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The Monster

The Monster Whitetail Buck

Have you ever walked through the woods just hoping that you would get the chance to show one of the elusive bucks you heard so much about? My uncle Tom's cabin will be forever memorable because I shot one of those magnificent, monster whitetails that you could only see on a professional hunting channel on television. Uncle Tom's cabin only had two bedrooms and running water or electricity. We had to use our flashlights to round and make our way to the outhouse.

Uncle Tom and I were hunting on his land in Crivitz, Wisconsin. Since it was opening morning of gun season, we woke up at 3:30 in the morning to get ready. The cabin only had a wood heater provide heat, which made it a chilly 50 degrees. All through the night we had a team putting logs into the wood furnace and that was miserable. We started with wearing long underwear due to the sub zero temperatures outside.

To get a good start, we had the typical hunting breakfast which consisted of eggs, bread, bacon, and orange juice. As we were eating, we were discussing what types of bucks we were going to shoot if we saw any. Tom stressed that I should shoot any buck that I saw, but I knew, I should wait for a chance to shoot a "monster." My stomach was so tight from being nervous I did not eat. As we finished breakfast, we started to get dressed and are hunting apparel.

We proceeded to get our hunting boxes that had our hunting clothes in them from our rooms. We both knew that we should be wearing enough warm holes for the all-day sit. I first proceeded to put on my Under Armour, a black polyester, long underwear, and pants. I then

grabbed my wool pants and my hunting jacket, which was blaze orange. As we were getting ready, uncle Tom was packing our lunches. I proceeded to pack my backpack with the necessities to keep my life from going insane with boredom or experiencing hypothermia. I packed my headphones, walkie-talkie, and hand warmers, along with a Game Boy with Super Mario Brothers Three, a .243 rifle with replacement bullet shells, and my propane heater. We loaded our guns at the cabin and said, "Good luck," to each other, then we were off on our one mile trek through some hilly land.

When I first stepped outside, I experienced a breathtaking awareness of the bitter cold. With every breath, the frigid air made my lungs feel like a pincushion. As I proceeded to leave the cabin following with my flashlight, I followed the fluorescent orange tape around the trees, marking the pathway to my stand. This had been done prior to opening weekend and well worth the time. The land had been recently logged off giving an eerie desolate feeling. As I was walking to my stand, my excitement made my mind wonder why I was doing this.

My ground stand was up on the hill, I had an old car seat for a chair. The blind had papermill felt attached to the boards going the long way that trapped the heat inside and kept me nice and toasty. The roof overhead was there to protect from snowing sticks. It was 5:00 AM when I settled into the blind. Since it was still dark, I had an hour to myself to get situated. I was excited to experience the hunt; however, I did fall asleep listening to my music. As I proceeded to dream of shooting this enormous buck, I had come back, and I woke myself up. The daylight started to creep in and I began seeing the structures of the land. There was a large hill in front, off to the left a downward sloping hill, to the right a fairly level ground, and behind was as well

level training. Down to my left in the ravine, I saw blaze orange and realized it was another under.

It was now nine o'clock, and I was getting pretty cold and bored of playing with my Game Boy. Then in just a split second, I saw the buck. The deer was in a rut behavior and was more than I was hoping for to shoot. The deer, being only 15 feet away, was coming in front of me. I was almost certain that I would hit him with the most critical first shot in the heart. I barely remember pulling the trigger five times. Adrenaline pumping, I was calling my uncle Tom yelling into the walkie-talkie, "I just shot a monster black." I may have added a few cuss words so he could tell I was excited. He said, "settle down, I will be there in a little bit." The air smelled like gunpowder at the shooting range. With being set aside beyond belief, I took out my cellular phone and called everyone that I knew who would listen and told him or her about my gigantic deer.

After about 20 minutes, which seemed like an eternity, my uncle arrived at my stand and we begin our search down the hill for him. The buck only ran 25 yards, for once, I thought it was easy to track. There laid a massive eight point buck with a huge neck from all the testosterone that was pumping through his body. He looked to be a healthy 250 pound animal. The antlers, with perfect symmetry, measured out to and inside spread of 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The monster deer was mine!

What I have learned from this was that patients will get you anywhere in life, but at the hunting or work. Hunting at uncle Tom's cabin will forever be remembered. We still talk, even to this day, about the buck and joke about my uncle cooking breakfast.