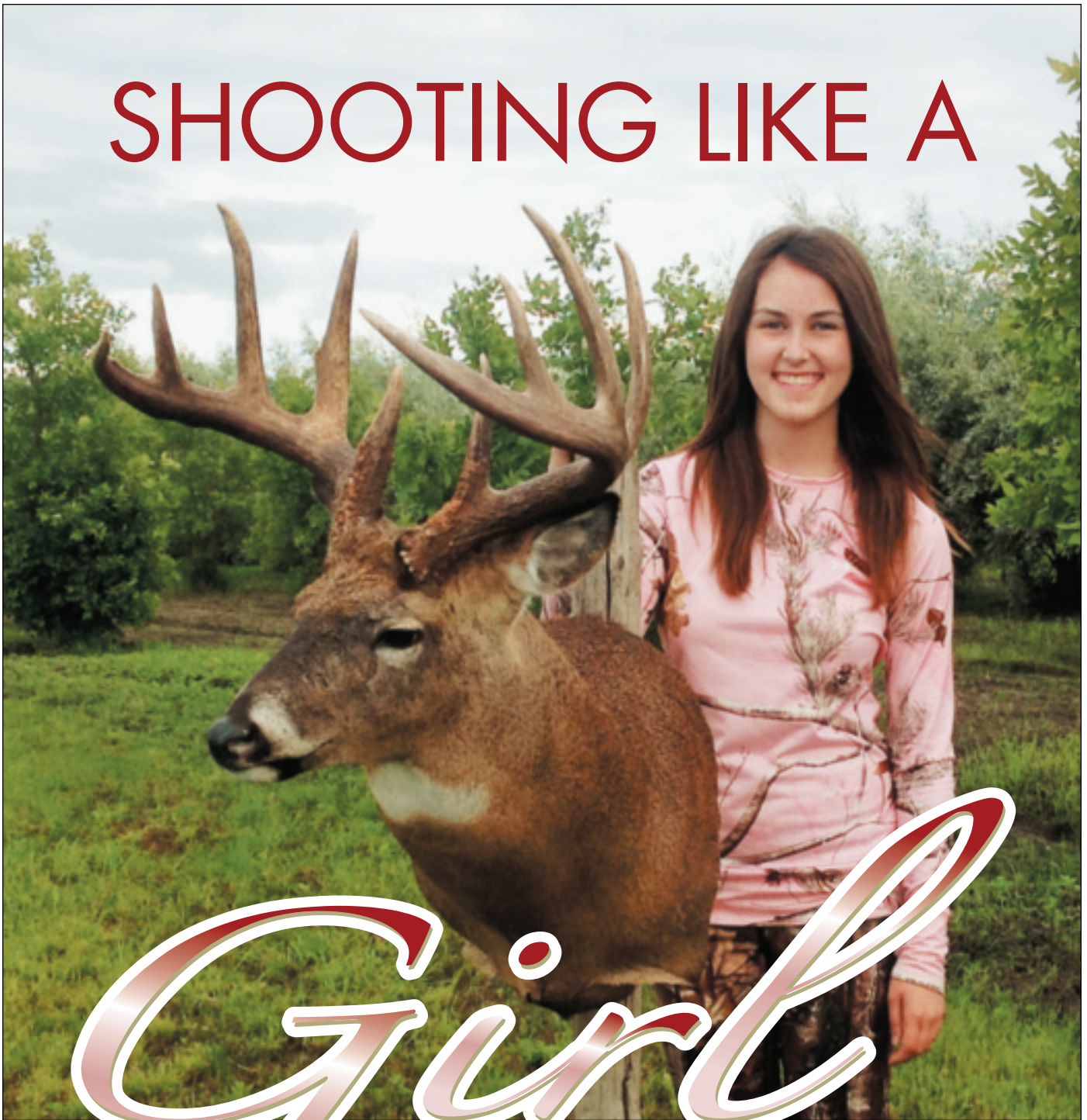


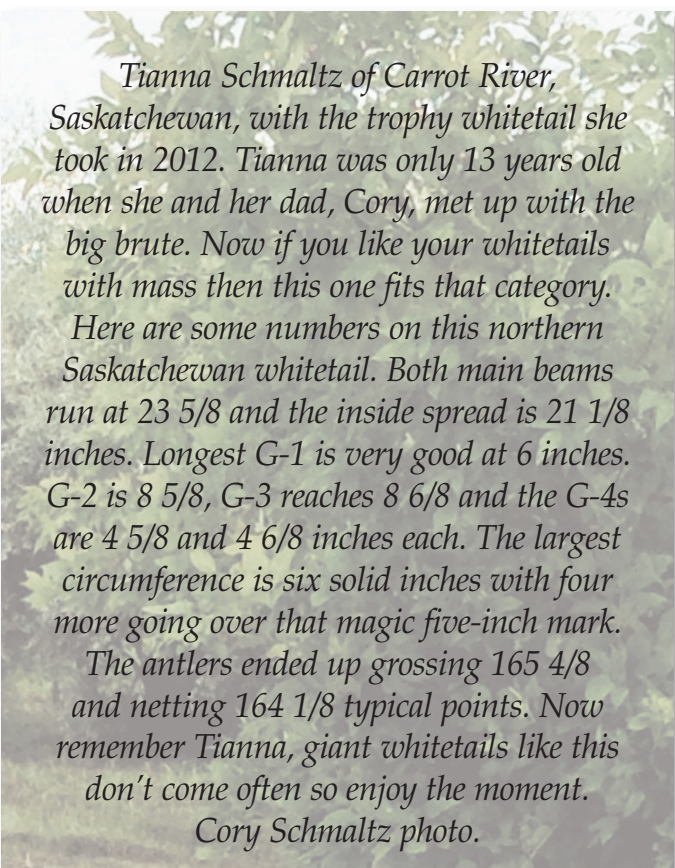
SHOOTING LIKE A



BY CORY SCHMALTZ

My thirteen year-old daughter, Tianna, and I were sitting along a tree row as the sun was coming up one early November morning, when she said, “Dad what is that?” I lifted my binoculars just in time to see a mature buck already walking into the bush. Although she wanted to go after it, I knew I had to get her to school. I told her that we would come back there in the evening to see if the buck would come out again.

As the day went on not a lot was being thought about other than that deer. As soon as school was finished we quickly checked our trail camera and found a picture of a heavy 5x5 which looked to be similar to the one we saw in the morning. We weren’t certain it was the same one because it was about 4 miles from where we had spotted the deer to where I have the trail camera. We decided to sit in that same tree row during the evening but we only saw a doe



Tianna Schmaltz of Carrot River, Saskatchewan, with the trophy whitetail she took in 2012. Tianna was only 13 years old when she and her dad, Cory, met up with the big brute. Now if you like your whitetails with mass then this one fits that category.

Here are some numbers on this northern Saskatchewan whitetail. Both main beams run at 23 5/8 and the inside spread is 21 1/8 inches. Longest G-1 is very good at 6 inches. G-2 is 8 5/8, G-3 reaches 8 6/8 and the G-4s are 4 5/8 and 4 6/8 inches each. The largest circumference is six solid inches with four more going over that magic five-inch mark.

The antlers ended up grossing 165 4/8 and netting 164 1/8 typical points. Now remember Tianna, giant whitetails like this don't come often so enjoy the moment.

Cory Schmaltz photo.

and fawn. Just like so many mature whitetails he became a ghost, disappearing for 2 full weeks. I thought it had to be out there roaming around for a doe, but how far? There was no way someone got it or I would have heard about it, wouldn't I have?

A few days later on a very cold and windy midmorning I was on my way to watch a football game, when I looked over and there he was, just standing in the middle of the pasture all by himself! I stopped the truck, picked up my binoculars and studied his antlers. Once I knew it was him I threw my binoculars on the seat and picked up my phone. My wife answered and I told her to get Tianna and the gun and meet me at my truck. Just as they were pulling up, the deer was slowly making his way into a tree bluff. I had a pretty good idea where the deer was going, so we quickly gathered our things and hiked to an old fence line that I thought he might step out on. As we were walking, I caught a glimpse of the buck about a mile away making his way down that old fence. We quickly got into position and put the .243 on the shooting sticks and got Tianna comfortable.

The next three minutes seemed to drag on for hours before he appeared in front of us. Finally, I heard a SNAP! I whispered, "Get ready, Tianna." A couple of seconds later the buck stepped out and stopped broadside, looking our way. My heart was pounding so hard I thought for sure the deer could hear it. I turned to Tianna, doing my best to seem calm, I instructed her to put the cross hairs of the scope on the front shoulder, squeeze the trigger, don't pull it, and take her time. The whole time my inner voice was saying "Hurry up and shoot this thing, it isn't going to stand here all day!"

I whispered, "Are you on it?"

She replied "Yep."

I said, "whenever you are ready squeeze the trigger." A few seconds passed and the she made a great shot with the deer falling in its tracks!

I yelled "Great Shot!"

She smiled and high fives were going strong. As we walked up to the deer, the antlers seemed to grow as much as Tianna's smile. I bent down and grabbed the antlers lifting them out of the snow. There was no ground shrinkage here! It had a wide rack with mass all the way through the antlers to make it look so majestic.

I said, "Wow, what do you think?"

Tianna replied with a huge smile "It is way bigger than I thought!" Then the smile got bigger and she said "Dad we have to get a head mount for this!"

One thing I have learned hunting with my daughters is that they do not get as excited as guys, or maybe as excited as Dad. They are able to handle their emotions better and concentrate on the task at hand. A shot will not be hurried, and they will not shoot until they are confident with that shot. So if someone tells you that you shoot like a girl, take that as a compliment!

This may not be one of those hunting stories where we sat in a tree stand all day rattling and calling one in. We knew there was a good deer in the area and when we found it we made the best of it. A little bit of luck, yes but still a father-daughter moment that is hard to put into words. I was very proud of how well she kept her composure, and made a great shot on such a magnificent animal. My dad gave me the hunting bug, and now I passed it on to my daughter. The side effects of this bug are one-on-one quality time with my eldest child with no cell phones, enjoying the outdoors and a smile that is very contagious but well worth the risk!

I would like to thank Shane Maynard at Tru2Life taxidermy for doing such a good job on a trophy that we will enjoy for a lifetime!