



This hunt actually started over two years ago. One evening in the summer of 2004 after I had put our boys to bed, my husband, Greg, and I were watching Bass Pro Shop's *Outdoor Adventures*. They were hunting mule deer in Sonora, Mexico. Near the end of the show, the ranch "accommodations" were highlighted. There was a pool,

games room, and they described how the cooks made homemade tortillas. I laughed and told my husband, who goes hunting in Canada every year, "You are always wanting me to go on a hunting trip with you, well, I'll go to Rancho Grande." Before I knew it, we were booked.

We flew to Hermosillo, Mexico, in January 2005 for a

RECORDS

By
Myra S. Smith

Are Made To Be

BROKEN

Myra S. Smith of Mt. Airy, Maryland, with the colossal mule deer she harvested in January of 2006. The wide-racked king, with an outside spread of 38 2/8 inches, was taken on a hunt in Sonora, Mexico. The right antler scores a whopping 93 4/8 while the left adds up to 92 7/8 inches. The gross score is 217 inches, and after deductions it nets 210 2/8 typical points. This buck will stand as the highest scoring typical mule deer ever taken by a woman hunter.

six-day hunt and were both fortunate enough to harvest nice mule deer. After Greg took a 5x7 that scored 199 on the second day, the pressure was on. That same afternoon, I dropped my mule deer in his tracks. A 4x4 with a kicker (I love kickers) and an outside spread of 29 inches, he grossed 179. After such a great hunt, we signed up for 2006.

In January 2006, we returned to Rancho Grande, hoping to get

something 190 or better and 30 inches wide! Upon arrival, Jesus Fimbres welcomed us to his home again, and we settled in for another six-day hunt.

I had the same guide as the previous year, Roberto Nunez. He knew I wanted something better this year. We saw lots of does and several bucks during the first three days.

Roberto pointed out a few bucks he thought were shooters, but not in my mind! Also on the third day, Greg took a nice 5x5 that measured 178 gross. Now I had my mark (did I mention I'm very competitive).

On the fourth day, we again saw lots of does and a few smaller bucks but no shooters. With only two days left, the clock was ticking.

Greg hunted Coues deer on the fifth day, while Roberto and I continued our search for a monster mulie. While we were glassing as the sun came up, we spotted a buck that had great potential, but we were too far away to determine his size. We tried to get into a better position to check him out. It is amazing how the desert mule deer blend into their surroundings. We finally spotted him 300 yards in the trees. He was extremely wide and tall, and had good back forks. All the while my guide had been telling me to shoot him, but I had to see the front forks before I would squeeze the trigger. The buck didn't stand very long and took off running before I had a chance to see his front forks.

When Greg returned that evening, I told him the story. I noticed he wasn't overly concerned as he usually is with my hunting woes. He seemed particularly excited, but I didn't know why because he hadn't taken a Coues deer. He finally



Myra and her husband, Greg, with the wide-racked mule deer. The Smiths have been longtime subscribers to *Big Buck* magazine. Greg is also an avid whitetail hunter, who heads to Canada to pursue these crafty animals. Still, this is one hunting trip the two of them will never forget. It should be mentioned that with a score of 210 2/8, this deer ranks very high in the Boone and Crockett record book. Out of 834 listed in the typical section, Myra's buck ranks in 23rd spot. Pretty impressive indeed.

took me aside and started telling me about a buck he and his guide, Fernando Flores, had seen. Greg was so animated he could barely speak and what he did say can't be printed. Greg and Fernando estimated the buck's spread to be around 40 inches. Greg added that the deer was tall and wide with deep front and back forks. What more could a girl want!

After a conference with Jesus, Roberto and Fernando, a plan was put together to hunt this deer. I usually fall asleep when my head hits the pillow, but that night I lay there with my heart just pounding while Greg slept. Buck fever was getting the best of me.

It was the last day of the hunt, and we moved in after sun-up. It was also the coldest morning and I was shaking, but I wasn't sure if it was from the cold or nerves. As we entered the area, nothing was moving, but then we began seeing bucks as the does started moving around. We glassed from several points – still no big buck. It was also warming up quickly, and I was beginning to wonder if we would see him. I was anxious, knowing this was the last day of my hunt.

At 9:40, Roberto suddenly spotted a doe. Then I saw a huge buck take two jumps and vanish in the thick brush. I told Roberto, "Muy grande." I did not know if it was the one spotted by Greg and Fernando, but it was definitely a shooter and no doubt the one for me! No more looking through binoculars. I was ready.

The buck had entered a low thick area, and either had to travel the length of it or up the other side. We eased along so

very slowly, looking for him. Then I spotted him under a tree in the shade, staring straight at us. I did not say a word; I just put the crosshairs on his neck and squeezed the trigger. By the time Roberto said "High," I already had another shell in the chamber. I placed the crosshairs on the same spot and squeezed again. This time Roberto yelled, "He's down!" Although the giant had dropped in his tracks, I had another shell ready in the chamber. I have received a great deal of "coaching and counselling" over the years – most of it unsolicited.

The monster mulie was down for good. Roberto ranged him at 267 yards. It had all happened so quickly I wasn't even nervous, but now I was shaking like a leaf and my knees were weak. With his colour, the shade, and the terrain, we could barely see him until we were 30 yards away. I've heard about ground shrinkage, but I swear this buck was getting larger as we approached him. I had gotten the "Big One." It was without a doubt the one for me.

When we all met back at the ranch house, Roberto said Greg seemed even more excited than me. I was just speechless, which is really unusual for me! Jesus, who was at the airport, came flying back – I think he had buck fever, too!

My buck weighed 255 pounds, the heaviest ever taken at Rancho Grande. His typical green score is 217 gross and 210 2/8 net with an outside spread of 38 2/8 and inside spread of 27 2/8 inches. He is the largest typical ever taken by a woman. He is perfect. What a buck!

Needless to say, I enjoyed the rest of the afternoon. Greg

went back out and got his first Coues deer. The giant scored 108 with a four-inch G-2 broken off. Unfortunately, even with such a great Coues deer, he didn't get the attention he deserved because I had already stolen the show.

OK, guys, you may want to stop here, but just when I thought things couldn't get any better, we walked into the airport on Friday and the first person I saw was Jim Shockey.

That's one hunting show I stop what I'm doing to watch. I introduced myself and got a few pictures. He was extremely nice and complimentary of my deer. It was great meeting him.

We're off to Rancho Grande again next year. I know I got a buck of several lifetimes, but I also know the Rancho Grande experience is something I want year after year. A little heads-up for the guides: next year I want tall with lots of kickers. 🍷

During December of 2005 and early January of 2006, I managed to get many photos of this Saskatchewan whitetail. I also took excellent video footage of him in that time frame. He had a four-inch drop-tine, but a fight took care of that. Garry Donald photo.

