

The magazine for the bowhunter, ranch owner and archer

AFRICAS BOWHUNTER & archer

MARCH 2007
VOL 8 - ISSUE 3
SOUTH AFRICA
R18.95 (incl. VAT)

Bowhunt in
Namibia

Game capture

New products

Win a 3D target

Field test on
local bowsling

The story of
Rothhaar's Snuffers

Bowhunting the
Lichtenstein's
hartebeest

www.africasbowhunter.co.za

USA \$7.50
Other Countries
R28.00





By Frank Berhuir

My second time on Farm Okapunja from 26 August to 9 September was once again amazing, exciting, beautiful and very successful.

During the 390km drive from Windhoek to the Farm near Otavi and Etosha National Park in the north of Namibia, I enjoyed the beauty, nature and spaciousness of Africa.

Gustav and his wife Uschi welcomed me heartily so that I felt as if I was "coming home" rather than being in a foreign country.

Bowhunt in Namibia



On the evening of my arrival we enjoyed a very delicious dinner with eland steaks, grilled pumpkins, and potato wedges, one of Uschi's fantastic homemade desserts and South African wine. As we sat under the lapa next to the open barbecue fire we made plans for the upcoming few days.

Saturday morning we set up a tree stand near a waterhole where Gustav and Rudy, one of the hunting guides, had recently found tracks of major kudu bulls. A kudu bull was my prime target for this hunt, so I found myself sitting in the tree stand in the afternoon, while Gustav placed himself 70 to 80 metres away in another stand with the video camera.

Half an hour later some Cape pigeons, guinea pigeons and rose louries gathered two to three metres beside and above me in the tree where I was sitting. Curiously they watched this Sniper Africa camouflaged creature. Within ten minutes more than 20 birds were sitting around me – incredible.

Two young warthogs and some kudu does entered the scenery, but unfortunately no bulls. After enjoying a wonderful three-hour suntan we decided to change the location because of upcoming changing winds.

On Sunday morning we went out very early to a ground blind at another waterhole called "old post". Every post, blind and tree stand on Okapunja has a name.

I enjoyed a wonderful African sunrise with the funny spectacular cackling of helmeted guinea fowls, the grey "Go-away" lorie and other birds. Again some kudu does with adolescents showed up, but the bulls remained perfectly covered at the edge of the bushes.

Now I know why its second name is the "grey ghost of Africa". For over an hour the bull stood in the bush without any movement. Unfortunately, when some young Oryx bulls approached he decided to disappear again.

Later that morning a male baboon (*Papio cynocephalus ursinus*) strolled towards the waterhole. I readied myself and my Mathews LX with the Laser Pro arrow tipped with Silver Flame broadhead, and made a deadly shot on the baboon at 20 metres. He went about 50 metres back to the edge of the bushes where he expired.

✂ page 37



Several younger warthogs and oryx appeared in the afternoon, but were not huntable in accordance with NAPHA regulations. Besides, I had hunted oryx and warthog successfully last year.

The next morning, 29 August at 6:20 am, two black-backed jackals (*Canis mesomelas*) suddenly came out of the bush heading towards the waterhole at the "old post" where I was again sitting in the blind. Gustav and I were dead quiet so as not to scare them away.

The jackals romped near the waterhole as if to fight over who may have the first sip. The older and bigger one won, while the younger one continued to thump him as he drank.

This was my chance. Neither jackal suspected anything out of the ordinary and both were confident. My heart pounded like a sledgehammer. For several seconds, which felt like ages, I had my bow at full draw and aimed at the animal 21 metres away.

The moment his upper body part bent down to drink I pulled the trigger of my Scott release. The carbon arrow with its 125-grain Silver Flame broadhead struck through the corpus of the jackal. He dropped dead 15 metres to the right of where I had shot him.

All this happened within a few seconds. For me, it was a jaw-dropping display of the power and performance of bowhunting. We found the arrow 70 metres behind the spot where I had hit the jackal.

After this exciting morning we drove back to the farmhouse for Uschi's lavish breakfast, feeling enriched by our morning adventures. The hot hours of the day were spent swimming, tanning and hanging around the pool, relaxing in the shade while browsing ABH&A, or observing the waterhole 90 metres away from the farmhouse.

There, where hunting is strictly prohibited, you find a lot of action during the day. In the midday heat a troop of 12 blue wildebeest galloped in for a drink, and over 20 mongoose strolled in and tried to get a nip without falling into the water. Funny and interesting observations.

Over the next two days we drove to Swakopmund for a sight-seeing tour and roamed through this beautiful, clean and ancient coastal city on the Atlantic seaside of Namibia. Besides a wonderful sundowner at the shore, some shopping and visits to places of interest we also did an amazing tour through the nearby Namib desert with our Land Rover Defender.

On 31 August I went out very early with Rudy, Gustaf's hunting guide, to the "Nikki Post". I was determined to successfully hunt my much sought-after kudu.

With Rudy's 30-year-old-but-still-working Land Rover we drove several kilometres in the direction of the proposed location. The morning was cold and I was happy to wear a jacket because we had wound down the front window and the wind was pretty cold. Moreover, the fine red sand ground my teeth.

We were in the blind before the 5:30 sunrise. As always, guinea fowl were our first visitors. At around 8:00 I considered aiming at them but was afraid of sending out an alarm signal to potentially approaching game, so I declined.

This proved to be a good decision because some minutes later I spotted some small brown-grey tips going up and down in the

near treetops – kudu bull (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) approaching! The cows came first and the three good bulls remained a safe distance away at the edge of the scrubland. Then four younger blue wildebeest bulls came closer.

Hey, what's going on here, I thought. G'nus, go away, I cannot use you right now. You are driving away my kudu bull!

And that's exactly what happened. The kudu cows drank and slowly trotted away. The wildebeest snorted several times and the irritated kudu bulls decided not to drink and headed off in another direction away from the water. That sucks, I whispered to myself.

Rudy decided to leave the blind and climb a nearby tree to try to see with the binoculars where the bulls were. After ten to 15 minutes he came back with new hope. The bulls were not too far away and we could stalk... Before he finished the sentence I had my gear ready to go. We had to make a bigger loop to bypass the thorny bushes and keep the wind against us.

By now it was 9:30 and pretty warm. We stalked very slowly and quietly, clearing away any noisy foliage or branches and always checking the wind. One hour later we made our way through to the edge of the scrubland. With the binoculars we could see the bulls. They were only 300 to 400 metres away from the blind where we were and standing in the shade under some camel-thorn trees.

From our position the bulls were 60 metres away so we had to stalk a bit closer. As we made our first step we heard a sound like a dog barking. Some kudu does were 50 metres behind us and had seen our movement.

Okay – the bulls had gone and we returned to the farm a little disappointed. After having replenished our energy with a good meal we decided to go out to the post again. The bulls must come back, was my thinking and hope. Fortunately, I was right. The bulls showed up again. With the binoculars we judged the best one. The three fine bulls came closer and closer and my blood pressure rose higher and higher.

Finally the biggest bull stood broadside to me at 28 metres. I was at full draw with my Mathews LX and fired the carbon arrow. The bow's 67 poundage accelerated the 125-grain Silverflame-equipped carbon arrow. It penetrated both lungs of the animal before the trunk of the bush behind stopped him.

The bulls jumped off and after a 30-metre run the two others stopped as if asking, "Hey, why did we run away?" They walked to their companion, which stood 50 metres forward.

When they and we saw that the bull had collapsed they cut off directly into the bush. I was extremely happy. The bull expired within range of sight. I went to my trophy and – wow – it was a good fine bull. What a fantastic hunt and wonderful day. After an exhausting and thrilling day we finally made my kudu trophy pics in this wonderful landscape under the Namibian sun. A day I will remember for a lifetime.

Two days later we observed the afternoon exercise fights of an impala bachelor herd of 12 rams. I had a broadside shooting opportunity to shoot a good ram within 22 metres.

Because of a string jump of the impala (*Aepyceros melampus*) ram the shot was a little too high, but we found him late that evening. Another a great experience, a fine trophy and a very

lucky hunter.

Thanks to Gustav and his wife Uschi and all the others for a wonderful time, fantastic hunts and adventures. With bow and arrow I was able to harvest a good kudu bull, a good impala ram, two fine jackal, five baboon and two helmeted guinea fowl. Next year I will try for springbok and wildebeest – but that will be another story.

Equipment was a 67-pound Mathews LX with Mathews two-piece quiver, Trophy Ridge Drop Zone Arrow Rest, HHA Optimizer Lite 5500 sight, Vibracheck isolator stabiliser, limb savers, Laser Pro 300 carbon arrows, 125-grain Silverflame broadheads and Scott Wildcat release. Optics: Zeiss Victory 10x40 BT binos and Bushnell Yardage Pro Rangefinder. Camo: Sniper Africa and Predator Deception.

Thanks to God and all who made my Namibian bowhunt possible and successful.



Your Home For
Bowhunting
On The Net

Updated Daily With the Latest Bowhunting & Archery Events and News.

www.bowhunting.net
IS THE SITE FOR YOU IF YOU LOVE BOWHUNTING & ARCHERY!!!


not believe that I was on the brink of a whole new experience. Just before we ran out of conversation Eddie whispered that we were now in the “witching hour”. Before I could enquire what he meant a herd of zebra appeared out of nowhere and nervously came in to drink. We were so close I was too scared to breathe. They left after we had had a good look at them. Two had quite a good skirmish. A lone impala ram came close but did not stay long. A baby warthog came charging past the blind a few minutes later, totally unaware of our presence.

Next moment Eddie whispered that he had spotted a nicely sized springbok ram just to the left of the blind. I wanted to take a peep but my coach warned me not to make any sudden moves or I might spook it. I could not breathe as I slowly reached for my Switchback and an arrow. The ram slowly came into sight, looking very skittish.

At 21 metres he stopped and stared at the blind. Now neither of us breathed. As he turned broadside I drew my bow. It was shaking in my hand like a puff adder in the Namaqualand. As I found my spot in the peep, he turned and moved to our right. Relaxing the bow was, at the time, the most difficult thing I had ever done in my life. I breathed for the first time in about four minutes.


The ram moved closer around a thorn tree and stood broadside at 18 metres. I drew again, found my spot, but as I got ready to let the arrow fly the animal moved again. This time it was spooked by a massive warthog sow and the baby we had seen

JJ Wapens & Trappers Trading


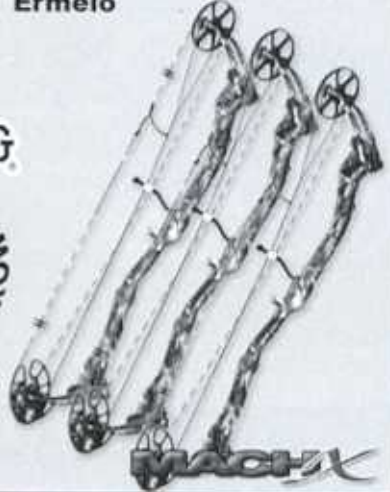



Ermelo
Bow-proshop

Tel 017 819 3415 / 42 Joubert Street
Ermelo



BROWNING
ARCHERY

earlier. After the two newcomers drank they started feeding and everything settled.

The impala ram from earlier was also hanging around in the background. My ram seemed much calmer and once again started to come towards the blind – 20 metres... 17... 14... and still moving closer. At 12 metres he offered me his broadside. I drew the bow, aimed, worried whether it was going to be a good shot, aimed more carefully and released the arrow. It struck home and Eddie immediately said the shot was good. The ram ran off into the veldt while the two hogs and impala carried on as if nothing had happened.

To say I was shaking is an understatement. Uncontrollably, like a poison victim, would be a more accurate description. As I moved to get out of the now too small blind, a firm hand stopped me and I was told that we had to wait for an hour. This was too much. But an hour later I was released, as promised, when the cruiser arrived with the dogs. My wife was also there to congratulate me and share the moment. The dogs ran no further than 60 metres before finding my ram where he had expired. Compliments were given all round and I could not believe my luck. Back at the homestead photos were taken, with me doing inward summersaults.

To my friend Grant that set up the whole trip I will always be thankful. To Gary and Haylie, the two Americans, Eddie and Luke, a big shout out for one of the most memorable weekends of my life.

Believe me, Imvani will see me again soon.