

OL' FIGHTER

Dyson's first of 12 record book bulls

By Greg Dyson
For the Blue Mountain Eagle

My first book bull will always hold a dear place in my heart as "finally I've arrived!" Ha!

Having harvested several branch bulls in succession, I began to have an idea that maybe, just maybe, I could step up to the next level as a public land bull elk hunter. I had called up a few bulls over 300 over the last few years, but as these trophy bull elk grow to majestic size, they also grow smarter, sharper, cautious, fortunate, etc.

At this point of the season, I had passed on seven branch bulls under 30 yards and was beginning to have thoughts that maybe I'm not cut out to be a big bull harvester. As they say, it seems to be pitch dark just before the dawn!

The next level transition only appears to be a big step? It truly is! These giants of the for-

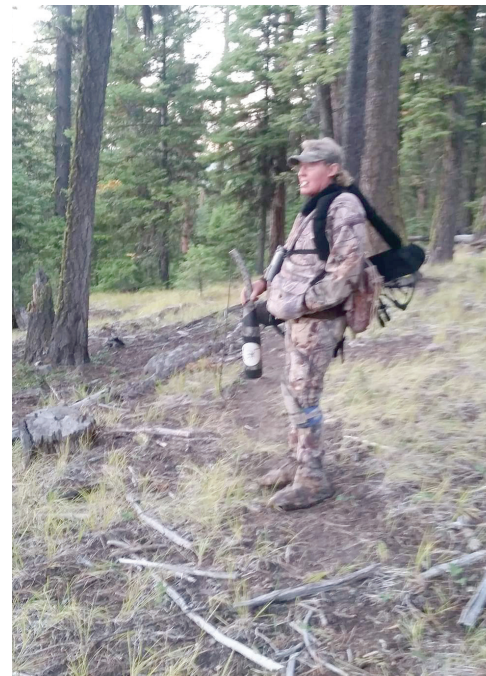


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Greg Dyson shot this 344 class bull elk on public lands in Grant County, his first of 12 record book bulls.

est are in many hunters' eyes the ultimate big game trophy.

Since the very beginning of my elk hunting days, I was always standing on ready and sitting on go! Always up for chasing bulls in the rugged Blue Mountain Range — the Rocky Mountains of Eastern Oregon — that I was never going to catch, then realized hunting a Chevy pickup in the early morning hours several times a season was as challenging as the bull elk



Contributed photo

Greg Dyson says he feels as close to his creator as he can be when hunting.

themselves!

Stepping up to the next level will always test who you truly are. But any passion to become good or great comes with hard work and dedication.

This was the end of the third week of the elk season and I hadn't put eyes on a book bull elk yet. A favorite ridge that I frequent usually is good for a whistle and has been home to a few herd bulls over the years.

I was up on top way before daylight when a deep-throated scream came back to me, almost cutting me off. I thought, "How rude!" Ha!

So using his aggression to my benefit, I cut the distance between him and me in half and thought just down the ridge a couple hundred yards that the wind would stay and not be a concern. Because my first bugle was met with such harshness, we may as well.

This time out Herd Master seemed to have closed in. Also being on the north face, the thought crossed my mind he may be close to his bedding ground. This seemed even more

apparent when he doubled down. Moving up the second time put me within a 100 yards of my bull.

When you first hear a bull elk raking a tree, it takes a minute to register, but in most cases, it's a chance to move up or somehow put the favor in my hands, a blessing for sure!

It's the time of morning that dark gives way to light, I'm 60 yards from a 340 class seven-by-seven bull elk, He also has seven or eight cows and calves all around him helping with safety.

It truly is the greatest feeling to see God's creation being elk and naturally as beautiful as they could be. This is the moment a bowhunter continues to practice calling, shooting, being accountable — this moment that's upon me.

I'm close enough that, if I give away my location, with a quick glance they'd see no elk in the area. So my go to up until now would be a chuckle grunt with my tube turned away from the elk to hopefully make them think I'm farther than the 60.

A low whine with six quick chuckles works like a champ, and after he tore up the small pine sampling a little more he came to confront the intruder — an uninvited guest who needs to be dealt with.

As he makes his way toward my location, I could hear him popping his teeth, a sign of being irritated. As he passed behind a tall thicket of buck brush, I drew my 93-pound Bowtech Tribute. As he veered to the left and down a little gully, he appeared at roughly 16 paces. Top pin!

As I let out a short and quick cow call, he stopped broadside, staring at the double pine tree that made for a perfect hiding place to arrow my first book bull elk, as my 125-grain Thunderhead exited the back shoulder cutting a perfect triangle through both lungs.

The big, beautiful 344-inch Herd Master only made it 120 yards down the trail collapsing for the final time. My first of 12 record book bulls will always have a soft place in this ol' bowhunter's heart!

The closeness to the spirit of good and all that I feel at these times is priceless! As close to my creator as I can be! My first of 12 book bulls so far!



I WAS UP ON TOP WAY BEFORE DAYLIGHT WHEN A DEEP-THROATED SCREAM CAME BACK TO ME, ALMOST CUTTING ME OFF.

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