

each side, a ten-point or better. But he seemed kind of light colored, and I really like the black horned ones. "Hurry...get the gun up...this could be the one."

"No, he is way over 160," I thought, as the buck turned broadside to cross the main trail. With my gun up and ready, the deer descended into a small dip. When he came up on flat ground, he looked bigger with each step.

"Yep, he is over 170." I could see some trash up there, but his main frame seemed quite typical. I decided I wanted him.

The buck rose up out of the dip and stopped broadside. Taking a good look at his body, I attempted to age him. Sway-backed, V-belly, short-legged and heavy, quite stocky – he was perhaps five years old or more.

Placing the cross-hairs on the unsuspecting buck, I took one last look at the headgear. The most impressive features were the black heavy brow-tines, thick as my arm, and wide beams with the same heavy mass right to the outside spread. There was no doubt now, "180+ for sure." I also remember thinking, "Don't screw this up. You are about to kill a book deer if you don't blow this easy shot." That was the last thought that went through my mind as the cross-hairs settled just back of his thick shoulder, while he was looking my way.

This story actually started a lot earlier, on a snowy day two seasons prior. I had located a pair of lions traveling together and was trying to sort out which tracks belonged to the male and which to the female. The tracks were over two days old, and I had my Walker-English cross male dog, Patch, and my female English hound, Ricki, working the cold track. I had also brought along three eight-month-old pups out of Ricki and Patch. The five hounds had moved the two-day-old portion of the track well, and the pups were even opening (barking on track) quite well. A few miles further, things began to heat up as the dogs progressed on



A look at what this buck would look like running away.

