

# HUNTING THE HENRYS



by Rusty Hall

Rusty Hall's buck scored 197" gross. It was taken at 630 yards.

The 2011 Utah draws were posted and my wife, Lesa, and I had both drawn the best mule deer unit in the country. She had max points but I was lucky and drew with eight! To top it off, two Western Lands clients had also drawn permits – Kyle Munk and Dave Dastrup. Four rifle tags in one year could have been more than we might be able to handle but it was going to be exciting.

The scouting trips in August and September were very productive. We had twelve to fourteen bucks found that could break the magical 200" mark. One of our guides is Lannce Sudweeks and his brother-in-law, Mace Crane, killed a whopper on the archery hunt. His buck is featured on the cover of this issue. The season was starting off great.

By the time the rifle season began many of our pre-season, scouted bucks had been harvested. We were down to just four to five bucks that were left from the scouting trips. We weren't too worried, as we knew some different bucks would also turn up during the hunt.

Opening day arrived and we all split up to hunt different areas. It was late in the day when Paul Pennie picked up a non-typical deer in a rough location. I was the only one who

could make the vertical stalk in the short time frame before the sun would set. It was a forced march up through the shale to a ridge opposite the buck where we would take a long shot. Chad Kulow was helping me glass and run a camera.

We reached the knife-edge ridgetop and ranged the buck at 620 yards with a steep incline. I wasn't worried about the shot. I shoot a Gunwerks 7mm topped with a Nightforce 5.5-22X scope. It has a target turret calibrated for elevation, bullet, powder, etc. The Berger VLD 165-grain bullet is deadly accurate at that range and does tremendous damage. We have shot lots of game in our guiding business and never have lost any animals using this bullet. I also was using a G7 BR2 Rangefinder made by Gunwerks. This rangefinder allows the hunter to program five ballistic profiles into its memory. It also will give a correct Bullet Drop Compensator (BDC) reading for the rifle programmed in its memory.

After reading 620 yards the G7 rangefinder gave me a BDC reading of 550 due to the incline. I had some trouble sliding in behind the rifle because of the steep angle. A touch of the trigger at the 550-yard BDC reading and the buck dropped in his tracks.

It was way after dark when we reached the buck. It took an hour of climbing in the shale to reach his resting place. He had lots of character, not very wide, but palmated and bladed at the top of the rack. One down- three more to go.

The following day Dave Dastrup scored on a big deer. They had been after a buck we called the "Crow's Foot Buck" but he had gotten into the timber on a very steep hillside. Kayden Murphy and Arwyn Murphy found another huge buck in his bed. It didn't take Dave long to make his mind up on this one. He made a great, 500-yard shot also using a Gunwerks rifle with a similar setup to mine.

The next day Travis Murphy glassed a wide buck up with some other deer in the thick cedars. He got Kyle into position with Chad Kulow helping on the glassing. Kyle was using my rifle and he made a 550-yard shot at a steep angle dropping the 37" buck. He had just taken the largest deer in all of his years of hunting.

The clients were happy and most packed up the following day heading for home with some great bucks and memories. My wife still hadn't gotten her deer. She had some quick opportunities but they just didn't pan out.

On the morning of the sixth day of the hunt, I was glassing a ridge with lots of deer on it. There wasn't anything we were looking for but lots of good bucks. My brother-in-law, Brad Roberts, pulled up and asked what I was looking at. I responded, "Just some deer—nothing great." He glassed farther to my right and replied, "Booner! What's wrong with that deer?" I looked to the right and walking out on the ridgetop was a massive 4x4. We watched him for a while before he turned and disappeared behind the ridge where he had come from. Brad and I evaluated him— heavy, great forks with the exception of weaker G2's and 27"-28" wide frame. Lesa said she wanted to go after him.

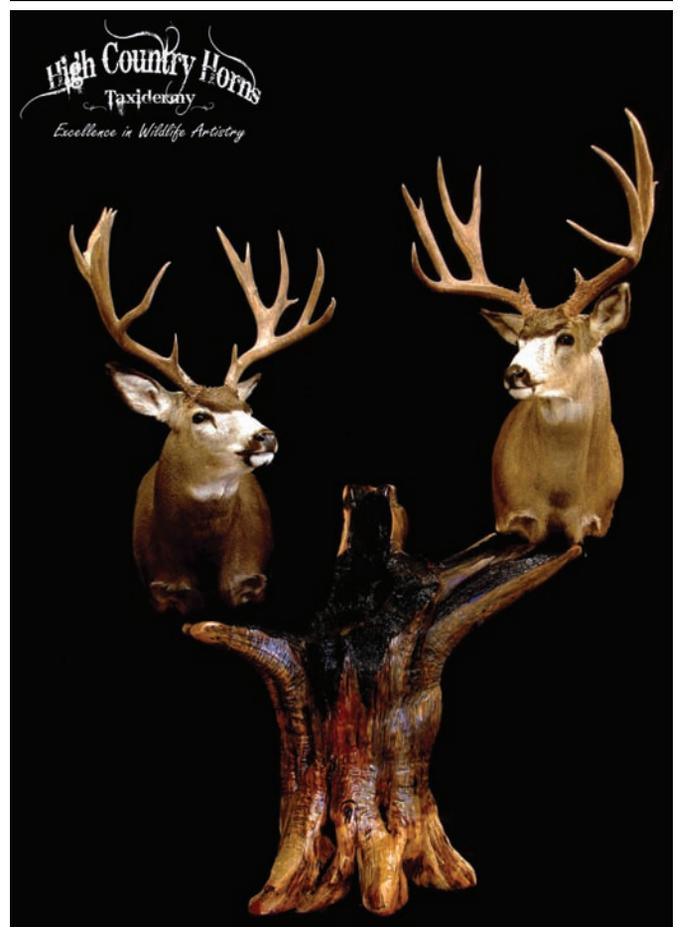
We circled around and got on top of a parallel ridge across from the buck. There were too many deer in the canyon between us to try a stalk. We would just have to wait for him to walk into view.

We waited for the buck for a couple of hours, keeping entertained with all the other good bucks bedded and feeding in the draw between us. Suddenly, he reappeared in the same location where he had been and began feeding. Lesa was set up with a rifle rest and was solid. I ranged the buck at 710 yards. No BDC was required as we were almost straight across from the deer. The wind was still. She touched the trigger and as I watched through the spotting scope, the Berger VLD bullet flashed through a backlit sky and dropped the buck in his tracks. He thrashed on the ground for a moment and Lesa said, "I am still on him. Shall I put another one in him?" "Go ahead," I replied. She touched the trigger with similar results and the buck lay still.

We gathered the deer up and moved him to a nice place for some pictures. The buck was awesome and Lesa was happy to have her father, Kent Roberts, brother, Brad, and our daughter, Tana, with us.

The 2011 Henry Mountains hunt was great. On four bucks we had an average of a little over 204". At times, we had lots of family there to look around and help us. We had a big camp and lots of fun. We are looking forward to the 2012 season. 

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**Paul Pennie (High Country Horns Taxidermy)**  
can be reached at 801-361-1890.



Dave Dastrup's buck scored 215" gross.



Kyle Munk's buck is 37" wide and scored 212 gross.



Lesa Hall's buck was taken at 710 yards. It scored 194" gross.



There is nothing better than a hunting camp full of friends, family and big bucks. Thanks to everyone that came to help and made this hunt so memorable.