

TWIN COAST ARCHERS



March/April 2016

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

Note only top 3 place-getters get mentioned in this section, congratulations to all the others that shot and did well but did not make top 3

K3D - Round 2

Benjamin - 1st in Senior Mens Bowhunter Release division
Samuel - 1st in Junior Limited
Caleb - 3rd in Non-Competitive

K3D - Round 3

Benjamin - 2nd in Senior Mens Bowhunter Release, 1st overall for the series competition
Samuel - 1st in Junior Limited, 1 overall for the series

NZFAA - Mt Tiger

Samuel - 1st in JMBL with 345
Benjamin - 1st in YAMBU with 520

NZFAA - Massey

Rebekah - 1st in JFFU with 503
Benjamin - 1st in YAMBU with 507
Samuel - 1st in JMBL with 363
Jared L - 1st in Novice 1 with 509 - nice shooting :-)

Bowhunting News

Congratulations to Craig for shooting his first fish, a Koi Carp. Rebekah got three firsts with a Rat, a Pig and several Eaglerays. Sarah also got a first with 11 Eaglerays (had previously only shot a Blackray). Goats were a first for Samuel, with 2 and Tim got his one with his trusty recurve bow. Total tallies from 1st March – 30th April: 10 Goats, 8 Rabbits, 210 Koi Carp, 12 Turkeys, 2 Rats, 1 Pig (small game - under 15kg dressed), 8 Possums and 12 small game (under 20kg) Eaglerays. Big Game - A Pig from Northland and 31kg Eagleray from Glinks Gully for Sarah, a 37Kg Eagleray for Rebekah from Glinks Gully and a 7 point Red Stag for Nathan from Whirinaki - great stuff!

NEWSLETTER

Club News

Nothing much I can think of this time around..

Membership fees for the 2016-2017 year are now due. These are \$80 for Cubs/Juniors, \$100 for Adults and a cap of \$200 for families of 3 or more. Please pay by the 31st May - see Stephen R at club for more info and how to pay.

Story Page - please do send me an archery related story and it will likely feature here. It's nice to hear from a variety of people about their adventures!

The Perfect Hunt

Benjamin Orchard 29/3/16

The car bounced and shuddered as it climbed up the corrugated surface of the gravel country road. It reached the top of the hill and since I now had a clear straight ahead, I could turn my eyes off the road for a second and scanned the hillside to my right which was dotted with slips, pockets of tea tree and shrubs, and then topped with native bush. Being within the block of land I had permission to hunt, I was keen to spot some wild goats which would make for an easy hunt if I could locate them from the road rather than having to traipse around the rough hill country in search of a mob. I was in luck, the lazy side of me which wasn't keen on having to cover large amounts of distance on foot, smiled when I spotted three goats, two black and one coloured, on the hillside. They were around 150 yards up from the base of the hill and 80yds down from the native bush at the top.

With growing confidence that I'd succeed in shooting a goat which was needed for dog food, I pulled into the driveway on the farm and parked. I had a quick chat with the owner to check it was OK for me to go after a goat today and after getting the good to go, I kitted up in a hurry; hunting jacket on, belt with camera and knife attached, cap on, bino's, and double check for release aid in pocket. I then grabbed my bow, checked that all was in order and headed out.

Shortly afterwards, I had crossed the first miniature valley between the car and the goats and was now in full view of them, about 350yds away. Until I could make the base of the hill some 200m in the distance, there was no way to get totally out of sight, but I knew I was fairly safe at this range. I erred on the side of caution though as I closed the gap to around 250yds as there was a shallow ditch conveniently heading in the direction I was going and I used it to my advantage by marching up the centre so as to not stand out as much as half of my height was taken in by the ditch. The breeze was gentle, and consistent in direction... straight in my face: perfect!

I was now out of ditch for cover and closer to my target, so I was binoing the goats and only moving when their heads were turned away or down grazing. A precaution that maybe was unnecessary, but if spooked, the goats would more than likely head straight for the native, and my chances against them in there when they were spooked would be extremely low

especially with all the dry leaves blanketing the ground. In binning them, I also picked up on there actually being four goats.... A coloured young billy showed up which must have been bedded down out of sight previously. All seemed to be going to plan, but then as so often is the case, something goes opposite to your intention! A group of about ten sheep who were standing watching on from 50yds to my right, decided I was a threat and headed off across the paddock at a frantic pace and through a decrepit old fence. And in doing so causing some nervous cattle to bolt and bringing the senses of every goat into alert and eyes turned down the hill. If they scampered off because of the racket these livestock made, I was not going to be impressed! But luck was still on my side, not the goats', and they stayed halted, and to improve the situation ever more, their eyes were now riveted to the cattle, and so I was no longer the object of attention so I quickly '*speed stalked*' and closed the gap between where I stood and cover at the base of the hill.

From past experience, I knew that I was better off climbing to the height at which the goats were and then to sidle around the hillside to get into position for a shot, rather than a stalk directly up the slope. Two reasons for this are: Goats look down the hill more often than they look up (and their eyes were already turned there because of the cattle), and it is easier to remain out of sight in most cases with that approach. I knew that as soon as I began my climb up the hill that I would lose sight of the goats, which was good in the fact that it also meant they'd have no chance of spotting me, but it also meant I'd lose sight of them for a time, and so I noted where they were to try ensure I surfaced on them in the right position for the stalk into an easy shot range. I also had to hope that the goat wouldn't shift their position while I was out of sight.

The adrenalin rush of a stalk and being within close proximity to game now set in and with the afternoon sun blazing down on my back, I had soon gained the height I desired. My pace slowed down now as I followed the contour of the hillside around cautiously, not wanting the goats to see me before I saw them. My eyes picked up the tops of their back shortly after, at around 40yds, slightly more elevated than where I was positioned. I knocked an arrow and retrieved my release aid from my pocket. The wind was still cooling my face... things were still tipped in my favour.

I closed the gap to 30yds without much work involved. I kept their heads out of view and with a bit of luck, the smaller coloured billy which was closer to my position and to which I stood in full view of it if turned, kept his head down grazing and I got into position for a shot of the biggest black billy. At 20yds I stopped and shifted to an adequate foot position. With its head behind a bunch of rushes and presenting a perfect broadside shot slightly up hill, I had to calm my nerves to ensure I could make a steady shot. Everything had just gone perfect so far and I was now in a perfect position to execute a killing shot. I clipped my release aid to the D-loop, double checking the distance I estimated, and then happy with my estimation, I presented and drew. My 20yrd pin locked on behind its shoulder, a fraction above the level of the rank kikuyu pasture.

Now everything hung on this one shot. Everything unrolling perfectly until this point would count for nothing if my shot was rushed or my form was

panicked. I've shot thousands upon thousands of arrows over my nine years of shooting but drawing back and lining up on a live animal each time still sets my nerves on edge. I glanced down at my bubble and levelled my bow, tightening on the trigger, maintaining back pressure, front hand relaxed. My eyes focussed dead on where I wanted to see my arrow penetrate. My thumb continued to tighten on the trigger. One second the arrow was in the bow and the string back by my face, the next, the release aid went off sending the arrow in the direction I was aiming, the helix on the front of the arrow slicing through the air and passed through the back of the shoulder a third of the way up on the black billy.

Seeing that arrow pass through where you're aiming is a great sight and I could breathe again. The billy jerked his head up and trotted off, spooked by the noise and a funny feeling of dizziness from loss of blood, but not sure the source of all this. As with any good shot with a bow, the animal never knew what hit it. It trotted 10yds and dropped dead, a convenient gorse bush below stopping it rolling all the way down to the base of the hill.

The other three goats stuck around for a bit then scampered off up into the native bush. I could relax again after the goat went down with a good double lung shot. Excitement hit when I saw it fall as I knew I had succeeded. I set about to get some pictures which presented quite a difficulty with the steep ground, long kikuyu and blazing sun, but eventually I got some with my 'tripod' for my camera being my bow! I then set about gutting and then carrying back the animal. Fifteen minutes later it was sitting in the back of the car, and I was in the driver's seat quite sweaty, but happy with how the hunt had unfolded.

I made the drive back a fast one that's for sure with the stinky billy pong wafting through the car from in the back! This had just been a perfect hunt. Everything had gone together perfectly. As any bowhunter would know, it very seldom turns out this way and you end up really having to work to get into the position to shoot a goat, and then the challenge doesn't always end there, as the animal sometimes finds itself a good possie to hide in when it dies! You end up having the odds against you. Today, multiple things could have changed the outcome of my hunt from coming home with a goat, to arriving empty handed, but they didn't and it had been a well spent fun afternoon.

I just wonder if things will roll together so perfectly for my next hunt.....

