

# SKULL

AN OUTFITTER'S JOURNAL



AS FEATURED  
ON EASTMANS



AGED TO PERFECTION

SHHC  
MARCH 2021



# CROSSING *paths*

In 2019, we had an unforgettable year at Sandy Hills Hunting Company. As a team we harvested many incredible animals with several of them being world-class. Our hard work, dedication, and experience, not only during season, but also in the off-season has continually produced success. As the founder of SHHC, I couldn't be any more proud of our team and what we have achieved in such a short time. Of all the great highlights in 2019, the Beamer Buck was certainly the most unique and is far from forgettable.

The story of the Beamer Buck began in 2017 as a client and I were driving down a small trail road at daylight. As we crested a small rise, a unique-framed, young buck trotted out of a wheat field and ran across the road in front of us. My client and I looked at each other and said, "Look at the double beam on him!" The buck ran off into some neighboring sandhills

and we only had one other encounter with him that year. As 2017 came to a close, I highly anticipated seeing the buck next season and wondered what he might develop into if given another year or two. Our 2018 scouting efforts never turned up The Beamer, and the season passed without a single glimpse of the buck as well. I couldn't help but wonder what had happened to the buck and think about his potential. Fast forward to the summer of 2019 and after locating many great bucks, there was still no sign of the double beam buck. To be honest, I had written him off, assuming he had most likely become a casualty of the previous season.

October rolled around, and with it came bow season. It was later in the month when Matt Jensen and his brother-in-law, Eric arrived to begin their hunt. I had hunted with Matt a couple years prior and he took a great buck at 50 yards with his bow. This hunt

started as many of them do; it was hot, dry, and the mature bucks had rubbed their velvet becoming more nocturnal and more difficult to find. On the second day, we found a buck I was familiar with from summer scouting and Eric was up to bat. This would be his first stalk ever on a mule deer. The wide buck was laying in some tall yuccas with the wind in his face, so we snuck up to 20 yards, got comfortable, and waited for the buck to stand for a shot. Everything went as planned except the arrow struck a yucca stalk and deflected under him. It was his lucky day! He high-tailed it to another property unscathed.

The next day we went to a different area where many of the crops were being cut. I knew this would be a good place to check as the corn and milo harvest always displaces deer and forces them from hiding. As the sun began to break the horizon, it cut through

the morning haze and landed on a group of rutting deer in middle of a milo field. Two bucks were in the 180" range; great bucks, but not what Matt was looking for. After a few more minutes of glassing, I caught some movement to the right of the rutting group. Just over a little knob I could see antler tips moving but had no idea what was about to walk over the hill. The buck fed slowly making his way to the top of a ridge. When he finally cleared the ridge and lifted his head, I'm sure you can imagine the words that came out of my mouth! A trashy giant stood through the haze. Although I couldn't make out exactly how big the buck was, I knew he was BIG. We sat and watched him feed for a short time waiting for him to bed. He slowly worked towards an uncut milo field and fed out of sight. We repositioned in an attempt to keep eyes on him, but had no luck. We quickly snuck out to a small hill to see if we could pick him or his antlers up in the



# 241 & CHANGE

## THE BEAMER BUCK

miro but we were unsuccessful. We decided to sit down and wait for the buck to get up and re-bed for the afternoon and hopefully spot him in the process. After about 30 minutes, I looked over to my left and there he stood. After a brief look around, he walked into some adjacent pasture ground and bedded in a large group of yuccas. I told Matt everything was perfect to get in position for a shot. Matt and I circled around about 300 yards to get behind the bedded buck. We slowly peaked over ridges until we found the buck's antlers over a cluster of yucca plants. With the buck facing away, we were able to work into 40 yards relatively easy. Matt positioned himself for the wait. All we needed now was for the buck to stand! After about an hour the buck began to get restless. I knew he was about to stand, so I told Matt, "Get ready!" The buck stood up perfectly broadside and Matt's shot seemed to be perfect, but the deer ducked just enough and the arrow hit him





high. We knew the shot wasn't fatal, so we kept an eye on him as he walked from the pasture ground into some nearby sandhills. He went about a mile and bedded again. Matt and I made another stalk. This time getting to 35 yards. The massive buck had no idea we were there. All we needed him to do was stand and give us a good shot. As he stood, Matt drew, but the buck was facing straight away. We had no shot! The massive buck began to walk away from us again. As the light faded, we were forced to back out and come back the following morning. I didn't know if we would ever see this giant again and it made for one of the longest nights of my life.

The following morning we arrived where we had last seen the buck the night before. We topped a hill and thoroughly glassed the area, but no luck. It appeared he had moved out of the area. We went from hill to hill glassing for several hours attempting to relocate the buck. After not picking him up, we went back to look for his bed and any sign of blood, but we came up empty there as well. I told Matt and Eric, "Let's get back in the pickup and make our way to a different part of the ranch and get on a high hill; maybe we can see him from a different angle." As we were driving towards the hill, I looked over and saw an antler in a tall patch of wild sunflowers we had just glassed an hour prior. It was him! I was shocked to see him laying there and we were only 100 yards from him. I was nervous he would get up and run so we sat there for about 30 minutes before we made a move. The whole time we watched him he never moved his head, which led me to believe he was hurt worse than we had originally thought. I told Matt, "Let's make a move and see if we can get close enough for a shot." We sat at 50 yards and again he stood up giving us no shot. He walked another half mile and bedded

in some sagebrush on top of a hill. It appeared the buck could see everything from his position, but I told Matt, "Let's get a little closer." Eventually we were able to get behind the buck and get the wind in our face. We slid in behind him and looked over a ridge from about a hundred yards away. I could see his antlers and luckily his vision was obscured by a big clump of sage. All we had to do now was make it over this ridge, drop into the bottom, and start up the hillside where he was laying. It was a tense several minutes as we eased over the crest of the ridge and into the bottom. We slowly snuck up the hill making it to 20 yards. He had no idea we were there! Again, we waited! After nearly an hour, he decided to lay his head flat on the ground allowing us to reposition and improve our shot angle. 20 minutes went by and he finally stood and was perfectly broadside. Matt came to full draw while the buck was getting up and let an arrow fly. Matt made a great shot and the buck was finally down.

As we walked up on the buck, I couldn't stop thinking about what an incredible deer we had just harvested. As we sat there looking at him, it finally dawned on me that it was the young, double beamed buck that had run across the road in front of me that cold, windy morning two years prior. I couldn't believe it...all the years, all the miles, all the glassing, all the wondering, and then there he lay right in front of me. I guess you just never know when two paths will cross.

The Beamer Buck ended up grossing just over 241" with an estimated 5" tine busted off. This buck ended up as one of the top 5 bucks ever taken by Sandy Hills Hunting Co.



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