

# A DREAM COME TRUE

Before I get started, I would like to dedicate this story to my dad Gaston Belleville. My father Battled Lung Cancer for the last 5 years but succumbed to Liver Cancer on June 26, 2004. My Father grew up in CANADA, and taught me the outdoors and to respect it. I will never forget that!

I have to say my 2004 hunting season was A GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENT. Pre season scouting has to be one of the best tools for success. Guy's I can't STRESS enough how important this tool is, and it does not cost anything (EXCEPT GAS)!

I started scouting my local mountains in June, when the bucks are in the velvet stage. They have a tendency to feed more to supply nutrition to their antlers. They also stay out of the dense brush to prevent damage to there soft growing tissue (Antlers). This makes them a lot easier to spot.

When I scout, I look for a number of things, like heavily used trails, doe population, water, saddles, and of course oak trees. The oak tree's are a big factor, because they produce acorns for feeding, and gives the opportunity for a tree stand, and shade, the archery season can get very hot, not just for the deer's but the hunters as well!

I found a canyon that had everything I was looking for and then some. I put my tree stand in a tree that had great shooting lanes, deer trails, oak trees, and a watering hole. I noticed the watering hole had bear prints around it, which was A BIG BONUS, considering my Goal for the past six years was to harvest a bear.

On Sept. 12, 2004, I got in my stand at 6:00am, by 9:00am I had three does and a 3x3 buck come down for a drink, then walk by me at fifteen yards heading for the acorns. In my scouting months, I had seen two nice bucks (shooters) but he was not one of them. Therefore, I shot him with my camera.

On Sept. 20, I tried an evening hunt, it was very slow; I had a couple of does and a small buck come to drink then up the ridge, they went.

On Sept. 28, I got a late start and did not get to my stand until 7:00am. On my way in I noticed a nice buck chasing a couple of does on the ridge above me about two hundred yards out. This buck that I had not seen in my scouting months, he was a shooter. Once I saw that I just about ran to my stand, with anticipation that he might want a drink after chasing does all morning. Right when I got in my stand, I heard a God-awful noise coming from the ridge next to me. It sounded like a cough and a growl at the same time; it lasted about fifteen seconds. (I did not know what it was, or if I was hearing things.) Anyways I settled in my stand hoping to get a better look at that Buck. After 30 min, I decided to try to call him in with my Fawn Distress call, which has been very successful in the past.

I blew it softly two or three times hoping to make the buck think that there were does and fawns down by my stand. No sooner, had I blown my call, I heard that cough & growling sound again, this time it was closer; however, I still could not see anything; the brush was too thick. It was obvious to me now that the sound was a BEAR. I would blow my call every 20 min or so, and every time the bear would growl. Nevertheless, he never showed himself.

At 9:00AM, I blew my call again; I could hear some growling and crackling leaves and sticks. I thought it must be that bear. However, I still did not see anything. I told myself it is coming and getting closer. Finally I saw it; I could not believe my eyes, it was that Buck from earlier. My calling must have worked or he was just coming in for a drink, whatever the reason, he was a shooter. The buck came by my stand and gave me an 18-yard shot, the arrow flew true. He went thirty yards and died within my vision. What a shot I did not even have to track him, after that I never heard the bear again.

When I was field dressing, my buck I was always looking over my shoulders, just in case that Bear want to keep MY prize for himself. The buck scored 110 inches, which is a very respectable buck for Los Angeles, Calif. It was the biggest buck I have ever shot with my bow.

On Oct. 31, 2004 HALLOWEEN day (my dad's favorite holiday who had recently passed away), I got an early start, and was in my stand at daybreak. I took my pack off, knocked an arrow, and hung my bow. I was just about to sit down, when I looked back at my trail & OH MY GOD! There was A Huge bear on the trail I had just taken, I grabbed my bow hooked my release, by then he was right underneath me. I let him walk out 20 yards and squeezed my release (and prayed). The shot was true and the bear went twenty yards and expired. I could not believe my eyes, this was a MONSTER BEAR.

The words Happy Hunter was an understatement. This monster bear could not have died at a better spot (other than in the back of my truck). After field dressing him, I was able to pull my truck up to him. However, I had a BIG PROBLEM; he was too heavy for me to get him into the back of my truck. I could not lift him; I managed to get his front paws and head onto my tailgate by using some rope, but could not lift the back half up. After 30 min of trying, I was thinking whom I could call for help. I did not want to call my hunting friends, because then they would know my hunting SPOT!

I did not know what to do, then I remembered it's Oct. 31, I thought of my dad, and decided to try one more time. What happened next I can't explain, I grabbed hold of that Monster Bear one more time, and he just lifted off the ground and slid into the back of my truck as if someone was helping me, (my family thinks it was my dad's spirit). Whatever it was this bear was a dream come true, after six LONG years I not only got a bear but A MONSTER BEAR!

I was unable to weigh the Monster, due to his size, when I brought the meat to the butcher he estimated the weight (by just 271lbs of meat I brought him) to be at least 500-

550lbs. The bear scored 19 12/16 my first Pope & Young entry.

I would like to thank my BEAUTIFUL wife Wanda, my children Candice & Shawn & grandchild Rocky, for putting up with my obsession for bow hunting. I cannot forget my Dad! I miss you. I also want to thank the staff at EASTMANS for a great magazine. The equipment I used to harvest this monster Bear was, BOW - KODIAK OUTDOOR. BROADHEADS - THUNDERHEADS 100 grn. ARROWS - GOLDTIPS 5575. RELEASE - TRU FIRE. CALL - K" MEER DEER.

Now that I have had the season of my life, it is time for me to get back to my Second Love, Taxidermy. Which I know all my Customers will be Pleased to Hear.