

TWIN COAST ARCHERS



November/December 2013

~HAPPY NEW YEAR~

A special welcome to our New Members!

Thankyou to all who let me know of their successes. For those that do not know, Email me at stgd94@gmail.com with your archery related news/pics that you want to share.

Hunters: If you intend sending pics through of bowshot game, please ensure you select the most 'clean' pictures. I.e, ones with the least blood/dirt etc... on the animal. Thankyou

Tournament News

Bowhunting News

Congratulations to Benjamin for getting his first Magpie! Total tallies from 1st November – 31st December include: 29 Goats, 1 Magpie, 3 Rabbits, 119 Koi Carp and 20 Possums.

Club News

Well, another year has been and gone. Congratulations to those who featured in the prizegiving and a huge thankyou to all those who put time and effort into the club and its related events this year. It is what keeps the club running and makes it so enjoyable for all those who attend.

A club 3D shoot is being held on our property (1206 Kaipara Hills Rd, Warkworth) on the 4th January...which you should all know about now anyway. Start is 9:30am.

If you have a short archery story you would like to share – please send it on through and it may well feature here (I havn't received any the past few months...so have ferreted up one of my own)...

Goat #150...And Still Counting

Sarah Thoroughgood
September 2013

I had as good as vowed to shoot a billy as my 150th bow-shot goat and the bigger the better. When I missed a goat with a respectable head a month earlier (the second time I'd missed that goat in as many months), I decided maybe that was a good thing. I'd target him as my 150th if third time was lucky! Imagine how I felt when I was up to 147 and stumbled upon him, dead, along with 4 others (including a roughly 2 month old kid). All legs were removed, except the kid's. I was extremely disappointed. The dead kid upset me a bit (no reason to completely waste such a young animal) but when I saw the billy, that really topped it off. Worst still, they'd not been dead more than about 4 days.

One week after making the unwelcome discovery, my youngest sister (Rebekah) shot a goat on a different property and while she was gutting it, I walked over to get the quad bike from over the other side of the gully. On my way, I came across a young billy browsing around a patch of scrub. I was out in the open and knew there were two others in this particular goat's company as I'd been onto them the night before. While he had his head behind the scrub, I quickly advanced before the second one then emerged. I knew I

couldn't make much ground now as unlike the first goat, this one was a young nanny and typically more alert. I stayed out in the grassland with my bow in front of me so as to break up my profile. When they weren't looking, I ranged the spot where the third one was now quickly appearing. 35y was the reading. I had an arrow nocked so came to full draw as the third one headed up the slight slope. The wispy breeze had done a swirl and this third goat, also a young nanny, knew something was up. The others were already in front of her, ready to run. She walked to the top of the slight slope, turned so she was slightly quartered on and was ready to move off. In this brief time she was looking around, I settled my 40y pin (as she'd moved a further 5y away roughly) on her shoulder and released. The arrow flew true and went clean through. She ran off with the others and as the first two appeared out from a small slip 40y down the hill, she did not. I went over to get my arrow and even though I knew where she was, followed the blood trail. That was goat 148 and it was now pretty much dark. I raced off to get the quad and drove it right up to my goat and chucked her on before continuing on to get Becky and hers.

Another week later, Becky and I were hunting on the other side of the same forested gully where the big billy met his demise. We both shot a white nanny each after first assessing their young were no longer reliant. I shot mine with the same arrow and broadhead that I'd shot #148 with. True to form, it once again went clean through, this time at 20y. The nanny bolted as she'd been suspicious something was up. She made 50y before succumbing to the shot. I found my arrow and put it back in my quiver. This was goat #149.

Now I had to think of what goat I'd target as my 150th. There were a few billies around, but none that stood out. The next day, after quickly processing the nanny, I decided to take a trip to another property about 15km down the road for a few days. I didn't think there were any respectable billies there, but I'd just about given up on getting a decent one.

Away I went, down the road. When I arrived, I checked in with the people that live on site. They wanted to see my Tournament winning goat skin (NZ Bowhunters Society Tournament 2013), which I'd taken along to show them as I had shot it on that property after all. After I finally extracted myself from all the compliments, I parked the van at the top of the property and geared up.

With my bow in hand, rangefinder around my neck, knife adorning my belt and camera in my jacket pocket, I purposefully set off into the cool breeze. My quiver held 3 arrows, that would be plenty! I headed across some farm land before entering the pine forest. Walking down a main ridge, I stopped at the head of several guts. A young goat bleated somewhere to my left. I headed that way but found it was just a nanny and her reasonably young kid so I left them alone. I continued on, down a spur, across a creek, up a steep slope... Finally I found them – now that I was on the other side of the forest! 7 or so were out in the paddock grazing. As I was planning on heading after them, I spotted another few still in the pines. It didn't take me long to pick which mob I was going to go after when I noticed a mature billy in the second mob. He didn't have a good head at all, but he was going to have to do...he was the biggest in the mob.

A good half hour later, I had nannies and juveniles to my right, a younger billy slightly to my left and another nanny in front of me...all within 25y. However, Mr Billy was staying out at 50y. I wanted to make a good shot on him and although I've shot goats beyond that range a number of times before, I didn't feel confident with it just then and decided I'd take him on if he offered a good angle at 40y or closer. Therefore, I was patiently waiting for him to come my way. The nannies hadn't busted me yet and as much as I yearned to just shoot one (as I did want meat for dinner), I had firmly told myself that the billy would be the 150th, regardless. Luckily, the nannies didn't seem to notice me as they fed right past 20y away. Talk about risky..!

Eventually the billy came into 27y, but knew something wasn't right as he came in. A nanny briefly spooked when she noticed something unusual (me) out of the corner of her eye at 15y. She didn't go far before grazing again, albeit a little more cautiously. I couldn't see the billy, but knew he was there. I poked my nose carefully around the pine tree I was hiding behind, he was standing staring right at my tree. That lasted for about 5 minutes with neither of us making a move. I knew I had to be the one to do something because he sure wasn't. I weighed up my options, the only thing I could do was draw behind the tree, then slide my right foot out to the side before putting my weight onto that leg. I proceeded to do this. The billy didn't like what he saw and promptly started trotting off, pausing briefly to have a better look over his shoulder. That was all I needed. I

reckoned he'd moved about 3y further away, so placed my 30y sight pin halfway along his ribcage and as he turned his head to run, the arrow was on its way. It hit him about where my pin was sitting when I released. I realised this may have been too far back despite him being about $\frac{3}{4}$ quartered away. Nevertheless, I stayed still and watched where he went. He made about 60y before turning to stop and look at me again for a few seconds. Then he trotted over a brow with some of his mates, out of my sight. I knew I'd hit him and this was not characteristic of a fatally shot animal – particularly not when I'd used a Thunderhead with brand new blades. I decided to give him some time, maybe adrenaline was driving him.

I went up to where he was standing when I shot and there was my arrow, stuck into the track. It was red from nock to Thunderhead, but it didn't really look like lung blood. I headed off after some nearby turkeys while waiting. A little while later, with no success, I thought I better head back to look for my goat. There was no blood trail, so I went to where I'd last seen him. Lo and behold, there he was, just over the brow where I'd lost sight of him. Despite no blood trail from where I'd hit him, there was no shortage of it all around him where he lay. It turns out the shot was not too far back, it took out both lungs as well as cutting through the side of the heart before exiting through the thick shoulder muscle (no doubt what prevented a blood trail). I had shot goat 150 and although he was no trophy, the stalk/wait and shot made it memorable. Some friends of a friend used the meat (I'm not a fan of eating billy goat, but they were).

150 goats seems like a lot, but it is just short of 5 years worth and the vast majority have been taken out for dog meat or the dinner table. The best thing for me is, every last one was taken with a bow and arrow – From an oblivious nanny who walked right up to point blank in some ferns to a fat semi-mature billy out in the open at 79y. I've taken them in the North Island and the South Island; rain or hail, on hot summer days; on steep, bluff-clad slopes (which have required strenuous and lengthy carry-outs) through to easy contoured terrain (where I can use the quad bike); in native bush as well as open pasture (and just about everything in between); dressed in a singlet and shorts with no shoes, through to polypropelene under multiple layers finished off with gaiters and boots (even in PJ pants one evening!!). The things one does when they live right next to the game!

The tallies keep growing... for the record – I finished the year having just shot my 175th goat!