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# Last chance bushbuck

**I**t was my last hunting day on this journey to beautiful South Africa. I was due to depart the next day. We, my PH, Izak Vos from Vos Safaris, and I, had experienced some memorable and very successful hunting adventures and above all had harvested some fine trophies in the past eight hunting days.

It was a lovely day in Limpopo, the northern province of South Africa, and we had walked and stalked for bushbuck more or less all day long. The day went from a crispy morning to a really warm (not hot) midday temperature, cooling down to a comfortable 20° Celsius by the afternoon. We had our lunch pack and drinks with us, so we enjoyed being out in nature and in the bush all day. To me as a city slicker it is always an enjoyment to be outdoors, resharpening my senses, trying to see and read tracks and signs, listening to my PH and benefiting from his experience, and being a part of the natural habitat. It is not

just hunting, it is also a kind of relaxation for me until it comes to the point where I get closer to a potential game animal and my blood pressure begins to rise.

During the day we enjoyed seeing some bushbuck females and also some young males, which was enjoyable and interesting, but we failed to observe a mature *bosbok* – my intended quarry. The sun had started to set when we called the game farm owner and told him that we were calling it a day. He asked if we had been successful so far and when he heard that we had not, he proposed that we come to his house as he knew of the whereabouts of a nice resident bushbuck male that came searching for females in the late afternoon.

We wasted no time, headed back to Izak's bakkie and drove back to the farmhouse. The farmer directed us to a spot just 400 metres from his home and we set up an ambush behind a



thicket. The light was fading fast but fortunately with my illuminated Spot-Hogg sight I still had enough light in case the buck showed up. We sat on the ground and kept deadly quiet for about twenty minutes. It looked like the hunting gods were in our favour when suddenly we heard some noises from the bushes to our right. A female bushbuck came out running with the male bushbuck in question in hot pursuit, running after her with outstretched neck and lowered head. They were circling around really quickly, and I could not judge if this was serious or just fun.

My blood pressure was rising as I observed the scene unfolding in front of us about thirty metres away. Fortunately they were not aware of us. My only concern was that they were running around like roadrunners and it seemed as if they could do this all night long without having a break. After a while both animals slowed to a walk and the female headed in our direction, still not having got wind or sight of us. Izak gave me a signal to get ready and I drew the bow just in case the male walked after her and got close enough to afford me a shooting opportunity.

Of all the impressions and lessons learnt on this trip with Izak the most important one was, "Listen to your PH!" So I did and it had gone perfectly the last few days. The Scott release and the Easton full metal jacket arrow with the Muzzy Phantom broadhead were all in place and I pulled the bow to full draw. The female and the male were still walking slowly towards us. We were both kneeling on the ground and I had a small but comfortable shooting window in front of me. Then the female

came into my line of sight at about 24 metres and a few steps later the buck followed her.

Izak looked at me and expressed with his lips that he was going to whistle and gave a thumbs up sign. That meant, "Do it – then!" My adrenaline level was at maximum. The bushbuck was slightly in between broadside and quartering towards our position when I heard the whistle. Suddenly both animals stopped and stared intently in our direction. I aimed with my 25 metre illuminated pin a bit forward one third from the bottom of his body over the right front leg. The moment he stopped I sent the arrow on its lethal mission. The 800-grain arrow hit him hard and went completely into the body with a cracking noise. The female ran off. The male jumped up and ran back into a clearing. We switched our flashlights on and luckily we could see him going down quickly after the shot, travelling only 25 metres from where he was first hit to where he expired.

I had bagged my first *Tragelaphus scriptus*, a Limpopo bushbuck. Celebrations and congratulations were extraordinary, the consequences of which I felt the next morning – a little headache!

Always good hunting – Waidmanns Heil – shoot straight and "alles van die beste". **ABH**

#### Equipment:

**Bow:** Elite GT 500 @ 90 pounds. **Arrow:** Easton Full Metal Jacket 250 Dangerous Game with heavier inserts. **Broadhead:** Muzzy Phantom SS 2-Blade @ 200 grain. **Optics:** Zeiss Victory Binoculars & Nikon **Rangefinder.** **Release:** Scott. **Camo:** Sniper Africa

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