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Case pleads guilty to assault also faces rape charges

A 26-year old Heppner man has plead guilty to felony assault charges in connection with the assault of a store employee in Heppner last December.

Michael Case plead guilty to Assault in the Third Degree in front of Morrow County Circuit Court Judge Jack F. Olsen on September 21. Judge Olsen also ordered that the matter be continued for sentencing, and that a pre-sentence investigation be completed.

Case was also ordered held in custody in the Umatilla County Jail until sentencing. He currently faces unrelated rape and sodomy charges in Umatilla County, which are scheduled for trial in October.

The Morrow County conviction results from a December, 1988, incident in which Case entered a downtown Heppner store and assaulted an employee who was alone in the store at the time.



by Mark Baggett

Hunters Pays Price for Potential Record Bighorn Month

Peter Bollinger just may have taken the largest Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep ever killed in the United States on record, although the trophy did not come cheap.

Bollinger's ram, which green-scored 200 6/8 Boone and Crockett points, was taken Sunday, September 3, in the Joseph Creek area of extreme northeast Oregon within two miles of the Washington border, validating the special tag the Sacramento California developer paid \$47,000 for at an auction last June.

The auction, held each year by the Oregon Hunter's Association, offers one Oregon sheep tag to the highest out-of-state bidder in order to raise money for the state's bighorn program, which finances restoration and enhancement projects for both Rocky Mountain and California subspecies of bighorn sheep.

Although the big ram's score fell short of that recorded for Spot, the famed 202-7/8-point Eagle Cap Wilderness bighorn which was found dead of natural causes in 1986, the largest recorded bighorn previously killed by a hunter in the U.S. taped an even 200 points and came from Wyoming's Wind River Range in 1983.

According to Bollinger, the big ram which did not come cheap also did not come easy. After sighting 14 or 15 rams during a scouting trip two weeks prior to the season, only to find that subsequent storms had seemingly moved the rams farther down the canyon, possibly into Washington.

He said it was not until about 3 in the afternoon of the third day that the pair spotted their first ram. Miraculously, the ram turned out to be the one they were specifically hunting, one they had seen during their scouting trip and determined to be the largest of the herd.

"We were crawling around in the lower third of the canyon—it's very steep in there and it takes a long time to make any progress—and happened to look back, and lo and behold, that ram. He had been (under the rim) beneath us and heard us or smelled us and was sneaking out the back door, so to speak, like a whitetail would do."

Bollinger said the ram, about 550 yards distant, appeared very near to topping a ridge, making any attempt at pursuit impossible.

"So I got a rest, and at 550 yards I shot six times and hit him four." (A feat in and of itself, if you asked this hunting writer.)

Bollinger said the landowners—the Singers—generously helped with packing the animal out, using pack horses.

Many hunters, especially those who have unsuccessfully applied for sheep tags for many years, have in the past been disgruntled with the auction system which practically assures a tag for those affluent enough to pay the price.

But according to Vic Coggins, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife District Biologist from Enterprise who measured Bollinger's ram, the revenue from the auctioned tag not only bolsters the sheep program, "it is our sheep program."

"I think what they have to stop and think about is, you know, the (regular) sheep tags that we issue—about 50 tags of a year—can't possibly pay for that program," Coggins explained. "This is where the average hunter comes out—in the programs that the (auction) money goes for. Out of this \$47,000 if we fund, say, four new transplants, down the road 10 years we could have a dozen or more additional tags for those newly transplanted herds."

Coggins said that during each transplant effort, the department tries to capture from 15 to 20-plus animals from a healthy, stable herd and relocate them into other areas where wild sheep once ranged, but had since been extirpated.

Bollinger, no stranger to sheep hunting, said his Oregon ram completes his second "Grand Slam," the revered accomplishment of taking a Dall, a Stone, a desert and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. And while admitting this was the first time he has purchased a tag at auction, he heartily concluded the money was well spent.

"There's people who buy boats and people who buy airplanes and people who spend money in Reno," Bollinger said, "but I prefer spending it on a sheep hunt."

"And you're giving something back; I mean, that amount of money, to me, is a lot of money, but on the other hand it can go to really increase the sheep population by quite a bit."



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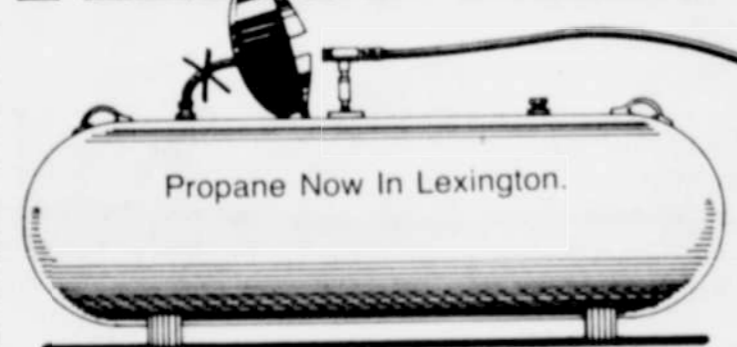
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Fibre Artists look for members

This fall Country Fibre Artists Guild is seeking new members and would like to invite anyone interested in one of the fibre arts to consider joining at this time.

Now in its fifth year, the guild was formed in February of 1984.

The group meets monthly and is the 1989 organizing guild for "By My Hand", the annual fibre arts show that is scheduled to open on October 2 at the Morrow County Museum. This is an ideal chance for interested persons to see what is being done by local artists.

Although most of the members of the guild are from Heppner, that is not a requirement and anyone in or out of the county is welcomed to join. Spinning, weaving, basketry, natural dyeing, needlework of all

kinds and felting are some of the subjects covered by the guild. The emphasis is on natural fibres and new skills and ideas are welcome.

Those interested in attending a meeting should contact Renee Devin at 676-5348.

We will be CLOSED Sat. Sept. 30 for hunting.

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The Morrow County Horse Show Committee wishes to thank all the generous donors and hard working volunteers for making our show successful. A special "thanks" to Leo and Peggy Dezoete for furnishing the cattle. On October 12 at 7:30 p.m., there will be a meeting at Kate's to plan the 1990 show. All those interested, please attend. Thank you again.

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