

Archers Shoot Through Raindrops

■ Second annual "Fun Shoot" offered an array of targets and hunting strategies.

By Ron Karten

Fighting a soft steady rain all morning on Saturday, June 9, archers from across the Northwest took aim at forty foam targets, shaped like deer and elk, bear and wild pigs, just for the fun of it.

"There's no trophy," said Tribal member Shonn Leno, Special Projects Coordinator for the Natural Resources Department, who helped organize the second annual event, "so people come to challenge themselves. They keep their own scores and shoot as much or as little as they like."

By the time the weekend event had ended, around 50 had signed up, compared with some 150 and an uncounted number of kids last year. Other competitions in the state, including a paying competition in central Oregon, along with the rain conspired to keep attendance down, said Leno.

Still, a hardy bunch took off through both new growth and old growth woodlands around Fort Yamhill Park to participate.

In addition, others enjoyed targets set up by Hunting Simulation Organization (HSO), a company that also hosts archery shoots.



Grand Ronde resident Daniel Revis, 6, takes aim during the Tribal Fun Shoot.

HSO set up its targets in the open field. While hunters could take all the time they wanted shooting at the Grand Rondes' targets in the woods, with HSO, the idea was to shoot fast.

"In three seconds," said Leno,

"the target disappears."

The woodlands shoots took a week to set up, said Leno, with the foam targets spread out into two courses. Staffers, including Tribal members Matthew Thomas, Bryan Langley, Tyson Mercier and Tribal

Elder Dale Langley limbed trees along the way to make an easy-to-follow trail. Targets were set up at different distances, and required hunters to shoot through branches and tree trunks.

Under the canopy of trees, the rain softened and the hardest part about it, for many archers, was pulling their arrows from the target.

"I have an arrow puller," said one participant, "and I still couldn't get a grip."

Grand Ronde residents Chris Revis and his son, Daniel, 6, along with their friend, Jacob Mills, were out in the woods killing everything that didn't move. None had yet been out for a real hunt, though they seemed more than ready. Every time the adults took a shot, you heard a thwack at the other end, where you just knew that the arrow had hit home.

Daniel, who is getting better all the time, won first place in a McMinnville archery shoot last month.

Mills came back from Iraq last year. He liked this experience more. "Compared with Iraq," he said, "this is a walk in the woods." ■

The Call Of The Wild

■ Hunter Jim Horn shows how to bring down an elk.

By Ron Karten

The thrill of the hunt played on the screen at the front of the Rogue Room at the Spirit Mountain Casino. The evening was Saturday, June 9, and the video accompanied the audience's entrance.

Many came with the Archery Fun Shoot held in the woods by Fort Yamhill Park still fresh in their minds and on their boots. Some were just drying off from the soft, steady rain of the day.

On every chair was a green product catalogue from Primos Hunting Calls, the company for which award-winning elk hunter Jim Horn works as Western Promotions manager. He also hosts a TV show through his own Winter Choice Productions, "Always Hunting with Jim Horn."

On tables at the front were samples of virtually anything an elk hunter might think of to lure these ruminants and carry the tools of their trade.

On the screen, the camera whirred from behind a hunter. In front of the hunter, a six-point elk was edging in from off-screen to answer the hunter's Primos call. It didn't like what it saw, however (camera-shy maybe?), and it turned almost in place before sauntering back out of range the same way it had come in. There may have been a little

bit of Wylie Coyote in it's attempt to look casual. Other times, said Horn, "it's butts and dust as they clear out."

"Do you know how bad he wanted that bull?" Horn asked the crowd. "It would have been his biggest bull."

But as the video, filmed in Montana, continued, there were plenty of bulls that came in, felt the sting of the arrow, and went down, or struggled, dying in a wash of broken tree branches.

Jim Horn was there to show everybody how to make that happen.

"You can kill elk year after year after year," he said. "But you have to think like an elk. You have to learn the animal. You have to know the biology of the animal."

He talked about the "rut phase" when the bulls "start looking for the company of cows. They don't have calendars," said Horn, "but there's a biological change in the bulls. As their hormones increase, you hear the yelling and screaming. They're stimulated by smell, taste and hearing," he said. "And we have calls that can mimic the exact sounds."

With his call, he let the room have an example. I turned to the Rogue Room's open doors and awaited the arrival of the "bachelor herd."

Nothing, so I turned back to listen.

"You never hear them answer you," said Horn, getting to the nub of his teaching. "Don't expect them to call back. They just show up." I



Award-Winning Elk Hunter Jim Horn

looked back at the door.

"I know they're going to come to my calling," he went on. "The key is to give them time to come. Make the sound every five minutes. And sit still for 45 minutes. Just be patient."

"The cows go through changes, too," said Horn. "Her body demands that she be bred. And she releases a scent."

On the first page of certain of the Primos catalogues sitting on the seats in the audience, Horn had written his name. "Check out your catalogue and those around

you," he said. "All those with my name written in them are winners. And I have some great prizes."

He gave away strings and cables for a compound bow and a WC label cap. He gave away the popular Hoochie Momma call.

"The next prize," he said, "is this bottle of cow pee. Put this on and you'll smell just like an old cow. And it really is good stuff."

The gift that keeps on giving. ■