



Newsletter Sep-Oct 2012

TROPHY TAKERS NEWSLETTER Sep-Oct 2012

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Game Claim Report 12/07/12

There been some exceptional game rated since the last newsletter across a number of different species. We have seen new number ones in two deer species and the wild dog category.

Back at Christmas time, Paul Southwell managed to sneak in close to a cracking Chital stag while on a hunt in north Queensland. A couple of well placed shots in the thick stuff and Paul re-secured the No.1 spot, with a heavy antlered stag scoring 197 DS. With heavy pearling, the stag had the biggest brow tines I have ever seen – nice one bro!

Gippsland bowhunter Will Ellen put his hog deer tag to good use during this year's season, shooting himself the new No.1 Hogg Deer. At 15 ½ inches in length, and scoring as an 8 pointer, this is one impressive little critter, scoring 96 5/8 DS and beats the previous No.1 by 14 points. Gotta be happy with that Will....



"Paul Southwell back at the top, 197DS!"



"Will Ellen with the new TT number 1 Hog Deer!"

New member Stuart Allen rated a big wild dog that scored 14 8/16 DS and sits at the top of the wild dog ratings. Stuart also rated a fine 98 5/8 DS Rusa stag. Welcome to TT Stuart.



"Stuart Allen with new number 1 wild dog!"



"Stuart Allen with his 98+ Rusa Stag."

There were a few other new members that joined with some nice animals as well. Dave and Josh White from the NSW south coast joined the ranks with Josh taking a 144 1/8 DS Billy, with over 50 inches spread, it now takes the number 5 spot in the Goat ratings – a truly monster Billy! Dave rated a big Rusa stag he shot back in 2008 scoring 202 4/8DS. Way to go fellas and welcome to TT.



"Josh White with a monster Billy, 144+!"



"Dave White with a excellent Rusa Stag 202+!"

Traditional bowhunter Mark Pitts also joined TT with a nice south coast Rusa stag scoring 151DS. Welcome to you too Mark.



"Mark Pitts with a trad Rusa Stag 151+!"

Finally, North Queensland bowhunter Shane Ross joined with a big Cape York boar scoring 25 2/8DS. No doubt Shane will be leading the charge at the Tully awards later in the year!

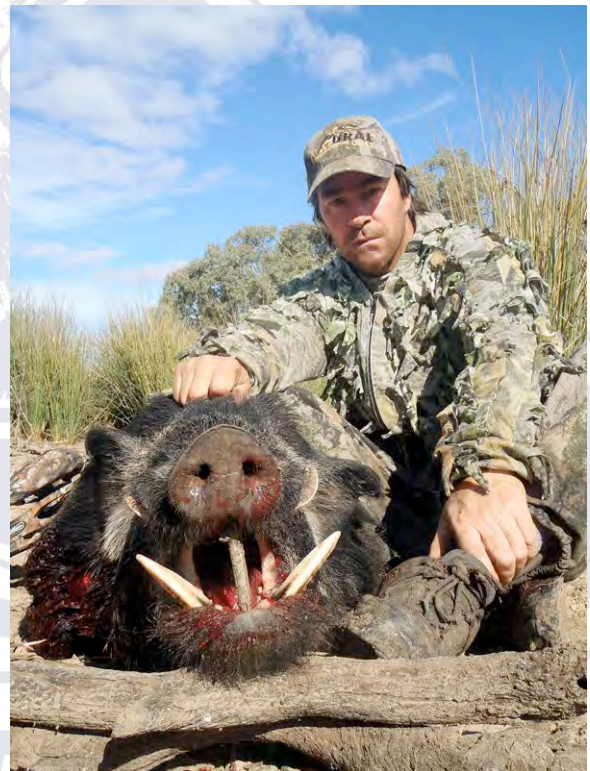


"Shane Ross with a 25+ cape york boar!"

Speaking of Cape York boars, Chris Hervert got around to rating his PB boar from last year, scoring 29 DS neat. I have heard that he plans to attack them again this year too – assuming he has survived the dry July! The only other boar rating for the period was a solid western NSW boar shot by Lee Payne, at 29 4/8DS there's certainly no shortage of ivory on that pig. Good work.



"Chris Hervert with his PB 29 DS Boar!"



"Lee Payne with his PB 29 4/8 DS Boar!"

As is often the case, TT members were very active over the fallow and red deer ruts. No stranger to these pages, Trevor Willis showed he is still in very good hunting form taking a long antlered fallow buck scoring 250 6/8DS. Will the purple patch ever end? Adam Greentree also tipped a few over this rut taking his new PB fallow buck at 231 1/8DS, along with several others over 200DS. Adam also came good on several big reds scoring 249 5/8 and 234 2/8DS. Hats off to you mate.



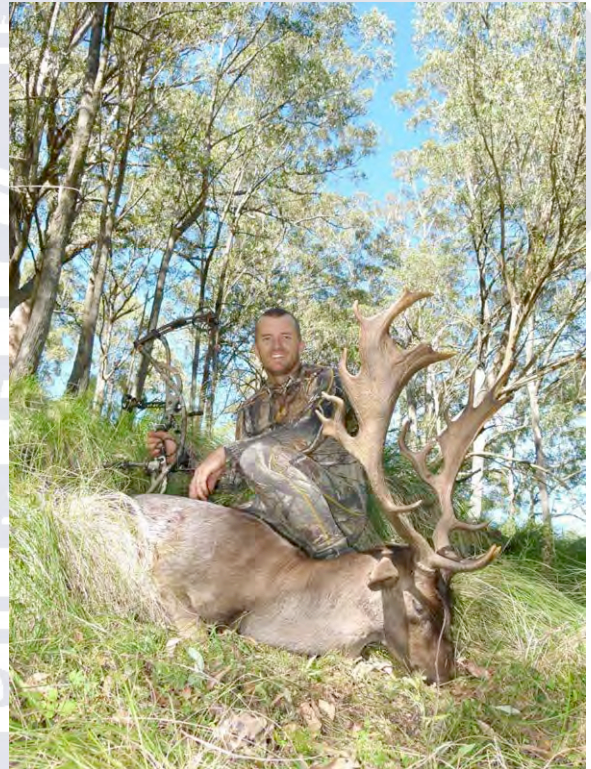
"Trevor Willis with his PB Fallow Buck 250+!"



"Adam with his best Red Stag for 2012 season, 249+!"



"Adam Greentree with his PB Fallow Buck 231+!"



"Adam with another excellent Fallow buck, 227 DS!"



"Adam Greentree with a very fine Red Stag, 234+!"

The Bowmen of

Chris Hervert was also in on the action shooting a nice fallow buck, his best to date at 222 3/8DS. Lee and Glen Payne proved that it helps to live in deer country rating a number of nice fallow bucks, Lee's best a black buck scoring 202 7/8, and Glen's a long antlered buck scoring a touch over 190DS.



"Chris Hervert with his PB Fallow Buck 222+!"

Lee and Glen also managed a few good goats and foxes over the winter. Glen took his PB goat out west scoring 117DS and coming under just under the magic 40 inch spread mark – sorry to remind you again Glen... Lee rated a solid 105 5/8DS western goat too. Closer to home, Glen had some luck on the red coats with a 10 1/16 and 9 15/16DS fox. Good work!



"Lee Payne with one of many buck for 2012, this one 191+!"



"Glen Payne with his 190+ Buck!"



"Glenn with another Buck from 2012, 189+!"



"Lee with his best Buck for 2012, 202+!"



"Glen Payne with his PB Billy, 117 DS!"



"Glen with another good Fox, 9 15/16 DS"



"Lee Payne with a western 105+ Billy"

Shane Dupille's been into the native killers as well, rating his biggest fox to date at 10 10/16DS and a big cat scoring 7 11/16DS. There can't be many foxes left around Dubbo, surely... Shane also rated a few Billies he shot with his Badlands recurve, scoring 112 6/8 and two close to 106DS.



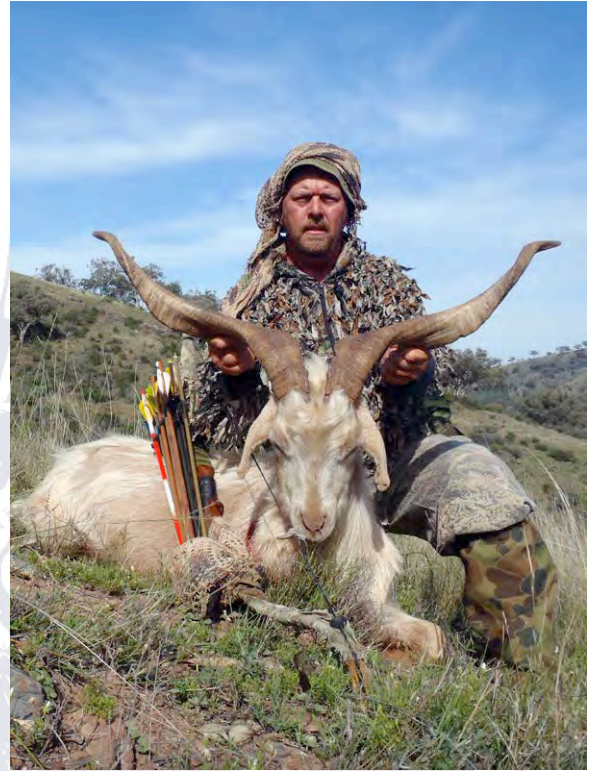
"Glen with a fine 10 1/16 DS winter fox!"



"Shane with another huge bag of Foxes!"



"Shane with his 7 11/16 DS Kitty!"



"Shane Dupille with 106+ Trad Billy!"



"Shane with his 112+ Billy, he needs someone to carry all the arrows, Dave W gets that job!"

To round out the ratings, I entered a Bull Tahr I shot in on the west coast of New Zealand back in May. While he wasn't the biggest bull on the mountain at 34 DS, he sure was sweet reward after a week busting our arses around in some big scary country.



"Mark Southwell's exceptional Tahr 34 DS!"

Good hunting,

Mark Southwell.

Cut-off Date for the 2012 TT ratings year.

Please note that the cut off for ratings to be eligible for the 2012 awards was the **20th August 2012**. This is to allow us time to get some new promotional banners made and get the trophies engraved prior to the awards presentation.

Video award at the 2012 Tully TT awards

With the increase in members filming their hunts, TT has awarded the best short hunting video at the last few TT award weekends. This year we want to make this category even stronger and encourage as many hunters as possible to put together some footage and enter it in this year's awards. If we get enough entries and people are keen to have their video's included, we will look to put all the entries on one DVD and make it available to TT members. Entries are to be no longer than 4 minutes in duration, and can be sent in on DVD to the TT mailing address:

P.O. Box U47, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2351

Before the 8th September. If anyone has questions regarding the video awards, please email

info2@trohytakers.org

Chairman's Report

Hello fellow bowhunters. Hope all is well amongst you and you are getting the odd shot away. The year is fast slipping

away and the 2012 Tully Awards are now less than a month away. I am aware that it has been a good while since our last Newsletter and on behalf of the TT Committee I offer an apology. Having said that I do think everyone will be pleased with this issue and say thank you to everyone that has contributed and especially to Pete Morphett that has to put it all together each time. We all lead very busy lives these days and I know Pete's no exception so I ask that anyone that can spare a bit of time or expertise with the Newsletter, going forward, to please let us know as any help will be appreciated. Also I ask ALL members to make the effort to send the odd photo, article or tip in to Pete for inclusion in future newsletters.

Thank you to those that already do so... We would love to hear from any one of you, particularly our newer members.

Tully Awards 21-23 September 2012

Firstly I would suggest, for anyone that has not yet seen it, that they have a look at the Tully Bowhunters Traditional Invitational Shoot Ad on page 33 of June/July issue of Bowhunting Down Under magazine. Boy, do they have a big weekend planned! This is also the venue for our 25th Annual Awards and I am tipping it will be one of our best given the interest already shown by many and fact that the venue, Tully Club, has a Bowhunting pedigree that stretches beyond 35 years of active Bowhunting and is second to none, I feel, here in Australia.

I can't wait to get up there to meet or renew acquaintances with some of the old-timers that began to build the Clubs legendary status way back in the 1970's. Also of note is that several amongst the Tully Bowhunting elite were also founder committee or very early

members of TT back in its foundation years of 1986/87.

It is my understanding that those that want to, can camp at the Club grounds a few days before and after the event however out of courtesy to the Club I would suggest that you contact them before hand on M: 0438489704 or Email to let them know your planned attendance etc.

tullybowhunters@gmail.com

By the way, unlike most “traditional” shoots the club has decided to allow all types of bows to be shot over the weekend ...even those dreaded compounds.... so no excuses make the effort and we will see you there.

One thing I should mention is that as this event will be run with TT as “Co-host” there is a chance that your name will be added to a “roster” to serve say a two hour stint sometime over the three days behind a canteen or assist with other catering duties. So if asked please co-operate and do your best to uphold the good name of Trophy Takers.

I also ask that all members attending bring at least one item to contribute to the trophy wall , framed photograph display and/or photo album display etc. A little input from everyone results in a great display. I have carried half a trailer load of trophies, marketing gear, banners, albums perpetual shields etc, etc to almost every Awards throughout NT, Qld NSW, Vic and ACT since 1987 so I tend to get a little annoyed when someone tells me they could not fit one item in!

As usual and in addition to all the Awards presented on the Saturday night for best boar, goat buffalo and deer species we will continue to provide encouragement Awards and recognition

for best framed and unframed photos, photo albums, best trophy mounts etc. We also try to do literary encouragement awards based on members contributions to the TT newsletter or articles they have written since last awards in the various Aussie Bowhunting mags. Another angle that we have really tried to encourage is for ALL members to provide a sequence of up to four minutes of recent bowhunting /or related video footage whereby a panel views the footage over the weekend and then decides a winner.

We are hoping that if we start to get enough snippets together each year that we can compile into one short DVD for availability to members. Refer Mark Southwell’s further writings re this matter in this Newsletter and please have a go at entering something.

In the spirit of promoting the fellowship of Bowhunting and the seemingly closely aligned photography aspect of our sport an invitation is extended to any Bowhunter attending the Tully Trad Weekend and reading this newsletter to also enter their trophies, photo’s, albums etc for judging and possible recognition on the Saturday night.

At the end of the day what it comes down to is you will be contributing to a great display and giving like minded attendees the opportunities to have a look at your achievements with the bow and arrow or camera work..

Anyhow hopefully I’ve sparked your interest to attend, especially you NQ guys. Further info is available by using the previously advise Tully Bowhunter contact details.

Danny “where am I “ McMahan – Annual Legend Award.

Instigated back in 1994 this is the one trophy that members perhaps do not want to get their name on each year. Presented with “tongue in cheek” and a bit of good natured fun on the Awards night for someone that perhaps done something real dumb or had a close encounter throughout the year and were either unfortunate enough that one of their mates witnessed the event or worse still they were silly enough to tell their mate about their stuff up/forgetfulness/accident etc, etc.

The only other selection criteria is that last years mug/fool (I mean lucky recipient) gets to pick this years winner/loser and it is preferable that the person to receive the Award is in attendance on the Saturday night so that we can ALL share the experience with them (I mean laugh at them). I think everyone gets my drift but with the intent of embarrassing someone a couple of examples are; A few years back young Dan Kernaghan left it till the last minute to snatch the glory when he was called in from the practice butt at the 2009 TT Awards at Upper Sandy Creek in Vic for the commencement of our presentation night.

Unfortunately in his rush young Dan decided to “hang his bow up on the ground”, with the result that a late arrival to the Awards entered the hall with Dan’s bow considerably the worse for wear having had a set of Goodyear’s rearrange its shape. The planned recipient was duly scratched and Dan’s name proudly sits engraved on the shield as the 2009 winner. Dan’s error of judgment made it onto the shield and the other example just might if he shows up at this year’s Awards. Apparently the abridged story of what I heard is that a well known young bowhunter from SA sat his very expensive compound bow down in the bush and then despite a very thorough search was unable to

locate it (must have had someone with him because you wouldn’t tell anyone. Would you?). One positive to take out of the Award though is that you would be in good company with a quick glance showing such previous winners as Mark Ballard (twice), Mick Barrett, Doug Stojanovski, Late Pedro Lever, Mick Kernaghan (only father and son recipients! Must run in the family!), Damain Zeinert, Dale Furze, Leigh Cocks, Shannon James, Dave Sarroff and Ben Salleras (shamed the Tully name!). Don’t worry I’m also in the mix somewhere for trying to abseil a cliff back in the 90”s without the one essential ingredient, A ROPE!

Last year’s winner Ben Reith (something to do with campfires and TT chairman’s camping furniture) will be at Tully this year and he has made it known he takes his job of finding and embarrassing the next Legend very seriously. So if you have a mate that is going to be at the do at Tully (doesn’t have to be a TT member) why not give Ben a call and DOB your mate in. Forgot to mention that in the interest of completely embarrassing your nomination you are encouraged to embellish the story as much as you want! Ben’s number is 0427267477 or 0263740393.

Game Ratings

Refer Mark Southwell’s report at the start of this newsletter and his recent email/correspondence to members advising of 20th August 2012 cut off date for 2012 Awards. Given the Awards are some six weeks after this date it is acknowledged as a somewhat early closing date however this mainly revolves around fact that we need to get all perpetual shields, and trophies sorted and engraved so that I can cart them with me when I head north late August with an eventual destination at Tully a few days prior to the Awards. All ratings

received after 20th August will simply be eligible for inclusion in 2012/13 ratings year.

On the subject of Perpetual Shields I would like to pass on a big thank you and acknowledge the efforts of Dubbo based TT member Shane Dupille in getting backing boards or larger base plates made for most of our trophies. This has upsized all of the trophies and this will enable us to catch up with any missing engravings from years past and hopefully increase longevity of trophies for another 10/15 rating years.

Several of our major trophies were crafted and donated by the late Bill Hill, from the Tully Club and for those that have seen Bill's excellent workmanship you will understand that Shane has done well to engage the services of a master timber worker in Dubbo that has been able to enhance and complement Bill's initial works of excellence.

Mark Wills, TT member from Wollongong has also managed to get a cast struck for producing our original #1 Shields (presented as a much sought after keepsake for anyone that beats our #1 rating in Boar, Goat, Buffalo and six deer species only) and I am happy to say we will be doing a catch up presentation of all those outstanding shields at the Tully Awards night. The original shield was cast back in 1986 and we had long lost contact with the craftsman that made them by the time we handed the last one out a few years back. Thanks Mark.

A few amongst us may read Mark Southwell's game report and say they did not get a mention. Don't be concerned as Mark tells me he has about another 20 or so ratings to input that came in after he put his report together for this newsletter. You will be mentioned in future newsletters and

should have by now received your rating certificate from Mark.

A couple of things on the hunting scene that I would like to mention are, firstly a big well done to Anthony "Killer" Clarkson and Dale Furze for both taking their first Buffalo last month. A great effort by you both. I understand Anthony's will slot into the top ten.

Secondly I would like to wish Ian Fenton, Ben Salleras, Adam Greentree, Ben Chambers and his partner Jane all the very best as they head off on their separate ways to North America in coming weeks hunting the likes of moose, elk and whitetail. Go safe and do well.

Before closing on this subject I would also like to acknowledge the work Mark Southwell does for Trophy Takers. It seems he not only holds down the position of Rating Director but also Membership Director, the two busiest jobs in our structure. So well done and thanks Mark.

2012 Trophy Takers Major Raffle

Refer flyer recently put together and circulated by Mark Southwell or Ring me on 0417045433 to obtain a ticket.

Trophy Taker founder, patron and Bowhunting great Ian Fenton has very, very generously donated a painting that he will do of the winners favourite hunting, fishing, landscape photograph. Profit from the raffle will be split between TT and the Tully Bowhunting club with winner drawn at Tully during the TT Awards on the Saturday night. Tickets are not cheap and are priced to a specific market and we expect to sell less than 100 tickets based on following rationale:

- **Will take over two full weeks for Ian to paint and is valued at in excess of \$2000**
- **Drawn in less than two months**
- **This is a “one off”, as Ian is unlikely to repeat such a generous offer,**
- **Will only attract buyers that genuinely want and appreciate the significance of a Fenton painting on their trophy wall.**
- **Limited sales means it gives all of us bowhunters that participate in the sport on a limited budget fair odds at such a unique and perhaps otherwise unobtainable treasure.**
- **Refer article on page 106 of latest South Pacific Bowhunter. Ian is a very good artist.**

Hope you all support our efforts. Good Luck and Many thanks Ian In conjunction with the Tully club we are still going to hold our regular “pick from the table” raffle so if anyone attending can access some small sponsorships please bring them along for inclusion in the raffle.

Tully 2012 Marketing Merchandise

Ben Salleras and Dave Keable have put their creative heads together and have come up with a great composite emblem design of the TT and Tully club badges. This unique emblem will be printed on 20 Cotton T shirts, 20 short-sleeved polo shirts in Aus-Cam and 10 Singlet's in Aus-Cam and in various sizes. This is not a big order for such a unique item of clothing, so get in real early when you arrive at Tully as they will be sold to all

comers and are not expected to last long. TT member Wal Parker via his family's screen-printing business in Darwin is providing shirts and other merchandise. Wal has also donated 100 stubby holders with the “one off” composite design on them and the decision has been made that these will be handed out to the first 100 people that register for the Tully Traditional shoot.

We have 50 new TT embroidered camo hats that will also be on sale for the first time at Tully.

Many, many thanks Wal for your help with this. By the way for those that don't know Wal yet he will be easy to spot as he will be the one with a big smile on his face and walking about the place with a new Huntsman recurve as a permanent fixture in his left hand. Wal is flying in for the Awards from PNG and picking the bow up when he arrives in Cairns. I know he is counting the days (probably in pigeon English if a recent email I got from him is any indication!)

Of course the Tully club will also have merchandise, with their famous logo, for sale, so don't forget to support them as well.

Vale – John Hillier

Very sadly I must advise members that John Hillier passed away over the last weekend in July. John was aged 64 and had actively and very successfully bow hunted for over 5 decades. John joined TT in its very early years and gave us good solid support over many years. John was one of the best shots with any sort of bow (with or without sights) that I have come across during my forty odd years in the sport.

Underneath that gruff and forthright exterior was a man with a heart of gold, a wicked sense of humour and

unrelenting ethics around his bowhunting and the Australian bush. John was a Trophy hunter in the true sense of the word, with a seemingly unswaying dedication to the taking of mainly trophy animals and in particular antlered deer. By the mid 80's, when most of us were thinking ourselves lucky to see a wild deer in the bush John had a trophy room full of them.

I had a few hunts with John over the years and must say that a two week trip to the NT that I did with John, Col Moynihan, Rod Shorten and Dave Daws back in the late 1980's still ranks as one of the best in terms of mate ship, bucket loads of fun and some good hunting.



"R.I.P. John Hiller 1948 -2012"

The friendly banter and antics between John, Rod and Mono from the time we boarded the plane in Sydney until we hopped off the plane two weeks later back in Sydney was side splitting fun and laughter.

John was a hard man to get to know and befriend but I can vouch that his good mates Rod and Mono would have been still tormenting him with friendly banter and in an endearing fashion right up until a few days before his sudden death. He will be sadly missed by these guys and whilst it is too late now I can't help but think that this quite achiever in our sport never really got the recognition for the bowhunting skills and exploits he displayed consistently year after year decade after decade.

To Gabby and John's seven children a heart felt condolence from we at Trophy Takers. John is yet another one of our bowhunting mates that has left us way too early.

Safe Hunting and good health,

Dave Whiting, Chairman.

Pigs's Pad

Been thinking a bit lately about how all this started, this hunting camping fishing thing, why do I and all of you guys love to do it so much. I think inherently it's already there, call it what you will but a genetic disposition to be a hunter gatherer lies deep (or shallow) within us all I believe. I look at my rels and I can see it plain as day, my niece in the Czech Republic for instance breeds gun dogs, and low and behold actually hunts over them. Other European relations have walls covered with skins and antlers, remind you of anyone?

My Australian heritage tells pretty much the same tale, but with an Aussie slant to it...

Ok so we have determined it's in there so what gives it the chance to flourish? I think its opportunity and environment, if

those around you do it chances are you will too. Whether you continue to do it depends on many factors too, but those of us with the desire seem to find a way despite any road blocks. It all started for me with my dad (as for many of us I'm sure), he was a forester and originally from the Czech Republic where his passion for the bush blossomed throughout his youth. I can remember the early days hunting the Decca Rd near Wyangla Dam, double barreled four ten, and bowling those bunnies as they sat unsuspecting in the sun, I reckon I was 7 maybe 8, great times!

Dad had a great mate, Wally Spring. Wally was a top bloke and many of my early outdoor memories include him as a central figure. His job was to travel the bush making sure all the fire trails were clear and drivable. Often he would take Stuart (my brother) and me along with him, two, three four days just 'exploring' the scrub. As characters go he was one in a million, he would spin us tales about one eyed foxes, bush rats and life as a lad in the depression. To get a 'campfire' going Wally would winch dead trees into a pile and simply light one end, as the camp progressed so did the fire. Once the river rose and unbeknown to us surrounded our camp overnight, Wally woke up surveyed the situation and calmly said 'surfs up'.

Another time I had spent the whole morning sitting in a cherry tree stuffing my face, on the way home I spewed all over the windscreen of the old Landover, all Wally said 'I got dibs on the chunky bits!' He was that kind of guy... Wally retired and died soon after, sad but I am sure he would say he had a good life, I know I certainly would agree.

So I guess in my rambling I am saying take a second to think about how you got where you are today, the influences

in your outdoor life, I know I can thank my dad and Wally. I also think it's important to foster others, it's a given the kids get to enjoy the ride, but those around who may not necessarily had the influences to simply 'go bush', they may need a little prod, the more the merrier I say!

Chris Hervert.

2012 Hoggie Hunt Ben Salleras

Day 0: The time has come...

Well the day has finally come, once I walk out the office door this morning I'll be en route to sunny Victoria for my first crack at one of Australia's least hunted species - the Hog Deer. An opportunity came up a few months ago through a mate down that way, for a guided hunt on private land. All I needed to know was where to sign up!!

Over the years I've often wondered when this opportunity would arrive. The other 5 species of deer we are lucky enough to be able to hunt here in Australia are usually far more accessible than the Hoggies. Getting access isn't easy, and hunting pressure down that way can make balloted hunts on public land pretty hard going for a bowhunter I've heard.

Introduced to coastal Victoria by the Acclimatization Society of Victoria back in the 1860's, they are actually classified as a threatened species in their home range of India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. Australia's wild population is one of the only places in the world (if not the only) where one can bow hunt true, free range Hoggies.

I'll be shooting my Hoyt Vector Turbo once again. launching Carbon Express Maxima Hunter 450s tipped with 3-blade 100gn Muzzy broadheads. The combination has looked the goods of late. We'll be hunting from tomorrow (Wednesday) morning through to Sunday, with the possibility of a bit of fishing or even a look for a Sambar thrown in if things go to plan. There are good numbers about, and some very nice looking stags sighted of late. I won't be too picky, anything with 6 points would be a dream come true for me.



Day 1: It begins

Day 1 has been incredible to say the least. After a fairly late arrival at the property last night, then a few hours of war stories and rums, I didn't get a huge amount of sleep before our first hunt this morning. We saw a few deer on the way in last night, including two reasonable stags having a bit of a blue.



Nevertheless, Jason and I were in the tree stand by 5:00am this morning. When I say tree stand, I mean tree house. Just on first light the first small group came wandering past. I was captivated. Between 6am and 8am we had around 20 deer wander past within 50m, including one stag around the 14" mark. No shots within comfortable range on any of the better stags were on offer, although it was just incredible just to watch that many hoggies feed past us unawares.

In the afternoon Jason and I headed for a portable elevated blind, mounted into the tray of an old Ute. I thought it was an awesome design! We glassed throughout the afternoon, but only had a velvet spiker feed in to us.

PHY
KERS
The Bowmen of the Bush



The wind has been crazy this afternoon, which isn't ideal, but the forecast is looking better for tomorrow. We have an awesome plan of attack for the morning, I've got a feeling I'll let an arrow go in the morning, fingers crossed. Amazing place, incredible deer, awesome people, having a blast.

Day 2: The Agony, the Ecstasy, and the Agony.

Wow, what a day. The highs and lows of this game are incredibly addictive yet agonizing at times. Yesterday morning I was set up about 20m off a well-used game trail, a bit closer than the morning before when we were in the tree house. Jason was keeping a lookout from above. I was waiting in the darkness below, poised and ready for the slightest hint of movement. Just as it became light enough to see, I caught movement on the trail, a glint of antler, then gone again. Later Jason confirmed he was an absolute monster, around 15".

Slowly the light got better, I could just make out the odd hind or two slowly meandering past. About an hour into the hunt, two stags came walking through, one thumper and one smaller 9" model. I was beside myself with anticipation...

I had just drawn my bow for a practice aim two minutes earlier, and was comfortable with the amount of light. As the bigger stag came into my shooting lane at a range of 23m, I slowly drew, gave a soft squeak with my mouth to pull him up, aimed steady, and released. To my utter disbelief the arrow zipped straight over his back into the ti-tree thicket behind him.... Both stags didn't hesitate in getting the hell out of there real quick. I gathered my thoughts... What had just happened? I hand signalled back to Jason to communicate the miss. He was already signalling to me madly to get ready again, I could tell by the ferocity of his signals that time was of the essence! Without hesitation I snuck another arrow out and prepared for whatever was coming...

No less than four stags came filing through the undergrowth, including one definite shooter around the 12" mark. I drew once again, it was déjà vu as I let out a squeak as he came into view. I settled the top pin and let off a smooth release. I watched in the dimness of an overcast morning as the arrow covered the 23m and smacked the stag in perfect line. The noise was right, the stag's reaction was right, and all was silent in seconds. I turned around to look at Jason and gave some mega fist pumps, I was 100% confident I'd just plugged the stag a beauty through the shoulder. We rejoiced as silently as possible and recounted the last 5 minutes. We gave him a good 10 minutes before following up the trail.



Feet hardly in contact with the earth, I headed over to the scene of the hit, and located my arrow a few metres past the game trail. Immediately my heart sank. Not a trace of blood on the arrow, just a tiny bit of meat and some fur. It took us 5 minutes even to find the slightest drop of blood. I maintained as much optimism as I possibly could for the next 3 hours as the two of us crawled on our bellies through the thick coastal scrub, waves crashing in the background and some rain starting to move in. I eventually came to the realization that my worst nightmare was happening right here and right now, and that we wouldn't be finding this stag.

The only explanation was that the shot had gone high, through that small zone of no man's land above the spine in line with and above the shoulder. On a Hoggie that's a very small area, an inch or two lower would have taken out his spine. There was almost no blood, one of the lightest blood trails I've followed in my life. The few drops we did find were dark and rubbed onto vegetation,

nothing on the ground. I can't explain with acceptable words how I really felt at that point, but I'm sure many of you have been in a similar place before. I really believed after the shot that I'd slotted him right on the spot, and that the dream hunt had been executed. Now I was walking back to the homestead, speechless, wondering if my hunt was now indeed over....

Back at the homestead, Neil (owner of the operation and property), Jason and I sat down over a cuppa and carried out a synopsis of the morning's events. We decided that the hit was unlikely to be lethal, I sighed a big sigh of relief (and I mean big). Neil directed us to continue with the hunt, something I was tremendously grateful for.

Looking back at the morning's performance, I tried to work out how I could get it wrong twice at 23m. I was very calm - no buck fever or jitters, and got a clean release both shots. I was happy with settlement of the pin both shots as well. The only issue I had was centring my pin in the peep in the low light conditions. The peep was very blurry, not well defined. I can remember torqueing my bow up and down, left and right, just slightly, trying to centre the pin in the peep. I can't remember the last time I had to shoot at an animal in such low light conditions, especially with the new bow. This is all I can put it down to. Anyway, what's happened can't be changed. I'm sure you have a rough idea how I'm feeling. As regrettable as this situation is, I can only hope now that the stag is laid up and recovers from the hit, and even better would be if the guys capture him with one of their many trail cams sometime in the future.

Yesterday afternoon Jason and I headed out to the same elevated hide. The deer were very quiet again - only the same spiker from the arvo before,

and an old hind came into view out of the tussocks as well. We watched a heap of video yesterday from the last few weeks, with the deer leisurely feeding throughout the afternoons in the same paddocks we've been glassing. The prevailing easterly wind seems to be keeping them in cover longer during the afternoons compared to previous weeks. A westerly change has come through today which is encouraging.



Day 3: So close

Well yesterday was action packed yet again. These deer are like nothing else I've ever hunted. Almost mystical in nature, they are as intriguing as any critter I've ever laid eyes on. I can say right now that regardless of whether or not I'm lucky enough to nail a stag this trip, I'll be back here again one day soon, mark my words.

Yesterday morning Jason and I headed down the coast a bit further to an ambush point we'd prepared the day before. The hide put me about 10m from a true hog deer highway, our hopes were high. We got into position well before dawn, and prepared for the onslaught of mozzies. I've never seen mozzies like this in my life, they're as bad as everyone had me thinking! Within 5 minutes, in the pitch black, a lone doe came wandering through. We were still at least half an hour away from shooting light. I sat motionless, my sanity being pushed to the limits by the cloud of mozzies, silently praying for a stag to come walking along the pad. But it was not to be, we didn't see another deer all morning. We discussed the lack of activity on the walk back home, all we could put it down to was the previous morning's events stirring them up a bit and keeping them in the thick stuff.

Later on, after lunch, Neil was up the watchtower glassing the tussock flats, when he called out. Jason and I climbed up to check it out, and found a really nice stag feeding in a prime position only 300m out from the house. I quickly threw my camo on and grabbed my gear and trotted out into the open flats. These things are so small you could lose them in couch grass, so to assist in guiding me in. I took my phone with me. Jason kept close watch with his spotting scope. He called up a few times to keep me heading in the right direction, until I spotted the stag at around 100m. I dropped into the tussocks and entered stealth mode.

Closing the gap to 30-40m after a fairly simple (no basalt here!!) belly crawl, I was just getting to the point where I could get a clear view to range him, when out of nowhere an unseen spiker jumped out of the tussock next to me and squealed. I couldn't believe how close I'd come yet again, without the spiker I was likely to get a good clear shot at around 30m on an unaware hummer of a stag.

Immediately after the two deer had disappeared back towards the scrub, my phone vibrated. It was Jason, telling me to get the hell back down into the tussocks and head back out to the east along the edge of the tussocks - three more stags had just got up for a

lunchtime chew. I headed that way and before long had them in sight, a spiker; a 10" and a 12". Before long I was back into crawl mode, unfortunately they were slowly feeding away from me so I had to move fairly quick to keep up, luckily the wind was steady and was masking my movements.



Every now and then I had to pop up and locate the three stags. I was getting real close now, although the biggest stag had seemingly disappeared. I had my sights now set on the 10" stag, and was now under 30m from him feeding away in the thick tussocks, back barely visible. Without warning the spiker who was behind him decided to feed straight towards me, suddenly he was almost on top of me, spotting me at 5m before letting out a little girly squeal and disappearing to parts unknown, taking both stags with him. I was slightly annoyed.

In the arvo we had a stalk on a good stag as he and around 10 girls fed out into an open paddock, but darkness closed in before a shot was offered. We decided not to stir them up too much and leave them for tomorrow.

Day 4: It all comes together

Day four started with a revised plan for the morning. Our hopes were high, as the westerly had retained itself over night, perfect conditions. In the

darkness Jason and I walked down to two different stands. I would hide off a well-used pad we hadn't hunted or disturbed at all, while Jason went down to the main tree house to survey movement in that area. Covering both of these main travel paths would give us a good idea of what the deer were up to, and hopefully a solid plan of attack for the final morning's hunt.

I positioned myself in some small banksia bushes about 25m off the pad, and enjoyed the peacefulness of the strangely mosquito less morning. As the very first morning rays penetrated the thick cloud to the southeast, I began to scan the pad for any movement. I had a few viewing windows off to my left, which gave me a good 10 seconds of warning prior to any deer walking through my shooting lane.

My first visitor was a lone hind, she was not nervous at all and casually wandered through. After a good half hour gap, I caught movement once again. A lone spiker came wandering through. The light was shot-worthy by now, so as he walked past my shooting window, I gave a soft squeak to pull him up, already at full draw (practice only!). He pulled up and gave me at least 5 seconds to settle the pin, before casually moving on. I was confident that if any good stags came through I would be in with a good chance of getting a shot away.

Around 20 minutes later, I caught the slightest glimpse of movement way out in front and slightly to the left. I manoeuvred slightly to get a better view, and spied a belter stag standing still in a clearing around 80m away. He was around the 14" mark, just what I was looking for. But unfortunately this morning he had chosen not to walk this pad – rather choosing another path off to the east. Unlucky....

Moment's later, movement to my left, and a hind and her fawn came wandering through. They walked straight at me, only pausing at 10m after picking up the faintest hint of human scent. It was incredible having such a close encounter with these magnificent little deer. Without spooking, they backed out slightly and went back over to the main pad. I tried my squeak/draw on the doe, which worked well again, although this time she only gave me 2 or 3 seconds to settle the pin. The next stag down this pad would be in serious trouble...

As the sun rose further, I was becoming less and less hopeful of any more deer using the pad that morning. Around 7:30am I had my last glimpses of deer, two spikers. They came in fairly close, before picking up some scent (the wind had swirled slightly), then heading off in Jason's direction. Around 15 minutes later Jason turned up, and another morning's hunt was over.

With the westerly still in place, we remained hopeful that the stags might get up for a midday feed again today, as they had the previous day. The game cameras picked up that morning showed us a very nice stag had headed out for a feed at exactly 2pm the previous day, at a little spot a long way out from our main hunting area. The area was thick with regrowth wattle and bracken fern. The guys had slashed a few tracks around and through the bedding area, and had planted a small patch of improved pasture in amongst the tussocks adjacent to the bedding area. There was a good well-used pad between the pasture and the bedding area, and this is where the game camera had picked up the stag coming through the previous day.

I decided I'd give it a go, if the weather was similar surely the stag would do a

similar thing, or so I hoped. Around midday I was dropped about 1km from the ambush point. I worked my way around the thick stuff to get the wind in my favour, and closed in, looking for a good spot to hide. I spooked a lone hind on the way in, which squealed and disappeared into the bull tussocks in the blink of an eye. I reached my ambush point, and without creating too much disturbance, found a good patch of young wattles to hide in. I had a mostly clear view out to the pad in front of me, the shot would be around 20-25m.

I sat and watched quietly, nestled in the grass. Silently I hoped that the same stag would get up and do the same thing as yesterday. The wind was perfect, and stayed solid. I answered a few emails and checked in on the forum, all the while keeping an eye on things out in front of me. At exactly 2pm, I decided to slowly stand up and stretch my legs. Peering over to the right, where the bracken bedding area was, I was scanning around when I caught movement. You little ripper... antlers...coming straight at me at around 60m...!

Arrow already on the string, I said to myself all those things you say when you really want to get something right (I'm sure you've heard that voice before). I kneeled in the shadows, hidden by a row of tussocks in front. The stag came into full view, and as if part of a movie script, slowed down to a meander and started to browse. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. He was a beauty. I slowly, slowly, slowly rose up, my camouflaged mass somehow staying concealed in the shadows at only 20m. The last thing I can remember is holding that top pin steady, counting to (almost) 5, and seeing my Muzzy tipped CX Maxima Hunter disappear through the sweet spot.

The stag bounded away straight back into the tussocks. All was silent again. Was the hit good enough? Would there be a good blood trail? Would that little stag be a needle in the haystack that was the several hectares of bracken beside me? All sorts of thoughts and emotions flew through my head. I gave him 5 minutes and went over to look at my arrow. This was more like it, totally covered in frothy bright claret from end to end. I knew he was in serious trouble.

There were a few spots of blood, but nothing like what I was hoping for. I remained focussed on the job, trying to pick up any evidence of his escape path, although there was very little. I decided to have a quick scout ahead, and stepped out into one of the slashed avenues through the bracken. I followed it for around 50m, parallel to where I'd seen the stag disappear into the bracken. I hit another slashed track, a T-junction, and peered over to my right. Only 10m away, right in the middle of the slashed track, laid my stag. Motionless, he'd only made it around 80m before expiring, conveniently on the only patch of slashed ground he was likely to cross.



"Ben with his excellent Hog deer 81 6/8 DS!"

I'm surprised they couldn't hear me yelling from Melbourne. I've never reacted like that to any kill in my life, I just exploded! I don't know how many times I yelled up to the heavens, but I could hardly talk when I called up the house to give them the good news. I took a snap on my phone and sent it straight to Jarrod Vyner, who had given me a bit of grief only an hour earlier about my shooting ability. "Is this where you shoot them ya bastard?" I asked...

The job had been done, and I was now just floating. The guys came down and helped out with the photo session, the mozzies were almost carrying both the stag and me away. I was flinching and swiping that much that we hardly got a decent photo! Off for the customary trip to the check in station, we got him checked in (weighed, measured, bottom jaw removed etc.





Bull Elk The Hard Way

By Paul Southwell

A high-pitched bugle drifted up from midway up the opposite valley face. Pat turned to me with a wry smile “found the bastard”. We had just crested the main ridge after hiking up the spur from our fly camp in the Highwood’s of Montana, in an attempt to get above the elk before first light.

I spent the afternoon enjoying a few rums and capping out my stag, happy as a pig in poo. I cannot explain how good it felt to have pulled a good shot and dropped the stag so cleanly, after my undesirable start to the hunt. It had all come together in the nick of time. My first hunt on Victorian soil will always be one to remember, the guys I hunted with were amongst the funniest but most genuine people I’ve ever met. We had an absolute ball, and as they were rifle hunters we gave each other a real hard time throughout the trip.



“Fly camp 1”

Those deer are something else, and I can honestly say now I am addicted. I am yet to hunt Sambar, but can honestly say out of the other 5 species I’ve hunted, the hoggies come in at second favourite only to my beloved Chital. The way they operate in the country they live in; and the challenge they present for a bowhunter, combine to create a really unique hunting experience. I’m a definite to get back down there again soon; I’m very tempted to book for 2014 already. They might not be everyone’s cup of tea, but if you get a chance to hunt them one day then I’d encourage you to give it a go.

As the sun poked over the eastern skyline the bull bugled again, a little higher this time, he was moving uphill. We discussed a plan of attack, tossing up whether to skirt around the valley head onto the bull’s side, or drop straight down to the valley floor and climb up under the bull.

We decided on the direct approach, and given that the thermals were drifting downhill in the cool morning air, we would be able to climb up from below the bull undetected. We knew that the thermals would start to swirl before changing to an uphill drift, as the sun got higher, so there was no time to waste.

Over the next forty minutes we dropped the 400 yards of elevation into the valley and climbed to the opposite ridge. The bull had continued to bugle regularly, moving his harem up onto a saddle on the main ridge.

The breeze had changed to a slight uphill drift, so we had changed course slightly on our ascent and were now situated above the bull's saddle, within about 150 yards of him. Due to the thick pines in the area, we were yet to lay eyes on this bull, but judging by his dominant sounding bugles, we guessed he was a mature animal.

We eased down towards the saddle and caught site of a cow staring at us from 100 yards. She had either caught some of our movement or heard the numerous squirrels that sounded their high-pitched signal call at our approach. The cow wasn't sure of what the disturbance was, and after a good while she settled down and fed, along with her yearling calf, further along the ridge towards us before dropping over the other side.

We slinked in a little closer and set up to try and bugle the bull in. Pat went 20 yards in front of me and set up in some thicker pines, while I set the video up and got my bugle ready.

This was our first attempt at bugling at a bull, having tried unsuccessfully to cow call bulls in the day before. Unlike on the DVDs we had seen prior to the trip, these public land bulls were very wary (or maybe we didn't sound anything like an elk cow!), and would not leave the thick cover or their cows to come in to our calls.

This time, however, we had ourselves a sweet setup. We knew the bull was within 120 yards of us, at least two of his harem had moved closer to us than him. We had slipped into his personal space without being detected, and we knew that if it was ever going to work, this was it.

My first bugle got an instant reply and the hairs on the back of my neck stood to attention, game on. A bugling dual

ensued for a few minutes, with Pat and I also breaking branches and raking trees to sound more authentic.

His next bugle was much closer, and I saw Pat tense up. The bull had snuck in and now started thrashing a small pine 25 yards in front of Pat. However, he didn't have a clear shot and I still couldn't see the bull.

By this time I was shaking like a leaf, I can only imagine what Pat was going through. The bull thrashed that tree for a good 2 to 3 minutes. I bugled once more, not my best effort with a dry mouth and my shaking could be heard in the bugle. The big fella bought it though, and with another scream he was on his way to sort me out.

All I saw was a massive set of antlers swaying in through the pines, as he wandered along the game trail which led right past Pat. Pat was already at full draw and as the bull propped on the pad at 5 yards, he put his arrow into the bull's heart, just as the bull turned to run.

After a short crash downhill, the bull slid to a halt. He had travelled no more than 40 yards after the shot; the little Steel Force Fat Head had done its job amazingly well. Even though I had not taken the beast, just to be involved in the moment rates right up there with the best for me, and the yelling and backslapping went on for quite a while as we took in the moment. We had worked hard for this bull, applying months before for the limited entry tag we wanted, preparing for the hunt, hiking a fair way from the trail head and getting up high before first light to give ourselves the best chance possible.



"Pat with his awesome Bull Elk!"



"The carry out!"

The rest of the day was spent photographing, capping, butchering and carrying out the bull. Montana state laws say that all meat must be retrieved. This task was made harder by the fact that we were hunting in an area with no legal vehicle or quad bike access, so all the meat had to be carried out on foot, at least to a defined track where our local mate Kyle could pick some of it up on his motorbike. The first trip to the

bike track was about 3 km's, and we dropped the first load of cape, antlers, back straps, forequarters and fillets off before returned to get the hind quarters once boned out. We carried that second load the 8 km back to the trailhead to save a few trips for Kyle on the bike.



After all the meat and the trophy were securely back in Kyle's truck, we left him and made the 7km trek back to our camp, arriving about 10:30pm. We were completely wrecked, but stoked at having taken a cracker bull, unguided, on public land.

The bull was a 6x7 and was just over 50 inches in antler length. Unfortunately, he had one broken brow tine and a partly broken sword tine, but was a big old mature animal and an awesome trophy for Pat.



Over the next week or so we hunted hard trying to get me a bull. I passed up a couple of 5x5's and cow called in a

young 6x6 to 20 yards before passing him up as well. We chased a big bull (also a 6x7 and probably around 350-360 points) for 3 days.



“Pat and I with some ground Pheasants!”

Everything nearly came together on the last morning with the big guy, but two deflected shots in thick pines and an hour within 60 yards of the bull without getting another shot meant I went home empty handed. Never mind though, the trip had been awesome, I had learnt a

lot and will definitely be back for another got at a DIY backpack hunt for elk.

High country hog double

by Randal Sullings.

I headed into goat country early in the morning with my main target a young pig or goat for the spit, (that's not to say I will pass up a trophy head) the pig sign was heavier than I have ever seen it in this area so I knew there was a real good chance to fulfil my mission.

I got to an area where the ripping was immediately fresh and the turds still steaming, so I whacked an arrow on the string and put the release aid on, I travelled very slowly looking for movement on the top of the bracken fern. There was very little air movement which isn't ideal in this situation, I have had many times where I have almost tripped over pigs in this area and a little breeze is usually helpful, at least helps me pick which side of the gully to travel.

Slowly I crept, then behind me there was an eruption with 7 pigs scattering in every direction one of which almost ran over me in its bid to escape. The last three pigs pulled up about 30m away with trees and shrubs standing between me and them so I was unable to get the shot off before they took off after their mates up into the hills and out of sight. I chased them for a bit but they can make some good ground at their trotting pace and I was left disappointed in their wake knowing that could have been my only chance.

Onward I went and in another 20 minutes I came to a similar scene of destruction, fresh ripping, steaming turds, so the arrow went on the string and I was again ready, slowly I went

when to my left a young pig grunted in his disapproval of my presence and trotted away, as it was the rest of the mob were less alarmed and in front of me less than 10m away two ears popped up and a young bore raised to his haunches, I drew, took aim and shot the arrow.

I hit him a little high and he dropped on the spot due to a severing of his spinal cord, well after an ear piercing squeal there was an explosion of pigs, they scattered in all directions I was quick to load another arrow to finish the deal on my pig when one of the others turned around and came to see what the commotion was about, he came over to his mate and I drew quickly and as I did he obviously realized the immediate danger and looked to take off, I grunted a couple of times and he stopped and looked in my direction, the arrow was just about on its way when he dropped to take off and he also was shot in the spine dropping on the spot, again there was an ear tearing squeal.



"Randal is a happy camper, 2 Boars on the deck!"

I quickly loaded again to finish the two pigs off and as I moved into a position for a heart shot, another pig was traveling in to see what was going on. He saw me moving and took off like I have never seen a pig run, so lucky for him. I quickly heart shot both pigs and

they were both dead only a couple of meters apart. Got to love the spine shot, best easy recovery shot around!

Hell yeah, the first pig!

Anyone who chases pigs in the mountains knows they can be very elusive and hard to find, so this was an exceptional hunt for me knocking over two young, but large boars within a couple of minutes.

I then took a heap of photos, removed, skinned and de-toothed the heads for lighter travel and took the back fillets for the wife to make something with, not a spit pig however I'm sure she will create a feast for us.

Very exciting hunting!

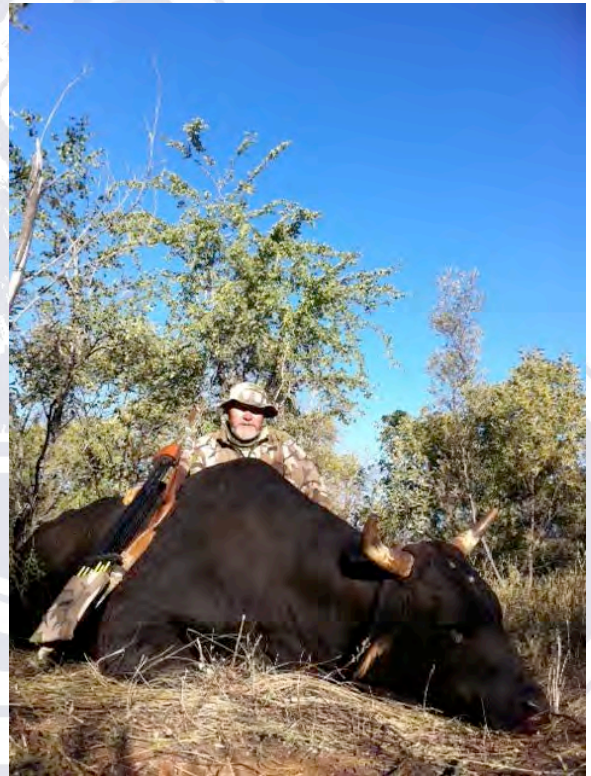
Around the Traps

Hello everyone Dave Whiting thought I would share some of the game I have and mate have taking on over the last 12 months, some of note like Roslyn Hardie excellent fox which stands out to mine, but again they have been some traffic trophies and hunts these a few that just stick's out.





"Roslynn Hardies Fox!"



**PHY
ERS**
of the Bush



Dave Whiting.

G-day all!

I took this little Sambar stag on the 15th of August 2012 from 50 yards with a 125g slick trick in the same gully that I got the stag last year. It was pretty much my first time back in the bush after about 14 months off from hunting.



Cheers Dean Scott.

Hello everyone Trevor here with some of the game I have taken over the last few months and the rut of 2012...



Trevor Willis.

Sean Walsh here, these are a heap of the trophies myself and my brother Brock and mate Jeremy Brown (Humps) have taken over the months.





Sean Walsh.

I haven't had that much time of late but I have taken managed to get out after the rut, yeah after the rut, who would of thought you could take decant Buck or two after the rut... well stay tuned!



"A Buck doe called in 10m on the 1st of May"



"A nice fox whistled into range!"





"Small pig taken after my mate Mark shot his first"



"Mark Hardwick with one of my custom bows and his first pig!"

Peter Morphett.

Newsletter Contributions

Well another jam packed TT newsletter is done, I know we normally pump a few more out but time these days is precious and hard to find, again as always I would like to thank all who contributed and congratulations to the new TT

number 1's and welcome to all our new members!

On a sad note this will be the last year I will produce for TT as promotions director as time and family issues have become paramount and I cannot find to time to juggle my responsibilities with family and work to continue production of the TT newsletter however, I will continue on with the website updates as normal. So thanks to all who helped and continued over the last 8 years in the position, it has been allot of fun!

As always score sheets and pic's and membership info should be directed to Mark Southwell at the TT Po Box.

Please send all ratings with pic's attached to:

**Trophy Takers
PO Box U47,
University of New England,
Armidale, NSW, 2351**

info2@trohytakers.org

Peter Morphett.

Don't forget to check out the latest issue of South Pacific Bowhunter in your newsagent or get a subscription via their website!



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customstrings@trophytakers.org

peter@killerbowstrings.com

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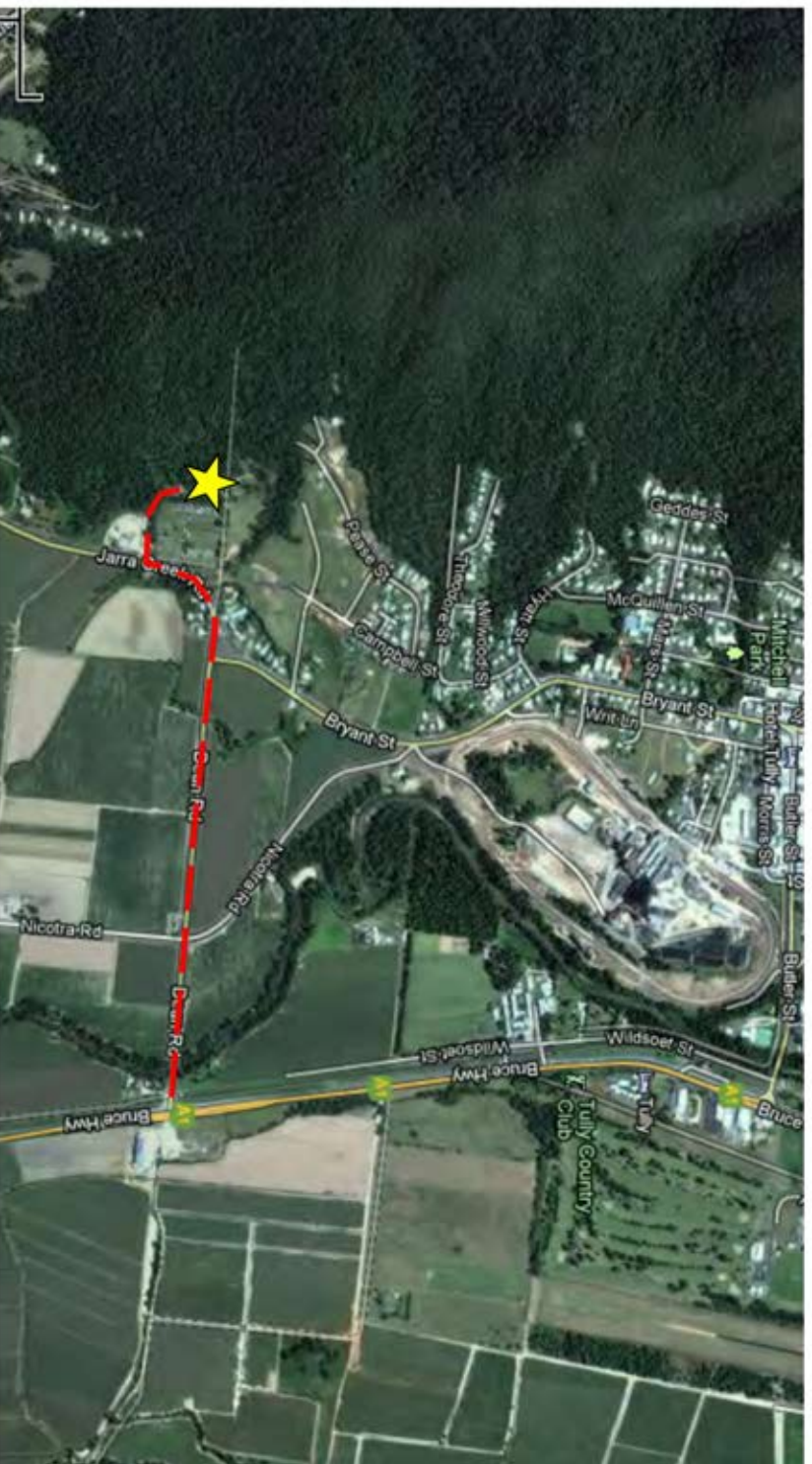
Peter Morphett.



Again I'm still making custom strings featuring the mainly BCY Fibres 452x and the BCY Trophy String material, this material is a vast improvement over 452x the superior characteristics compose of higher ware resistance, quitter, far less creep and stretch over time. I also have BCY latest string material called 8190 shortly this is estimated to be the fastest string material ever made and on average be between

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Directions to Tully Bowhunters Club Grounds



- Approximately 2km south of Tully township, turn west off the Bruce Highway onto Dean Rd.
- After approximately 2km, Tully Cemetery will be on the Right.
- Immediately after the Cemetery, turn right up the gravel driveway. A Tully Bowhunters sign is at the front.
- Travel approximately 300m up the driveway to the Club Grounds and camping ground.

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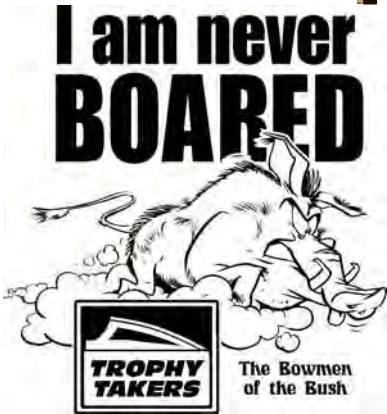
**Tickets at the 2012 TT
awards or pre-purchase
by contacting:**

**Mark Southwell:
info2@trophytakers.org,
0427785344**

or

**Dave Whiting:
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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 - \$35

T-shirt - \$35



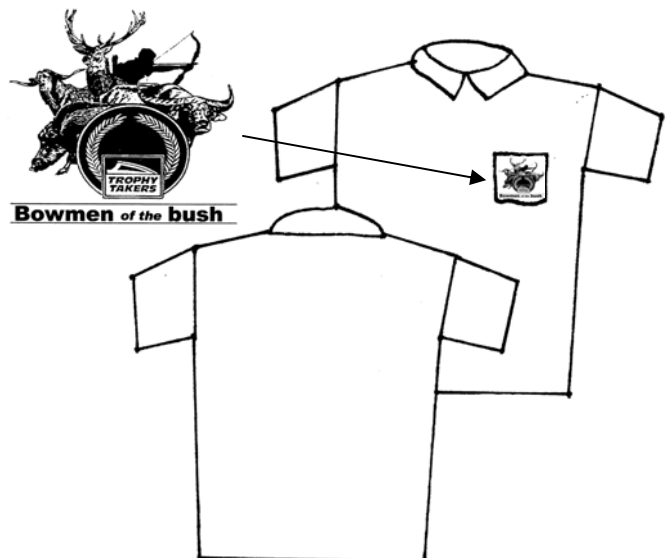
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T-shirt - \$25



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Note: logo is white on a dark background

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