

Caleb Przybylek's First Buck!

by Rich Przybylek



My son, Caleb Przybylek, shot his first 6pt buck on November 3 with a crossbow at 25 yards out. He is a 7th grade student at Fruitport Middle School. He has a heck of a story if you want to hear it.

Let me start by telling you that I was not too enthused about hunting this year. That's until Caleb came home from school about a week before the youth hunt, and told me he wanted to hunt and shoot a deer this year. I am an avid hunter, and I have definitely been blessed but just felt like my hunting was missing something. Well I got our crossbow out and we went and sighted it in, and let's just say Caleb only needed to take one practice shot - bullseye first shot at 20 yards!

The youth weekend was here and it was gonna be miserably hot. I warned him that it was probably gonna be too hot to see deer, and we saw none. I was worried, for I just got him to hunt and not seeing deer can be a turn off. He told me he didn't care to see deer, he just wanted to spend time with me.

It's now the third week of bow and I can't get him to come back out with me, but he got me excited about being out and I shot a 5pt. We hunt state land so just seeing bucks at times is tough. I went up on the 27th of October again by myself and I had a real nice 6pt coming in but I could not shoot it. I knew my son could and that this might boost his confidence.

I went and talked him into going by telling him, "I guarantee you'll shoot a deer, possibly a buck." I convinced him to go with me on Friday Nov. 3rd and not 20 minutes in the stand, 4:15 to be exact, the 6pt was coming in. I had Caleb pick up the bow, turn the safety off, and get ready. I could see he was getting nervous. He was shaking and breathing hard so I whispered to him over and over to take deep breaths and calm down. I also told him to aim at his shoulder and to not take it off.

Caleb had to hold the red dot on him for 10 minutes until he cleared a few trees. He was doing so great being patient letting that buck take his time and he did not speed the shot. I taught him to never take bad shots. Finally the buck turned his head only to look behind him, and in doing so he stepped forward a foot giving my son a shot. I was gonna tell him to shoot but before I could, he shot. Direct hit right through the heart, he only ran 20 yards and dropped. The deer did not suffer, for it was a perfect shot.

I looked to Caleb and said, "Good shot!" and grab the crossbow so he doesn't drop it in excitement. Then I noticed Caleb was in full tears. I asked if he was crying because he's sad he killed a deer and he said, "No." I said, "Why then do you cry?" He says to me, "These are tears of glory, Dad. I never thought I would ever shoot a buck." He didn't know but I shed a tear myself, because I knew exactly what I was missing in my hunting, my new hunting partner, Caleb.

On the way home the fun competition and heckling started toward me. Caleb was teasing by saying, "I shot a bigger deer than you, Dad." I smiled and said, "Yes! Yes, you did."

I so look forward to future hunting with him and my other three kids in the future. Thanks for letting me tell you this. Caleb is an amazing 12-year-old trying to find who he is like most boys and girls his age, and he lacks confidence in himself. After this hunt, I've seen a change in him and see him starting to gain confidence.

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Humor submitted by Julie Turpin

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