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*NEW WORLD
RECORD*

SPRINGBOK TROPHY

**HUNTING
DANGEROUS
GAME**

**GIANT
KUDU BULLS**

+

**BOW
HUNTING**

NAMIBIA'S
42%

P 44

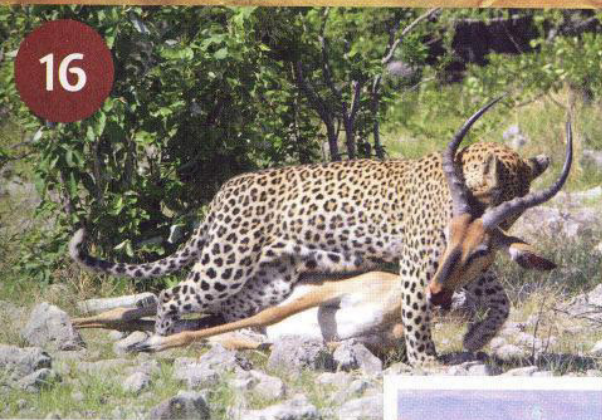


**NEW TROPHY MEASURING METHOD
DEVELOPED IN NAMIBIA**

NS/R 35.00 incl. VAT

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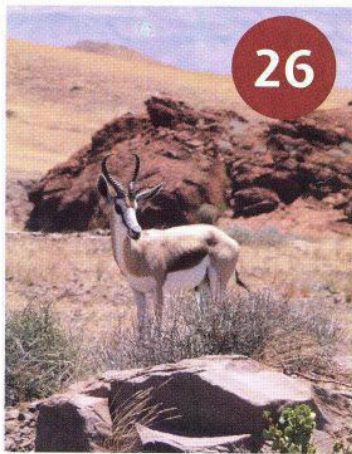
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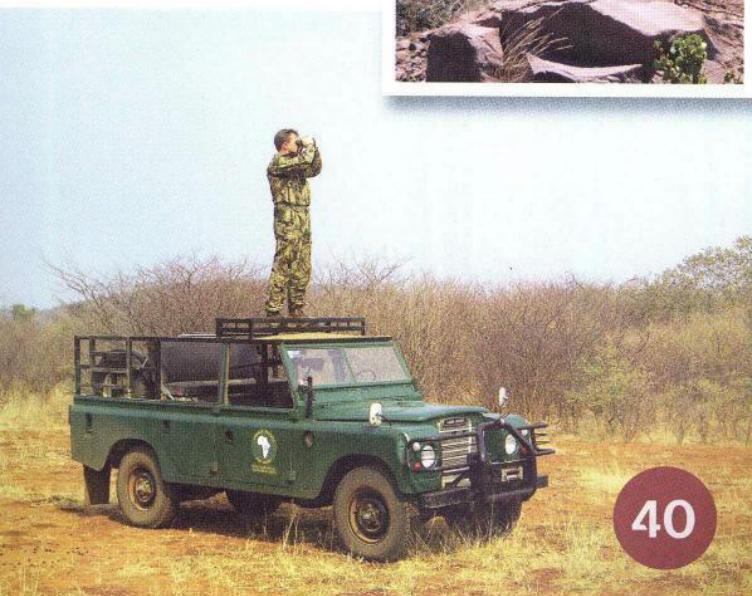
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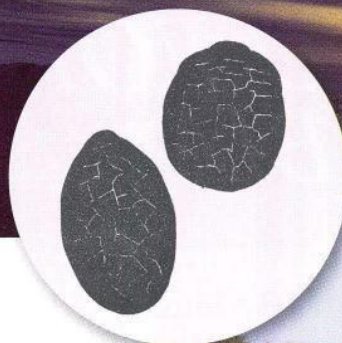
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NEW MEASURING METHOD

From now on the ultimate World Number One will belong only to an old bull, taken after his prime and after he has had time to spread his strong genes. In the world of sustainable utilisation of natural resources, Namibia is leading the way in yet another important field to ensure the future of species.



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HUNTING THE GREY GHOST OF AFRICA

My second visit to Namibia was once again an amazing, exciting, beautiful and successful hunting experience. During the 243-mile drive from Windhoek to the farm near Otavi and the Etosha National Park in northern Namibia, I became immersed in the scenic beauty, natural quality and wideness of Africa all over again. *Text Frank Berbuir*

First thing in the morning we set up a tree stand near a waterhole where PH Gustav and Rudi, one of his hunting guides, had seen tracks of large kudu bulls the days before. Since downing a kudu bull was top priority for me on this hunt, I found myself sitting in the tree stand that afternoon, with Gustav positioned 40 yards away in another stand, and the video camera set up and ready.

About half an hour later some African green pigeons, guineafowls and go-away-birds

gathered about nine feet away from the tree in which I was sitting. With great curiosity they watched the Sniper Africa camouflage-dressed creature I must have been to them. Within ten minutes, over twenty birds were sitting around me. It was incredible.

Two young warthogs and a few kudus made their appearance, but unfortunately no kudu bull.

After exposing ourselves to a pleasant three-hour suntan, we decided to climb down

and call it a day. Moreover, the winds were changing and increasing in strength.

We set out very early on Sunday morning, heading for a ground blind at one of the other waterholes on the huge 17 000-acre property. I enjoyed a superb African sunrise amidst the comical cackling of helmeted guineafowls, grey go-away-birds (louries) and several other birds. Again some kudu females with adolescents put in an appearance, but the bull remained perfectly concealed at the edge of the bushes. Now I know



"Now I know and understand why this antelope is referred to as the 'grey ghost of Africa'. For over an hour the bull remained in the bush without moving."

and understand why this antelope is referred to as the 'grey ghost of Africa'. For over an hour the bull remained in the bush without moving. Unfortunately, when some young gemsbok bulls approached, he took off into the beyond.

After this exhilarating morning we drove back to the farmhouse to indulge in Uschi's opulent breakfast, which we enhanced by relating our morning adventures. We passed the hot hours of the day with swimming, tanning and hanging around the pool or relaxing in the shade, reading a book or hunting magazine and observing the waterhole 90 metres away from the farmhouse. There hunting is strictly prohibited, so you are likely to find plenty of action during the day. That day, in the midday heat, a herd of 12 black wildebeest galloped in for a quick drink, and over 20 mongoose strolled in, trying to have a sip without falling into the water.

For the evening hunt we went back to the same ground blind, but no kudu bulls appeared on the scene. Over the next two days we drove to Swakopmund on a sightseeing tour. We roamed through this nice, clean holiday resort situated on Namibia's Atlantic coast, and after doing some shopping and visiting places of interest,

enjoyed a peaceful sundowner on the beach. We also went on a wonderful tour through the nearby Namib Desert in our Land Rover Defender. The Namib, by the way, is the oldest desert in the world.

The day after returning from our sightseeing excursion I was all geared up to hunt again, and went out very early with PH Rudi. This was the day, I decided, on which I was going to be successful in my hunt for that much sought-after kudu bull.

In his 30-year-old but still fully functional Land Rover we drove several miles, then covered the last three-quarter mile to our blind on foot. I was really relieved to be wearing a jacket, because Rudi had rolled down the front window and the early-morning September wind was pretty cold, plus it was carrying fine red sand, which ended up between my teeth and was truly gritty.

Before sunrise, at 5:30, we were ready and waiting in the blind. As always, guineafowls were our first visitors. At about 8:00 I considered shooting one of them for the pot, but resisted, not wanting to frighten off any approaching game. This was a good decision, because some minutes later I spotted the telltale

brown-grey horn tips bobbing up and down in the near tree canopies, which meant a kudu bull, *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*, was approaching!

As usual, the cows walked ahead, with three good-looking bulls remaining at a safe distance at the edge of the scrubland. Four young blue wildebeest bulls came closer. The cows drank quickly before trotting off slowly. The wildebeest snorted several times and the irritated kudu bulls decided not to have a drink and took off in a different direction. That's how life goes – sometimes.

So we left the blind quietly, and Rudi climbed up a near tree to glass their whereabouts with the binoculars. They weren't far away, so we decided to stalk them. 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 slowly and quietly, circumventing foliage and branches that could cause noise, always checking the wind. An hour later we made our way through to the edge of the scrubland. With the binoculars we could see the bulls. They had gone only about 300 to 400 metres away from the blind, and were standing in the shade under some huge camel-thorn trees. From our position the bulls were 60 metres away, but for

a good shooting position we had to stalk a bit closer. When we took our first step, we heard what sounded like the bark of a dog. Behind us a few kudu cows had approached as close as 50 yards, and had seen us moving. So, the bulls took off once again, and we returned to the farm, somewhat disappointed.

After regaining our energy with a good meal and having relaxed a little, we resolved to go out to the blind again. "The bulls must come back; they will want to drink," I thought optimistically. So we found ourselves back in the blind at 3:00 in the afternoon. Fortunately my thoughts had been spot on and the three bulls showed up again. We picked out the best one through the binoculars. As we drew closer to the trio, my blood pressure increased with every step.

Finally the biggest kudu bull stood broadside at 31 yards. I was at full draw with my 70-pound bow. I pulled the trigger and released the broadhead-equipped carbon arrow. Within a second it had penetrated both lungs of the animal before being

stopped by the trunk of a bush behind the kudu.

The bulls leaped away, then stopped 30 yards further, as if to ask: "Hey, why did we run away?" They looked back at their companion, now standing 50 yards away. When they saw the bull collapsing, they headed off straight into the bush and I was completely happy. The kudu bull expired within our range of sight.

We waited a few minutes before approaching my trophy. As we drew closer, we realised that it was a fine bull indeed. What a fantastic hunt and what a wonderful day. Exhausted and thrilled, we took some trophy photos in the wonderful landscape under the clear Namibian sky as a keepsake of a day I would remember for the rest of my life.

Thank you to all who made my bow hunt possible and successful.

Always hunt well. And shoot straight. ❧

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FIVE FUN FACTS

1. Namibia has a long tradition of hunting with bow and arrow, practised by many traditional people over centuries.
2. The best known of these are the San people who traditionally hunted with poisoned arrows.
3. Bow-hunting for trophies in its modern form was legalised only in 1997.
4. Because of Namibia's habitat, this kind of hunt requires exceptional skill.
5. Guides with additional qualifications conduct hunting safaris in areas registered for it.

