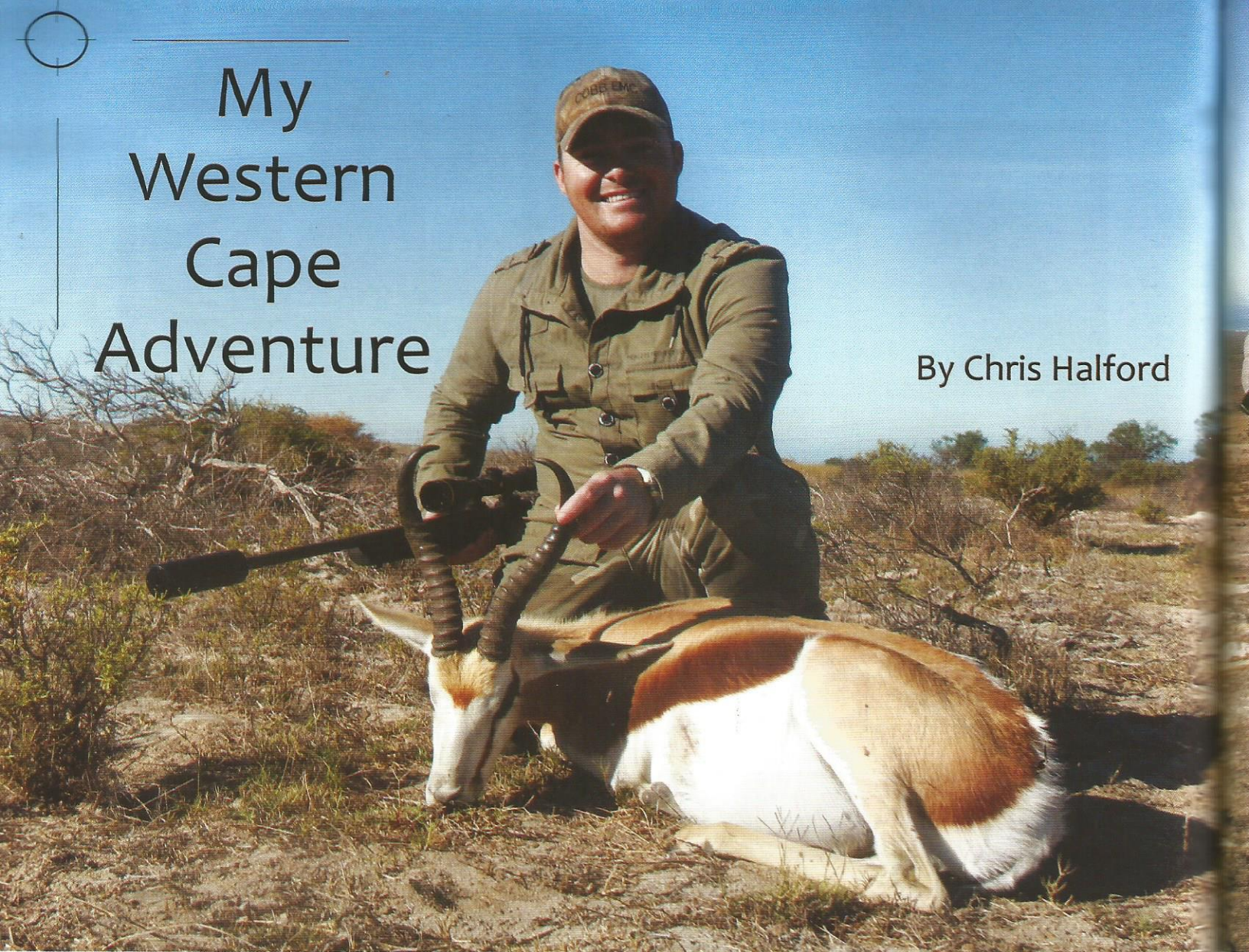


My Western Cape Adventure

By Chris Halford



Very Happy Hunter

The day began by being awake before the alarm went off at 5am at our accommodation, the Asara Wine Estate Stellenbosch, filled with excitement of what the day was to bring. I was in South Africa with my partner Tash, who had been sent to Stellenbosch by her work for a conference and for which we used this trip to our advantage and turned it into a holiday as well. So being an avid hunter and being in South Africa,

every game hunters dream, I had booked a one-day hunt with Nicole from Cape Town Hunting Safaris for a Springbok Buck.

Nicole arrived to pick me up at the arranged time of 6am in her dual cab Landcruiser and we made our way to pick up her skinner/tracker Mubati, then onto the area we would be hunting. The drive there was filled with conversations about my hunting experience, our plan of attack,

Some of the entries received from our readers to go into the draw for the chance to win




Nicole glassing for mob

shot placement and general getting to know each other.

On our arrival to the property I was introduced to a magnificent plains area of the Western Cape which is owned by an organisation called Khwattu which, to quote their brochure, “is dedicated to the culture and heritage of the San people of South Africa. It is a San culture and education centre. Become informed about the


world of San issues by the people themselves.” Accommodation is available here and it also has a restaurant that is used to teach the locals on waitressing skills, cooking and hygiene skills and general skills to enter the workforce. This is also where all of the meat from hunting through Cape Town Hunting Safaris ends up, for use in the restaurant and also kept for the trainers and trainees on the property.

Winchester 300WSM Featherweight
with Meopro Z-Plex Variable Scope
(see page 7 for promotional details)



After we had made ourselves known to the people at reception and checked that there wasn't anyone on the hunting grounds, we made our way back down onto the plains to get myself accustomed to the rifle I was to be using. Once a target had been set up at roughly 75m, Nicole ran me through the rifle to be used today, a Remington 700 SDS chambered in 7mm-08 with a custom made suppressor, (legal in South Africa), coupled with a Leupold 4-16 x 40 scope. We were also using shooting sticks, which was new to me but after a quick demonstration on how they worked and using them, it was time to shoot at the target. Two shots later and with both Nicole and myself happy with my accuracy and the rifles performance we got back into the Ute and drove to scout out a good mob of springbuck.

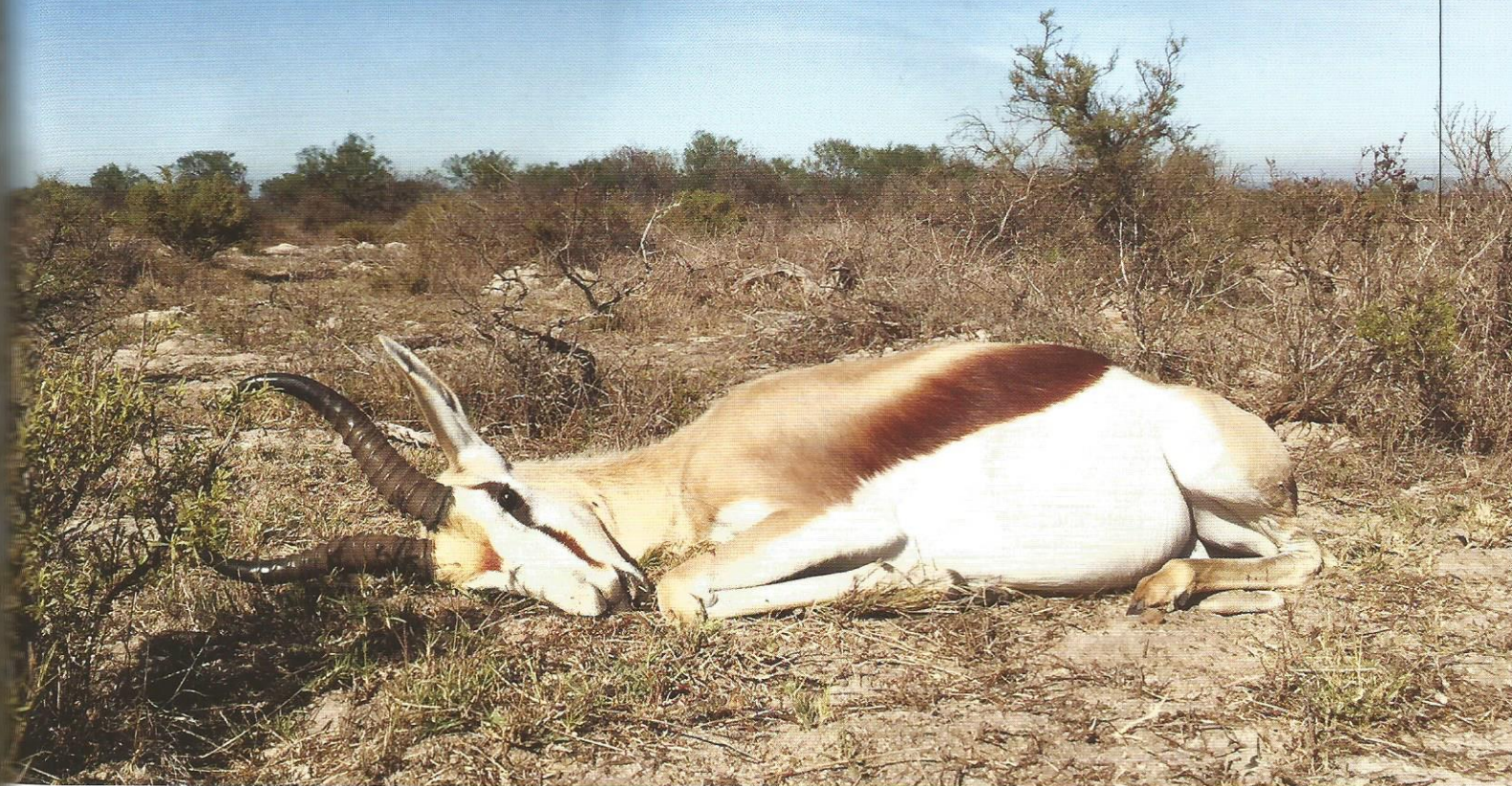
of Eland as well, which would make the stalk all the more interesting! We slowly starting stalking through the spread out shrubbery only making ourselves visible to spot where the mob were and stopping every 20 paces or so as to not alert the Springbok or the Eland. We had closed the gap to around 700 metres and poked our heads round a bush and a younger buck was staring straight at us, we froze for 10 minutes or so and the mob moved away slowly seemingly still unaware of our presence, we slowly and quietly resumed our stalk closing the gap to 120 metres after another 10-15 minutes and decided this was a good spot as the Springbok were staying where they were feeding. Quietly we setup the shooting sticks and I got into a good position to identify the buck to be taken. Adrenaline was now very high and I had



Driving slowly through the property to find a good vantage point to glass over the area and find a suitable buck to set up a stalk, we came across many other species of game, some proving difficult to photo, including Eland, Guinea Fowl, Zebra, Duiker, Bontebok and Ostrich. Once at our desired vantage point, we spotted at least three good sized mobs of Springbok and after scanning through each mob carefully, a good sized buck was spotted and after a game plan was discussed, we were on our way back down onto the flats to start the stalk and with my adrenaline starting to pump we approached the area with the wind in our favour blowing right in our faces.

We sat in the ute for 5 minutes after switching it off so as not to spook the mob, which once out of the ute we realised was very close to a big herd

to control my breathing to keep from shaking, I could not believe what was in front of me! Nicole and I agreed on identifying the same buck and I rested the rifle on the sticks awaiting him to present his shoulder for a clean shot, no sooner had Nicole finished whispering that he was about to turn, he turned and presented a shot and I squeezed the trigger and whack heard the bullet hit him just right of his heart, a lung shot. We sat for a second and after he didn't fall, I chambered another round and sent this one into his shoulder right on the money and down he went. After some hand shaking and congratulations, we slowly made our way over to where he lay, it was at this point where Nicole instructed me to smell the large strip of white hair running up his back and to my surprise it smelt aromatically of sweet

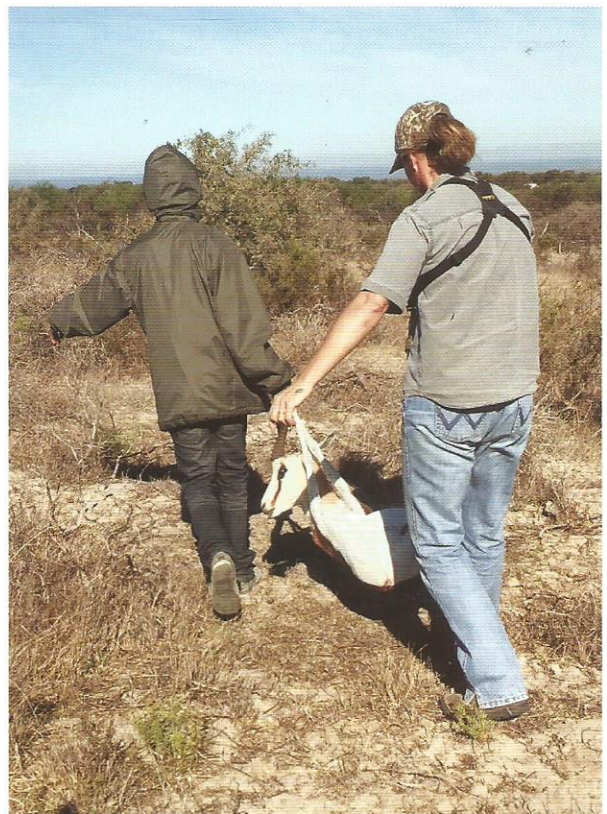


honey, which she informed me was his attractant for the females. I knelt down and thanked him for the privilege and promised him he would never be forgotten and after all the photos were finished we loaded him into the Ute to go back and start the skinning and butchering.

I will be getting him shoulder mounted by Nicole's Taxidermy business, Buck 'n' Bass Taxidermy and they have organised everything for me to get it crated and shipped into Australia in 10-12 months' time.

All in all I can't thank Nicole enough for the experience and the privilege of the day I had hunting Springbok, being a free range hunt and being exposed to their business and how nothing goes to waste makes you proud to be a hunter. I highly recommend Cape Town Hunting Safaris and Buck 'n' Bass taxidermy for anyone going to South Africa and wanting a hunt, and if you just want the cultural experience, Khwattu is a must.

I will never forget my Western Cape hunt and I will treasure the experience for the rest of my days. 🐾



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