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April 2025

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REPORT

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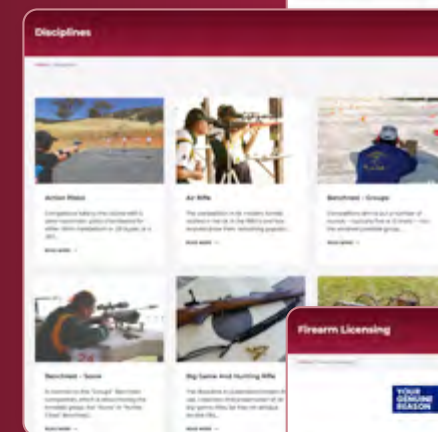
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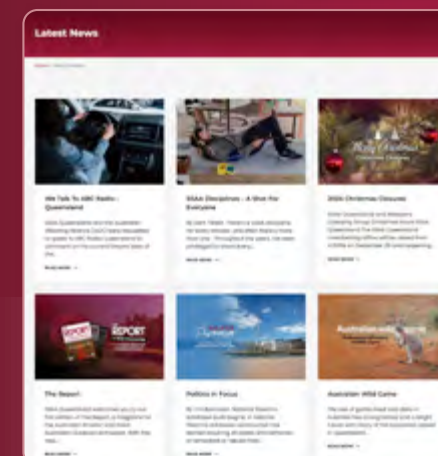
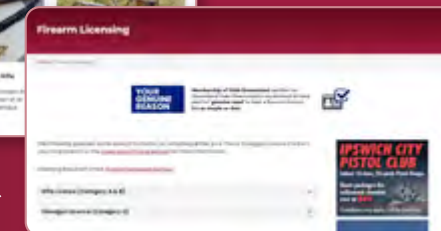
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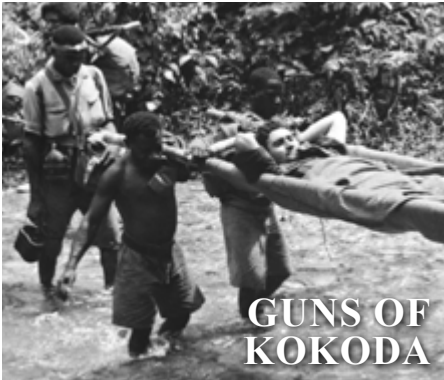
SSAA Queensland

Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Qld.) Inc.

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Editorial

Shooting means many different things to different people, but we all share a common understanding of what it means to be a licensed shooter. It means we are law abiding, watch our Ps and Qs and have been subject to investigation of our past. Our future conduct will be scrutinised and assessed by the authorities and they decide on whether we can maintain our firearms license and what firearms we can own.

It can be intrusive and frustrating and despite us jumping those hurdles and diving through the hoops, we see some in our society, often the media, only too happy to muddy the waters between licensed and unlicensed shooters and registered and unregistered firearms.

I was live on air on ABC Radio recently and was asked whether there was cause for alarm because there has been an increase in licensed shooters across the country in the past 30 years. My answer was no; that’s a good thing, as licensed shooters are among the most law abiding in the nation. The more licensed shooters, the safer our society will be.

Oh, and what does shooting mean to me? Less clay target shooting and night culling nowadays but more day hunting and lately handgun competition. And it means I get the opportunity to disprove the lies and sensationalist ballyhoo of antis and adversaries while spruiking the fun, challenging and beneficial aspects of target shooting and hunting.

Tim Bannister
Co-Managing Editor



A new magazine for the Australian Shooter and Great Australian Outdoors enthusiast

Volume 1.2

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Letters

Academic paper or fairytale?

I read a story on how the Australia Institute 'think tank' put out a report saying 'shock, horror' there are more guns in Australia now than 30 years ago and most of them are stored in suburban homes. Are these guys for real? Please tell me these knee-wobbling scare mongers don't get any government funding?

Are they going to put out a report saying there are more cars and houses now than 30 years ago?

Sam, via email

Editor's Note: The extensive links between the Australia Institute and the Greens has been well documented, Sam. Their claim to be independent is laughable and their understanding of firearms matters is non-existent. In a previous report on firearms in Australia they said shooters choose which firearm they are going to 'carry' that day by what colour clothes they are wearing! See our response to their current paper in this issue under Politics in Focus.

Crocs and cane toads...

In the February issue of *The Report*, I read about the damage cane toads can have on animals as large as saltwater crocodiles (*Croc avoids eviction*, pg 21).

Not long after, I saw an article from the ABC about a group of women in Boonah, Queensland who have formed a group that nightly roams their local golf course to collect and destroy troublesome cane toads, accumulating nearly 10,000 of them in only one week.

That got me thinking about ways hunters and our numerous sporting shooters could help remove or limit these unwanted pests. I wonder if shooting clubs could establish similar groups?

Jen, Adelaide, SA

Why is the magazine called *The Report*?

I received the new magazine in the mail and was very impressed with its stories. I gather it is called *The Report* because that is what the noise of a gun firing is called or am I on the wrong track?

Brett, via email

The Report: Yes. That's right, Brett. The term '*the report*' is perhaps in older times referred to the sound of a firearm being carried over a distance, particularly when no one sees the firearms being used to shoot whatever is the target.

The Zen of shooting

Regarding the story on the mindset of shooting [The mental game of shooting by Taylah Campbell May, *The Report* Vol 1.1], I really appreciate the author being able to express the mental zone a shooter goes into before pulling the trigger.

I have tried to explain it to family and friends but have never been able to find the words to properly explain my theory. I usually just get a confused odd look when I tell people I go into a Zen-like calmness when target shooting, lowering my heart rate, breathing calmly but purposefully knowing when my head rises and lowers.

An extension of this is when hunting, where you have to be calm but aware of your surroundings, in control of the firearm and know when and when not to pull the trigger.

I personally think being a firearm owner makes you a more respectful and calmer person!

Tom, Atherton Tablelands, Qld

News

LET US KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS

We want to know your thoughts on shooting, hunting and the great Australian Outdoors so put pen to paper or hit the keyboard. Letters may appear in any of our electronic and printed media including our e-newsletter, websites and *The Report* magazine. Last names optional but please include your first name and town for publishing and SSAA Queensland membership number for verification purposes only.

Mail to: SSAA Queensland, Member Letters, PO Box 2443 North Ipswich, Qld 4305 or

Email: news@ssaaqld.org.au

A sustainable future for print

Did you know *The Report* is printed from fully renewable and sustainable trees that capture carbon as they grow? The paper is made with pre- and post-consumer waste and seedlings are planted to replace the harvested trees.

Electronic waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the world. Print has a one-time energy cost and stores information forever without requiring additional energy. Digital content requires energy for its maintenance, such as being stored in the cloud.

Sustainable forests provide a home for native fauna and, like all environments, requires the hands-on services of environmentalists for protection against introduced species and weeds.

Change your details online

Did you know you can change your SSAA Queensland membership details online yourself?

Queensland is the only state in Australia where members can change their contact details and communication preferences online and instantly.

Go to members.ssaaqld.org.au

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SIFA
Shooting Industry Foundation Australia

A new shooting alliance FORGED IN STEEL



As announced in 2024, SSAA Queensland established the Australian Shooters Alliance (ASA), a national entity responsible for publishing the Australia-wide *The Report* magazine and serving as a vehicle to lobby and engage national lawmakers and international groups. Discussions have been held with shooting organisations in New Zealand and the USA and ASA representatives have visited Canberra and Federal Parliament on several occasions.

ASA has also been accepted by the Australian Attorney-General's Department as a stakeholder on the National Firearms Register (NFR) Program. The Attorney General's Firearms Reforms and Permissions Director Vanessa Paterson said,

"Working collaboratively with organisations such as the ASA will be essential to ensure the successful implementation of the NFR.

"The department will engage with the ASA to seek input on key elements of the NFR. The ASA's ongoing input will be valuable to ensure the NFR achieves mutually beneficial outcomes and improvements to firearms registries that are appropriate for firearms users..." ASA is a conglomerate of hunting, shooting and industry members and organisations and like the Australian firearms industry peak group, the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia (SIFA), involvement is by invitation only. All financial members of SSAA Queensland are automatically represented by the ASA, which

already boasts members and affiliates from across multiple Australian states.

The concept of a new national 'alliance' dedicated to promoting and securing the future of the shooting sports and hunting in Australia came about when SSAA Queensland took over its membership processing and activated its own public liability. The difference between other start-up shooting organisations and lobby groups is that the ASA has the staffing and financial backing of SSAA Queensland. With the financial stability and multiple real estate assets, the ASA's future has been forged in steel and is destined to be an unbreakable player in the world of shooting. 🎯



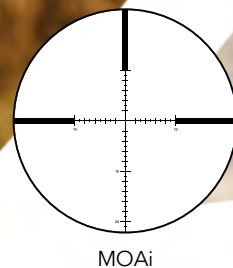
SSAA Queensland AWARD WINNERS for membership solutions

In 2023, SSAA Queensland took over its membership processing, using Advanced Solutions International's (ASI) membership software – iMIS. It was a huge project, but SSAA Queensland management and membership staff handled it professionally, despite the challenges. In fact, the transition was such an undertaking, it earned the Association an 'ASI Great Things Award' in October, which is given to organisations achieving great things for their members. ASI implemented this award to celebrate clients 'committed to serving their members and community at the highest levels through continuous performance improvement'.

SSAA Queensland exists for its members and is proud to have received this honour, as it shows its

commitment to them. SSAA Queensland President Hellen Gill accepted the award and engaged in panel discussions with other award winners. The Association's implementation of iMIS for its membership management will feature in various ASI publications.

Bob Alves, Chairman and CEO of ASI, said, *"The ASI Great Things Awards are reserved for ASI clients who truly dedicate themselves to improving their organization and empowering their members, supporters, staff, and community so they can fulfill their mission to the best of their ability. We're proud to honour each of our nominees and all our incredible winners, all of whom are committed to achieving great things."* 🎯



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When you want to be found

GME's personal locator beacon

An actual life saver

By Jennifer Martens

Recently my daughter and her friends took our jet ski out on the ocean, as they have done many times without incident. However, on this outing, the battery died, and they were stuck out sea for nearly an hour. Thankfully, being teenagers, they had their phones, and they contacted a friend who happened to be out fishing. He was able to tow the girls back to shore, but it was a scary situation and one where, if their phones had fallen into the water or run out of battery, could have turned even scarier. That same year my husband and I went remote hunting and our phones didn't have reception. We were fine, but we were geographically embarrassed. Those two situations convinced me of the need for some sort of location device. We chose a personal locator beacon (PLB), due to its versatility.

A PLB is different to an EPIRB, which is an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon. Both will send signals to the relevant authorities; however, a PLB is meant to be carried on and registered to a person and has wider use. An EPIRB is registered to a vessel and has an internationally agreed rescue protocol. For our family, the PLB made more sense, as it can be used both on the jet ski, which is used relatively close to shore compared to a boat, as well as out bush.

The girls set out for a fun adventure on the ocean, which turned into a potential disaster. Next time the GME MT610G PLB will be in the ski's hull in case of emergency.

GME's MT610G PLB

The MT610G PLB from GME is a small unit, weighing just 264g in the case and 159g on its own. With a GME Genuine Accessory CC610 case with a handy latch, it can be attached to a belt, backpack or similar. Being bright yellow, it is easy to pick out from other camping and outdoor gear. While not designed to work in water, the MT610G is a fully sealed unit and will not sink if dropped in water, which makes it suitable for use with our jet ski or other small watercraft such as kayaks, etc.

Registration

Registration of your PLB is a must, as each unit has a unique identifier and will give authorities access to your details, including your emergency contacts. It will also allow authorities to contact you to ensure the activation of your device was not accidental before they deploy a rescue team. Registration is made easy either via a QR code or included instructions from the Australian Government's Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Registration also gives you exclusive content, access to tutorials and information on the latest products. You can also transfer ownership of your PLB; if you do, you must inform the AMSA, providing the name and address of the new owner.



The GME PLB ready to unpack and include in the jet ski's hull.



Registration of your PLB is a must.

WHEREVER LIFE TAKES YOU,

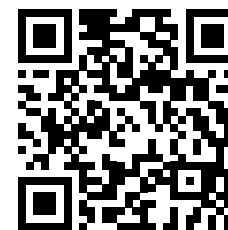
TAKE THIS PLB.

GPS PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACON MT610G

Introducing the Australian Made 406MHz GPS Personal Locator Beacon from GME, the MT610G.

The MT610G is a super-compact, lightweight PLB, offering an impressive 7-year battery life and a 6-year warranty.

Featuring an integrated 72 channel GPS receiver, high-intensity LEDs, IP68 Ingress Protection, and an inherently buoyant design, the MT610G is designed to meet and exceed the latest international standards, ensuring enhanced peace of mind for the outdoor adventurer.





The unit's easy On/Off and Test buttons.

Activation and accidental activation

The GME PLB will lead air, land and sea rescue to you. To activate the beacon, simply hold down the On/Off button for two seconds. Pressing again for five seconds turns the unit off.

It is extremely important to avoid accidental activation, which can occur from poor storage, poor handling or from failing to totally disable old PLB models. To minimise the chances of accidentally activating your GME PLB, you are encouraged to follow the self-testing procedures and educate your travelling companions on how to activate and deactivate the unit and when it is appropriate to do so. Also, the GME manual says to avoid storing the unit where it will be exposed to direct sunlight, which could reduce the battery or cause the unit to overheat. And, this is a no-brainer, never let a child play with a PLB.

If accidental activation does occur, you must shut it off immediately and contact the AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre on 1800 641 792.

I'm a rule follower and I'll admit that I initially felt quite nervous about accidentally setting off the MT610G PLB, but the more I got to know about it, I realised if I follow the instructions and handle it properly, there was little chance of that happening. Knowing it could one day save my life, or the lives of my travelling companions is very reassuring.

Testing the PLB

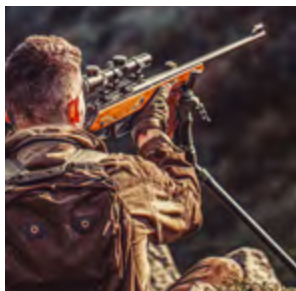
Testing your PLB is done in two parts:

1. General Self-Test – testing the digital message and memory integrity, 406 MHz and 121.5 MHz carrier RF power, communication with GPS receiver and the battery
2. GPS Self-Test – tests the real time position acquisition and transmits the position data in the digital self-test message.

Using flashing and coloured lights and the manual's 'indication' chart you can tell the health of the self-tests or troubleshoot.

Features of the GME MT610G:

- Comes with a very thorough instruction manual.
- Is suitable for marine, aviation and land activities.
- Is GPS equipped (better than 100m).
- Has a 7-year battery life (6 years guaranteed).
- Emits a high visibility flashing light.
- Does not require a warm-up period.
- The unit is featherweight, compact and robust.
- Features a digital 406 MHz, 5-watt transmission plus 121.5 MHz homing signal.
- Allows for COSPAS-SARAT worldwide operation, which is a satellite-aided search and rescue initiative that was created prior to the space age (1957).
- Has national and international approvals.
- Boasts a buoyant and waterproof design (Exceeds a rating of IP67, which means better than water-resistance rating up to 3 feet for 30 minutes).
- Uses a simple two-step activation.
- Includes a lanyard and clip for easy carry.



With a GME PLB, the hunt will be your only focus.



A trick to easily attach the lanyard to the PLB is to use a bit of dental floss to pull the strap through.



The GME PLB fully deployed. It is a small unit with big capabilities.

With a family-affordable price at about \$369 online, there is no reason not to have a GME PLB but really, the reality of knowing your family is protected is reason enough...So, ***'Wherever life takes you, take GME.'*** More information: ausbeacon@amsa.gov.au 📞

Havannah Island

Free of unwanted guests

By The Report Team

From the 1800s up until 2013, Queensland's Havannah Island was inhabited by thousands of goats, which were left there expressly to feed shipwrecked sailors. The goats severely affected the island's vegetation, which consists mainly of spear grasses, rainforests and mangroves.

Today, however, the island, which is 55 kilometres north of Townsville, is goat free, thanks to the hard work of members from SSAA Queensland's Conservation and Wildlife Management Group (CWM). A comprehensive, six-year control program was undertaken by CWM members, mostly from the Townsville area, to eradicate the goats and allow the native vegetation to regenerate.

Having received permission from the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council (PIASC), which manages the island along with 10 others in the Greater Palm Island Group, CWM members planned, controlled, and funded the program on their own.

Method of goat removal was by organised ground shooting, as helicopter shooting was too expensive and difficult given the rough terrain, with crevices, shrubs and large rocks providing ideal hiding places for the goats. The island is not inhabited by people, and it is only accessible by boat.

To assist the shooters in finding groups generally of about 30 or more goats, teams would often

circle the island in boats and relay locations by UHF radio. The ground shooters usually walked the island in two or more teams, pushing the goats in a specific direction. Rifles used were centrefires of various calibres, ensuring quick and humane kills.

As goat populations can double in about 18 months, the group had to remove about 35 per cent of the population each year to ensure it decreased.

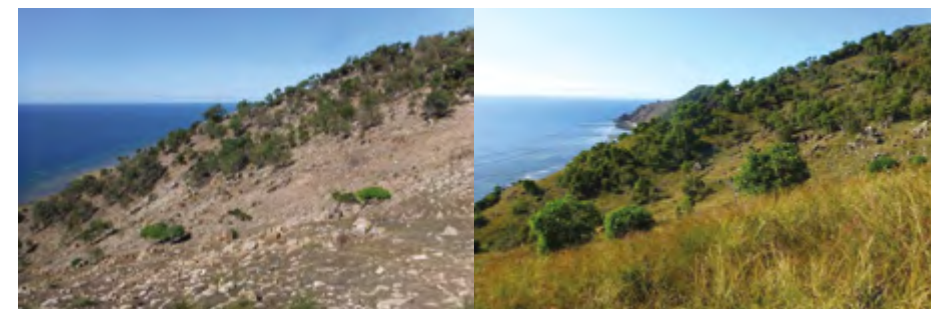
During 10 shooting trips to the island, CWM members racked up 2552 hours of volunteer efforts. 1633 goats were removed, at a cost of about \$17 per goat. Again, the costs were covered by the individual CWM volunteers, mostly arising from travel to and from the island and the purchase of ammunition. These costs are relatively low compared to other

“1633 goats were removed, at a cost of about \$17 per goat.”

culling programs. For example, a similar ground shooting program on Kangaroo Island in South Australia cost between \$70 and \$235 per goat, while an aerial shooting program there cost about \$360 per goat.

The success of the Havannah Island eradication program demonstrates the benefits volunteer sporting shooters can provide and their commitment to conservation. As such, discussions have begun with PIASC about establishing comparable volunteer shooting activities on the other islands managed by the council.

The Havannah Island project serves as a shining example of conservation success to the rest of Australia. Conducting similar programs throughout the country could benefit both governing bodies and shooters, as well as our native flora and fauna. For shooters, finding hunting properties can be difficult, so coordinating with authorities to assist with feral control could offer members opportunities for both hunting and conservation activities. A win-win for all. 📍



(L): View of the island before the goats were removed and (R), the same hillside a few years later.

The Report Exclusive:

BERETTA 688
PERFORMANCE
SPORTING
A modern entrant into clay competition

By Darryl Groundwater

The Report magazine was given Australia’s first look at one of Beretta Australia’s new sporting clays shotguns – the 688. Fresh to the local shooting market, it was taken to the range to be evaluated over competition targets.

Field testing the Beretta 688

After setting up the firearm to suit competitor Aaron Blackwell, we ventured out into cloudy weather to shoot some rounds of clays. Interestingly, Aaron felt quite at home with the 688, as he normally shoots a Beretta 692.

To say the least, the 688 performed beyond the squad’s expectations and, surprisingly, top scored for the first round. Based on the original 680 action, this firearm fell into the shooters’ hands without any stock modifications, which are often required when fitting a new gun.

As anticipated, the sporting clays grounds had shooting stands that are set to test the best shots with their seasoned sporting firearms. The 688 in Aaron’s hands glided through all stands with a smoothness of swing that punished all targets released. Ammunition used was GB Pro Clays. The selection of ammunition necessary to engage these challenging targets seemed to match the medium-weighted 688, with little barrel jump and acceptable felt recoil on Aaron’s shoulder.

We managed to shoot two courses over a variety of challenging stands before the skies opened up. The rain provided the perfect time to sit down with the squad to talk about this new addition to the Beretta stables and to understand the reasoning for the impressive performance that the 688 delivered.



Leading into a teal target.

Overview of the Beretta 688

Starting with the stock, the dark laminated wood is a surprise to initially observe. Stepping away from conventional one-piece timbered stocks may raise eyebrows from the more conservative shotgun owner; however, Beretta has done a fine job with this new design. The factory-adjustable comb is complemented with a sensible Beretta tool that carries out elevated and lateral adjustments quickly and with ease. The 688 also includes a T spanner for a quick release of the stock from the action. Added benefit for the shooter is a supply of coloured shims to support the height of the adjustable comb. Recoil reduction is assisted with a factory gel recoil pad. Stock length is set to satisfy the average shooter and additional factory gel pads can be sourced if stock-length adjustment is preferred.

Beretta has made favourable changes to the pistol grip by extending it downwards to offer larger hands a practical hold of the grip to provide support for all of the fingers. The right-handed palm swell fitted Aaron comfortably and he mentioned his preference for the 688 stock over his 692. The quality of the laser checkering was impressive. Timber fit to the action was excellent.

BERETTA 688 PERFORMANCE SPORTING

Moving onto the action and, once again, Beretta has demonstrated its initiative to capture shooter interest with a modern-designed action and signature to complement the 688. A rounder top lever to assist the reduction of thumb fatigue is a noted benefit. The stippling on the action is very well done, providing a low contour over the top of the action, and delivering an uninterrupted view of the rib. Beretta has provided a trigger shoe that is slightly angled to favour right- or left-handed shooters. Trigger pulls on the 688 were crisp at 3.5lb for the bottom and 4lb for the top. No take-up play was evident on either trigger before they released. Fine triggers such as these would be normally found in the most expensive sporting guns. Interestingly, Beretta has paid particular attention to detail in the stock design and competitive triggers to place the 688 into the competitive sporting arena.

At first observation, the forend seems a little short compared to the norm. The length is more than

Key attributes

- Affordable, modern, upper-entry level competition gun
- Adjustable and customisable
- Modern black laminate
- Greater weight reducing felt recoil
- Laser chequered
- Good weight distribution (adjustable)
- Palm swell grip
- Excellent handling and, well, ‘Performance’!



A complete package.

adequate for a conventional gun mount; however, for those who support a longer mount, the fingers may sometime rest on the barrel.

The 76cm barrels have a flat tapered rib measuring 10mm at the action and 8mm at the chokes. Five colour-coded extended chokes are provided with the 688 and range from skeet, cylinder, improved cylinder, modified and improved modified. All of these chokes are marked for steel shot. This is another practical benefit of the 688, as some clay target clubs around Australia are now stipulating steel shot ammunition only.

The gun case supplied with the 688 is a practical purpose-built case. Robust and able to be roughly handled, it offers adequate protection for the firearm and provision for security to satisfy the requirements for firearm transportation.

Summary

Beretta has complemented the 688 with all of the attributes needed to make it a serious sporting shotgun. After observing the firearm through its paces over the challenging targets, the 688 did it better than the rest of the fine guns in our squad. Felt recoil appeared negligible and the long distant crossers were engaged by Aaron without any signs of flinching. The smooth movement of the 688, with the balance on the hinge pin, made any target flight path an easy task to engage.

Overall weight of the 688 is 3.807kg (just under 8.4lb), making this firearm a well-weighted sporting gun

The 688 comes with a 12-month limited warranty, which can be extended a further 24 months if the original owner wishes to register their purchase with Beretta Australia.

Beretta Australia indicated the recommended price for the 688 is \$5,490.

Specifications

Mode	688 Performance Sporting
Gauge:	12 with 76mm chamber
Bore Diameter:	18.6mm
Barrel Lengths:	71-76-81cm
Chokes:	Optima Choke HP
Top Rib:	10x8
Stock:	Laminated wood
Recoil Pad:	MicroCore
Finishing:	Blued
Weight:	3.8kg with 76-cm barrels
Price:	RRP \$5,490

See Beretta's promotional video here:



A well-balanced Sporter.

Gear Up
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WIN



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GPO Centuri 3-18x44i provides outstanding functionality for a variety of shooting scenarios.

GPO CENTURI 3-18X44i

*A perfect scope for Australian conditions
- even the odd monsoon or two*

By Steve Marchant

German Precision Optics (GPO) was founded in 2015 by a team of former managers and specialists, whose combined experience in the optics industry totals more than 100 years. GPO's headquarters is at Inning am Ammersee, Bavaria, Germany. Its vision is to be the world's first choice for high-quality outdoor optics. To achieve this vision GPO applies a lean, efficient business model, wherein key components such as electronic lighting control and fibre-optic reticles are produced in Germany, with final assembly of the products taking place in GPO's international production network in Japan, Philippines and China. All products are returned to headquarters in Germany where they undergo a final quality check before being packaged with

accessories/documentation and then shipped. GPO products are backed by a ten-year warranty on optics and mechanics. With its products currently represented in more than 60 countries, GPO is well on the way to realising its vision.

Released in 2024, the Centuri line adds six new riflescopes to GPO's product range:

- two super compact models: 3-12x44i SC and 4-16x44i SC
- four traditional models: 4-16x44i, 2.5-15x44i, 2.5-15x50i and 3-18x44i.

The 3-18x44i is the subject of this review.

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The scope arrived with everything you need to get shooting.

Accompanying the scope is an operator’s manual, warranty card, micro-fibre lens cleaning cloth, see-through ‘bikini’ lens cover, a zero-stop turret adjustment tool and a tool for removing/replacing the magnification throw lever.

First impressions of the Centuri 3-18x44i riflescope were how robust it appeared and felt, in relation to its relatively compact dimensions for a high-magnification optic. The matt finish was aesthetically pleasing and the graduations delineating windage/elevation, magnification, parallax, ocular lens adjustments and red dot illumination levels were amply distinguishable.

Elevation and windage turrets feature 1/4” MOA click adjustments. Instead of caps that must be removed before elevation/windage can be adjusted, the Centuri has ‘exposed’ turrets that are locked down to protect the scope from being accidentally bumped or adjusted. To make an adjustment, simply pull up on the turrets to disengage the lock and turn the turret the required number of clicks. When adjustments are complete, the

turret is pressed down to lock it back in place. Elevation and windage adjustments are audible and feel crisp and sharp. The turrets are 35mm in diameter and have nice, aggressive serrations, which facilitate positive, precise adjustments. GPO Centuri elevation and windage turrets include a Reset to Zero function. After sighting the rifle, the turrets can be removed and replaced with the 0 mark on the turret ring aligned to the rotation indicator marking on the riflescope body. Reset to Zero provides for an easier return to the initial sight setting if additional windage or elevation adjustments are made for a shot. Instead of counting the number of clicks required when returning to the original sight setting, the shooter can simply spin the turret knobs back to zero.

The Centuri elevation turret also comes with a ‘multiple rotation indicator’. On the second rotation of the turret, a stainless-steel post on top of the turret pops up. This allows users who have made long-range elevation adjustments in the field to see and feel exactly where the turret has been adjusted to. Yet another feature is Zero Stop Function, which stops the bullet impact point from being adjusted down and is intended for shooters who wish to easily return to their original sight setting after raising the bullet impact in the field.

Like the various other Centuri controls, the magnification ring on the 3-18x44i was firm in its movement, which contributes to the robustness of the scope. The GPO Centuri is supplied with a magnification throw lever, which makes adjustment of the magnification settings easier. When testing the scope, the magnification ring was moved throughout its entire range several times, so good use was made of the throw lever. For shooters who don’t require it, the throw lever is easily removed and replaced using the tool provided.



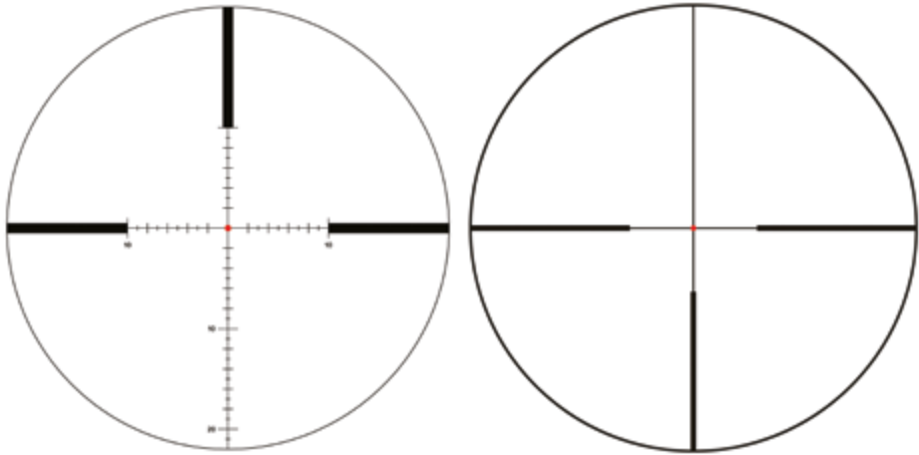
The stainless-steel post that pops up on the second rotation of the turret.

Parallax adjustment and red dot illumination controls are incorporated into the scope’s third turret. The parallax dial is marked for 15, 20, 30, 50, 75, 100, 200, 300, 500 yards and infinity, enabling shots to be fine-tuned effortlessly. The red dot illumination settings are graduated from 0 to 8. At night, the red dot becomes fully illuminated at the 3 setting, and in daylight it is bright enough to use from around 5 to 6. Even in full sun the illuminated dot is useful for clearly defining the aiming point on a black target, particularly when the target is in a dark background. A shot on a black pig in the shade of a tree, for example, is more readily accomplished with the red dot illuminated.

The Centuri features a single piece, 30mm tube made from the highest-grade aluminium alloys, with the reticle placed in the second focal plane. The review scope came with an MOA graduated reticle incorporating the above-mentioned illuminated micro-dot.



The third turret incorporates the parallax adjustment and red dot illumination controls.



The reticle is in the second focal plane. It is MOA graduated and comes with an illuminated micro-dot. Here the G4i reticle is beside the MOAi.



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GPO CENTURI 3-18X44I

For those who prefer a much simpler and cleaner sight picture, Centuri scopes will be available with the famous G4i reticle from July this year. The scope’s internal components are cutting edge and include GPO’s proprietary ‘Double HD glass technologies,’ which incorporate more than one extra-low dispersion element within the lenses. Commonly used in high-end photography lenses, this technology is now being utilised in riflescopes and binoculars.

GPO uses proprietary lens coatings: ‘GPObright,’ which they say has a 99.7 per cent transmittance, delivers a crisp, clear colour image in all lighting conditions; and ‘PASSIONdrop’, which protects outer lens surfaces by effectively filling in the micro-grooves and channels created when the lenses are finely polished. The hydrophobic PASSIONdrop coatings produce a smoother surface on the lens, causing water, oil and dirt to simply roll off or fall away. This helps maintain a better view in all conditions in the field and keeps the lenses cleaner for longer, which, in turn, reduces the prospect of the lens being scratched or marked.

“...the Centuri out-performed my 4-12x40 in every way.”

The GPO Centuri’s optical performance was tested against one of my own scopes in various light settings, from outside in bright (North Queensland summer) daylight, to after dusk on a cloudy evening. Given its higher quality and greater number of features, it was no shock that the Centuri out-performed my 4-12x40 in every way. What was interesting is by how much it did so, particularly in low light.

Low-light testing of both scopes was carried out 20 minutes after dusk, under some broken cloud cover. It was dark enough outside to the naked eye that I would not have considered taking aim at anything. I was thus somewhat astonished to look through the Centuri at a clear enough image of the intended target to have completely confidence in taking a shot. Checking my own scope, the target could be seen, but it was not defined enough to take a shot with any confidence.

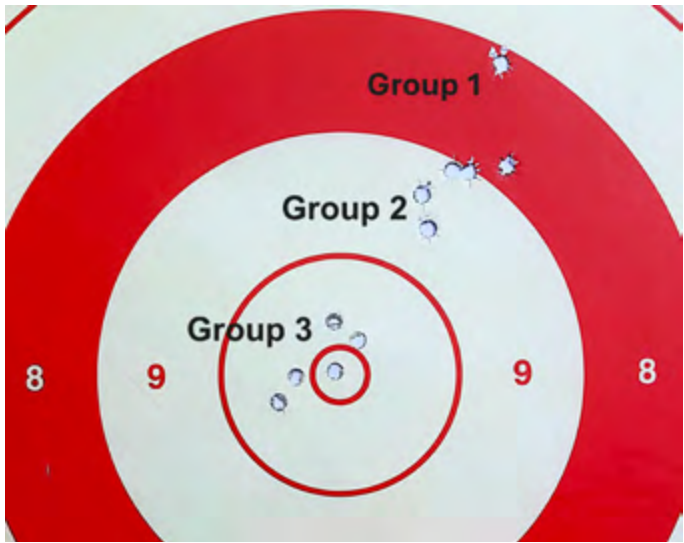
Given that the best time to hunt primary game species, such as deer and pigs, is around dawn and dusk, having at one’s disposal the level of optical performance provided by the GPO Centuri is a very distinct advantage.

Unfortunately, opportunities for range-testing the 3-18x44i Centuri were limited due to the current monsoonal rain. On a heavily overcast morning, I set my target at 50m and just managed to get the scope bore-sighted before the skies opened. A week or so later, with conditions looking more hopeful, we headed off to the range. To save time, I skipped my usual first sighters at 50m and set the target at 100m. The first two shots hit high and right of point of aim, but they were touching.

The weather was deteriorating, so I took this two-shot group to be valid and adjusted the elevation and windage turrets to position the next group about half-way between the first two shots and the bullseye. The next

five shots appeared roughly where they should, so a second sight adjustment was made and the third group was fired, as the showers began again.

Retrieving the target, a five-shot group was found very near to the point of aim. Unfortunately, the monsoon hung around until Christmas and this turned out to be the last opportunity for range time with the Centuri. I was disappointed about the rain, but very impressed with the precision and ergonomics of the Centuri’s lock-down turrets, which had enabled the scope to be sighted so quickly and easily.



The five-shot group very near to the point of aim.



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“...the perfect all-round scope for Australian hunting conditions.”

In summary
The GPO Centuri 3-18x44i is a high-magnification, low-profile riflescope, which provides exceptional optical performance. The 3x setting is perfect for shorter-range hunting in thick timber or under forest canopies in low-light conditions and the 18x magnification enables precision hunting and shooting to be accomplished at greater distances. This riflescope is compact, robust and easily mounted on hunting rifles, yet it incorporates a maximum range of adjustments and thus provides outstanding functionality for a variety of shooting scenarios. The GPO Centuri 3-18x44i embodies the perfect all-round scope for Australian hunting conditions and, with a recommended retail price of \$1089, is excellent value in terms of price-performance ratio. 🎯

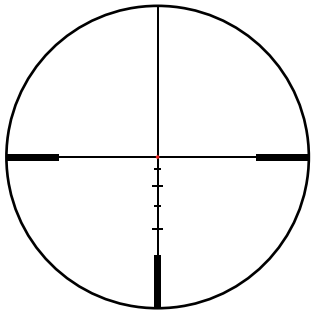


GPO Centuri Specifications	
SKU	RC650
Model	3-18x44i
Reticle	MOAi or G4i
Weight	23.3oz
Length	13.2in
Eye Relief	3.75in
FOV@100y	41ft – 7ft
Tube Dia	30mm
Turret Click Adj.	¼ in
Max Elev	90in @ 100y
Max Wind	90in @ 100y
Turret	Zero Stop-Locked
Parallax Adj.	10y to infinity



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Brigalow Belt boars

By Neil Schultz

If you are lucky, you can see the pigs before they see you. These are out feeding late afternoon after the air temperatures have started to drop.

Queensland's Brigalow Belt is a unique bioregion on the western side of the Great Dividing Range, stretching from Townsville to a little south of the New South Wales Border. As the name would suggest, this region's flora consists largely of brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla*) along with a scattering of belah (*casuarina cristata*) and poplar box (*Eucalyptus populnea*) and is characterised by black-soil plains and melon holes.

Those fertile black-soil plains support a thriving agricultural sector producing both high-grade beef cattle and millions of tons of grain, largely wheat, barley and sorghum along with chickpeas and mung beans. Tasty crops are irresistible to feral pigs; consequently, the region hosts a substantial population of those destructive pests. In 2021 it was estimated that feral pigs in Queensland numbered around 2.3

million. A direct consequence of the good wet seasons we've had since then, landowners are reporting that numbers have increased.

Nationally, feral pigs are costing the agricultural sector more than \$156 million per year in lost production and damage mitigation measures. This is where recreational hunters have stepped up to lend a hand, ground shooting pigs on farms right throughout the state. Queensland's Brigalow Belt has been known to be a feral pig hotspot for decades and as such sees substantial mitigation efforts undertaken by the recreational sector. There are boots on the ground hunting feral pigs in southern Queensland 365 days per year.

All that recreational effort is 100 per cent voluntary, with no cost to the landowner or taxpayer. Outlays for dedicated shooters are in the tens of thousands of dollars with rifles, scopes, thermal detection



Thermal scopes increase hunter's success exponentially. This entry level unit mounted on a Lithgow .243 took care of an average boar rooting up a sorghum crop.

equipment, ammunition and fuel making up the bulk of expenses. Add to that the wear and tear on expensive 4x4 vehicles, insurances, etc and you'll see that these 'weekend' shooters are contributing millions of dollars to managing pest porkers.

Tactics employed by successful hunters largely revolve around patrolling crop paddocks either on foot or using vehicles. As feral pigs are largely nocturnal, this makes the use of spotlights, or increasingly more common thermal detection devices, essential. Once pigs are spotted, they are often best approached on foot to within



Damien Ticehurst took this crop pig with the most basic gear for nocturnal hunting, a torch mounted under the barrel of his Lithgow .308.



A common sight throughout the brigalow belt, a mob heading for water just before sunset. Coloured pigs are very common in some areas.



This tusky old boar was feeding on a cow carcass and dealt with using a thermal equipped .308.

shooting range, as they can become quite shy of vehicles. This is especially common in areas where hunting pressure is intense. It is standard operating procedure for my hunting companions and I to walk to with 30m of feeding pigs at night. Pigs have poor eyesight but an acute sense of smell. They will detect movement, but if you are stationary, even in daylight they'll often ignore you. Conversely, the slightest whiff of human scent will usually send them bolting for cover at warp speed.

During our hot and often dry summer months, sitting at water points just before sunset is often effective. Pigs will drink every day in hot weather and commonly visit dams around last light. Positioned with the breeze in your face, it is simply a matter of waiting for the pigs to come to you. My hunting cobbles and I have refined this to sitting in folding chairs with a set of shooting sticks, iced coffee and bikkies, very relaxed hunting indeed. 🍷

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Blades

Which is the best for your task?

By Rod Hoare, The Report's
bladeware expert

The most important part of a knife is undoubtedly the blade (duh!), and that blade must be made to suit the tasks the knife is being designed for, whether that be hunting, dressing an animal, slicing food, survival, everyday carry (EDC), etc... To understand how and why a knife performs, or doesn't perform, at certain tasks, first you have to understand blade grinds, heat treatment and then the steel used. This can be a detailed and complex discussion into blades' 'how and why', so this article will touch on the basics of the common grinds, continuing over a few editions and ending with a basic understanding of heat treatment and the common different knife steels used in Australia.

The grind on a blade offers various advantages and disadvantages. Some grinds are stronger, while others are sharper, and some strive to achieve a balance of both. Although each grind has its own strengths, the impact on the blade's performance is influenced by the width of the blade stock and the grind angles. We'll assume that the blade's width and angles are optimised to enhance the strengths of each grind.



Definitions

Concave: Shapes that are hollowed out or curve inward.

Convex: Shapes that curve outward.

Spine: The back of a blade, opposite the cutting edge.

Primary Bevel/Grind: The point where the knife's main stock narrows into a cutting edge.

Secondary Bevel (or edge bevel): The thin cutting edge of the blade.



FULL HOLLOW GRIND

Hollow grinds are common in both production and handmade knives. Typically applied to thinner blades, hollow grinds create a fine edge ideal for slicing. However, the reduced material behind the edge makes them prone to chipping or rolling, making them un-suitable for heavy-duty tasks or chopping uses. Their ability to create extremely thin edges makes them a favourite for hunting, skinning and razors.

- **Strengths:** Fantastic slicing ability, easy to sharpen.
- **Best knife types:** Skinners/hunting knives, small- to medium-sized EDC, folders, and straight razors.
- **Weaknesses:** The edge can be fragile compared to other grinds.



FULL FLAT GRIND

The full flat grind, as its name suggests, involves grinding the blade from the spine to the secondary bevel/edge in a flat, linear slope. This versatile and popular grind can be thick and heavy or extremely thin and sharp, dependent on the blade's thickness and width.

Typically, a full flat grind is stronger than a hollow grind and slices better than a sabre grind.

- **Strengths:** Good cutting, strength, and chopping (depending on blade thickness).
- **Best knife types:** EDC knives, kitchen knives, hunting knives; honestly, it is good on most knives.
- **Weaknesses:** Doesn't cut quite as well as a hollow grind and isn't quite as robust as a sabre grind.

SABRE GRIND

A sabre grind is either a flat or hollow grind, where the primary bevel does not cover the entire width of the blade, leaving some portion unground. If someone says 'sabre hollow ground' you know the blade has a hollow grind that starts partway down the blade. The sabre grind is used when the maker/user wants a stronger blade.

- **Strengths:** Excellent durability holding up to chopping or battening.
- **Best knife types:** Military and tactical knives, self-defence blades, camp knives.
- **Weaknesses:** Its slicing ability is typically less impressive than other grind types.



CHISEL GRIND

The chisel grind has only the primary bevel on one side, while the other side (off side) is not ground at all (flat), or, in some chisel ground kitchen knives, it can actually be concaved slightly on the off side to resist drag on the food being sliced. Chisel grinds are uncommon, making them a more specialised grind.

- **Strengths:** Excellent strength, easy to sharpen, good cutting ability, depending on the bevel angle.
- **Best knife types:** Traditional handmade Japanese kitchen knives, Japanese Kiridashi style knives and leather-working knives.
- **Weaknesses:** Cutting is not symmetrical, which can be confusing; performance can vary widely depending on grind angles and design.

BLADES



CONVEX GRIND

The convex grind, also known as an appleseed grind, curves downwards into a convex shape (arcs outward) towards the edge. This grind is designed to retain more steel in the middle of the blade, making it the thickest of the three primary types of grinds (hollow, flat, convex). Consequently, it places additional steel behind the edge, thereby enhancing its strength.

The convex grind is commonly used with axes, machetes, and survival knives. The thick edge can withstand considerable impact without breaking or rolling.

- **Strengths:** Very strong edge; great for chopping.
- **Best knife types:** Choppers, machetes, axes and some larger survival knives.
- **Weaknesses:** Difficult to maintain and sharpen. Performance can vary wildly depending on angles.



SCANDI GRIND

The Scandinavian (Scandi) grind is a short, flat (sometimes convex) grind on a thin blade, where the primary grind also serves as the edge bevel. With no secondary bevel, the edge is ground to zero, leaving material behind for strength.

Common in bushcraft knives, it provides durability.

- **Strengths:** The theory of sharpening a Scandi is easy to understand. Often it has a strong edge that doesn't chip easily (depending on grind angle).
- **Best knife types:** Bushcraft.
- **Weaknesses:** Not as good at slicing as other grinds. In practice, sharpening can be a chore, as you have to sharpen the entire bevel (and remove a lot of steel) to sharpen it, assuming no micro-bevelling has been put on it.



COMPOUND GRIND

The compound grind is a specialised grind that involves combining two or more of the above grinds on a single blade, e.g., flat and hollow. This unique approach offers the best of both worlds, providing both strength and slicing capabilities across different sections of the edge. Tactical and military knives are often crafted using compound grinds, as are daggers where they may be hollow ground along most of the edge, but the tip is flat or convex ground for strength for thrusting/piercing. A kitchen or hunting knife can feature a full flat grind that transitions into a convex grind near the secondary bevel; this design enhances the knife's strength behind the edge. It's difficult to see this transition to the untrained eye.

- **Strengths:** The ability to perform different tasks with the one knife.
- **Best knife types:** Tactical/military, American tanto, daggers, some kitchen/hunting.
- **Weaknesses:** Usable blade length can be much shorter due to the different grinds along it; more difficult to sharpen the different edges.

Conclusion

Different grinds work for different jobs. When purchasing a knife, think of what you'll mostly use it for to decide which grind is best for you.

The benefit of dealing with handmade artisan makers is you can request a different grind for a profile of blade you like, while also getting the opportunity to discuss options with the actual maker to get their thoughts and get exactly what you want.

Next issue we will discuss heat treatment and steel types, and their effects on edge retention and toughness of the blade. 🎯

Full hollow grind: Knife by Sam Renwick
Full flat grind: Knife by Shawn McIntyre
Sabre grind: Knife by Mal Hannan
Chisel grind: Knife by Adam Grosskopf
Convex grind: Knife by Keisha Wurth
Scandi grind: Knife by Rian Doudle
Compound grind: Knife by Luke Berkelmans
Compound grind 2: Knife by Jackson Gross



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Hunters' guide to health risks

surface epithelium can be associated with gastrointestinal symptoms; whereas individuals who don't experience these symptoms may be mostly asymptomatic. Rare cases of spirochetemia and multiple organ failure have been reported in critically ill patients with IS. This is especially concerning for individuals with compromised immune systems, who may experience severe health complications from opportunistic infections like Brachyspira.

Given the often-challenging environments and physical demands associated with hunting, individuals with compromised immune systems are particularly susceptible to health complications from opportunistic infections like IS.



As spirochaetes is going unrecognised in Australian laboratories, more testing and research needs to be conducted.

Understanding Brachyspira exposure in Northern Australia

By wildlife ecologist Joanne Heathcote

Hunting feral vertebrate species in northern Australia can be an exhilarating adventure, offering a unique connection with nature and the thrill of the chase. However, this passion comes with certain health risks, particularly from zoonotic parasites such as the Brachyspira species. Two species of anaerobic intestinal spirochaetes, *Brachyspira* (formerly Serpulina) *pilosicoli* and *Brachyspira aalborgi*, can colonise the human large intestine. Both species are associated with a condition known as intestinal spirochaetosis (IS), in

which a thin carpet-like layer of spirochaetes is found attached by one cell end to the colorectal surface epithelium.

The presence of IS has been documented microbiologically throughout Africa, Australia, India, Indonesia, and much of the Western world for decades, particularly where living standards are low. Although IS has been historically considered relatively rare, recent studies suggest that it might be more widespread than previously thought. Carriage of spirochaetes is going unrecognised in Australian laboratories, as current protocols

Feral pigs can spread numerous diseases, including Brachyspira. Follow key hygiene strategies to minimise the risk of this serious infection.

do not specifically target their detection, and existing medical opinions remains ambivalent about their significance.

In the veterinary world, IS has been linked to diarrhoeal illness in swine, poultry, dogs, cats, opossum, non-human primates, and guinea pigs. The disease causes significant economic losses when it affects large numbers of swine. In Australia, feral pigs are known reservoirs for Brachyspira.

Colonisation of humans by intestinal spirochaetes is less well documented. Invasion of spirochetes beyond the colorectal

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With 18x magnification, a newly designed Ballistic Turret, and increased internal adjustment range, this scope ensures precise shooting at long distances, essential for hunting in open terrains or mountains.

The 30mm Main Tube Diameter allows for more physical space and increased adjustment range.

The Ballistic Turret has 3-times more adjustment range, featuring four coloured-dash-rings and a two-rowed MOA scale ring, plus a locking mechanism and zero-stop function.

Reticle options include 4W, PLEX, BRS, and BRW. The BRS reticle is optimised for hold-overs, while the BRW reticle is designed for combined turret and reticle compensation. All reticles, except for the Plex non-illuminated reticle, are glass etched for high contrast.

Competition Closes: May 31st, 2025.
Terms and Conditions apply.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Mount: Ring mount

Objective:

- 3.5-18 Magnification
- 34.3-50mm Effective objective lens diameter
- 9.5-2.8mm Exit pupil diameter
- 95mm Exit pupil distance
- 10.1-2.1m/100m Field of view
- 5.8-1.2° Field of view degrees
- 21° Field of view apparent
- -3 to +2 dpt Diopter adjustment
- 91% Light transmission
- 9.9-30.0 Twilight factor acc. to ISO 14132-1
- 50-∞yds/46-∞m Parallax correction

Measurement:

- ¼ MOA/7.27mm Impact point correction per click (in/mm)
- 82.8/82.8 2.3/2.3 Max. elevation/windage adjustment range (in@100yds/m@100m)

Size and Weight:

- 366mm
- 560g
- 30mm (central tube diameter)

Environment and Conditions:

- -20 to +55°C Functional temperature
- -30 to +70°C Storage temperature
- 13ft/4m water depth (inert gas filling) submersion tightness.

SWAROVSKI OPTIK

Routes of exposure

Hunters can inadvertently expose themselves to Brachyspira through several pathways. The most common include:

- ingestion of contaminated food or water
- direct contact with infected animals or their faeces
- poor hygiene practices, especially after handling game.

The gold standard for diagnosis of human IS worldwide is confirmed through colorectal biopsies, where direct histological examination can reveal the presence of the bacteria. Detection by culture, microscopy, or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) is not difficult, and could be implemented in Australian laboratories to examine faecal specimens during investigations of individuals with chronic diarrhoea of unknown aetiology.

Recognising symptoms

Symptoms of Brachyspira infection have been linked to a variety of intestinal disorders and can include:

- abdominal pain
- chronic and intermittent watery diarrhoea
- rectal bleeding
- weight loss
- malnutrition.

These symptoms often resemble those of more common gastrointestinal illnesses, making proper diagnosis difficult if a doctor is not aware of this condition.

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Preventive measures for hunters

For those engaged in hunting or any outdoor activities, strict hygiene practices are essential.

Here are key strategies to minimise the risk of Brachyspira infection:

- **Hygiene first:** Always practice meticulous handwashing after handling animals or their remains.
- **Cook meat thoroughly:** Ensure that all game meat is cooked to an internal temperature of at least 75°C.
- **Water safety:** Refrain from drinking untreated water while in the field to avoid exposure to pathogens.
- **Animal faeces awareness:** Avoid contact with animal faeces, which can harbour numerous parasites and pathogens.

You want to do everything in your power to avoid IS. If you need further convincing, read about the horrific symptoms IS can have on humans. Visit *The Report's* website:



YOU OWN THE SHOT

By Ken Payne

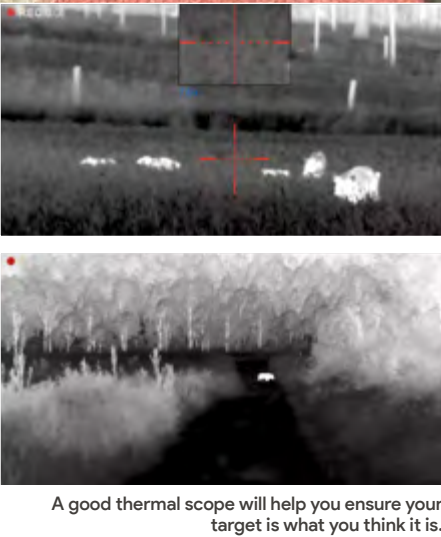


‘You own the shot.’ This statement could have had a bad outcome on a recent trip to a Queensland Conservation and Wildlife Management (CWM) Moonie project, although it could have been anyone’s trip, anywhere, at any time. We are constantly telling hunters they ‘own the shot’; don’t pull the trigger unless you are absolutely sure of your quarry. Don’t trust someone else to tell you to shoot, because if the cow pat hits the wall, you are the one responsible and would have to wear the consequences, which could be cold hard money plus the probability of you, and possibly the whole crew, not being invited back to a property.

Three of us were out in my 4x4 Challenger, slowly driving around the oat paddocks looking for pigs with a CWM Pulsar Helion XP50 thermal monocular out the passenger window and my mate, Ian, looking out the other side with his own Pulsar thermal. I also had my own personal Pulsar XP50 pro hanging on a bino harness on my chest, as I find this takes the weight off a lanyard hanging around my neck and keeps it central, protected and out of the way.

As I am not set up like some of the other CWM vehicles with red lights to drive by (ferals don’t seem to react to red lights), I had my normal low beams on. At that stage, there were oats on our left, and a grass paddock on our right. Suddenly, I pulled up and told the others that there was a large pig standing in the grass edge ahead of us in the headlights. After I quickly turned off my motor and lights, my front passenger, Adrian, got out with his earmuffs on, went to the front of the vehicle, loaded his .308 Marlin rifle topped with a Night Tech MS19 thermal scope, aimed, and, looking through his scope, he called out, “I think it’s a calf.” I was looking through my thermal out the driver’s window, watching the boar start to trot across the grass paddock. I kept calling out that it was definitely a pig; to which Adrian kept calling back that it was a calf. We were yelling directions back and forth until I shouted that the pig was gone. Adrian said the calf was still there – standing up front. I leaned out the window looking ahead and realised we were looking at two different animals.

He was concentrating ahead on the target and didn’t pick up on my



comments the pig had gone through the fence into the grass paddock. After our heated discussion, I apologised for pushing him to shoot and complimented him on his conviction that he was right not shooting and not bowing to pressure from me. We both agreed we would rather something get away rather than shoot the incorrect animal. My backseat passenger, Ian, was in full agreement and when we pulled up beside the calf, Ian got out, shooed it along and it went straight back through the fence to the Heffer on the other side.

A short drive further around the paddock and other boars were spotted but this time we all identified then correctly and took them cleanly. Ⓞ

The best little cartridge YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

By Neil Schultz

For much of my 40-something-year shooting career, I've been an advocate of owning rifles chambered in 'common' cartridges. Much of my shooting in the late 70s, and through the 80s, was hence undertaken with a .30-06 then a .270, both very commonly used pig, goat, and deer rifles in that epoch. My regular hunting coppers at the time ran rifles in .243 and a couple also carried the accurate little .222 Rem.

During the past couple of decades, I've sent thousands of projectiles away from the barrels of rifles in .308, .243 and .223.

The past few years, however, have seen me stray from my common-cartridge idiom and decide to add a few wildcats to the gun safe. The first was a nifty little .22 K Hornet, which has proven to be the ideal short-range fox cartridge. Other additions to the gun safes at home included a .22-250 Ackley Improved and a .25-06 Ackley Improved, both in long, heavy barrelled rifles. As accurately and effective as both of those rifles are, they are best suited to either shooting from a hide or being transported by a vehicle. Carrying them around the mountains becomes rather uncomfortable in short order.

Hence, I developed the desire for a rifle light enough to carry through the hills, inherently accurate enough for small targets (feral cats) but with enough punch to tip over the odd pig or fallow deer with a reasonably well-placed shot. It took very little to convince myself that a 6mm cartridge based on the .223 bolt face was where I should be looking. Ringing around a few local gunsmiths, I found that a 6mm TCU reamer was available just minutes from home, so that's what the new project rifle was destined to become.

The TCU series of cartridges were developed by Thompson Centre Arms for shooting handgun silhouette competitions in their Contender pistols. A 7mm variant was first off the production lines in 1980, with the 6mm, then a 6.5mm following a few years later. As one would imagine, being purpose designed for competition these are inherently accurate.

Being an enthusiastic practitioner of buying Australian, I opted to have an old Sportco model 33 re-barrelled. A phone call to the great folk at Swan Firearms had an order placed for one of their superb barrels. I'm unlikely to ever want to shoot heavy projectiles through this rifle so a 1:10 twist 24" barrel was ordered.



The 6mmTCU (left) compared to the popular .243. The Performance of the TCU is surprisingly close to the larger cartridge.

The first view of the re-barrelled rifle had me smiling; it looked very sharp. Apart from its neat appearance with the thin 24" barrel, the light weight immediately impressed. Now to get some rounds loaded.

Like all wildcats, cases needed to be made up from other cartridges. The 6mm TCU cases were created by first necking up .223 brass to 6mm without any other changes. These were loaded with 80gr Rexem hollow point projectiles long enough to jam into the rifling to fire form into the finished TCU cases. With 50 of those fire-forming

cases loaded, a trip to the local SSAA Ipswich Branch range was undertaken.

Running in the barrel was done as per Swan's instructions, which took a total of 30 rounds, all sent down range while sighting in the scope, then just shooting groups. Results were pleasing, with all groups sub-MOA even though the barrel was not yet fire lapped. History has shown that (in my rifles) peak accuracy isn't achieved until a 100 or so rounds have been put through a new barrel.

Now, with fire-formed cases on hand I began the interesting journey to find the load that would give the best possible performance in both knock-down power and accuracy, settling on 27.6gr of ADI 2206H under Rexem 80gr hollow points. These loads went through the chronograph at an average of 2950fps and delivered groups of 3/4" at 100 metres. That is just 200fps and 200ft-lbs less than a .243 running the same projectiles. That was a little surprising, considering the difference in case capacity between the two cartridges. My loads in the .243 are 38.3gr compared to just 27.6 in the TCU running the same powder and projectiles.

For the rig's first outing, I had mounted a newly acquired Zero-Tech Thrive 4-16 scope via a 3/8 to Picatinny adapter that I had re-engineered at home (read 'taken to with a hacksaw and file') to allow easy loading and ejection. This combination of new, free-floating barrel, lightened trigger and rigidly mounted scope proved to be a winner. Groups shot over the bonnet of the ute in very windy conditions ranged from 1" to 0.4", with a seating depth of



Pushing 80gr projectiles, the 6mm TCU delivers 1,600ft-lbs of energy, more than enough for thin-skinned game species like this fallow yearling.

2.34" proving to be most accurate, delivering groups averaging .6 MOA.

I usually use a trip out west to conduct range work on loads or sight in rifles wearing new scopes, etc. This outing was no exception, so once various loads had been shot over the chronograph, naturally a short hunt was in order.

The property on which I was camped has a permanent population of bunnies, a few foxes and very occasionally a feral cat or pig. Oh, it also sees a few fallow deer passing though at times, too. Having a daytime optic perched

atop the Sportco dictated an early afternoon start to enable shooting with natural light. Hopes were high for a fox as I commenced wandering around ridges covered with open box forest, button whistle hanging around my neck. I had no interest in any rabbits, which don't tend to be too numerous in the rocky ridges anyway.

During one of the frequent stops to scan the scrub for a hint of ginger fur, a spot of colour caught my eye. About 250m distant something was moving slowly, almost totally concealed by undergrowth of wattles and hop

THE BEST LITTLE CARTRIDGE YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

bush. Cranking the Zero-Tech up to 16X, I braced against a box tree and waited for the wee beastie to show more of itself. The old heart rate increased significantly upon the observed stepping into a gap in the foliage, revealing itself to be a deer. Using tree trunks to block the deer's view of my movement, a deliberate stalk was undertaken to close the gap. Every tree was used as a rest to steady the scope while I glassed and re-evaluated the distance. Daylight was fading fast, so I wasn't going to dilly dally. Dropping below the deer's horizon into a gully, I legged it along to emerge at just 80m or so away; perfect. Crosshairs centred on the deer, it became a waiting game, holding fire until the ideal shot was presented. A meat-saving point of aim saw the projectile hit just in front of the right shoulder, quartering into the vitals and at *'the report'*, he dropped in his tracks.

Due to the absence of an exit wound, I was curious about the performance of the 80gr hollow point sold as a 'varmint' projectile. When dressing the young spiker, an ideal meat animal, I found the remains of the projectile, lodged just under the hide of the offside rib cage. That is perfect, with all

of the round's energy dumped within the animal's vitals. That is ideal for a pill designed for thin-skinned beasties, including cats and foxes along with our smaller game species.

Just a couple of weeks later I was farm-sitting for a friend on a mixed block of grazing and cultivation on the southern Darling Downs. Here was the mission for which the 6mm was destined, with cats, foxes and pigs on the feral hit list. Following the script to perfection, the opportunity to test the 80gr pills on pigs came on the first night. Happily, the little TCU received an

A+ report card, with DRT results on pigs up to 60kg. Either shoulder or neck shots were used, depending on the pigs' size and position, with both proving effective. I wasn't keen enough to dig out any of the projectiles but penetration through shoulder armour indicated a well-constructed jacket for medium-sized game.

Having now been hunting with the 6mm TCU for a couple of years, it still impresses, punching well above its weight. Accuracy, efficiency and incredible muzzle energy from such a small package - it has it all. 🎯



The 6mm TCU is inherently accurate, perfect for taking small feral animals from fragile Australian ecosystems.

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SHOOT OUR TARGETS

Members occasionally ask why they have to use only SSAA Queensland approved targets on the range.

Well, the answer is two-fold. Firstly, by buying an approved target you are supporting the branch you are shooting at. The sale of targets is a key contributor to your branch's finances and helps with the maintenance and improvement of the facilities.

Secondly, approved targets form part of the Queensland Police range approval process, along with approved competition rule books that are part of the critical public liability protection all ranges need to



operate. All SSAA Queensland ranges have a different range approval, with some only approved for paper targets for safety reasons; so, metal targets such as spinners or silhouettes are not allowed. If you are unsure, please always ask at the range.

Your Association has a wide range of targets available, covering all the competitions at a variety of distances. Animal targets include rabbit, fox, bear, feral cat, goat and pig. All targets are sold to the branches at a highly discounted price. 🎯

Online safety crucial for members' safety



Club committee members, we need your help to secure members' information. Cybercriminals and adversarial groups are targeting emails, websites and computers to try and trick people into revealing sensitive information or allowing hacking to steal data.

SSAA Queensland has engaged Platypus Networks IT Team to provide security training to staff, the management committee, discipline chairmen and club committee members. They will email invitations to take part in short, five-to-ten-minute courses to improve your knowledge of cyber security, both at home and when handling Association matters. About one short course will be sent per month.

While our members' data is obviously linked with firearms, it is more often financial information cyber

criminals are seeking. Either way we have an ethical and legal responsibility to guard that information. It is critical as volunteers, office bearers and directors that we demonstrate we are taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of our members.

The easy-to-follow security training is designed for beginners, so you'll learn, for instance:

- How to recognise suspicious emails.
- What to do if you think a message is fake.
- Simple steps to avoid common online scams.

Your partnership in ongoing education in online safety is essential; **together we can keep our clubs safe!** 🎯



GARMIN® Xero C1 Pro Chronograph

Compact, light and accurate

By Nick Rositano

I have been wanting to test out the Garmin Xero C1 Pro Chronograph for a while now so when the opportunity with *The Report* arose, I was quick to jump on it! Garmin was founded in 1989, with headquarters based in the United States. Garmin first made its mark in the aviation industry with GPS navigation products. Since then, Garmin has expanded its products to cover aviation, marine, automotive, outdoor and fitness markets.

The Garmin Xero C1 Pro Chronograph is capable of measuring projectile speeds from 100fps through to 5,000fps, being suited for use with bows and air rifles all the way through to magnum centrefire rifles. The Xero C1 makes it easy to pair with your smartphone by simply downloading the ShotView app, which allows you to track each shot fired so no more pen and paper when you are trying different load data. The Xero C1 features an IPX7 water-resistant

rating, which makes it capable of incidental exposure of up to 1 meter for 30 minutes, so no need to cover or protect the unit when out in the field for a short amount of time.

“...capable of measuring projectile speeds from 100fps through to 5,000fps.”

Unboxing the unit for the first time, I was really impressed with how compact the Xero C1 PRO Chronograph is; it can literally fit in your back pocket! Garmin claims battery life for up to 2000 shots or up to six hours, which is ample time especially when load testing. The Xero C1 can be used both indoors and outdoors and won't really be affected by any atmospherics. Garmin warrants



The Garmin Xero C1 is a compact unit.



The Garmin Xero X1 Chronograph is such a light and compact unit, which can literally fit into your back pocket!

the Xero C1 Chronograph for one year from date of purchase. The units feature a USB cable for charging, making it portable and easy to charge even while on the move driving, so no need to make sure its fully charged before heading away.

I think many of us can remember the chronographs from the early 2000s, which represented something from outer space, with their massive antennas not to mention how bulky most of the units were to transport around and to setup. Having acquired a new 300 PRC, it was time to put the Xero C1 chronograph to the test to see what velocity my reloads and factory Hornady Precision Hunter achieved. In doing this, I was able to setup an accurate ballistic chart to allow me to dial in at longer ranges, whether being down at the range or out hunting.

It was Christmas holidays, and I managed to sneak out to a mate's property, as my local range this time of year can be chaotic. Unfortunately, upon arrival I realised I had forgotten my trusty portable range bench (nothing more than a fold up table from Bunnings) so I had no choice but to use a towel on the ground - not my best setup I can tell you! Nonetheless I had to make do, the wind was strong so I tried to shelter as best as I could.

Not my best setup; nonetheless, notice the position of the chronograph.



GARMIN XERO C1 PRO CHRONOGRAPH



First shot of the 300 PRC using 212 grain Precision Hunter Ammo.



Second shot; noticed the variation of only .8 fps, which is impressive!

“After firing a few shots off, I was impressed with only a difference of .8fps!”

The Garmin Xero requires you to have the chronograph within 5-15 inches from the muzzle of the rifle, being either vertical or horizontal to the muzzle, unlike the earlier style chronographs. We have all heard of the accidental incidents of shooting the old-style antennas; however, with the Xero C1 this is almost impossible. The Xero C1 asks you to put in your projectile weight when turning on, so be sure if you are using different size projectiles to change it to give you an accurate reading.

After firing a few shots off, I was impressed with only a difference of .8fps! This was using factory Hornady Precision Hunter ammo, so the Garmin was pretty on the money I would say! I also paired the chronograph to my iPhone using the ShotView app, so I didn't have to worry about bringing out a pen and paper, as all the data from this day is stored on the app making it easy to go back to if ever unsure. The legs of the Xero C1 are easily screwed off and on and are durable being a small size. What I liked about this unit is the ground doesn't have to be level to give an accurate reading, and, in my instance, I was definitely not on level ground. However, the data I got was impressive.

For those of you who are looking at collating ballistics data for your rifle, Garmin has really made this easy: turn it on, set it up, point it in direction of fire and shoot. It is easily done in less than a minute. The Xero C1 Chronograph retails for \$1099 and can be purchased either online through Garmin or at their many other stockists found on their website all across Australia. Although the unit is fairly up there on price, as the old saying goes 'buy once, cry once'; you won't be disappointed. 🎯

BIOSECURITY

is everyone's responsibility



ARRIVE CLEAN, LEAVE CLEAN

By Rachael Oxborrow

Awareness of biosecurity risks when entering properties as hunters is an important part of protecting our relationship with landowners. People and vehicles carry weeds, pests, and diseases without even knowing it, and simple measures - such as asking the landowner about any specific requirements - are a surefire way to maintain good working relationships.

With hunting being one of the primary reasons for firearm ownership across much of the country, making ourselves safe, ethical, and biosecurity-aware hunters contributes to the broader perception of our community among the non-firearm-owning public.

In Queensland, for instance, this is particularly important, as hunting is restricted to privately-owned land with the landholder's express permission; hunting on Crown Land is not permitted at all.

All Queenslanders have a general biosecurity obligation under the Queensland Biosecurity Act to prevent risks that are within our control and that we know about or should reasonably be expected to know about.

Biosecurity Measures for Hunters

From an outsider's perspective, the simple actions a visitor can take when entering and exiting a property may seem insignificant, but they are the measures that matter.

- Ensure clothing, footwear, and tools are free of soil or plant matter before entering or leaving the property.
- Carry supplies to clean boots, outerwear, tires, and wheel arches, and make sure they are clean before entering and leaving a property.
- Inspect your vehicle before entering the property. Look at wheel arches, mud flaps, axles, and spare tires (if suspended under the vehicle), and check inside the vehicle for mud and debris on carpets.
- Check in with the landowner regarding any biosecurity requirements, such as vehicle movements and livestock locations.
- Notify the landowner if you have recently been overseas and avoid wearing clothing or footwear that you have worn abroad. While Australia has one

of the strictest border-control systems in the world, there is always a risk that an exotic pest could enter the country.

Weeds, pests, and diseases cost the agriculture sector about \$12 billion annually. Although these costs are rising, they are managed more effectively when all Australians take biosecurity seriously.

When weeds, pests, or diseases spread in Australia, they can have devastating effects on our environment, animals, and economy by reducing access to international markets and causing production losses.

Helping Landowners

As hunters often move across large areas of a property, we can support landowners in their biosecurity efforts.

This can include:

- Reporting boundary fencing issues, which are vital to keeping livestock in the right locations.
- Keeping a lookout and reporting animals (either livestock or pest animals) that appear unwell or exhibit unusual characteristics.
- Familiarising yourself with significant weeds and informing landowners if you notice anything unusual.

The federal government's biosecurity website is a wealth of information, providing methods for landowners and the public to report concerns and contribute to Australia's biosecurity strength.

These biosecurity measures complement SSAA Queensland's Code of Ethics, Rules of Hunting Etiquette, and sustainable wildlife management practices.

A popular way for SSAA Queensland members to get involved in hunting is through the SSAA Farmer Assist program.

SSAA Farmer Assist

The SSAA Farmer Assist program provides farmers and landholders with a simple way to find qualified hunters to volunteer for pest control and/or conservation activities.

The program features a unique online portal that acts as an introductory service. Farmers and landholders register and use the program's 'Jobs Board' to seek help with problem wildlife. Once a request is posted on the Jobs Board, only registered members approved for the program can respond, allowing landowners to review applications and select the members they wish to contact.



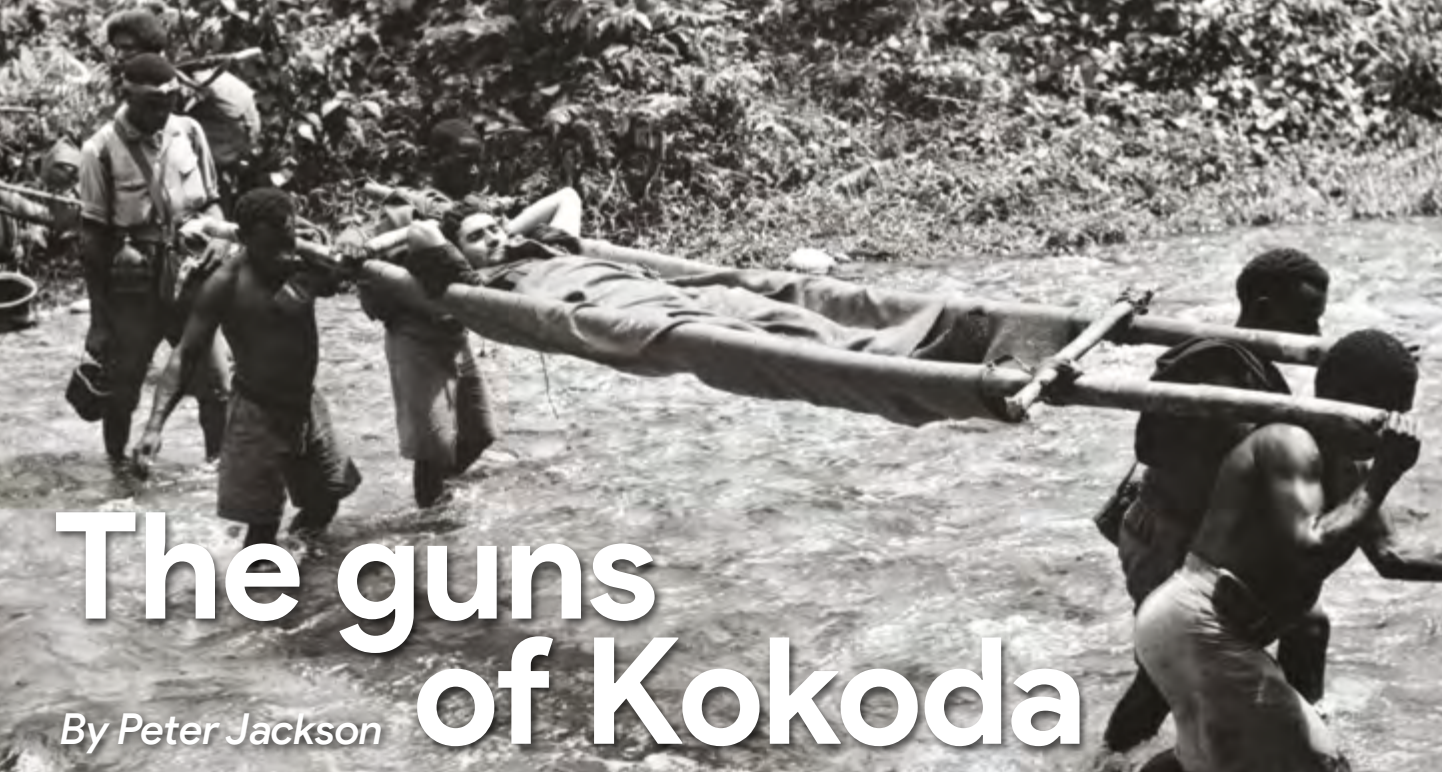
For members, there is a four-step process to register for the program and apply for jobs in their area as they become available:

1. Read the Complete Program Booklet and commit to the program's safety, animal welfare, and ethical hunting requirements.
2. Attend a SSAA range and complete a self-guided shooting competency assessment using the approved SSAA Farmer Assist Assessment Target. If you are a subscriber to a Conservation & Wildlife Management (CWM) branch, you do not need to undertake the competency test.
3. Once the shooting competency is completed, fill out the online sign-up form and upload a digital copy of the assessment target to complete registration. Save a copy of this target for your records.
4. Check the Farmer Assist job's page and start exploring the job's board, ready to respond to suitable jobs.

Hunters as Responsible Environmentalists

Whether hunters operate independently, through CWM, or via the Farmer Assist program in Queensland, biosecurity is an essential aspect of our work. The fundamentals of hunting already support biosecurity, with our commitment to protecting the environment and native animals from pest animal impacts extending to safeguarding land from weeds, pests, and diseases beyond just the animals we target.

Remember to spot and report anything unusual. If you notice a pest or disease that may affect human health, social amenity, the economy, or the environment, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland at **13 25 23**. 📞



The guns of Kokoda

By Peter Jackson

Papuans, affectionately known as Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, assisted Australian injured soldiers during the Kokoda campaign, in which 600 Australian lives were lost.

With the anniversary of the battle of Kokoda now more than 80 years, a recent tour of the privately owned Australian Armour & Artillery Museum in Cairns and its outstanding display of Australian small arms used in the conflict prompted a brief revisit of those firearms used to defend our country.

Since that battle, there has been dispute from some quarters that Australia was never really in danger of being invaded by the Japanese hordes.

What is not in dispute was the courage shown by our fighting men in the theatre of war, as well as the herculean effort by the Papuan Carriers.

While many are acquainted with the story of New Guinea and the battle of Kokoda, as mentioned, the visit to the Museum and the weapons used in the jungle conflict drew my attention. So, allow me to offer a very cursory overview of the guns of Kokoda.

The Owen Gun

The Owen gun, an Australia invention, truly was the 'little gun that could'. This 9mm Parabellum submachine gun earned the nick name 'The Diggers Darling'. It was damn near unstoppable. When tested against the Sten, the Thompson and even German sub guns of the time, Evelyn Owen's backyard problem stopper proved head and shoulders above the rest. General McArthur was so impressed that he was about to issue the Owen to US troops in place of the heavy Thompson .45.

Owen gun quick stats

Designer: Lieutenant Evelyn Owen
Designed: 1931 – 1938
Years produced: 1942 – 1944
Number built: 45,000
Weight: 10.7 loaded
Length: 813 mm
Barrel length: 250mm
Cartridge: 9mm Parabellum
Action: Blow back open bolt
Rate of fire: 700 rounds a minute
Effective firing range: 123 metres
Feed system: Detachable 32-round magazine (often loaded to 30 rounds to relieve wear and tear on magazine springs)
Sights: Iron

The Thompson .45 calibre sub-machine gun

It might have been slow, but the Thompson .45 calibre delivered a heck of a punch. Originally designed for the close quarter fighting of World War One trench warfare, this heavy 'Trench Broom' may have been late to the party in WW1, but it was at home in the European 'Theatre of War' as well as the thick jungles of Kokoda in WW2. Unlike the Owen, however, it needed constant attention to ensure its combat-ready lethality.

This weapon was generally issued to Australian section commanders within the patrol order, carrying either a 30-round stick magazine or the 50-round drum.

Thompson .45 Calibre sub-machine gun stats

Designer: John T. Thompson
Designed: 1917 – 1920
Manufacturer: Auto Ordnance
Produced: 1921 – 1945
Number built: 1.75 million (including several variances)
Weight: 4.5 kg empty
Length: 860mm including compensator
Barrel: 267
Cartridge: .45 cal
Action: Blowback
Effective firing range: 150 metres
Feed system: 30-round stick / 50-round drum

Mark 4 .303 rifle

So much can be said about this iconic firearm, but alas I have limited space. So, to the other .303 fans, my apologies.

By the time the Australian soldier



was called to fight on Kokoda, the 'three -oh' really did not need an introduction and had already earned a reputation as a reliable lifesaver, as well as a lethal life-taker if you were on the wrong end of it.

Versions of it had served our troops previously in WWI and, with some fine tuning and finessing, as a Mark 4 - the Small Magazine LEE Enfield (SMLE). The .303 saw itself back in the hands of 'The Digger' once more. Though it proved itself against the Africa Corp in the open desert campaigns, landing in the thick jungle of New Guinea, its length did prove to hinder swift movement at times.

Lee Enfield .303 SMLE Mark 4 stats

Designer: James Paris Lee
Manufacturer: Australia's Lithgow Small Arms Factory until 1953
Numbers built: 17 million of all variances in total
Weight: 4.11kg
Length: 1260mm
Barrel: 640mm
Cartridge: .303
Action: Bolt
Effective firing range: 503 metres
Feed system: 10-round box magazine



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Caitlyn May – Shooting for excellence

By Taylah May

Caitlyn May started shooting when she was just 11 years old, the youngest age you can be to begin in the sport. She has been a member of SSAA Queensland since the start of her shooting career in 2015. Throughout her schooling, Caitlyn was able to stick to her shooting commitments, using ‘marksmanship’ as the skill component for her Duke of Edinburgh’s award. During the five-year period she took to complete all three levels of the award, she recorded at least 100 hours of dedicated training alongside 100-plus hours of ‘Sport’ and ‘Community Service’.

Although she started her shooting journey through the junior’s program run by the SSAA Brisbane and competed in tough disciplines for many years, over time she progressed to predominantly shooting open sight lever actions. Ever since she borrowed a rifle from a friend and gave Lever Action a go, she has been hooked and has not looked back.

Caitlyn has enjoyed the challenges of shooting open sights after shooting scoped rifles for many years and she just enjoys the perks of shooting this type of rifle overall. She was introduced to the sport by her family, who has been shooting for many years. After hearing many stories from her father and grandfathers’ childhoods she was adamant that she was going to give it a try. Soon after, she found herself getting her A, B and H licenses.

Caitlyn’s favourite part of shooting is the community. She says she has “been able to meet so many amazing people not only at the Brisbane range but also at ranges across the country, as far as Western Australia.” As life has gotten busier, and her graduation date for her bachelor’s degree has quickly approached, her time shooting has had to take a side seat to make time to focus on her academics. Among the chaos, however, she has been able to get to the range every week or two so that she can have some fun and put some lead down range.

As part of her studies, she majored in Ecology and Conservation Biology and has investigated extensively the importance of pest control and management and the influence of invasive species on the natural environments. She hopes to get a job in this field post-graduation. Growing up in the SSAA Queensland community, she has gained further insight into effective pest control strategies and how this could potentially be implemented into assisting the conservation of many native and

threatened species across Australia.

Throughout her shooting career, Caitlyn has competed in numerous competitions, ranging from zone shoots to national championships. In May of 2024, she took part in the Queensland State Lever Action Silhouette Championships. There, she competed in the Smallbore competition and scored a 28/40. After shooting exceptionally well, she was informed that she would be in a shoot-off for a medal. She was able to re-centre and stay calm throughout this high-pressure situation. In the end, she took out gold for her class. There is no better time to get a personal best than at a championship; she really did put her best foot forward.

While speaking with Caitlyn, I asked her what would be the best piece of advice to offer to a new shooter. Her response, “Don’t be afraid to give things a go. Even if you don’t think you’re good enough to shoot in a state or national competition, there will never be any harm in trying and they are great places to meet new people, ask for advice and just get out into the community.”



Caitlyn May prepares for competition.



Caitlyn May pauses to focus before a sitting shot.

SSAA Brightly Shooting Complex



A great aerial view of the multi-purpose Brightly Shooting Complex.

The sports shooting hub of central Queensland would have to be SSAA Queensland’s 680-acre Brightly Shooting Complex, for which SSAA Q17 Mackay Branch holds the shooting rights. The Mackay Branch also shares the range with SSAA Springsure, which recently was left without a shooting ‘home’ when its property was sold.

The property is managed by the SSAA Queensland Complex Committee, with most of the work provided by volunteers. An enthusiastic group runs club, state, and national shoots, hosts corporate events, and assists with various groups’ training sessions such as the police, security providers and government departments like the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Volunteers also run Mackay’s annual Family Day, where families from all over the area come each March or April for a free shooting day, including meals, drinks, and the use of club guns and ammunition. The Family Day is very popular and the club can easily go through 6,000-7,000 rounds of .22 ammunition on the day, ensuring everyone who wants to try shooting gets a chance and has a positive experience with firearms.

The SSAA Mackay Branch has been shooting on the site for 35 years. The range was purchased

by SSAA Queensland in 2015, ensuring the club could have a permanent site at which to shoot.

The Complex’s vast and carefully thought-out facility has seen it hold many well-run state and national events, and it is more than capable of hosting successful and enjoyable large-scale shoots in the future.

The site caters for all styles of shotgun, pistol and rifle shooting and all SSAA disciplines. There is a separate shotgun range – mainly for 5-Stand – but there is a Down the Line range as well. The shotgun range was upgraded about 10 years ago. The club basically ‘took off the top of a mountain’ and built a shotgun range, with improvements ongoing. There are pistol and rifle ranges out to 500m.

The Complex’s ranges also include three stand-alone 50m pistol ranges, a 200m silhouette range with three layouts and a ‘plinking’ or practice range out to 300m for those who want to just come out and shoot their rifles. There is also a 500m benchrest layout, which can cater to Black Power shooting.

Amenities include a large building providing disciplines with their own lockup facilities and new toilet blocks with showers. The ‘breeze way’ affords an area for socialising and respite from the Queensland weather; there is a large kitchen, relaxing lounge room, and an old schoolhouse used for running safety



The Brightly Shooting Complex caters to all styles of pistol, rifle and shotgun shooting.



A typical sunny view from one of Brightly’s undercover shooting bays.

courses. Accommodation for visitors include short-stay camping facilities and eight ensuite units.

Future plans for the site will see the addition of a 1000m rifle range. The recent purchase of an additional 100 hectares will provide a safe buffer zone between the Complex and the adjacent farm to cater for this range. Plans to upgrade the benchrest range are also on the cards, including new concrete, roofing, and benches, bringing it up to a very high standard.

Overall, SSAA Queensland’s Brightly Shooting Complex is an impressive setup catering to shooters of all styles, their families and other like-minded shooting groups.

A fact-based response to the Australia Institute's gun ownership report

By Sam Talbot

A recent media release from the Australia Institute presents findings on firearm ownership in Australia, raising alarm over an increase in registered firearms and calling for stronger regulations. While public debate on firearm policy is important, it must be based on accurate data and balanced perspectives. Their so-called "scorecard" attempts to rank states on gun control but misses the mark by ignoring the realities of firearm regulation. So, let's look at some of the claims in their report and provide some extra perspective.

Why there are more firearms - and why that's okay

One of the main assertions in the report is that the number of firearms in private hands has grown significantly since the Port Arthur massacre. While this is technically accurate, it lacks context. Australia's population has increased substantially over the years, and given this growth, it's reasonable to expect an increase in registered firearms. For instance, in Victoria, over the past eight years, firearm registrations grew by 21%, compared to a 15% population increase. The remaining 6% gap may be explained as simply as a growing interest in shooting sports and lawful firearm ownership.

The Australia Institute report also notes that a significant number of firearms are in urban areas, particularly in New South Wales and Queensland. However, that's not inherently concerning; with a larger proportion of the population now residing in

urban and suburban areas, it's expected that firearm ownership would follow a similar pattern. There's no evidence to suggest that urban firearm owners are any less compliant with stringent licensing and storage requirements than their rural counterparts.

Misconceptions and misfires

A key omission from the Australia Institute's report is its failure to recognise the rigorous process required to legally obtain and store a firearm in Australia. Of course, every firearm purchase must be approved by police, and owners must demonstrate a genuine reason for ownership. From there, each firearm is accounted for, and storage must meet strict police-approved standards. As the Australian Shooter's Alliances', Tim Bannister explained to ABC radio, "As soon as you have a firearm licence, you are inviting the scrutiny of police into your life. They want to know how you store your firearms, they can inspect your firearms, and each

firearm you buy is checked by the police". The Australian

Shooters Alliance is a wholly owned subsidiary of SSAA Queensland.

The Australia Institute's report assigns scorecards to each state, penalising them, among other things, for not having arbitrary firearm limits. However, this approach overlooks the fact that every

firearm is individually assessed and approved by law enforcement. Whether a person owns one firearm or several, each must be stored in a police-approved manner, ensuring compliance and safety.

Another omission is found in the section on Queensland, presenting data on over one million registered firearms and more than 224,000 licence holders without acknowledging the state's strict regulatory framework. Queensland's laws impose stringent storage and handling requirements, ensuring all licence holders meet rigorous safety and compliance standards.

Additionally, the report raises concerns about minors having licences but overlooks the fact that Queensland's system restricts these licences to supervised sporting or occupational use, ensuring that young shooters are

trained and monitored under controlled environments. The report also calls for a ban on anyone without a licence from using a firearm but does not explain why or how this measure would improve safety.

While the report focuses on the number of legally registered firearms, it does not sufficiently address the issue of illegal firearms. The most significant threat to public safety comes from unregistered, untraceable firearms, often linked to criminal activity. Efforts to enhance firearm policy should prioritise measures to combat illegal firearm trafficking, rather than imposing further restrictions on law-abiding firearm owners who are already subject to extensive regulations.

Common ground

One key area of agreement with the report is the need for improved data collection and transparency.

Police operation means well - But blurs the legal vs illegal firearms line

By Tim Bannister

Having a consistent approach to inspections of firearms storage and ensuring licensed shooters know what to expect when an inspection is booked are among the goals of Queensland Police's Operation Whiskey Firestorm. Criminals using illegal firearms also fall under the poorly named operation's spotlight, unfortunately blurring the use of legal and illicit firearms to the media and general public.

Detective Superintendent George Marchesini told *The Report* that police wish to work with the shooting community in a positive and educational way to ensure proper firearms storage and underpin key responsibilities of

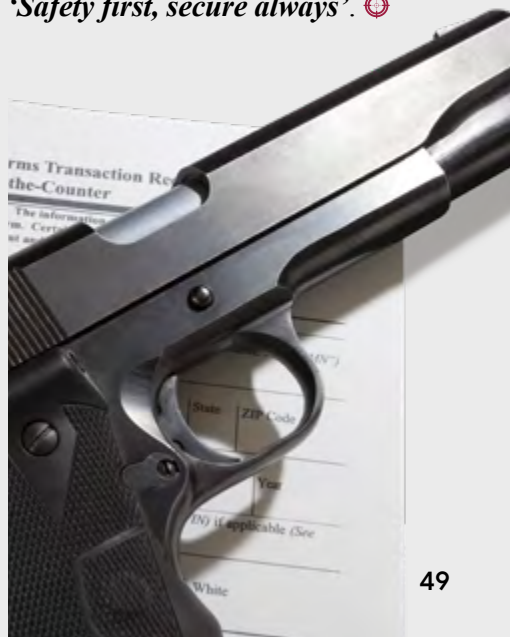
firearm ownership.

"We will be reinforcing key messages on firearms storage and working with firearms stakeholders and industry to remind them of their responsibilities," he said.

Police will also be concentrating on how firearms are getting into the hands of criminals, by illegal firearm manufacturing, including 3D printing and firearm theft, particularly in regional communities.

"We have anecdotally seen rural and remote properties be increasingly targeted by criminals and an escalation of the criminal networks using firearms in violence. We are putting these criminal networks on notice."

Detective Superintendent Marchesini said while police will target criminals, they had a respect for licensed firearm owners and hoped to work together to achieve the motto of the Operation: 'Safety first, secure always'.



Eat WILD:

Kangaroo SIZZLE STEAK SANDWICH

Prep: 15 min Time: 10 min Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 500g K-ROO kangaroo mince
- 1 pack K-ROO Sizzle Steak*
- Olive oil spray
- ¼ cup egg mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons grainy mustard
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 8 thin slices of multigrain bread, lightly toasted
- 2 tomatoes, sliced
- 1 cup rocket leaves
- 2 brown onions, peeled and finely sliced
- salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

*K-ROO Sizzle Steaks are available in Coles stores or, of course, you can hunt your own!

Recipe courtesy of K-roo.com.au

How to cook it

1. Heat olive oil over a medium fry pan over a low heat. Add onions and cook for 8 minutes or until soft. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside until required.
2. For the mustard mayonnaise, combine mayonnaise, mustard and parsley together in a small mixing bowl, stirring to combine. Set aside until required.
3. For the sizzle steaks, heat a fry pan or barbecue on high. Lightly spray steaks on both sides and cook for 1 minute each side, for medium rare. Remove from heat onto a plate.
4. To assemble steak sandwiches, spread mustard mayonnaise over the lightly toasted bread. Place sliced steak on top, followed by onions, sliced tomato and rocket. Top with remaining slice of toasted bread.

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