

CARNIVORE & GunDigest PRESENT

HUNTING

BUYER'S GUIDE

2020





Black Hills

Black Hills Gold was originally discovered by General George Custer on his 1874 expedition leading the 7th Cavalry through South Dakota's Black Hills. It can be discovered again in the form of valuable metal of lead, brass, and copper combined into Black Hills Gold Ammunition. Black Hills is well known for providing the pinnacle of performance in the ammunition field.

The Black Hills Gold line combines components carefully selected from the premier names in the firearms industry into the ultimate quality ammunition. Cartridge brass,

projectiles, powder, and primers are all carefully chosen and combined with care to create the ultimate in accuracy and terminal performance. The skilled men and women of Black Hills Ammunition is dedicated to crafting the best performing ammunition available anywhere. No, it's not plinking ammo. It's built for perfectionists, like you, who demand ammunition built to the standards they expect for their hard-earned money.

www.black-hills.com



Dawson Knives

Deep Notch

A sleek, classic drop point style blade and deep finger notch make the Deep Notch Skinner one of the most comfortable and intuitive knives you'll ever use.

The blade is the perfect width, with a generous belly for peeling back the hide on your latest trophy and a fine, strong tip for clean, precise entry cuts. The deep finger notch, gentle palm swell and thoughtfully shaped handle cause this skinner to just melt into your hand.



Feels safe, secure, and remarkably comfortable to use. Thumb and finger rests are filed on the spine and inside the finger notch for added security.

➔ www.dawsonknives.com

SPECS:

- + 100% designed and handcrafted in the USA
- + 0.140-inch CPM-3V American-made powder steel
- + 100% American-made materials
- + 3 3/8-inch blade, 7.5 inches overall
- + 5-ounce knife only / 7 ounces, including sheath
- + Heat treated in-house for maximum toughness, durability, and edge-holding capability
- + Rockwell 60-61
- + Intuitive to use, razor-sharp drop-point blade
- + Custom Arizona copper finish is unique to each blade and no two are exactly alike
- + Polished marble carbon-fiber handle will not swell, split, warp, or crack
- + Industry-leading clear Cerakote® finish protects your blade from corrosion
- + All-weather black Kydex® sheath, designed for convenient inside-the-pocket carry
- + Thumb and finger rests for control and safe handling
- + Lifetime free sharpen
- + Protected by Dawson Knives' Common-Sense Guarantee



MOSSBERG

Mossberg

Mossberg Patriot Predator 6.5 PRC True Timber Strata/ Patriot Brown Cerakote

Looking to go long-range? Look no further than the suppressor and optics-ready Mossberg Patriot Predator bolt-action rifle chambered in 6.5 PRC (Precision Rifle Cartridge). This purpose-built rifle is housed in a durable synthetic stock, fully covered with TrueTimber® Strata™ camouflage with complementing Patriot Brown Cerakote® metal finish and is packed with premium features to deliver tack-driving performance. Designed for short-action, bolt-action rifles, 6.5 PRC offers a balance of velocity, manageable recoil, and a flat trajectory for extended-range performance in the field or at the range to 1,000 yards and beyond.

At the core is Mossberg's proven twin-lug, push-feed machined-steel action, fed from a lightweight polymer, flush 4-round box magazine. The standard contour, free-floating 24-inch barrel features a 1:8 twist rate, straight-edge fluting and is threaded (5/8x24 threads per inch) for the addition of a suppressor. A protective cap is included. Every Patriot rifle features Mossberg's pat-

ented LBA™ (Lightning Bolt Action™) user-adjustable trigger with a 2- to 7-pound range of adjustment, to help provide consistent shot-after-shot placement. A top-mounted Picatinny rail provides for ease of mounting and repositioning optics. And completing this performance-driven, bolt-action package are an oversized bolt handle, spiral-fluted bolt, and sling swivel studs.

The classically styled stock on the Patriot Predator rifle is well-designed for comfort and reduced felt recoil with its straight comb, rounded edges, and raised cheekpiece. Giving the stock a modern feel is textured stippling on the grip and three surface areas of the forend. A polymer block insert with integral magazine well provides a simple, but effective bedding platform. Rounding out the stock design is a traditional black rubber recoil pad.

This Predator is built to hunt and equally at home on the range.

➔ www.mossberg.com



SKU#: 28091
MSRP: \$540

QSP Knife



Bison - QS134

SPECS:

- + D2 blade, satin finish
- + Micarta handle (3 color options: black, blue, olive)
- + Overall: 8.875 inches (225 mm)
- + Handle: 4.375 inches (111 mm)
- + Blade: 4.5 inches (114 mm)
- + Blade thickness: 4.2mm (finished product)
- + Weight: knife: 198 grams (6.98 ounces); sheath: 145 grams (5.11 ounces)
- + Kydex sheath including tech lock which can be attached vertical and horizontal

MSRP:

\$79.88



www.qspknife.com

Riton Optics

X3 PRIMAL 3-15x44

With capped, zero resettable turrets and Riton HD glass, the X3 Primal 3-15x44 is a purpose-made hunting scope with guaranteed performance. Featuring an integrated, removable throw lever and 85 MOA of total adjustment, this rifle scope is built for accuracy and quick target acquisition in the most extreme environments.

www.ritonoptics.com



Sig Sauer Cross



The Sig Sauer Cross rifle is the first ever true crossover bolt-action, precision hunting rifle. Engineered to meet the demands of today's hunter the Cross was designed and built, from concept to completion, at the Sig Sauer research and development facilities in New Hampshire with the input of hunters, military snipers, and elite long-range shooters.

The Cross features a precision free-floating stainless-steel barrel fitted to a one-piece aluminum receiver, with no need for bedding or action screws, to deliver extreme accuracy; an aluminum M-LOK™ handguard for quick and easy attachment of bipods, rails, night-vision or thermal

clip-on optics; familiar AR-15 styled controls for a seamless transition to the Cross platform; a unique two-stage match-grade trigger that can be adjusted from 2 to 4.5 pounds; and AICS pattern magazines for the ultimate compatibility across calibers, platforms, cartridges, and loads.

The unique folding and locking precision stock of the Cross offers toolless adjustment that can be modified for any shooting position while in the field. With folded stock the Cross measures as short as 25 inches, making it the ideal hunting rifle to fit in any backcountry backpack.

The Sig Sauer Cross is available in 6.5 Creedmoor with an 18-inch

barrel, or in .308 WIN and the all-new 277 SIG Fury Hybrid cartridge with a 16-inch barrel.

Whether your hunting the steep terrain of the mountains or the densely forested hills the Cross delivers PRS performance, built for the backcountry.

➔ www.sigsauer.com

FEATURES:

- + Under 6.5 lbs., the lightest, most portable rifle in its class (up to 40% lighter)
- + Folding precision-style stock with 4 points of toolless adjustment
- + Precision stainless steel 5R rifled Barrel with 5/8x24tpi threaded Taperlok suppressor attachment technology
- + 1-piece receiver for a foundation of accuracy
- + Available in .308 / 277 SIG FURY with a 16-inch barrel (collapsible to 25 inches)
- + Available in 6.5 Creedmoor with an 18-inch barrel (collapsible to 27 inches)
- + Designed and built in the U.S.A

Mulies on the Mountain



Six years ago, I was introduced to this hunt by my friend Chris Camren, who told me it was going to be a legit mountain adventure, and hard as hell, which meant I couldn't turn it down. Committed, we headed into the wilderness of northern Washington to take our shot at the first rifle hunt of the season. During this time, bucks are still way up high in the alpine country, beating the summer heat and leaving

the mozzies behind in the timber bottoms. They're easy to spot, with light gray bodies against lush green mountain alder, and they're still grouped up. It's a great hunt, trumped only by the rut. The country was punishing, and in order to go anywhere, you're either going up or going down with no easy options. I was hooked, and ever since I've made it a point to go back every season I can.

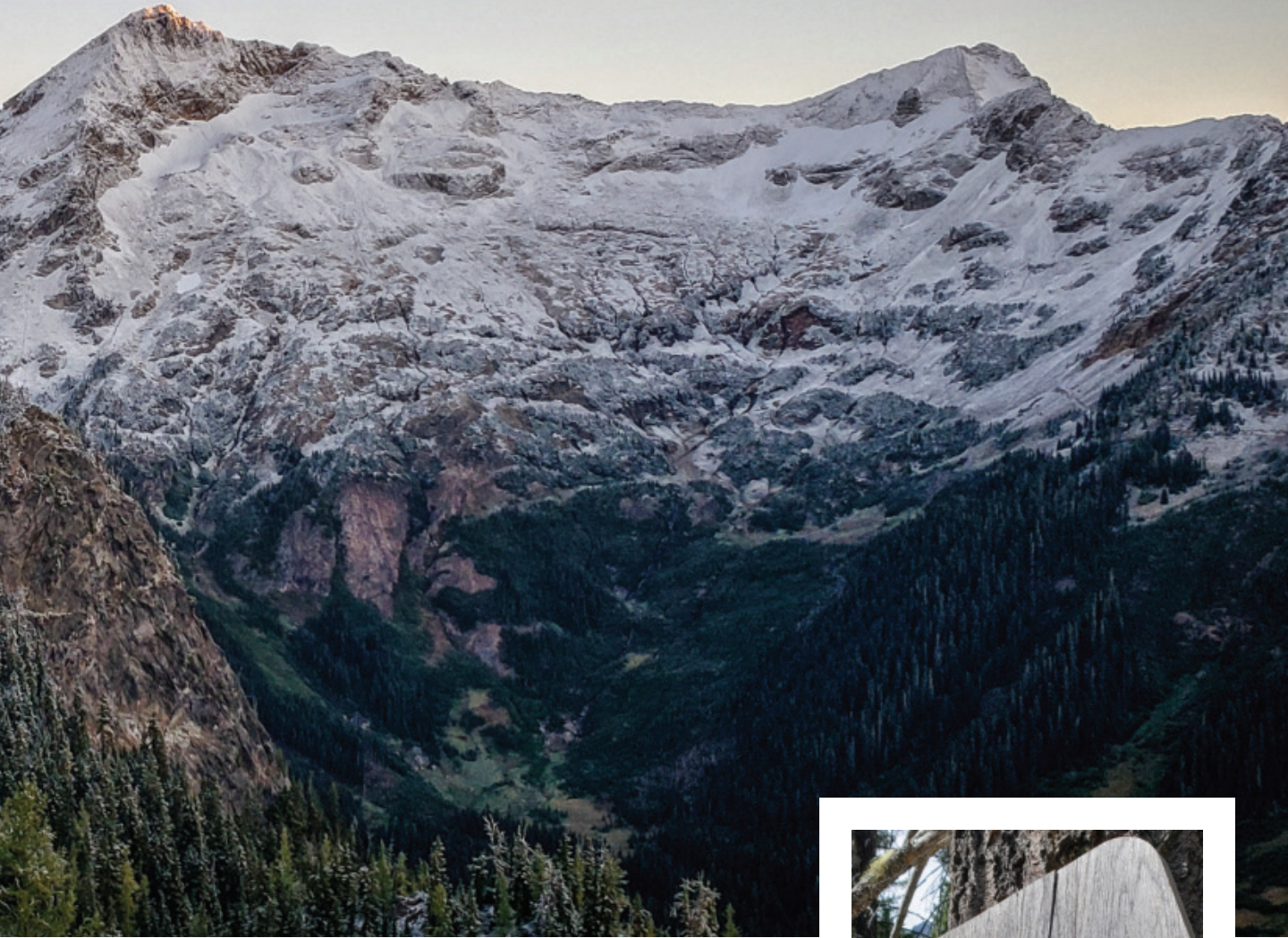
Fast-forward to 2018, my great friend, hunting partner, business

partner, and one helluva guide, Luke Carrick of Guiderite Adventures and I were talking about the high hunt, and he offered me an invite to one of his honey holes in the same wilderness area. (Don't ask, I'll never tell ...) Originally, we planned on going together, but he ended up having some other commitments, so I was now solo.

Although I prefer to hunt with friends to share in the experience, this year I was on my own. So, I rucked up and got my climb on.

Chasing Deer Solo in Mountain Goat Terrain

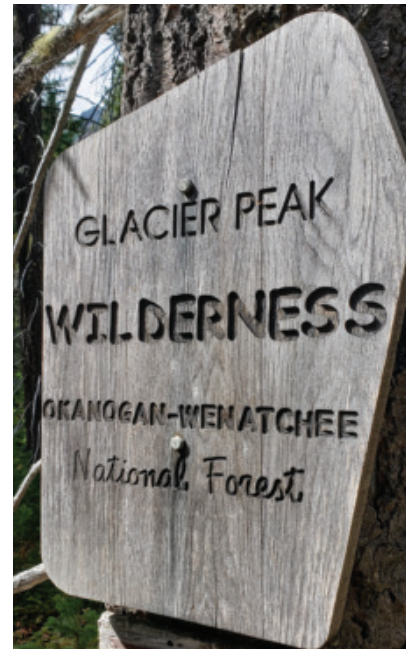
By Caylen Wojick



This trip was a great one in the sense that I got it all in terms of weather. Things started off warm, in the 70s, hiking in a T-shirt and feeling it somewhat unpleasant in the sun, then turned quickly to rain, 28 degrees F, and white-out snow conditions. Although weather can really suck, it tells you a lot about your gear deficiencies and where you can improve your choices to enhance some comfort on those really sh*tty days. More on that later.

INTO THE WILD

I parked my truck in the late evening on the day before the opener and was only able to get part way to the spot Luke told me to glass from. No worries; at least I got my feet on the country, and now had an idea of how long it'd take me to get there in the morning for sunrise. Day one produced no deer at all, but there was weather coming in late that night, with a forecast for Sunday that said it'd really hammer and dump up to 5 inches of snow in







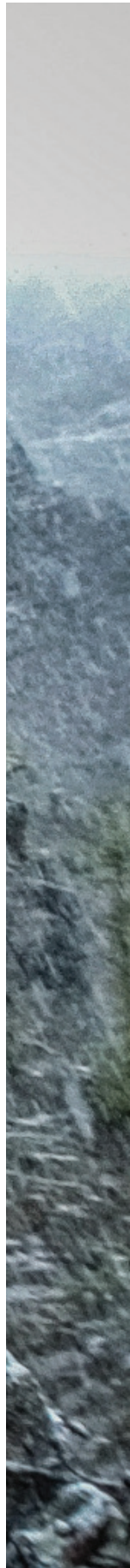
a 12-hour period. But, that's being up in the mountains in general, so it is what it is. Deal with it and don't be a bitch.

Waking up on Sunday morning, it didn't look that bad. I decided to ruck up and see if anything was moving. This proved to be a really poor idea, because the snow came when I was deep down a very, very steep rock chute and sitting on a little glassing perch. Within about an hour the snow had accumulated an inch and was coming down hard. I looked at the loose dirt and even looser scree chute and knew that it was about to get to the point of being too slick to climb out of there. If I lost traction, then the fall line headed straight over a cliff. That little 200-foot climb was, well, sporty — and that's all I'm gonna say.

I made my way back down the hill, and at 6,000 feet, was under the main cloud layer and able to see my camp. The three other humans previously visible had bailed, certainly due to the weather. Cool. I wasn't stoked to see people anyway, and I greedily wanted the mountain to myself. I hit the tent, stripped off my wet gear, got dry stuff on, and prepped for the long haul. Downloaded podcasts proved to be a lifesaver, and I studied my map sipping hot coffee, listening intently to Joe Rogan and Neil deGrasse Tyson discuss astronomy and astrophysics.

Looking at my map and knowing that I really had zero desire to climb that loose scree chute with 5 inches of snow lying in it, I needed to come up with another plan. I'd spied some other basins while previously studying Google Earth, which looked hugely promising but they were a long haul from my camp. I wasn't sure if there was water between them and my temporary home, where I had an ample supply. I knew that the animals would be out in force after the weather broke, hungry and wanting to stretch their legs, soaking up the sunshine. So, the next morning, I elected to do a bit of a walkabout still-hunt, exploring the alpine slopes and glassing into small pockets.

I immediately started seeing deer, spotting four does not more than 400 yards away, at a steep, negative 50-degree angle. I kept moving and eventually made my way to a beautiful green basin with rock fields and timber pockets — high-country mule deer heaven.





After less than an hour, I'd seen six does feeding in the open at 1 p.m., completely unconcerned. This was going to be the spot for today, as the ridge was strewn with paralleling deer trails with tons of fresh sign. I was focusing my glassing efforts up high in the basin at the bases of cliffs where there were pockets of timber — prime bedding areas.

At about 6 p.m. with the sun dropping into my eyes, I saw two bucks feeding on an open hillside. One was a very large 2-point, with antlers past his ears and equally tall, out at 720 yards and standing broadside with zero wind. Done deal for this rifle. But I thought I saw some crab claws up top, so I decided to make a 600-yard stalk to see if this guy was legal. Truth be told, I'm not a trophy hunter. I'm a meat hunter, though I fully understand the ethics of harvesting mature deer with good genetics, which is what I try

in earnest to do. Those fat bastard marmots started whistling and after making it to my vantage point, those two deer were nowhere to be found. Busted. Oh well, this was a bad-ass spot, and having three does within 200 yards of me while walking back from the stalk gave assurance that these deer had no idea what a human was and all wasn't lost.

The next day, I packed up my camp and took it with me, because if I harvested I didn't want to have to haul my deer all the way back. I'd planned to hike out the next day anyway, and I was going to camp in the basin in which I was glassing that night. My plan was to leave after first light, still-hunt my way back to the basin and glass all day. That plan paid off, because I immediately started seeing does, and when almost to the basin I spotted a group of five bucks, just 280 yards away, staring at me. I located the largest,

most mature buck and dropped the hammer within 30 seconds of seeing them. Done deal.

We all know that as mountain hunters this is when the work starts, but it truly is a labor of love. This pack-out wasn't going to be fun. With the truck about 8 miles away and 3,000 feet down, I really wasn't interested in the idea of making two trips. I decided that if I could get stood up and reasonably stable while loaded with both the deer and my camp, I was going to give it a go. Honestly, on the flat, that's not a big deal at all, but I was looking at about a thousand feet of double black diamond steep slopes, and another thousand of less steep, dark timber and mountain alder down to the main trail. Although seriously worried about the possibility of injuring myself, I wasn't going to not try. Three hours later, I was at the main trail with another six miles to go on relatively flat and downhill grade.



This sucked. Period. On the trail, I hiked for 50 minutes, and rested for 10, all the while focusing on only breathing through my nose. That allowed me to regulate my exertion to match the level of endurance I wanted. If I couldn't maintain a steady in and out through my nose, I was moving too fast, and I'd regulate my pace accordingly to slow my breathing. By only focusing on my breathing, and almost going into a meditative state, those miles just flew by and before I knew it, my 50-minute timer was going off. Seeing the truck under my headlamp was one of the sweetest moments ever. A successful harvest and with 77 pounds of meat safely in coolers, the trip was over.

These are really the trips I live for. You're earning every ounce of that deer, and there's something to be said about knowing, literally every step of the way, exactly where





your food came from. It's the weight of success, with that success hard bought of putting yourself into the austere environment of the alpine to live with these incredibly hardy animals and doing work, giving yourself the gift of an opportunity to chase one of them.

Victory isn't always measured by a harvest either. For me, that's a bonus — I just love the mountains. It's a magical thing to wake up in the morning and see radiant white mountain tops covered in fresh snow and mist. Knowing that you're living really the purest life a human could possibly live in this day and age. Knowing there's only a handful of batsh*t crazy people out





there who share your same ethos. Knowing that you're only relying on yourself and your own wits to keep you alive.

People die in the mountains all the time, and it's a real possibility on every trip. You're within the realm of ultimate self-reliance, and it's a good feeling. Flying solo has its downsides though, and I really like hunting with friends and connecting at the end of the day, telling tales of the day's adventures around a blazing fire, honestly hoping that your friends have success before you do.

Hunting, to me, is earning it in the most primitive way we can in today's modern society. I wish all of you happy hunting this year, and while you're getting after it, think about what it really means. It just might unlock some hidden potential inside that you never knew you had. 🍄



