

The Lloyd Smith Bucks

By Larry Warantz



In 2007, Lloyd Smith of Riding Mountain, Manitoba, harvested his biggest whitetail. The massive 5x5 has an inside spread of only 15 3/8 inches, but long tine length and massive 26 4/8 inch beams make up the difference. With circumferences ranging from 4 2/8 to 5 1/8 inches, tines from 5 4/8 up to 13 4/8 inches, and brow-tines of 7 4/8 and 7 1/8 inches, you end up with 177 1/8 net typical Boone and Crockett points.

Photos by Larry Warantz, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.



Lloyd Smith and Bruce Loepky of Riding Mountain, Manitoba, hold the two big whitetails that Lloyd harvested in 2005 and 2007.

After numerous phone calls to Lloyd Smith of Riding Mountain, Manitoba, I was finally en route with all my gear and cameras packed away in my 2001 Chevrolet Blazer. It was 6:00 a.m. and I had a big day ahead of me with two photo shoots planned. I was really looking forward to meeting Lloyd and seeing the large 177 1/8 typical whitetail he harvested in the 2007 muzzleloader season in Manitoba and the 173 7/8 non-typical whitetail he harvested during the 2005 rifle season. I would also be stopping off at Ste. Rose du Lac, Manitoba, for an interview and photo shoot with a young female hunter who had harvested a provincial champion, non-typical whitetail that scored 184 6/8 points!

Lloyd Smith farms near the village of Riding Mountain. After getting acquainted with this pleasant gentleman, he showed me

Lloyd with his 2005 whitetail, which carries 22 7/8 and 24 2/8 inch main beams. With a net typical score of 163 4/8 and adding 10 3/8 abnormal points, the final outcome is 173 7/8 non-typical points. Photos by Larry Warantz, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba.



his pair of mounted deer heads. So find a comfortable spot and come along with me on Lloyd's hunts as he reveals how he harvested these two giant whitetails!

Lloyd is one of those diehard hunters who makes time while farming to pre-scout his hunting areas early in the year, in mid-March, in search of sheds. Lloyd has a large area which he hunts west of McCreary on public land in Riding Mountain National Park.

Bruce Loeppky, Lloyd's longtime hunting partner, accompanies Lloyd on all of his hunting trips and also pre-scouts early in the year. The two men do a lot of walking in the mornings as well as the evenings, looking for the perfect place where "big bucks roam." Checking out sign and movement is so important if you want to see one of those huge whitetails.

As the warm summer days ended, Lloyd and Bruce were getting more acquainted with some of the larger bucks' movements. In late August, Lloyd spotted a large 5x6 buck with good mass and height. After a number of attempts during the black powder season in 2005, Lloyd would hold back on this whitetail until the rifle season. When the rifle season opened, Lloyd finally connected on the 5x6, and later had a beautiful head mount done. The buck scored 173 7/8 non-typical.

Fast forward to 2007. Lloyd and Bruce were out scouting their old haunts and seeing some new faces in the area. There was one very large buck that would easily make the book. With everything set, the muzzleloader season finally arrived. Lloyd had gotten permission from a farmer close to the park to put some bales together to make a blind in a hayfield that was regularly visited by the big buck.

Getting home early on a dull cloudy day in late October, Lloyd decided to head out alone for an evening hunt since Bruce had some field work to do. As Lloyd made his way to the blind, he felt good about the evening hunt.

About half an hour had passed when Lloyd noticed two large does heading into the hayfield. The wind was from a favourable direction for his setup. Suddenly, he noticed a large-racked buck enter the field and start walking along the edge with its head down, checking out scent and searching for a doe in heat. It soon lifted its huge head and picked up the pace towards the two does, but on a bad angle. Waiting out the buck's decision on which doe to check first, the other doe bolted towards Lloyd with Mr. Buck right behind her. They both came to a stop about 75 yards from the hunter, giving him a perfect broadside shot.

The crack of the old muzzleloader shattered the stillness of the quiet October night as the sound of the 260-grain, soft-point bullet smashed into the huge buck's shoulder, dropping him like a rock! Lloyd quickly reloaded his smoke pole, but knew the whitetail was down for good.

While admiring his trophy, Lloyd knew this was the buck he had been watching all summer and fall. He excitedly called Bruce to let him know of his great success and to ask for a helping hand to load the large whitetail, which easily weighed 250 pounds on the hoof.

A special thanks goes to Paul Fayant for the outstanding taxidermy work on Lloyd's whitetail deer. 🍀