

WYOMING SUPER TAG RAFFLE

Leads to Record Book Bison



Many big game hunters dream of the days when bison carpeted the plains.

The vast roaming herds, which could number in the tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands, were a spectacle of nature and an icon of the unsettled West. While the demise of the great herds is a well known story, many hunters today do not realize that there are still opportunities to hunt wild bison and the adventure can be as great as ever.

Most impressions about bison are formed from experiences at zoos, parks, ranches, or other locations where they are not hunted and/or protected from predators. In these circumstances, bison often appear docile and tame; however, bison are worthy game animals. While their eyesight is poor, their hearing and sense of smell are very good. Bison have been known to smell other animals from over a mile away. Additionally, for their size, they are surprisingly agile and can move at speeds of up to thirty-five miles per hour and cover long distances at a lumbering gallop. Above all, bison are tough and unpredictable. They are North America's largest land animal and bulls can weigh over 2,000 pounds. Bison are known to absorb several well-placed shots from a high-power rifle before going down and will charge and gore when agitated or threatened.



Having already taken two bull bison on a rifle hunt on the Crow Nation Reservation in Montana, Daniel Hauck of Riverton, Wyoming was no stranger to bison hunting when the phone rang in July, 2014. On the other end of the line was Scott Talbott, Director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, notifying him that he was the inaugural winner of the Wyoming Super Tag raffle wild bison hunting license ([More Information on Wyoming Super Tags is Available Here](#)). The Wyoming Super

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Tag bison license is special for a number of reasons. Chief among these is that Bison Hunt Area 2, in northwestern Wyoming where hunting occurs, is considered a true wild bison herd and meets fair

chase requirements set forth by both the Boone and Crockett and Pope and Young record book clubs, one of only 18 bison herds for the former and one of 16 herds for the latter.

As soon as the reality of being a Super Tag winner sank in, Hauck knew he wanted to approach this hunt like he does most others. He would hunt with his bow. He was not going after just any bison, but wanted something special, a bison of true trophy proportions. He also planned to hunt by himself and in the wildest setting possible.

His first step in planning his hunt was a telephone call to the Jackson Regional Office of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. The office managers had a lot of information for him, including where bulls have been known to hang out in past years. He also made several trips to Jackson in late July and early August to watch the bulls rut on the National Elk Refuge in order to further familiarize himself with how to gauge a fully mature bull.

Hauck is a year-round archer. He decided not to make any changes

to his current archery setup. He shoots a Hoyt Alphamax 35 bow with a 72 lbs draw weight. His choice of arrows is a 450 grain Goldtip Kinetic Pro, tipped with a Vantage Point Archery 100 grain broadhead.

He left Riverton alone on the morning of August 26, heading to Jackson for his first hunt. His hunting buddies were on standby to be ready to meet him with horses to help with the pack out in the event of a successful hunt. Upon reaching Jackson, Hauck wound his way along a Forest Service road, eventually unloading his four-wheeler on a secondary road and traveling further west toward the Tetons before grabbing his bow and proceeding on foot.

He did not have big expectations for this first hunt, viewing it partly as a scouting trip to familiarize himself with the area. After hiking for about an hour, Hauck reached a small plateau just as the sun was beginning to set on the Tetons. He surveyed the surrounding country, and after spending a moment to just enjoy the view, turned around to start the walk back to his four-wheeler. As he walked, he noticed

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tracks that looked like beef cattle, but he knew there were no cattle in the area. The identity of the tracks was soon made clear when he caught the aroma of bison in the air. Shortly thereafter, he looked up, and with the naked eye could see a bull bison grazing next to a patch of aspen about 600 yards away. The bull had probably spent the day bedded in the aspens and rose to feed as the evening started to cool. As soon as Hauck got a better look at the bull through his binoculars, he knew it was big, but just how big he could not tell. The fact that it was by itself, and was not rutting, made him think it could be a very old bull that was kicked out of the herd.

From that moment the hunt was on. Luckily, abundant ground cover and trees allowed him to quickly close the distance. Hauck was in a race with darkness. At about 80 yards, he stepped on a twig. The bull lifted his head, looked around, and then went back to feeding, and Hauck continued his stalk. Finally, he reached a distance where he could shoot. His rangefinder read 51 yards. From past research into hunting bison with a bow, he knew his shot should be slightly lower and more forward than the traditional archery shot for big game. By now, the bull was quartering slightly away presenting a perfect opportunity. Hauck drew his bow, let the pins settle on target, held his breath, and calmly pulled the release.

The first shot was right on target and the arrow buried up to its fletching, only being stopped by the off-side shoulder. The bull immediately started showing signs of weakening; however, Dan wanted to put the bull down as quickly as possible. He had heard stories of wounded bulls traveling long distances, even after being well hit. There was also a safety issue. Mortally wounded bulls often retain the ability to charge until their last moments.

He quickly put a second arrow

in the bull as it started to make a circle. This shot was farther back than the first. He then carefully approached to within 15 yards of the bull for a third and final shot, all the while being sure to leave plenty of cover between him and the animal for protection. The hunt was over.

As soon as he was back to the truck and within cell phone range, he made telephone calls to his buddies. Since success had come so soon, it took a little convincing before they believed he was serious



about the events of the evening. But, like most true-blue hunting buddies, they were at the trailhead the next morning at 5:45, ready to help with the pack out and share in his adventure.

Approaching the bison was surreal. He knew the bison was big, but he was not sure exactly how big. This bull was far bigger than the bulls he had taken on his Crow Nation Reservation hunt. It took four to five hours to process the animal. After getting back to the truck, he drove to the Hatchet Resort at Moran and loaded up the bed of his

truck with ice to keep to quarters cool for the ride back to Riverton. Hauck had to wait 60 days before his bison was scored. The initial score was 115 2/8. Because this score potentially ranked within the top ten all time scores for bison taken with a bow, it had to then be measured by a scoring panel before receiving the prestigious designation from the Pope and Young Club. The final score came back 111 2/8, not enough to make the top ten, but still the second highest bison taking during the scoring period and number 26th all time.

Hauck is having a shoulder mount done for his bison. Memories from the hunt will last a lifetime. “Wyoming Super Tag hunting license raffles are a great opportunity for the people of Wyoming to raise money to support big game,” Hauck says. If you’d like the chance to participate in a hunt of a lifetime, consider putting your name in the hat for a Super Tag and hunt one of North America’s most iconic and exciting big game animals. ■

[Purchase Your Super Tag Tickets Here.](#)

