

HAWKE — THE HUNTER-SNIFFER

Story by PHILIP CASTLE
Pictures by Richard Briggs, of the
Canberra Times

POLICE in Canberra have been delighted with the performance of Hawke, its 20-month-old German Shepherd all-purpose working dog, who after short service has achieved considerable success.

Hawke, named after his more famous Prime Minister, was given to the NSW Police by a Gosford family at 14 months. The NSW Police trained him, and Hawke then worked with them for five weeks under his AFP handler, Constable Peter White.

Hawke began duty in Canberra on Monday 15 December, 1986, and is attached to the ACT Police region. In his first week he helped find an alleged offender hiding in some bushland. He then recovered some stolen property and break-in instruments nearby.

Constable White said that while on a training exercise in September in bushland near Mt. Druitt in Sydney he was supposed to find a man hiding. Instead he went in a different direction and found about \$2,000 of sporting equipment stolen five days earlier from a nearby primary school.

While working with the NSW Police, Hawke was successful on a number of jobs including sniffing out some drugs in a house raid. He also tracked a man for more than six suburban blocks who was allegedly involved in a motor vehicle accident. The man was arrested.

Constable White said that Hawke is friendly and can be approached. He has shown all the right qualities for police work. He is trained to do building searches, can find property recently touched by humans, is able to do open bushland searches, to detect cannabis, heroin and cocaine and to attack.

Hawke will attack only if he or his handler is threatened or if he is given the command to attack. He knows he has to work when Constable White places his harness on him.

In January Hawke was again called in when two men were seen in a car which had just been reported stolen.

Constable Steve Mullins and his partner spotted the allegedly stolen Holden V8 in Canberra's Civic area about 3 am. After a car chase on the Tuggeranong Parkway the two men dumped the car in the Mt Stromlo Forest area and ran into bushland.

Station Sergeant Bob McGoogan led a search for the men but they could not be found. He called in Hawke. Hawke was instructed to do an open bushland search. Within 10 minutes he had found the first alleged offender. That person boasted to Constable White that his mate was from Sydney and he was too clever



and experienced to be caught by a dog.

Constable White said that increased the challenge. It would make Hawke all the keener to find him which he did within 10 minutes.

Both men, aged 19, were arrested and charged, one with a number of alleged offences relating to stolen vehicles.

More recently Hawke has located drugs and some money hidden in the lining of a bag in a house-search. He has continued to be an excellent working police dog.

"It's all a game to Hawke and the handler has to jump around and encourage him when he's done something well," Constable White explained to a group of media people when he was introduced.

"You have to give him a reward, like a game, and jump around saying 'Good

dog' or whatever."

Constable White used a "criminal", First Constable Peter Kossatz, to show how Hawke reacted if anyone threatened him.

Criminal Kossatz wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with "The last great act of defiance" simulated a chase and began to run away.

"Good boy, good boy, 'ats's a fella. Let's get this bloke," commanded Constable White. Hawke did not need much encouragement and latched quickly onto Kossatz's protected arm. He only let go when Constable White told Hawke to "leave". The offender then "foolishly" struck at Constable White. A silly thing to do and Hawke again had to be restrained. Everyone nearby made very sure they were friends with Constable White.

However Hawke can be patted and is friendly provided he is not working. He was a "high flyer" on the NSW course in Sydney and according to Constable White, had he not been struck with a virus he would have won first prize, and not the second prize which he got for his performance.

One police officer was heard to remark that if Hawke kept up his working record he would be getting quicker promotion to First Constable than any before him.

The AFP in Canberra has two other working dogs; Keogh — the bomb and explosives dog who works with Senior Constable Bruce Roby, and another general purpose dog trained by the RAAF — Max, who works with Constable Ernie Roughly.



• Hawke attacks Senior Constable Peter Kossatz who was foolish enough to resist Constable Peter White.