trover has been an official ADA scorer for over 10 years, now with the substantial increase in the members that are qualified to score deer in the origination we are now joined by another that can also teach the Douglas Scoring system like Mark Ballard has done, welcome to T.T. Trevor.

Also thank you the **Brett Simpson** for donating his famous black stump board heads!



I bet we are all siting with crossed legs after reading Chris Hervert's story, well to help him recover from the mental scarring he received from the ordeal he has won this issues dozen **CarbonTech** shafts, congratulations Chris!



Also this issue T.T. has given its donated **Custom OzCrest** wraps to Nathan Cocking, well done mate!



On a bit more technical note, you might have noticed the DP have been removed from the website and your articles as I have been informed that the correct format is **DS**, (**Douglas point Score**) is the correct lettering for all your score sheets and articles as DP is incorrect. Sorry I guess we have to get it right eventually.

Also please if you see any typos or mistakes that might be misinterpreted, or you need more detailed information in the newsletter or on the website please let us know in and respectful way, as we have received some emails that could have been delivered a with a little more respect, again they are mostly my fault and can be rectified quickly, but if we receive emails from people weather they be potential members or friends of members that are abusive, to directors or members in future we will not be so diplomatic!

Also a note from Paul Southwell on 07 T.T. merchandise. The prices have risen due to new set up costs from the printer (beyond our control sorry) **\$38 for the new Polo's and \$35 for the new T-shirts.**

Please don't hesitate to send your stories and ratings in, the email and postal addresses are at the end of this report.

All Membership and Rating forms to be sent to:

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

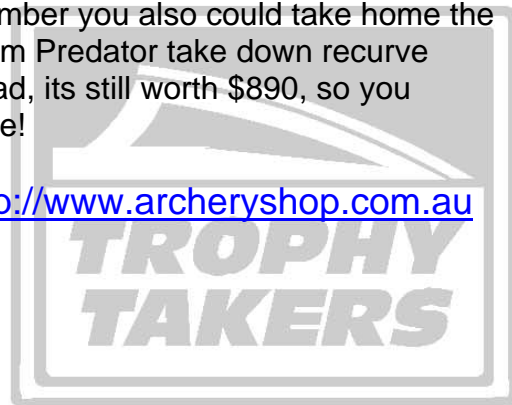
**Peter Morphett.**

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Remember to enter your stories in the T.T. newsletter to be in the running for the end of year grand prize of the a TOP of the range **BowTech** (worth \$1300), yes you get to pick what model that best suits you, that could be either a Tomkat, Allegiance, Tribute, Commander, or the amazing Guardian or Constitution, but remember you also could take home the custom Predator take down recurve instead, its still worth \$890, so you decide!

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**The Bowmen of the Bush**

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# Trophy Takers Merchandise

I am never  
**BOARED**



The Bowmen  
of the Bush

**LOOK - NEW  
SHIRTS**



## NEW DESIGNS Polo or T-Shirts – 2 Sided Print

Colours: Black, Navy, Dark Green, Maroon, Light Grey.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

Prices: Polo - \$38

T-shirt - \$35



**DON'T WORRY, THE OLD FAVOURITES HAVEN'T GONE!!**



## Polo or T-Shirt – 2 Sided Print

Colours: Black, Navy, Dark Green, Maroon.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

Prices: Polo - \$28

T-shirt - \$25



**Bowmen of the bush**



## Polo or T-Shirt – Pocket Print Only

Colours: Black, Navy, Dark Green, Maroon.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

Prices: Polo - \$25

T-shirt - \$22



**LIMITED EDITION**  
Only a few left – GET IN QUICK

**Custom Wall Clocks**

Round: 280mm dia **\$65** (inc P&H)  
Square: 330mm X 330mm **\$80** (inc P&H)

- Clocks custom made with TT member number included under logo if requested.
- Made of Plastic (battery operated)



Note: logo is white on a dark background

**Stubby Holders – with Base**

Colour: Black, Navy, Dark Green, Maroon

Price: **\$9**



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ALL THE GIRLS WILL BE  
CHECKING YOU OUT!!**

**ORDER FORM**

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**SHIRTS – NEW DESIGNS**

**“I am Never Bored”** Polo: \_\_\_ T-Shirt: \_\_\_

Size S: \_\_\_ M: \_\_\_ L: \_\_\_ XL: \_\_\_ XXL: \_\_\_

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

**Red Stag Logo** Polo: \_\_\_ T-Shirt: \_\_\_

Size S: \_\_\_ M: \_\_\_ L: \_\_\_ XL: \_\_\_ XXL: \_\_\_

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

**SHIRTS – 2 SIDED PRINT** Polo: \_\_\_ T-Shirt: \_\_\_

Size S: \_\_\_ M: \_\_\_ L: \_\_\_ XL: \_\_\_ XXL: \_\_\_

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

**SHIRTS – POCKET PRINT ONLY** Polo: \_\_\_ T-Shirt: \_\_\_

Size S: \_\_\_ M: \_\_\_ L: \_\_\_ XL: \_\_\_ XXL: \_\_\_

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

**STUBBY HOLDER**

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

**CLOCKS** Round: \_\_\_ Square \_\_\_

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