

Archery Action

January February 2021

Emerald club's
hunting adventure

Foxes in 2020
—a different ballgame

Another year,
another trip to the Gulf



THE ARCHERY ALLIANCE OF AUSTRALIA

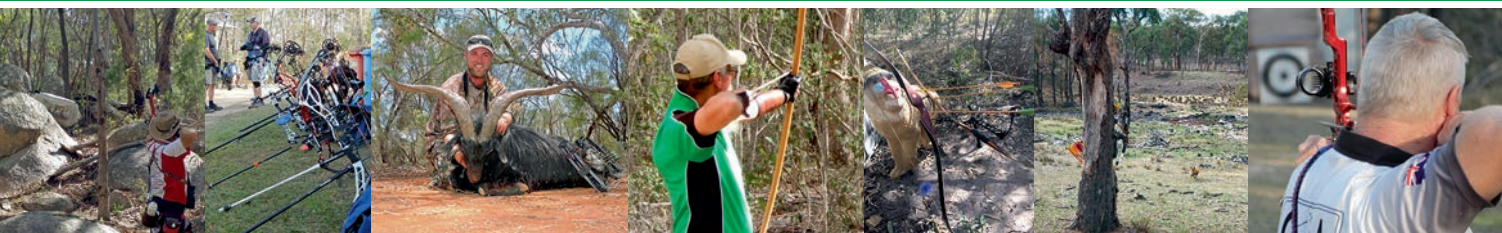
Officially recognised by these organisations



Thinking about doing archery as a sport?

Would you like to try field archery or become a bowhunter?
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Membership benefits include:

- Organised field and 3D archery competition at club, branch, state, national and international levels
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- Access to insured affiliate clubs across Australia
- Subscription to the Archery Action magazine
- Access to a game award registration and recognition system at national, state and club levels
- Free coaching programs
- Bowhunter proficiency and education programs at club, state and national levels



For online membership and further information go to
www.bowhunters.org.au



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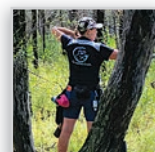
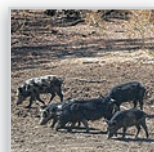
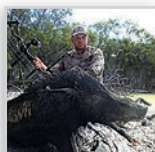
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◀ COVER PHOTOGRAPH

A trip to Cape York country was a journey to pig heaven for a group of Emerald Archery Club members. See TBA column on Page 14 and the tale of the club's hunting adventure on Page 18. This pig was taken by Brad Lane during the hunt.

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I wonder what kind of new year's resolutions people are making this year. We've all been affected in some way by 2020 and I for one am not keen to make promises that I'm not sure I can keep. So, no new year's resolutions for me. Instead, I'm going to have a 'word of the year' for 2021 ... and it is going to be LIGHT. Light as in carrying less baggage. Light as in brightness and illumination. It's a nice positive word and I'm sure I'll find lots of ways to make my year reflect a lighter and brighter attitude. Maybe this will be the year that a skylight is installed in a dark room. Perhaps I'll have a paper purge that results in the office losing a few hundred kilos. I might find more ways to have a lighter ecological footprint. The possibilities are endless! (I just won't have two 'light years' in a row because that would surely make the time go too fast.)

Having said that, I'm not about to make any predictions as to what kind of year we're going to have. Because, who knows, really? And that question really underscores the fact that life is a lot less predictable than we sometimes believe and that

DEADLINES

Please submit articles and advertisements by these dates:

editor@archeryactionmagazine.com

ISSUE	DEADLINE
2021	
Vol 46 No. 4 March-April	1 February
Vol 46 No. 5 May-June	1 April
Vol 46 No. 6 July-August	1 June
Vol 47 No. 1 September-October	1 August
Vol 47 No. 2 November-December	1 October

(November-December issue = 2021 Yearbook)



many things happen that are totally out of our control. The trick to living well is to recognise what we can influence and what we cannot, then give our effort and attention to projects and situations which we can make better.

I'm sure there's a way we can change the world by simply changing the little bit we can control. There is a saying that the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing, so it is up to each one of us to do something when we see an inequality, an injustice or simply a mistake that needs fixing. I am firmly of the opinion that the greatest crusade can start with just one person. We sometimes feel quite helpless and that is because we don't know what we can do in the face of a problem of any great magnitude. Yet if we can find one small action that we can take, the paralysis dissolves and our small steps, followed by increasingly larger and more confident strides, lead us along a path of resolution.

I'm talking about a philosophy of life here, but it also applies to small troubles we're faced with every day—in our relationships, our work, our archery club.

So yes, I'm going to try to fix a few problems this year. Iron out a few wrinkles. Change my world in some way for the better. I'm just going to try to do it while treading lightly.

Jenel Hunt
Editor



Advertising Bookings and

Editor—Jenel Hunt

Mobile 0427 756 546

editor@archeryactionmagazine.com

PO Box 638, Stanthorpe Qld 4380

ABA contact details—

Phone (07) 3256 3976

officemanager@bowhunters.org.au

www.bowhunters.org.au

FREELANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

are welcomed by this magazine and articles should be addressed to: The Editor, Archery Action. 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 return of photographs if required.

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

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PO Box 5124, Brendale Qld 4500



REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Traditional Trails—Nick Lintern

Bushcraft and Survival—Scott Heiman

Safari 2021



Incorporating Bowhunter and Sighted Championships and 3D Championships

*To be held at the National Field Venue
ABA Park, Mudgee, NSW
2 to 5 April 2021*

All ABA members are cordially invited to compete at the 2021 National Safari Championships.



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.

Nomination Fees:

All nominations must be completed online at www.bowhunters.org.au and be paid for at the time of registration. Nominations will close on 15th March 2021 and NO late nominations will be accepted.

ABA Adult \$55 Jnr/Cub \$45 Family \$125
3D Adult \$60 Jnr/Cub \$50 Family \$135

Closing Date for Entries is Monday 15 March 2020.

Last date for grading is 2 March 2021.

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 1 April

ABA - Friday 2 and Saturday 3 April (3 and 1 arrow each day) followed by Presentation Saturday evening

3D - Sunday 4 (2 x 2 arrow rounds) and Monday 5 April (2 x 1 arrow rounds) followed by Presentation Monday evening.

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.

GO TO
WEBSITE

Great and unlucky (both at the same time)



Sometimes hunting just goes your way and sometimes it doesn't. On other occasions it can go both ways, and that's exactly how this particular hunt turned out.

It started with my Dad asking if I wanted to go on a father-and-son trip to a great property in central western Queensland. Of course, I was super keen and we packed our gear and hit the road.

When we arrived we went for a

short walk in a creek but only saw some sign, then headed over to catch up with the property owner. We got to hop in the big harvesters and watch for a bit, which was very satisfying.

The start of the first day of hunting was great. We were about 2km from the house and just drove through a creek to see a big pig just walking along the road. Unfortunately we saw each other at the same time and he jumped into the tall grass and

bounded off. After that we continued down to where the property owner had seen pigs regularly. We parked up at a little rise and glassed around to try spot a hog feeding on the wheat stubble. Well, find a hog we did—and a cracking one at that—but with the light increasing the pig started to make his way down to the creek. We then fanged it down to where he was heading. Dad literally had just turned off the engine and rolled down to this



by
Jett Harch

little alleyway and stopped and there was already a mob there. There were about 10 pigs in the alleyway and another 30-plus over the fence in the creek. We quickly jumped out of the car and immediately realised the wind was wrong. We tried to quickly get to the creek, but they caught our wind. Luckily for us, a sow was on heat so all the pigs stopped and started chasing her with the idea of making bacon so Dad and I drew back from 40yd and

let our arrows fly. I use a back tension release so I can't exactly control when the shot breaks, as people would understand. Just as Dad shot, I shot. His shot made my pig move forward and I got to watch my arrow fly perfectly straight to where my pig's vitals had been only moments before. Luckily, the pig had moved enough for a complete miss. We followed the mob again and came across a big patch of turkey bush, then there was a big whoff and

pigs started coming from everywhere. Dad and I spread out a bit, but I got caught between a tree and the pigs. There I was at full draw, trying to find a gap through the scrub to get a hog but I just couldn't shoot. Dad was heaps luckier and shot two pigs. (Now you can see where the title of this story is coming from.) After that, I came back to help Dad track his pig because he is colour-blind and can't see blood. There was good sign that it had been a great

shot because I was finding thick red blood. Dad went up ahead to see if he could find the pig and I turned around to see the mob coming back! I quickly stalked up to a tree that I could see the pigs would come by at about 10 yards! The pigs were about 30yd off when I saw Dad stalking them, not knowing I was here. He came to full draw and I was frantically whistling at him to stop. He finally saw me and waited, but by then the pigs were alert. They were about 20yd from me so I came to full draw and placed my top pin on a small pig's back-of-the-ribs for a hard quartering-away shot and just as the shot broke the pig took off and the arrow went straight up his bum. Ouch! Now I have heard these are great shots on pigs so I was pretty confident. We had another quick look for Dad's pig then I decided I wanted to look for my pig. Once again, the mob was back and was now watering at the creek 60yd away. I started my stalk with Dad getting great footage for my YouTube channel. Eventually I got to what I thought was 40yd and let this sow have it.

Without a rangefinder I couldn't range the distance exactly, but it was about 30ish so the arrow was a bit high. She jumped at the sound of the shot and the arrow hit her better but still a touch high, this then led to no

blood, which I thought might be due to the lungs needing to fill up more to release the blood. We looked and looked, but eventually we called it quits.

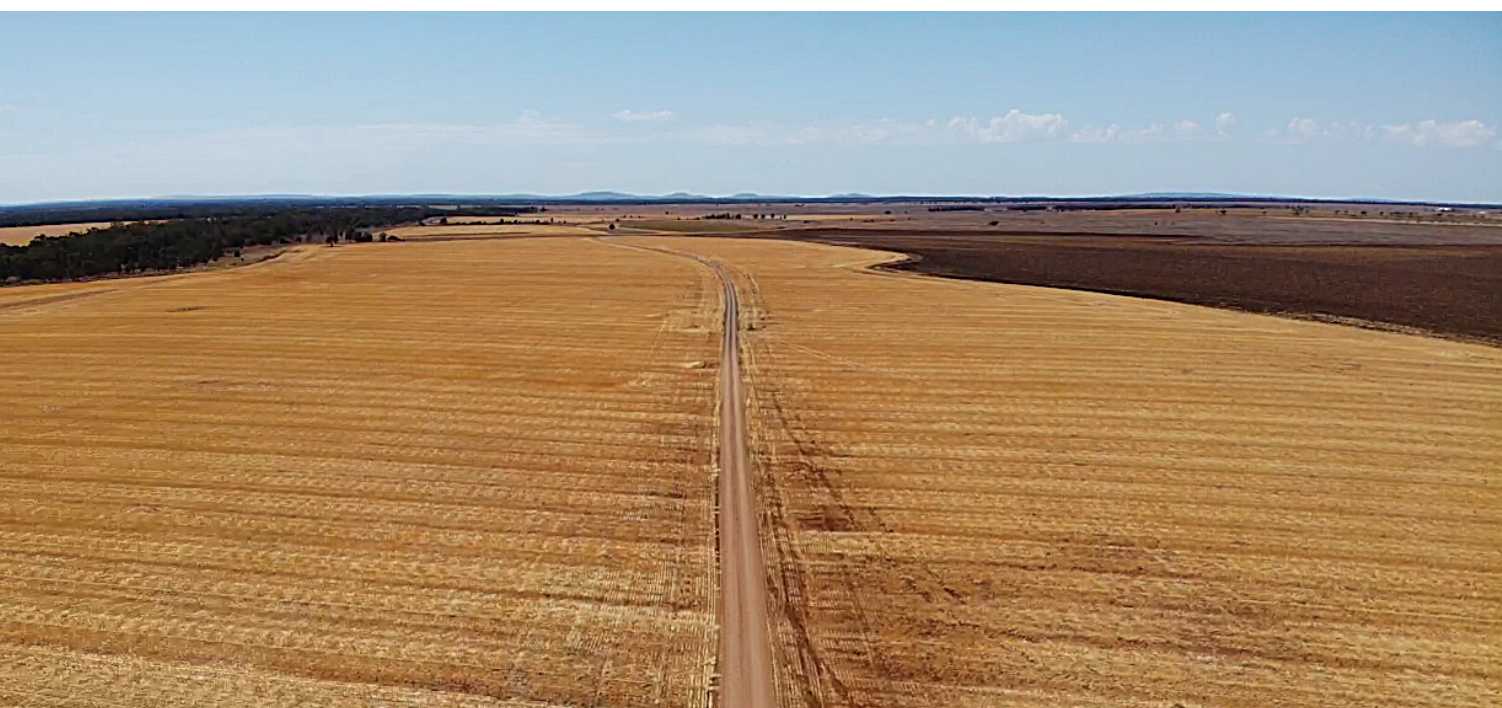
Dad then decided we would try to follow the pigs again so we jumped on the pad they followed. We were walking along and I saw drag marks and bits of blood from my Mexican heartshot pig! The mob had gone one way while my pig went the other. The mob ended up leaving the creek and we went looking, without success, for the pigs we had shot.

It was getting a bit late so we decided to walk a few more creeks then drive around glassing the stubble to look for feeding pigs.

We drove out to the back end of the property out in the cattle country to look at a dam. I looked up at the skyline and saw a funny looking cow ...holy moly, it was a monster pig (100kg pigs are quite common here so this thing was *big!*) and there wasn't just one but six great boars—yes, all boars—all over 100kg trotting along! Dad floored it then got to a spot where he told me to get out and try to cut 'em off on foot. I jumped out into an open paddock with a few little shrubs as cover. There was one big bush in the paddock that would offer me a

perfect 30yd shot at these monsters. All but one pulled up behind the bush but the one boar saw me and took the whole mob away (sad face). Great and unlucky indeed! Anyway, chin up and continue forward.

As luck would have it, we had just got out of that paddock when we saw a small family mob feeding along the creek onto the stubble. Then another bigger pig was seen just up the road, and not one had seen the car! So we started stalking them. I was checking everything; looking at every pig before I moved, studying everywhere my foot was going to go, going super slow ... But of course there was one main thing I couldn't control, and that was the wind. All the pigs suddenly hightailed it back to the creek. I was a bit annoyed about the wind but at the same time I was very happy. This had been the most productive trip I had been on and it was only the first day! But all was not lost, as we hadn't even got to the ute when the same pigs fed out into the stubble again. This time I went alone. As is seen in the photo of me on the road stalking a pig (next page), there is a grassy point going out into the stubble. I headed out there and crawled about 150m across the stubble like a pig to close the gap. Not one of the pigs thought anything





Starting the stalk-crawl behind and to the right of the pig.

of me, I guess I didn't look too out of place on my knees. Slowly I was gaining on the mob. It was then I noticed the huge monsters from before feeding directly to my 9 o'clock.

Now I am not a big kid. I'm tall but I'm not big and I was in the open in a big paddock., I did not want anything to do with those pigs and even when I passed them I was always looking back in case they thought I was a potential challenger. But soon enough I had closed in to what I thought to be 25-ish yards of a pig. My bow shoots pretty flat out to 30m so I was confident this pig was mine. I still don't know if it was because I was on their level or because I was out in a open paddock, but when I shot and hit high I was very shocked and learned that the actual distance was more like 10yd or 15yd. It looked

like I might have got the top of the lungs and I saw the pig sway a bit. Not too long after, it started getting dark so we opted to come back to look for the pig the next morning.

What a first day. I had shot three pigs and Dad had got two, but we

hadn't successfully tracked them.

We woke a bit later the next day and went back to where we had seen pigs the day before. The mob was there again and I took a shot but it was a complete miss. We walked a few more creeks and saw plenty of



The yellow hand is pointing at Jett's position amongst the mob.

sign but no pigs. We moved on in the car before parking in a shady spot so we could walk down to a creek. This time the stench of pigs hit us. Not five minutes into our walk, Dad called for a stop. Pigs! Three of them, to be exact, and all good fellas. Two walked off but one stayed and looked to be ready to bed down. Dad quickly ducked down and moved around to try to get out of the pig's sight. Eventually he drew back and released. With a big thoomp, the tree was hit. Great job, Dad.

Later that day we hopped in the harvesters again and I yarned to the driver about my previous day's adventures.

The next day was spent looking for the pigs we had shot earlier and catching some Zzz's ready for an afternoon hunt. The afternoon was spent walking creeks and watching some saratoga swimming in the lagoon.

The following day we decided to pack up and go home, which ended an amazing trip. It was a trip that was



Both hunter and pig are well camouflaged as Jett takes his shot.

both great and unlucky, and at times downright annoying. I'd lost three brand new arrows and broadheads, but that is hunting sometimes.

If you're interested, you can subscribe to my Youtube channel, The Bow Show. Check out both Alien Archery Australia and Easy Vanes for

outstanding products.

The gear I used was a Bear Cruzer G2 @ 50lb @ 29 inch DL. Outback X-treme arrows with Alien Archery 2BT broadheads and Easy Vanes. Stan Element back tension release aid.

Below: Ready for anything.





Australian Bowhunters Association INC



NATIONAL OFFICE

Office Manager, Kerry Chandler
PO Box 5124
BRENDALD QLD 4500
Ph (07) 3256 3976
Email: officemanager@bowhunters.org.au

NATIONAL OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
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(vacant)

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).

AFFILIATIONS

BOWHUNTING: WORLD BOWHUNTING ASSOCIATION
FIELD ARCHERY: INTERNATIONAL FIELD ARCHERY ASSOCIATION
CONFEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN SPORT

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

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BRANCH CONTACTS

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	Rod Moad	0417 695 316
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



BOWHUNTING DIVISION REPORT

by Allan Driver

Vice-President Bowhunting Division



Welcome to 2021

Welcome everyone to this unique first digital edition of our great ABA magazine.

It is a new direction that transpired through economics and needed to be done to keep your association functioning and moving ahead.

I do hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year and that some of you were able to get out hunting.

Back in the mid 1990s when I took on the job as the Branch H Controller (as it was then known), I didn't even have a computer or know anything about them. The Secretary had one and

we used a tractor-feed printer to send minutes-newsletters out by snail mail.

But as things progressed with technology, I had to learn about computers. I now use one every day and would be lost without it ... plus that damn mobile phone. So, this is how it is with our magazine—moving with the times to accommodate current and future changes.

News snippets

I am always on the lookout for items that come up that may influence what we do as bowhunters.

I watch out for any interesting articles that may need to be brought to

everyone's attention so if you as an ABA member see something of relevance please send it to me. Of interest are the following:

- In Victoria there is a project coming up from the Environment Minister locking in \$6 million to take on feral pigs and deer and control foxes and cats in the Otway ranges. They call it a federally funded environment initiative. In other words, your taxes at work.

It may have some success but as we all know as hunters you never really remove problems such as this. So, if you are a bowhunter down that way make every effort to get out and about claiming those species.

- In South Australia, the Limestone

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	Elissa Rosemond	205 7/8pt	2019
Chital Deer	Elizabeth Proctor	161 3/8pt	2019
Hog Deer	Cheryl Morris	60 5/8pt	2018
Sambar Deer	Nil		
Rusa Deer	Elissa Rosemond	197 6/8pt	2020
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

Coast Landscape Board is advertising for a Project Officer-Feral Deer to implement and evaluate the risks to the economic and environmental and community values caused by feral deer within that region. This follows on from the 2019 Feral Deer Declared Animal Policy and land management.

As to what this entails will be something for discussion. It's possible that a culling program may be implemented.

- A report has just come out in Victoria stating that deer hunting is booming with a 43 per cent increase in deer numbers taken in 2019. It was

a record year of 173,800 deer taken. In order of numbers taken, sambar deer were number one, followed by fallow, red deer then hog deer. This data covers firearms, bowhunting, dogging et cetera. The Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research conducted the research and covered many facets of what hunters did while hunting.

It is always good value to watch out for these surveys and complete them to get your perspective as a bowhunter out to the public.

As a deer hunter you need a licence to carry with you and this in turn gives that organisation the opportunity to conduct surveys.

- At the present time in Victoria there is proposed legislation being drafted about animal welfare.

This proposed legislation has some major implications for hunters across the State and they are working on a reply to be put forward shortly. ABA has been asked to assist in any way it can, and we are currently in discussions.

- Something of value to ABA members is that there are a couple of television shows being aired about Australian hunting—"Beyond the Divide" and "AHA" (Australian Hunting Adventures). Both these shows delve into both firearms and bowhunting. Just recently I viewed two ABA members on a hunt in the Gulf. I knew both of them (and have known one since he was a youngster). So, you never know who you may see on programmes like this. We should all be supporting these programmes that show humane hunting practices here in Australia.

There have been some interesting times of late, and no doubt there are more to come in 2021. The good news is that from all accounts, the majority of ABA members should be able to travel interstate to go hunting. I hope to be one of them, with a plan to get away for a hunt in NSW this month.



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

Bnch/Hunter	Club	Game	Award	FK/FKOS	Size
B Tony Manthey	Cape York Archers	Cat	RC	FKOS	8
B Tony Manthey	Cape York Archers	Rabbit	GA	FKOS	0
B Edward Rowe	Independent	Pig	TC		25
B Edward Rowe	Independent	Pig	RC		29 4/8
B Laurie Goudie	Independent	Pig	TC		26 4/8
B Laurie Goudie	Independent	Pig	TC		26 2/8
B Mark Spiller	Mt Isa District Bowhunters	Camel	RC	FKOS	30 6/16
B Paul Polinelli	Towers Bowhunters	Camel	RC		29 7/16
B Paul Polinelli	Towers Bowhunters	Camel	RC		29 11/16
B Leslie Zillman	Townsville District Bowhunter	Pig	GA	FK / FKOS	0
C Brad Lane	Emerald Archery Club	Pig	GA	FKOS	0
C Brad Lane	Emerald Archery Club	Pig	TC		25 4/8
C David Brewer	Emerald Archery Club	Pig	TC		25 4/8
C Michael Law	Full Draw Archers	Pig	TC		26 2/8
C Michael Law	Full Draw Archers	Pig	TC		25 4/8
D David Wallace	Lakeside Bowmen	Pig	TC		27 2/8
D Dale Winks	Renegade Bowmen	Pig	TC		26 6/8
D Jack Winks	Renegade Bowmen	Pig	TC		26 2/8
D Simon Burchill	Renegade Bowmen	Rabbit	GA	FK / FKOS	0
E Bernie Hayne	Namoi Valley Archers	Fox	TC		9 14/16
E Peter Bush	Namoi Valley Archers	Red Deer	GA	FKOS	0
E Peter Bush	Namoi Valley Archers	Goat	TC		103 4/8
F Nicholas Bedford	Manly Warringah Field Archer	Fox	GA	FKOS	0
F Nicholas Bedford	Manly Warringah Field Archer	Pig	GA	FKOS	0
G Christopher Bourne	Macalister Trophy Bowhunters	Sambar	TC		163 7/8
G Adam Clements	West Gippsland Field Archers	Fallow	GA	FKOS	0
G Adam Clements	West Gippsland Field Archers	Sambar	GA	FKOS	0
H Dan Podubinski	Buffalo Bowmen	Fox	TC		9 5/16

Bowhunting achievements to end November 2020

Master Bowhunter

Nil further since last report

Trophy Bowhunter Award

Dan Podubinski 290

Bowhunter Award

Jack Winks 110

Michael Law 100

Bowhunter Royale

Nil further since last report

Bowhunter Imperial

Nil further since last report

Bowhunter Supreme

Edward Rowe

Senior Member of TBA

Peter Bush

Bernard Hayne

Tony Manthey

Members Admitted to TBA Club

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

Brad Lane

Mark Spiller



Trophy Bowhunters of Australia Club



Introducing TBA MEMBER *Brad Lane*

Where do you live?

Tieri which is located in Central Queensland.

Personal details? Are other family members interested in archery?

38, married with 4 children—one is a current ABA member and the youngest has just started shooting.

How long have you been hunting?

I started bowhunting at 15 years of age

How long have you been an ABA member?

I first joined ABA around 2003 I think (member of Lithgow Valley Archers).

What got you into bowhunting?

I've always enjoyed the outdoors and found archery a better way to enjoy it.

Are you a member of an archery club, and if so, which one? Do you hold a position in the club?

Yes I am a member of Emerald Archery Club. I don't currently hold any positions within the club.

How often do you get to go hunting?

I usually try to get out once every couple of months if time allows.

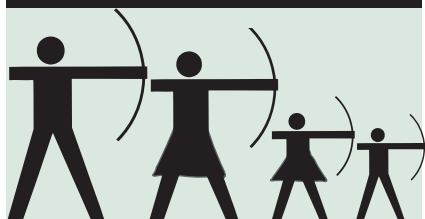
What equipment do you use (compound/recurve/longbow)?

I am a compound shooter.

Has this encouraged you to do more hunting?

I don't need much encouragement.

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Do you have any hunting goals that you would like to achieve/bowhunter awards et cetera?

I have made an effort to start logging my bow kills going forward as I haven't done so in the past.

Did you know much about TBA before this?

Yes.

The TBA Committee congratulates you, Brad.

The hunt:

“



The hunt was a self-guided hunt in the Gulf country. My trophy boar was shot around midday. It was bedded next to a fallen tree around the edge of a dam in a mob of around 60 pigs. It took me about 25 minutes to stalk into a good position for the shot as there were two sows bedded in front of him. I took the shot from about 18m. The boar ran into the long grass away from the dam. I waited for the rest of the mob to disperse before I went to locate the boar. I located him about 70m from where I hit him. I was very excited once I realised he had gone over 25pt.

”



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SPOTLIGHT ON AN ARCHER

by SUSAN GRAHAM

ROSS FLEMING: Master Archer

To my mind, Ross Fleming is the quintessential longbow archer. His lean stature and long grey beard are reminiscent of a Medieval archer.

Ross took up archery some nine years ago. His teenage son Michael was shooting with a longbow at the Mallee Sunset Field Archers Club and he was inspired to follow in his steps. Initially, it was suggested he start shooting with a longbow or recurve to develop his form and stance. Ross shot some 20 arrows from a recurve once and has shot a compound bow twice. Neither of these shooting styles interested him.

Ross quickly became hooked on

the longbow, in particular, the historic longbow. The notion of no technology, no sights and no wheels involved was appealing.

"I soon realised that with the longbow it all depends on the person behind the bow," he said.

"Sometimes you shoot well, sometimes badly ... and you can also have a very, very bad day."

This reflective attitude developed a strong determination within him. His resoluteness, coupled with consistent practice and perseverance, enabled Ross to begin winning State Titles in his second year after starting the sport. Roscoe, as he is known around

the club, often completes one and sometimes two early-morning practice range circuits before club meetings and shoots.

His accomplishments have been many, both in IFAA and ABA. When asked about any memorable experiences he has had Ross said he was very proud of his achievements at the Alice Springs Nationals in 2019 where he broke and won ABA Paper and 3D records and then continued on to break two IFAA records. IFAA National Shoot records (Historical Bow) show that in the AMHB division in 2019, Ross shot a new record in Field of 211 and in Hunter with 182.



Ross Fleming.



The Pacific Regional Archery Records show a score of 230 in the Marked Animal Round. The score cards, medals and awards from this shoot hold very special memories for him.

Ross won in both Paper and 3D at the SA Branch Safari 2020. He also claimed the Branch IFAA Titles in 2020.

Recently, a member of the Mallee Sunset Field Archers club commented that “every time Roscoe goes away to a shoot, he breaks records.”

Ross has a strong community commitment, perhaps as a result of his 47 years within the grazing field. He spent many years as a volunteer in the Rural Fire Service in NSW and

is a committed club member who helps out without hesitation when something needs doing around the club and provides encouragement to anyone whether they shoot recurve, compound or traditional.

Currently, Ross owns seven bows ranging from historic to traditional. He generally shoots with a Stratton bow and makes his own arrows. John McDonald supplies the arrow shafts. The feathers on his arrows are predominately red and white. Asked why he chose these colours, he jokingly replied, “Because they are easy to find.”

The COVID-19 pandemic caused

many restrictions across the archery community. Ross said the lockdown had meant the club was closed down altogether between March and June. “It was a hard period. I really missed shooting with past and new traditional archers and the club involvement,” he said.

Ross has no preference between ABA or IFAA formats. So long as he can shoot arrows, he is happy. When asked what his goals were he replied, “I just want to keep shooting till I fall over.”

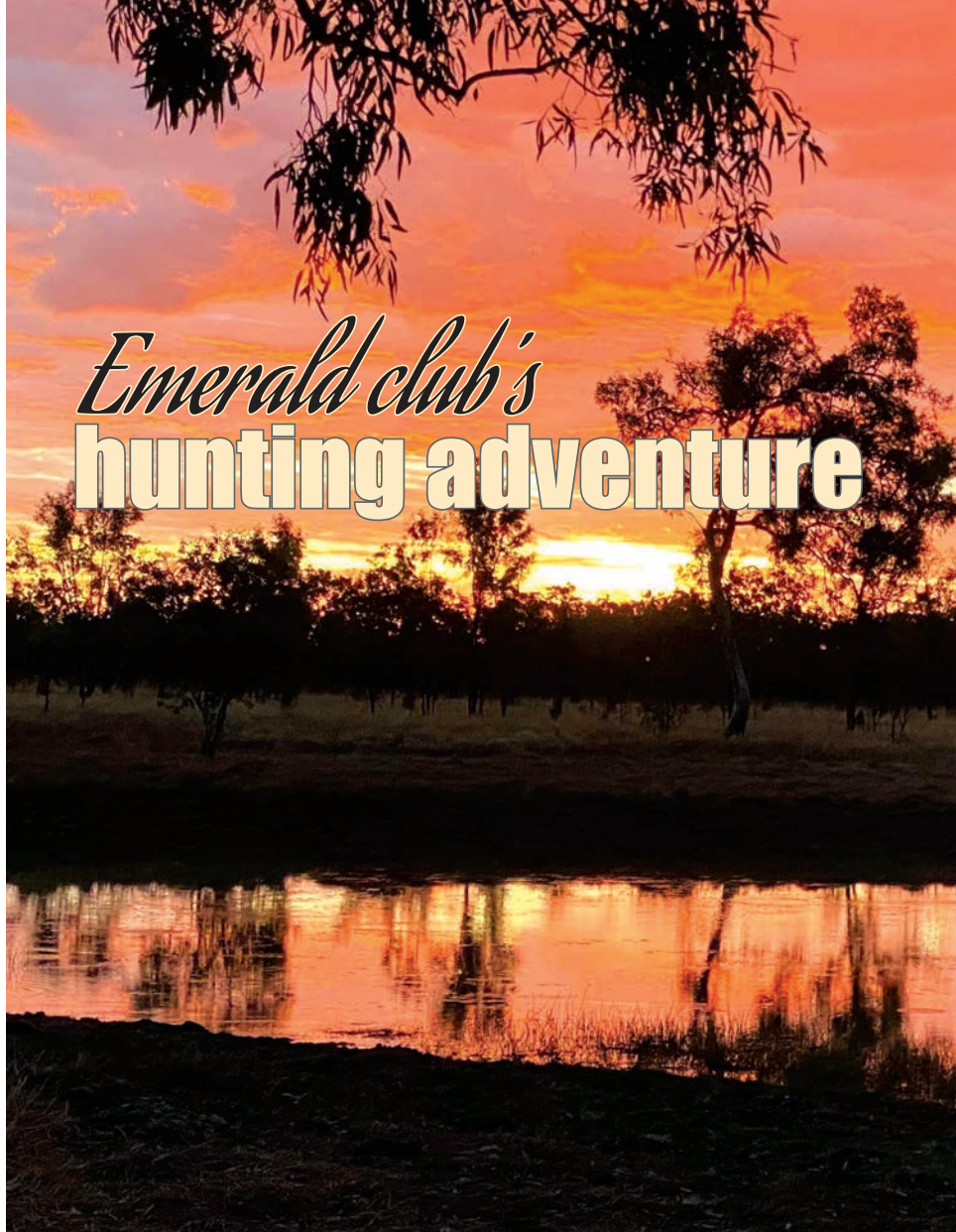
As for the rest of us, we’re looking forward to seeing Ross continue his high level of archery achievement in 2021 and for many years to come.

It started 12 months ago with a Stalkbook post, “Who would be interested in a club hunt to the Cape?” It didn’t take long and the available spots were full. We’d be hunting the Alice River, which drains to the Gulf of Carpentaria in far-north Queensland.

Planning was going well right up until the point that COVID hit and everything closed up. So, nervous times while we waited with bated breath for the restrictions to lift. A month out from the leaving date, we got the go-ahead. Emerald Archery Club was off to Cape York!

Four fully loaded four-wheel-drive vehicles full of eager pig hunters—some on their first trip and most of us on our first Cape hunt—met at the Chillagoe Van Park the night prior to our hunt start. What a great place this was, with fantastic hosts, great food and fuel under \$2 a litre. Breakfast done, we headed off. Nick and Sam were in the lead while Brad and I brought up the rear.

All went well for the first 50km. Coming out of a river crossing, we found the rest of our companions parked up on the edge of the road. It was clear that Nick had an issue with





A peaceful sunset at the property.



by DAVID BREWER

The campsite.

his trailer axle, because the wheels were at crazy angles. Pulling up, we got the story. Nick's trailer tire had lost some rubber on the trip but hadn't blown, just lost all the grip. As he had taken the corner on the river crossing the trailer hadn't followed and had dropped off the edge. After some very intense moments and a bit of luck, Nick managed to bring the trailer back onto the crossing. The opposite scenario of the ute following the trailer over the edge would have been unthinkable. It was a great reminder to give the Cape the respect it deserves. With the bush mechanics in full swing we (by we I



Donkey-heated shower.



A loo with a view.



Kevin's amazing first pig kill—two with one arrow.

mean not me; I don't do mechanic) managed to get the trailer into a drivable condition to make the final run through to our hunt camp.

After meeting Mick at his camp and getting the final instructions we were off to our camp for the next 10 days. Camp was basic with both a donkey shower and a drop loo with a view and a billabong behind but we soon had a camp set up that anyone would be happy to call home. It got even better when Nick presented his Ice Break fruitcake. Life was pretty good.

Daylight on the first hunting day had us all kitted up and keen for a look around. We all had images of trophy boars in our heads. Water was in short supply so seemed like as good a place as any to start. Not wanting to scent up the whole block too early, we all started at different points along the same waterway. Brad and I walked plenty of kays, saw heaps of sign but no pigs. We did come across a few snapping lizards though, the first of many for the trip. These guys were only freshies though

so no need to worry.

This was Kevin's first bowhunt. He was hunting that morning with his brother Rob and although they didn't manage to get a pig the first day they had plenty of stories of near misses and what could have been. The boys came across a mob of over 50 pigs and got into position where the mob would walk past at around 20m. That was, until Rob got his rangefinder out and the stretch cord came loose, making a nasty whack. Sensing something was amiss, the pigs chose a different route to the one they had been on. That meant the shot distance would be a little further than they had hoped. Kevin sized up the closest sow but it just wasn't his day. Nick and Sam had the same sort of first-day stories— plenty of pigs seen but nothing on the tally. Still, we were in for a great trip if day one was to be any sort of guide.

During the hunt there were quite a few memorable moments. On one hunt that Sam and Kevin were on, Sam spotted some pigs bedded in



Kevin's Trophy Class ant hill ... also taken with a single arrow.

the creek. The only shot on offer was from the opposite bank so getting the wind right, they started to close the gap. Kevin closed into 27m, having chosen the biggest pig he could see. Taking a broadside shot, he managed a double as his first bow harvest when an unseen pig that had been lying behind the intended target caught the pass-through arrow full in the chest resulting in two pigs from a single arrow. And just to show it wasn't a fluke, Kevin also managed to take a Trophy Class ant hill with a single arrow.

Brad managed his first pig with a heart shot as the boar watered late in the afternoon. He took the shot at 35m quartering-on and the boar travelled about 20m before piling up.

Early the next morning Brad and I were checking waterholes when we came across a mob of pigs feeding on the plains. It didn't take long to work out which was the pig we wanted. As it was my shot, I closed the gap to 30yd and put an arrow into the boiler room. We gave him a few minutes before we



Brad's first boar was heartshot, quartering on at 35m.

followed up and found him expired only metres from where he had disappeared from sight. Brad headed after the pigs as there were still some great boars to be had. Taking photos and the jaw, I was rapt at what I suspected was to be my first Trophy Class boar. I joined up with Brad again and we continued to check the waterholes. The very next hole we thought was the motherlode. As we were carefully working in on them, we came across a small mob of sows and immature boars. We waited for them to move on, as we could see more pigs on the other side of the water. Once the smaller



Another boar for Brad.



Rob's scrub bull.



Nick had to settle for a multi-coloured boar.

mob had moved off we closed to the water's edge. Watching while different pigs took turns in the same wallow at the water's edge only metres away, we finally saw what we were looking for—a mature boar sound asleep in the shade at 30m. Getting into position, Brad gave him a rude awakening by slipping an arrow into the sleeping boar. The pig count was rising.

Wanting to take a break from walking, the tribe decided to visit the river and try for a few fish. Nick and Sam were first on the scene and were pulling in catfish with just about every cast. As Nick's opinion was that catfish represented very poor eating, they were being tossed back into the river. Rumour has it that Rob almost cried in grief when he, Lindy and Kevin arrived and got the news that heaps had already been returned. A change of tack saw the now-valuable catfish being kept and added to by Sam's first barra. This was to be the evening cook-up. Rob and Lindy made fools of all the doubters, the cook-up was sensational ... no way would we be throwing back catfish now. I'm not sure if it was the special batter, the fact that we had been eating very basic food the previous few days or that we were just super hungry but that beer damper and fish bites was a great meal and everyone went back for seconds and thirds.

We were lucky enough to get the chance to get a few days hunting with Mick after his hunters left so Rob and Nick took the opportunity to do a guided hunt for scrub bulls on another part of the property. Mick advised that when hunting scrub bulls his policy is quick follow-up with a rifle to ensure the animal is not lost and the hunter gets a bull for his trophy fee. Heading off at light speed, the boys started their search for a bull. Checking a few different bulls, finally Rob found one he was keen to have a crack at. It was at 18yd and quartering away when Rob sent



Lindy's damper.

the arrow on its way. Two quick shots from Mick's 308 and the photos started on a great scrub bull. Nick spent some time on a massive bull waiting for the right shot before the wind worked against him and the game was up with the bull exiting stage right. Nick had to settle for a good multi-coloured boar that was sunbaking on the riverbank. Safe to say they had a great day.

Chasing pigs with Mick the next day, Rob and Sam needed to fill their quivers after having plenty of shots



Taking time out from hunting for a bit of fishing.

on offer. You couldn't wipe the grins off if you tried. Rob took a good boar that dropped on the spot from a 10m shot. Sam took his personal best boar as well showing off the shooting form he had on display at the club leading into the trip.

Brad and I took our chance to check some different country, it was Brad's turn and we hadn't gone far, about 6km, when we saw a pig on the opposite side of the water. After quickly crossing, we blew out a boar that had

been quietly bedded in a hollow, and we watched as he passed the other boar. We had our hearts in our mouths hoping that both boars didn't blow out together. Luck was on our side as the boar we had seen continued to come in and presented a broadside shot for Brad at 30m. Without his lungs, he hit the deck quickly. We were taking photos and the jaw when I noticed a boar watching us only metres away. I swore quietly, because of course the bows were out of reach and as soon as we made a move toward them he was out of sight. Coming across another lot of sleeping pigs in the sand on the water's edge I took the chance of trying a new broadhead. I couldn't have been happier as the arrow flew true, 48yd straight into the heart and stopping what turned out to be a large sow, right on the bank.

The following day we saw some great pigs but couldn't get the job done. The wind was terrible—its sucking and blowing meant we just couldn't get into position before the pigs blew out. Or when we did find them and the wind didn't give us away, they were lying in the most awkward way and not presenting a shot. We did play cat and mouse with a family group. They



Rob took a good boar that dropped on the spot.

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A broadside shot at 30m for Brad.

were only small boars and sows we so got the camera out instead and filmed them at really close quarters. At one point they were just over 1m away as they happily fought with each other for the best bed. We didn't manage to put any on the ground that day, which made us super keen the next day.

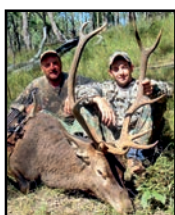
The next morning and five minutes in, and we had a sleeping boar that took an arrow through the lungs to

give me my second boar of the trip.

Later in the day I hunted with Nick and we walked a watercourse. We found a big mob with some cracking boars but the cattle saw us first and stampeded straight through the mob, sending pigs in every direction. Cursing the cattle for ruining our chance we were blown away to see the pigs start to head back to the water. Our glee was shortlived, though, as they headed

off again before Nick could close the distance. Still, it didn't take us long to recover from the disappointment because as we rounded a corner we found two sleeping boars. Nick slipped an arrow into a boar then we watched as he fell only metres from where he had been lying. Walking up to the expired pig, all we could see was ivory hanging out of the jaw. This was a cracking pig, and hopefully Nick's first trophy boar! Then we rolled him over and saw that the other side was broken off. Crushed was an understatement. This was a great little spot to be sure. Brad, meanwhile, had managed to find himself a Trophy Class boar. The shot was a double-lung broadside shot at 16m. You'd think finding him would be easy, but I guess not. There was barely any blood and the long grass made it a difficult task. Twenty minutes and plenty of determination later, Brad had his entry into the Trophy Bowhunters Association secured.

There were still three days to go and the hunting party was a little tired but still keen to keep flinging the arrows around. I have to say that Lindy was truly unlucky to be the only hunter without a pig. It wasn't through lack of try-



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Rob's second boar for the trip.



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The freshies weren't too worrying, but seeing a slide mark from a salty made you rethink how close to the water you went.

ing, it just seemed to be that wherever she was, the pigs weren't. That didn't curb her enthusiasm though— she was already planning the return trip.

Even around camp there was plenty to see and do. The billabong was full of barra and saratoga. I had plenty of hook-ups but couldn't land one, so that's still on the bucket list. We had a resident goanna that we kept checking on, water snakes patrolling the water's edge and we lost count of the species of birds we took photos of. Falling asleep under the stars for 10 nights was a great reminder of the simple pleasures of hunting in the Cape. It really is a special place to visit, so long as you remember the crocs. Freshies are one thing, and it's not too scary watching them disappear into the water while you check the water's edge. But it has to be said, big salties are another. Fishing a small stretch of water one day and then coming across a huge skid the next day makes you think maybe you won't sit quite as close to next time. No wonder the pigs find smaller holes to water at.

We knew where the pigs were now, and it was time to get some more in the bag. Nick took out most pigs for

the trip, we thought he had the best for the trip as well until he pulled short, not quite making 25pt. Nick got another cracker boar with Sam, a heart shot from 19m saw the boar drop at under 10m. Nick couldn't believe it though—another broken tusk, this time on the opposite side. His first Trophy Class boar was proving difficult to get. Nick's fifth boar went down with another good arrow but this time, the boar had no teeth to mention.

We had our pattern now, walking



One of Dave's boars.

water through the heat of the day. We thought this particular morning we would park up and walk a creek before doubling back to the car. We had been averaging between 10km and 15km a day so we thought it seemed a good idea. Well, it turned out a little longer than expected. Walking the creek was over 18km. By the time the day was done we had over 25km on the dial. That day broke me, and I was footsore for the rest of the trip. But did we find some pigs! A comedy of errors



Rest time.

followed that had us laughing. It was a great day to be sure, possibly better if we'd had a pick-up at the other end rather than having to walk back over hot dry country.

Brad and I hunted a watercourse the next day. We had walked it earlier in the week. Parking in our reserved spot, I couldn't believe it when a boar, not just a boar, the biggest bodied boar I had seen all trip, casually walked by into the watercourse. Giving him a few minutes we followed him up. Being as quiet as I could while walking on cornflakes, I checked the banks ahead to try not to blow the boar out. Finally after a couple of hundred yards I saw him and watched as he went in to bed. Closing in I couldn't believe how good a spot this big boar had chosen. If I hadn't seen him go in I never would have known he was there. I was at 8m, he had a cliff behind him, but thin dead saplings in front were so dense that I'd never get an arrow through. Walking around might give me a front-on shot, but might not as

well. With a marginal breeze I stayed, deciding to wait him out. Wait I did, 47 minutes according to Brad. All I could do was watch him roll, swish flies with his tail, and flap his ears around. Then without notice he was out of his bed. I had clean shot opportunities on both sides, of course he pulled up behind a broken-down tree and try as I might I simply couldn't get an arrow away. Big boars aren't stupid. This guy had finally worked out something was up and he was out of there. Disappointment was an understatement. Second-guessing myself, I checked his bed and it was evident that I would never have got an arrow through the cover. He'll be there for another lucky hunter one day. Another 6km and another opportunity—bedded pigs in the sand. Picking the largest pig I could see that offered a clean shot, I sent an arrow into the quartering-away bedded pig. It was another sow as it turned out, but she must have been the lead sow as the remaining dozen or more pigs stayed with her till the end. That afternoon

we found another waterhole on the map that we hadn't noticed before. It was only a couple of kilometres away so we headed off to check it out. Thirty seconds after arriving we knew we would be back the following morning. It was clear that there were a heap of pigs watering here.

Then came the last day—our 10 days had gone fast. Brad and I were going to sit on the water we had found the day before. Right on 9am, in they came; hundreds of them. We sat and watched them wallow, feed, drink and fight. It was a great morning. As luck would have it, we needed to be further down the water as that was where the boars had parked up. Brad closed the distance to under 30m but couldn't get a clean shot as the pigs were packed in tight. As is the way, cattle again scared the pigs off before a shot was taken but we managed some great footage.

We had a blinding trip, one that's sure to be repeated—but it might be a rush to see which club members get in first to secure those available spots.



Nick with a tusky boar.



Nick's final boar, but rather a tuskless terror.



Nick Lintern

TRADITIONAL TRAILS

Hi to all our readers and welcome to another instalment of Traditional Trails. I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year. I hope 2021 has got off to a great start for you all and you are all out and about with your bows and hunting, or attending shoots or just simply shooting on your own at a box. Whatever style of traditional archery you prefer, get out there this year and let's make up for last year's bumps and bruises.

When we left our previous article, our yew bow was rapidly taking shape and was ready to be strung for the first time. As always, I apologise for being slightly long winded with these descriptions, but nothing is more frustrating than when an author on any subject skims over points that seem everyday to him but aren't to readers trying to learn. So I'd rather err on the thorough side. Let's get onto the final stages of this epic yew bow journey.

Building the yew English longbow

Part 5

Where we left off, our yew stave had become a fledgling bow and had been tillered through stage two of the tillering process and was ready to receive a string. The best policy is to use a longer string than the full brace height string so as not to over-stress the bow yet. Even though we have taken the bow to brace height on the tiller post, it is different when the bow is braced properly for the first time. You have done everything you possibly could to ensure that the bow is properly aligned, is twist free and has a nice even curve and the limbs are balanced. However,

this first stringing is the acid test. If you have done everything correctly and patiently to this point, all should be well, but things can be quite different when the bow is 'properly' strung for the first time, so go with a slightly longer string to minimise the load at first while we assess how she looks. How long should your string be? Normally a finished ELB will have a string that is about 2 ½in shorter than its nock-to-nock length. (ELBs are different from American semi-longbows and recurves in this way). So make yourself a *Flemish* string that is 2 ½in shorter than your nock-to-nock

length. It's critical that it be a Flemish string as these are very adjustable. This adjustment will be a valuable tool in this phase of tillering. Wind it out a bit so that your string is around 2in shorter than your bow's nock-to-nock length. At this stage I'll divert briefly to discuss a good all-purpose workshop stringer. This will be a great asset for any bow building you might embark on. I use—and have done for 20 years now—a cup-style stringer (see photo next column). This stringer enables you to string ELBs before the horns are on and the same applies to American semi-longs or hybrids. Two leather cups and a strong cord, such as a venetian blind cord that can take double the weight you are stringing, is the way to go. The cups are attached via two bowyers' knots for easy adjustment. If this sounds like something you might struggle with, I can supply one for you.

Now, back to the bow. Slide your top string loop over one limb and bed the other loop into the other nock. Fit your stringers cups on the bow's tips, stand on the stringer cord then slowly string your bow. As you pull up on the bow's handle as you string it, take note of how the bow feels in your hand. Does it feel like it's coming up evenly or is it trying to turn in



The cup-style stringer is a great tool for stringing and for early assessment of your bow.

your hand? Watch the tips as well. Does it look like they are coming up nice and straight? As long as it's looking and feeling close (not necessarily perfect, but close), complete the stringing and gently back off on the stringer. If it really wants to turn badly in your hand, back off and head back to the tiller post and reassess. If it is seriously twisted, it can unstring itself and violently buck which can be dangerous. Hopefully if you've been really careful at the post stage, all will be well here.

So now, assuming all is well,

remove the stringer and look over your bow. Look at the balance between the limbs; are they fairly even? Check the string alignment; is it close? Look at the overall curve; how does it look? If anything looks wrong, we don't want to stress the bow any further until we've rectified it. This is where we really start stalking tiller hardcore. There are many things to watch. If the balance between the limbs looks way off, mark the stiff limb and unstring her and weaken the over-stiff limb before going much further. At the same time, if the bow has some alignment issues, you'll need to sort that as well, so you may end up having to reduce one over-stiff limb by scraping down one side of the bow only to fix alignment at the same time. At this stage it'll all be cabinet scraper adjustments, so make the changes slowly and carefully. You can always take more off but you can't put wood back on. After each adjustment, you will need to stress the bow further than previously to get the changes to register. At this early stage, the best way to do that is to twist your Flemish splice up a few twists so as to increase the brace height slightly. This will add more load on the limbs. Even still, once you have restrung the bow at the new higher brace height, put a

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The tiller rig set-up. This incorporates the scale and pulleys.

series of *very* short draws—no more than a few inches—on the bow (as we must get the wood to react to the changes). If she looks good and the issues have improved, leave her there for a few minutes and allow the wood to show you any further changes. If she looks the goods at this point, we are ready to start putting some bend in the bow.

Tiller board

The next step after bracing your bow and being completely happy with everything at that point, is to



Bow on the tiller rig, ready to start exercising.

start applying some bending towards the full-draw length. One of the best rigs for this final stage of tillering is a tiller board (*see photo above right*). It is basically a gridded background behind a tiller post with a pulley system to work the string. As with the first tiller post, there is a U-shaped holder for the bow's handle to sit in. The pulley set-up is around ground level and you can stand back and pull on the cord and watch the bow bend. Mine is rigged with an extra pulley to divide the bow's weight by three so as to make it easier to pull the bow—especially when tillering 100lb-plus bows. It is also good to add a scale in there as well, so you can observe bend and weight at the same time. If this all sounds a bit daunting, don't worry, I'll cover another way of doing it later, but this is the easiest and most accurate .

So, with the braced bow looking nice, we now place the bow onto the tiller board set-up and place the pulley hook on the string, stand back and *gently* pull on your rope to apply some bending to your bow. Don't pull and hold the bow, exercise it by bend-

ing and relaxing over and over again. Don't go too far yet, a few inches only, you're now in uncharted territory with your stave. You haven't asked this much of it yet so go slowly and watch closely for changes. Watch the limbs, look at them against the grid background. The grid is especially useful for comparing the two limbs. Are there any stiff spots or weak spots starting to show up? If so, mark them with a pencil, unstring the bow and scrape to make the changes. Restring and repeat the same process, creeping down the tiller board a few more inches each time. Keep an eye on the draw weight. It is never wise to take the bow past its desired draw weight. Why risk overloading the bow? So if for example, you're after a 60# bow @ 28in, and at 23in the bow looks great and is bending into a nice even, balanced curve, and she is 60# at that 23in length, rather than pushing her 2in more, it's better to remove wood *evenly* over the whole bow to maintain tiller and reduce weight. Then return the bow to the tiller and see what the reduction did. Hopefully it is now 60# at 25in et cetera. All the



Bow on tiller at full draw, note the even, full-compass draw.

while keep an eye on the tiller. Is the bow showing a nice even curve? How is the alignment? How is the balance? Is one limb slightly stiffer than the other? We need one limb stiffer by about 3/16in or so. The weaker limb is the top limb. As you progress, make sure that the bow's brace height is steadily increased to be its final brace height which should be about 6in. The bow will now be under full load as you work it. The shape we are aiming for with an ELB is a nice 'full compass' tiller. The bow should be working right into the handle area. This is also known as a C tiller. (The stiffer, non-working handle area of an American semi-longbow is called a D tiller.) So, we slowly work the bow down the tiller board, closely watching the weight, curve, balance and alignment. By the time you've reached the draw length and weight you desire you will have pulled the bow hundreds of times. Self-bows require a lot more exercising than all-wood composites as the variation within them can be a lot more dramatic and takes more time to settle in. As I've mentioned before, if you feel



Here you can see the alignment is very good. Try to aim for this kind of alignment where possible.



A yew bow strung to full brace height. It still hasn't been overly worked yet.



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Another big yew bow at full brace height. You can see the curve profile is quite good and she is ready to start bending further.



Full drawn bow, looking very nice and even in curve. Note the full-compass tiller. The horns are next.

like rushing, or are becoming impatient, go and have some lunch and a coffee and refocus. The target is to get to your desired draw weight at about 2in short of your desired draw length, so on the above example, if you want 60# @ 28in, stop when you get to 60# @ 26in. The reason for this is that we want to now fit the horn tips. This can cause the bow to alter slightly sometimes. Thus a few pounds up our sleeve is useful to make adjustments if needed. I'll cover fitting the horn tips in the next issue. God willing, you are now holding a bow which is 90 per cent for weight, and 100 per cent for curve, balance and alignment, all achieved by tweaking changes and patiently working your bow down the tiller board. Be totally critical and

honest with yourself when assessing your bow. Is it really good? Does that curve look like a half circle? If you are busting out of your skin to shoot your bow, at this point you can put a few through her, but only a few, and don't draw it to absolute full draw. Remember it has only been tillered to 2in shy of draw length, so don't take it past where it's been trained to go. I like to do this as the act of shooting it can also make a few changes occur sometimes—changes I want to know about now so I can alter things if necessary.

About string follow

Now would be a good time to talk about string follow—what it is and why it happens. String follow is very simply when the bow's unstrung pro-

file goes from being fairly straight when you started, to staying curved towards the archer now she's fully tillered. Firstly, this is a 100 per cent natural phenomenon and is for the most part, unavoidable. When I make an osage self-bow, I steam the wood and pre-set several inches of reflex in the stave to allow for the set that is going to happen. Again, this is unavoidable and can only really be allowed or compensated for.

Why does it occur? Any bow is experiencing two opposing forces, tensile or stretching forces on the bow's back and compressive forces on the belly. Roughly half way through the bow these two forces meet and there is a shearing force as the two opposing forces meet. This is called

the neutral axis. If we get the neutral axis right in the middle of the limb or even slightly forward towards the back, we will get almost no string follow, but in this arm wrestle that occurs, the tensile forces always win. It's like a 20-stone strongman taking on a table tennis player. There's only one way that goes! So we do what we can to help the belly, like arassing the bow's back et cetera. If your stave was well seasoned when you began, and you have tillered cleverly, the string follow shouldn't be extreme. A moisture meter can be valuable in assessing staves at the start, but a good rule of thumb is that if your bow takes no set until after it's been to brace height, then it's good and dry. If it does take some early set, simply set it aside for a few more months. Does string follow matter? If it's no more

than a few inches, like 2in, then no, it's no big deal. But if it gets to 3in or more it will rob the bow of cast. It is common for a fully tillered bow to be strung all day, then when you unstring it the bow is showing 4in of follow. But come morning, it is back to the 2in it started with. This is all quite normal and nothing to obsess about. In fact, bows with some set are generally nicer to shoot if it isn't extreme. With our self bow it may not have been completely straight to begin with and we are working with what nature gave us, so bear that in mind.

I'll take a few minutes now to describe the alternative to the tiller board for those folk who don't want to build a full tiller rig or don't have the room. Very simply, you can use a mirror. I made all my early self-bows this way and it certainly works. So

just as described previously, string your bow and when you are satisfied that she's ready to bend, pop a pencil behind your ear (or in your pocket) and stand in front of a mirror—preferably one where the whole bow can be seen (like a hall mirror) Now, draw the bow a few inches and mark any issues that need sorting. So we now progress exactly the same way as using the tiller board, but we are drawing the bow by hand and using the mirror to assess it. This method works fine but is not quite as easy to assess the bow as the board method.

So, now we are ready to fit the horns, make the final adjustments and finish the bow.

Feel free to send any questions you may have by emailing me at norseman_longbows@hotmail.com.

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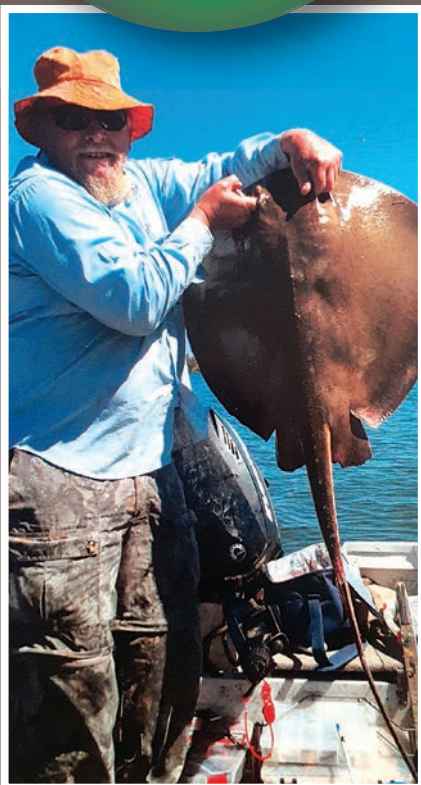
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ABOVE: Grant Bowd, goat.

LEFT: Shane Scorgie, pig.

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Around THE TRADS

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Sue Wallace

✱ The weatherman suggested it was going to be a warm day for Chevallan Archery Park's last two-day trad shoot for the year. After we set up, we went to the practice butt near the shed for a few shots. My better half is now 12 months down the track from the coma and influenza A, however there is one lingering condition that was amplified during the recent Tully shoot trip—he can no longer go for four days without having a shot as his right arm just loses all conditioning.

For this shoot we had a two-arrow field course of 20 3D targets and four novelties. Our group chose to start on the rolling disc, then do the 30-second speed round before walking down to do the 60-second hunt round. It had been set up around the 'shields' on the combat archery course. You shot from the first plate mark to target 1, then walked to target 1 to locate the second plate to shoot at target 2 and so on through to target 6 and then you walked back to plate 5 to shoot target 5 and so on. This set-up can be a little tricky as you often zig-zag from plate to target.

Following the hunt round we headed down to the field course. Target 5 was the gamble shot, a rather small duiker at the front with a gemsbok at the back. The parked

RAV4 wasn't one of the targets. One of our members had recently had a melanoma removed from the lower part of the shin and to make it a little easier he drove as far as he could. To protect his leg from being bumped or scratched he was wearing part of a downpipe (well, as they say, needs must). Very fetching! The vehicle was also helpful to another of our members who is awaiting hip replacement surgery.

This story was relayed to me out on the course: At the gamble shot there were a couple of locals in a group. They weren't as experienced at these two-day events, and it was explained to them this was the gamble shot, which meant they got double points. So, the first chap stood at the plate, looked at the target, sized it up and took the shot, and was absolutely delighted at hitting it. He was then ecstatic when his second shot also landed, and was jumping up and down, all the while exclaiming he'd hit the target for double points, and it was so small! Sadly, his enthusiasm was soon squashed when he found out that the double gamble points were only for the big target at the back.

Around 3pm, archers gathered over at the 30-second speed event for the Top 10. The Top 10 shootout

at this event contained three women. One by one the archers stepped up to the stump to have their go. The first challenge was to shoot an arrow inside the metal ring on the fox target. One poor fellow who was in the Top 10 for the first time was so nervous he couldn't settle enough for one shot to get in the ring. It took me three arrows to finally get inside the ring. Kay was her usual smooth self and was looking very much a winner, with only my better half and me left to shoot. He very calmly stepped up and shot smoothly as well, getting one more arrow out than Kay. As for me, I inadvertently pulled two arrows out, one dropping to the ground, the other nocked and shot. I then pulled out another two arrows and somehow nocked and shot both and one actually hit the target. By then I was laughing too much to even nock another arrow.

For the Saturday shoot there were medals for first, second and third for all divisions, and for the first time we had a draw for first place—it was the Ladies Recurve. The winner of the Top 10 Shootout was presented with a set of custom Chevallan coloured arrows. The same chap also won the Overall on Sunday.

Our next campout shoot will be our Christmas Fun Day in December.



Chevallan Top 10.



Standing bear.



Arriving at North Albert Field Archers.

✱ The weather leading into the weekend of October 24 and 25 was not looking great. There had been storm alerts in the days leading into the weekend of the Trad Tourney at North Albert Field Archers.

By dinner time there were 10 of us set up to camp on site, and we were hoping more would arrive tomorrow. We enjoyed a feast of sous vide backstrap done at home then lightly fried by our master chef Tom, with mashed potatoes, peas and fried mushrooms. As we all sat around we were working out which of us could swap and change bows to cover all the categories for the presentation if no-one else turned up.

It was overcast on Saturday morning, and slowly everyone started to arrive. There were archers from Toowoomba, Pittsworth, the Sunshine Coast and the northern suburbs of Brisbane. For club numbers, the most were from Kurwongbah Lake Traditional Archers, and there were half a dozen of us from Chevallan Archery Park at Gympie.

Both the ranges for this shoot were across the road, with one course on the left, the other on the right. On the Saturday, you do 15 3D targets in a two-arrow round, and then you do a one-arrow round on the other 15 3D

target course, plus novelties of moving target, rolling disc, 30-second speed round and 60-second hunt round.

It was a still slightly overcast, and they are in need of rain so with little greenery around, some of the targets just blended into the background, so you really had to look hard to find them. The targets were placed in what could be best described as hunting shots, there was always a hole to shoot through. There was a jackalope surrounded by shrubs, antelopes at the end of an alley of trees, a baboon's backside to be shot through a V-tree trunk. Some targets were framed by timber work on the way to the target, a bear between two trees, another bear climbing a tree stump, and a wolverine I think it was, in an old fallen down corral, just to name a few.

Both courses have a gamble shot where the closest target is normal points, and the bigger further target is shot for double points. One had two deer, the other a wolf and very large bear.

We headed over and did the hunt round, which had eight targets where you walked along the track shooting into them as you went, and you could walk back and continue shooting until time was called.

By the time we got to the moving

target, the threat of rain turned into a sprinkle and then a bit more. By the time we finished it was fairly tipping down. It did rain a little more overnight.

On Sunday we shot the two-arrow round on the course we'd done as a one-arrow round the previous day.

By the time the presentations started the rains came pelting down making it a little hard to hear. The rain did ease up and we decided to make a run for it. I reckon we left in the nick of time as there followed hail and a great downpour.

✱ Sunday November 15 was the Sunshine Coast Bowmen Traditional Knot Shoot Day. We had some medieval archers from the Ipswich and Brisbane area as well as archers from north of Brisbane through to the Gympie area.

For this shoot there were two 20-target courses. The front course was all 3D targets which included some recent purchases from Apex Hunting. It was a two-arrow round scoring as 10 for A/B and five for rest of the animal. There were various deer, antelopes, a crocodile, an angry bear in a hollowed-out tree trunk, a goose, a grouse, a warthog and two small rodent-type creatures huddled

together at the end of a long cylinder plus a small spotty cat among the targets. The range captain wasn't actually at this shoot as the fish were biting (although we did hear that no fish were harmed in the course of the fishing weekend). He always does a brilliant job of setting up the targets in very realistic situations.

The first course complete, we did two of the novelties. First, the moving pink-winged-monkey, where you took five shots, one from each marker, scoring 10 or five. Then the knock-'em-downs. There was just a small catch: we had to use the club bows. They were 18# and the arrows were overspined! If you hit one of the six big crow or cat targets you scored one point per knockdown, and if you hit the below hanging bird head you scored 20 points. We were hard pressed hitting the big targets, let's not worry about the smaller one.

After lunch was the back course

which was all brand new vinyl dinosaur targets, which were a collaboration of a couple of the club members. Absolutely unique, and an awful lot of fun. Our group's favourite was the "very-thin-osaurus" (we were naming the dinosaurs as we went). These targets were set up in realistic situations and we had to shoot through palm fronds for quite a few of them.

Once this course was complete we did the rolling disc at the side of the clubhouse.

We had a fabulous day and will definitely be marking the calendar for the third weekend in November for their 2021 Trad Day Shoot (to be confirmed).

✱ A trad shoot confirmed for early next year at the time of printing is the Tenterfield Blacked Out Trad Shoot February 20 and 21. I have not yet heard if the Twin City Trad Shoot

planned for March 13 and 14 (Albury NSW) is still being held.

You will find further information and available flyers for the Traditional Shoots on the following websites:

Traditional Archery Australia: www.traditionalarcheryaustralia.org >

Shoot Information

Wallace Woods:

www.wallacetradwoods.com > *Shoot information (proposed 2021 calendar, and will have the link to the shoot flyers as they become available)*

Chevallan Archery Park:

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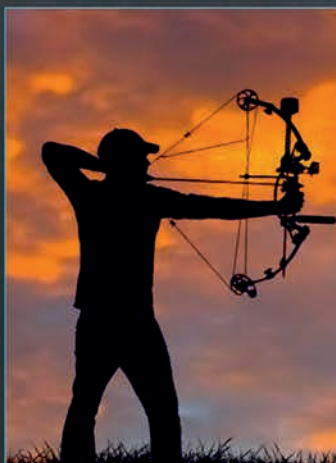
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Foxes in 2020

—a different ballgame



by Graeme Duff

Helen Duff with a mangy fox.

When we look back on 2020, we can't help but think of the pandemic. Virtually no one in the world has been unaffected by the ramifications of COVID-19. But for Helen and me, the year has been a very strange one in terms of the foxes we hunt. In spite of decades of hunting these creatures, 2020 has also shown

us foxes in a very different light.

Helen and I came home from a very successful bass fishing trip and holiday at Cania Dam (Queensland) in March. We had thought that we would be filling our quivers with arrows ready to start hunting as usual, but that was wishful thinking. The lockdown saw both of us changing our daily activities

very smartly. This we both accepted in good part, as has been the case for many people.

It wasn't until late May that we decided to have our first fox hunt for the year. We were anticipating our hunt with a great deal of eagerness. To go a relatively short distance from home now felt as though we were going on a



Graeme Duff with a Record Class fox, 10 8/16pt, taken at 2.5m.

holiday, as ridiculous as this may seem.

That time of the year is, or has been, a very productive time in bowhunting for us. But our first couple of outings made us quickly realise this year would be like no other we had experienced in our 38 years of bowhunting.

To put things in perspective, all I got was a lot of practice in the field blowing

my fox whistle. As good as it was to be away from home, to some extent it felt like a bad dream.

I'm not referring to COVID-19 here either. The problem was, despite knowing all our hunting properties quite well, we just couldn't see a fox — let alone their footprints near dams or scats on livestock tracks.

Eventually on yet another hunt, we got a fox each and saw maybe two others that were severely affected with sarcoptic mange. Now the penny was starting to drop. Before the end of 2019, and up till early March, the horrendous drought had been responsible for above-average temperatures, thus in my opinion causing mange to spread



This vixen measured 9 14/16pt.

throughout the fox population at an incredible rate. Whilst it is well known that in some instances foxes can survive mange, it is my belief that an animal which is infected from head to tail has little chance of survival. For those who haven't seen mange in a fox, it is a terrible sight as their fur disappears, skin thickens and takes on a crusty appearance. The itch caused by this mite infesting the skin of the unfortunate animal's continually scratching results in bleeding and emaciation then in the cooler months hypothermia followed by death.

Many years ago, I contracted mange from a fox on my left forearm. Thankfully it remained localised but the itch for me was far more intense than a sandfly or a kangaroo tick bite. It did take me some time to get rid of it, too. A noteworthy point is that mangy foxes are on the borderline of starvation and their desperation will lead them to kill the property owner's chickens at any time of the day. That also applies to their killing of lambs.

This brings me to another point. In June 2020 we had unloaded our ATV from the trailer and decided to go for a walk and look for a fox in that vicinity on one of our hunting properties. It was Helen's turn to try for a fox. With very little wind blowing, we positioned ourselves. Helen had an arrow nocked and at the ready as I blew my GJD fox whistle gently. About a minute passed and a medium-sized healthy fox answered the distress call. Helen made short work of it at 5m. Having taken the usual photos, she suggested we go back to where the ATV was and I should get my bow. (We usually have one turn each.) I said, "No, you are going alright, so I'll pick another stand for you."

Now what happened is something that absolutely rattled the pair of us. Not 200m from where Helen had taken the first fox of the day, along came

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another medium-sized vixen. At about 50m I said quietly to Helen, "This fox has something in its mouth!" Helen positioned herself as I blew the whistle very quietly, thus bringing the fox to us. About 25m out, it put down what it was carrying in the long grass, then came straight towards the dying rabbit sound. Something spooked the incoming fox and it accelerated away, not presenting an opportunity for a good and humane shot. This disappointed both of us but we decided to go over to the patch of long grass and find what it had been carrying prior to its final approach to us.

Helen found what the fox put down in the grass. It had been carrying the head of a freshly killed lamb that would have been at least two weeks old! I was a meat inspector for 34 years prior to retirement and was used to seeing food animals being processed for human consumption, but the sight of this gnawed-off head was confronting even for me. All I could think of was to buy a good shotgun and get stuck right into the foxes. This is definitely the first time since giving up the use of firearms (about 40 years ago) and taking up bowhunting that I have wanted to do this.

It truly made me that angry. We all know that foxes are full-on killers of native life but seeing something like this is different. I've seen them taking young chuffs, magpies, dunnarts. I've seen chewed-up turtles as well. But this ... even at the time of writing, this incident doesn't sit very well with either of us.



The build-up to the foxes' breeding season was, from what we can determine, definitely different over winter. Property owners told me they'd heard foxes barking at night—which is quite normal—but only on two occasions did a breeding pair of foxes come to the whistle for us. That should have happened at reasonably regular intervals.

An interesting aspect of the season was revealed when skinning out the heads of bowshot foxes. It became clear that the usual territorial clashes between rivals in the build-up to the mating season had been non-existent.

Usually we see evidence of savage clashes resulting in head and facial bruising, broken canine fangs, injured



A mangy vixen, 9 5/16pt, taken at 3m.



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legs et cetera. I can only surmise that they had little or no need to engage in physical altercations due to their greatly reduced numbers. My guess is that the fox population has declined by maybe 70 per cent.

I have no way of knowing if the fox population in other areas far away from here has suffered a similar fate. One thing is for certain: primary producers will be very pleased to see a marked decline in fox numbers as they strive to get their flocks up to desired levels after suffering the worst drought in living memory.

Now, lest this article appear to be advocating only doom and gloom, let me say we've had a few encouraging and rewarding hunts. Strangely, we haven't sighted a pig this year but on a few occasions have seen recent evidence of their presence.

On the positive side, we have had some fairly keen foxes come to the whistle prior to the normal shutdown period of August-September-October. One that tested my reaction time in mid-July was when we went to an area with a reasonably sized hill—a site that rarely disappointed. There was not the usual grass coverage on it so I selected a large yellowbox tree to stand in front of, with the gentle breeze in my face. Some 40m from me, at the base of this hill was a patch of coolatai grass no bigger in size than an average lounge room. With an arrow nocked on my old 42lb Darton Apache barebow, I gave my whistle a blast. Immediately a big healthy dog fox exploded out of this grass and was coming at, I guess, 20km/hr.

I barely had time to tuck my whistle in my camo shirt and come to full draw. He seemed to be on me in a few seconds. It turned out quite well as I took the shot at 2.5m, taking the big dog fox between the shoulders with a Tusker Delta. Death was close to

instantaneous. it measured 10 8/16pt —Record Class.

Helen was not feeling very well that afternoon and thought it better than I take on any foxes that may come around this good fox-producing hill.

I actually shot too quickly at the next fox because it came in very quickly and I suspected it was going to wind me. Consequently that dog learned that not all that sounds like an injured rabbit is actually one at all. He's going to be harder to get next time. They get wise—and they stay wise for up to 12 months after an experience like this. It's even worse with feral cats because a feral cat coming to the whistle can—should the bowhunter miss the shot—remember the experience for its entire life, making it virtually impossible to get.

Not to be fazed by this, I was fortunate enough to put three more foxes on the grass. Two of those were 9 6/16pt and 9 14/16pt vixens. One I got at 2m was an old healthy vixen that did not go Trophy Class. That is the best day I had all year. Maybe that fox which carried the lamb's head made me a bit more determined.

In August we fully expected the foxes would on most occasions be somewhat apprehensive about responding to the whistle in at all. On a very different part of this same property, we selected an area near a very large patch of what I call wire grass. The wind was good but there were two problems which could have made things go badly for Helen. The tree we selected was a big ironbark tree but the wire grass in the foreground was fairly thick and only receded about 20m from us. This can drastically reduce one's reaction time as Helen uses a sighted bow these days. Still, the biggest problem always seems to be ... horses. If they're in a paddock anywhere nearby, the sound of a fox whistle will set them off. They're such inquisitive animals! In this instance

there were five horses and they had seen us before we started trying to lure a fox. This area, like the previously mentioned one, has more often than not held a fox or foxes in some cases.

My tactic was to whistle extremely gently so as not to make these horses run as if that happens it's game over. Having blown the whistle four or five times, luck was about to change regarding these horses. They fairly slowly went further away from us but still were stopping for a stickybeak at us. While keeping a very close eye on the horses, and looking for any slight movement in the wire grass clumps, Helen spotted a small patch of red moving slowly in our direction. "We may be in luck," I thought as I continued intermittently blowing the whistle. This fox came in painfully slowly but Helen was able to get a shot at him at 8m with a Tusker Spirit broadhead. The shot was successful, however the dark red fox ran through the wire grass about 40m, went into a log and expired. Luckily I am the owner of a top quality tomahawk. About half an hour of 'axe work', if you could call it that, we had Helen's fox out ready for a photo.

The effort was well worthwhile, as it was a 10 5/16pt Record Class fox. Around the other side of this hill where we've succeeded on quite a few occasions, it was my turn to take a stand and try my luck. Little time elapsed before a fairly shabby-looking fox was coming to the whistle. It was covered in mange and was understandably in very poor condition. I took it with a Tusker Javelin at 3m. This vixen went 9 5/16pt.

These days we look upon a day's bowhunting as good exercise and a time where we can enjoy life in the great outdoors, where social distancing always exists. But it has to be said, even in the great outdoors, 2020 proved a very different ballgame for our fox-hunting ventures.



Graeme with a 9 6.16pt fox.

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



Helen's Record Class 10 5/16 pointer expired after disappearing into the hollow of a log.



SCOTT HEIMAN

Bushcraft & Survival

BACK TO BASICS



The 5 Cs

These days, you'd be forgiven for thinking you're an unwitting participant in a game show like 'Letters and Numbers' or a perpetual spelling bee. There is so much language to be across, whether it's relevant to your profession or your kids' sports or on social media. Then there are the endless acronyms. They're the bane of our existence. In the military, the issue is so pronounced that military acronym dictionaries are issued, and most publications will have a dedicated glossary of two or three pages to unpack the verbal diarrhoea held within their pages.

So it's probably little surprise that the world of survival training is also unashamedly full of acronyms and cheeky mnemonics (so-called easy ways to remember things). After all, most survival principles owe their

origin to the bygone days of our military forebears. Start studying survival and you'll soon be faced with mental prompts like: PRWF, DRSABCD, SURVIVAL, PLB, BOB, EDC, MRE, PPPPPP or COLDER. It's enough to make you want to buy a vowel.

In previous issues, we've begun to unpack the principles behind PRWF (Please Remember What's First). This time we'll look at another common mnemonic—the 5 Cs. This stands for Cutting, Combustion, Cordage, Container and Cover. The premise is that, if you could only carry five things with you in the scrub, they should target these descriptors. That's because these items are the hardest to reproduce using only natural material, take the largest amount of skill to generate, and control the conditions that most directly affect your body's

core temperature and function. So let's have a look at them.

Cutting

Due to the nature of our recreational activity as bowhunters, most of the time we'll already be carrying something sharp—broadheads, a multi-tool or a skinning knife. So how do these common items stack up in a survival situation?

Broadheads are great for their primary purpose—that is, being propelled from your bow. While they can help out in other ways, you wouldn't want to be relying on them as your only cutter in an emergency.

Multi-tools are useful for many things and will invariably include a blade. They're great as 'that little bit extra', but they don't have the strength or capability you'd need if you found



When it comes to cutting implements, it's horses for courses. Some choices are better than others in a survival situation.

yourself in a survival situation.

As for your skinner—well, it's horses for courses. It's probably great at its primary role but in an emergency situation it might be hard pressed to conduct various tasks. Adopt a survival mindset at point of purchase and you'll stand a better chance of selecting a blade that has the versatility that you'll need.

Look at the blade surfaces and profile, its handle and its spine. Then ask yourself a few questions.

Could I conduct food prep with it? Split timber? Make traps, shelter, spear or a bow with it? Use it as a prying tool or screwdriver? Hammer with it or use it for signalling? Sharpen its edge easily? In this regard, remember that serrations are great to cut seatbelts and rope, but are the hardest to sharpen in the field.

Whilst there is no 'one size fits all,' a large blade can do anything a small blade can—but the reverse is not true. So choose a skinner or camp knife with

a minimum 6in or 7in blade with a full tang and a thick (5mm-plus) spine with a right angle to the flat of the blade. You also need your skinner to be made from high carbon steel, not stainless or some exotic metal. The reason for this is that you can then use the spine of a high carbon blade with your flint and strike a spark (more on this later).

In the end, the best cutter to have in a survival situation is the one you have on you. And that's the point: you need to be carrying one in the first place.

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Off the shelf survival kits like this one from SOL have chemically enhanced fire lighters.



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Flints are small, lightweight and no trouble to carry.

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Combustion

When we say combustion, we're not necessarily talking about common manufactured lighters. These are great and we carry one—always—however a lighter may, or may not, produce a flame in wet environments (after you've accidentally fallen into the river, or once you've been walking in the rain [perhaps in circles] for the past three hours). You need to carry something that's guaranteed to throw a spark, regardless of conditions. Ideally, more than one of your 5C items will give you the ability to make fire.

Just like knives, not all firestarters are created equal. Ferrocerium rods can withstand thousands of strikes, which means you can practice at home. Alternatively, consider chemically enhanced tinder or fire starters. There are plenty of commercial products like Tinder Quik and Mini Inferno that do this job very well. Remember too that some off-the-shelf survival kits already have fire starters and flints included.

Beyond conventional fire-starters, there are many ways to improvise. You should be familiar with at least two. Traditional methods include bow drill or a friction board. To help here, I carry a dried flower spike from a xanthorrhoea in my quiver. That way I've got it close by if I need it and I don't have to go foraging for it. Back

at the club shoots, many of us carry canisters with Mr Sheen in them to help lubricate arrows for 3D targets. A similar container filled with cotton buds and Vaseline will make great fire starters and help seal small wounds from infection. Beyond this, use your nous. Wearing glasses? You can use the lens to help focus the heat of the sun like a magnifying glass onto your tinder. Now ask yourself, how else could you improvise fire making?

Cordage

Have you ever made cordage from nature? It takes time to gather the materials, it takes time to make it, and sometimes you simply don't have that time in a survival situation. Making a crude rope can be as simple as plaiting



If you don't carry cordage, it's a time-consuming task to make it from grass or bark.



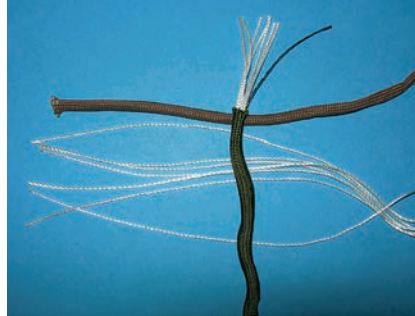
See if your environment has anything you can use as cord.



Carry some cordage on your hat as a plaited hatband.

three pieces of green bark together but making thin useable cordage takes longer. Meanwhile, the clouds could be rolling in and you need to be making a shelter or creating fire. So carry some cordage with you to save yourself valuable time.

In truth, you may already be in the habit of carrying cordage. You just didn't know it. Look down at your boots. Shoelaces would work well in a bow drill. And the leather band on your Akubra hat could be handy. You could also utilise strands from your



The internal strands of para-cord can be easily extracted as a force multiplier.

bowstring as cordage.

While braided nylon or other day-to-day cordage products would probably help to get you out of a messy situation, they have their limitations. If you have 3m to 5m of braided line what are you going to do when you need two bits of rope? You're going to cut off a bit. If you're making a shelter, you might then cut off a few bits more, and so on. Before you know it, you've got five or 10 short bits of cordage and not much else. So what are you going to do the next day when you want fishing line or to lay some traps or snares?

If you're serious about your safety, the best approach is to carry para-cord for 'just in case'. If you have 3m to 5m of this stuff, you can generate 24m to 40m of line. Why? Because para-cord has an outer sleeve, and inside are seven individual strands of twisted line. Once removed, you have eight lengths of 3m to 5m cord, each with a breaking strain of 25kg. Now you can make a shelter, start a fire, set traps, collect water, go fishing, mend your clothes and even stitch up a gash.

The easiest way to carry para-cord is on your arm as a bracelet. Fix another to you in your leg rig, backpack and quiver. Or roll some out and use it as shoelaces, plait a new hat band or braid some into a bow wrist sling band. The more the merrier.

Container

Containers are probably one of the most under-rated bits of kit we

carry. Without a container we cannot boil water. And, without water for extended periods we die. Period.

In the past few decades, many people have opted out of carrying a canteen and cup. Instead, the common daily water carrier is a cheap ROTO-moulded sports bottle or water bladder. The issue is that plastic melts. In a survival situation, your container needs to be able to both collect water and boil it for disinfection, and it should also be able to operate as a cooking pot for plant material and meat if necessary. So it needs to be made from metal, it needs to be thick, and it needs to be strong enough to withstand the shock of being dropped and banged around.

A single-walled (not insulated or double-walled as it might explode) stainless steel water bottle or the traditional 'cups canteen' are much better alternatives to a plastic sports bottle. If you simply must keep your water bladder, consider also carrying a small metal canister, pot or other container that can be used in an emergency. This will provide options, and in a SHTF (Shit Hits The Fan) scenario, options are what you need.

In the event that you're caught short in a survival situation, keep a lookout for a discarded glass bottle or even a



The classic dual container combo was invented in 1910 is still used across the world 110 years later.



This webbing belt survival kit has a metal container that can be used for cooking and boiling water.

plastic one. You can sterilise water by pasteurising it at 76°C for 30 minutes. If your container could melt or crack, sit it near the fire (not directly on it) and slowly move it close enough for the water to warm to the required level.

Cover

Since the dawn of time, our species (and those that came before us) have sought shelter. Indeed protection is the first principle of survival. It reduces our risk of hypothermia, hyperthermia, dehydration, sunburn and windburn.

Protection starts with a well-informed choice of clothing and it's supported by the things that we carry and that can provide cover when we need them.

So think about your belt kit, backpack, quiver and/or leg rigs and their contents. Do they consist of something that is waterproof, lightweight and compact? Could they be multi-purposed to make shelter if needed? If not, wonder why not. And then do something about it.

Think about the garbage bags you carry to fill with meat (in case you bag a deer). They could be improvised to create cover. They could be cut into ponchos by cutting a hole in the bottom for your head and two holes on the sides for your arms. They could be cut into flat sheets that are good for making a rainproof lean-to. They could be worn like a jacket and stuffed with dry leaves, grass et cetera to provide insulation in a cold, desperate situation.

Combine these items with a purpose-designed re-usable survival blanket or bivvie bag and you're on a roll. A high quality survival blanket will offer you versatility and adaptability at a minimal cost. Use it to make a solar still, for rain catchment, as a sleeping bag, ground covering, to trap body warmth and to signal for help (particularly if the survival blanket has an orange side). With so many survival uses, don't head bush without one.



With para-cord and a survival blanket, you can make shelter in less than a minute. The blanket has multiple uses—a shelter, a windbreak, to trap body warmth, to signal for help, to catch rain and more.

The onus

The onus is on you to carry these things with you so you have them when you need them. Make them part of your EDC (sorry, another acronym—this one stands for Every-Day Carry). Have them when you're bushwalking with the kids, on a recon of a new hunting property, fishing or even on holiday because it's Murphy's Law that if something can go wrong it will go wrong.

Reflect now on the fact that if you don't have the right gear or the right mind set next time the SHTF, you'll go into the situation as an 'existor', not a 'survivor' and your chances of getting away with it alive will decrease accordingly. Being prepared can start as simply as adding a flint to your key chain and wearing a para-cord bracelet. So there's really no excuse.

So let's make our own mnemonic ... let's call it QUIVER CARRY. Get your quiver and empty its pockets. If it doesn't have pockets, replace it with one that does. If there's something in your quiver that you'd forgotten existed, get rid of it and replace it with one of the 5 Cs. Can you fit all five in there? Then do the same to your belt kit. Purge it of all the things that are 'nice' to have and replace them with kit that, in a bad situation, will help you be a survivor.



Sports chaplaincy

My name is Shep Inglis, and I'm proud to be a member of Lakeside Bowmen. Three years ago, I had the opportunity to become an accredited and qualified Chaplain within the SCA (Sports Chaplaincy Australia) and the first Chaplain within the Australian Bowhunters Association.

I moved to Australia in 2007 from Ontario, Canada. My lovely Aussie wife had grown homesick and struggled to live through any more of the Canadian winters I had grown up in. (All these years on in my amazing Australian life, I can't say I particularly miss the winters myself.)

Sustainable hunting had long been part of my life, as I grew up in rural Canada in vineyard and dairy country. There were moose, bear and more whitetail deer to chase than you could shake a stick at.

I had no idea that Australia had deer populations and varied species to hunt. Unaware of not only the different species here that could be hunted but also the fellowship and friendship that was readily available within the ABA, I was shooting with Archery Australia. One day a fellow archer took exception to my Hoyt GamesMaster II in real tree camouflage. He advised me that I was fine to be a member within that organisation, but might find more enjoyment and would be a better fit for ABA. I'd be lying if I didn't say my feelings were hurt at the time, but it wasn't long before I came to realise the blessing in the message. I found amazing, salt-of-the-earth, like-minded people to enjoy doing the sport with. I have also come to grow and learn so much from the Field Instructor courses and the Bowhunters Proficiency, club shoots, that becoming the club Chaplain seemed like the least I could do to

thank these archers for being amazing individuals in my own life and to give back to the sport in Australia and local community and club level.

Of course, some people might think there's a bit of 'fire and brimstone' about to come forth because I am a Chaplain. Good news! My role as a Chaplain is not to chase other archers through the bush with a bow and Bible in hand.

I am a member of the Sports Chaplaincy Australia and follow the values and code of conduct of the SCA, which is the belief that every Australian athlete is worth investing in completely. The SCA states that "for over 30 years, Sports Chaplaincy Australia has been caring for athletes at every level—both on and off the field by providing pastoral care to invest into the complete athlete and their entire sporting community."

In these recent COVID-19 uncertain times, it has been an honour to have the opportunity to be a part of my fellow archers' lives and to do my bit to support and care for their well-being, from a cuppa to an open ear. It's a chance to find those blessings that so easily can escape us at these times.

I want to encourage you to stay strong within yourself and to celebrate the importance and significance you hold as an individual, an archer and proud member of the ABA and your own club. We are going through a rather bizarre and crazy time. but please take comfort in knowing that you are not alone. We are all in this together and we will all come through this together, by being strong not only for ourselves, but also for our other club members.

If you haven't seen or heard from another member and are concerned



for them, reach out with a friendly greeting, a call or an invitation to shoot a round (obviously in accordance with your club's COVID-safe plan). Iron sharpens iron and in these times, I implore you to be your brothers' and sisters' keepers.

I personally cannot wait and count down the sleeps to get back to ABA comps and tournaments when they're safe and open for all to attend. I hope to meet many of you there.

Lastly, if you have a desire in your heart to take 'the call'; Sports Chaplaincy Australia have a vision to see more than 3000 more Chaplains situated in sports clubs around Australia. I do know that three other ABA clubs have indicated an interest in having a Chaplain become part of their club. If this is the case, please feel free to express an interest for a Chaplain and/or to become one by going through www.sportschaplaincy.com.au

Be good, stay strong, stay healthy!

Shep Inglis

ROY ROSE

Meanderings

Recurve bow set-up for newcomers and recreational archers



The label of 'recreational archer' is often bestowed upon weekend participants in club activities. They enjoy the camaraderie, they shoot their arrows and often take on office but it is falsely assumed that they have only minimal concern about their accuracy level and little desire to become competitive.

The truth is that every person who draws a bow, whether it be recurve, compound or longbow, shoots with the same objective. A world champion, an Olympic medallist, a club stalwart, a come-and-try beginner or just a kid with a bamboo stick and a piece of string have one ambition in common—to hit what they are aiming at.

Often the recreational archer must prioritise work and family commitments. Practice time becomes extremely limited and as a result their weekend archery experiences become the norm and ambitions to become competitive are set aside. However, even under such limited circumstances, the natural desire to find some accuracy remains ingrained in our mind. Unfortunately, I have found that far too often the recreational shooter has scant knowledge, not only of correct form and execution, but also of the set-up and tuning of a recurve bow.

I'm sure many clubs have some coaching and set-up expertise but there are still so many people who shoot each weekend with little knowledge of their

equipment and this clearly impacts upon their chances of attaining any consistent accuracy. So in this column I will cover the subject of how to set up your recurve target bow and next time will explain how to tune that bow.

Logically, the first step is selecting the correct bow. I'm not talking about specific manufacturers' models. There is a goodly cross-section of recurve bows at various price points which will serve you well if set up correctly. The choice factor relates to bow length. Recurve risers and attached limbs come in three lengths for target aspirants—66in, 68in and 70in, and yes it's important you shoot the right one. This is determined by your draw length, the arrow you are shooting at full draw with the clicker resting on the point ready for the execution phase.

If your draw length is less than 27in, which is the majority of female recurvers and a smaller percentage of less-tall male archers, then you should be shooting a 66in bow. If your draw length is between 27in and 29in, which is the vast majority of male recurvers, and some taller female shooters, then a 68in model should be your option. For the archer (usually a tall individual) whose draw length is in excess of 29in, then the bow for you is 70in.

The obvious question is: why is a specific limb length of such relevance? Let's suppose you are an archer with a 30in draw length and you mistakenly

opt for a 66in bow. A trio of concerns immediately arise. Firstly, drawing back a 66in bow 30in will overtax the limb design and take the bow past its optimum recurve arc. Perhaps even more importantly, at full draw the string angle on the archer's fingers will be so acute as to not only be uncomfortable but also to make a quality, functional release highly unlikely. At the other extreme where an archer with a length of say 26in draws back a 70in model, clearly the curve back of the limbs will not reach its designated specifications either in poundage or optimal functioning, despite a favourable string angle at anchor.

A word of warning about bow length choice: If this is your very first bow, be aware that as you progress from the beginner stage to becoming more proficient, your draw length will lengthen. This is because your form will become better aligned and as much as an inch or so can result. So take that into account when choosing a limb length first up.

So now we have the right bow, clearly we need to add a string. Of course, the string length will vary according to the bow length you intend to shoot. When the bow is strung, the length from the inside of the grip out horizontally at right angles to the string is termed the brace height. For a 66in bow this brace height needs to be between 8in and 8 1/2in. For a 68in bow it should be from

8 1/2in to 9in and for a 70in bow, 9in to 9 1/2in. Olympic level archers have the feel and expertise to settle on a very precise brace height where the bow shoots best, but if your brace height is within the margins I've outlined then this is a desired starting option.

It is now time for our next crucial adjustment—the tiller situation. I have elaborated before about the necessity for addressing tiller, but I will reiterate its important function. The tiller is the measurement from where the limbs lock into the riser out at 180° to the string so we have a top and bottom limb measurement. Traditionally on a compound bow, because the archer has a one-point release from a string loop, the tiller measurements are identical, however with a recurve we have one finger above the arrow and two below so we need to change the tiller on the bottom limb to increase poundage marginally to allow both limbs to arrive at anchor in harmony. So the bottom limb tiller distance will be slightly less than the top, approximately 3/8in for a 66in bow and proportionally a little more for 68in and 70in bows. Bow poundage is also a factor, naturally, but this adjustment initially to the above guidelines will be quite adequate. (Highly experienced competitive recurvers will settle on a specific tiller where they feel the bow aims and shoots most effectively.)

From here, we move on to the addition of an arrow rest, nocking points, cushion plunger, sight, stabilisers and clicker.

First up, the easiest addition: the arrow rest. It's easy because the riser has a specific hole through which our cushion plunger will go, and the stick-on rest also has a hole which allows rest and plunger to align.

The next addition is the cushion plunger, and the obvious questions here are firstly, how far should it protrude on the arrow side and what tension should be set as regards the

internal spring? Let's look at the tension situation first. We want the cushion plunger (obviously) to cushion the path of the arrow on release. So if we have the tension stiff, we defeat the purpose of the cushioning effect. Conversely, if we have the tension so soft that the arrow pushes the plunger right in to the riser, we may as well not have a cushion plunger at all. What we need is a medium tension for the plunger to do its job. Now setting up a medium tension is not difficult, but in real terms, it's still a guess. The perfect medium tension for our cushion plunger will be a major step later on when we tune our bow, but an approximate setting at this stage is all that's needed. So how far should it protrude above the arm of our arrow rest? Well, if we put an arrow on the string and line up the string with the centre of the top and bottom limbs, down the centre of that arrow, we will have what would seem a superb alignment. But our cushion plunger is going to be pushed in as the arrow rides over it so to compensate, we need to actually have around three quarters of our arrow off to the left of the string (for a right-handed archer). So when the release is made the arrow will ride into the plunger, bringing the alignment back to the arrow's centre.

A couple of pointers for your arrow rest: It's a good idea to have the angle of the arm just slightly uphill to ensure the arrow sits against the plunger and can't ride off the rest during the draw. Also be sure the centre of your arrow is in line with the centre of the plunger. And finally, if the arm is protruding out beyond the arrow, which can often occur with thin carbon shafts, snip off that extra to prevent contact as the arrow leaves the bow.

Now to a nocking point on the string and its positioning. As we noted with our tiller adjustment, allowance must be made for the three-finger hold we have on the string. Consequently our nocking point must be elevated

above square to compensate for the fact we have one finger above but two below the nock. Now there will be a very marginal difference depending on your particular limb length, but a setting around 1/4in-plus is a ballpark assessment. The exact positioning of this approximation is the second task which will be addressed during the tuning phase, along with the plunger tension. Your riser will have the appropriate holes to attach your sight extension and sight bar, making sure that bar is parallel to the riser, so no windage dramas can eventuate as the sight moves up and down.

Stabilisation on a recurve target bow, unlike the compound situation, has become very standard. It utilises a V-bar bracket and a long front rod with dual shorter rods pointing back, usually at an angle of 45° or less. The general lengths employed are a front rod 3in above arrow length and the V-bar rods about half-arrow length. International competitors do have personal idiosyncrasies as to stabiliser lengths, but overall it is very standard. Finally, the clicker too has a specific set of riser holes for attachment and can be angled to accommodate the arrow length requirement of the archer. All leading archers shoot a clicker, as it allows exact poundage on release and also acts as a trigger for the archer to shoot.

It is imperative after setting up your bow with such care and precision that equal care is brought to bear on your arrow selection and preparation. No bow, no matter how well set up, can produce results unless a correctly spined arrow, with a proper front-of-centre arrow point weight, is matched to the poundage you utilise. All arrow manufacturers provide spine charts for specific arrow choices compatible with poundage and a point which allows a front-of-centre balance of around 15 per cent will then guarantee that the fine tuning of your bow is successful.

Revitalised club hosts final Branch F shoot for year

On the weekend of December 5 and 6, the Snowy Mountains Bowmen held their first Branch shoot in almost 10 years. Seven years ago, the club was in danger of closing down and they have put in a huge effort to rebuild their club and are now enjoying a renewed vitality with many new members. After many weekends of planning and preparations the club was finally ready to host their fellow archers at the final Branch F shoot for 2020.

More than 60 shooters travelled from all over New South Wales and Victoria to attend the highly anticipated shoot and welcome Snowy Mountains Bowmen back to the Branch circuit. Many archers who attended had never before shot at their high country range.

Saturday saw perfect archery

weather with everyone enjoying the courses that had been set. A variety of shot opportunities ranged from shooting through tight trees, shooting over a dam wall and long open shots. At the completion of the day's shooting everyone was looking forward to day two but Mother Nature had other ideas and the weather turned. Rain and gale force wind gusts saw many campers up throughout the night trying to secure their camps. Sunday dawned to a campground looking a little worse for wear with many damaged sites and the wind still not letting up. A decision was made to cancel day two due to safety concerns.

Presentations were held based on Saturday's results and the much anticipated raffle was drawn. A few club members had brainstormed and

reached out to many hunting and archery businesses and suppliers who generously donated to their cause, resulting in a quality raffle table. Snowy Mountains Bowmen would like to thank the following businesses for their support: Charles Davis Photography, MJ Grey Photography, Fury Lures, Extract Broadheads, Outback Broadheads, KIFURA Australia, JS Custom Strings, Aussie Targets, KINGS 4WD, Dog & Gun Coffee, High Calibre Cleaning Supplies, Tobas Archery, R&N Blades, WFNO Queanbeyan, TUSX Camo, Norseman Traditional Bows, Little AX, Primal Hunting and Outdoors, Native Hunting Gear, L Lynch Tasmania, Custom Knives and Pathfinder Outdoors.

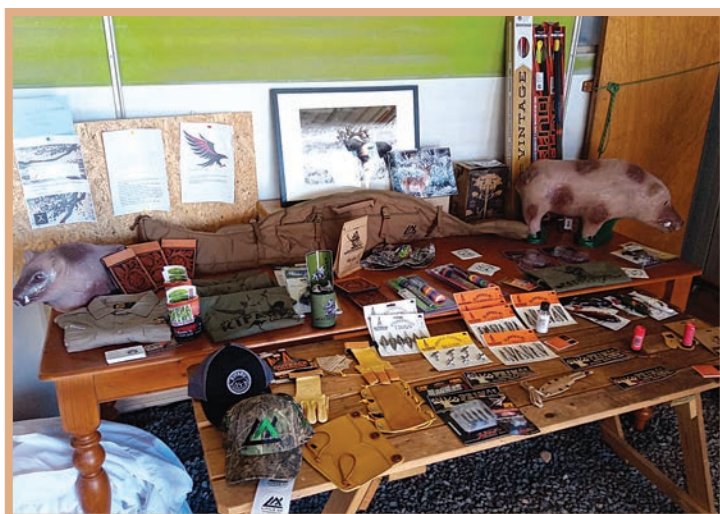
*Louise Whitley and
Luke van der Platt*



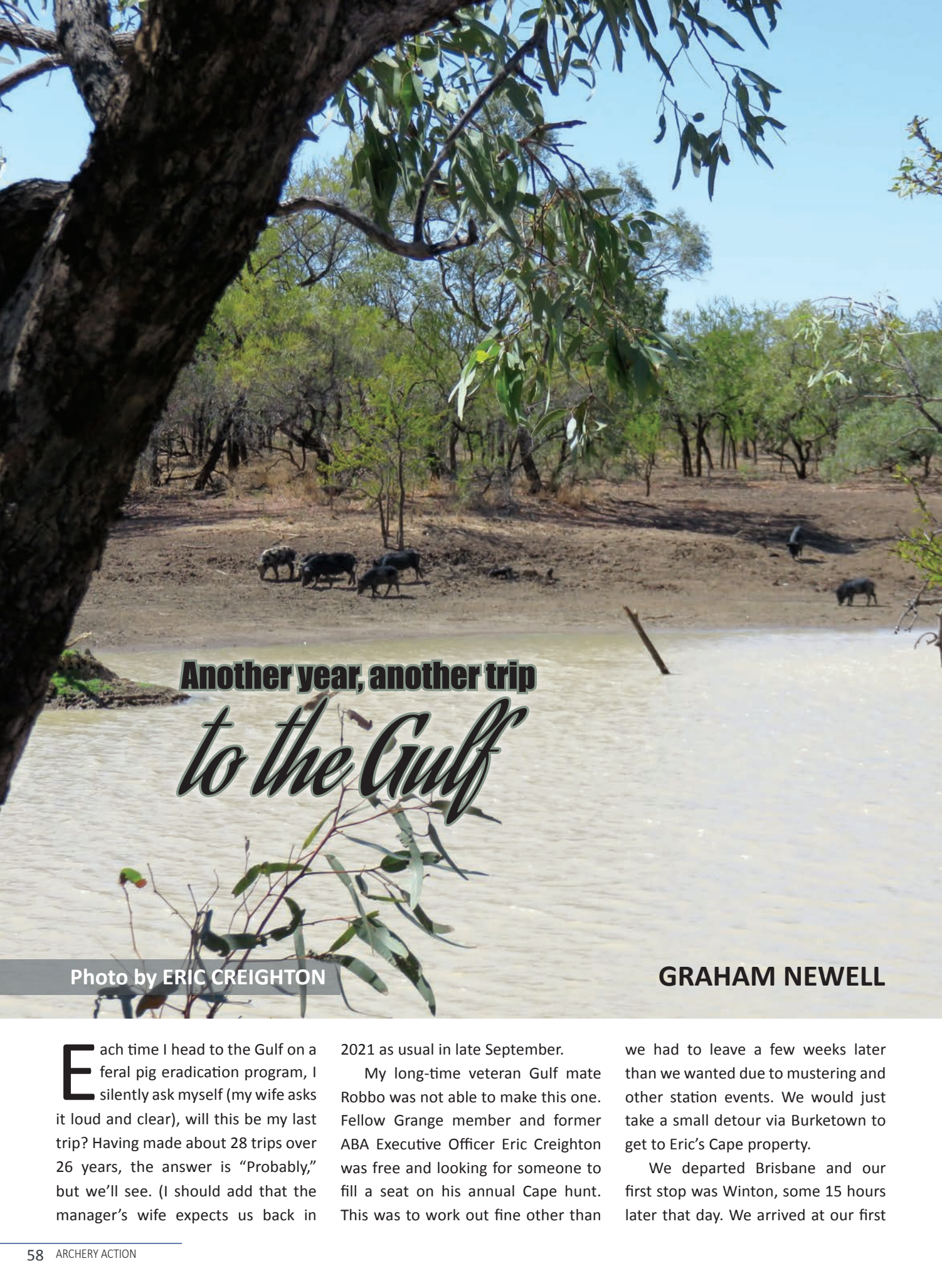


PHOTOS BY
Louise Whitley

Archers had a fantastic time on the first—and only—day of the shoot.



The raffle table ... too much for just one table.



Another year, another trip *to the Gulf*

Photo by ERIC CREIGHTON

GRAHAM NEWELL

Each time I head to the Gulf on a feral pig eradication program, I silently ask myself (my wife asks it loud and clear), will this be my last trip? Having made about 28 trips over 26 years, the answer is “Probably,” but we’ll see. (I should add that the manager’s wife expects us back in

2021 as usual in late September.

My long-time veteran Gulf mate Robbo was not able to make this one. Fellow Grange member and former ABA Executive Officer Eric Creighton was free and looking for someone to fill a seat on his annual Cape hunt. This was to work out fine other than

we had to leave a few weeks later than we wanted due to mustering and other station events. We would just take a small detour via Burketown to get to Eric’s Cape property.

We departed Brisbane and our first stop was Winton, some 15 hours later that day. We arrived at our first

destination after midday the next day.

Our accommodation was to be the air-conditioned station schoolhouse but due to COVID-19 we had to arrange our own cooking. We had two Engels—we used one for the frozen meals and the other for cold drinks (of course). With temperatures set to be up to 38 degrees, the comfort of air conditioning would be appreciated. We soon had the schoolhouse set up like a second home and were ready to go arrow a hog or three.

There is always the threat we will not get the okay next year, so to regularly be in the manager's mind I send up magazines (for staff) and education material for the station children about four times a year. This time Eric was able to build a replacement string for the boy's recurve bow and I supplied 15 or so arrows of a mixed bag (it got a very nice thank you from Mum, Dad and their son, the 'hunter').

We made the long, dusty trip in Eric's ever reliable Nissan Navara dualcab. We carried 130 litres in the tank plus 80 litres of fuel in jerry cans on board. With some 265,000km-plus on the clock, Eric was not afraid to take the lady off-road on several occasions; it did the job very nicely thank you.

Our two biggest expenses were fuel for the Nissan and fuel for ourselves (the evening refreshments) and the station personnel (we called it rent). One such extra expense was a bottle of quality scotch for the bore-runner to bribe him to not dog or shoot any hogs for two weeks prior to our arrival. He was as good as his word, in fact he was very helpful each day on our return from the waterholes, checking our hit rates.

Day one was to be Eric's first look at this new property and my discovery of how dry the place was. There was good grass growth and the cattle looked healthy but rainfall had been



Graham's first kill of the trip.

only 65 per cent of what they usually get annually. Apparently the rain had fallen at a good time and spaced out, resulting in quality grass coverage. The station had sent the young cattle south to fattening stations in the Channel Country and also sold several thousand stock due to the very high prices. This meant not as many mouths to feed in the paddocks.

After having difficulty finding the usual track into a special lagoon (the roads change after almost every wet season), we eventually made it.

Eric was first up and as we parted to walk each side of the 30-metre-wide channel I spotted a boar asleep in his wallow not 50m ahead of Eric. Eric closed the distance to about 20m but had to slip the arrow between some branches. His shot was a good lung hit. As I'd seen two other boars up the channel about 100m, I decided to walk up to see if I could get a shot, thinking Eric's hog was a goner. I was about opposite Eric when out of the water came the fatally wounded boar. It looked like he was going to run past me but he turned, looked at me

and decided I was the one who had inflicted the damage on his lungs! He charged straight at me from 25m. I only had time to bring my Mathews bow back and smack the boar hard on the side of his head, deflecting his charging path somewhat. He stopped some 3m away, starting to stagger, then fell down with fast emptying lungs. He was a good healthy young



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One of Eric's boars.

boar but only had small hooks. I now had a bow covered in wet, smelly wallow mud. My bow quiver had gone flying on impact but luckily it seemed that no damage had been done

After an uneventful few detours, the next stop was back at a creek not 5km from the homestead, a steep-sided creek with only a pool of water about 10m wide and some 75m long, shallow and muddy ... just as a boar likes it on a hot day. We saw him as we peered over the lip of the bank. He was asleep, with his head facing into the wind. I stalked to be 18m above him on the top of the bank.

The shot was good—into both lungs—and I thought I had a quick kill, but the angry boar spun around several times in the water then went looking for the responsible hunter with the sharp sticks. When he saw me, I had already nocked a second arrow, and as he hit the lip of the creek bank just 3m in front of me, I released the second arrow into his exposed brisket. The boar stopped instantly, rolled his eyes (well, maybe not) then tumbled back down the bank ... and it was game over. I decided to take the hooks but the trend in boars seemed to be that the hooks were not very



Another one for Graham.

big. I got Eric to take a photo or two anyway. Then it was time to make sure that the car refrigerator was really working okay.

Our evening meal and a few ales was a nice way to finish our hunt, then we hit our camp stretchers in an air-conditioned room ... not a bad first day.

Day two was to prove the start of a few issues that hunters are not too keen to encounter. It was starting to get windy and gusting from most points of the compass.

Our trip to the next dam and turkey's nest was also interesting as the managers had not only changed the roads/tracks (re-graded after the wet) but also the watering points' names—yes, we thought that a tad strange also.

We soon found the first two waterholes devoid of hogs but at the third waterhole Eric was onto a sleeping boar. Again, I had spotted the hog on his side of the waterhole as he could not see the boar for scrub and trees. The UHF radios are very handy to direct the other hunter to the target! Eric got to within about 24m. I watched from across the water, very interesting actually, as Eric manoeuvred himself into position. He had to get his arrow through a very



Graham's pig, covered in wallow mud.

narrow gap, which he did successfully, but decided to use a second arrow to make certain the boar did not go far. Eric said later he should have taken the hooks, instead of only photos.

On our way back to camp, we called at another creek only to have the now strong gusty wind swirl enough to send a nice wallowing, half-asleep ginger boar and a small family group running.

The days were now becoming

a bit of a blur as we tried to get on top of the less-than-friendly weather conditions.

On our third day we tried to get to watering spots that would allow for the now strong north-easterly winds so we headed south-west and turned to head into the wind.

Our next stop was again at a borough (earth removed to build the above-ground turkey's nests). This still had water in it. On the approach Eric

took the left I the right. Immediately we saw a boar plus a couple of juvenile hogs from a family group about to depart their wallows and go into a tree-line surrounded by the cursed rubber-vine, which is (almost) impossible to get an arrow through into a hog. In my attempt to do so I only managed to spook them into a fast run over an earth bank. Well, all but two small boars which headed to have another tub in the turkey's nest



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some 80m ahead of me. That was a mistake, as I closed on one to a nice 15m and put a Gold Tip through the back of both lungs. He ran some 25m then toppled over dead.

Earlier in this hunt I'd said to Eric to keep a keen eye on the open ground alongside the water but there was one time Eric was so busy watching my unsuccessful stalk that he missed the big boar off to his left who appeared to also be watching my efforts, yes, the boar bolted very smartly. The wind had made our decision for us and it was time to see if the refrigerator was working correctly (again).

The next three (or was it four?) days had the boars, sows, family groups and wild dogs tucked away from the persistent winds, now stronger than ever. Even the birds curtailed their activity. We know that most game are very nervous in windy conditions as they cannot hear the

threats around them, not only man but wild dogs (of which we saw a few) and eagles. We did the kilometres but saw nothing for this period.

On our last day we decided to sit on a long lagoon. At least one magnificent crocodile was at home in this stretch of water, but we knew pigs had been in residence a few days earlier. Eric chose the middle section and I took the southern end where it was almost dry but had several active wallows away from those ever-hungry and ruthless crocodiles.

Some two-plus hours later, I was ready to call it a day, Tired and thirsty (with all my water consumed), I stood to stretch (bum numb by now) and then in a timely and orderly manner in came a family group, some 12 hogs in total, the big boss a leader sow, several smaller sows and two juvenile boars plus suckers. I had already knocked a Gold Tip shaft, ranged to their three most likely wallow spots

(15m to 25m) so it was game on. The first arrowed was the wallowing big sow, up she got and down she went with a bit of commotion which got the rest of the tribe excited. The second was a confused boar that walked towards my spot at 10m. Soon he was also on his way to the RIP spot for hogs. It was not a bad way to finish the waiting time after our previous three or four days' frustrations.

On our way home we called at a spot that 'should' have a few boars in or on the water. It was still quite windy. I had a brief talk on the UHF to Eric and it looked like another lost cause.

Not two minutes after that call, I saw an ear flicker about 30m ahead. A sleeping boar, I realised. I slowly moved to 25m but the boar was facing me. I thought my only hope was a shot to the left of the brisket, so that was duly completed. The boar leapt out of his slumber, ran parallel



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Eric took a wild dog on the trip.

to my position some 15m away then saw me. But after earlier incidents I already had a second arrow nocked. As he faced me, I released the fatal shot. The boar took three steps, looked to his left then toppled over, thankfully. He too was a healthy boar but had a small set of hooks—par for the course for that hunting trip.

This was our last hunting day in the Gulf, but we weren't sad because a new adventure awaited—we were now off to Eric's property about another 560km north-east in the Cape. I was quite excited as this was to be my first time in a very different type of hunters' terrain.

We started to repack our gear and loaded up the Nissan. Mind you, the vehicle had a tad less weight as we left several cartons and bottles of the refreshments with the manager and staff not to mention what we had consumed. With 90 per cent of the packing done, we relaxed with a beer and would get an early start on the next day, a Monday. This was to be our last night for eight or 10 days in air-conditioning comfort.

On these last few trips, one

begins to realise that bowhunting is not just about the thrill of the stalk, hunt and kill but a hell of a lot about mates, time in the bush, glorious sunsets, campfire chats, the animals that live with us on this land and the great country we are so fortunate to have to hunt in. On this trip, I took particular note of the native and not-so-local bird and animal life, heaps of kangaroos (reds and greys), wallabies and others but did not see a single snake. The birdlife was everywhere, and (using my Michael Morcombe Field Guide Bird Book) I saw broilgas, plains turkeys (bustards), red-tail black cockatoos, sulphur-crested cockatoos, galahs, pelicans, wedgetail eagles, blue kookaburras (not able to laugh), egrets, cormorants, emus, whistling kites, whistling ducks, water fowl, cuckoos, pale-headed rosellas, apostlebirds (these are so, so annoying), black-winged stilts, butcher birds, numerous parrots (too many to name), plovers, pigeons of many varieties, corellas, sea eagles, crows (of course), curlews, sarus cranes and herons.

It was time to move on. As we left

the homestead (we were not able to thank the station managers as they were away at another station), we knew this next leg would be a challenge as mustering was still in progress, however I was looking forward to the coming session on the Cape boars. We could hardly wait to experience *real* bulldust, flies and the 40-degree-plus temperatures. But that's another story in itself.

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The best laid plans ...

What do you do when COVID scuttles your schedule of events? You simply come up with a new plan, of course!

The final Northern New South Wales Branch event on the 2020 calendar was supposed to be the Shooter of the Year Award, a special archery gong for which members qualify during the year by competing in a set criteria of events within the Branch.

Because of the greatly reduced number of events held due to COVID restrictions, the Shooter of the Year concept had to be abandoned and a normal ABA two-day event was held in its place at Namoi Valley Archers on December 5 and 6. The shoot was comprised of a three-arrow round followed by a one-arrow round on Saturday, and a two-arrow round on Sunday.

Namoi Valley Archers went the extra mile, setting up a six-target novelty deer round for those who wanted to give it a go on Saturday afternoon. Many thanks to all involved for their efforts in setting this up and supervising the round.

Recent rain at Gunnedah had the ranges looking spectacular, and those who attended enjoyed the pre-Christmas get together. Special mention goes to Lisa Pawley, who nabbed herself her very first Robin Hood over the weekend.



Lisa with her Robin Hood.

NNSW Branch IFAA Titles



Brian Taylor.



Above: Dave Parker and Karl Peck stop for a rest. before getting back to business (right).



Members from five clubs within Northern NSW Branch competed at the IFAA Branch Titles hosted by Macleay Valley Archers of Kempsey on November 7 and 8.

Numbers for the Branch Titles were less than usually would be expected, but this was only the second

away shoot held after the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, and members remained understandably cautious regarding travel to other areas.

As usual, the range captains had set some very challenging courses, with great use of the slope of the land.

IFAA is always a challenge to the

stamina and ability of archers to maintain their form and consistency. It was great to see that those who attended were up to the challenge, with many respectable scores shot over the course of the weekend.

Peter Stubbs

NNSW Branch Controller



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Hills, boulders and fun at Branch D's Club Challenge



The view at the back of Range 2 overlooking the wine country of Severnlea. Naturally, you have to climb a pretty decent hill to get there.

There's just something about the archery course in Stanthorpe that keeps people coming back. Maybe it's the granite boulders strewn through the bushland. Maybe it's the views. Maybe it's the hills. (No, it's probably not the hills, although you don't usually get views without having to climb hills.)

In mid-November, the Granite Belt Bowmen hosted the Branch D Club Challenge. Of the 10 clubs within the Branch, eight were represented for this most auspicious occasion. The Club Challenge, which has been going since 1986, is always held near the end of the year and is generally hotly contested, although not all small clubs can field a full team. The way the Challenge works is that all individuals compete in the three-arrow round and the one-arrow round on the Saturday. On the Sunday, the previous day's highest scorers are still competing in their divisions for their personal placings, but their totals in the two-arrow round also go towards their all-important club score. Each club team can have two sighted shooters and two barebow shooters. They can shoot longbow, recurve or compound and can be cub, junior or adult. The club to beat for years and years has been the Renegade Bowmen, of Ipswich. And so it was again for 2020. The Darling Downs Field Archers drew very close to the winner's podium but missed out by 46 points—just a target or two's difference! So Renegades were crowned again for the 12th consecutive time—or at least, they'll have their name engraved on the perpetual trophy.

It was a great weekend. As the Branch's second shoot back after the COVID lockdown, all the safety procedures went like clockwork.



Renegade winners.



Granite Belt country. Lots of granite, bushland and altitude.



Kev Dowd sitting down on the job. The trad peg is notorious for inspiring creative shooting stances.



Brad Stephan shooting the steep downhill.



The downhill Group 1. You don't see this kind of target very often (thank goodness).

Outside In the zone

IFAA

by Nils Spruitt



I was never a big fan of the International Field Archery Association's format of competition archery. I will point out that I am not referring to indoor archery, which also falls under IFAA jurisdiction. I am only citing the IFAA shoots conducted on an outdoor range, including the field, hunter and animal formats.

Just about all of my field archery to date has been conducted on 20-target ABA courses and I was content with that. Well, in most cases at least. Naturally I would prefer my scores to be somewhat higher and my average a tad greater, but I can't have it all my own way. Heaven knows why. Over the years I have shot IFAA a handful of times just for a laugh, but never in competition. I am now regretting that.

Why I never took IFAA seriously has a lot to do with the reason I took up field archery in the first place and secondly, the crowd I fell in with at the time did have some influence over my mindset. None of the group I regularly hung with shot IFAA. They despised it for reasons based purely upon the fact most were hunters and the IFAA target distances were not practical for hunting (or so they said). As a hunter myself and a newbie field archer, I guess I was easily persuaded to agree with this sentiment, but in reality it is not correct.

When I first took up field archery it was primarily as a means of obtaining

regular practice for hunting purposes. I held no ambitions of winning competitions or even shooting at a competitive level. At the time I was shooting a compound with sights and all the trimmings. My sights were set for a maximum of 40m, which suited both ABA shooting and hunting. I had no desire to shoot any further and I had been told some of the targets on an IFAA shoot were out to 60yd with one set at 80yd. For those who don't know, ABA distances for their respective groupings are set in metres while IFAA is conducted in yards.

My code of ethics when it came to hunting would never permit me to attempt such a long shot no matter how big the trophy. With this in mind, I quickly joined in with the other hunter/archers in the club and completely vetoed the concept of shooting IFAA. I also held this ill-conceived concept that IFAA was for

the dedicated competition archers whereas ABA was for the hunters. This illogical thinking on my part was further enhanced by the IFAA target faces. IFAA field and hunter target faces were simple concentric circles whereas ABA targets all depicted some of the animals I loved to hunt. How naïve and wrong can a guy get? It was much later before I learned that an animal round with animal target faces is also shot as an integral part of any major IFAA competition.

At our club an IFAA shoot was conducted once a month but it was not all that popular and only a handful of the shooters ever participated. The rest of us just shot ABA as per usual. I do recall on occasion some of the ABA group (me included) were borderline rude in our comments to the IFAA shooters. I am now deeply ashamed of that. Speaking for myself, I never really meant any harm, but I can see now how our selfish and childish behaviour may have upset some. For that I sincerely apologise to all and sundry.

As a regular at the club, it didn't really take all that long before I started to take my shooting seriously. I am by nature a competitive person so it goes without saying that I started to eye off the annual trophies awarded by the club and the medals at various branch shoots. I did okay too, but I was starting to doubt the merits of shooting

compound bows. I just didn't like them and in a very short space of time I sold the compound and embarked upon the traditional methods of archery (albeit without wooden arrows). This meant I was still confined to the red pegs, but that did not phase me and to this day I still shoot with the same set-up—traditional bow with carbon shafted arrows.

I can't really remember when I had my first go at IFAA, but I do know I shot it with a recurve bow. If I am honest, I had my eye on the Archer of the Year trophy at our club. It wasn't awarded to the best archer in the club. This award was more about the most improved who shot all the various disciplines. With this in mind, I decided to have a crack at IFAA.

For those who don't know, an IFAA field and hunter course set-up is 14 targets and you shoot four arrows at each. The animal round is slightly different. The maximum you can score with four arrows on each target is 20 points (five points per arrow if they hit centre), which gives you a total maximum of 280 and you shoot it twice. That is a lot of arrows and I do remember being somewhat tired and just a little sore by the end of my first experience with IFAA. I would also submit that my score suffered as a consequence of this fatigue as well as a few other factors.

Overall however, I enjoyed it. For starters most of the target butts were set at distances similar to an ABA round. Yes there were some really long shots which I did struggle with. Yes you do shoot one arrow at 80yd and no I didn't score on it. I never even reached the butt. I did enjoy the walk-up targets where you shot one arrow at the maximum distance then walked up closer for your second and so forth until you had shot all four arrows. The fan-style shoot was pretty good too.

When the shoot was finished I

remember being the brunt of a few comments from my ABA comrades, which didn't sit real well with me. I did try to explain to them that only four of the 14 targets were situated at a greater distance than a Group 5 on an ABA range, but to no avail. I also made light of these long shots, stating it was actually fun (and it was) trying to hit a target at 60yd to 80yd away—especially with a traditional bow—but it all fell on deaf ears. Subsequently, it was a long time before I shot IFAA again despite the fact that I did enjoy the initial experience. Peer group pressure is a very real thing to anyone struggling with the need to feel like they belong.

I have no real concept of how much time passed before I decided to man up and have another crack at IFAA. Perhaps it was 18 months, maybe even been longer, but by then I was a regular on the scene and actually sat on the committee running the club. My desire to be accepted had vanished long ago and I no longer felt any need to prove myself to anyone.

On the day I had my second attempt at IFAA there were only five shooters taking part including me. There was one other traditional archer and three compound freestylers who took it all very seriously. Don't get me wrong: I have nothing against anyone striving to do their best. I do it myself to a point, but mixing trad shooters with freestyle compound shooters does not make for a good day, I quickly learned. For starters, I do not have a pre-shot routine. I don't need to make an exaggerated point about getting into my correct shooting position. I don't need to check every arrow from tip to nock prior to shooting it. I simply can't hold my 50lb longbow at full draw for seemingly hours on end before releasing and I most certainly don't hold my position for two minutes 35 seconds after taking each shot. If this happens for four arrows per target, 14

targets in the round multiplied by three shooters, it makes for a very long, mundane and boring day. So much so, I never went out for the second round. This experience just harkened me back to my belief that IFAA was for dedicated target archers and not for us part timers.

It was a long time before I got over this episode and while I did shoot a round or two of IFAA again, it was only after I persuaded a couple of my regular shooting buddies to try it for themselves—and I never again allowed myself to be placed with any compound freestyle shooters. I am not trying to put such archers down or sound in any way critical of them. They certainly have their place in field archery and I have mine. The problem is that we are just not compatible.

Fast forward to the present. Due to bushfires and COVID-19, I have had a long break from archery and a lot of time to think. I can't really explain why, but my opinion on the entire IFAA concept has altered. So much so, I now find myself longing to shoot it again and on a regular, if not competitive basis. Perhaps it has something to do with the fact I don't hunt much these days except with a camera, so that in itself negates my initial reason for not shooting IFAA in the first place. That aside, I think there is a bit more to it than that. As a mature man, I am my own person and I will do what pleases me without any further thought about what others might say or do. I have long lost that part of me who just wants to be 'one of the boys'. I think shooting competition with a longbow has taught me this.

With all that in mind, I am hoping this new year I can have a fair dinkum crack at the IFAA conundrum. If nothing else, at least I can have a laugh at myself whenever I fling an arrow 15yd short of the 80yd walk-up. Rest assured, you will be the first to know how I go. Until next time.

WHAT'S ON

Where applicable, please use this as your tax invoice: Australian Bowhunters Association™



INCORPORATED (Inc in NT No AO1978) GST INVOICE GST ABN 79 750 431 225

Australian Bowhunters Association, Inc.

Branch D - ABA SHOOT

Hosted by
Barambah Bowhunters and Field Archers

Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th January 2021

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 17th January 2021 to: Branch Score Recorder, Sally-Anne McGrigor abasqscorer@gmail.com or 0402 074 788

Facilities include: Camping, showers, toilets.
No dogs allowed • No smoking or vaping allowed on the ranges

BRANCH D ABA TITLES

Hosted by
Lakeside Bowmen

20th and 21st February 2021



Saturday Round
8.00am Payments of Nominations and Bow Checks - Noms 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
3 Arrow Round • Lunch • 1 Arrow Round • Presentations ASAP

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

Pre Nominate by Monday 15th February 2021 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 • Branch meeting Saturday afternoon
No dogs allowed • No smoking or vaping allowed on the ranges

Australian Bowhunters Association Inc™ (Inc in NT No AO1978C)

GST ABN 79 750 431 225

GST tax invoice



Name _____

Address _____

_____ P/Code _____

ABA number _____

ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE

* Available to TBA members only

Available only to members who have qualified. Please enclose copy of letter of acknowledgement from BH Division.

PAYMENT DETAILS

- ☐ Enclosed is cheque/money order for \$_____ payable to Australian Bowhunters Association
- ☐ Pay by credit card—fill out details below:

Card Number ↓ NAME OF CARDHOLDER (print) _____

☐ Visa

☐ Mastercard

Expiry Date (mm yy)

Signature _____

Product (Prices include GST)	\$.	Qty	Size/Type	Cost
ABA Cloth Badge	10.00			
ABA Metal Badge	8.00			
ABA Car Sticker	4.00			
ABA Proficiency Badges (eg, 300+)	5.00			
ABA Junior Advanced Badge	6.00			
ABA Cub Advanced Badge	6.00			
ABA Target ID Cards	5.00			
ABA Coloured Identification Card	5.00			
National Bowhunter Education Manual	19.00			
National Measuring Manual	10.00			
Welcome to Field Archery	14.00			
IFAA Cloth Badge	10.00			
IFAA Metal Badge	8.00			
IFAA Chevron (eg, Hunter)	4.00			
Robin Hood Cloth Badge	9.00			
Robin Hood Metal Badge	8.00			
*TBA Car Sticker	4.00			
*TBA Metal Badge	8.00			
*TBA Cloth Badge	10.00			
#Game Award Badge	9.00			
#Game Award, T/C & R/C Chevrons	6.00			
ABA Peaked Caps	15.00			
Total				

Forward with payment to:
Australian Bowhunters Assoc
PO Box 5124 Brendale Qld 4500
(07) 3256 3976
or email credit card order to:
officemanager@bowhunters.org.au

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

Chital Deer - Jan to May from \$3000 (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.

**GO TO
WEBSITE**



Date	Host Club	Branch	Shoot Description
January			
3rd	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 03/01
9th	Eden Field Archers Inc. *	SA	Field QRE
10th	Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
15th	Burnie Bowmen *	Tas	Indoor Archery World Series Online
16th - 17th	Renmark *	I	Carp Hunt
16th - 17th	Paringa Archers	Tas	AST State Field
17th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
17th	Hinchinbrook Archery Club	B	ABA
17th	Collinsville Barebow Hunters Club	B	ABA
17th	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	3D
17th	Full Boar Archery	B	ABA
17th	Phoenix Field Archers of Sale *	G	IFAA
23rd - 24th	Moranbah Bowhunters And Field Archers *	C	3Ds at the Bah 2021 Invitational
23rd to 24th	Barambah Bowhunters *	D	ABA
23rd to 24th	Lithgow Valley Archers *	F	3D/ABA
24th	Mount Isa and District Bowhunters	B	ABA
24th	Archery SA *	SA	Australia Day Field
24th	DVA *	Vic	Field QRE
26th	Twin City Archers Gippsland *	Vic	Australia Day Field
31st	Full Boar Archery	B	3D
31st	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 31/01
February			
6th	Eden Field Archers Inc. *	SA	Field QRE
6th - 7th	Central Coast Moonterra Archers *	E	ABA
6th - 7th	Paringa Archers *	Tas	AST Northern WA
7th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
7th	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	ABA
7th	Bairnsdale Bowhunters *	G	ABA
7th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 07/02
12th	Burnie Bowmen *	Tas	Indoor Archery World Series Online
13th - 14th	Playford District Field Archers *	I	IFAA State Titles
13th - 14th	Twin City Archers Gippsland *	Vic	TCAG Feb - Indoor Archery World Series Online
14th	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	3D
14th	Freds Pass Field Archers *	A	3D

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All shoots must abide by COVID-19 government requirements in your State/Territory. Please check with your local archery association to make sure your event will be going ahead.

14th	Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
14th	Full Boar Archery	B	ABA
14th	DVA *	Vic	Double 720 QRE
20th	Lismore City Archers *	NSW	QRE
20th - 21st	Lakeside Bowmen *	D	Branch ABA Titles
20th - 21st	South West Slopes Sporting Field Archers *	F	IFAA State Titles
20th - 21st	Ballarat Bowhunters *	H	ABA
21st	Hinchinbrook Archery Club	B	ABA
21st	Collinsville Barebow Hunters Club	B	ABA
21st	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	3D
21st	Mount Isa and District Bowhunters	B	ABA
27th - 28th	Cessnock Archers *	NSW	3DAAA
28th	Full Boar Archery	B	3D
28th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 28/02

March

6th - 7th	ABA Park *	E	Branch IFAA Titles
6th - 8th	Mt Clay Archers *	H	ABA
7th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
7th	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	ABA
7th	Macalister Trophy Bowhunters *	G	ABA
13th - 14th	Orange and District Archers *	F	3D & ABA
13th - 14th	Playford District Field Archers *	I	Marked 3D
13th - 14th	Mornington Peninsula Bowmen *	Vic	3DAAA
14th	Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
14th	Full Boar Archery	B	ABA
14th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 14/03
20th - 21st	Roma and District Bowmen *	D	Branch 3D Titles
20th - 21st	Lake Glenbawn Field Archers *	NSW	3DAAA
21st	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	3D
21st	Hinchinbrook Archery Club	B	ABA
21st	Collinsville Barebow Hunters Club	B	ABA
21st	Mount Isa and District Bowhunters	B	ABA
21st	Gleneagle Field Archers *	J	ABA
21st	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE 21/03
28th	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	ABA
28th	Freds Pass Field Archers *	A	ABA
28th	Full Boar Archery	B	3D
28th	Phoenix Field Archers of Sale *	G	2D/3D
28th	West Melbourne Field Archers *	H	3D

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

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

or email to:
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Post completed form to:
Office Manager ABA
PO Box 5124
Brendale Qld 4500
Phone (07) 3256 3976

Renewal ☐
New Member ☐

ABA Membership N^o:

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: ☐

I agree for photos to be taken and used for promotional purposes by the Australian Bowhunters Association.

If you do not agree, tick this box: ☐

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

Signature of Applicant

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.

ASSOCIATION USE ONLY

M'ship #s Allocated

Receipt Number

Computer Entered

M'ship Forwarded

Card Number ↓ NAME OF CARDHOLDER (print)

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Expiry Date (mm yy)

Signature

12/ 2020



INCORPORATED (Inc in NT No A01978C) GST TAX INVOICE GST ABN 79 750 431 225

APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE
AUSTRALIAN BOWHUNTERS ASSOCIATION™

