

africa's **Bowhunter**

**Tom Miranda:
Goal power**

**An (un)lucky
bushpig**

**Broadhead test:
improved Ashby**

**Warthog hunt
Give a girl a bow...
A new bow sight?
Processing a carcass**

MAY 2015
VOL 16 - ISSUE 05
SOUTH AFRICA
R34.00 (incl VAT)
USA \$ 6.50
OTHER COUNTRIES
R29.82 (Tax excl)



Preparing for the hunt

Next morning warthog



By Frank Berbuir

I first got acquainted with those martially looking critters called warthogs in 2004, while hunting in Northern Namibia. They looked really fascinating with their huge two pairs of tusks protruding from the mouth and curving upwards, their mane down the spine to the middle of the back and their wart-like protrusions found on the large head, which serve as a fat reserve and are used for defense when fighting. It looked funny seeing them running with tails standing up straight like antennas.

Luckily I could harvest a nice big old boar with bow and arrow that time. Since then I became addicted to hunting and shooting these bruisers. During my hunt with Izak Vos and Vos Safaris in early August 2014, my main intention and hunting ambitions were never to shoot a warthog, but I would not pass the opportunity to shoot one either.

During the six days of this hunting trip we had some very memorable events and occurrences with the wildlife in the beautiful Limpopo area in northern South Africa. We walked and stalked or glassed and stalked and could bag some great trophies as well. A massive eland bull was the quarry I was now focused on. We had found tracks of a group of eland at

Frank and Danger (above), the tracking dog that found Frank's warthog.

(Below) The beautiful Limpopo area in northern South Africa.



two different natural waterholes and tried to get close to them, but they espied us early and escaped. We decided to sit in a blind for the afternoon. Izak and I were joined by Anton, the landowner, who also likes to hunt with bow and arrow and wanted to follow the action. It was quite cozy and crowded with three people in the small blind that was imbedded nicely in the surrounding area under an old acacia tree. We started about two o'clock in the afternoon and although it was August and South African wintertime, it was fairly hot. For about an hour nothing happened until we saw a squad of about 25 banded mongoose running quickly to the waterhole to take a sip. What a funny picture to see this band of tiny, but very lively carnivore running around for about five minutes before it became calm again. We realized that a breeze has sprung up

and unfortunately it swirled around, which would not be good for our situation. Due to our former experiences with the wind, we were prepared for this and had a bit of sun-dried rhino scat with us. We picked it up and stored it in a bag and now lighted it up a bit. This should help as a scent control against the swirling wind. It worked as all of a sudden kudu approached the waterhole and they were not disturbed at all by this special mixture of smell. We were affected because after a while it smoked like a chimney inside the blind and we felt like cured meat. With the smoke getting into your eyes, we were all close to crying and Anton had to cover his eyes with a handkerchief. We had to discipline ourselves not to laugh about the situation, especially when suddenly, and unexpectedly, a big "pig of the plains" or better known as "vlakvark" in Afrikaans, came out

Frank and Izak with the fine tusker Frank bagged



of the bush and approached the waterhole from the right side.

Izak, Anton and I were very excited.

“Frank, do you see this monster,” Izak whispered and pointed to the right side on the tip tapping pig.

“Holy smoke, that is a bruiser”, I thought. “Do you want to shoot it?”, he asked. What a question. “Sure, let’s go for it, this is a whopper,” I mumbled. Generally warthog have a clear attitude and pattern when they approach a waterhole. Their procedure is going straight to the water – kneel down or head bent down – scoop some water – turn around – move back the way they came in and disappear again. And all that happens normally fairly quick. Exactly like this the old warrior behaved and therefore everything had to go quiet and fast. Izak looked through my rangefinder when the big boar arrived at the water and showed me his left hand’s four fingers followed by a clenched fist, which meant it is standing at 40 meters.

I was sitting on a small plastic chair and had my bow ready with a nocked-in arrow in my left hand. The warthog was standing broadside with its head bent down for drinking. My heart rate and blood pressure was supposed to be on its peak when I drew my bow in slowmotion and settled the 40 meters sight pin on the spot of his vitals.

I released the arrow and within a split-second it penetrated the hog’s chest.

The boar turned to the right and ran up the way it came. After he ran about 30 meters we could see it staggering and after a further 20 meters we saw it falling to the left side lying on the ground of the savannah.

What an excitement. The shot placement looked good and Izak and Anton hold their thumbs up. They whispered: “Good shot, dead pig.” We did not celebrate it as some kudu where still there and we did not want to spook them. Maybe some eland would show up later as well. We kept quiet for another hour until sunset and it became dark quickly. We decided to leave the hide although there were still three kudu females around. It was now dark and because of the noise we made leaving through the backside of the hide, the kudu ran off without realising what really spooked them.

We walked to the waterhole and about five meters behind the spot where the warthog stood we found the arrow full of blood. There was a good blood trail as well and we followed it up to the point where we saw the warthog falling down. But to our surprise the warthog was not lying there anymore. We could see that it made it back on its feet somehow and we followed the tracks and blood trail until it disappeared. Because it was late and dark Anton phoned one of his trackers, who should bring along one of his hunting dogs. I was a concerned and nervous. Anton and Izak both stated: “With that shot the boar is dead, we will find it, don’t worry.” When the tracker arrived together with the dog named Danger, we started at the point of the last tracks and blood spots with flashlights. We tried to illuminate the surrounding

area that consisted of knee high grass, bushes and acacia trees.

It was nine o’clock at night, totally dark and Danger was not really motivated. She looked at us with an impression like: “Guys it is late, I am off work now and want to lie beside the campfire”. After an hour of intensive search we stopped and drove back to camp. I had a more or less sleepless night. Early in the morning we all gathered again at the point of the last tracks and blood spots. Now Danger seemed to be awake and dedicated and picked up the trail. After about 100 meters we heard her barking. We walked to the place where she was and could see the “vark” lying dead under a dark thorny thicket. It slipped in there last night before it died. It was really hard to see it lying there. After last night’s tracking, we finally found it this morning under the glittering African sun. My feeling of relief was unlimited and I could not resist cuddling the brave dog that finally found my *next morning warthog*. Later in camp she got one of our delicious “Boerewors”, Afrikaans for “farmer’s sausage”. The placement of the shot and the broadhead hole showed that the shot was good and cut both lungs but these critters are tough as we realized once again.

Exhausted but happy about the harvest of this South African tusker, we took trophy pictures before we went back to the pick-up. We uploaded the warthog and enjoyed a hard earned cold Castle Lager early in the morning. One more time, thank you very much to Izak for the great organization, his experience and company and all the nice people I had the opportunity to meet during this fantastic time. **ABH**

Equipment:

Bow: Elite GT 500 at 90 lbs; **Arrow:** Easton Full Metal Jacket 250 Dangerous Game with heavier inserts; **Broadhead:** Muzzy Phantom SS 2-Blade at 200 grains; **Optics:** Zeiss Victory Binocular and Nikon Rangefinder; **Release:** Scott; **Camo:** Sniper Africa.



Next issue:
Frank's impala hunt.