

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S SHOOTER

*Catherine
Kelly*

SSAA Academic
Bursary recipient
**excels in
deer research**



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Editorial

Gemma Dunn



Here we are already three months in to the New Year with the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games just around the corner. Laetisha Scanlan takes us through the trials and tribulations for shooters leading up to this year's historical and engrossing sporting event.

What's the difference in ammunition for target shooting and hunting? I take you through rifle ammo in part two of my focus on ammunition selection. My step-by-step process looks at factors like a projectile's type, weight and application.

Our ongoing SSAA Academic Bursary awards offer tertiary students a grant to further their studies in shooting-related matters and we profile worthy recipient Catherine Kelly. Her chital deer research and incredible artwork feature as we introduce you to her and our rewarding SSAA program.

We produce *Australian Women's Shooter* to encourage more women, men and junior participation in shooting, hunting and conservation. A wonderful article from Colleen Woodford highlights how shooting has become a family affair and the ultimate link that bonds she and her husband with their daughter.

The amazing Browning clothing prize pack from the last edition was so popular, Winchester have kindly supplied another set for one more lucky winner.

Be sure to check out the upcoming women's events inside for fun near you and remember there's further great content on our Facebook and Instagram pages. Visit us at ssaa.org.au and emails are welcomed to aws@ssaa.org.au

Gemma

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Taking aim with Laetisha Scanlan



I want to start by wishing everyone a very Happy New Year. As we have welcomed it and the prospects of a fresh start for another 12 months, for many it is just another year and nothing to write home about.

However, for myself and those in the ISSF shooting community, 2020 means another opportunity to be a part of the biggest sporting event in the world – the Olympic Games. And while this blockbuster only occurs every four years, I cannot believe how fast this has come around since making my Olympic debut in 2016.

Here we are again at the pointy end of the selection trials. Having competed at the Nationals in January, this year the Commonwealth and National titles contribute 50 per cent of points to Olympic selection for the Australian team.

I won't go in to too much detail about the policy criteria for inclusion but simply put, four selection shoots are included

in the trials. The combination of your qualification score out of 125 targets, plus your finals position eg, 6 points for 1st, 5 points for 2nd and so on, are added together. You have the opportunity to drop your lowest score, leaving you with your three best qualification and finals points. These are then added together and as a result the highest total wins the spot. In the events that have two places available, the secondary berth is decided by the discretion of a selection panel that will take into consideration several factors like international performances and world rankings.

The traumas and tribulations of Olympic sport mean that not everyone will be victorious. Some will miss out on the team altogether, some will achieve greatness and some will fall just short of this. As I've mentioned before, due to the mental strength and concentration necessary for Clay Target Shooting, resilience is needed to overcome the highs and lows that are constantly thrown your way.

Olympic selection will test even the best shooters' nerves and it will be those who can control the pressure and rise to the occasion that will be boarding the plane to Tokyo in mid-July.

And while I agree selection trials can be stressful for many, I can't help but think how exciting it is to have another opportunity for a crack at a lifelong goal.

I hope everyone makes 2020 a year to remember!



Women's-only competition

Only female SSAA members are eligible to enter. One entry per member. To enter, simply write your name, address and membership number on the back of an envelope and send it to:

**Browning clothing pack,
Australian Women's Shooter,
PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061**

or online at ssaa.org.au/win



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Competition closes March 31, 2020



Catherine Kelly

Hunting and artwork skills add to student's repertoire

Dave Rose



Cat Kelly – from Hamilton to Townsville.

Catherine Kelly's postgraduate studies into the ecology of chital deer at James Cook University are going along at a hectic pace.

The 28-year-old New Zealander is into the third segment of a near four-year PhD course based at the Townsville campus and her pioneering investigations have already caught the attention of the SSAA. The December 2018 edition of *Australian Shooter* featured Catherine, known to all her friends and family as Cat, as one of four students who had been granted financial assistance under the umbrella of the SSAA Academic Bursary awards.

The donation of \$1956 helped to fuel Cat's research which involves employing radio-tracking and monitoring to examine the principal reasons of fawn transience. Also which groups of predators pose the most dangers to young chitals.

Before arriving in Australia, Cat completed her Master of Science degree with First-Class Honours in Biological Science, having previously undertaken her Bachelor of Science at the University of Waikato.

After that, when Cat was considering her options it was the lure of the project in Queensland that grabbed her attention.

"I really love deer and when I found this project it looked perfect – and fantastic for me," she said. "It just seemed like me."

Cat's migration from her homeland to Australia's tropical reaches has come about amid background influences that span a devotion to hunting and the great outdoors, plus a passion for observing the habits of deer. On top of all this, Cat finds spells to indulge in her pastime as an artist who wields pencils to depict wildlife images.

"I come from a family of artists, so combining the two (research/deer and art) was a natural progression," she said.

The core of Cat's scholastic analysis revolves around studying the ecosystem of chital deer in North Queensland. She has found that since the introduction of the species in 1886 in the Charters Towers region, numbers have not spread as significantly when compared to the extent of other ungulates worldwide.

Factors that influenced this trend and also affect mortality, habitat selection and population expansion of chital deer are not commonly known. Understanding these issues could have implications on the management of such species. This is all tied into genetics and fawn mortality.

Cat's scrutinising of chital deer trends involves fieldwork carried out around the Spyglass Beef Research Station. Radio-tracking is used to plot daily movement, with wildlife cameras in operation to record habitat selection and interactions with other species.

But aside from Cat's progress with her academic pursuits, her talents spread to take in interludes as a wildlife illustrator. Her handiwork involves artwork capturing virtual portraits of mammals, birds, snakes and, of course, deer.

The prints are amazingly life-like and it's no surprise to learn that Cat's gift of delivering stunning images with the pencils has also earned her widespread recognition. Her drawings have helped Cat to bolster various student theses due to their inclusion. The impressive sketches have also been seized upon by numerous wildlife publications.

So when did Cat discover she possessed such extraordinary flair and how did she translate this to wider acclaim?

"I have always enjoyed drawing and just carried on from an early age. I never had any lessons and just learnt from my parents," said Cat.

"The best advice I ever had was from my dad, Mike, who just said to try to avoid outlines. He reckoned that natural contours and shade create their own outlines."

Cat said that if she did animal drawings in black and white she used a plain graphic pencil. If the subject was in colour then it was coloured pencils. That might be stating the obvious but there is no denying the beauty of what the procedure yields.

As for the pictures that Cat bases her work on, that depends on the topic and availability. "If I have my own pictures to use, that's fine," she said. "Otherwise I use a composite."

With study obligations paramount, Cat does not have the opportunity of sufficient stretches to put aside for her artwork. But that has not stopped her using her drawings as part of her thesis as well as having them snapped up by goat and camera tracking publications.

"I just try to fit the drawing in with everything else," said Cat. "Each one probably requires a couple of hours per night. And the deer one took that length of time for a week."

Cat hails from a hunting background which explains her dedication to deer and intense concerns for the environment, especially the need to curb the intrusive behaviour of pest species.

Growing up in Hamilton, Cat tried her hand at hunting thanks to her family's traits rubbing off on her.

"I first got into hunting through a hero I never met," said Cat. It turns out that her champion influence was her grandfather Gladwyn Lyons, who sadly passed away when Cat's mum, Diana, was only 16. Apparently Gladwyn used to go deer stalking everywhere, mostly in the mountains of the North and South Islands. Duck shooting was more of a casual pastime.

"I never got to meet him which I really regret because everyone used to talk about him all the time," said Cat. "He died of a heart attack when he was only 59."

So it was this family connection that propelled Cat into hunting at an early age.

Below: In the field, Cat works on a deer's antlers.

Opposite: A kiwi, the native bird of New Zealand.



“I really enjoy trailing deer which is essentially the same thing as hunting, though without the process of the end product.”

- Cat



Left: Cat hunting in New Zealand with her border collie named Indi.

Top: Cat's portrait of a curlew.

Opposite: A perfect image illustrates Cat's love of deer.



“I remember going duck shooting when I was small,” she said. “It was probably when I was about eight or nine.

“There was my mum, nanna Enid and brother David. Obviously I was too young to carry firearms but I tagged along because it was a family thing.”

The hunting forays were usually centred around the Lake Ngaroto area and eventually there was also rabbit shooting.

“Gradually perhaps I became more of a fisherman around then,” said Cat. “We used to catch some trout but the ocean fishing took us to The Coromandel, where we would catch snapper and trout in Lake Rotorua. There were even big fish like stingrays and sharks but we didn’t keep those ones.”

Because of the long hours expended on her studies, Cat has not done much hunting from her Queensland base. In fact, all her firearms are still back in New Zealand. But she hopes to remedy that by acquiring an Australian firearms licence. She has set that process in motion and has already joined the SSAA.

“When I’m back in New Zealand I hunt with a .22 and also a shotgun,” said Cat. “I also love to take my dog with me. Indi is a four-and-half-year-old border collie and he comes everywhere in the bush with me.

“He’s very fluffy so unfortunately he can’t come to the tropics of Townsville because it would just be too hot for him.”

Even if Cat is not carrying a firearm, the presence of deer remains a constant motivation.

“I really enjoy trailing deer which is essentially the same thing as hunting, though without the process of the end product,” she said.

The future looks bright for all-rounder Cat but she is unsure which global location beckons to tap into her multiple ecological attributes.

Perhaps the draw of deer development management could see her make a return across the Tasman to her native land. Cat has also hinted at possible career openings in the US. She has already formed links to the American heartland as a result of a bond built up with renowned wildlife author Elizabeth Cary Mungall. Her book *Exotics on the Range: The Texas Example*, which was co-produced with William J. Sheffield, is one of the seminal reference points on chital deer in the US and has formed an important plank in Cat’s studies down under. Part of the SSAA Bursary grant was instrumental in Cat acquiring this publication to supplement her delving into the topic.

Cat hails from a hunting background which explains her dedication to deer and concerns for the environment, especially the need to curb intrusive behaviour of pest species.

Such was the impact of the volume on Cat's mindset, she endeavoured to make direct contact with the American writer.

"I talked to her recently and about how wonderful I thought her book was," said Cat. "We even talked about me going over there to see how things worked with the deer."

Cat's post-academic travels could also see her put India on the agenda where chital are native and the most important prey item for tigers and dholes, the equivalent to dingoes. They generally inhabit wooded regions.

"There are no set dates for the India trip but I'm looking at January to March of 2021 once my university commitments are over," she said.

It's the myriad of possibilities yet to happen that thrill Cat. "My future is a blank canvas," she said. "It's exciting but intimidating at the same time.

"I would love to stay working with deer but I'm also becoming more involved with pest mammals."

Whichever road Cat takes, it seems that job satisfaction is assured by virtue of her affinity with her vocation allied with a yearning to extend her already compelling capabilities. She is definitely a woman on a mission.

■ **The ongoing SSAA Academic Bursary Program is for tertiary students to further the community's understanding of conservation, hunting, recreational shooting and all related matters. Visit ssaa.org.au/bursary**



What's the right

ammo

for you?



PART TWO – RIFLE

Gemma Dunn



In the previous edition of *Australian Women's Shooter*, we discussed how to select the perfect ammunition for your shotgun shooting. This time, we cover the process for deciding on the right factory loaded rifle ammo.

Unlike shotgun ammo, there is a bit more to making sure you're using the right ammunition for your rifle as the twist rate, type of projectile, projectile weight and case thickness all come into play heavily. However, the procedure of elimination is similar. It is important to note that no two rifles will perform the same, which is why it is so crucial to test for yourself.

For some, this whole process can be a bit confusing and even overwhelming for many (myself included when I first learnt about it). I initially discovered this when

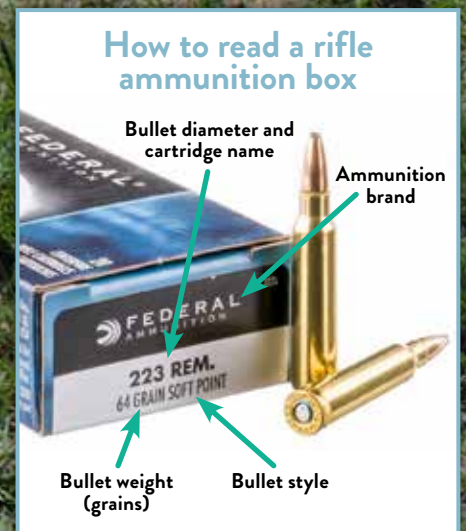
in my first job out of high school and before university, I ended up being part of the sales staff at one of Sydney's largest gunshops. I was lucky that my colleagues had the patience and time to teach me so I could better help customers and become an improved all-round shooter.

Step 1: What are you going to be shooting?

To start this course of action, you need to have in mind what kind of shooting you are going to do with your rifle so you can select from the right variety of ammunition. Most manufacturers offer various assortments of ammo made specifically for target shooting and hunting so you will need to do a bit of research into what sort suits the application you're going for.

Take care not to forget the first step though – ensure you know the correct calibre you should be buying for your rifle. It is essential to also note that, just like I mentioned in the shotgun edition of this series, most ammunition manufacturers have a premium version of each option. These certainly do have their benefits but you need to understand them in order to gain the most value for yourself.

Down this route you will notice the main variations are with projectile type and weight. Make sure you speak to your local shop or a trusted friend or coach about this if you are unsure. It is imperative to note that everyone has a slightly different opinion about these things, which is why you need to know what the path is for forming your own judgment, through these steps.



Step 2: Select three to compare

After you have decided what projectile category and weight is best for your niche, select three brands to test on the range. You must make sure that your preferences consist of comparable specifications so you are judging like-for-like. Your decision could be dictated by many different things such as: value, stock availability, brands you have used before or ones that have been suggested to you. This is why it is necessary to test a few because there are a lot of variables to snaring the right ammo for you.

Step 3: Be ready to test

When at the range you need to make sure that you have sighted in your rifle properly before testing the ammunition to confirm you have a consistent starting point for testing.



Once you are sure your rifle is all set and you are ready to begin the test, you need to ascertain that you have a fresh target available for each brand of ammunition you are employing. Some SSAA ranges offer a single target on the paper to shoot at, others have a bank of targets on a single sheet of paper so that you don't have to swap out your targets as often.

It is vital that you don't shoot the same target with multiple brands of ammo as you will not be able to complete the examination properly.

Place your target at a distance of 25m from your shooting point and ensure you have a really steady shooting set-up to minimise variables.

Before you start testing your ammo, particularly if you have already fired to sight it in, make sure you clean your rifle thoroughly. Once your barrel is clean, you can begin the testing analysis.

Step 4: Test the ammunition

Now that you are starting with a clean slate, pick the first brand of ammunition you want to trial. Shoot five rounds of that at your opening target, at a steady pace. Be careful not to rush though, so that you can obtain the best from your shots.

Once you have fired your first five shots, make sure you clean your rifle again and set up a new target (if you need one) ready for the next batch of testing. Repeat with another five shots with your next brand of ammunition.

Repeat this until you have fired five shots with each type of ammunition.

Some people suggest to clean your rifle between each shot. This is to ensure you have the best possible comparison for every shot placed. It is up to you how far you want to go with it, as long as you at least clean between banks of five shots you will tally a good enough 'grouping' for this purpose.

Place your target 25m away and ensure you have a steady shooting set-up.





Photo by The Outpost - Arms and Munitions

It is important to use a fresh target for each ammunition brand tested.

Step 5: Compare

Once the testing is completed you need to work out which one has performed the best by looking at your 'groupings'.

You may notice that one batch of five shots have landed on your target closer together than the others. This means you have a tight grouping and that is what to look for with this outing. If you are unsure about whether the result is because of ammunition performance or shooter performance, you can have someone else you trust complete the program again and compare across the two sets of results.

Also to note, the first shot after a thorough rifle clean may have a different point of impact than the following shots, so it may be necessary to disregard your first shot of each ammunition make.

Step 6: Select your ammunition

Once you identify the ammunition that gives you the tightest grouping, this is the brand and type you should be using. If you decide to change what you are shooting

at, you will need to repeat this for each application until you have a handful of loads and brands that you are sure perform the best for the job – ie, you use different ammunition for target shooting than you would for hunting.

Part of the fascination many of us have with rifle shooting is the fact that there is so much to learn about performance. The different variables when it comes to ammunition means it can be a bit of a Pandora's box.

We all want to extract the best out of our equipment, so the best ammunition for the job is necessary on the range or in the field.

Step 7: Fine-tuning

Now that you are confident in a brand and load-type that work for you, tweak your sights using your chosen ammunition so that it is set up and ready to go the next time you turn to that rifle.

Some might say that this process can be a little tedious, but it is a necessary one. We all want to extract the best out of our equipment, so the best ammunition for the job is necessary on the range or in the field.

Once you build up more confidence in your shooting and gain more understanding about the different performance factors, you will be more apt to easily make these changes yourself.

As always, make sure that you have a trusted friend, partner or coach to help you through this check. Otherwise, head over to our SSAA social platforms to learn from others and ask questions.

Happy shooting.

Projectile variants

Each projectile type is commonly referred to by its suffixed acronym. Here is a list of basic variants that you might come across:



Full metal jacket (FMJ)

- Full copper exterior protects the inner lead core, some can be found lead free.
- Good for use as plinking or target practice as it is usually cheaper.
- The projectile does not expand (mushroom) effectively on softer targets, therefore it is not recommended for hunting.



Soft-point (SP)

- Has an exposed lead core that is partially encased in a harder copper jacket.
- The exposed lead enables a more reliable expansion.
- The projectile does expand, but at a slower rate than a hollow-point projectile.
- Commonly used for hunting.



Polymer tip

- A polymer tipped hollow-point projectile.
- Acts like a hollow-point on impact but is aided by the ballistic tip giving the projectile a higher ballistic coefficient (BC), allowing for a flatter trajectory (compared to the same projectile without a polymer tip).
- It is commonly used for both hunting and long-range target shooting.

Lead round nose (LRN)

- The most simple of all the available bullet types, made entirely of lead alloy.
- Versatile but is best for target shooting.
- Most commonly available in standard velocity .22LR ammunition.
- Very cost-effective and one of the most common types of projectile, making it easy to purchase.



Hollow-point (HP)

- The hollow tip allows for a rapid expansion (mushroom) upon impact.
- Effective for a quick and humane kill for a wide variety of game.
- Not overly ideal for use while hunting for food or trophies, as the projectile can damage the meat considerably.
- Often used for long-range target shooting coupled with a boat-tail (LRBT or HPBT).
- Less likely to pass through the target or animal.

Along with the most common projectiles, there are a few additional types to consider:

Boat-tail (BT): The tapered boat-tail design provides a sleeker shape to the projectile, benefiting the BC and retaining stability. As the projectile has a higher BC and a flatter trajectory due to the boat-tail, it is more suited to long-range application. The higher BC of the boat-tail projectile helps to reduce wind drift at long range.

Hollow-point boat-tail (HPBT): This is a combination of the boat-tail and hollow-point features. There are multiple applications for a HPBT. Hunting/varmint HPs are for rapid expansion while target HPBTs are more suited to target shooting.



HP Quick Fact:

Because of the Hollow-point's ability to rapidly expand, therefore creating more damage upon impact, it has been banned for military use under the Saint Petersburg Declaration of 1868 which "prohibited the use in international warfare of bullets that easily expand or flatten in the body." This agreement was further solidified through the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

Coming events



Channel your inner cowgirl, Olympic trap shooter, deadeye target shooter and Charlie's Angel at

SSAA Victoria's Women on Target come and try shooting day

No licence or experience required. Just a willingness to come and have fun with other new shooters.

Women on Target is a SSAA Victoria initiative to give women the opportunity to try different types of sports shooting. A full day event will be held at SSAA Eagle Park (165 Gifkins Road, Little River) on March 29 where women can shoot shotgun, cowgirl-style single action, handguns and benchrest rifle. It's free of charge and bookings are essential.

Contact Lee-Anne Romans at the SSAA Victoria State Office on 03 8892 2777 or state_office@ssaavic.com.au



The Outpost Arms' second annual Women of Shooting event

The Gala Night is on March 7, while the Try Shooting events are held in Rockhampton, Qld on March 8:

- Ladies introduction to pistol shooting, 8.45am–1pm
- Ladies Clay Target Come & Try day, 8.45am onwards
 - Ladies rifle Rimfire Benchrest and Single Action, 2.45pm–6pm

Check out facebook.com/theoutpostarms or contact Nathan Armstrong on manager@theoutpostarms.com.au



Shoot for a Cure NT ladies day

This fundraiser for ovarian cancer research will be held at SSAA Darwin and Top End Gun Club, Mickett Creek, Darwin, NT on May 16, 9am–2.30pm. A day of pistol and shotgun education and practical hands on experience. Check out facebook.com/ShootforaCureNT

Girls with Guns try shooting day

It's thrilling shooting steel targets so come along and have a go with rimfire rifles and handguns. Held at SSAA Practical Shooting SA, Monarto South, SA on July 12, 9.30am–4pm. Check out practicalshooting.org.au/calendar

SSAA Wodonga have range time for women and juniors

Every fourth Saturday of the month between 1–4pm. Check out facebook.com/Ssaawodonga

Sports shooting

Colleen Woodford



Clays became a passion for Jasmine, who bought her first shotgun soon after this shoot.

Wow, who knew sports shooting could be so much fun? I am now addicted.

I first experienced firearms when I worked at a prison around 1996 as a 22-year-old and was trained with a .38 pistol, .223 Ruger rifle and 12-gauge pump-action shotgun. I found through the tuition I was quite a good shot and the 12-gauge was fun.

After leaving the prison 18 months later until the mid-2000s I didn't have anything to do with firearms. However, when we relocated from city to country, I decided to obtain my firearms licence as husband Don had a few firearms and I may need to move or handle them. So I attended the course at the Benalla Police station, passed the test, applied and was approved. I kept my firearms licence placed in my purse and renewed it when needed. But I still had no real interest.

Fast forward to late 2018 and our then 13-year-old daughter Jasmine (Jazz) started to show some curiosity in hubby's .22 rifle when he went out to pop off the

odd pesky rabbit. She was really engaged in helping to skin the bunnies and all that stuff too. In February 2019 she sat the test for her junior firearms licence and that's where it all began.

Before long she was out with her dad and picking off rabbits like an expert, having a real eye for the task. She was proud of a huge hare she shot and was eager to help skin it and dry out the pelt with her dad.

We even set up a mini range at home with some targets and cans and brought out the air rifle and .22 with low velocity. This is when I became involved and found family plinking rather entertaining

as we competed against each other. Jazz continued to prove how much of a better shot she was than both me and her dad.

When I found the 'Girls with Guns' day advertised at SSAA Shepparton I thought that would be a great surprise for Jazz. It was a chance to have a go at handguns and shotguns, so I booked. We had an absolute blast and Jazz was exceptionally good on the clays.

Nine days later I entered her in the school clay shoot at Benalla Field and Game. We both felt a bit nervous and overwhelmed as Jazz had only shot 10 rounds beforehand. Jazz held her nerve and although

We now shoot as a family as often as we can. It is something we can all take pleasure from on an even playing field together.

our family link



Jasmine and Colleen enjoy their first shoot together.



Jasmine at the SSAA Shepparton's Ladies 'come and try' day. It was her first time attempting all three disciplines – benchrest, pistol and 12-gauge shotgun.

she merely hit about six clays out of 50, we both had a great time. That afternoon we headed to A&W Grassi and ordered Jazz a Redolfi 12-gauge and me a Lithgow Crossover .22 rifle for targets.

Later Jazz participated at a Benalla F&G shoot and shot the morning session (50 targets) with her new shotgun. Jazz again managed to down six targets and enjoyed herself.

I wanted to join in the spectacle so ordered myself an Akkar Churchill 12-gauge, which I tested at the SSAA Wodonga range. I took Jazz and her friend Tarnia, who was new to shooting. Jazz smashed every clay thrown at her and did well on the targets and silhouettes. Tarnia also impressed for her first time and is considering going for her junior licence. I didn't do too badly myself.

I went on to compete at Kyabram F&G and was thrilled. Albeit I was a bit sore the next day. We had a wonderful squad and lots of friendly and helpful advice which

makes me want to go back. The scores don't really matter. Jasmine won the Sub Junior and I scooped the raffle so it was win/win all round.

We now shoot as a family as often as we can. It is something we can all take pleasure from on an even playing field together. Hubby and I also have turns shooting with Jazz for some bonding time. I will probably lean towards .22 target shooting as the days go by. My body might not cope with lots of clay shooting due to my multiple sclerosis. But I am willing to have a good crack at it and see how I go.

Thanks to the SSAA Ladies Days, my bank account is now several thousands of dollars lighter, but we do have something to show for it. Thanks to the guys at A&W Grassi for their advice and support in our purchases and to all the people that have helped us and encouraged us along the way and put up with all my questions. We hope to see you around the traps (just be patient with us please).



Tips for Jasmine from SSAA Victoria's Junior Vice President Marion Barnes at the SSAA Wodonga range.

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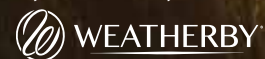
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- ▶ Assembled in California, USA.

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