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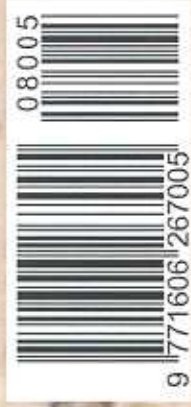
The art of
walk and stalk

Presteer jou pyle?

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MAY 2008
VOL 9 - ISSUE 05
SOUTH AFRICA
R21.90 (incl. VAT)

USA \$9.99
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£19.21



Bowhunting the
Springbok

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Springbok with bow and arrow

By Frank Berbuir

Once again the "virus Africanus" brought me back to the dark continent – back to Namibia. Almost five months had passed since my last Namibian bowhunt in November 2006. This time I was hunting with Juergen from Wildlife Marketing, an experienced Africa hunter and a buddy of mine. He invited me to accompany him on a hunting trip and the making of a promotion film for Wildlife Marketing.

We had a good, exciting and successful time. This time I bowhunted from 10 to 17 April 2007 in the south of Namibia, near the village Maltahöhe on Farm Kachauchab. The farms in the south of Namibia are all very large and Farm Kachauchab has a size of 20 000 hectares.

Christian Otto, the owner, PH and farmer picked us up at Windhoek airport and during the approximately 300 km drive south to the farm, I enjoyed the diversified landscapes and being back in Africa again.

I was chasing springbok this time. Due to the rough territory and open veld, stalking was not an option, so we decided to hunt from two available blinds that Juergen and Christian had set up the year before. Shooting distances at the waterholes were more than 30 metres. After our arrival and hearty welcome to the farm we wanted to go out immediately for an afternoon hunt.

At half past four we were in the blind. Some small warthogs and different birds visited us, but besides this we only enjoyed the amazing Namibian sundown on the horizon. It did not matter because we were happy to be back again in Namibia and Christian had made a "lekker" gemsbok roast for dinner, which we washed down with a couple of beers and Scottish single malts. On top of all this we had a wonderful and magnificent view of the African sky, with billions of stars, the Milky Way, Magellanic Clouds and the Southern Cross.

Next morning we started early.

03:30: The wake-up call from my watch got me up.

04:00: Met Juergen for a quick coffee and then drove out to our hunting ground where the last days showed tracks of springbok that gathered there frequently.

04:15: Arrived at the blind after a tricky walk, especially if you are still half asleep and have to walk in complete darkness.

04:30: Ready in the blind and slept again – not really, because excitement rose when we reached the blind and heard the snorting noises of springbok close by.

05:30: Sunrise and it became cosier and warmer in the blind. First birds approached the waterholes and guinea fowls clucked around.

06:10: Attention: Nine springbok seemed to appear from nowhere and stood to our right.

Unfortunately there were only does and young males or females – nevertheless it was a vision of delight to see the

The author with his springbok ram.



youngsters bouncing around and it made for some good scenes on video. Because the wind was in our favour and we were dead quiet, they headed down to the waterhole, drank and stayed there. Some of them felt so comfortable, they lay down 40 to 50 metres away from us.

06:40: "Buddy, keep your hair on, this is getting serious!" A good springbok ram came over the hill about 180 metres away from us. Even-tempered, he trotted towards the water, not caring a straw for the others. In slow motion I dragged myself to my feet. After two hours of sitting my legs felt like wobbly pudding. At a snail's pace I moved to the shooting slot to get into position. The ram was at 80 metres and still heading forward. I nocked the Carbon Express CX Hunter 300 Advantage arrow, equipped with the 125-grain G5 Tekkan II mechanical broadhead. The ram was still on his way with no sign of discomfort.

At 33 metres he reached his destination and lowered his head to sip. This was the moment for me to draw my bow. Within seconds I had the sight pin on his vital area. He stood slightly quartering towards me and I fired the arrow from the 80 pounds Mathews LX. You could hear it crash through the shoulder and penetrate the lungs before it flew out of the springbok on the other side. Like a cannonball the ram shot off around 40 metres in the direction from which he had come, before going down on his knees and expiring within seconds. What an incredible experience.

07:10: We arranged the ram for some dignified trophy photos and headed back to the farm for a good, rich bacon and potato omelette breakfast. What a wonderful start to the day.

Altogether on that trip I harvested with my Mathews LX, one springbok ram at 33 metres, full penetration, shot through both lungs, two springbok does (one trophy doe and one for the kitchen), 30 and 32 metres, full penetration, shot through both lungs and one helmeted guinea fowl at 20 yards.

All animals were shot with the 125-grain G5 Tekkan II; excellent performance from these broadheads. With the rifle I shot another springbok, just for the meat, Juergen also shot eight trophy animals by bow or rifle (springbok, oryx, black and blue wildebeest, blesbok, warthog).

If you are interested in bow- or rifle hunting on Farm Kachauchab, check out the links, www.wildlife-marketing.de and www.namibiafarmhunting.com