

WYOGA HUNTING STORY CONTEST WINNER **BLESSED AGAIN IN WYOMING**

By Masoud Yousefi

BIG GAME HUNTING

FOR MANY YEARS I have been fascinated with the stories describing Mountain Goat Hunts, their habitat and the spectacular scenery of the alpine environment. I have always loved the mountains and have hunted Sheep in various ranges in North America, Asia and Europe.

After 18 years of applying in Wyoming for Mountain Goat, I eventually drew a Goat Tag in 2019. Only another Sheep Tag would have gotten me as excited and thankful as this tag. Wyoming has been nice to me during the years. As painful as it is to wait several years to be drawn a tag, I have a Deer, Antelope, Bison, and now mountain goat tags. I can't wait for my sheep though. I feel blessed to be hunting in Wyoming.

After consulting with several friends and experts, I called and made plans with James (Jimmy) Owen of Lost Creek Outfitters, we discussed the logistics and my physical abilities. The date was set to meet at his lodge on October 10th in Cody Wyoming. In the past 12 months prior to this hunt, I had logged over 600 miles of hiking and walking. I was ready and Jimmy made sure I prove it during 15 days of hard hunting.

On the first day of our hunt, we had low clouds, snow and low visibility. So, we scouted close to the lodge and decided to ride in the next day. Our team consisted of myself, Jimmy, B Joe, Cameron Grant and 10 horses and mules and off we went to Goat country in the North Absaroka Wilderness of the famous Shoshone National Forest

Few places in North America are more beautiful in the fall than the high mountain country of Wyoming where air and water are clear and pure.

The camp location had a very interesting history. It is called Buffalo Bill Cody's Elk Camp. Apparently, some dignitaries have also camped there to hunt elk in the valley in the years gone by.

When we think of Sheep habitat, we think of the roughest terrain, which they inhabit, but it is not, as that is the second-roughest habitat, with the Goats occupying the parts where even the sheep don't dare traverse.

Weather got worse again, temperatures dropped to single digits and we had no visibility due to snow and low clouds. We tried several



new locations within the Wilderness despite bad visibility and extreme cold. This was a very early winter for Wyoming in October. I was frustrated and worried that we would not get a chance at a Billie and I will miss my "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity, but we did not slow down or lose momentum. On the 14th day of my hunt, we got a break in the weather again and spotted some goats from several miles away in new country. The next morning, we got ready and started to climb at 7:30 AM and after a grueling hike, we found them at about 800 yards from where they were the day before. I cannot describe how, but Cameron had managed to get us up some scary and nasty precipitous cliffs and now we were closing the gap between us and the goats. We finally got set up at 335 yards. It was 12:20pm, B Joe behind the spotter, Cameron by my side, helping me get set up on our packs. There was only one Billie in this bunch, he was behind some stunted trees and Cameron wanted to make sure that he would be positioned perfectly for my shot and that if I hit him, we can recover him. The shot was good, the Billie has a magnificent coat, very symmetrical, 9 years old with 5 1/8-inch bases and was over 9 inches long. I had done it, but I didn't do it alone. During my 15 days hunting, I was proud to have been with Jimmy, B Joe, Cameron and the rest of his team, I was in good hands. Thank you, guys. 🙌

