



On target

NEWSLETTER OF THE BUFFALO RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA 114 Mar 2025

March-ing On

Another month has raced by. A month of organized club activities spread over two weekends.

Saturday 15th March was the Trundle Back in Time Vintage Tractor Pull. With the day celebrating 100 years of John Deere it was a sea of green. A local collector bought out 14 of his restored tractors, allowing the red dust to once again settle on the paintwork. Local JD Dealer, Hutcheon & Pearce, bought out the latest and largest tractor to stand menacingly next to the Waterloo Boy. The colour was the only thing they had in common.

Many brands were represented and were on display and pulling in the competition. They were in various states of restored, like a Summer Nats street machine or, like ours, straight out of the shed/paddock in their working clothes. Spider webs and wasp nests adding to the ye olde feel.

Brad & Kellie joined us for a wander around the tractors and stalls in the near 40° heat. It was hot and dusty but a great day out.

Sunday we had arranged a range visit to the Orana Range Complex, and complex it is. We all arrived at the front gate to commence the tour at 11am. We inspected the 500m range with its covered firing line and toilets and shed. We wandered around the adjacent long range mound, gaining insight into how much work has been done and how much more there is to do. We looked at the pistol ranges and surrounds. Photos don't do the scope of work completed justice so seeing it in the flesh has made it make more sense.

The following weekend we had invited anyone interested to come to the BGGR for a casting & reloading camp. Dan got the idea from the Knifemakers Guild camps he has attended. It's about demonstrations and sharing knowledge and experiences.

Peter arrived Friday afternoon and was joined on Saturday by potential new members John and Richard.

A casting session began the day with Dan running through how he does it. There was much discussion about the little things that make a big difference in the quality of bullets.

One thing that came up was the use of P.I.D controllers to keep your pot at a very even temperature. You can buy lead pots with in-built ones or an external one can be made to use with any pot. Perhaps a discussion can be had with respect to a couple of our "clue-ier" members putting a few together?

A couple of little tricks were passed on but probably the thing that was emphasised the most was to be very fussy when it comes to bullet "fill". Making sure that grease grooves are even and square and especially inspecting the base of the bullet. If it isn't perfectly formed with a sharp square edge, throw it back into the pot and try again. This was something that when pointed out and shown the difference between a good base and a reject, attendees said they had been a bit tolerant of. Another one of those "ignore it at your peril" things.

Another thing is to make sure you have a good sprue puddle, this helps give a good "fill-out" and ensures a good base.

A quick weighing of the demo bullets showed a difference of just 0.3gr between them.



The reloading session began with a discussion of case preparation. Deburring of flash-holes, trimming to length, the pros and cons of weighing cases and what can be learned from it.

We talked about annealing and the various ways to achieve it and just how simply it can be done without the latest whizz-bang machine. (Although they are nice!)

Next, we moved onto the way Dan starts off with a starter load for any rifle.

(This was the subject of an article in BRAA newsletter #93)

Showing the fellas how to go about this and then moving onto the various loads and the use of wads, grease cookies, etc.

One thing that was emphasised is the need to look after your cast bullets, especially the base. All of your hard work in casting perfect bullets can be undone with careless handling while reloading. The emphasis of not compressing your load with the bullet, use a compression die.

Pete spoke about his use of paper-patched bullets and how he goes about it.

John was very interested in this as he has recently purchased a Sharps from our good friend Bruce from S.A. (Yes the one he towelled us all up with at our last hoorah at Cooyal) Bruce uses paper-patch bullets in that and it will be handed over with the applicable load data for such.

An enjoyable evening was spent with many a story told, a bit of encouragement for John and Richard to come along and join us at BRAA, a few relaxing beverages and a supper of venison stew that seemed to go down well.



Weekend 1 Crew

We hope everyone got something from it. Sometimes it is just good to cross reference and know that you are doing it the best you can with what you have or that a small tweak may make a significant difference and make life easier. Black powder loading has many variables and the more you can control, the more consistent and reliable your loads will be.

Sunday was then another visit to the Orana Range Complex before our visitors travelled home. With some local rain it was interesting to see where the water had run.



Boof seemed as pleased to see us as we were to see him



Totally non BRAA related but a sweet ride, 1937 Ford Coupe Ute at the tractor pull

Shooting Opportunity

Nowra Rifle Club are hosting their Annual Black Powder Rendezvous on the 16-18th May. We can put you in touch with Shayne for more information.



Trundle Back in Time vintage tractor pull and 100 year Anniversary of John Deere tractors.

Each horsepower class pulls a different weight, the further you pull, the heavier the sled becomes due to clever engineering. The TD24 easily pulled the sled and the pull-back tractor the full distance. This model dozer was used on the construction of the Snowy Hydro Scheme.

Secretary's Say

Thanks to Peter for shopping around and securing us another great deal for our website hosting, still on the air and at a fraction of the cost.

It was also great to catch up with a few faces at the Bathurst Arms Fair earlier this month. It was a busy Saturday there with lots of people. Shayne and I both thought it might be somewhere we could have a table to promote our club and black powder shooting, as our style of shooting was not on display. Food for thought for when we are less homeless perhaps??

A reminder to all about attendances, the reporting year finishes 30th June which will be here soon enough. With pistol attendances, if you have BRAA as your primary club and are shooting elsewhere, that is fine but the onus is on you to report those attendances to BRAA so we can report your compliance.

Once again we are thinking of our members having health issues.

As my secretary has previously emailed, our bank has had a merger with another bank and our account number changed to avoid clashing in the merge. BRAA will always include the banking details on our membership forms or when requesting any payment so please double check next time you are making a payment.



Secretary's Secretary's Say

Thank you everyone for a great weekend and a great weekend. For a non shooting month we have socialised with BRAA members three weekends in a row.

I am pleased to report we have just received our defibrillator grant funding this past Friday so by the next time we meet I should be able to jump start you if required. Seriously though, it is an amazing grant to receive and we thank the NSW Office of Sport and we sincerely hope we never have to use it. We all seem to run quite well on strong coffee.



Upcoming matches

Easter-SSAA Muzzleloading Nationals
Townsville QLD

May16-18 Nowra Rifle Club Annual
Black Powder Rendezvous Nowra NSW

May 22-23 BRAA @ "Nioka" NSW

October-SSAA BPCR Silhouette
Nationals SA

MLAIC Long Range Muzzleloading
Worlds Championships Raton NM USA

Long Range BP afternoons at Nowra Rifle
Club on the Fourth Sunday of the
Month, paper targets, 300m to a max
800m

**In dog coffees,
I've only had
one**