

It was 3PM. On the 1st day of the hunt that I found myself perched in a tree stand deep in the Maine woods off a trail that would have put an amusement ride to shame. I was the 1st to be dropped off by Andre of Katahdin's Shadow outfitters followed by my Father in law, then Manny from another hunting party.

Once situated I would describe the scene as if looking thru a large port hole of dense foliage directly to the bait barrel about 30 yards away, there was no other scenery just strait ahead no reason to turn and look other ways. Everything was planned by the Guides, the approach, the wind, the location, and the silent hand signals at the drop-off.

Between my adrenalin, the fall sun and overdressing, I was sweating for a good 2hrs. Then the sun started to hit the tree tops which cooled things down and lifted my spirits for a good hunt to follow.

I kept rehashing the instructions in my head while gazing at the barrel, WAIT TILL HE GETS TO THE BARREL!

He showed up instantly about a half Hr. before sundown, huge head and a broad chest with bowed front legs one in front of the other. I can still see him in my mind.

Before I was able to get the safety off, that fast he put his head down grabbed some goodies off the ground and took off. By the time I was able to register what had happened he was back, approaching very cautiously checking the wind, sniffing the ground heading to the barrel again. By this time I had the rifle scope on his head contemplating a head shot when he took off again. Within less than 5 min. he was back coming to the barrel again. That was when I kept repeating to myself those words of advice. Wait till he gets to the Barrel. This time I knew he was committed to the treats inside. As soon as his nose touched the rim I put the crosshairs on his shoulder and let go a round from the 35 Rem. That the Guide was kind enough to let me borrow since my 30/30 Win. was deemed inefficient.

All I saw was a muzzle blast of fire then a large black paw waving right in front of the barrel. I couldn't believe it, I was expecting to see him run off because I was told to watch which way he runs but there he was on the ground. I immediately put a 2nd one in him which stopped him instantly.

By this time it was almost dark. I emptied my rifle climbed down and headed up the dirt path to wait for Andre. I contemplated how I would break the news to him. He showed up right on time about 20 Min. latter and helped me load my gear in the truck, then got back in the cab when I said I think I got one & I think he is big too. It was great to see his reaction he was shocked and just as happy as me. I asked him if we were going to go back to pick up Dad & Manny & he said do you think you hit him good? I said I think he is lying at the barrel. Well next thing I know he grabs a black sled and flashlight from the back and headed right for it. By this time it is pitch dark Sure enough there he was, I helped Andre put him in the sled and away he went up the hill thru thick brush like some work horse on a farm, what a brute!

What a great hunt Thanks Andre!

Now came Manny's hunt on Thursday but I'll let him tell that story!