

KF Man Recalls Mauling By Kodiak Bear

By JOHN GUERNSEY
 "All I wanted to do was live—I didn't care whether she tore off an arm or mangled a leg so that it would have to be taken off. I just lay there as quiet as I could with my arms around my head and my knees pulled up under my

neck. I didn't care what else happened, I just wanted to live." That's the way Fred Barmore felt during early November of 1948 when he was being mauled by a several-hundred-pound Kodiak bear on the island of Kodiak just below the northern end of the

Aleutian Peninsula in Alaska. At that time Barmore, a 6-foot 4-inch man of 230 pounds, was a fire fighter with the air base crews on Kodiak Island. Today he is the assistant chief of the Kingsley Air Base Fire Department. Barmore, with his eyes twinkling

as though it might be about ready to happen all over again, relates the story this way. "One morning another fireman and I decided that a little rabbit hunting was in order. We jumped into a pickup with our .22 rifles and headed for the favorite hunt-

ing grounds a few miles from the base. Lloyd Howe was the fellow's name.

"It was just one of those days. We snowshoed over a fair share of the island but didn't find a single bunny.

"We were headed back to the base and were just about a mile from it when Lloyd spotted a patch of trees and brush which was normally good for a rabbit or two. He started in from one side and I began moving into the other side of the brush.

"I had gone just a short way when I stopped to look over a small clearing. Just then I heard a snarl in the nearby brush. There are lots of wild dogs on the island, you know, so I didn't think much about it.

"I scanned the clearing one more time and then I knew, I well knew I was in trouble.

"Standing just a little bit away from me were two Kodiak bear cubs about the size of Newfoundland dogs. I had hunted bear enough to know that I was in real trouble. That mother bear was bound to be around there some place and she had more fire power than I could muster—me with a .22 rifle.

"I started to look around but it was too late! I heard the brush cracking and out of the corner of one eye saw this mad streak of brown bear rushing at me. I whirled and ran for all I was worth!

"I hadn't traveled more than 20 or 30 feet when I became hysterically scared. I was too excited to feel myself being hit but I knew it had happened—she had me down! I knew it because I had stopped my forward progress down the slight hill and was moving through the air at right angles to the way I had been running.

"When I hit the ground I fortunately remembered what I had been told, cover your head with your arms, pull your knees up to protect your throat, and lie as still as you can.

"I was scared, scared to the point that I didn't know what was happening. I just wanted to live and a bookie wouldn't have given much for my chances.

"I was too scared to feel it but when I shot across the ground I knew I had been cuffed again while rolled up in a trembling ball. If you struggle they bite and cuff you until you are quiet, dead quiet and still. If you lie still they might go away.

"Everything went quiet then, I could no longer hear the guttural snarls, I could no longer feel the steaming breath, and, I seemed to be staying in the same place on the ground. I was still afraid to open my eyes.

"Then it happened, I felt a tugging at my shoulder and began screaming as I jumped up to run!

"What's the matter with you," asked my hunting companion, "it's just me, let's get out of here."

"While laughing hysterically I realized it was Lloyd tugging at my shoulder and that the bear had gone away."

"We started to run for the pickup when I had cause for new shock.

"Heading right for us were the two cub bears, each weighing about 200 pounds."

"They were just chasing after their mother who had gone over the hill but I was so far gone I figured they were full grown Kodiaks and were coming after me to finish the job the old lady had started. I ran as hard as I could

(Continued on Page 3-D)



FRED BARMORE, who stands 6-feet 4-inches in his stocking feet, illustrates with a 30-30 rifle the angle at which a man must shoot if going for the head of a Kodiak Bear charging directly in front of him. Some of the half-ton Kodiaks measure as much as 11-feet between the tips of nose and tail. A 30-06, or a .375 Magnum is the usual wea-

pon for bear hunting, and Barmore points out that the 30-30 he is pictured with would do little more than get through the hide and fat of a big Kodiak. Barmore, incidentally, was armed with nothing more than a .22 rifle when he came face to face with a large Kodiak a few years ago.

—Photo by Kettler

Photographer Don Kettler definitely felt a touch of spring when he surrounded pretty Marky Cox with flowering crab blossoms and went to work with his camera. Miss Cox is employed in the offices of the Oregon Water Corporation. The picture was taken on Tri-X film, using a K-2 yellow filter, with the settings at a 50th and f32.