

THE BRUMBY BOAR

STORY AND PICS BY MATT KLEMENT

WINNER
LED LIGHT
FROM PIG DOG SUPPLIES



Fred and I set out from our camp at 4pm one day and what a camp it was, it even had its own waterhole with freshwater crocs that we had been swimming with daily. There were other supplies left there by the station owner and it was undoubtedly a luxury camping spot compared to what I was used to. Just having a waterhole nearby was a dream for the dogs and I, anyway back to the story.

We headed off from camp and headed parallel to the dry river where we had seen a mob of 12 pigs one morning laying up in the dry sand under the pandanus, heading to a spot that we had plotted on the GPS. As well as being lucky with the waterhole and camp setup, we were even luckier again as a dead brumby was just some 3.5 kms up from camp. So as we headed closer to the brumby's carcass that was down in the dry creek with 14 foot banks on either side, the anticipation built and I started to get nervous about what we might find there. The mob of pigs we had seen a couple of days earlier blew me away as there were 3 mature boars that stood roughly a metre high and I estimated their weights at well over 120kg each. We had been warned by the station manager that there were not many pigs on this property but the ones that existed were really massive and had good hooks, and they would be ready to fight a pack of dingos or pig dogs in this harsh granite country. As we were closing in on the carcass location on the GPS, my heart rate started to go up a notch. I kept looking at the GPS, 500 metres, 400, 300 and then 200, at this point I asked Fred to hold both the dogs on the leads and hang back as I wanted to stalk in and check the carcass on my own first to assess what was going on. I walked closer, 150 metres, 100 and then from 50 metres, I approached the lip of the dry river. I looked down and nearly shit myself, I stumbled back 5 metres and walked away to compose myself. Never had I seen a boar of these proportions, it was bloody huge. It was roughly the same size as the dead brumby it was feeding on! Not only did it have the longest legs I have ever seen and stood up like a giraffe, but it had a woolly mottled ginger, cream and black colour that was bizarre.

I went back to the lip of the creek and watched this rare sight, the boar was the same size as the brumby it was just crazy. He had his head inside the stomach and was chewing on a rib like it was a chicken drumstick. The boar was so engrossed in this brumby carcass that it didn't notice me, so I continued to watch and wonder how old this big fella was. I knew I would have to check his teeth if we were lucky enough to catch him but I was worried if I had enough dog power to catch this brute. Duke is 44kgs and Chewy is 42kgs and at this point I was wishing I had a South African

Boerboel with me. These dogs are renowned in Africa for fighting off leopards and baboons and protecting the farmers over there.

I walked back 150 metres and told Fred the news, he was shocked and excited and his face lit up like a christmas tree in December. We planned how we would approach this monster then we walked in, when we had ourselves and the dogs in a good position we let them go. As they ran towards the boar he still had his head inside the brumby until the last minute when he pulled his head out to check his surroundings and got hit like a freight train by 86 kg of Bull Arab brawn. It was like watching a union game with the front rowers packing the scrum and hearing the clashing of muscle and bone. Within what was a second or two the boar was held, but Chewy had to move around to the other side and hit up on the other ear as the boar was spinning around on the side where the dogs held the ear. Chewy moved around and these dogs held like never before, I think they shit themselves whilst holding on as they were not used to holding at the angle they were at. The boar was so tall these dogs had to hold at an angle that made them look like speed jumps down at a water-ski event on a river. I moved in cautiously but quickly as I heard Fred chamber a round in case things got nasty, as we were not prepared to take any risks with this big brumby boar, I grabbed a leg and instinct took over. There were moments like these in my life where instinct just takes over and I do what needs to be done under pressure, it's a weird and surreal experience. What I call a natural drug high, endorphins are pumping and everything seems slow and calm.

I couldn't tip this pig and I couldn't turn it over its own head as the course thick river sand was making it tough to move around so I just held one leg and leaned over and stuck it, and then I moved back slightly and held the leg for dear life. The dogs lugged hard and at this point I was glad I had spent 12 months teaching them, using a working dog bite pillow on a weekly basis with a police dog trainer. The boar started to stumble and then fell over with a deep thud on the sand, again I took some time to compose myself and catch my breath.

I looked at Fred and his jaw had nearly hit the ground, we laid the pig next to the horse and took a photo. We then dragged the boar up onto a nearby fallen tree and took another photo. I cut the pig open to check his condition as he had maggots all over his nostrils and inside his mouth; these really are filthy animals and will eat anything. Later that night in camp, we recapped the event and slept soundly knowing we had nailed the biggest boar of our lives.

Happy Hunting,

Matt Klement

