

A Tracklayer's Story

Sunday 6.45am, a very cold, frosty morning and here I am sitting on a canvas sheet amongst trees and high, dry grass, waiting to be located in one beautiful part of this country.

I am aware that I will remain at this spot for another hour or so and hopefully be found by one very smart dog. I do not even feel the cold as I have put so many layers of clothe on, aware of the conditions awaiting me. From our camping ground some distance away, I can hear some dogs barking that remained at the camp. There is no other noise to be heard, except the rhythmical beat of my own heart. The air is so cold I notice the warmth of my breath causing a mist to drift off through the air. It is so peaceful and I feel happy to be part of all the tracking excitement. My thoughts wander from here to there and thinking how I got involved in "Tracking" and how much I enjoy it. The sun slowly touches the distant hills and I admire the beauty of all this. Still sitting amongst the frosty area I was wondering whether the sun will reach my spot before the dog finds me.

It is time to lie down and wait quietly for a while till the dog (hopefully) finds me. Soon I hear some voices and I knew the tracking party cannot be far away. Some time passed and I can hear a dog's panting, getting closer and closer and then suddenly the dog appears and greets me with happy licks!

This time my searcher "passed" the test and the handler was so happy and proud I could see it all over his face. On the way back to camp the handler's excitement continued and he could not find enough words to praise his champion dog. I also felt very happy that the dog had no problems finding me along a winding track of over 1000m in length, even with a one hour head start.

Soon, back at camp, when everybody is back from the morning's tracking we all enjoy the well deserved breakfast and all the friendship that goes with The Grafton Dog Obedience Tracking Trial.

I hope I have inspired a few people to get out there and take part at next year's Tracking Trials at Fineflower. Unless you do it you will never know what you miss out on.

Yvonne