



N-ICE BUCK

BY ALYSSA MUNTON

Alyssa Munton of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, holds the big mule deer she took on November 11, 2011. It was the young hunter's first deer, and what a way to start a hunting career! Main beams both reach out to 26 4/8 with the brow-tines going 2 4/8 and 3 7/8 inches. Alyssa's buck carries excellent tine length, and here are some of the longest measurements: G-2 16 5/8, G-3 12 7/8, G-4 13 5/8. Circumferences average 4 3/8 inches. The antlers ended up grossing 192 7/8, and after 12 total inches of deductions, the final score is 180 7/8 typical points. Also pictured is a happy Cole Peterson of Saskatoon.

It was Remembrance Day and pretty much my last chance to fill my tags. I had gone out a few times before, once during muzzleloader season and twice in rifle season. During my outing during muzzleloader season with my dad, I had found a nice buck. I snuck up on it while it was bedded. Then Dad got

its attention for me, and I pulled the trigger. Although sure I had hit it, I waited for the *BANG*, but it didn't come right away. There was a hang fire, and by the time it fired, the buck had moved and the shot missed its mark.

On opening day of rifle season, my dad and I, along with

Jason Peterson of “Hunting Canada and Beyond,” went out again. We saw some bucks but none that I thought were big enough. A little later that day, we spotted a big one bedded down. We snuck in to where I was supposed to shoot, but I couldn’t see it from where I was. When it got up, I wasn’t looking in the right direction and it snuck over the hill before I was ready.

At about 5:00 p.m., we found another buck and watched it go into a coulee and hide in some trees. Dad went to the other side while I waited with my gun and Jason with the camera. The deer just stared at my dad like it knew I had the gun. It didn’t move for a long time. It finally moved into another bluff, but Jason and I didn’t see it. When it came out, it was bouncing and my shot was too low. After that, it was getting too dark to continue hunting.

The only other time I went out before Remembrance Day was Sunday, November 6. We saw a big buck with deep forks walk over a hill and thought we were on its tracks. However, they were actually the tracks of a big 2x3. We never saw the big buck again that day.

Now, instead of trying to get a record book buck, I was hoping I could at least get a buck that scored about 160. I was running out of days and getting disappointed in my luck.

On November 11, Jason and his son Cole met up with us at 7:45 a.m. Jason was planning to film the hunt. We saw the

same big four-point buck we had seen on the sixth. We watched it go over a hill, so we followed to see where it was going. This happened about four more times over a five-mile stretch before Dad saw it go into a coulee to bed down.

Dad offered to push the coulee, while Jason, Cole, and I headed to the east end of the coulee to get in front of the deer. We climbed a hill to a point where we could see below into the trees and over a frozen slough. A doe that the buck had picked up crossed the frozen slough with no problem. When the buck followed, it was breaking through the ice. Jason said, “Shoot!”

I asked, “Now?”

He said, “YES!” So I did!

One shot right in the lungs and the buck was down. I was so excited, but we had a problem: the buck was 60 yards from shore, and how do we get it out of the frozen slough?

We drove to my dad’s friend’s place nearby and borrowed some rope, a quad, and some pieces of plywood. We hurried back to the slough, but to the opposite side from where I had shot it so we could get to it more easily. Dad set down two pieces of plywood on the ice, took the rope, and gingerly stepped from one piece to another. He put the first piece in front of the second and took his third step. He broke through the ice and got soaked up to his knees. That was the end of plan A! I hope Dad’s friend doesn’t want his plywood back!

Plan B was to get a calf sled and paddle out with branches,



Alyssa and her dad, Roy, with the heavy-bodied brute of a buck. You sure couldn’t ask for better G-4s, and these really helped the overall score.

Jason Peterson works his way across the thin ice towards Alyssa's mule deer.



attach the rope to the deer, and pull it out with the quad. The only question was who was going to slide across the ice in the calf sled? Since Cole was too young, I was too scared, and Dad was too cold and wet, that left Jason. He pushed offshore with a branch and slid across the top of the ice. He got about 30 feet before he broke through! Before he could get moving again, he had to break the ice with the branch. Jason paddled until he was about 35 feet from the deer, then he got the sled on top of the ice again. When he was about 10 feet from the buck, he lassoed it, then paddled all the way back. We attached the rope to the

quad and started to pull. After a whopping three seconds, the rope broke, causing it to slingshot out onto the ice!

Jason got back in the sled to retrieve the rope. When he almost reached it, the sled broke through the ice, and freezing water rushed into the sled. Since he was wet anyway, Jason hopped out of the sled, grabbed the rope, and walked back through the water to shore. I couldn't believe it – Dad and Jason had both gotten wet for me and my trophy buck!

But the buck wasn't out of the water yet. It seemed like a dumb idea to hook the rope to the quad again, so the four men grabbed the rope and ran! At first the deer was on top of the ice and pulled easily. Then all of a

sudden, its nose dug under the ice and it wouldn't budge. Dad's friend walked out to pull the deer the rest of the way. He was lucky, though, because the ice didn't break one bit. At last the buck was out!

I was thrilled, excited, overjoyed! I don't even know how to describe how happy I was and how proud of myself I was. I had a blast and I LOVE hunting! I can't wait to hunt whitetails.

Thanks very much to Lyndon and Spencer Archdekin for all their help getting the buck out of the lake.