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Ancient blinds

Mounted archery

To camo or not to camo

Preparing for the hide

**Youngsters – the future
of bowhunting**

**Broadhead
testing protocol**

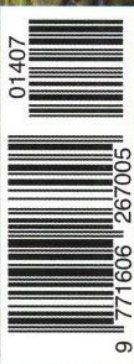
Waterbuck hunt

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Have we lost the plot?

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A magazine for the bowhunting enthusiast

Patience paid off with a nice waterbuck



By Frank Berbuir

Together with my PH, Izak Vos, from Vos Safaris I had a terrific hunt with unforgettable impressions and memories the past week in South Africa. On my second last day of this trip we were close to Rooiberg on a huge farm in the Limpopo Province. Since 8:00 o'clock in the morning we sat in a nicely constructed pit blind in an area of the farm where, according to the owner, bushbuck, waterbuck, kudu and warthog roam frequently. After we had fixed our stuff and I had drew my bow as exercise to familiarise myself with several shooting positions, we sat stock-still on what was quite a chilly early morning in mid-August.

However, I watched and soaked up again the beautiful awakening of the African bush with manifold chirps, tweets and singing of the birds while the rising sun with its upcoming warmth made it more comfortable in the blind. A pair of birds, so-called blacksmith plovers (*Vanellus Armatus* or "Waffenkiebitz" in German), came close up to two metres of our blind running around picking seeds. That was exciting and amusing and the only activity until 11:30 that morning.

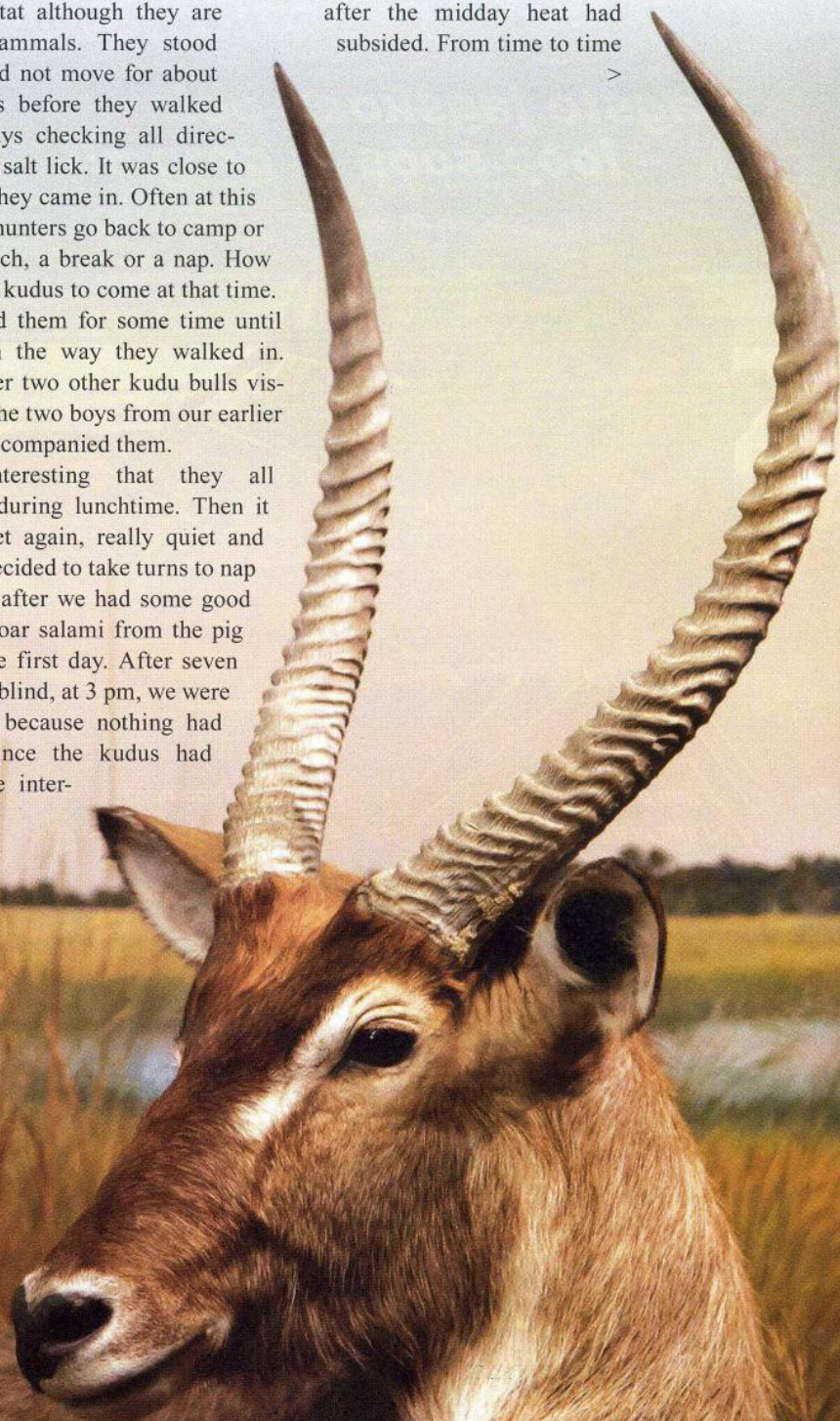
Nevertheless, it was good that we kept quiet and paid attention because all of a sudden two young kudu bulls stood static at 50 metres behind some bushes, gazing in our direction. The natural waterhole was more or less dry but their focus was probably on the salt lick. They were about two years old and not what we wanted to shoot, but it was exciting and interesting to watch their behaviour and reactions.

As always it was amazing how good these "grey ghosts of Africa" merge with their natural habitat although they are such big mammals. They stood there and did not move for about five minutes before they walked slowly, always checking all directions, to the salt lick. It was close to noon when they came in. Often at this time of day hunters go back to camp or farm for lunch, a break or a nap. How clever of the kudus to come at that time. We observed them for some time until they left on the way they walked in. An hour later two other kudu bulls visited us and the two boys from our earlier encounter accompanied them.

How interesting that they all sneaked in during lunchtime. Then it became quiet again, really quiet and Izak and I decided to take turns to nap in the chair after we had some good tasty wild boar salami from the pig I shot on the first day. After seven hours in the blind, at 3 pm, we were a bit bored because nothing had happened since the kudus had left. But the inter-

esting hours would probably follow as the animals started roaming through the bush after the midday heat had subsided. From time to time

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I took my binoculars and scanned the bushes, just in case some animals were standing somewhere or approaching our location. The hunting gods were in our favour when I spotted three young waterbuck. It was four o'clock in the afternoon and they were about 100 metres from the hide but hopefully they would come closer and maybe a good bull would accompany them. Within a split second the tension was back when I whispered to Izak that there were waterbucks coming closer and he praised: "Well spotted Frank".

Slowly but surely I took an arrow out of the quiver, put it on the arrow rest and nocked it, without any noise. I was standing left of the shooting window, covered completely by the wall, when I placed my left hand around the Gripwerks quilted maple bow grip and lifted the bow. My release was nocked in and I was ready to move to the shooting window when Izak tapped me on the shoulder and mumbled: "Stay there, don't move, a big waterbuck bull is coming in and staring straight in our direction." Now the tension was more than back and I felt my blood pressure rising. I did not move although my body and nerves were all on edge and I did not see what the waterbuck bull looked like. Then Izak whispered: "Can you draw the bow now and hold it at full draw, I will slowly pull you over to the window." There was just a little space to draw my 90-pound Elite GT 500, but with that high adrenaline level I did not realize if it was hard to pull or not. I just pulled the string back.

Izak left me at full draw for about 10 seconds, which felt like eternity, before he turned my upper body towards the shooting window in slow motion and whispered: "The bull is facing us head up, he will probably not turn broadside once he becomes aware of you. Can you do a frontal shot? Aim exactly in the middle and on the centre of the chest!"

Normally a shot like that is not recommended with bow and arrow but with my fast 90-pound bow, along with the 800-grain arrow and a shooting distance of about 25 metres to the bull, I felt safe and answered: "Yes, I can do that!"

"Ok, then do it as soon as I pulled you over to the opening of the shooting window. I ranged him with the Nikon at exactly 26 metres", said Izak while I was simultaneously pulled into my final position at full draw at a clear shooting window.

As said, the waterbuck was looking in our direction when I aimed at the centre point of his chest and sent the Easton Full Metal Jacket Dangerous Game arrow with the Muzzy Phantom SS two-blade broadhead on its deadly mission.

Not even a second elapsed between releasing the trigger, the impact of the arrow, the jump up and run away of the bull like an express train. "Did I miss him or did I hit him good", I asked Izak.



Frank with the beautiful waterbuck that he hunted.

"Your shot was good my friend, just about two centimetres left of the centre but the arrow went completely into the waterbuck. I saw the arrow dunking in", he answered."

Wow, that was impressive. After 15 minutes of waiting we decided to climb out of the blind for the follow up because very soon it would start to get dark. We found some good blood and deep tracks on the spot of the impact. Izak is a good and experienced tracker and we could precisely follow the flight of the waterbuck which was not far. He expired about 100 metres from the shooting point. My first waterbuck lay beside a bush - what a beautiful specimen of the ring-horned antelopes of Africa. I was overwhelmed and more than happy together with Izak about this awesome trophy.

After we loaded him on the pickup and were back in camp the slaughtering revealed the arrow and that was amazing too. Due to the power, mass and speed of the arrow it went completely into the body of the animal and was just stopped by the right hip bone. Although it was an extremely sturdy and tough arrow it was bent and the stainless steel broadhead was broken in two. Unbelievable what power bow and arrow could have.

In the end good things come to those who wait and our patience paid off with a nice good waterbuck bull.

What an exciting day. Once more thank you very much to Izak and the company for this outstanding experience.

Shoot straight, always good hunting, Waidmannsheil and "alles van die beste" – Frank.

ABH

Equipment:

Bow: Elite GT 500 set at 90 pounds.

Arrow: Easton Full Metal Jacket 250 Dangerous Game with heavier inserts.

Broadhead: Muzzy Phantom SS two blade - 200 grain.

Optics: Zeiss Victory binocular & Nikon rangefinder.

Release: Scott.

Camo: Sniper Africa.