

# SKULL

AN OUTDOORER'S JOURNAL

**KIP  
KOCHAVER'S**  
DESERT  
GIANT

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# CIBOLO

## CREEK

The landscape around Cibolo Creek Ranch is something out of an old western movie. With the Chinati mountains as a backdrop, you know immediately you're someplace special. Myself, my daughter Karly and good friend Chuck were here to chase Aoudad, the wild mountain sheep. It's hard to imagine that much of anything prospers in that environment other than snakes, scorpions and thorny shrubs, but Aoudad thrive in this rugged landscape.

After settling in at the lodge, we all jumped into "The Beast", a specially built hunting rig to take a quick late afternoon ride around the property just to get a feel for the place. Not expecting too much, we struck

out in to the vast West Texas desert. Only about twenty minutes into the drive, we rounded a corner and there they were; about fifteen animals with one large ram were moving off quickly a hundred yards from the road. Karly being up first, decided to try and take this ram as they moved off over the ridge. Fortunately as he topped out, he stopped for one last look back and that was his last look. Karly drilled him with a well-placed shot at 250 yards and the ram was down. The skunk was off!!

Day two started off slow. We spent most of the morning riding and glassing country not far from the lodge trying to locate more rams without much luck. October brings pretty warm days still so





we decided to head back to the lodge for lunch, a siesta, and plan for the evening. Late that afternoon, Chuck and I were riding atop The Beast along a nasty old trail on the east end of the ranch, hoping to get to an area that held more animals. As we were approaching an old windmill at the base of a large mountain basin, off to our left, we noticed several aoudad running along a ridgeline a couple hundred yards off. As we stopped to glass, those several animals turned into several more, and several more and within seconds, the entire hillside was moving as 300-400 aoudad ran over the ridge ahead of us into the basin ½ mile away. Along with our guide, Chuck and I bailed out of the vehicle, grabbed our

packs and made a plan for the stalk. The problem with any plan was with so many animals distributed across this basin we thought it would be next to impossible to get real close, but what the heck, Let's go! Fortunately the wind was in our faces as we crept over the ridge. What lay before us was a sight I'll never forget. Hundreds and hundreds of Aoudad filled this basin from 100 to 800 yards distant, now calm and feeding or resting...Perfect!! We settled in and started glassing for big rams. The options were plentiful but it seemed that the bigger rams were staying on the far hillside. One particular ram kept grabbing our attention as he lay in the shade under a large yucca shrub. It was not going to be an easy shot

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at 560 yards but there was no moving closer. I settled in on a yucca stump, dialed my Leupold CDS scope in and waited for him to stand. 20 minutes later as my legs were falling asleep, I decided to shoot him where he lay. I squeezed off the shot, as the mountain erupted with running sheep in every direction, the old ram took 1 jump

straight in the air, folded up and rolled down the hillside. Not knowing what just happened the other sheep quickly calmed back down as Chuck grabbed the rifle and took position. 15 minutes later another large ram was spotted feeding up the ridge 350 yards out. We dialed in the scope and with one more well-placed shot, Chuck rolled his ram



down the mountain. Unbelievable!! In a matter of about an hour and a half we had located, stalked and taken 2 large rams off the same mountain out of the same group of sheep.

As the sun was setting over the Chinati Mountains, the hour long, rugged bumpy ride back was made most

enjoyable reliving the days events with a good friend, admiring 2 large rams on the front rack of The Beast, and washing it all down in our memories with a cold Ranch Water! The remaining days were spent chasing javelinas around the ranch and relaxing....West Texas and Cibolo Creek did not disappoint!



# “3-400 SHEEP”

