

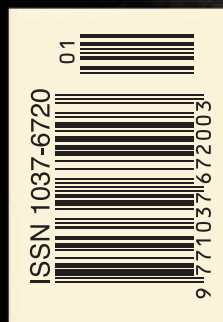
January February 2020 \$6.95

Archery Action

*Hunter Valley Traditional Archers
Charity Shoot*

*A ghost
story*

*Elk hunting in the
mountains of Montana*



THE ARCHERY ALLIANCE OF AUSTRALIA

Officially recognised by these organisations

Australia's largest circulation archery and bowhunting magazine

Safari 2020



Incorporating Bowhunter and Sighted Championships and 3D Championships

To be held at the National Field Venue

ABA Park, Mudgee, NSW

10 to 13 April 2020

All ABA members are cordially invited to compete at the 2020 National Safari Championships.

Nomination Fees:

All nominations must be completed online at www.bowhunters.org.au and be paid for at the time of registration.

ABA Adult \$55 Jnr/Cub \$45 Family \$125

3D Adult \$60 Jnr/Cub \$50 Family \$135

Closing Date for Entries is Monday 23 March 2020.

Last date for grading is 10 March 2020.

All archers under the Archery Alliance of Australia are invited to attend.

Timetable:

Muster each day at 8.00am for an 8.30am start

Registration and Bow Checks for both events
Thursday 9 April

ABA - Friday 10 and Saturday 11 April (3 and 1 arrow each day) followed by Presentation Saturday evening

3D - Sunday 12 and Monday 13 April followed by Presentation Monday evening.



ABA Park address is 600 Upper Piambong Road, Piambong

Directions:

From Mudgee take the Castlereagh Highway towards Gulgong for 12.5km and turn left into Lesters Lane and continue 3.7km to a T intersection and turn right into Lower Piambong Road (gravel road from here on). Follow Lower Piambong Road for 2.1km until you come to Upper Piambong Road on your left, take this turn and continue 6km until you find the gated entrance to ABA Park. All turns will be sign posted. If coming from the North (Gulgong) after 16km it will be a right hand turn into Lesters Lane.

Camping:

Camping is ample at the range; anybody wishing for offsite accommodation can obtain further information from the ABA website. Definitely NO DOGS allowed.

Champion of Branches Team Competitions will be running for both National Championships and teams must be registered prior to Muster for each competition.

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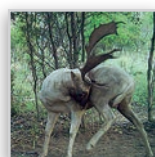
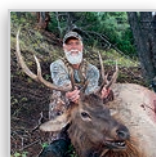
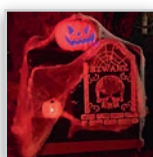
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◀ COVER PHOTOGRAPH

An early morning sambar for Michael Luxford. See story on Page 6.

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If you haven't made your New Year's resolutions yet, here are two that I can suggest. Firstly, if you're a bowhunter: Any game that you take, make sure you claim it. This is easier than ever before through the ABA's online member portal. (See Pages 12 and 13 for details.) By claiming all of your game, even if you never take the next step of having it officially measured, you will help towards more accurate records that go a long way to keeping your sport alive.

And secondly, for all archers, bush or field: Take good photos. There is a bit involved in taking a good photo of game. Firstly, never sit on your animal or in any way disrespect it. No arrows in bodies. If there has been a lot of blood, either wash it off or cover with dirt/sand before you take your photo. And for anyone doing 3D and 2D



targets, let's see some great photos from you too. Have your camera or phone set to the highest resolution it will take. That will produce a larger file. When you email it, send at the actual size. You'll notice through the magazine that there are some otherwise good photos that are very small. That's because print media is vastly different to what you see on your screen, and we can only work with what we get. Once information has been lost, it can't be regained down the road. The only way to have better-sized photos in the magazine is for you to take better quality images in the first place. I'm always really disappointed when I see a photo of someone with a Record Class animal and they haven't made that bit of extra effort to take an image that can be used at a decent size in print media.

Jenel Hunt
Editor

DEADLINES

Please submit articles and advertisements by these dates:

editor@archeryactionmagazine.com

ISSUE	DEADLINE
2020	
Vol 45 No. 4 March-April	1 February
Vol 45 No. 5 May-June	1 April
Vol 45 No. 6 July-August	1 June
Vol 46 No. 1 September-October	1 August
Vol 46 No. 2 November-December	1 October
2021	
Vol 46 No. 3 January-February	1 December

The ABA Office (based in Brisbane, Qld) is seeking a casual employee for administration duties. Please contact the office to receive more information—see ABA contact details below.



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FREELANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

are welcomed by this magazine and articles should be addressed to: The Editor, Archery Action, at the above address. The Editor accepts no responsibility for unsolicited material. Colour photographs or high resolution scans are suitable for publication. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your articles to enable notification of acceptance or otherwise and return of article if required. Photographs returned only if stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Emailled contributions should be sent in plain (editable) text only and any photos should be sent as separate attachments, not embedded in the story text.

DISCLAIMER

All expressions of opinion in Archery Action with Outdoor Connections are published on the basis that they reflect the personal opinion of the authors, and as such are not to be taken as expressing the official opinion of the publishers unless expressly so stated. Artemis Productions accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of any opinion or information, or the reader's reliance upon it, contained in this magazine.

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REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Traditional Trails—Nick Lintern

Bushcraft and Survival—Scott Heiman



Handlebars, taken on a previous hunt.

SON OF *Handlebars*

The fog was pea-soup thick. It was my only hope for salvation this morning against a full moon because it dissipated the light, creating an eerie ambience in the high country. I hoped the fog would mean that the deer would keep feeding longer—closer to first light—but I knew the heavy fog could also be my undoing here in this Victorian high country.

I followed the fenceline towards my ambush point. I cautiously passed some cows, just faint grey silhouettes

only metres away. “HONK!” You have got to be joking, I thought. “HONK!” From what could have only been 15m away, the sound of hooves thumped the earth, racing back down the hill. I stood still, staring into the nothing, wondering what to do now. The hut had been warm, out here it was below zero. An hour and a half before light, I was almost convinced the morning was over.

But the hard part was done, I had crawled out of bed and gotten my

arse out here. Maybe there were still a few out feeding. I hit the treeline and followed the edge along. The treeline split, and in the fog I had followed the wrong line. I cursed myself and turned around. “HONK!” This time a lone deer spooked. What were the odds now? I made it to my ambush point and slunk into the gap behind the last tree in the row overlooking a run and patiently waited in the crisp, still, mountain air.

At 6 o'clock, I heard the first ping



Michael with the malform in the watery morning light.



It's worth waiting for the final search so a hunter can share a sambar moment with others who understand.

of the fence. Five came through. It was too early for roos. The sambar were already heading for cover, 45 minutes before first light. Twenty minutes later, another pushed through.

At 6.45, I could see well enough to try a stalk through the bush edge. I cut to the top of a lightly treed gully that ran down to the paddock. The deer needed to cross the gully to get back to the bush, but the run was a better ambush point. A large gnarly gum marked the top. From there a flat opened up, covered with briar and blackberry shoots. A large wattle stood solitary in the middle.

I picked a trail through the fallen

bark under the gum and slowly crept through.

"CLACK, CLACK ... CLACK, CLACK ... CLACK." Knowing immediately what the sound was, I took the last few silent strides and peeked under the drooping gum branches. I saw two sambar stag silhouettes. The deer were sparring in the fog in the pre-dawn light in the middle of the clearing about 80yd away—something I had never seen before. I dropped to my hands and knees and crawled swiftly across the wet flat, using dead ground to close the gap. The stags paused and parallel-walked towards the bush directly away from me.

I had run out of cover. They turned and locked antlers again, pushing each other around in a show of strength. I seized the opportunity. While they fought, I stood and ran parallel to the stags to line up the lone wattle.

Under the cover of their own distraction, I positioned myself behind the tree. I could see their antlers now but not overly clearly. One looked about 18in, the other appeared malformed and not much more than a spiker. I took a range. 41yd. I dialled in. The 18-incher positioned himself above the malform and pushed him downhill and broadside. I drew and sent the shaft on its way. The arrow struck true. The stags broke off the fight. The malform bucked and his

body shuddered. He spun and ran downhill, crashing through the bush. Three seconds, then silence.

I walked to where they had been fighting to look for the arrow. The other stag had only gone 20m inside the bushline. He looked at me and honked, then disappeared.

I couldn't find my arrow, but I marked the ground with another and headed back to the hut. I wanted to share the follow-up. To me, that is a big part of the hunt.

Liz was just as I left her, buried under every blanket we could find. After a brew, a story and not being able to wait for Russ any longer, we both went back to find the stag. Russ had seen my missed call and met us at the gate. I led them through the stalk, re-enacting as I went. We picked up blood and followed the short trail. He'd gone maybe 60m.

I was glad to have waited to share the experience. It is a unique feeling of camaraderie with other hunters, especially when it concerns a sambar stag.

I was pretty happy with my new arrow set-up: 100-grain Slicky Standard with a 50-grain brass insert up an Easton Axis 300 total weight of 515 grains. It was a very nice way to break in my new Mathews Traverse as well.

For a great crack at a sambar, contact Russ and Steph at Timberline.

Timberline Self-Guided Sambar Hunts

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Steph (0427 669 914)

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A cold and foggy morning, and a sambar on the ground.



Australian Bowhunters Association INC



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CONFEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN SPORT

WEBSITE <http://www.bowhunters.org.au>

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Email: officemanager@bowhunters.org.au

COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The protocol for contacting officers is: Member speaks to relevant club officer. If the club officer cannot answer the query the officer passes it to the Branch representative who then contacts the relevant National Officer if required.

If you have any queries for National Officers, please direct your communication to the National Office (contact details as above).

NATIONAL OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Tony Hartcher
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT
Ralph Boden (*appointed*)
VICE-PRESIDENT, BOWHUNTING
Allan Driver (*appointed*)
VICE-PRESIDENT, FIELD
Bruce Kelleher
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Amanda Skinner
NATIONAL MEASURER
Garry Pitt
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Sally-Anne McGrigor
NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Alan Avent
DIR BOWHUNTER EDUCATION
Ray Morgan
DIRECTOR OF COACHING
Tom Cornell

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Northern Territory	Ken Henderson	0413 820 818
North Queensland	Wayne Salmon	0429 438 925
Central Queensland	Andrew Little	0420 925 834
South Queensland	Brett Willaton	0401 326 132
North New South Wales	Peter Stubbs	(02) 6743 1559
South NSW and ACT	Ryan Tilbrook	0404 479 106
Gippsland, Victoria	Mark Burrows	0419 550 510
Central and Greater Victoria	Steve Old	0418 177 980
South Australia	Brett Raymond	0418 810 598
Western Australia	Ken Neill	0418 926 862
Tasmania – see Victoria		
Trophy Bowhunters of Australia	Ralph Boden	(02) 4392 6810

ABA News

Change to Shoot Rules

After much discussion, the ABA Management Committee (made up of Branch representatives and the National Executive) has decided to change the ABA Rules for National Archery Games so that up to two children from a family can shoot in the same group along with a parent or designated adult as long as there is an independent group captain. This addresses the problem of young children being in a group where no adult has been clearly identified as

the responsible adult. Rule 16 Shoot Rules (last major paragraph) now reads:

Juniors may, but cubs must, shoot with their parent/guardian or designated adult in all levels of official competition under the following provisions:

a) That there must be an independent Group Captain responsible for the direction of the group

b) Only one parent/guardian or

designated adult and up to two children from a family may be in the same group

c) A parent/guardian may designate another adult (with their agreement) to accompany their cub as the responsible adult

d) The parent/guardian or the designated adult is responsible for the behaviour of the child/children

e) Requests by parent/guardian for a designated adult to accompany children must be made at the time of registration

VP Bowhunting

As many of you know, after a stint of 20 years in the position, Mark Burrows did not seek re-election as the Vice-President Bowhunting Division at the ABA AGM held late last year. No nominations were received for the position but since then the role has been filled. Allan Driver has been appointed to the position, which will become vacant again at the next AGM for election. As he says in his introduction here, he is on his "L" plates as there's a lot to learn about

the position, but he is approachable and willing to serve the Association in this role with the same enthusiasm he has brought to other positions within the ABA.

Introducing Allan Driver



I have been a member of our great association for 30 years. I am the President of Bacchus Marsh Bowmen and have been for the past 10 years.

I am employed by Bunnings, which is a household name up and down the east coast of Australia, and I have worked for them for the past 18 years. I have a few more to go before I can call it quits from working. I started out in a store and was there for four years then moved to the head office in Melbourne, working with a great bunch of team members ... mainly female.

My best mate Ray Morgan, the National Director of Bowhunting



Education, is responsible for getting me into the archery game all those years ago. I met him at Echuca and he had this unusual piece of equipment in his hands with wheels and strings attached and asked me if I wanted a go. As a rifle shooter, I of course said yes, and so began the lesson. Then I joined the Victorian club where Ray was a member—Bacchus Marsh Bowmen—and have never looked back. This archery game was for me!

Ray took me along on my very first hunting trip in New South Wales and managed my first ABA claim for a goat and fish way back when. In 1995-1996, I became the Zone H Branch Controller (as it was known back then) and held that position for six years before having a break. After two years off, I rejoined the Greater Victoria Branch as the Field Representative and held that position for 17 years.

I took some more time off to recharge my batteries before speaking with Mark Burrows about the VP Bowhunting national position. After a

Summary of Australian Bowshot Records

Species	Holder	Australian Record	Record Class	Trophy Class
Boar	Michael Dacre	37 2/8	29	25
Goat	James Finlay	151 2/8	110	95
Buffalo	John Lopes	108 2/8	86 4/8	80
Camel	Kimberley Nicholas	32 6/16	29	25
Fox	Graeme Duff	11	10 2/16	9 3/16
Cat	Tim Pitt-Lancaster	8 5/16	7 10/16	7
Red Deer	Dan Smith	315 3/8	200	175
Fallow Deer	Darryl Bulger	276 4/8	190	150
Chital Deer	Dan Smith	204	160	140
Hog Deer	Stephen Tilley	111 7/8	70	55
Sambar Deer	Dean Scott	203 5/8	162 7/8	140
Rusa Deer	Jay Janssen	236	170	150
Shark BHFF	Barry Feeney	35 2/8	20	15
Shark BF	John Van Den Heuvel	51 6/8	41 4/8	15
Stingray BHFF	Barry Feeney	11 3/8	7 4/8	6
Stingray BF	Gleewyn Butson	14 3/8	11 4/8	10

Ladies Best of Species

Boar	Kristan Bell	34 4/8pt	2017
Goat	Katherine Agale	127 1/8pt	2010
Buffalo	Christie Pisani	87 4/8pt	2017
Camel	Christie Pisani	30 7/16pt	2014
Fox	Helen Duff	10 14/16pt	2016
Cat	Lorna Hopkins	7 12/16pt	1984
Red Deer	Christie Pisani	268 3/8pt	2014
Fallow Deer	Jennifer Vanderburg	205 5/8pt	2018
Chital Deer	Leny Smith	159 3/8pt	2010
Hog Deer	Cheryl Morris	60 5/8pt	2018
Sambar Deer	Nil		
Rusa Deer	Emma Johnson	195 6/8pt	2016
Shark BHFF	Lynda Fell	25 4/8pt	2016
Shark BF	Lynda Fell	23 5/8pt	2000
Stingray BHFF	Carolyn Rundle	9 7/8pt	1987
Stingray BF	Gleewyn Butson	14 3/8pt	1986

number of in-depth conversations I said, yep let's give it a go and see what I can offer our Association.

I am the sort of person who will listen to any questions that are asked and if I can't answer at that time I will seek help and get back to that person with the answer. I am a problem solver, always approachable and ready to listen. I will have my "L" plates on for the time being until I understand the role and how it functions and as needed can speak with Mark to work out any finer details that need attending too.

I attend ABA events in Victoria and interstate as well plus I get away hunting on average three times a year, taking club members and others with me to teach them about all manner of hunting-related topics ... and I usually learn something from them as well! I'm a great believer in passing on knowledge. If we don't teach others, we may lose what we have in ABA.

So that's a small snapshot of yours truly.



We also welcome National Score Recorder Brian Taylor, who was elected to the National Executive for the first time at the recent AGM. And in the position of Senior Vice-President is Ralph Boden (appointed after the AGM). This position will be up for election at the next AGM.

Member portal for game claims

If you are shooting game with a bow and arrow, no doubt you want to continue being able to do it into the future. Be proactive in safeguarding your ability to hunt in years to come by always claiming your game, even if it's only the initial digital claim which is now super easy to do through the members portal at bowhunters.org.au. You can always follow up and get your animal



T/C and upward and/or First Kill/Species

Bnch/Hunter	Club	Game	Award	FK/FKOS	Size
B Tracey Smith	Towers Bowhunters	Rabbit	GA	FK/FKOS	0
B Brian Duynhoven	Townsville District Bowhunters	Pig	TC		27 2/8
B Brian Duynhoven	Townsville District Bowhunters	Pig	TC		26 2/8
B Brian Duynhoven	Townsville District Bowhunters	Pig	TC		26 6/8
B Brian Duynhoven	Townsville District Bowhunters	Cat	TC	FKOS	7 4/16v
B Graham McComiskie	Twin Rivers Bowhunters	Camel	RC	FKOS	30 14/16
D Dave Pender	Lakeside Bowmen	Goat	RC		118 6/8
D Alex Szybel	Renegade Bowmen	Goat	GA	FK/FKOS	0
D David Teitzel	Renegade Bowmen	Rusa	RC	FKOS	176 5/8
D Jeanette Dowd	Renegade Bowmen	Red	GA	FKOS	0
D Kevin Swan	Renegade Bowmen	Pig	GA	FKOS	20 6/8
D Kurt Teitzel	Renegade Bowmen	Chital	RC	FKOS	165 5/8
D Peter Fryda	Dubbo and District Field Archers	Cat	TC		7
E Darcy Galliano	Namoi Valley Archers	Donkey	GA	FKOS	0
E Darcy Galliano	Namoi Valley Archers	Buffalo	TC	FKOS	85 6/8
E Darcy Galliano	Namoi Valley Archers	Goat	TC		98 2/8
G Andrew Robertson	Boola Valley Field Archers	Donkey	GA	FKOS	0
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Cat	TC		7 2/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		9 10/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		9 6/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		10 1/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		10 1/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		9 13/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		9 3/16
G Colin Brownlie	Independent	Fox	TC		9 9/16
G Damien Hollingsworth	Macalister Trophy Bowhunters	Pig	GA	FKOS	0
G Alastair Meldrum	Geelong Trophy Bowhunters	Rabbit	GA	FK/FKOS	0
H Scott Brown	Independent	Sambar	GA	FKOS	0

measured so you can claim Trophy Class or Record Class, but even if you only ever claim digitally you are helping to provide a more accurate number of the ABA's game claimed figures, which are actually of quite a lot of importance.

The number of game taken are used to show governments how the ABA is helping to control feral animal numbers. Also of interest to governments are such things as the economic effects associated with recreational hunting along with the social and mental health benefits to the people doing this activity. The ABA can use game claimed numbers as positive

statistics to help keep the activity of bow and arrow hunting for feral animals alive into the future. Bureaucrats will only ever take notice of factual evidence, and claiming of game is the ABA's only way of recording these figures.

On the next page are a few screenshots to show how easy it is. It can be done on your mobile, while you're still out there and pumped about your hunt. If you access your member portal and don't have a 'game claim' folder, just send a query via the portal to the ABA office and it will be activated for you. (You need a BPC for it to get activated.)



Trophy Bowhunters of Australia Club



Bowhunting achievements to end November 2019

Bowhunter of the Year



PREVIOUS WINNERS

2012: Jamie Molloy
2013: Brenton Mitchell
2014: Marc Curtis
2015: Graham McComiskie
2016: John Teitzel
2017: Marc Curtis
2018: Rohan Walker

The TBA Bowhunter of the Year Award is the ABA's most prestigious hunting award. To be eligible for the award, you have to achieve enough points to be in the Master Bowhunter Award class for the bowhunting calendar year (January to December). So the cut-off period for game to be measured is December 31 for the award, which is announced the following year.

The Master Bowhunter with the most measurable species claimed in the specified 12-month period is declared the winner. In the case that two or more hunters have the same amount of measurable species then it will go the hunter with the most Record Class, then Trophy class claims.

To have your name on this handsome perpetual trophy is not only testament to the trophies the hunter has taken in the period of 12 months, it also recognises the dedication of time, effort and personal cost (and maybe sometimes a little luck!) to make it all happen.

Master Bowhunter

David Luxford 510

Trophy Bowhunter Award

Benjamin Chambers 210

Bowhunter Award

Toby Gall 190

David Brewer 170

Darcy Galliano 160

Bradley Seagrott 150

Bowhunter Royale

Colin Brownlie

Bowhunter Imperial

Nil since last report

Bowhunter Supreme

Nil further since last report

Imperial Ishi

Nil since last report

Royale Ishi

Graham McComiskie

Senior Member of TBA

Kurt Teitzel

Members Admitted to TBA Club

(membership granted after taking first Trophy Class or better animal)

Nil further since last report

Membership



The association has now switched over to our new Membership Portal. So if you have not yet registered, you will need to do so prior to being able to access our new members portal software.

Quick Info Menu

- ➔ ABA on Facebook
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- ➔ ABA Membership
- ➔ Contact Us
- ➔ ABA & Alliance Shoot Calendar 2019

members.bowhunters.org.au

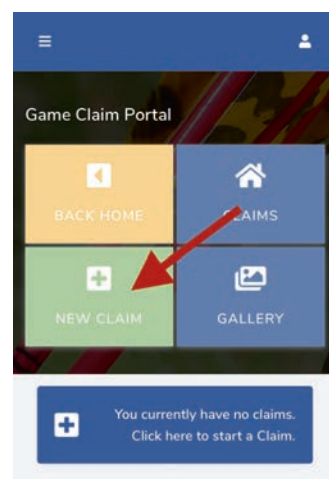
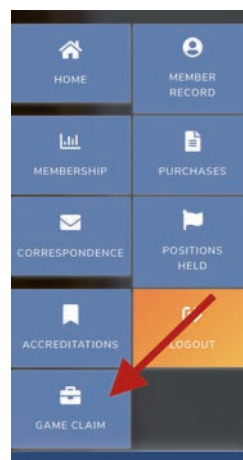
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HUNTER VALLEY TRADITIONAL ARCHERS

Andrew Spiechowicz Memorial Charity Shoot

The origins

In 2007 on the Friday of the upcoming June long weekend, a massive East Coast low was barrelling towards the Hunter Valley and Newcastle. For all of us at Hunter Valley Traditional Archers, it was business as usual as we all prepared for The Gathering long weekend. The threat of rain didn't dampen our spirits—as it usually doesn't—and by this point all of us at the club had come to expect a drop or two of rain at The Gathering.

However, what none of us were expecting were the 124km/hr winds and the heavy rain that would lash across our region. On the Friday morning, the Pasha Bulker ran aground on the shores of Nobby's Beach and over the next 36 hours the strong wind and heavy rain would wreak havoc across Newcastle and the Hunter. An estimated 100,000 homes were without power, streets in Newcastle were flooded and 10 people had lost their lives.

It was a devastating storm, and the HVTa club grounds weren't spared. Trees had fallen, a torrent of water had swept down through the campsite towards the swamp and our tents had been completely flattened by the wind. So, for the first time in The Gathering's history, the shoot was cancelled.

After the weather had calmed down, it was decided we would move the 2007 Gathering to the October long weekend. So, The Gathering that year was held on the October long weekend during much calmer weather.

Shortly after, it was suggested that we keep the October long weekend on our calendar and make it a charity shoot. The charity shoot would follow the same structure as The Gathering, 3D target ranges and novelty shoots, with all the money we raised over the weekend would go to the charity of the club's choice.

The first charity shoot was held in October 2009 with participants coming from all over Australia. Each year the number of people attending the sanctioned club shoots, The Gathering and the Charity Shoot has grown exponentially.

Many participants of these archery events make the journey an annual pilgrimage, with some travelling hundreds of kilometres to attend and spending thousands of dollars here in Newcastle and the Hunter district.

The name

In 2013, the charity shoot was renamed the Andrew Spiechowicz Memorial Charity Shoot in honour of one of the club's founding members, Specs, who had passed away earlier that year. The club dug extra deep that year for Specs, raising more than \$11,000 for the Cancer Council in honour of our fallen comrade.



Kids line up for the balloon shoot.

The present day

The Hunter Valley Traditional Archers (HVTA) still holds the charity shoot every year over the long weekend in October. HVTA chooses a different charity each year to support. The charities chosen rely on donations and/or small grants and are not government funded directly. Hunter Love Bites was chosen for 2019, with all the weekend profits going to the charity. As part of The National Association for Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN), the Hunter Love Bites Committee formed in 2009. This was in response to statistics that showed the area has an above average domestic violence rate. Love Bites



Hunter Valley Traditional Archers

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The brave head-shave volunteers Chris Kendall, Towball and Finn McCarthy.

targets young people aged between 14 to 16 years. It is an educational program that is built around two interactive workshops, one dealing with relationship violence and the second one dealing with sex and relationships. These workshops are followed up by a highly successful creative arts program (art, music or drama) that allow and encourage the young people to have a voice. The creative sessions consolidate and incorporate the information from the educational workshops. The aim of Love Bites is to prevent domestic violence, family violence and sexual abuse by teaching young people the value of healthy respectful relationships.

The shoot

The club's large campgrounds began to fill on the Thursday. The archers, in true archery fashion, began chatting and laughing and generally preparing themselves for a great weekend. A complimentary dinner was on offer Friday evening, which was especially appreciated by those who had travelled long distances.

Archers were called to muster at 9am on Saturday. At this time the skies decided that drizzle was going to accompany us out onto the range. This did not dampen the enthusiasm of the 120 strong crowd that had turned up for the weekend. The targets were set out in the usual HVTa cheeky fashion causing much heckling to be heard as people worked out the best way to tackle shooting the 3D rubber targets. The score sheets may have become a little damp but then nature in her usual fashion cleared the clouds away, leaving the rest of the weekend with perfect archery weather.

Archers made their way around three ranges each set up with 10 targets. The targets were at a variety of distances and set through the trees to give realistic hunting shots. The scoring novelties at HVTa are familiar to most archers—the running pig, bow bird, speed round, hunt round and rolling discs. Archers are given the opportunity to shoot the ranges again to see if they can better their initial score. Extra prizes are on offer for the most improved.

Over the years, it has been noticed that some archers struggle with the challenge of the main ranges. HVTa members have also noticed an increase in the number of cubs enrolling as members or just visiting the big shoots. In response to this, the club decided

for this year's charity shoot to trial a short, easy-walk range for beginners, small cubs, the mobility challenged and those just not feeling up to the long walk. The targets on this range were set at between 10m and 25m and in easy-to-shoot positioning. The range proved extremely popular as even the more experienced archers were observed taking a stroll and a shot on the Gammy Knee Track. The camaraderie and good humour shown by HVTA members and visitors is truly what this wonderful sport is all about.

Saturday afternoon heralded the axe and knife throwing, always a popular event at the club. The cubs then spied Towball in his 'lovely' red kilt and knew it was time to grab their parents and line up for the Balloon Pop. Excited cubs shot arrows at balloons where each colour earned a different score. Those who reached 50 could choose a party bag. Every cub earned at least one bag, some won more. Cubs were encouraged to enter using a gold coin to teach them the value of charity. For a larger donation, adults then entered a knockout game of dart archery followed by a turn at the 7ft high swinging target. This swinging target was built by visiting archer Kevin Prescott and generously loaned to HVTA for the shoot.

Late on Saturday afternoon, archers gathered to reflect on times past while remembering



Presentation to Glenn McMahon for the top primitive bow score.



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Arrows by Ronnie White.

friends no longer with us. Everyone moved to a spot overlooking the water, a place dearly loved by Andrew Spiechowicz. There, Nick Lintern spoke of Specs, Andy Firth and Erik Nielson and others who have been loved within our sport. There was also a toast in remembrance. Another tradition was followed—the swapping of friendship arrows where everyone found a new friend.

The Saturday evening spit roast dinner was a treat and was followed by a bow and arrow tuning educational session by Nick Lintern, HVTA member and master bowyer of Norseman Bows. This was very much appreciated by everyone present.

Sunday saw archers eagerly up, breakfasted and ready to get back to what they love to do, shoot arrows at targets. Scores were in by 2 o'clock and it was time to settle back and enjoy the Sunday afternoon antics.

The traditional archery community at our charity shoots are generous and always prepared to give whatever they can to make this shoot a success. The enormous pick-of-the-table raffle had donated prizes appearing from all over the place, and people very much admired the craftsmanship of the bow donated by Allan McKerrow and the beautiful obsidian flint knapped knife crafted by visitors Drew and Kelly.

The hilarious hair shaves, *not* professionally performed, gave everyone a good laugh while also raising many dollars. Thanks must go to Finn McCarthy, Towball and Chris Kendall (from Manning Archers) for volunteering to part company with their lovely locks and shaggy beard. Added to this, Uncle Ronnie White generously made a stunning set of arrows for auction. He rarely shoots now so these are something special.

Dai Pritchard from the iconic Australian Band Rose Tattoo is part of the Hunter Love Bites music educational. Dai organised a fully signed T-shirt from the Rose Tattoo European Tour and two signed drum skins, one from Rose Tattoo and one from the Screaming Jets. These went at auction raising good money. Two of the items were

purchased by two generous Queensland fans, Dane and Otto.

Presentations over, a grateful Natasha from Love Bites received the generous cheque of \$6000 and it was time for everyone to relax and toast a jolly good and very successful charity weekend. Well Done HVTA members and visitors!

The continued success of the Andrew Spiechowicz Memorial Charity Shoot would not be possible without all the visitors and members of the club who dig deep each year. It also wouldn't be possible without the HVTA club members who help make our shoots run so smoothly, from preparing, cooking and serving the meals to setting up the ranges and the many other tasks required to keep the club going.

The future

2020 will be another great year of archery for all of us at HVTA, with the Andy Firth Memorial Shoot on March 28 and 29, The Gathering from June 6 to 8, the Andrew Spiechowicz Memorial Charity Shoot from October 3 to 5 and the regular club shoots every second Sunday. We hope to see you there!



Dai Pritchard, Scott and Leslie White.



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Nick Lintern TRADITIONAL TRAILS

Happy New Year to all our readers and welcome to the first Traditional Trails for the year. I hope you all have a safe and prosperous 2020. For those of you who shoot longbows and recurves, I hope you get out there and achieve all that you want to this year. For those who don't, why not grab yourself a traditional bow this year and go out there and see what all those smiling faces are about?

This time I want to venture back to some how-to's. I am going to cover how to straighten twisted recurve limbs. Recurves are notorious for twisting and I spend a lot of time throughout the year straightening badly twisted recurve limbs. I'll cover why they twist, how you can avoid it and how to straighten them if they do ... because sometimes they'll twist even if looked after well. So here we go ...

Straightening recurve limbs

Firstly, what is proper string alignment on any bow? It is when the string tracks straight down the absolute centre of the limbs and through the middle of the handle. Any well-made bow will have perfect alignment. It doesn't matter whether it's an English longbow, an American semi-longbow or a recurve, the string should track straight. A string width—maybe 1/8in either side of absolute centre—is probably acceptable, particularly with wooden bows due to natural factors, but even then, they should be straight. Longbow limbs, if made straight to begin with, will never twist. This is due to a narrow, thick limb design that resists twisting no matter what you do with it. This also helps when you are shooting and you have a less-than-desirable release. So why do recurve limbs twist out of alignment? They do it all the time. The reason they are prone to twisting is in the design. Recurves have wide thin limbs. As a result, they will readily twist if given motivation to. I've seen some so badly twisted they won't even stay strung. Run this little test: Grab



The limb twist here is clearly visible.

a longbow and string it. Try to twist the limb in your hand. It just doesn't want to budge. Now do the same thing with a recurve, it twists easily and without much encouragement. This makes recurves more critical of poor shooting form as well. Makers have used some clever tricks to try to eliminate this problem; things like string grooves cut into the limbs in the area around the curve, just under the nocks. This helps when the bow is being shot. It helps to force the string back into alignment if a poor release is made. And while this certainly helps, it won't eliminate the permanent twist problem from occurring. While they are prone to twist, if a recurve is well looked after, limb twist should rarely occur. Let's take a look at what makes them twist.

1. Poor stringing technique

This is the big one. Nearly all recurve limb twist occurs in the bottom limb. Archers seem to insist on foot stringing



*Foot stringing is a sure way to twist a recurve's limbs.
Never do this.*

recurves. If you place a recurve's tip over your foot and step-through string it, you will twist the bottom limb in a few weeks. I cringe whenever I see it happening. Hardcore 'curve shooters will never do it. I don't even string longbows that way and it won't twist a longbow. Step-through stringing on a longbow (*see photos*) is fine—if you use a dog collar. Never brace a bow over your foot. On longbows I prefer a push/pull method or a stringer. On recurves you absolutely *must* use a stringer. A dog collar or push/pull style is not terrible with recurves but the only guarantee of even pressure when stringing a recurve that eliminates almost definite limb twist

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A good quality recurve stringer is a must to prevent limb twist.



A longbow stringer is not essential to prevent limb twist but is still a good idea to make stringing easier.



Mark your limb with a pencil so you remember which way to apply force.

is a quality stringer. I've included some photos with the article of different stringers to give you an idea.

2. Leaving the strung bow sitting on its end for extended periods.

A recurve normally has a large riser section and is weighty. Leaving the bow for an extended period leaning up against a wall or similar will mess with the bottom limb.

3. Just usage.

Yes, sometimes just using a recurve can potentially twist it. But this is usually very slow to occur and is uncommon if it is strung properly.

So that covers what causes most twisting issues; now we need to look at how to fix it when twist occurs. Straightening out a recurve is within the realm of skill of most folk. All you need is a pot of water, a hot plate and a pencil. As we proceed here, as with all things of this nature, be patient.

Fixing the twist

Step one: String your bow and look down the limbs. Determine which limb is twisted. (It may be both.) If your bow has a string groove cut in, it'll be obvious which way the twist is going. When you have established which way the limb needs to go to re-align it, mark it with a pencil.



Left: Bring the unstrung limb to the pot and bathe it in the steam. Be sure to apply the steam over the whole limb.



Right: Apply force to the hot limb and hold until it cools, maybe 20 seconds or so.

I use an arrow pointing the way I want to bring the limb. Unstringing the bow again. *(Never do this with a strung bow.)*

If using a takedown, keep it together; you won't do this using just the limb. You'll need the limbs to be on the riser still to get the leverage. Now, put your pot of water on the stove and bring it to the boil. We are going to use steam to straighten the limb/limbs. Steam is just a transporter of heat. Don't freak out about doing this. I've done it hundreds of times. Unless your bow is extremely old, it is safe to do this.

I also use steam to heat up osage staves so I can clamp them into a more conducive stave shape. It won't damage the bow's finish either. Once your water is boiling strongly, bring the limb in question and hold it in the steam. Don't submerge it in the water, just hold it in the steam. Move the limb around making sure it is all getting bathed in the steam. Caution here! Don't get burned. Steam is really hot and steam burns are nasty. Use gloves if necessary. After a few minutes—no more than that—take the bow out of the steam and while it is still hot, twist the limb in the direction of your pencil mark and hold it there while the limb cools. You'll need to take it past the twisted zone to allow for the fact it'll settle back. It's hard work on the arms and wrists as you must hold some firm pressure. After a few minutes, slowly let the pressure off and let it cool *thoroughly*. **Do not attempt to re-string the bow while it is still hot!** If you do, disaster is on the horizon. I give it a good half an hour. Next, towel off any residual moisture from the bow's surface and restrung your bow. Look to see if you've achieved the alignment you were needing. If not, repeat the process again. If yes, draw the bow a few times and see if the correction holds. If it does, happy days and we're done. If not, no worries, repeat the process until it is straightened. If by some chance you've gone too far, no worries. Just reheat and come back the other way. It's hard to gauge how much pressure may be needed but generally on the bigger draw weights more pressure is needed than on the light ones.

That is all there is to it, it's really simple. Once it is all straightened out, make sure you keep checking it over the next few shoots. If the limb has been out for a long time it may take a few runs to get it out of the twisted habit it has learned. It will get back to normal if you persevere. Most twists are fixed straight away. I've added a lot of pics to this article to help show what we're talking about. If you are looking for a longbow or recurve stringer, we stock quality stringers here at Norseman so drop me a line if you struggle to find one.

As always, any questions can be sent to me by email at norseman_longbows@hotmail.com. Until next time, keep traditional.



Using a recurve stringer properly will go a long way to preventing limb twist.



Push/pull method of stringing a longbow.

On a calm and cool October night, the forested bushlands of outer Gisborne, Victoria, began to come to life. A sign at the front gate read "BEWARE", foreshadowing what lay ahead on this chilling evening. Turning to your left, you see a vampire, blood dripping from his fangs. To your right a skeleton has arisen from the dead ... and a spooky clown awaits the moment to give you a fright. And where might you find all of these terrifying entities together in one place? At Bacchus Marsh Bowmen's Night of Horror, of course!



Archery's NIGHT OF HORROR

by LAUREN HOBDAY

Around the same time American kids were trick or treating around their neighbourhoods last year, a spooky thing happened in Australia: Bacchus Marsh Bowmen hosted its third annual Halloween Night of Horror.

It was certainly a treat. Whether people were avid cosplayers, looking for some fun or simply up for a challenge, this night provided it all! The night consisted of a 10-target, three-arrow round on a modified ABA course. The targets were a fright, with something spooky to arrow around every corner. The shoot began at the first sight of nightfall and archers had only their torch or some glow sticks to light their way around the eerie depths of the natural forested gully. It was truly nothing short of chilling!

The targets themselves ranged from vicious zombies to werewolves and everything terrifying in between, each illuminated with only a small light or glowing red eyes. The shooting was best experienced with torch/headlamp switched off and only instinct to guide the arrow to the scare zone (known as a score zone in less dire circumstances). Although the scoring was simply just for fun, archers were pleasantly surprised how capable they

could be even when stripped of the luxury of light with only true hunter's sense to rely on. It was also the perfect excuse to use Lumenoks!

On their way to each target, archers were confronted with ghouls and spiders hanging from trees and graves all around. There was even some audio, with the sounds of the forest moving around and the odd zombie groaning amongst the bushes.

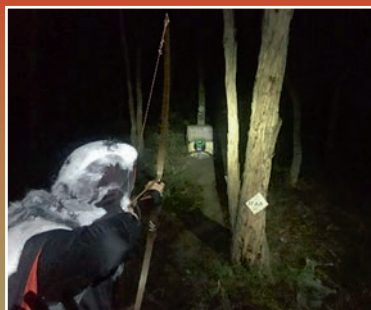
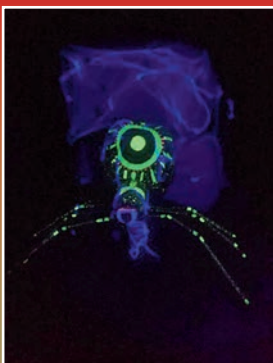
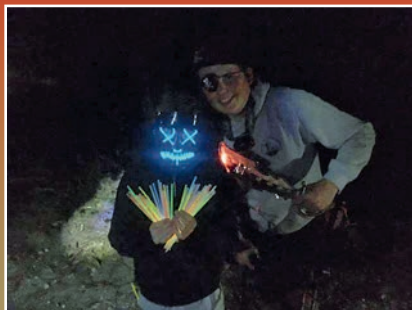
And if that's not bone chilling enough, many of the archers were visually terrifying as well! The organisers highly recommended that participants join in the spirit (mind the pun) of the night and come along dressed in a scary costume. It's an incredible atmosphere when you're not sure who the clown standing next to you really is!

Each year has provided some scary and at times hilarious costumes that make the night that much more fun and exciting to be a part of, and there's a prize for the best costume for one well deserving individual. This year's participants didn't disappoint in the costume department, with some skeletons, spiders, vampires and even a dinosaur ... along with some appearances from cult favourites Pennywise the clown (2019 best



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dressed) and Edward Scissorhands.

Of course for such an absolutely fantastic night of horror there is a team of very dedicated individuals from the club who spend months planning and days setting everything up, to make it an archery experience like no other. Everything from the decorations within the clubhouse and around the range/course as well as many of the targets were made by club members for the pure joy of seeing their hard work in the scary limelight.

People are always shocked by the level of production and effort that goes into the creation of this event. Every year has been a little bit different and as time goes on it only gets better and better. Unfortunately this year the weather threw a spanner in the works as it poured the whole day and there was speculation throughout the day

about whether or not the night would go ahead. The club's team wasn't going to let the rain dampen the night, though, and pushed on throughout the day's poor conditions to be ready for the night. And they had some ghoulish luck, as the weather cleared up. The dry, cool and still evening was perfect for some spooky shooting. In fact, the damp atmosphere and wet forest only added a new dimension to the night's ambiance!

As the night wrapped up with the awards ceremony back at the clubhouse, all the hard work didn't go unrecognised. People from not only Bacchus Marsh, but other clubs boasted about the experience being totally unique and surprising, many commenting on making sure they would be back next year! As someone who has attended all of the past three

years, I can truly say that each year the level of production strengthens and I look forward to what's going to follow in the next year. It's a fun and unearthly night of archery that must be experienced to appreciate it. There's something in it for archers of every skill level, and trust me parents it is well worth your children missing bedtime for! The club also opens up the grounds for camping and use of amenities as well, for any travellers. So if you're looking for something frightfully entertaining to do on an October night, this will be well worth your time, but come along only at your own risk!

A special thank you to Bacchus Marsh Bowmen for organising and holding the event, in particular Hayden and Gail for all their hard work in making sure it goes ahead each year.

Around THE TRADS

To receive trad shoot information direct, email a request to:
swallace@wallacetradwoods.com

Sue Wallace

✱ We knew the weather was going to be warm for the trad shoot at Chevallan Archery Park over the long weekend in October. It was also extremely dry and even though the night temps would be dropping to single digits, there was a total fire ban.

We arrived late Friday afternoon to find the camping area quite full, with many families enjoying the serenity of the property for the school holidays.

The archers camped in their usual positions out of the way of the guests, although we invited them to walk around with any of the groups to observe.

By Saturday morning more archers had arrived to set up their camps for the weekend. We were joined by Ray, who I thought was from SA (it seems my information source had confused me,

much to his amusement) but who was actually from the Greater Victoria area. We also had visitors from Toowoomba (Queensland), Illawarra and Tooma (NSW).

One of our regular archers looked like he had been heading to an Oktober Festival somewhere, then changed his mind and came to archery instead, still dressed in his festive gear. Dazzler!

The events for this shoot were a two-arrow round on the 25 3D targets, with novelties of clout, popinjay, rolling discs, 30-second speed round, moving target and hunt round.

My better half, who is slowly regaining his strength and has been progressing to steadily heavier draw weights, wanted to shoot for at least part of the day. So he took his shooting stick and I carried a

low poundage bow in case he needed it. He had his first shot at a blesbok and the first shot just skimmed under the neck. I had a shot and hit the target with the 25lb bow, which surprised me as I have never shot that low a poundage before. Well, it must have inspired him because his second shot was straight into the 10. He doesn't seem to have forgotten how to shoot!

We walked and shot with one group for a little while, and while we were at one of the targets a family of campers came along the track behind us to watch us shoot. The little boy's name was Archer and his family was pleased for him to hold my bow and arrow for a photo.

When we got to the moving target, my better half didn't stop for a shot but kept walking back to camp. The rest of us headed to the speed round.

Lunch was a chance to sit in the shade for a while before continuing the events. At 4.00pm everyone was asked to gather at the centre walkway with \$2 and five arrows for a long-distance target shot. Once we had all shot our five arrows we started to walk down. The prize rules were: First prize was for the arrow closest to the 10 zone, then the rest of that person's arrows were removed (so only one person could win each prize). Second prize was the next closest arrow to the 10 zone, third prize was for the arrow in the smaller circle on the ground closest to the animal.



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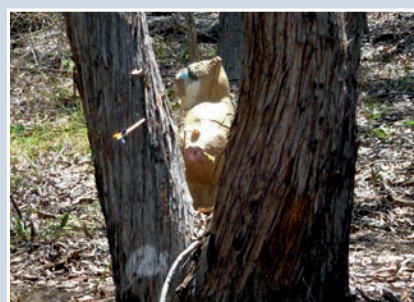




Kids fascinated by archery.



Uh oh, a horn shot at Chevallan.



Cheeky baboon at North Albert.

First place (winning the kitty) was taken out by a relatively new archer who has recently joined our ranks, second place was our Victorian visitor (who won a bottle of wine). And I won a block of chocolate for third place.

We talked to a few of campers explaining how this event was a little outside our usual shooting range and it seems we inspired a few of them to have a go at the practice butts the next day, as we all looked like we were having fun.

Saturday evening dinner's steak was expertly cooked by Tom the chef, and that was followed by various tarts and icecream. We then all adjourned to our campsites for a few nightcaps before retiring.

Sunday seemed a little cooler as we headed down to the course after a hearty bacon-and-egg breakfast. A couple of local archers had also joined us. After the day's shooting during presentations, one couple had to leave a little early—I virtually had to run after the car to deliver the Ladies Recurve third place medallion!

The next two-day shoot at Chevallan Archery Park will be on February 22 and 23..

✱ Also on the October long weekend, the Hunter Valley Traditional Archers held their annual charity shoot. There is a complete story of the weekend elsewhere in this magazine.

✱ The weekend of October 12 and 13

was the Traditional Archery Australia's third annual National Muster which was originally to be held at Tenterfield Traditional Archers; however after devastating fires in the area, which completely burned the club's grounds, (but thankfully not their new clubhouse area), was moved to Barambah Bowhunters and Field Archers at Nanango (Queensland), where they also held their AGM. The new president is Steve Linaker, while Keith Speight has retired.

✱ The final two-day shoot on the Queensland trad calendar was the Trad Tourney at North Albert Field Archers at Yatala. When we arrived, a couple of sites were already taken, so we found a nice shady spot and set up. By Friday

evening nine groups were settled in.

Saturday morning started with bacon and eggs and a few archers arrived by car to shoot for the day.

I'd been talking to a couple of the locals earlier and they were expecting a large number of archers which would have been great, however by the time Muster was called it was obvious the numbers weren't going to be as high as expected.

There were two courses of 15 targets, which for this shoot were both on the other side of the road, one course shot as a two-arrow, the other course as a one-arrow then on the Sunday it was swapped around.

Even though the walk was quite long, the target placements were good, with some shots being a little challenging. The

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FULL DRAW ARCHERY

hunter round was set up on the walkway heading back out to camp. There were also novelties of moving target, and rolling discs, which the groups ran by themselves, and bower bird which was run as a separate event once everyone was back, with the 30-second speed round set up at the side of the practice range.

On one course the gamble shot was a big bear some distance away with a couple of overhanging trees or a well camouflaged mini-stegosaurus, while the other course had a bear leaning to the left or a speckled javelina. They also had the baboon's pink bottom at the fork of the tree, with one archer in our group landing an arrow quite firmly in the trunk ... of the tree!

My better half is still gaining strength so decided to shoot at a few targets then head back to camp as his stamina ran out. The rest of us did the one-arrow round before stopping for lunch. Our

group finished the events mid-afternoon and settled in with some nibbles. A couple of our friends had arrived early Saturday evening and set up camp while we finished dinner.

Sunday morning saw the same group of archers arriving by car, which was reassuring, and today it was only the two field courses to do. Our shoot group had expanded by two so we headed out early. My better half decided to have a go with the slightly heavier bow this morning and managed to shoot one arrow at all 15 targets.

The combined archers from Kurwongbah Lake Traditional Archers and Chevallan Archery Park made up the bulk of the archers who attended and we all had a great time, and we would like to thank Bill Watson and the North Albert Field Archers who assisted over the weekend.

It was very disheartening for the club to have so many more people say

they were coming, and then not show, so it will be no surprise to those who did attend to learn that this shoot will not be on the calendar next year. We will have to wait to see.

✿ We had a really bad storm on Saturday evening with quite a lot of rain which was a great relief for my garden, however it did mean it would feel rather tropical out on the course at Sunshine Coast Bowmen. The club held their Traditional Knot Shoot on Sunday November 17. We headed out a little earlier than we needed to, and were surprised to find quite a few archers already there.

At this club, you leave the car in the school's car park, and walk across the sports field to get to the course. You need to cover your gear, and I had a chuckle when I got across to find someone had pushed a wheelbarrow, that I must say was rather full, all the way across. Others have pull along



North Albert bear—hang in there.



Chameleon at Sunshine Coast.



Obsured kill zone on this panther.



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trolleys, while most of us just wrap our bows up. Whatever it takes, I guess!

By the time Muster came around there were 50 archers gathered. For this shoot, there were 20 targets on each range, with two arrows at each target, the first shot from the orange peg, then a walk-up for the second shot from the green peg.

Our first target was the one the range captain had deemed 'the chicken dinner', which was a vinyl target with four chooks on it, all with score zones, so you had to pick two and shoot. The club is having their own vinyl targets made using photos taken of various game animals by the club members. What a brilliant idea, plus they had purchased some 3D targets which no one had seen before.

To make it more interesting, the range captain had set a lot of the targets strategically behind large palm fronds, which we punched right through.

The second and third targets were together with two stakes, and we could see one target which was an interesting smallish 3D pig. It wasn't until you were on the shooting peg that the crocodile became apparent. There was one really really *loooong* shot which none of us hit—a deer—but were more successful with the closer shot. We spied a very colourful chameleon from the shooting peg and had no idea where the score zone was on that one, and then discovered as we were pulling the shafts out, there was a score zone on the

front of the 'log' part of the target.

One of the targets was a small wild dog and the score zone was very cleverly covered by a dead palm frond some distance in front of the target. It was very deceptive, and we were quite surprised to see how close all our arrows actually were when we got to the target.

We found a pig, then a goose target sitting in front of a tree, a little further along, a deer target that looked like he'd been rutting against a tree and all the bark had fallen and tangled in his antlers, and then there was a lioness placed as if she was trying to climb up the inside of the tree.

By the time we had reached the 15th target my better half was getting tired, but was determined to finish this first course, which he did. Another in our group had a broken toe, a third archer had an extremely sore elbow which was giving her grief every time she drew the string back ... and my fractured foot was giving me gyp. Talk about a group of broken downs!

Once lunch was over the groups went back out to do the second round, although some of us went home. It was a great day, as always, the range captain Peter definitely does a great job setting out the targets into many and varied interesting positions.

A big thank you to all at Sunshine Coast Bowmen, which is a very friendly club and makes everyone welcome, and we all look forward to the Traditional Knot Shoot same time in 2020.

☀ Trad shoots confirmed for February and March at the time of printing are: Tenterfield Blacked-Out Trad Shoot on February 15 and 16, Chevallan Archery Park on February 22 and 23, South West Bowmen TAA WA State Titles on March 14 and 15, HVTA Andy Firth Memorial on March 28 and 29, Twin City Albury Trad Shoot, possibly March 14 and 15 (to be confirmed).

☀ Reports in the next issue will include Stawell Bowhunters Inaugural Trad Shoot and the White Rose Christmas Trad Shoot.

Further information and flyers for traditional shoots are on the following websites:

Traditional Archery Australia:
www.traditionalarcheryaustralia.org > Shoot Information

Wallace Woods:
www.wallacetradwoods.com > Shoot information (proposed 2019 calendar, and will have the link to the shoot flyers as they become available)

Chevallan Archery Park:
www.chevallanarcherypark.com – for the proposed traditional shoot calendar, IBO-approved African 3D targets, customised archery medals.

Ozbow:
www.ozbow.net > Traditional Archery Events > each shoot has an individual thread.

I look forward to seeing you 'round the trads in 2020.

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ELK HUNTING IN THE MOUNTAINS OF MONTANA



View of the Crazies from the Lodge.



A hunting we will go

A little over a year ago, I never would have thought that I would ever be sitting looking out over the Crazies—but there I was.

Crazies? What are Crazies? Are they as mad as they sound? The Crazies are a mountain range in Montana properly called The Crazy Woman Mountains. Apparently way back, the Indians wiped out a family in the mountains and left them for dead. The mother survived but ended up mad and lived in the mountains, so the Indians left her alone and called the mountains by that name.

What was I doing here? I was here to hunt the majestic elk in the mountains of Montana.

This saga had started a year earlier when two of my mates, Dave Littlejohn and Graham Newell, decided that they were going to hunt elk and tried to persuade me to go with them. My first reaction was NO! But after considerable pressure from the boys, and my loving wife saying “Why don’t you go?” well, let’s just say I am weak and I finally agreed to accompany them on their adventure.

Stryker

What’s a Stryker? Actually, that should be, who is Stryker?

Stryker—that’s his real name, by the way—is the guide allocated to me by our chosen outfitter, Elk Ridge Outfitters. He was to accompany me for my hunt and hopefully be instrumental in helping me to get my elk.

Stryker is 22, an ex-marine ... and just happens to be a bit taller than me.

I was chosen to be guided by Stryker as the outfitter had decided

ALAN ROBERTSON

that I looked like the fittest of our group and should be able to keep up with him. That was a mistake. Not only was I unfit, but also I had a bung knee, and trying to negotiate large hills at an altitude of 6500ft was not going to be good.

Now I am just shy of 6ft in height and my wife is about 5ft 4in. Our whole married life, she has complained when we are walking together about my striding out and her having to walk twice as fast to keep up with me. I now know how she feels and will try and be more considerate when walking with her in future.

As to how tall Stryker is, just have a look at the photo (right). He is 6ft 10in tall and no, I am not on my knees in the photo.

The bowhunting

Bowhunting elk in Montana is not easy. Unlike hunting in Australia, you only get one chance and if you stuff it up your hunt is over.



Tall and taller. Also note the interesting wall art, especially near the ceiling.

We were booked in to hunt for 10 days and each day went something like this: 4.00am: Rise, get into camo and have breakfast, leave soon after 5.00am to drive between 20km and 30km to get to our chosen hunting sites (my spot happened to be in the

foothills of the Crazies) then start to walk-climb.

Hunting is mostly based on trying to ambush the elk as they leave the alfalfa (lucerne) paddocks on daylight to return to their bedding areas up in the hills. The morning hunt is usually over by about 7.30am. If you have been unsuccessful, the elk will be back in their beds and the outfitters don't like to disturb them in their bedding areas as they will then just completely vacate the area.

If unsuccessful, it's then back to the hunting lodge for a rest and lunch before heading back out at about 3.00pm to do it all again. This time the elk are making their way back down the hills just on dark to spend the night feeding on the alfalfa.

I should probably point out that for most of our stay the temperature seldom got much above 0°C and got down to about -11°C. We also had plenty of snow, which was very interesting for three Queenslanders



Aussie bowhunting mate Graham Newell (left) with the guides.



The saddle.

used to hunting in much hotter temperatures.

After five days of unsuccessfully following the routine without ever getting close to an elk and sometimes not even seeing one, I was starting to get over it. There was a saddle up in the hills where the elk liked to pass through on the way back to their

bedding areas. Our main chance for success was to get up in this saddle in the dark and lie in wait hoping firstly that there were elk in the alfalfa below us and secondly that they would choose to follow the path through the saddle. This saddle also happened to have the boundary fence running through it. Some mornings there

were no elk and some mornings they chose to just jump the boundary fence lower down and not come through the saddle at all.

I had become very familiar with a certain pine tree in the saddle as it was here that I had my little hidey spot where I waited in the cold. I had it all ranged with 53yd to the boundary

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fence which would be the maximum distance they would pass by me if indeed they ever came.

On the fifth day I was once again back in this spot and it was now 7.30am with no action. I was about give up when all of a sudden I heard a bull elk bugle like crazy several times. He was coming, but he was not coming where we expected. He was behind us, having crossed the saddle earlier. He was following one of the many game trails that went up the ridge behind us

We had crossed this ridge earlier in the dark before dropping down into the saddle. I looked back at Stryker who was in the pine trees about 40yd behind me and he gestured that I should move and try and get up the ridge before the bull disappeared.

I started to make my way up the hill but the bull had stopped bugling and I had no idea if he was even still there. I could now hear other elk coming up the saddle where I had just been.

The cows constantly chatter to each other when they are together. Who knows what they are saying but like most women they love to keep up this constant chatter. I now had a dilemma: I did not know where the herd bull was so decided I had better make my way quickly back to the saddle to see what was going on back there. On nearing the edge of the clearing I could see elk everywhere; about half a dozen cows and two satellite bulls. The only trouble was that they were all heading back the way they had come at a fairly quick pace. They had either picked up our scent or been spooked by a small mob of cattle who had been hanging out in the saddle. Either way, the elk were getting out of there.

I don't remember drawing my bow. All I knew was that I had a good angling-away shot on a bull elk at about 40yd even though he was moving away. The red pin settled back on his ribs and the arrow was on its way. I heard the

arrow hit then all hell broke loose as the herd of elk crashed away over the nearby boundary fence and into the neighbour's country.

Stryker had previously mentioned that the boundary fence being so close could be a problem, as we were not allowed to just cross into the neighbours. I walked to where the elk had been when I took the shot but could find no sign of blood. I thought I heard the elk's final breaths from over the fence but could not see him. On walking down the fenceline, I found very good blood on our side of the fence and could see it continuing over the fence.

Not long after, Stryker showed up to say he had got to within 25yd of the big herd bull. He had heard my shot and had heard it hit the animal. I explained what had gone on and he agreed that it looked like a good hit when I showed him the blood.

We now needed to try to get

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TUSKER TROPHY OF THE MONTH

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BEST GAME NOT TAKEN WITH A TUSKER

Kurt Teitzel, Renegade Bowmen, Chital Deer, 165 ½ pts, Record Class

WINNER
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Robbo with his elk.

permission to cross the fence to look for the bull. Stryker contacted Doug (our outfitter) on the hand-held two-way radios but reception was pretty bad as he was probably 30km away. Doug could tell him the name of the outfitter who hunted over the fence but didn't have his phone number. We could do nothing but head back down and walk back to the vehicle (another couple of kilometres) to try to get somewhere where we could contact the other outfitter.

Back at the car, we started to drive out and when we got up on another small hill Stryker even got up right on top of the vehicle's roof to try to get a better signal. Even with his extra height, it was still not enough.

He left the vehicle and climbed

another nearby hill where he managed to get in contact with his father to get the name and phone number of the neighbouring outfitter. He then phoned the outfitter from the hill and got permission to cross the boundary fence to look for the elk.

This time at least I didn't have to walk back the couple of kilometres and climb the hill. Stryker drove his vehicle right up through the paddock and up to the bottom of the saddle. They don't seem to have to worry too much over there about staking tyres as the country compared to ours seems nice and soft without any spiky stuff.

As soon as we crossed the fence, we were back on the blood trail which was pretty easy to follow. I did stop to take some photos, though, as snow

had begun to fall pretty heavily and it was such a novelty to me I had to get photos.

About 40yd past the fence we came across my elk all piled up where he had crashed down amongst the undergrowth. I was pretty elated to finally put my hands on him, as any deer taken with a bow is good and to my mind the elk is the pinnacle of all deer hunting.

Now it was time for the hard stuff. After all the photos were taken we gutted him out, ready to get him back to the vehicle. These animals are huge but as he was on quite a slope we were able to slide him down the hill under the fence and get him back to the vehicle.

In Montana, you are not allowed to leave game meat in the paddock.



The elk on the vehicle rack. Below: View from the lodge after snowfall.

As soon as you have an animal down you have to attach your game tag so the whole thing can be recorded by Montana Fish and Game.

Nothing is allowed to be wasted and the outfitter is well set up to retrieve the animals from the bush.

Most vehicles here have a rack which is carried on top of the vehicle

and when it is required it is attached to the tow bar instead of the normal towing tongue. The elk was manoeuvred onto this rack for removal back to the home base.

Once home, everything was so efficient. No field dressing here—they skin out, cape if required and prepare the carcass for transport to the butcher

for meat processing. Most hunters are keen to take all the meat and their families can live off it for months. Unfortunately there was no way we could take it back to Australia but it didn't go to waste, as any unwanted meat is donated to the local food bank to help feed needy families.

While I only fired one arrow at an animal during my Montana trip, the overall experience was fantastic, from the hunt itself to mixing with the real country Americans to the snow-capped mountains and the cold. It was amazing seeing animals in the wild that we just don't have in Australia—elk, whitetail, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, coyote, bear and I even saw a skunk one cold morning while watching a herd of elk on the alfalfa.

We fascinated the locals with our accents (they learned a few new words of Aussie slang while we were there).

Overall, it was a trip of a lifetime for me and one which I will never forget.

Thanks, boys, for persuading me to go and to my wife Kerry for letting me go. I now have a lot of points to make up for with her, but it was worth it.



The writer of this story wins a threepack of **TUSKER SPIRIT** broadheads



Entries PHOTO COMPETITION



*Rusa antics: Antlers and
grass hat, no headgear,
bird brain.*
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Eric Creighton



Good people, good times.
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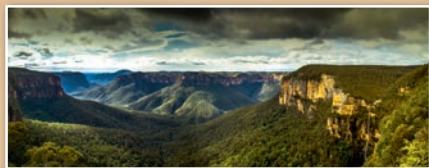


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BACK TO BASICS

RESCUE

Part 3

*The boat is safer anchored at the port;
but that's not the aim of boats.*

Paulo Coelho

Mayday Mayday Mayday

As hunters, most of us are “Landlubbers, to be sure!” (said with my best pirate accent). But many of us still love to take the tinnie out on hunting trips for a spot of fishin’, crabbin’ or even for entry to hunting locations using waterways for access. Maybe you like a bit of bowfishing for sharks and stingrays. Or if you win a ballot for hunting hog deer in locations like Boole Poole and Snake Island, there’s no vehicle access and you’ll soon be reaching for a mate’s boat if you don’t already have one yourself.

But before you chuck on a life jacket and set off from shore, consider this. You don’t have to be Tony Bullimore or Tom Hanks to find yourself in need of a water rescue. And it happens more often than you’d think.

According to NSW Maritime statistics, open runabouts

accounted for 47.2 per cent of all vessels involved in incidents. In 48.7 per cent of cases where a person (or more than one) was killed, the vessel was less than 4.8m in length. What’s more, only 26.5 per cent of incidents occurred on open waters. The rest happened in water bodies like rivers, lakes, estuaries and bays.

The Australian Maritime Safety Agency (AMSA) tells us that the total number of waterborne incidents up to September 2019, was 475. Fifty of these were deemed serious and included fatalities. Of these, 29 (60 per cent) occurred in Queensland where a fair smack of bowfishing takes place. And these were just the incidents that involved AMSA. Many other incidents will have occurred around the country that didn’t directly involve the Agency but were handled separately by local maritime rescue, police or other emergency services.



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There's no central national repository of data for these rescues, but it's safe to assume they're going on every day somewhere around Australia's 25,700km of coastline or along our waterways.

Further, not all search and rescue operations involving recreational vessels include distress beacons. Mobile phone and Sat Phones and S.E.N.D devices like Spot and InReach have been used.

So, are you beginning to think you might need to take the risk of a waterborne mishap a little more seriously? Perhaps a review of your on-board emergency equipment is in order? After all, as they say, there's nothing faster than disaster.

The Australian Maritime Safety Agency's Manager of Search and Rescue, Alan Lloyd, certainly reckons there's a lot we can be doing to better prepare ourselves for the



I've gone boating

The idea of a 'Fridge Gram' for when you've gone hunting has been covered in a previous issue. This is the handy note that you leave on the fridge and with mates or family telling them what you're doing, where you've gone, with who, how you can be contacted and when you expect to be back. For boating, a similar leaflet is available from Maritime Safety Queensland, NSW Maritime and Maritime Safety Victoria. It's called 'I've Gone Boating' and you can fill it out then leave a copy on your driver's seat at the boat ramp. In case of emergency, it will help authorities know who's missing and what to look for.

For more information and to download your copy go to:

https://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/29473/Ive-Gone-Boating-flyer.pdf

<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Safety>

I'VE GONE BOATING

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HERE ARE MY TRIP DETAILS FOR: (DATE) / /

I am departing at: am/pm (please circle)

I am departing from:

My trip intentions are:

I will return no later than: am/pm (please circle)

Number of people on board (including me):

Weather conditions expected:

Keep a whiteboard marker handy to enter fresh trip details and ALWAYS inform a relative or friend of your boating plans by leaving this card with them. If you fail to return by the time specified they should:

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PLACE PICTURE OF YOUR BOAT HERE TO ASSIST POLICE WITH VESSEL IDENTIFICATION IN EVENT OF A SEARCH

Check the marine weather report and ensure you and your boat are suited to the conditions.

Ensure you have a float plan and return it. Plan for 1/3 OUT, 1/3 BACK, 1/3 RESERVE.

Ensure there is an appropriate skipper for everyone onboard and 'buddy up'.

Fully charge your boat's battery as well as home, mobile and mobile phone.

If you're heading offshore, carry a distress beacon (EPIRB).

VALUABLE INFORMATION ON THE BACK

NSW Maritime

Australian Maritime Safety Agency



You don't always get much notice when a capsize happens. Everyone on board needs to be wearing a life-jacket.



The KT1 SA2G Personal Locating Beacon can be placed in your life-jacket pocket or strapped to your arm.



The majority of drownings in Australia are middle-aged blokes. How far can you swim?



Left: Four-inch scar from prop chop. Right: Be aware and take care.

unexpected. Here's some of what he had to tell us: "Being prepared for a capsize starts with making sure that every passenger on your boat is wearing a life-jacket at all times.

Capsizing can happen quickly and you may not have enough time to don a life-jacket that has been stowed.

In the event of a capsize or other emergencies, you need to alert search and rescue authorities to your situation immediately by using verbal communication equipment like a phone, marine radio or satellite phone. When verbal communications are unavailable, activate a distress beacon."

Beacons which are used in the marine environment come in two forms—emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs) and personal locator beacons (PLBs).

Boats travelling more than two nautical miles offshore are required by law to have a registered EPIRB, however, in the case of the recreational fisher or bow-fisher, carrying a PLB makes a lot of sense.

"This is because beacon activations don't have to be solely for main vessel emergencies such as collision, capsize or groundings. Consider life threatening events. There are numerous reports over time of prop chop, man overboard, or diving incidents but even more often are 'rescues' from broken-down vessels due to poor maintenance or worse, running out of fuel. You have to keep an open mind and take your responsibilities as a master of the vessel seriously. Keep an open mind to events and their variability."

Consider these examples:

Heart attacks occur on boats too. Forty-five thousand Australians die of dramatic heart failure each year (that's nearly 30 per cent of all deaths). Meanwhile, cardiovascular disease affects one in six Australians—or 4.2 million people.

Within our own circle of associates, we know of a bloke who had a heart attack on a small fishing boat. Unfortunately he didn't pull through because no one on board knew how to perform CPR correctly and his mates were relying on sketchy mobile phone communications. Knowledge of CPR and first aid could have made all the difference and seen this bloke return to his family. It shows too that reliable communications are vital. Having at least two options available is a good thing—mobile phone, marine radio and/or sat-phone combo.

Prop chop: Boating seems pleasant enough, but too many Australians unwittingly test whether the soft tissue of their body can withstand the fast centrifugal motion of a boat's metal propeller. Indeed, prop chop is the equal fifth most likely way to injure yourself in NSW waters.

And, in case you were wondering about the other ways people injure themselves, they include (in order of most likely) towing incidents, collision, explosion

Safety equipment

The below list is from Maritime Safety Queensland and pertains to standard safety equipment for registered boats. While this may not apply to your bowhuntin' crabbin' fishin' tinnie, it's a handy ready reckoner for what you should be considering.

Equipment	Smooth waters	Partially smooth waters	Beyond partially smooth waters
Must carry the following equipment			
EPIRB or PLB*			✓#
Flares (2 red hand-held and 2 orange smoke)		✓	✓
Fire fighting equipment	✓	✓	✓
Signalling device if operating at between sunset and sunrise (e.g. torch, lantern, glow stick)	✓	✓	✓
V sheet		✓	✓
Lifejacket	✓ Lifejacket level 50, 100, 150, 275 or level 50 special purpose	✓ Lifejacket level 100, 150, 275 or level 50	✓ Lifejacket level 100, 150, 275

Should carry the following equipment			
Anchor	✓ (with cable appropriate for size of vessel)	✓ (with cable appropriate for size of vessel)	✓ (with cable appropriate for size of vessel)
Chart		✓	✓
Compass		✓	✓
Drinking water	✓	✓	✓
Handheld electronic navigation device (if not equipped with a chart and compass)		✓	✓
Oars or paddles (for boats under 6m)	✓	✓	✓
Pumping or bailing equipment	✓	✓	✓

Before you go, remember to ...

- Check the weather report, check the tides and have the appropriate maps.
- Check you have enough water, fuel and reserve fuel.
- Check you have the right safety equipment on board and ready to use.
- Check your boat is in good condition and the batteries are fully charged
- Prepare an emergency plan in case of bad weather or a marine incident.

(fuel) and person overboard. In terms of fatalities, NSW stats provide a sobering picture. Specifically, the three most common fatal incident types over the last 10 years were: capsized (40 incidents, 34.2 per cent); fall overboard (33 incidents, 28.2 per cent); and towing incidents (11 incidents, 9.4 per cent).

To there and back: If you think running out of fuel in your trusty 4x4 is embarrassing, wait until you do so in a boat and you can't walk back to the nearest fuel station.

The rule of thumb in boating is one-third of your fuel to get where you are going; one-third to get back and one-third in reserve.

We know of three men who, in 2018, ran out of fuel in the NT in a crocodile-infested river system. They set off their PLB two days after they had become stranded as they would have "preferred to get themselves out of trouble" hoping another boatie would come by and help them out. The reason they set off their beacon was that they had started to feel the effects of dehydration.

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Grab your grab bag

Some people call them bug-out bags or rapid-ditch bags. It doesn't matter what you call them. What does matter is that you have one and that you can get to it quickly.

There are a lot of companies out there like McMurdo, ACR and others who make purpose-designed marine grab bags. You'll find splashproof, buoyant, hi-vis options with external pockets for EPIRBs et cetera, in differing sizes and with soft and hard skins. There's no shortage of variety. But the real test is have the right gear in them.

While no list can be considered complete, the obvious bits of kit to include are: EPIRB, flares, hand-held waterproof VHF radio with extra batteries, waterproof GPS and batteries (preferably the same type of batteries for your VHF radio—or alternatively buy a combo radio GPS), floating flashlight and batteries (same same), whistle, heliograph (a real signalling mirror not a CD), water and high energy food (there are purpose-made long life survival packs for this).

After this, consider what you may need for long-term survival. If you're hunting overseas, then your ID, passport and money in local currency and USD could come in handy. And regardless of where you are, a way of making shelter (like an old Army hootchie or AMK SOL survival blanket)



Hand-held marine radio

If you do a lot of bowfishing on board a boat, consider the utility of a hand-held marine radio. Why would you do that when you already have a hand held CB?

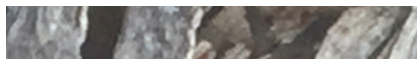
For starters ... as they say, "When in Rome...". Your CB radio is HF while the marine radio is VHF. So they are incompatible. Around the briny stuff, people will be monitoring VHF not HF. So really it's a question of whether you'd like to be rescued now or later ... much later.

Channel 16 VHF (156.8 MHz) is a marine VHF radio frequency designated as an international distress frequency. It's monitored by search and rescue groups as well as by ships, fishing fleets and other nearby registered vessels.

You can keep a marine radio secure with a wrist strap. Most are waterproof to AP67 for full durability. Others also have awesome extras such as: if you accidentally drop it in the water it will float. Others will still automatically flash with an LCD light, even when wet, making them easier to retrieve quickly.

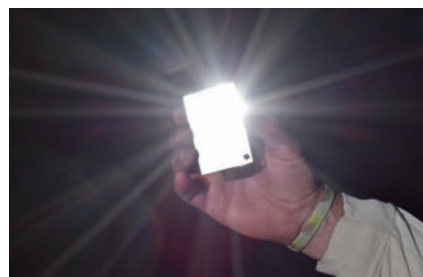
is a no-brainer. Take a sturdy bit of kit and you'll be able to use it as well for water collection or as a sail, et cetera. Other items to carry include matches, a purpose-made survival knife like the Heiman Hatchet, first aid kit, survival kit and cordage like dental floss and para-cord.

The next step is to ensure that your life-jacket can hold some emergency kit too. Pockets are useful to hold a knife, PLB and Personal Distress Signals Mini Flares. That way, if all else fails, you're wearing a mini-grab bag and you'll give yourself a fighting chance,



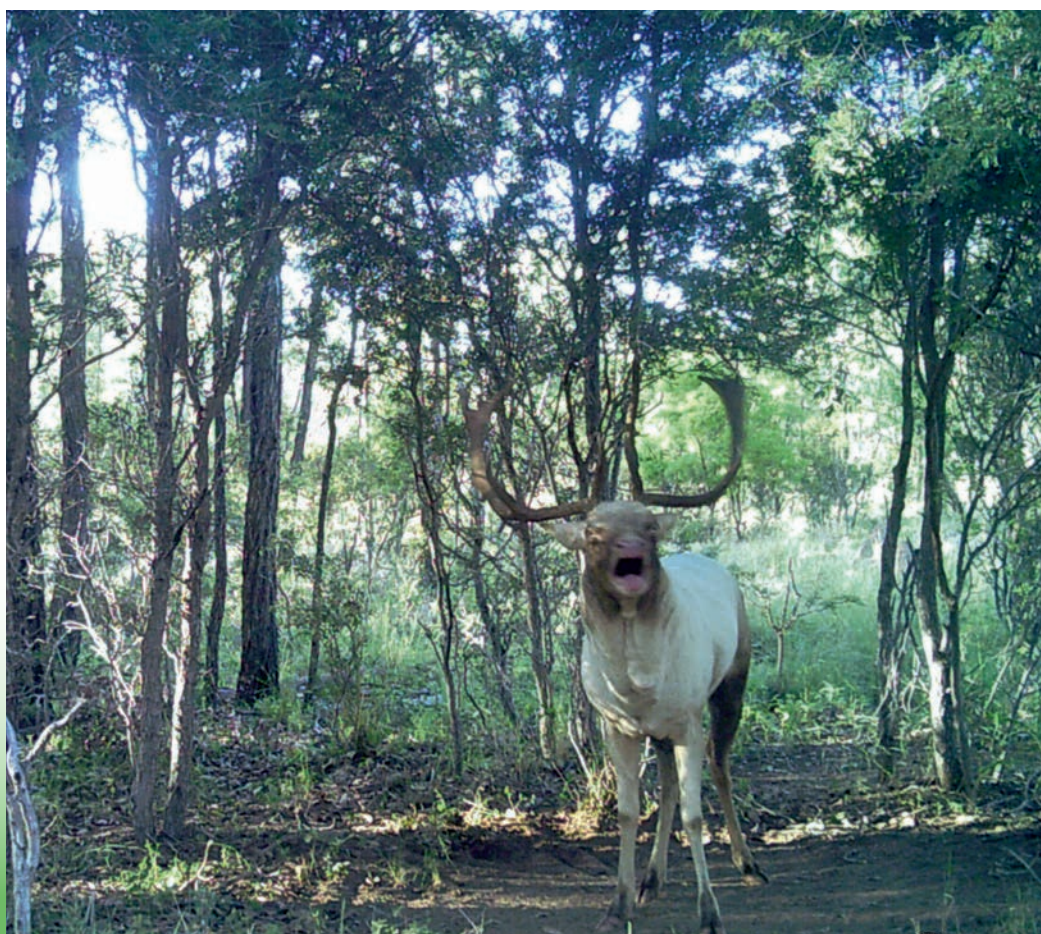
Right, from top: Have a signalling mirror in your life vest to attract attention. For longer term survival situations a survival kit can help. Cord can have many uses. If you find yourself grounded or cast away, you will need something better than your filleting knife.

Left: A distress caller like this should be in your grab bag (also pictured is the small but incredibly loud pealess FOX Sharx whistle).



A GHOST STORY





DAVID BREWER

The big white stag, caught on a game cam a couple of years ago.



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A phone call had me packing my gear. The fallow were croaking; it was time to go! Just before I lost phone service, an 'Australian moose' dropped into my feed. What a fallow that Darryl Bulger had shafted—a true monster and a trophy that anyone would dream of. How good would that be! Daydreaming, I missed my turn off. A quick U-turn and my quest was on.

A quick meet and greet, the must-have cup of tea and I was off to check my cameras, hoping to have some shots of a big white fallow that had been seen. A white fallow was rare, not something seen in these parts previously and from the talk he was a cracker.

Checking the cards that night, I made my plan. This white stag was working three scrapes that I had cameras on and he had worked them every day. Sleep came hard that night and I certainly didn't need an alarm.

Well before daybreak, I was sitting on a ridge listening, the fallow were singing all around. There isn't much that I enjoy more than chasing fallow

in the rut all over the hills and valleys. I was in for some fun.

A deep grunt caught my attention. It sounded different to the rest; even without seeing the stag I knew this was the one I wanted ... well, at least I hoped he was as he was a lot closer than the other deer I was listening to. One of my big beliefs in life is that exercise is overrated—close works for me. Checking the wind for the hundredth time, I moved off just as the sun topped the mountains.

My jaw dropped. This stag was a monster—the photos simply didn't do him justice! Tall, wide and proud and he was letting every deer around know that he was in charge. I was hooked. Without reason, the stag bolted across the valley; try as I might, I couldn't locate him again that morning. I did come across some good stags but they just didn't hit the mark. Heading for camp, I hoped for a better outcome the following day.

Sunrise had me in the same valley, the same croak ringing out. He's back! Moving down the ridge, I could see him along the creek singing at the top of his lungs. Glassing furiously, all I could see was a single hind. The odds were good—not too many eyes, plenty of cover to get in close. We just might be on here. All was going really well until the lady in his life decided France was nice this time of year and away she bounded. The stag, with tongue hanging out, followed close behind. Day done.

Day three, same plan, same result, same valley. The white stag was facing off with a rival, the same hind close by (watching with bored amusement, I'd suggest). Fighting stags made it easy to close the distance and soon I was watching from the tree line as the two stags ran at each other across the flat. It was one of those memories that bring a smile every time it enters my head. It was an incredible thing to witness. The white stag ran his rival off and peace

returned to the flat. Collecting his hind prize, the stag walked back toward the creek just out of bow range. With the stag and hind bedded down in the grass I thought my best move was to crawl across the open grassland and wait for him to stand. Slowly, quietly, I moved into bow range. This was going well, I hadn't disturbed either, all I needed do was wait, and wait, and wait, and wait ...

There was a flaw in my plan. In order for me to get a shot, the stag needed to be there. I discovered later there was a washout where I thought the stag had bedded. The traces along the gully showed a clear deer highway where the deer could melt away unseen. This beast was a GHOST!

At least this stag kept to his habits. Morning saw him in the same flat with me in the same timberline watching his early morning routine. There were no rival stags to be seen this morning and I had the bright idea to try to call this stag in. Try as I might—and I tried grunts, rattles, even hind calls—this stag wasn't taking the bait. As I had seen many times before, the hind broke off at a run with the stag ghosting me in favour of deer love and disappearing out of sight. Head down and second-guessing the morning's event, I headed for the ute. Thinking I

hadn't checked my cameras for days, I decided to swap the cards over and check them over lunch. Parking up, I headed off to check my scrapes. Checking the third camera I heard a familiar grunt, and it was close, real close. Carefully I moved through the thick undergrowth to where that single grunt had come, a grunt at eleven ... who would have thought?

I saw the hind bedded down, I was sick of seeing her as she had blown my hunt more times than I cared to think, but if she was here the stag must be close. Glassing, I see him bedded behind a shrub not 20yd away. This was an awesome chance, one of those few times when a stag made a mistake. It wasn't the only mistake, though ... I didn't have a bow. I'd left my pack and bow in the ute about 2km away. What was I saying about exercise being overrated? About now, I was wishing I was a lot fitter! Slowly backing out the way I had come, I made a hurried trip to get my bow.

Praying to anyone who was listening, I moved back in to where I had left the stag. Not believing my luck, I saw that the stag was still right where I had left him. There simply wasn't a shot on offer so quietly I found a comfortable position to wait for him to rise and step out. Only minutes

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later the hind stood and walked in the only direction I couldn't cover. You guessed it, the stag followed without a shot offered. Cursing, I got to my feet and cut back and around the thickest timber trying to keep them in sight.

For three hours we played cat and mouse, with the stag bedding and rising many times. Finally I had the stag at 30m. He was bedded and facing

away with his head behind a tree. I couldn't have asked for a better set-up. The hind was bedded as well but facing my way.

Staying put, I again waited for the stag to rise. Of course it was the hind that was first to get to her feet. The stag was watching her as she fed but he didn't stand. The hind was feeding right toward me, closer and closer

and still the stag lay. With the hind at 15m she performed her usual trick of running off into the timber.

Not this time! Stepping out from behind the tree I had been using for cover, I drew on the still bedded stag, I had seen this act to many times so I knew what came next. The arrow was away and the stag never made it to his feet with the broadhead passing

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through his spine and into the vitals. It was a day that I will never forget. This stag, this ghost, was hard won and while not the 'Australian moose' that Darryl had earned, it was still a great 230pt head.

Fast forward two years and the story continues. Here I am in 2019, hunting the same ground with my son on his first fallow hunt. From above us on the ridge I hear a fallow grunt. Catching movement, I pull George in close into some cover. I see a hind coming straight toward us on the run. I can hear the sound of a stag grunting on the run coming closer and closer. Coming into view I see a white spiker chasing the young hind ... the similarity of two years ago wasn't missed on me. Enjoying the moment, we watched as the young stag leaped over some low shrub not 5yd away, grunting the whole time. As the deer ran out of sight I said to George, "That's the son of Ghost." We saw him a few times over the next few days, always with the same hind. Like father, like son.



School had started back so after that I was hunting on my own. I had blown a great chocolate coloured stag that morning, which was my last day. Walking back to the ute some 6km away I was berating myself for a rookie mistake. Without realising it, I detoured off track. Lifting my head, I was shocked to find I had walked up on one of Ghost's favourite scrapes. I had more photos of him on this scrape than I did on any others. What blew me away was here was the white spiker, lying in that scrape.

I had disturbed him and he rose and

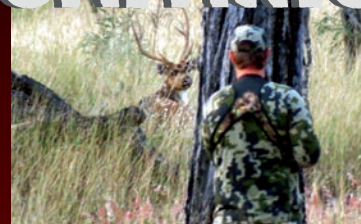
started to walk away. I let out a quick hind call to get him to come back into the open to give me time to get some quick photos. I'm not a church-going person and I'm not sure what life is all about and what happens in the end. All I do know is that something is at work here. I needed to finish my hunt with the memory of this young stag and the circle of life. His mannerisms, behaviours, hell, his whole being made me think that this stag was Ghost for another run at life. Is this what life is? Do we get another run at it? Makes you think.



The writer of this story
wins a threepack of
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 - Draw Weights 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, 80lbs
- Black 5**
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 - 35" Axle to Axle
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Out with the lads

GIRLIE HUNTER

I wouldn't say I was a particularly girlie girl (despite my name), but I'm definitely not all that enamoured of the idea of the 'true' camping experience. You know, when you sleep on the ground and you're cold all night and in the morning you can't find the tree that the hairdryer is supposed to plug into.

I mean, I don't mind a bit of roughing it. I don't expect to take my four pillows complete with silk pillowcases on a hunting trip (despite the fact that I'll have a bad hair day the next day if I don't). And I'm definitely able to 'man up' enough to drink billy tea despite the fact that it's usually a bit strong (shudder) and I don't really have any need to put hairs on my chest. Oh, I'll pass on the eucalyptus leaves in the tea, thanks. They might give me Delhi Belly. Or more likely, Gumleaf Gripe. Or even a bad case of Through-the-Eye-of-a-Needle Squitters.

Anyway, I'm out here with the lads. They've already found a shady spot for the beer fridge, which is complete with its own gas bottle. Apparently you've got to get your priorities right on these trips. Now they're unpacking their bows and jocks (they didn't bring much else ... actually, I'm not sure they all brought spare jocks) and I'm fiddling with my little containers of makeup as I unpack the first of my three suitcases. (No one thought to bring a dresser. Oh well, I'll just repack this case and worry about it later.) But I'm here, and how bad could it be, anyway? The sun is shining. I look up through the gumleaves at the sky directly overhead and it is bluer and more beautiful than anything I've ever seen before. The leaves are dancing lightly as a breeze skips over them. Oh, that's a poetic thought. Where's my notebook? I scramble through the sandals, saris and pashminas in my second suitcase looking for a pen and piece of paper so I can capture my brilliance.

"Hey Girlie, over here!" one of my new camp mates gestures for me to drop everything and run to his bidding.

"Do you mean Girlie my name or girlie, as in a sexist term that seems relevant to you only because I don't have the same kind of dangly bits that you do? Hmm? Hmm?"

Poor bugger. He's stumped. Oh well, no one said all these he-man hunter types had to be over-endowed in the IQ department. They've just got to be able to put up a tent and rub two sticks together.



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“Hey you, look at this,” he finally replies.

Oh, that’s better. I wander over.

Eek, eek! Maybe I am a girlie girl after all. I jump up onto the only available rock (four inches high), then from my safe vantage point gaze in horror at the gigantic monitor lizard in front of me.

“It’s a bearded dragon.” Cute little thing, huh?”

Cute my Aunt Fanny. The little devil is wearing a necklace of spikes that would do a Hell’s Angel moll proud, has a face even a mother wouldn’t love and he’s giving me a gimlet stare, stretching up his neck as far as he can to have a good perve at the view as I lean over to ‘admire’ his ugly mug. I escape as soon as I can without actually sprinting, although I swear I can hear a snicker from Mr-Neanderthal-I’m-amazing-because-I-can-put-a-up-a-tent.

Then there’s the bush dunny. When the lads were having their beer-and-chips meeting in preparation for the camping trip, I didn’t really take much notice of the agenda item entitled Long Drop. The only drops I’ve been concerned about recently with regard to toilets, relate to water. In our neck of the woods, it’s known as half flush and full flush. Even though we’re in the throes of the worst drought in living history where we live and we’re all careful to conserve every cupful of water, no one talks individual drops like they seem to out here in the scrub. And how does a drop of water get to be long, anyway? Aren’t drops usually plump and tear-shaped? Does someone squeeze it too hard or something?

And then, horror of horrors, I find out what they’re talking about. Well, that’s fine. I just won’t go (if you know what I mean) for the next three days. I will send my alimentary canal into a state of hibernation and if that doesn’t work I will screamingly insist that someone drive me the 20km (or is it 40km?) to the nearest public amenities block where I can full-flush to my heart’s content and my eyes can subside back into my head from the relief of it all.

And don’t get me started on the food. I was always told that campoven fare was brilliant, that anything cooked on a campfire out in the great outdoors was nothing short of amazing. But, boys, last night the potatoes were burned worse than a nuclear accident and that stuff coming out of the campoven wasn’t stew, it was swill. Oh, I get it. It’s the cold beer sauce that makes it all palatable. No, I don’t think a shandy would help. Anyway, you forgot to bring lemonade.

Ooh yes, I love camping. It’s my favourite pastime. Next time you ask me if I’d like to go hunting, boys, I’m gonna say yes. And then I might suggest that I could stay home for the price of, say, a nice diamond bracelet. That’d be okay with you, wouldn’t it?



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Clockwise from top:

Scott Brown, sambar; Edward
Rowe, RC pig 31 2/8pt; David
Teitzel RC rusa 176 5/8pt;
Wayne Atkinson, rabbits;
Michael Law, goat.



Clockwise from top:

Darcy Galliano, TC buffalo 85 2/8pt; Kevin Swan, pig; Jeanette Dowd, stingray; Kevin Dowd, stingray; Melissa Brown, shark.



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3DAAA National Championships

Throughout the year, 3DAAA-affiliated clubs hold a State Series, with one club holding the State Titles. The National Titles are held by 3DAAA to allow all members to be able to compete and enjoy the biggest shoot of the year.

The 2019 National Championships and presentation night was held in Nambucca Heads on the mid-north coast of New South Wales. 3DAAA have had great success utilising the planned venue, a State Forest just 2km from the town centre, in previous years. But this year the lead-up to the weekend was anything but smooth sailing. On Thursday, November 7, the 3DAAA Committee was notified that the State Forest which was to have been

the venue for the Nationals was closed and not scheduled to reopen for the weekend due to the dreadful fires that were inhaling the East Coast.

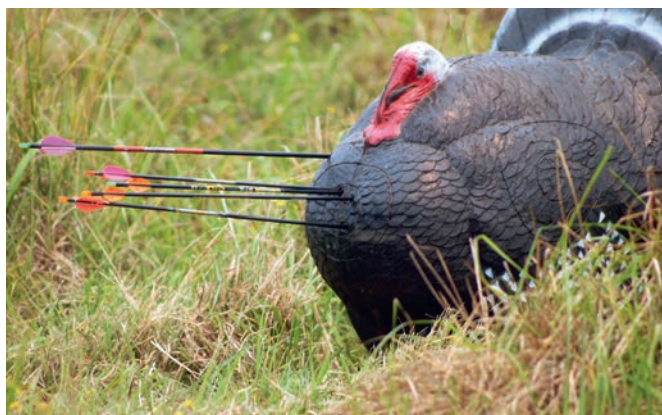
The 3DAAA President, Terry Sheather, said it meant pulling out all stops if the competition was to go ahead.

"Five weeks had been spent getting the tracks and the distances ready for the championships, but at 5pm on Thursday we received the news that they were closing all the State Forests," he said.

"That gave us a day to find a venue plus set out 50 targets."

And find a venue they did. The new championships site was private property owned by a local farmer who not only allowed 3DAAA to use his property for the weekend but also





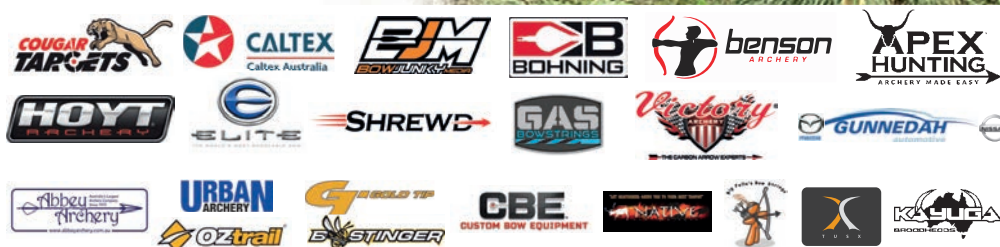
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slashed the area where the practice range was to be set up and the parking area.

On Friday, the committee was working on the ranges as the sun came up and as it went down. In 12 hours, five ranges were created from scratch, 50 targets were set, 350 pegs were placed in the ground, over 200 signs were put up, the practice range and practice butts were set.

As the sun rose Saturday morning through the smoke haze, the archers rolled through the gates all eager to compete. Due to the venue change the start times for all shooters had to be delayed as the placement of the ranges was differ-

ent to where they would have been at the State Forest.

The fun didn't stop once all the targets were shot on Saturday. The Top 10 and Kids Fun Shoot was soon to follow. The Top 10 gives recognition to the efforts that shooters have put in to be among the top highest scorers. After a gruelling shootout, William Bristow won the Aided Top 10 and Ron Scott won the Unaided.

Over the two days of competition, 238 archers filled the ranges with laughter and encouragement despite the blazing destruction occurring in neighbouring towns. At all times the situation was monitored and organisers were in contact with the fire services. Although there were some who felt as though they could have shot better, they still walked away happy because of the experience they had acquired.

Once all the targets had been shot on Sunday afternoon it was time for the presentation dinner. This is where all of the 3DAAA community can come together and acknowledge everyone's achievements from the year. There were many very impressive scores shot over the weekend, despite the difficult weather.

Not only do 3DAAA recognise the efforts shooters put in towards their shooting and scores throughout the year, but also their contributions to the association and the sport in general. The association gives out awards to those who

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have demonstrated certain characteristics such as passion, sportsmanship and drive to achieve their personal best but to also push others to do the same. Those who received the awards for 2019 were: Bill Holmes was awarded the Steven Reeks Medal, Kellie Ellen received the Marg Cowin Trophy, Mick Anderson was the recipient of the 2Dogs medal and Jeremy Douglas received the Young Achiever Award. Full results for the Nationals can be found at: <https://www.3daaa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Nats-Web-2019-V1.1.pdf>

Archery is a process of continual self-improvement. You must practice diligently, whether outdoors or in front of a bale, whether it be placed at close range or at a distance. You scrutinise every element of your technique so that you can eventually develop your form into a cohesive and intuitive whole.

Whenever possible, practise with like-minded friends, being open-minded and receptive to their good advice. Every mistake is a learning opportunity. If you miss the mark or in any way execute a poor shot, take a step back and patiently assess your problem so you can fix it.

This year 3DAAA has some exciting shoots on the horizon. The 3DAAA Australian Indoor Titles will be held on February 1 and 2. This national indoor mail match will be held at North Albert, Twin Cities, Dubbo and Wingham.

The State of Origin is now a two-shoot event, with the first being held on May 2 and 3 at Cherrabah near Warwick, Queensland, and the final shoot planned for Casino, New South Wales on June 6 and 7.

Mikala Shevill

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ROY ROSE

Meanderings



Before and during competition

Beforehand ...

Failing to prepare is preparing to fail

Having a specific competition event pencilled in requires focussed stages of preparation; firstly, a practice and training programme allied to the particular event and then as the day approaches, a list of prerequisites which will ensure trouble-free participation. Any lapse in giving each of these preparatory tasks your full attention will undoubtedly invite an outcome that

is less than satisfactory.

The reality of serious competition is that invariably we don't rise to the pressure of the occasion—we simply arrive at the level of our preparation. Confidence comes from a good lead-up programme, while failure to prepare in all areas will immediately erode our mental status.

Clearly, preparation must begin well in advance, with practice specific

to the event. Be it indoor, target, 3D or field, equipment choices must be determined and the focus of practice must be on the round to be contested. The physical aspect also comes into play, particularly if a field championship is the goal. Many elite archers do weight training and aerobic programmes and these are usually regular, ongoing activities that may come into sharper focus as



MARKED DISTANCE 3D SHOOT

ALL ARCHERS ARE WELCOME

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Location: 98 Frazer Drive, Tweed Heads South, NSW. 2486 (No Dogs Allowed)

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an important championship looms.

For the vast majority of serious, competitive archers at whatever level they may be competing, correct practice is vital and is usually a well thought out process. But from my many years of observation, it is the day before and the actual day of the competition where poor preparedness can evaporate all the good yards put in up to that point. Too often, a lack of thought about the mini-details ends up causing unnecessary stress and turmoil on the day of the tournament. And the last thing you need at this time is an assault on your mental composure, for the event itself will create a degree of nervousness.

So, how can we make our final state of preparedness foolproof? Over the years I accumulated a checklist. Let's assume, as is often

the case, that you must travel some reasonable distance to the competition.

The day before, make a close scrutiny of equipment. Make certain every allen key bolt is tight on the bow and that the sight, rest, every component pertaining to the bow, is contest ready. Doublecheck all arrows, fletching, nocks, points, numbered and initialled. Accessories: Check release aids, tabs, armguards, finger slings and pack spares of every component that it is feasible to duplicate, expense wise, and which might be required in an equipment emergency. Obviously, you must have a reliable sight tape, compatible to the ranges the competition demands. If that is not an actual tape attached to your sight and you utilise a number system on a card, have that duplicated and

be sure it goes into your bow case waterproofed.

Next, minor but crucial items. Sunscreen, insect repellent, water supply, a pencil to score with and any personal item you may need. A hat, cap or visor, plus wet weather gear and anything else you may need on the course if it's a field tournament.

Have familiar, comfortable clothing ready for the next day. Appropriate footwear is essential.

On the morning of the shoot, allow considerably more time than is usually needed to drive to the tournament site. Nothing is more frustrating than a last-minute rush to the shooting line because of a hold-up en route. Arriving early allows you ample time to unload, sign in, check target allocation, spend some relaxing time (and for field competition, do some unhurried practice).

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This whole preparation procedure allows you to be in the best possible mental state to face the competitive cauldron. Composure is a huge asset to take to the line.

If you are venturing out onto a field course, be aware that you will only have access to what you take along with you. Be certain all vital items accompany you. Portable spares such as an extra recurve string,

a second tab or release aid (anything which is lightweight and portable) will ensure you can continue if there is a breakage or mishap.

Be sure to keep up your water intake throughout the day, and if your allocation on the field course means missing the usual lunch break, take along some healthy snacks.

Now all these details may well be viewed as simple common sense,

however I have regularly witnessed a myriad of contingencies which have left contenders frustrated and disillusioned when a bit of practical planning would have avoided a drama. We all know that common sense is not all that common!

Detailed preparation is something you can control. It is a first step—and a crucial one—in the competitive quest for excellence.

On the day ...

Shot analysis

One recurring problem for many archers who shoot competitively is following up one bad shot with another. Now it's easy to say that a poor shot should be dismissed immediately from the archer's mind and due concentration and attention should be placed on the next. However, it is human nature to dwell somewhat on an error and consequently not give complete focus to the subsequent arrow.

Elite shooters follow a strict strategy for quick, decisive assessment of each shot then move on with a clear mind. These upper echelon archers have a strong realisation that only four outcomes can eventuate from one shot execution. Knowing these outcomes allows them to be very successful in immediate assessment and conclusive thinking so the next arrow can be given its rightful attention.

So what is this quartet of outcomes which allow the elite such quick positive refocus?

Obviously a good shot can, and most often will, produce a good result. No problem moving on from

that! Sometimes what feels like a good shot produces a less-than-satisfactory result. This is the tough one. Acceptance must be prompt, and the feel that the shot was error-free must be taken forward into your next effort without overthinking the situation as to what went amiss.

The third possibility is, of course, when a bad shot yields a bad result. This is, after all, a completely expected disaster so there is absolutely no need to waste any time dwelling on it.

Finally comes the real bonus situation, when a bad shot somehow ends up in the gold. Very clearly there is no rational analysis needed here. Just smile and be thankful this is your lucky day.

So there it is. Nothing we couldn't have worked out for ourselves, but being very cognisant of each of these situations and moving on quickly from each, is a 'road under construction' for aspiring competitors. It will be difficult initially to avoid being over-analytical when that very ordinary shot upsets your mental equilibrium. But like all learning curves, it's a

gradual path to be able to do what the champions do, irrespective of arrow scoring and it is achievable.

Staying in the moment, divorcing yourself from a previous outcome whether it be exhilarating gold or a flunked effort, is a skill which will guarantee that wasted points from loitering mentally over an arrow can be totally removed.

Beating yourself up simply ruins your chance of mentally and physically attaining that duplication which is the secret to ultimate accuracy the next time you pull an arrow from the quiver.

Unlike many sports, you seldom, if ever, see an emotional outburst if a shot goes badly for a top-line international archer. Their natural temperament may materialise at the conclusion of an end or a match, but until then the arrow-by-arrow concentration is always on show.

If you adopt this mental programming, this clearing the mind, and focus on every shot irrespective of the shot that went before, you are in a much better position to avoid wasted points and to be the best you can be.

3D international archery shoot on Norfolk Island ... unpack, unwind, unleash

Plan *now* to take part in the island's international archery shoot in July and make some early-bird savings when you book before Valentine's Day!

There's nothing quite like Norfolk for an easy 'overseas' holiday where you can unpack, unwind and unleash your party animal, your sightseeing self and your inner archer all in the one scenic place. Plus if you have kids you get kudos for being a fun parent!

Norfolk has a community of enthusiastic archers who welcome archers of all levels to attend the Norfolk Island Travel Centre 3D Archery Championships. The week suits the whole family with 3D events organised for all ages including cub divisions, adult compound, recurve and longbow. Held during school holidays, the championships are an excellent introduction to international competition for junior shooters. A traditional shoot day adds to the fun and is a great opportunity for the kids to feel the spirit of Robin Hood! Norfolk is an exceptionally friendly and safe place for the whole family to holiday and event locations are easily accessed.

The club is situated on historic Melanesian mission land. This varied and beautiful landscape has scenery reminiscent

of Lord of the Rings, with flat meadow, woodland hillsides, valleys, rolling hills and creekbed. The flat meadow is perfect for the target range, while 24 permanent FITA field targets nestle hidden around hidden corners in the woodlands and the 3D animals can be found on the open hills, through stands of bamboo, or in groves of trees. It's a top social event for locals and visitors alike!

Participants are encouraged to bring along family members and friends to share in their Norfolk Island holiday. Norfolk has many activities and tours for partners and friends to enjoy while the archers compete. Everyone unites later in the day to enjoy social activities.

Make your booking through the club's sponsor partner, Norfolk Island Travel Centre, and take advantage of the early bird special to save on your tournament registration fee if paid before February 14.

Contact Helen via email at helen@travelcentre.nf or on AUS freephone 1800 1400 66 to get an information pack with holiday details and accommodation options. Secure your spot with a \$200 deposit (the full amount is not due until March). Where better in the world to do archery than under the blue skies of Norfolk Island?



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Outside In the zone

Poor man's elk

by Nils Spruitt

I seem to recall mentioning in a fairly recent *Outside the Zone* that my best mate loves hunting goats. Above any other game animal, Digs prefers stalking old stinkies and it has nothing to do with game availability or accessible hunting land. Between the two of us, we have access to a number of private land holdings where we can stalk and hunt a wide variety of creatures including deer and pigs, but Digs is borderline obsessive about goat hunting.

Feral goats have, for as long as I can remember, been the bread and butter of the Aussie trophy hunter. Back when I was just a boy it was always my fervent desire to hunt and have a set of trophy billy goat horns on the wall just like my uncle and mentor. Feral goats were the mainstay of both the rifle and bow stalkers who wanted to delve into the world of trophy hunting. Pigs have always been a popular game animal with hunters and it is true a mature boar is a trophy in itself, but from a purely aesthetic point of view, a mature boar just doesn't stack up to a big billy goat with a wide flaring set of horns.

Over the years I have been invited to see a lot of hunters trophy rooms both big and small. Some were mere conversions of a spare bedroom while others were large extensions added onto the family home. Despite all



this, I still maintain one of the most impressive rooms I have ever seen belonged to an old German chap who lived in northern New South Wales. Dieter was his name and he had spent most of his adult life here in Australia hunting goats near his home town in northern NSW. His lounge room was jam packed with shoulder-mounted billies in various poses and two or three boars. It was an inspiring display, but what impressed me the most was the size of each trophy. Without question, every billy on display was of a high standard including six specimens with horns wider than 40 inches in spread. Most hunters never even see such a trophy goat in their lifetime and yet Dieter had taken six. This is extraordinary in my opinion. I don't think there was a single billy in

the room with a horn spread under 35 inches. I have never seen a collection of goat trophies which could match this man's lifetime achievement.

I find it somewhat ironic that these days trophy billy goats have been shoved aside and replaced on a trophy hunters must have list by more fancied stags and bucks. Fifty years ago, deer were only ever whispered about in small circles and hunted by a handful of hardy individuals. They were not widespread and could only be found in isolated and far-flung pockets around the country and these locations were secretly guarded by those in the know. Not like now where just about every grove of trees in every paddock has a resident deer herd.

This rapid colonisation of deer along the eastern seaboard plus the

decline in overall goat numbers due entirely to the widespread rounding up of animals for the booming overseas market, has made goat hunting a lot tougher for keen hunters. On one property where Digs and I hunt, there are goats, but the owner does trap them and sell them off. We can take a trophy billy if we desire but we have to pay the owner the cost of that animal. I have no real problem with this although so far we have not seen a billy with big enough horns to warrant any such transactions taking place.

As I said at the start, it was my dream to hunt and secure a big horned billy goat and that wish did come true when I was 15 and on a pig hunt out near Bourke in NSW. I encountered this billy in a mob while walking back to camp late one day. It was no monster and measured 33 inches in spread with a DS of 103. On a personal level, that goat set the benchmark for all of my later goat trophies and it also sparked in me a strong desire to hunt purely for trophies. Aside from small game rabbit hunting, all of my hunts from that moment on centred around trophies and trophy hunting. I even viewed foxes from a trophy perspective and the same went for pigs as every pig hunt became a boars-only experience. In time I too become obsessed with deer, but I never ever forgot goats.

I cannot remember how many big horned billy goats I have taken over the years, but there have been a few. My biggest to date was an old goat with a horn spread of 41.5 inches. I encountered him out in western NSW. He was running with a big mob of billies about 50 or 60 strong and there were quite a few animals sprouting Record Class horns. I have never ever seen such a sight since. Just for the record, my friend grassed a 37.5-inch trophy out of the same mob, but I still maintain there was at least one other individual billy with bigger horns. I have never been greedy and we limited ourselves to only

the one trophy each from that herd. The word impressive just doesn't really do justice to what my hunting mate and I witnessed on that day.

Aside from that, I have taken quite a few trophy goats with horns in the mid to high 30-plus-inch spreads and I have had half a dozen or so professionally mounted. Actual horn size aside, what attracts me the most about billy goat shoulder mounts is the variety of colours which make up their head skins or capes. This makes them stand out even in a room filled with trophy deer. On a personal level, I have had all white, all black, brown and white, brown and black, grey and a light beige coloured mounts. Each animal is different, which only adds to their overall attraction.

From a hunting perspective, goats are not the most astute of animals. At times I have had goats walk only 2m or 3m past me, but then again I have been mighty close to other game species as well. Goats are herd animals and this is where they feel most protected. Never ever think they have poor eyesight because they don't and their sense of smell is not that of a deer or fox, but you get the wind wrong and they will smell you long before you get within bow range.

Stalking an individual animal in a herd situation is tricky to say the least. With so many eyes and individuals to worry about, it is a difficult scenario and I cannot remember how many times I have been busted doing a belly crawl by an astute nanny. Most of my success has come from watching which direction a herd is grazing and then attempting to cut them off and lie in wait. Of course the wind direction plays an important part in all of this and it can test your endurance and patience level to the max.

Digs' biggest goat to date was taken by using this method and I was privileged to witness the entire hunt from the vantage point of an adjacent

hill. Like most older and wiser billies, the billy Digs was after was situated more or less smack bang in the middle of a sizeable mob. The herd was grazing on the slope of a hill and heading slowly towards a fairly steep cut between two adjacent ridges. After surveying the situation and checking the wind direction, Digs decided to circle ahead and hide in the cut ... which he did. About 30 minutes after he had disappeared into a thick patch of trees, the frontrunners of the herd passed by his hide none the wiser of the danger that lurked so close. It was now just a matter of time before the billy ambled past and when it did, Digs nailed him from a distance of 20m with the one arrow from his Hoyt compound. If only they were all this successful.

A long time ago I read an article by a then well known Aussie hunter who labelled our feral goats as poor man's elk. I never did like that tag as it implied a trophy billy goat was a poor substitute for a trophy stag. From a guy who has hunted both, I just see them as a different animal species. I have never put one species above another. There is no place for such snobbery in hunting. Some may sneer but a trophy from any species should be entirely about the hunt and never about the wallet. Any hunter who works hard for his or her kill has far and away earned that trophy whereas one who prefers to pay big dollars to shoot an oversized animal within an enclosed paddock is just a collector and nothing more.

From a personal point of view, it has been a long time between goats so to speak. I am thinking it might be time to string the recurve and head back into the hills. I guess the quest for a trophy never ever leaves you and I most certainly can make room in my little man cave for one more billy goat. Even if I fail to find such a goat, I would still rather be out there than sitting around home pondering my navel. Until next time.



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First hunt

FK AND FKOS for Tracey.

TRACEY SMITH

Late in 2018 I made the decision that I wanted to have a go at hunting so I completed my Bowhunter Proficiency Course through my club, Towers Bowhunters, to allow me to do that.

The opportunity to go on my first hunt didn't arise until Easter of 2019. So along with my husband Andrew and his son Blake, off I went. I had been warned that rabbits cry and I didn't know quite what to expect.

We got up early (before sun-up)—which in itself was quite an achievement as I like my sleep—but as this was the time of day to catch the bunnies out and about, I sucked it up and loaded myself, my bow and my two hunting experts onto the four-wheeler.

In the cool of the morning, we soon came across a rabbit or two and I took my first shot. It went wayward and the rabbit took off. Rabbit 1—Tracey 0.

I continued along on foot for a little while and found my next target at a grid where there was a little green grass. I drew the bow back, aimed at the rabbit, took the shot and managed to hit him but unfortunately, it wasn't a perfect shot and I had to pull another arrow. That cry, oh my gosh! Lesson learned. If I never hear that noise again, I will be very happy.

What's On

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Branch D ABA Shoot



Hosted by Lakeside Bowmen
Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th January 2020

Saturday Round

8.00am Payments of Nominations and Bow Checks

Nominations close at 9.15am

9.45am Muster for a 10.00am Start

3 Arrow Round • Lunch • 1 Arrow Round

Sunday Round

7.45am Muster for an 8:00am Start

2 Arrow Round • Presentations ASAP

Fees: Cubs/Juniors \$15, Adults \$25, Family \$50

Pre Nominate by Monday 20th January 2020 to: Branch Score Recorder,
Sally-Anne McGrigor abasqscorer@gmail.com or 0402 074 788

Facilities include: Camping, showers, toilets and canteen

Evening Meal Available Saturday Night

No dogs allowed • No smoking or vaping allowed on the ranges

Branch D ABA Titles

HOSTED BY



Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th February 2020

Saturday Round

8am Payments of Nominations
and Bow Checks

Nominations Close 9.15am

9.45am Muster for a 10.00am start

3 Arrow Round - Lunch - 1 Arrow Round

Sunday Round

7.45am Muster for an 8.00am Start

3 Arrow Round

Lunch - 1 Arrow Round

Presentations ASAP

Fees: Cubs/Juniors \$15, Adults \$25, Family \$50

Pre Nominate by Monday 10th February to: Branch Score Recorder,
Sally-Anne McGrigor - abasqscorer@gmail.com or 0402 074 788

Facilities include: Camping, showers, toilets and canteen
Meals available all weekend

No dogs allowed • No smoking or vaping allowed on the ranges

Branch D 3D Titles

Hosted by Roma and District Bowmen

Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th March 2020

Saturday Round

8am Payment of Nominations & Bow Checks

Nominations Close 9.15am

9.45am Muster for a 10.00am start

1 Arrow Round - Lunch - 1 Arrow Round

Sunday Round

7.45am Muster for an 8.00am Start

2 Arrow Round

Presentations ASAP

Fees: Cubs/Juniors \$20 • Adults \$30 • Family \$60

Pre-nominate: by Monday 9th March to Branch Score Recorder
Sally-Anne McGrigor abasqscorer@gmail.com or 0402 074 788

Facilities include: Camping, showers, toilets and canteen

Evening meal available Friday and Saturday night

No Dogs allowed

No smoking and vaping allowed on the ranges



JUNIORS

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SHOOT-CALENDAR

January-February-March

Date	Club	Branch	Shoot Style
January			
2nd - 3rd	GHA *	Vic	GHA 2020 Dbl Vision Field Combo GP
4th	GHA *	Vic	GHA 2020 Dbl Vision Alfresco Indoor T'ment
4th	GHA *	Vic	GHA 2020 Dbl Vision Target Tournament
4th	Adelaide Archery Club *	SA	AAC Holiday Target QREs
4th	Eden Field Archers *	SA	Field QRE
12th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
12th	Charters Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
18th - 19th	Branch I *	I	Carp Hunt
18th - 19th	Paringa Archers *	Tas	Paringa Northern Field Championships
19th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
19th	Kurrimine Beach Archers	B	3D
19th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
19th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
19th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
19th	Mackay and District Bowmen	B	3D
19th	Phoenix Field Archers of Sale *	G	IFAA
25th - 26th	Lakeside Bowmen *	D	ABA
25th - 26th	Lithgow Valley Archers *	F	3D/ABA
26th	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
25th - 26th	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	2020 Australia Day Tournament and NMS
26th	TCAG *	Vic	2020 Australia Day Field
26th	Archery SA *	SA	Australia Day Field
February			
1st - 2nd	National Indoor Championships Mail Match *		3DAAA Australian Indoor Titles
1st - 2nd	Hobart Archers *	Tas	AST State Field Championships
2nd	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
2nd	Mackay District Bowmen	B	ABA
2nd	Boola Valley Field Archers *	G	ABA
8th - 9th	Macleay Valley Archers *	E	ABA
9th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
9th	Charters Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
15th	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	Barbara Dowden Memorial Shoot
15th - 16th	Gympie Field Archers *	C	ABA
15th - 16th	Granite Belt Bowmen *	D	ABA Branch Titles
15th - 16th	South West Slopes Field Archers *	F	IFAA Branch Titles
15th - 16th	West Melbourne Field Archers *	H	ABA
16th	Kurrimine Beach Archers	B	3D
16th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
16th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
16th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
16th	Mackay District Bowmen	B	3D
22nd - 23rd	Playford District Archers *	I	IFAA State Titles
22nd - 23rd	Western Plains Archers *	J	3D/ABA

23rd	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
29th Feb-1st Mar	Burnie Bowmen *	TAS	Bruce McCaskill Memorial Shoot
29th Feb-1st Mar	Cessnock Archers *	NSW	3DAAA

March

1st	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
1st	Mackay and District Bowmen	B	ABA
1st	Bairnsdale Field Archers *	G	Mal Thomas Memorial Shoot—ABA
7th - 8th	Venue TBA *	E	State IFAA Titles
7th - 9th	Mount Clay Archers *	H	ABA
8th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
8th	Charters Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
8th	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	CAC March Presidents Shoot
14th - 15th	Saxon Archery Club *	C	ABA
14th - 15th	Roma District Bowhunters *	D	Branch 3D Titles
14th - 15th	Orange and District Archers *	F	3D/ABA
14th - 15th	Playford District Field Archers *	I	ABA
14th - 15th	Mornington Peninsula Bowmen *	Vic	3DAAA
15th	Kurrimine Beach Archers	B	3D
15th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
15th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
15th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
21st - 22nd	Lake Glenbawn Field Archers *	NSW	3DAAA
22nd	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
22nd	Phoenix Field Archers of Sale *	G	2D/3D
28th - 29th	lpswich Field Archers *	Qld	3DAAA
29th	Gleneagle Field Archers *	J	ABA

Black type shows ABA events, green type represents Archery Australia events and blue type denotes 3DAAA events,
ABA national events are in red. Shoots marked with an * are cross-participation events

DR Archery and Firearms

42 Brisbane Road, Dinmore, Qld. 4303

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DL# 5000 1536

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Preferred method of receiving

Archery Action

☐ digitally online

☐ hard copy (mailed)

Post completed form to:

Office Manager ABA

PO Box 5124

Brendale Qld 4500

Phone (07) 3256 3976

Renewal ☐
New Member ☐

ABA Membership No:

I, (full name) (M-F)

Of (street # & name) (town-city) (p-code)

Postal address (PO Box #)..... (town-city) (p-code)

Phone number Date of birth/...../.....

Email address.....

do hereby wish to make application for membership of the Australian Bowhunters Association Inc (ABA), and if accepted, do undertake to conduct my/our membership in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Policies and Code of Ethics of the ABA. Additionally, I/we acknowledge that Field Archery and Bowhunting are shooting sports conducted in the natural environment which can impose inherent risks and this application is made in full recognition of the Association's requirement for responsible and ethical behaviour. I/We undertake to do all in my/our power to preserve the good image of the sport and ABA. I/ We understand that members breaking the Code of Ethics and/or ABA's regulations may be subject to sanctions as per the Constitution.

I am a member of (Club)

I agree my contact details can be provided to form a contact list to be used within the Australian Bowhunters Association only.

If you do not agree, tick this box: ☐

Signature of Applicant

I enclose the required fees of \$.....

I, the applicant above, also wish to make application for membership of ABA (Inc) on behalf of the following persons, who are members of my family and reside at my address:

Full Name of Applicant	Male-Female	ABA Number	Date of Birth
.....
.....
.....

I am prepared to accept the responsibility for the above applicants who are under the age of 18 years, until they attain such age.

Parent-Guardian Signature ABA Number if Applicable:

The Australian Bowhunters Association Inc reserves the right to refuse, suspend or terminate the membership of any person whose conduct contravenes the Constitution, Rules and Policies of Association of the ABA. Failure to provide information sought or supply of incorrect information may result in application being rejected.

RENEWALS and/or Advance Memberships for existing members

	12 months	3 years in advance
Adults	\$75	\$205
Juniors-Cubs	\$50	\$145
Families	\$160	\$435

New Members (12-month membership including joining fee)

Adults	\$100
Juniors-Cubs	\$75
Families	\$205

PENSIONER DISCOUNT: Deduct 10% from fees listed.

Quote Pension Benefit Card Number:

All fees include GST

Note: Dates of birth must be shown for all persons listed. Club name must be shown. **Family membership applies only to parents and their children under 18 years of age.** Separate single membership must be taken for children over 18 years. Couples without children under 18 years also pay separate single membership. In the case of family renewals, state ABA membership numbers. If insufficient space, use additional form.

Card Number ↓	NAME OF CARDHOLDER (print)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard	
Expiry Date (mm yy)	<input type="text"/>	Signature

8102/121



APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE
AUSTRALIAN BOWHUNTERS ASSOCIATION™
INCORPORATED (Inc in NT No A01978C) GST TAX INVOICE GST ABN 79 750 431 225

ASSOCIATION USE ONLY

M'ship #s Allocated

Receipt Number

Computer Entered

M'ship Forwarded



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www.trophybowhunts.com.au



Fully Guided Hunts for:

Red Deer - March/April from \$1800 (5 days) includes a doe, trophy fee if stag taken.

Chital Deer - Jan to May from \$2500 (5 days) includes a stag and unlimited does.

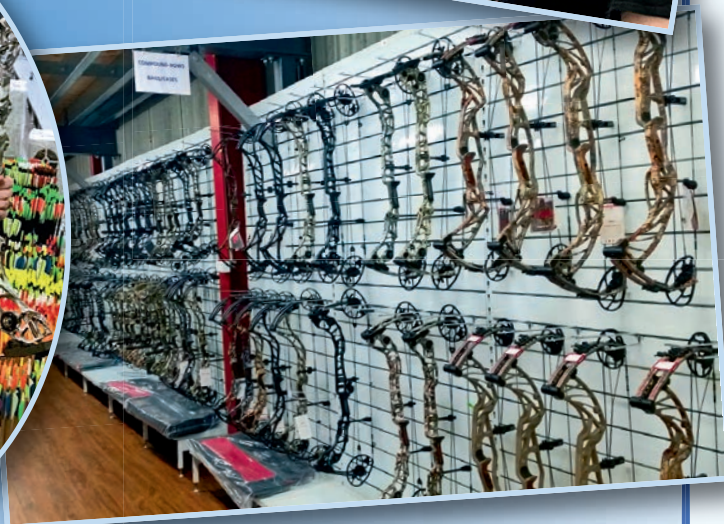
Buffalo - June to August (6 days) fully guided hunts, POA.

Wild Boar - Aug to Oct from \$4000 (10 days).

All prices are a guide only as people require different options so please call for a quote. Hunts are all inclusive except: Alcohol and Trophy Fees (Trophy Fees on application) Indemnity Waiver to be signed at pickup. Special Hunts are available from time to time so if you are flexible you can get a great deal on some hunts. All you have to do is get on the emergency list and you are notified every time a special deal comes along.

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