

Two Years in the Taking: Local hunter shatters deer record

By Travis Hogan

The 2009 hunting season was one of the best ever for many people.

Wes Eagleburger, on the other hand, didn't have the luck that he wanted. Not harvesting the big buck he had his sights set on "sucked" if you asked him. He did, though, fill his tag with a nice buck.

Wes gets a lot of static for always killing a nice deer every year. He just tells everyone that they could do it, too, if they just worked for it like he did.

And it isn't like he owns or even pays to

hunt on prime ground. He spends most of his time in the stand on public hunting ground surrounding the lake, ground that has continuously coughed up big bucks for Wes year in and year out. Another good reason he tells people, "you can do it, too!"

The following spring, Shawn Gosselin and his son, Dallas, were out shooting their 22's one afternoon on an old dead road south of the lake and found a shed that they were certain was off of the buck that Wes was hunting the past season.

Shawn and Wes have always been hunting

buddies. So when Wes was shown the antler he felt a little better knowing that the deer was probably still alive.

Fall couldn't come soon enough. Wes, who uses Kansas whitetail tag, enjoys hunting early with his bow and later on in rifle season if need be to harvest the biggest deer possible. Early scouting and stands were put into place for what is his most enjoyed hunting season to date. Many times Wes saw the big deer but could never get a shot opportunity with the stick and string.

During the rut he came closest to the deer when he tried to stalk him, locked down with a doe. But big deer aren't stupid. That sixth sense kicked in and he got away without Wes even knowing he was gone!

Time was not on his side as the rut phased off. Wes was hoping to get his chance in rifle season. On opening day he did.

Shawn and Wes were hunting together that day. Shawn had seen the giant many evenings before season just before sunset. Knowing that, they figured that the best chance was in the later part of the day.

That evening, not far from where the deer's shed was found, they spotted him with some doe. The deer ran into a thicket draw and never came out. Shawn pursued after them, and Wes went around to the other side to wait and see if they came out. Shawn did get close and even got a shot at the deer, but missed.

The deer ran out the other

Hunter: Wesley Allen Eagleburger

Date: 12-1-10

Place: Norton County

Equipment: Centerfire Rifle

Antler Classification: Perfect

Scorer: Travis Hogan

Total points per antler: R-5, L-6

Number irregular points: R-0, L-1

Total irregular inches: R-0, L-1 4/8

Length of main beams: R-26 2/8, L-27 2/8

Length of Points

1: R-10 2/8, L-8 4/8

2: R-12 1/8, L-12 4/8

3: R-11, L-10 6/8

4: R-6, L-6 6/8

5: R-0, L-0

6: R-0, L-0

7: R-0, L-0

First circumference: R-5 1/8, L-5 1/8

Second circumference: R-4 5/8, L-4 4/8

Third circumference: R-4 4/8, L-4 4/8

Fourth circumference: R-4 3/8, L-4 3/8

Score per side: R-84 2/8, L-85 6/8

Inside Spread: 18

Percentage of irregularity: 18

Official Score: 170

side and over the hill to where Wes was waiting patiently. He spotted the doe first, then the buck. It didn't take long for him to shoot! He connected!

They both got to the deer at the same time and the celebrating began! Shawn was gracious enough to give Wes the shed that he found the previous year after filling his tag the next day. They both are looking forward to next years season to see who can get the bigger deer.



Wes Eagleburger of Norton shattered the Kansas buck record with a buck he took in December of 2010 near Sebelius Reservoir. His buck beat the 12-year record by nearly 6 inches and with the new record, he is tied for 19th place world-wide.

—Photo courtesy of Travis Hogan

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