

ADA Brisbane Branch

Rubs N Roars Newsletter: August 2025



Adam Blackman with his 2025 winter red stag

COMPETITION – Each newsletter cover photo winner gets an ADA stubby cooler.
Coolers can be picked up at the next branch meeting.

To win, send your photos into brisbane.editor@austdeer.asn.au

Next meetings:

- General – Friday 1 August
- Committee – Friday 15 August

6:30pm for 7pm start at ADA Clubhouse @ SSAA Complex - 292 Mt Petrie Road, Belmont QLD 4153

“To inspire and educate successful, ethical deer hunters”

From The President: Greg Rashford



It was good to see some fresh faces and lots of energy at the first meeting of the new Committee held recently.

There is lots going on at the moment and by the time you read this a number of events will be ancient history. That said I'd like to acknowledge Madelein and Mitch for taking the lead when the Branch was invited to provide catering for the "Women who Venture" evening supported by Venture Hunting and Outdoors.

Also a shoutout to Daniel Brogden for coordinating the annual Bernie Mascord shooting competition against our friendly rivals SSAA.

From this edition of the newsletter we have a new editor. Thanks Michael for taking on the job and a big thanks also to Ben for having done a stirring job over the last couple of years.

Seems those who attended the Branch R Licence Hunt at Nundle had a memorable time. Nundle never fails to provide a great opportunity to test out your cold weather gear and always manages to provide good hunting. Congratulations to those who were successful, particularly Adam who managed to bag a couple of nice red stags.

Check out the calendar for upcoming events but note in particular Committee Meeting on 15 August, Annual Branch Shotgun Shoot 6 September and Social evening on 12 September.

Our next Branch hunt is Pilliga State Forest from 4 to 7 October – those interested or who would like more information please catch up with hunt coordinator, Greg Keegan at our August Branch Meeting.

Branch Directory

ADA Brisbane Clubhouse

SSAA Complex – 292 Mt Petrie Road
Belmont QLD 4153.

President – Greg Rashford

Brisbane.pres@austdeer.asn.au

Mob.0417 740 520

Vice President – Chris Szymanski

Brisbane.vp@austdeer.asn.au

Mob. 0416 149 886

Secretary – Jay Heni

Brisbane.sec@austdeer.asn.au

Treasurer – Cameron Wicking

Brisbane.treas@austdeer.asn.au

Mob. 0477 776 859

Editor – Michael Gronert

Brisbane.editor@austdeer.asn.au

Mob. 0475 877 568

Paul Swan – Ripley Comp.
Dave Cupitt – Silhouette Comp.
Norm Gibson – Shotgun Comp.

Committee

- Mitch Pocklington
- Jason Baker
- Daniel Brogden
- Joe Ford
- Michael Gronert
- Madelein de-Jager
- Dilan Ponnudurai

QLD Accredited ADA Scorers

- Jason Baker – 0403 166 227
- Chris Szymanski – 0416 149 886



Branch Calendar 2025

Month	Date	Event
Jul	11	Social Drinks @ Clubhouse from 3pm
	13	Bernie Mascord centrefire shoot – SSAA Ripley
	19	Field Rifle – SSAA Belmont
	19/20	Ridgemount Station Hunt
	25 ~ 5/8	ADA Hunting Camp – Shelley
Aug	1	General Meeting - 6:30 for 7pm start
	15	Committee Meeting - 6:30 for 7pm start
	16	Field Rifle – SSAA Belmont
Sep	6	Annual Branch Shotgun Shoot
	12	Social Drinks @ Clubhouse from 3pm
	19 ~ 30	ADA Hunting Camp – Shelley
	20	Field Rifle – SSAA Belmont
Oct	4 ~ 7	Piliga R License Hunt
	10	General Meeting - 6:30 for 7pm start
	17	Committee Meeting - 6:30 for 7pm start
	18	Field Rifle – SSAA Belmont
Nov	14	Social Drinks @ Clubhouse from 3pm
	15	Field Rifle – SSAA Belmont
	20	Rimfire Silhouette Shoot – SSAA Belmont
Dec	6	Xmas BBQ and Awards Night
	19	Committee Meeting

ADA Brisbane Branch

Containers for Change Member Number

C11555661

ADA Brisbane Branch Winter Hunt Nundle - June 2025

- By Adam Blackman.



I had wanted to hunt this spot for quite some time. It had, however, been in exclusion zones on previous occasions. It looked good on maps and satellites. Big steep gullies, flat benches close to a large creek, occasional clearings. The plan had been to backpack down and set up a fly camp. Having never taken this approach, I had sourced some gear the week before and decided to test my setup next to the security of my vehicle. I arrived in the forest in the middle of the night, stopping along the track to inspect the frost that had formed in a clearing. I decided on a spot and began to setup a hammock next to my ute - it was surprisingly comfortable.

A late start the following morning, I gathered my bearings and with no tracks found to take me to my spot, I headed down a spur from 1100 meters elevation at 11am. Dropping the first few hundred meters, looking for sign, admiring the view, adjusting my pack.

The next few hundred meters drop in elevation were quite different. Thick, thorny bushes, chocking the top of the ridge. Loose rocks under foot and downed trees directing me this way and that while being careful not to grab at nearby trees for support that were dead and would fall over. This was not the place for a mishap. The ground was steep where I travelled, but worse to the sides of the spur. Finding myself on my hands and knees in this rubbish had me questioning my life choices that lead to this moment. I was questioning individual items of gear I had brought. My rifle had long since self-identified as a walking stick. I knew this wouldn't go on forever. I knew it, but I didn't feel it. After three hours of descending, thankfully, this had cleared up.



By 2pm, a small tree had grabbed my attention. It appeared to have been rubbed. I had no experience with stags in my very short hunting career. Additional trees, scat and prints on a recently used game trail, all in proximity, confirmed my assessment. With eyes up, I moved slowly down and around the hillside for an hour, to reveal more sign and more thick brush.

Continuing my journey, I came across a road and walked it down towards the creek. Besides multiple recently fallen small trees across it, it was in okay condition and had been used. I came across large, grassed clearings just before dark and sat and glassed before losing light.

Setting up camp nearby in the dark, the noisy creek was more like a river at 400 meters elevation. This night felt much colder, but I was able to sleep mostly undisturbed.

The next morning revealed an icy frost over everything in the open. Leaving camp and most of the gear I went for an explore, the top of my boots catching a layer of ice. Opposing hillsides had blocked the sun from touching the whole system even at 8:30am.

What appeared to be a light brown bush grabbed my attention in the tree line. Binoculars revealed a fully unblocked view of a large red deer, high above me. At this point I thought just how bloody big they are. It could've been the size of a cow in my mind. The unimpeded view, the looking uphill, and a bit of fog, made this thing much bigger in my mind.

Dropping to my hands and knees, I ranged it at over 220 meters. I could also see another deer 15 meters to the side that was a large spiker. The first deer, much lighter in colour revealed more developed antlers. Through the glass I could see them browsing, I could see rub trees also, and a little closer through some bushes I could see something making a small tree fling back and forth for a moment.

These were the first Reds and the first Stags I'd seen in the bush. I was caught in the open. I was on my hands and knees crawling like a dog through the ice-covered grass, trying to reach the stability of a pile of rocks 20 meters away to shoot off while stopping every few moments to keep eyes on the animals. The larger animal seemed to always hang around a particular thick bush. They continued to move and feed in and out of view but by the time I reached my shooting spot they had vanished. Heart racing, I stopped for a smoke and reflected. Glad I hadn't risked a shot, I felt I was still in the game.

I mucked around that area, hearing sounds near the creek that turned out to be the condensation dropping from the trees mixed with my heightened imagination. I explored up the hill and seeing the scat, rub trees and prints on multiple trails that I could only now confirm was red stag sign. I moved through the timber until I reached a saddle on a spur. The sunlight now hitting this other side of the saddle. Figuring this was an ideal place to be, I sat with my back against a tree for a smoke. I noticed some kangaroos feeding 30 meters away, saw a big, black pig feeding about 50 meters away and placed my crosshairs on the pig for a few moments but I decided my stalking hadn't been terrible and remained dedicated to find reds.

Once the pig had browsed out of view I stood up, walked three paces and two deer had materialized in the sunlight through a gap in the trees on a clearing maybe 60 meters away. The bigger standing right in front of the smaller, perfectly broadside. I raised my rifle to my eye, dropped to a knee and aimed for the bigger one's front shoulder. The shot felt good, and they ran off.

There was no blood trail found and after about 10 minutes of anxious looking, I found the double 5 red stag had run about 50 meters and was laying dead with evidence of a lung shot



just behind the shoulder. Pressed for time, I took the compulsory photos (or “it never happened”) and headed back out. Back on the clearing, I saw that the spiker had doubled back in front of me and he presented a turning away shot. Standing, I placed a shot further back, and it felt good. He shot forward, turned and fell within a few meters. More happy snaps and then it was a race to get back to camp, spooking four horses in the forest as I marched.

I unloaded all gear and set off up the vehicle track with my rifle and a water bottle around 10am, determined to plot the vehicle route others had used. Three hours later I arrived at my ute. I drove to an area with phone reception and rang my hunting mate, Lindsay, to see if he could “help us out for a bit?” What proceeded was hours of driving down, cutting and removing numerous trees off a track, moving rocks to fill in wash outs that fell into near vertical gullies.



Walking in, we saw a dog leaving about 200 meters from my deer, my mate despatched the running animal. There was, however, no sign that the deer had been touched. Eight legs, two sets of back straps, one cape and two heads... And then a 600-meter pack out, up, down and up hills. Thankfully Lindsay did most of the leg work. This left us arriving back at the ADA Camp at about 1am.

The work continued in camp the whole of the next day. I'm grateful that the ADA Members at camp guided me and provided additional gear to complete my cape preparations, without which, I was sure to bungle the process. I really enjoy going to the ADA deer camp. It's always a good atmosphere with great people with an interest in learning and passing on their own findings.

I'd recommend it to any hunter, and I'm grateful to be able to attend.

My First State Forest Hunt

– By Jay Hani

As someone who grew up fishing, prawning, and crabbing, the idea of getting my own meat had always appealed to me. After binge-watching every episode of *MeatEater* that I could find, I decided it was time to bring home some red meat of my own.

I got my firearms license in 2018, learned to shoot on paper, and then completed my R license course, ready to head to New South Wales to see if I could fill the freezer with fresh venison.

But just as I started scouting forests online and gathering information, someone in China apparently left the door open at a lab... and the world shut down. While my hunting plans were put on hold, the time I'd spent learning didn't go to waste. I turned my attention to pest control on farms. A few years of shooting rabbits, hares, foxes, goats and pigs, helped me sharpen my aim, though it didn't quite satisfy the freezer-filling itch—although the odd goat or hare did make its way into the kitchen.



After three years of border closures and lockdowns, I'd all but forgotten about my original plan to hunt deer. I'd made peace with chasing pigs and was enjoying myself. But when work got especially hectic and I felt the need to step away to refocus, I found myself drawn back to that original goal.

I re-did my R License course, only to discover my original (expired) license was still valid – I just needed to pay the renewal fee. Still, the refresher on rules and regulations was probably worth it. So, late in 2023 I committed to my first state forest hunt. I dove into research, combing through forums and maps, trying to choose the right forest.

A podcast episode about Tuggolo State Forest sealed the deal—it gave me just enough intel to decide that was where I'd start my deer hunting journey.

I'm the type of person who dives into something headfirst and lets it consume me. That can make it tough for others to come along for the ride – for them it's just a trip, but for me it's the culmination of countless hours of reading, researching, and planning, and that meant my first hunt would be a solo one.

I watched every YouTube tutorial I could find, read dozens of articles, and studied topographical maps to plan the trip. Having never been to a state forest before, I didn't even know where to camp. I reached out to one of the guys from *The Hunter's Campfire*, and he pointed me to a good campsite and suggested a nearby trail where I might find deer. That was all I needed.

Expecting to do a lot of hiking and unsure how I'd go with a heavy pack and a rifle in hand, I bought a Howa Super Lite in .308, grabbed a snake bite kit, took the PLB out of my boat, threw a swag and gazebo in the ute tray, and hit the road.

The weather looked perfect – no rain, light winds, mid-20s. I was hopeful. The drive from Brisbane to Nundle takes about eight to nine hours, so I left early to get there in time for a sunset hunt. I topped up fuel and grabbed ice at Walcha, then said goodbye to civilisation for three nights in the bush.

The drive in was stunning – farmland made me feel like I could spot a deer crossing the road at any moment. I didn't, but as I neared Nundle, fog rolled in and the wind picked up. My sunny, calm forecast didn't match the rain and gales lashing my windscreen.

Still, I pressed on and was eventually greeted by the Tuggolo State Forest sign. I made my way to the pre-planned campsite—only to find it wet and soggy. Surprisingly, I had reception, so I checked the forecast. It showed no rain at all, which didn't match the torrential downpour outside my window. In the pouring rain, I set up camp, pitched my gazebo, got into my gear, and headed out for my first hunt.

I didn't see anything – there wasn't much light left – but I returned to camp, had a quick dinner and got ready for bed. That's when I discovered the leeches of Nundle. Removing my gaiters and boots revealed I'd given them plenty of room to crawl up my legs. If you've seen *Stand By Me*, you know the scene I'm talking about. Still, I crashed into bed for my first night in the forest.



I woke the next morning to clearing skies and fresh enthusiasm. I hiked for kilometres, staying off the main roads, and started noticing sign. I'm not a master at identifying deer droppings, but I slowed down and paid attention. Later, driving to a new area, I caught sight of two fallow does running through a creek bed – my first deer sighting, and a big morale boost.

I decided to explore deeper into the forest, which is when I discovered that while hunting maps *show* roads, the forest doesn't always *have* them. Plenty

of heart-pounding, butt-clenching driving eventually led me to a dead end. I turned back and made it to camp, where the weather finally allowed me a fire and some quiet reflection.

At 2 a.m., a storm rolled through. My gazebo was blown over, gear thrown across camp, and I got soaked trying to salvage what I could. The storm lasted two and a half hours – I didn't sleep a wink and the thought of packing up and going home crossed my mind more than once.

But I wasn't ready to quit – I had areas on the map I hadn't yet scouted. Just before legal light, the rain eased, so I jumped in the car. Halfway to my chosen area, a doe and a spiker stood in the road. They stared at me for what felt like forever. My rifle was bagged, it wasn't legal light, and they were on a road, so I could only watch as they eventually trotted off. My adrenaline didn't settle until I reached my spot.

With the wind in my face and drizzle still falling, I started walking. Not ten minutes in, I bumped two fallow does. One of the advantages of solo hunting is all the chances you get to run through drills. Every time I spooked a roo, I practiced shouldering my rifle, acquiring a sight picture, and pretending to shoot. So, when the real moment came, I was ready. The two does split. I picked one, got her in my crosshairs, and fired. I knew immediately the shot was true – she dropped.

The flood of emotions is hard to describe. The preparation, the miserable weather, the leeches – it all suddenly felt worthwhile.

I carried the doe to the nearest road, retrieved my car, loaded her into the tray, and brought her back to camp for processing. After gutting and skinning her, I packed the meat into the esky, broke camp, and began the drive home.



That first state forest hunt tested me more than I expected. But it also lit a fire in me that I know won't go out. Since then, I've returned to Tuggolo, spotted many more deer, taken my first red deer, and joined the ADA hunt in Nundle this June. That experience opened my eyes to just how much more of this incredible forest system there is to explore.

I can't wait to go back.



The First Cut: A Hunter's Most Important Tool – By Dilan Ponnudurai



Every hunter remembers their first knife. Whether it was a family hand-me-down, a birthday gift, or a carefully saved-for purchase, that initial blade marks an important milestone. It represents the transition from observer to participant, from someone who talks about hunting to someone who actually does it.

Whilst bow and bang stick tend to attract more attention, the experienced hunter, with many more years and miles than I have under my feet, will tell you that a quality knife is arguably your most versatile tool. That first knife teaches lessons that go far beyond simple cutting – it introduces hunters to the full scope of field work that comes after the shot.

From field dressing and skinning to camp chores and emergency situations, a hunting knife serves multiple roles throughout any hunting trip. Learning to use that first blade properly builds essential skills that every hunter needs, regardless of their preferred game or hunting style.



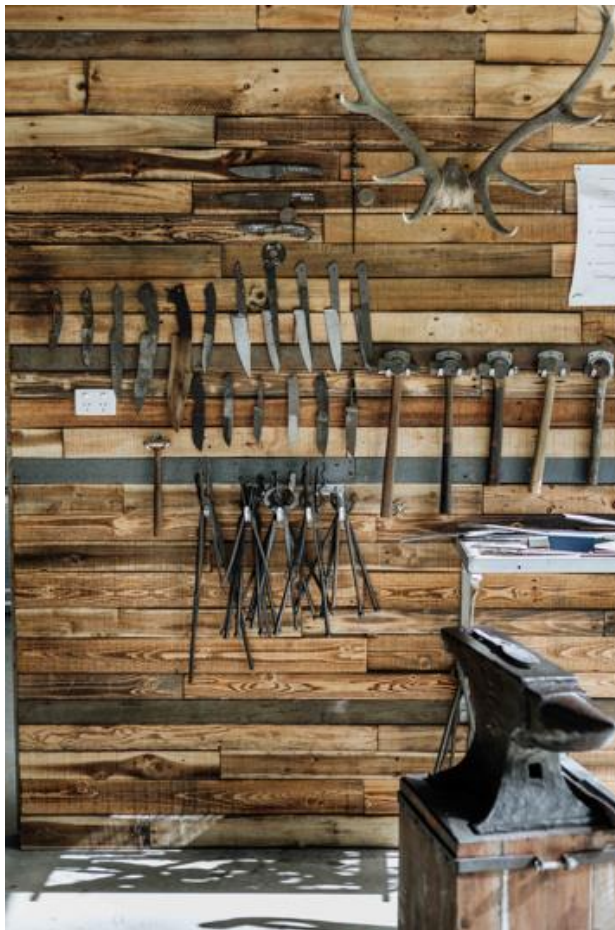
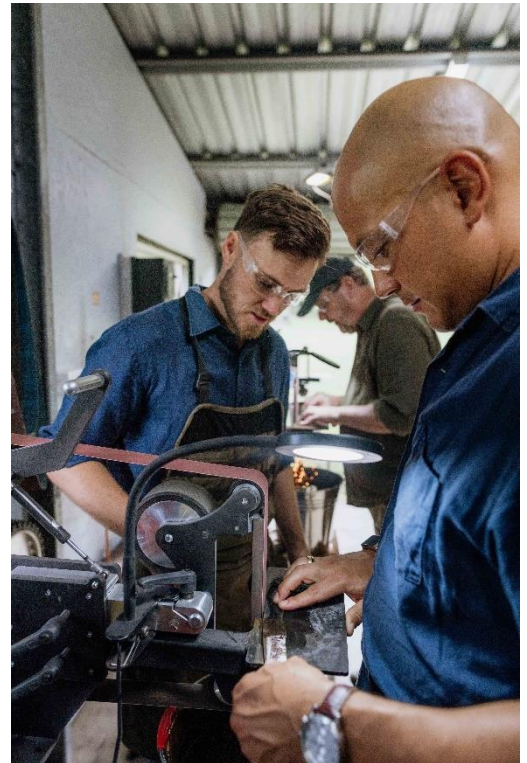
These aren't just practical skills but fundamental aspects of hunting responsibility. A sharp, well-maintained knife ensures clean, efficient processing that maximizes meat yield and maintains food safety standards. Poor knife skills, on the other hand, can lead to wasted game and potentially dangerous situations.

Not every knife makes a good first hunting knife. The best options balance quality with simplicity – blades that hold an edge well without requiring complex maintenance, handles that provide secure grip without unnecessary features. Fixed-blade designs can work better for beginners than folders, offering reliability and ease of cleaning, but as with all rules, there are always exceptions.

Many experienced hunters recommend starting with a moderate-sized blade, typically 3.5 to 4 inches, which handles most tasks effectively while remaining manageable for developing skills. The goal is building competence and confidence, not overwhelming new hunters with overly specialised tools.

While factory knives serve many hunters well, there's something truly special about owning a blade crafted by a skilled artisan. Somewhat of an endangered species in an increasingly digital world, Dan Pettersen from London Road Ironworks holds true to years gone by and creates extraordinary handmade custom hunting knives that prove exceptional quality doesn't always come with a premium price tag. A schoolteacher by day, Dan pursues knife making as his passion project, bringing the same dedication to his craft that he brings to education.

Dedicated to old world blacksmith techniques, Dan gives those who venture into his barn an authentic experience that transports you back to what it must have been like in medieval times. The rhythmic sound of hammer striking anvil and the distinctive smell of the coal powered furnace create an atmosphere that connects modern hunters to centuries of metalworking heritage.



His reasonably priced, handcrafted blades demonstrate how traditional techniques, and modern materials can combine to create tools that outperform many mass-produced alternatives. What makes Dan's work even more unique is his commitment to sharing these ancient metalworking skills with others. Through his knife making workshops, he introduces enthusiasts to the art of bladesmithing, teaching them to create their own custom hunting knives.

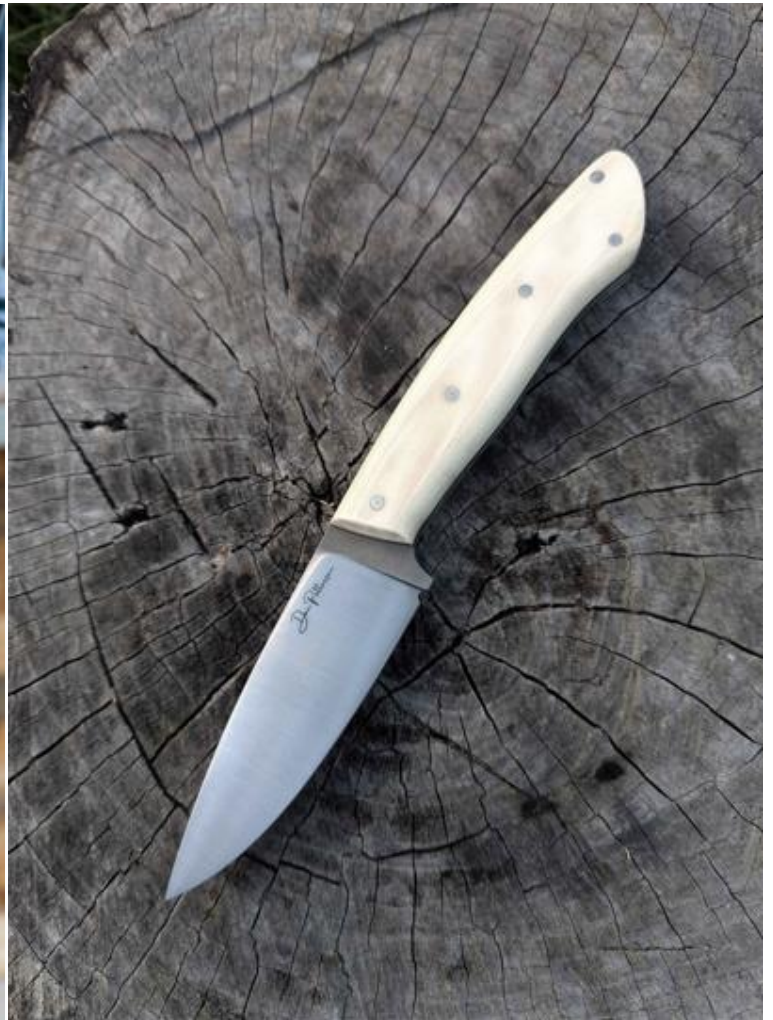
These hands-on workshops offer hunters a unique opportunity to understand their tools on a deeper level. Participants don't just observe the process – they forge, shape, and finish their own blade from start to completion, taking home a fully functional hunting knife they crafted with their own hands.

For many participants, creating their own hunting knife becomes a deeply meaningful milestone – a blade that carries personal investment and craftsmanship pride alongside its practical utility. There's something profoundly satisfying about field dressing game with a



knife you forged yourself, knowing every aspect of its construction and capabilities. I speak from personal experience, having the privilege of owning one of Dan's one-of-a-kind hunting knives.

Dan's approach shows that skilled craftsmanship can still be accessible at a reasonable price, providing hunters with blades that deliver superior performance while maintaining the personal touch that only comes from individual attention to each piece. Whether purchasing one of his custom knives or learning to make your own in his workshop, London Road Ironworks represents the bridge between mass production and the old world charm of a blacksmith's craft.



Heym SR30 chambered in 7x57 Mauser – By Greg Rashford



The SR30 is Heym's version of a straight pull centerfire rifle and is now the latest addition to my gun safe. Straight pulls are nothing new having been around since the 1880's and many rifle manufacturers offer a centerfire variant including Beretta, Blaser, Browning and Savage amongst others.



Heym SR30 in walnut with Burnt Bronze cerakote action and barrel. Note adjustable cheek piece.

What attracted me to the SR30 is the ability to have a round chambered with the bolt un-cocked and safety on. This enables the rifle to be carried safely while allowing quick and silent cocking should a hunting opportunity arise.

The SR30 comes in a number of variants, I chose a semi varmint barrel together with an adjustable cheek rest. At just over 4.7kg with optics, bolt, magazine, sling etc it's no mountain rifle but suitable for my needs as I tend to spend a bit of time at the range between hunting trips.



At 4.7kg the SR30 is no mountain rifle but will be a good allrounder between hunting and range duties



Magazine variants come in either 3 or 5 shot. One of each came with the rifle.

The 7x57 Mauser, also known simply as 7x57 or the 275 Rigby, was first developed in the late 1890's. Many popular current cartridges can trace their lineage back to the 7x57 through either the 308

or 30-06 family of cartridges. Because of its age and use in many rifles over the years the official SAAMI spec lists maximum pressure at 51,000psi. With modern powders and rifles (the SR30 ball bearing locking mechanism has been tested well above 100,000psi) it is possible for reloaders to load well above SAAMI spec (read speeds north of 2700fps for 150gn projectiles).

W.D.M. (Karamodjo) Bell made the 7x57 famous for having killed the majority of his +1,100 elephants with the cartridge. Bell was sensitive to recoil and mastered the brain shot with the low recoiling 7x57. Another historical legend who used the 7x57 (marketed by the English as the 275 Rigby) was Jim Corbett of man-eating tiger and leopard fame. Corbett was gifted a Rigby 275 for killing the Champawat man-eating tiger responsible for 436 human deaths. Later in his career Corbett purchased his own 275 Wesley Richards, a testament to how highly he regarded the cartridge.



Being a bit of a traditionalist and not that interested in the latest high BC fads of PRC's and Creedmoors, the timber stocked SR30 chambered in 7x57 filled the gap between my 25-06 and 308 just nicely. Early load development is showing promise, and once I find time for a few more range sessions, the SR30 will be ready for its first hunting trip. I figure that if Bell can kill 800+ elephants and Corbett the majority of his 19 man-eating cats with the 7x57 then I should be able to knock off a deer or two in the coming years!



**BROADSOUND
SAFARIS**

**Proudly supporting Brisbane Branch,
Australian Deer Association**

Broadsound Hunting Safaris Australia is owned and operated by Greg Coyne. Offering a wealth of experience, Greg's vast knowledge of the Australian big game and native wildlife, is second to none!

MINCER FOR HIRE

The branch has a new mincer and sausage stuffer which is now available for our members to hire.

Cost \$10 per week with a \$50 deposit. Equipment must come back clean and in good working order (the same as when it was checked out).

Pick up and drop off from the Branch building, SSAA Belmont.

Contact Peter Cohen to arrange pick-up on 0438 774 213.

Member Hunting Book Library

Please note: There is an extensive hunting/shooting book library available to all Brisbane Branch members who attend the meetings. The library is located within the ADA building at Belmont, so just ask a member for assistance. It's an honesty system – so ALL borrowed books must be returned once finished. Speak to Peter Cohen for more information.



EST.



2019

DOG & GUN
COFFEE

**BLOODY GOOD COFFEE.
READY FOR ADVENTURE**

DOG & GUN COFFEE IS FUEL FOR THE INTREPID EXPLORERS,
THE HUNTERS AND THE GATHERERS. THE THRILL-SEEKERS AND
THOSE WHO SIMPLY FEEL AT HOME IN THE WILD

**UNIQUE CLUB MEMBER CODE:
ADABRIS15**

15% OFF ANY ORDER ONLINE AT DOGANDGUNCOFFEE.COM
ONE USE PER CUSTOMER

  @DOGANDGUNCOFFEE

WWW.DOGANDGUNCOFFEE.COM