

Father – Son Hunt

For my eleven year-old son, his Labor Day Week hunt began on the morning of June 24th when he received his first e-mail from Katahdin's Shadow Outfitters informing him that had he received, as a birthday present, the chance to hunt for a Maine Black Bear. This was his first opportunity to go on a guided big game hunt. After reading the pre-trip information provided by Katahdin's Shadow, my son spent the next couple of months preparing for the hunt. He read every bit of information he could get his hands on to make sure he was well-prepared for the hunt. He made checklists of equipment he had on-hand and equipment that he needed to get, that he kept on the refrigerator. He had a calendar that showed the days when we needed to go to the range, the day we needed to be packed, and the day we needed to leave for Maine for the hunt.

From the moment we arrived at the hunting camp in Haynesville Woods, Andre and the rest of the Katahdin's Shadow staff, made it their top priority to provide top-notch service to each hunter. When some of the more experience hunters were relaxing in the hunting lodge in preparation for the first day hunt, Andre took extra time to talk to my son about what he could expect in the woods. Andre showed him pictures of the stand, the location of the bait barrel, and the expected routes the bear were known to follow to the bait barrel. Andre reviewed the procedures that all hunters would follow once they left the truck to the time they were seated in their hunting stands.

Although my son didn't get a bear, it wasn't because the staff didn't put forth the effort to allow him to be successful. The two-person stands that the Katahdin's Shadow staff selected for us to occupy were excellent. My son was confident that he knew the proper procedures for entering and leaving the sites. He gained an appreciation for having the discipline to sit motionless for several hours at a time because he saw a variety of wildlife which included coyotes (one as close as 12 yards), a fisher cat and gray jays.

It was difficult leaving the hunting camp. In such a short period of time, strangers to us on Sunday became best of friends by Friday. I can think of no other experience that has had the same impact on my son and me as this hunt. Over a three month period, I watched my son mature as a person and a hunter. We'll be back!!!

Jeff

New Hampshire