

# **THE DEERSTALKER**

## **April 2012**



**Newsletter of the NSW Deerstalkers Association**

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# THE DEERSTALKER

**web address: [www.newsouthdeerstalkers.org.au](http://www.newsouthdeerstalkers.org.au)**

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## **NSW Deerstalkers Association**

**COMMITTEE FOR 2011-2012**

**Formed:** 7th June 1972

**Life Members:** the late Gordon Alford  
Bob Penfold  
Wayne McPhee  
Jack Boswell  
Paul Wilkes  
Steve Isaacs  
Greg Haywood  
Ron Tinning

### **Affiliated To:**

Australian Deerstalkers Federation  
Game Management Council (Australia) Inc.

### **Contributions:**

The editor and editorial committee reserve the right to modify any contributions.

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### **Advertisements:**

Advertisements for products sold by NSWDA Members are accepted and printed free of charge provided a discount is given to club members.

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**Cover picture of Neil Brown with his Nepali blue sheep, taken last year. See the feature article in this issue for the full story.**

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**Video Library: Terry Burgess**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

This year we will publish four issues of this newsletter. To ensure that we get each issue out on time, there will be deadlines for submission of materials to be included. If material reaches me after a deadline, it will be included in the next issue, if appropriate.

### Guidelines for submissions.

Material which is emailed saves me a lot of work. Writing can be sent as a Word file, or a text file. For those without an expensive word processing program, you can use any writing program included with your operating system, or download "Open Office" free from the internet which is virtually identical to "Microsoft Office" & can exchange files with that famous program.

**Photographs should NOT be included in the article itself**, but sent as separate files (attachments to the email). You can indicate where each photo might be placed by typing its file name in brackets in the text.

**Photographs** should be . jpeg files, saved at about 15 cm X 10 cm size at quality 8 (which gives the best quality for the smallest file size).

**Printed on paper submissions** need to have clear black typed text. Faintly or poorly printed text will not scan & cannot be included. **Very short pieces, such as personal adverts can be hand written.**

**Advertisements for hunting related items will be printed at no charge.**

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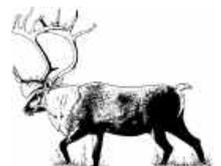
## Meeting dates for 2012

**2012 dates as follows:- Thursday 23 February Thursday 17 May Thursday 19 July (Also AGM) Thursday 11 October Trophy Exhibition & Christmas Party Saturday 17 November**

**Photos** can be prints or negatives or slides. These can be returned to you if you include a stamped self addressed envelope. If these photos are valuable, send copies rather than originals.

**NSWDA Hunting Club AHO (for R licences) is 10111, & the Agent No. is 7185**

**Please Note:** The N.S.W.D.A. Inc. takes no responsibility for views expressed in "The Deerstalker". All articles submitted are signed by the relevant author. The Editor & Committee do however, take responsibility for views expressed in articles & reports submitted by them!



## **Nepal – Blue Sheep Hunt by Neil Brown**

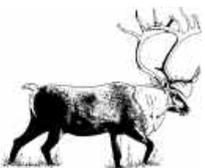
Early November found me in Kathmandu at the beginning of my long awaited Blue sheep hunt in Nepal. A couple of days to get my rifle through customs and to do a bit of site seeing was enough for me as I just wanted to get into those spectacular Himalayan mountains and the Dhorpatan hunting reserve. A day by car followed by a day by bus and I was at the end of the road at a village called Darbang, from now on we would be on foot. I met up with the team that would take me into the mountains, 16 in all, Team leader, Hunting guide, game scout, cook and 12 Serpa porters. As we set off on our first day of walking I realised that this was no normal few days in the hills hunt, this was an old style hunting expedition into a very remote and inhospitable area where everything had to be carried and some serious hard days of walking laid ahead.

It took us 3 days to walk the 45 to 50 Km to the village of Dhorpatan, on the way passing the seventh highest mountain in the world, Mt Dhaulagiri (8167m), we then had to climb 2000 meters over a small mountain range before descending 1000 meters to the village. We reported in at the Hunting Reserve office and had a short briefing from the local rangers, we also took the opportunity to restock with some rice and fresh vegetables from a local growers.

Day 4 was a big one, leaving Dhorpatan (2900m) early we started to climb straight away and just after lunch we crossed over a pass (4100m) which gave us a great view of the interior of the hunting reserve. We were now into the mountains proper, with views of Mt Putha Hiunchuli (7246m), and Mt Churen Himal (7385m), reminding me exactly where I was. We took a few photo's but the cold wind off the icy tops of these giants gave us the motivation to keep moving as now we had to descend almost 1000m to our camp site for the night. We walked

about 15kms that day and I easily noticed the drop in temperature but as I sipped on my cup of tea that night looking up at a crystal clear sky full of stars, I realised that I felt at home here in these mountains and just could not wait for what lay ahead.

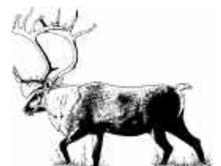
Day 5 and Day 6 was spent crossing a few more mountains which put us at the front door of my hunting block called Ghustung. I checked that my rifle was shooting OK and hunted for Muntjac for an afternoon without luck. We did come across very fresh signs of Snow Leopard that must have had the same idea as us about the Muntjac, maybe he had better luck. Day 7 was another big day, we only travelled about 5kms as the crow flies but it was up and down all the way over very steep and rough terrain. A herd of about 8 Goral was sighted out feeding on an open ridge, these of course are fully protected but I still looked at the big male with interest, it was great just to see these magnificent animals in the wild. A bit higher up we glassed our first herd of blue sheep and a very good ram was spotted laying down a few hundred meters above the ewes. They were a very long way away, so their location was put in the memory bank and we continued on. The camp we left was at 3600m and the highest point for the day was 4100m before of course dropping back down to 3800m where we established what we called base camp beside a beautiful mountain stream. The majority of porters would stay here while the team leader, hunting guide, game scout and myself would start hunting the higher country. New camps would be set up and supplied by a few porters ferrying food and equipment up to higher altitudes. We were up very early on Day 8 and after a quick breakfast started climbing, only after 10 minutes we broke out of the small bushy scrub along the creek and into the open frost covered glass tops. These seemed to go forever and I quickly learnt how hard they were to walk across. About 10am we reached the top of a ridge at 4300m which gave us a great glassing spot of



several high hanging valleys, it didn't take long and we were spotting sheep everywhere. The bino's and spotting scope were working overtime as we assessed each group and with the warmth from the sun on us, made it a very enjoyable time. No big rams were sighted but we stayed on that ridge until the last hour of day light watching the sheep before descending to a new camp site that the cook and two porters had established. This camp was at around the 4000m mark and in a great location that gave us access to several huge valley systems, the only bad thing was that everything froze solid during the night. On day 9 we again got an early start and reached another excellent glassing position at around 10am. It did not take long to see sheep and in no time a few great looking rams were spotted. We pick the best ram and planned our hunt, at about 11am the rams bedded down for their daily midday sleep in a warm sunny spot, this is the best time to try and close the gap. At about 1pm after a very long hard climb we poked our heads over a ridge to see the ram exactly in the same place. I had trouble catching my breath and just couldn't get the oxygen into my lungs quick enough, it took some time before I could look with my bino's at this magnificent animal. I ranged him with my rangefinder at 420 meters across a big open basin, a strong gusty wind was now coming up the valley making a shot from this range out of the question. We could see some cloud been blown in and as it rose up the valley we were immersed in a light fog. We took this opportunity to race across to another closer ridge which would cut the distance to about 200 meters, we waited for a break in the fog to locate the ram and through my bino's I could see that he was a very good one. I picked up my rifle and made myself comfortable but the fog came back in and I could not see more than 20 meters. An hour passed without a break in the fog, the temperature was falling fast and the day was disappearing quickly, it did not look like the fog would clear. I got my Garmin

GPS out and checked the altitude, 5200 meters, no wonder I had trouble breathing, with the sun starting to go down I knew that we could not stay there much longer. Another half hour passed with a few moments where we thought the fog might clear but eventually we had no choice, so close yet so far, a short break in the fog for 20 seconds would have been enough I thought as we started the long walk back to camp empty handed. I was a bit down on day 10 after all the hard work we put in the day before, just to be beaten by the fog, each day you spend in these mountains take a hell of a lot out of you and I could feel my energy levels going down. As normal most of the morning was spent climbing and this day was no different. From another great glassing position we spotted 3 good looking rams bedded down together and no time was wasted as we headed straight for them. We got into some real steep rocky country around noon and were taking a short break, the spotting scope was fixed onto the rams and as any good hunting guide should do, mine was using his bino's to look around when he spotted another group of sheep a few kilometres away down in a completely different valley system. With the spotting scope we could see a huge ram in the group and a change of plans was instantly adopted, we back track of about half an hour before dropping down behind a ridge that run out toward the sheep. Every so often we would carefully take a look over the ridge to make sure the ram was still in the same position as we quickly closed the gap. My guide knew exactly what to do, we kept out of sight and eventually poked our heads up over a ridge to see the herd bedded down and unaware of our precense. I ranged the ram at 240 meters and could not get over how big this bloke was, his body was twice the size of a couple of young ram that lay near him. I had all the time in the world so I arranged my pack to ensure that I had a good rest, I looked

**continued p. 9**





## Secretary's Report

Hopefully you are receiving this as you pack or and unpack from a seasonal hunt. I kindly request you put something/anything on paper and send into the editor for the next magazine. Maybe you thought of a good learning example for our newer/younger members they could heed from your last trip, maybe something you found out from an old hand while away. I attended the Wild Deer expo in Feb on behalf of the club. We had in a small booth and I assisted the manning with a healthy team of members. The expo seemed to be a great success with a constant flood of people through most of the 2 days. The membership drive came up a little short but we did speak to a lot of people and our promotion of the club and hunting in general was well received. Met a few of our fellow ADF colleagues and further secured a club event using the Vic SSAA hunting lodge later in the year. We also sold quite a few blaze orange hats thanks to the R license drive by Game Con. A reminder that we still have shirts, jumpers and hats available for purchase see details later in magazine.

I am proposing a few new sections to be added to the magazine. Currently we are way too short on communication. Members to members, Member to committee and visa versa. This needs to change and these changes in the magazine are designed to instigate this. We need more stories or photos. Your help is paramount – I need each of you to contact myself, the editor or one of the committee members with feedback or additions. Critical to the success of the club as a whole is the fostering of our newer and younger hunters. The upcoming events section to include proposed events to gain feedback on the options you would like to attend.

### **QnA Section**

I have re-invented a QnA section where anyone can have a question raised in the newsletter for anyone to answer. New section to the deerstalker designed for new members, juniors who want to

learn from the experience in our club and old members who want to check something. Please pass to your kids and friends for a read. Push them to write Q's and articles on hunting, 4 WD, Camping trips, etc I have had some questions already posted by some young and new members and have posted them to kick off – please have a look at them in the new section. AND if you have any thoughts or an answer please let us know!

**Kids Page** With articles for kids and by kids. I don't have anything yet so all comments are welcome. It is also proposed to have \$ incentives for the kids to write a story.

**Ask the Committee** An Open forum to ask the committee queries and raise ideas or topics for events. Perhaps you can't get to the meetings but have a burning question – write to the editor and put it in here.

The member register has been updated on to a new control system and we now have 163 financial members. A few gaps have been found in the members details and I may contact you shortly to help fill in these gaps. We have had a couple of new members join but we need many more to generate new ideas and enable the us to hold more events. Reminder from decision last year, fee's are now due at the end of the year in line with the gold cards. All Gold cards have been issued to all members, please contact your committee if you have not received yours. I hope you appreciate the extra bits in the magazine if not let me know.

Regards Mat



## **President's Report**

### Bendigo – Wild Deer Expo

As mentioned in my previous report, we were having a booth at the Expo which was held at the Bendigo Exhibition Centre on 4 and 5 February 2012 to promote our club.

The quality of the exhibitors was amazing and there was something for everyone attending and they attended in the hundreds.

Many of our members attended the Expo and I thank the ones who came to man the booth over the 2 days John Natoli, Bircho, Mat Wulff, Robert Hill and Darren Plumb.

We caught up with the other ADF member clubs SSAA (Vic) Deerstalkers, GDSA and NEDSA as they had a combined booth. In true spirit, one of the NEDSA guys lent us a Sambar head to compliment the heads we had on display.

We also purchased two custom made skinnners for competitions throughout the year.

All in all, we had a great time, although we didn't gain members on the day, we did sell some of our clothing.

### Australian Deerstalkers Federation (ADF)

Now that the Federation is reactivated, we are about to incorporate the Federation. Tasmanian deerstalkers wish to join and this will embrace all the major deerstalker clubs under the one umbrella and give us a strong voice with regard to deer.

We will be holding a meeting shortly so that we can formalise regular meetings and start promoting the Federation.

### Game Council - NSW

Game Council is adding to its current publications with a new publication "Getting Started in Bowhunting in NSW. It is expected that 10,000 booklets will be distributed.

- Deer Hunting Workshops 2012

Game Council, through its Hunter Education OutREACH program, is seeking expressions of interest from OutREACH licensed AHO's to jointly run the 2012 workshops. (We will be joining the OutREACH program).

- Tales from the Bush – Bluey's (David Smith)

Game Manager : Central Zone

Hunting Area Profile : Pennsylvania State Forest

Interesting profile and the game available red deer, fallow, goats, pigs (6,561 hectares)

Other info:

Vulcan State Forest (Fallow and Red)

Neville State Forest (Fallow and Red)

Blenheim State Forest (Fallow and Red)

Mount David State Forest (Fallow and Red)

### Shooters & Fishers Party

- The Firearms Amendment (Ammunition Control) Bill 2012

Refer the Hon. Robert Borsak MLC newsletter dated 28 February 2012 which provides detailed information printed elsewhere in the magazine.

- The Shooters and Fishers Party are going to re-establish a branch in Western Australia and will contest the next election. This has been brought about by the major parties threatening to restrict the number of firearms a licensed shooter in WA can own. SFP came within a 100 votes of winning a seat in the 1996 election.
- Media Release SFP has challenged the Coalition and Opposition to get fair dinkum in addressing Sydney's gun crime and back its Legislation introduced in Parliament on 15 March 2012 to make it a separate crime to use a firearm in a crime.
- March 22 Update "Police bust puts final nail in Government Ammo Bill"

Police say a post office was being used by a syndicate which brought up to 220 illegal guns into the country including some linked to recent shootings.

AGM & General Meeting – 19 July 2012

We have arranged our meeting at ARB – Wentworthville covering all things 4WD. Meeting will commence at 7pm and we will have a pizza night.

Next Meeting

17 May 2012 at the German Austrian Club starting at 7:30pm

Good hunting,

Greg

## **Gun control body's figures really need shooting down Legal gun ownership has no link to illegal firearm crime statistics.**

gympietimes.com.auGreg Wildie

I THOUGHT the graph that inspired my last column was the worst example of the journalistic misuse of figures I was likely to see for a while. Sadly I came upon another example on Monday, January 9, courtesy of the Herald Sun. Admittedly the article did not involve a graph but every journalist should be aware that quoting anything produced by the National Coalition for Gun Control without having a really long think about what it actually means, is a recipe for a nasty surprise. Short of all the padding, the base article was an unsurprising non-story demonstrating that most of the guns used in crimes are neither stolen nor have ever been registered. After wrapping a few figures around that however, the Herald Sun produced a horror story to keep the kids staring into the dark, or at least the gullible toeing the gun control line. One of the supposedly startling revelations was that there are several small Victorian towns where the number of guns is larger than the number of people. One town of 278 people has 774 registered fire arms. It sounds alarming, until you do the maths. That is 2.8 guns per person. There is no indication how many belong to security firms, police officers, gun collectors, professional shooters or even military museums. The figures tell us nothing about the actual distribution or use of the guns. If you think I am being pedantic, the next breathlessly alarmist statement was that, shock, horror, Victoria has almost 23% of all the registered firearms in Australia. In reality, this is hardly surprising as Victoria has almost 24% of the total population. Then there followed what are supposedly quotes from the Victorian police who

are worried that there were 39,000 extra firearms registered in Victoria in the 18 months to June 2011 but only 5000 new licences issued. Their biggest concern was expressed about the number of pistols in the community and people's willingness to use them to commit crimes. All sounds frightening so far. The article then made a heroic attempt to connect the high rate of legal gun ownership in country Victoria with the prevalence of gun-related crime in the North-western suburbs of Melbourne. This was followed by a pledge by the police of unremitting harassment to deter the use of pistols. Leaving aside the question as to whether harassment is ever a legitimate policing tool, who are they going to harass? Harassing registered gun owners is not going to worry the criminals. They are not dependant on stealing guns to obtain their fire arms. The rate of gun theft has actually fallen by over half in the same period as the article covers, so any increase in gun crime is not attributable to stolen guns. The attitude of the police who were quoted as saying, "We can't just wait for these matters to be fully investigated and brought before the courts one or two years down the track. "We've got to start making life difficult for these peanuts" expresses an attitude to policing and the public that is all too familiar in Victoria. Luckily the head of the Licensing and Registration Division is a little more balanced. He admits that the problem is not the legal guns in the hands of licensed shooters. So what do all these figures really mean? The increase in the number of pistols in Victoria was only 400 in 12 months. There are only 11,600 licensed pistols in the whole of Victoria. Only 273 pistols were seized from criminals in the past three years in Victoria. Only 41 of them were stolen. In spite of the Wild West image that the article portrayed, crime has fallen by 18% overall in Victoria since 2000 and by 29% when considered as offences per head of population. Yet the article claims that the rate of armed robbery using firearms increased by 62%

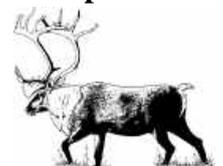


in the year ending June 2011. Accurate data is difficult to get when dealing with firearms. There are too many political fingers in the pie. That said, in 2008 there were 5686 incidents of armed robbery recorded in Australia as a whole. The number of victims of armed robbery had decreased by 28% since 2003. Only 13% were committed using firearms. Official Victorian police figures for 2011 show, "Armed robberies accounted for 46% of all robberies in 2010/2011, an increase of 10.6% since 2009/2010. The most common weapon used in armed robberies was a knife (48.2%), and 14.5% of all weapons used in robberies were a firearm (including imitation firearms), an increase of 44.5%." So where does the Sun Herald/Gun Control lobby get its 62%? Probably from the same place it pulls most of its so called data from. The more pertinent fact, played down in the article, is that 75% of pistols seized from criminals had never been registered and that 85% of all firearms seized from criminals were not stolen weapons. Logically there would seem to be a large black market in weapons that never hit the registers. It would seem that criminals do not bother to register their guns. Somehow, registered gun owners do not seem to be the problem. I don't care what happens to criminals with firearms, but knee-jerk policy founded in ignorance only hurts the law-abiding citizen because after all, criminals don't register their guns.

### from p. 5

through the scope and had a few practice goes pulling the trigger on an unload chamber, all was set. I pushed a cracker into chamber and slowly closed the bolt, the crosshairs came to rest on the rams shoulder and then full of confidence I touch off the shot. High was the call from my guide, he did not have to tell me, I knew as soon as I pulled the trigger, I had stuffed up. The sheep instantly jumped to their feet and ran another 30 or 40 meters down the slope, I reloaded and was following them through the scope when the big ram at the back of the herd stopped to see what was going on, this gave me a few seconds to get off another shot, I lost sight of the sheep as they disappeared down into the valley. I was shaded, I could not believe that I had stuffed up on the first shot and I didn't hold much hope on the second, I was rolling around on the ground cursing myself out loud, my guide set the spotting scope up to view the herd as they reappeared on the far side of the valley. The young rams lead the way followed by the ewes and lambs as they climbed up the near vertical face, we noticed some of the sheep looking back down into the valley and after a while the big ram appeared. Straight away you could see that he was hurt pretty bad and that he could not keep up with the others. We watch him with the spotting scope for about an hour before he went to one side and dropped to the ground, as he laid there I could see lots of blood on his back leg and knew he would not be able to get up and go any further. I did not know how to feel, I was glad that I got him but I felt bad that I did not kill him cleanly with the first shot. The day had got away and we only had a few hours of day light left, it would take at least 2 hours to get to the ram so we decided to head back to another new camp site higher up over in the valley we started the day in. We arrived at this camp just

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## Long Range Shooting of Game.

By Dal Birrell

Without a range finder & suitable scope, the average deer rifle in 30-06, 270 etc has a point blank range of about 250m, zero'd at 200m. If this is enough for you, you need read no further, unless of course, you just want to know if it's really possible to accurately shoot a lot further! There's a bloke down here in the Illawarra who regularly kills Rusa at distances over 1200 m. There are plenty of witnesses & quite a few kills are recorded on video. Recently I've been developing my own system to kill game at more modest ranges; up to about 500 m maximum, which is working well. The shooting magazines abound with articles on shooting at extended ranges, & of course there are countless Utube videos of long range kills on everything from Prarie dogs to Elk & steel plates, most using the latest you-beaut heavy tactical rifles, scopes, bipods & other gear.

I can't help feeling that most of this is aimed at parting more shooters from their hard eared cash rather than anything else. Yes, I'm a complete cynic when it comes to what's in the magazines, new calibres, new rifle styles, new this & that, gear reviews etc; with the odd exception. What's usually ignored in all this sales frenzy is a consideration of the ethics & the practicality of hitting game animals at extended ranges, and a realistic look at the gear you really need to do the job. An exception to this is an article in a recent "Guns & Game" magazine which was written by an Aussie ex-army sniper, who set out the basics pretty well. I'll restate some of his points & add a bit more.

What gear do you really need? Most American writers, & those here who swallow their stuff uncritically, assume that only the flattest shooting calibres can do the job; that you need a heavy rifle, a powerful scope, a bipod & a range finder. Well, I'll go along with only the last of those

requirements. Let's look at the basics. Shooting anything with a rifle requires that the shooter; knows the range, knows the trajectory of his rifle, knows how to adjust his sights for the range.; can actually shoot well, using a variety of positions. In addition to these, a hunter needs to use a cartridge with sufficient power to do the job; use a suitable projectile for the game and the range; know the behaviour of the animal well, so that he shoots only when he is sure it is going to stay still long enough for the bullet to reach the animal & hit the intended kill zone. Wait until a good shot presents itself. Limit his shooting to ranges at which his scope can clearly define the kill zone. Be able to set up a good shooting position, with a hold which doesn't waiver. Is a top judge of wind, or only shoots in still or low wind conditions.

Let's go back to our 1200 m shooter. His basic kit is a very accurate Tikka 6.5 X 55 T3 refitted with a 26" match barrel, a 6 - 24X or 3.5 - 30 X scope with target knob adjustments & a good range finder. Now add that he hunts over the same territory all the time, has wind flags & practice gongs in place all over it & he practices all the time. He also limits his shooting to very light winds. His system is to locate a deer, range it, adjust his scope using the vertical adjustment, set up a steady position, then wait for the animal to present itself for a killing shot. His ammo is carefully loaded soft VLD projectiles at moderate velocity. At these ranges they expand properly with enough energy to put the animal straight down.

At these ranges also, sometimes a number of deer can be downed one after the other. The 6.5 is relatively quiet, very accurate & bucks wind better than almost anything else. Why else would it have been described as the best infantry cartridge ever? This bloke is also a brilliant shot & a very experienced deer man. If you're thinking he's 1 in 1000 you'd be on the right track. This sort of shooting is way beyond the capabilities of



“Mr Average shooter” & beyond the opportunity of most of us.

My own setup started out with a different purpose. Walking the hills for hours with a pack & a 9 ½ lb 270 rifle got to be a bit much for the shoulders. I wanted a lighter rifle & one which I could also use for Metallic Silhouette competition. It had to be as accurate as possible & produce minimal recoil while still able to knock down the steel targets out to 500 m. The rifle choice was easy; a Tikka T3 light with synthetic stock. I ditched the scope mounts which came with the rifle in favour of an excellent DNZ one piece alloy mount. The calibre choices came down to three, the 6.5 X 55 , 7 X 57 & the 7 mm 08. The 6.5 won out because of it's slightly flatter trajectory (for a given projectile weight), lower recoil & noise levels. If I'd wanted to shoot heavier projectiles the choice would have gone the other way.

By comparison, a 308 calibre bullet has to be 180 grains in weight to have an equivalent ballistic coefficient to my 129 or 140 grain 6.5. A 30-06 using 180gn loads will have twice the recoil of the 6.5 X 55, & any of the 308 magnums will have a lot more recoil & noise. Both are a lot harder to shoot than a 6.5. John Desanti, who has used my rifle to kill goats at over 500 yards reckons the 6.5 X 55 is “unbelievably easy” to shoot (& kill) at long range compared with his own 30-06.

My rest is my pack, held either upright for shorter shots, or laid flat for prone shooting. Bipods work, but they add more weight, which is what I'm trying to avoid. I also wanted a mid-range light weight scope with some sort of ranging reticule, & after some searching, came across the Nikon Monarch range. These have target adjustable knobs as standard, a ranging reticule which seems to have been designed by a shooter, with the added bonus of an accurate on-line ballistic calculator. I chose a 2 – 8X for it's light weight & simplicity. If this scope has parallax error it's too small for me to detect, despite it's

lack of range focus.

If you don't want to be adjusting the scope for each shot, then a scope power of about 12 is maximum. The simple reason is that as scope magnification increases, the actual drop difference between the additional aiming points DECREASES, resulting in a reduction in the range at which these aiming points are zeroed. The maximum range at which you can shoot DECREASES as scope power increases. You can check this out quite easily by using the “Spot On” calculator, comparing the ranges of each aiming point using different scope powers. One of my sons recently bought a 3 – 12X Monarch for his new 270 Win, which is just a bit larger than my scope & gives a better view of the target. With the cross hairs zeroed at 100m the other aiming points are for 200, 300, 400 & 500m.

Andy Montgomery recently reviewed this scope in “Guns & Game” & found that his example changed point of aim about 1 moa between 3 X & 12 X. I really don't think this is a problem as you will set up for long range using 12 X & only use the lower powers for short range shots where a small change in poa is of no consequence. If you are curious about this reticule & Nikon's ballistic calculator, go to “Nikon Hunting” on the web, then once on the site, click on “Spot On” which is their ballistic calculator. Enter the projectile to be used, its measured velocity & your cross hairs zero. It then calculates the distances for the other aiming points, & windage if you want it. By varying the primary point of aim you can organise where the other aim points will hit. There is provision in the calculator for including altitude into the calculation So far I've I've not found any practical difference between sea level and about 1000m, but Neil brown, who shot his Blue Sheep at 8000m in the Himalayas recently (see lead article in this issue) says that at that altitude, it must be in the calculation. At that height, air



pressure is only about half that at sea level. The other aim points in this reticule are small circles, through which you can see the target. At 450 m on 8 X, the circle sits well inside a Fallow's shoulder kill zone, which you can clearly see. Many other scope manufacturers provide ranging reticules, with & without on-line ballistic calculators, some better than others. Of course, the shooter can choose to wind the vertical adjustment up & down instead of using the aiming circles. In a recent on-line poll of long distance varmint shooters in the USA, 60% voted for winding the knobs. On deer & goats which are a lot larger than a Prarie Dog, I find the aiming circles work perfectly. Memorising the distances of each aiming circle is easy, but some people print out & tape distance / aiming tables to their stock. I think that the simpler the system the better. The other piece of essential gear is a laser range finder. Make sure that it includes the ability to automatically allow for the shooting angle, as this can make a real difference to the point of impact. In any case these models are not much more expensive than those without the angle adjustment. Also, I chose one with a black display. Some brands have gold displays which are virtually unreadable against dry grass & bare earth. The Bushnell 1200's black display is easily readable in the lowest shooting light & ranges reliably out to about 800 yds. It is supposed to be able to range a deer to 450 yds. If the target is too small, just range a bigger object close by. I read a review on the web recently of several range finders which seemed believable. It concluded that the best was a Swarovski, very closely followed by the Zeiss, with the Bushnell a long third choice. The first two ranged reliably a few hundred yards further than the Bushnell, but you really pay for it. A variety of quality scopes & range finders (including the above) are available from "theriflescopes.com" at about a 40% discount of local prices. He has a number of

Utube videos showing his products & his service is prompt. How accurate does a long range rifle need to be? Let's consider the kill zone on a Fallow deer's shoulder to be a 6" (15 cm) circle. In fact it is more of an oval, 6" horizontally & longer vertically, but ignore that for the following considerations. Also assume no wind & a perfect hold.

A rifle which shoots 2 moa, shoots into a 6" circle at 300 yds.

A rifle which shoots 1 moa shoots into a 6" circle at 600 yds.

A rifle which shoots ½ moa shoots into a 6" circle at 1200 yds.

Subtract 10% from the distances to convert to metres.

I know that our local 1200 m shooter's rifle shoots ¼ moa, & mine shoots ½ moa.

To "get real" there will always be some air movement, & no one can maintain a perfect hold, so take off the theoretical maximum range whatever distance your wobble & wind dictates you should.

My final point.

Gear does not make the marksman. Accurate shooting of any sort demands that the shooter prepares, which not only includes selecting & sorting out gear, it demands lots of practice, & if you want best accuracy, carefully made hand loaded ammunition. Failure takes no preparation. Personally I practice most with a rimfire, competing in all sorts of competitions, including BR30, Metallic Silhouette, 3P & Field Rifle. I also regularly experiment with various loads & rifles off the bench. A lot more field shooting wouldn't hurt either, but then there are limits to what one can manage.

When setting up a shot in the field at any extended range, I don't shoot if I cannot maintain a perfectly still hold, if the wind is up, or the animal is moving about. At 500 yds, my projectile takes ¾ second to get to it, so the animal has to be still.

**cont. P19.**



## NSWDA Merchandise

I have organized some new club shirts, polar fleece & caps.

The colours are at this time ;

Polo shirts .....white/navy trim.....\$ 25.00

Micro fleece top.....Moss green.....\$ 35.00

Caps.....bottle green.....\$ 15.00

Caps.....blaze orange.....\$ 15.00

All garments have the club emblem embroidered on the item

We will have the items at the next meeting for sale & also at Coffs Harbour.

For further information members could contact me on 48 210 774 / 041 202 1741  
or at 20 John street. Goulburn. 2580

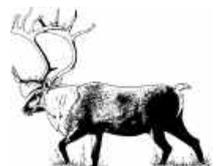
Postage will be at \$5.00 for members.

Also, other colours are available but will need to be a special order.

Thanks Darren



Some porker!!



## Better Hand Loads for Hunting Rifles.

By Dal Birrell.

Reloading ammo saves money which allows shooters to shoot more. This makes perfect sense. Another reason however, is to get better accuracy than is usually possible from factory ammunition. This too makes perfect sense, especially if you are trying to hit small targets at long ranges.

In recent years several rifle manufacturers have guaranteed their rifles to shoot minute of angle with premium factory loads. In most cases, carefully researched & prepared hand loads will halve that. Bench rest rifles and their ammunition are now capable of amazing accuracy, with some competitors consistently shooting 0.1 moa groups. Those rifles are made to exacting specifications with great care; far more care than any hunting rifle. The ammunition for BR rifles is put together usually with far more care than hunting ammo. The improvements made over time with these rifles & loads are small, but are significant in competition. With hunting rifles we cannot hope to emulate BR groups, but by using some of the techniques those boys use we can improve the accuracy of a hunting rifle much more, in % terms.

I'll list & comment on some key things which many reloaders have found to really work, but before that I need to remind you of one important difference between factory hunting rifles & BR rifles which will always give BR rifles an unbeatable advantage.

This is the rifle's chamber, which in a BR rifle is cut to minimum dimensions, requiring the case necks to be turned down & often the case bodies to be full length resized just so that the ammo can be squeezed in. Tolerances are tiny, measured in ten thousandths of an inch. The purpose of such a tight fit is to line up the bullet with the axis of the bore, so that when propelled forward it enters the bore as close to its centre as possible. A bullet

sent into the rifling at even the smallest angle or off centre is damaged & never settles down properly in the bore. Accuracy suffers.

The chamber of a hunting rifle, or any rifle made to accept factory ammunition is much bigger than a BR chamber. Proper functioning of the rifle is more important, so chambers must have larger tolerances. Factory ammo varies in dimensions, brand by brand, lot by lot. Not that it isn't good quality. Every round represents enormous effort & expense by the factory to produce a good product, & the stuff's getting better year by year. They do their homework.

The main reason you as a hand loader can make better ammo, has to do with the case above all else. A new factory round when chambered lies in the bottom of a chamber which is almost always just a bit too large to have the bullet properly aligned with the axis of the bore. Once fire-formed however, the case has swollen so the bullet now sits higher up, closer to the axis of the bore. The alignment problem hasn't been solved, but it has been improved. There are other important things you can do to the case.

**Consistency & concentricity** of ammunition is what shrinks groups. Let's deal with consistency first. Cases should be batched by brand, then by weight, each batch varying only by +/- 0.2 grains, then after fire forming & neck sizing, checked for overall length, then trimmed as needed. The flash hole needs to be a consistent diameter & length, with no burr on the inside. A deburring tool with a stop collar will remove the burr & uniform the hole length. While this is an essential stage of case preparation with American made brass, it is not really needed for Lapua brass, in which flash holes are drilled not punched. Primer pockets should be uniformed (cut to uniform depth) using a primer pocket uniforming tool. Each of these tools costs about \$30. Again there is a noticeable difference between the degree of variation in most American brass when compared with Lapua cases in particular. You can just about eliminate



both processes by buying Lapua brass, which is the same price as American brands, but much better made and more consistent in weight & other dimensions.

**Neck turning** our cases is different from doing BR cases. BR cases are neck turned to snugly fit a tight chamber. Hunting cases are outside turned minimally to give uniform brass thickness all around the neck, which helps to centre the bullet along the axis of the case. Some unturned cases have so much variation in the brass thickness around the neck that seated bullets can clearly be seen to have pushed out to the weaker side. It may also help give a more uniform grip on the bullet, but this is less important. Some of the better case length trimming tools, like the Lyman will also turn necks & a number of specialised tools are also available. The better the tool the better the job & the greater the price, naturally! If we again compare Lapua cases with others, the uniformity of neck brass thickness is much better. Again, depending on the size of your targets, neck turning Lapua or other top quality cases may be unnecessary. If shooting rabbits at 300 - 400m is your thing, I'd neck turn, whereas if goats are the quarry it may be unnecessary.

After putting in all of this work, case life becomes important. Collet dies are readily available for most common calibres at about the same price as the older type dies, which work the brass much more & result in split necks in from about 3 to 10 reloads. Some shooters using collet dies report reloading cases up to a hundred times. Collet dies pay for themselves in dollars & effort very quickly.

#### **Primer seating.**

The gurus recommend using a hand seating tool so as to seat the primer with a controlled feel. Do it very firmly. With uniformed primer pockets, you will get uniform depth & more uniform strike of the firing pin, leading to more uniform ignition. Some of us use our presses to prime. You can experiment to see if either method works better

for you.

Primers vary in diameter & hardness. With large rifle primers, I have found Federal to be the largest, sometimes requiring a lot more effort to seat them, especially in European cases which tend to have slightly smaller primer pocket diameters. Remington are among the smallest, along with some European brands. I have read that Federal 210's are intended for the higher pressure magnum cases, which probably explains their tighter fit.

#### **Powder selection.**

ADI has developed its line of rifle powders to meet the tough demands of the US military. They have been so successful that they have virtually that whole market, with exceptionally accurate metering, uniformity and very small response to environmental temperature changes. A good rule of thumb is that a suitable powder, at ideal loading will fill the case to the base of the neck. Loading manuals suggestions should be followed. Heavy loads of fast burning powder & light loads of some slow burning powders can be disastrous. A good rule is to use slower burning powders for heavier bullets & faster burning powders for lighter bullets (but stay in the range recommended in the reloading manuals). It's worth trying several powders. Although powders of similar burning rates usually give similar results, one may give better results in your rifle than others.

#### **Bullet seating.**

BR shooters seat bullets to touch or almost touch the lands to centre the bullet as much as possible. This may be impractical in a hunting rifle (rounds may be too long for the magazine; bullets pulled as an unfired round is ejected, dumping unburned powder into the chamber & action). Conventional wisdom is to seat the bullets not more than 0.025" from touching, but each rifle is different so experiment with seating depth. Some rifles have relatively longer magazines than others, allowing greater freedom to seat bullets. This can be an important reason for selecting one brand & model



over another.

### Concentricity (or run-out).

Concentricity is the holy grail of BR loading. When turned in V blocks a dial gauge is used to check the run-out of the bullet. The aim is for less than 0.001" run-out, with each additional 0.001" adding significantly to group size. Unless you have the gear, you won't be able to measure concentricity, but you can improvise simple gear to indicate relative differences. My hunting rounds, made using these methods, show from 0.001 – 0.003" run-out, which isn't too bad for standard dies and imperfect techniques. Dies are generally exceptionally well made, but there are odd ones which aren't & if run-out is a consistent problem, that set should be replaced.

### Load development.

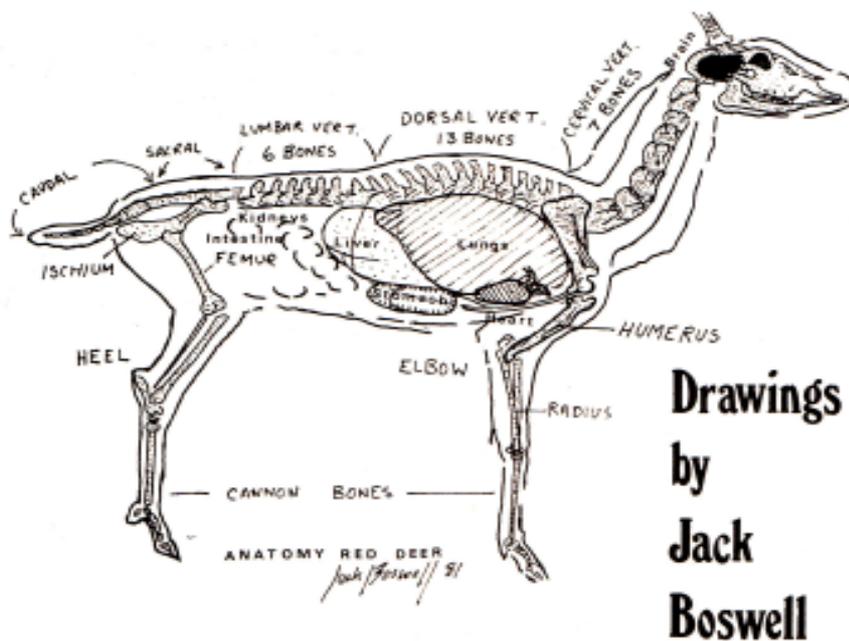
There is one essential in obtaining meaningful results, which is to change only one thing at a time. If you make 2 changes to a load, such as a different primer & a bit more powder, it's impossible to know which one caused a change in accuracy.

Shoot sufficient numbers of each load to get a good idea of its performance. A couple of 5 shot groups tells you nothing. Don't be fooled by a fluky small or large group or the odd flyer; it's the average distance of shots from the group centre which counts, a method the US military has used in its research for over a Century. If you have a computer & scanner, download the free program "On Target" which will measure & compute that value (& others) for you.

Keep full records. They'll save you repeating trials & wasting time & money.

Serious reloaders regard a chronograph as an essential tool, but that is too big a subject to tackle here.

## The Anatomy of Humane killing.



Jack's anatomical drawing of a Red deer is a good guide to placing a shot on a deer for the best chance of an instant knock-down & kill.

**The vital organs** which the bullet should hit are in the front of the chest, i.e. the heart, lungs & major blood vessels.

**From the side**, these are easily located directly above the front leg. A low shot usually destroys the heart, a middle shot takes out the lungs & a higher shot (1/3 rd of the body height down from the back line) will usually hit the spine, which is quite deep in the body at this point. A spine shot is most spectacular, dropping the animal instantly, often with no further movement. I have noted a tendency among relatively inexperienced hunters to place their shots a little too far back in the chest, where although the lungs & liver may be hit, death is not quick. If the vertical cross hair of the scope runs up the front leg, & the bullet placed from 1/3rd to 2/3rd of the height of the chest, a knock down & humane kill should result.

**From the front**, a shot which hits where the neck meets the chest will strike the heart & major blood vessels. Undisturbed animals will usually collapse on the spot.

**From the rear**, the shot needs to penetrate the digestive organs, intestines, & stomachs (deer have three), usually full of compacted wet vegetation, before reaching the vital organs in the front of the chest. This is a shot to be passed up, as there is little chance of the bullet reaching far enough forward to kill humanely.

**Quartering shots**, where the deer's body is not looking straight towards or away from the hunter need to be placed so as to avoid the abdomen & to hit the organs in the front of the chest. Being able to visualise the vital organs inside the animal is a great advantage.

**Brain shots** are a poor choice unless the hunter is virtually alongside the animal as it is a small target & with the animal moving its head frequently, it is impossible to be sure of a hit.

**The Neck** likewise presents difficulties. The spine

is deeper down than most hunters realise, except where it joins the head. The major blood vessels to the brain run through the bottom half & a hit on one of them will drop the animal, but not necessarily quickly. I have tracked a Rusa shot through the left carotid artery which left a monumental blood trail, yet travelled a few hundred metres into scrub because the right artery kept the brain supplied with blood & the animal conscious & functioning until blood loss took effect.

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**continued from p. 9**

on dark, crossing a small creek that was frozen solid to be greeted with a hot cup of tea from the cook. I was completely buggered but wasted no time in getting some food into myself before climbing into my sleeping bag, this camp was at 4300meters and the temperature would drop to well below -10 at night. All Day 11 was spent recovering my ram and moving back to the lower camp where we took the cape off and butchered the carcass. Using a tent peg as a skewer we roasted some sheep meat on the hot coals of a fire, this was the first red meat I had had in weeks and was very surprised on how good it tasted. The cook that night served up a real treat of curried Blue sheep and rice which tasted great. Day 12 we got back to base camp about midday and spent the rest of the day boiling out the skull and working on cape. Day 13 was another big day, we started early and covered in one day what took us two days coming in, the porter had a lot less weight to carry and basically it was down hill, but it was still a real tough day. Day 14 and 15 was spent walking back to the village of Dhorpatan where we said goodbye to the hunting guide and game scout as they headed off in a different direction for their homes. I was very surprised on how much I enjoyed the walk out but I was really now looking forward to a hot

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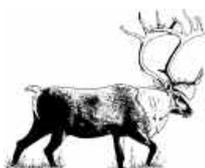
shower, comfortable bed and a few beers. Day 16 The day started by walking the 2km across the flat bottom valley of Dhorpatan before climbing for about half an hour, we crossed over another mountain range and then dropped down the rest of the day towards the village of Burtibang where that night we made camp for the last time. The following day we hired a 4x4 vehicle and drove the 150kms taking 10 hours along what the locals call roads to the town of Pukarra. Here we hired a mini bus to take us back to Kathmandu arriving at

the airport on my final day in Nepal I was not surprised when I got hit for 10kgs overweight but I did not mind one bit as I knew that I had a trophy of a lifetime in my bag. Customs gave me no problems with my rifle and the Quarantine staff were very helpful with my Blue sheep horns and cape at Sydney airport. It was on the drive back up the country that I thought about what I had done, I had been away from home for 26 days, walked for 16 days straight without a break, reached an altitude of 5200 meters and taken a great trophy. I was very happy with the way my



6am. I got to my hotel around 8am and spent the next hour having my first shower in 20 days, after a sleep and with clean clothes I felt like a new man but I just spent the rest of the day preparing for my trip home and taking it easy. The next day I had another look around Kathmandu and did a bit of shopping before returning to my room to try and put everything in my bags for the trip home. At

body had stood up to the trip and all my equipment had performed to my expectations, the only bad thing was my shooting but we won't talk about that. I would not recommend this hunt to everyone as it requires for a lot of hard walking over difficult terrain, a hunter will need to be able cope both physical and mentally with the conditions. The Nepalese are very friendly people but patience and a calm temperament is also



needed from the hunter to cope with the culture difference in some incidents. Thanks to Raju Thapa from Nepal Wildlife Safari and all his staff in Nepal for their great work, this trip was a real modern day adventure in a wonderful country with spectacular mountains and great people, the only thing is that I wish we would of had time to hunt Himalayan Tahr, but maybe that's an excuse to go back.

## Contributions Needed

**It has been a while since the last issue of the Deerstalker. This is because we have had very little to fill its pages. Luckily Neil Brown's article on his Blue Sheep hunt in Nepal started the ball rolling but much of this issue has been written by myself. While I'll write something if I have something to say, it's not up to the editor to write articles for the Deerstalker. This is supposed to be a newsletter for all of NSWDA, for the members, by the members, about the members. So whatever hunting trips you have been doing, please drop me a line or three & include a few photos. Members will be very interested in any reports you care to make on safari operators, both here & overseas, especially, but not only, positive ones.**

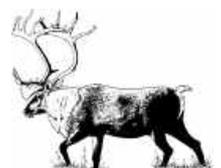
### **cont. from p12.**

A nervous or moving animal is too risky. Why do it at all? One day "Mr Big" is going to be standing out there all unsuspecting on an opposite face in good conditions, in the last of the shooting light, with no chance for me to approach closer. If that shot presents, I'll have the confidence to take the shot. Besides, practicing for real is a buzz!

## Ask the Committee

Q1. Would it be possible to arrange a club rabbit hunt somewhere Although not at the top level of hunting that deer represent. I could do with some basic training I miss not being a shooter until now and it would be easy to bring the kids and met new friends at the shoot?A1 Committee response not available prior to printing. See next magazine  
Q2. Free Clothing with new membership from now on Hat and Tshirt or jumper.A2. Committee response not available prior to printing. See next magazine .

Q3. Get guides (within club or external) best offer on a few local hunts – then subsidise on top from the club, then auction the hunts at a club meet starting at the base price – so the starting price will be unbelievable for the hunt and a great way for newer hunters to get in without paying a fortune for a guided hunt.A3. Committee response not available prior to printing. See next magazine



Water Buffalo - Wild Boar - Wild Ox - Magpie Geese - Banteng

# Muckadilla Safaris

PO, Box 3793  
Palmerston  
NT - 0831  
Ph/Fax 08 8931 0379  
Mobile 0412 308 338

[www.australianbuffalohunting.com.au](http://www.australianbuffalohunting.com.au)  
[muckadilla@optusnet.com.au](mailto:muckadilla@optusnet.com.au)

Management Hunts - Donkeys - Brumbies - Pigs

## Q & A

**The idea:** Anything that you are curious about email the editor Dal or anyone on the committee contact (email, letter, phone call) that will get it posted here as a question. Similarly if you have an opinion/answer to any of the questions please contact (email, letter, phone) Dal or a committee member to have your notes posted. Then all answers from anyone right/wrong or indifferent shall be posted to further the discussion. There will be no tolerance of any bullying or abusive behavior. All Q&As will be posted without editing unless you ask for editing to assist you question.

1. Posted by: Anonymous

How do you know that your meat animal is clean/

safe to eat, e.g. parasites, disease or other? What types of disease should we know about / look for in a taken animal? Are the diseases different for different animals, Deer, Goat, Pigs, Rabbit?

2. Posted by: Anonymous

Do you have to allow for up hill and down hill shots, if I zero the gun in? If so Why?

3. Posted by: Anonymous

Do I have to be a SSAA member to use the range?

4. Posted by: Anonymous

Are polarized shooting glasses any use for hunting when most of our hunts are early morning or late night?

5. Posted by: Anonymous

Why do people/magazines refer to bullet size as



140gn not 140g? The projectile should be in weight therefore grams which under the international standards units SI should be 'g'. Where the powder used can be measured in grains 'gn'? What is the correct way to refer to the complete bullet used?

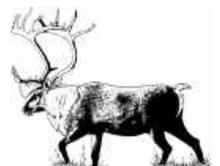
6. Posted by: Anonymous

Can someone tell me the order of magnitude for rifles? If there is a legal limit (eg Sambar) then how do I know if the gun I want to use is bigger or not? eg Is my 6mm bigger than a 270?

### **Shooters & Fishers News Byte.**

We already know from where the next Liberal/National attack will come... a ban on P650s (permits to allow un-licenced persons to "try" a shooting sport). The intro of the P650 is one of SFP's best achievements so far, in that it has opened up a huge opportunity to get new people into the sport. The FAR hate it ! That attack will be on the back of a Coroner's report ( yet to be published) into the Fernando murder, where a woman stole a .22 target pistol from Sydney Pistol Club, went home, lured her estranged father around to her house... then gunned him. The Libs have already hinted that's where they'll go next.

**Rob Brown & Rob Borsak.**



**NEW SOUTH WALES DEERSTALKERS ASSOCIATION INC.**

Dedicated to the Sound Management and Conservation of Deer in NSW.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

SURNAME:.....CHRISTIAN.....MIDNAMES.....

DATE OF BIRTH..... SEX: Male/Female

DRIVERS LICENCE NO:..... STATE.....

SHOOTERS LICENCE NO:..... CLASS:.....

POSTAL ADDRESS:.....POST CODE:.....

HOME ADDRESS.....POST CODE.....

HOME PHONE.....BUSINESS.....MOBILE.....

OCCUPATION.....

**FEES** (Please tick payment being made):

**1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION**

**3 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION**

FAMILY: \$55.00

FAMILY: \$150.00 (SAVE \$15.00)

SINGLE: \$50.00

SINGLE: \$145.00 (save \$5.00)

JUNIOR: \$25.00 (Under 18)

JUNIOR: \$70.00 (Save \$5.00)

PLEASE NOTE: By law, to possess a shooters licence you must hold appropriate insurance. This is included in the subscription with the exception of FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS which include only one insurance payment. Insurance must be obtained for each additional family member after the first at the rate of \$10.00.

INSURANCE @ \$10.00 PER FAMILY MEMBER AFTER THE FIRST TOTAL: \$.....

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FEE \$.....

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$.....

I AGREE TO ACCEPT AND PRACTICE THE NSW DEERSTALKER'S CODE OF ETHICS AND TO ABIDE AT ALL TIMES BY THE CONSTITUTION, FEDERAL, STATE AND TERRITORY LAWS.

Signature: .....

Date:...../...../.....

PLEASE NOTE: This form is an application for renewal of membership only and is subject to Committee Approval. An application will only be considered if accompanied by all the necessary Fees, This form must be completed in full and is due for renewal 1<sup>st</sup> July of Membership expiry.

**PLEASE PAY PROMPTLY.**

Return to: The Secretary, NSW Deerstalkers, P.O. Box 519, Picton NSW 2571