



Hunting Photos

TIPS AND TACTICS

By Mike Eastman

In the last issue we looked at three different setups for a photo. Now let's look at the placement of the hunter in relation to the trophy animal. Two factors are important; animal body size and antler or horn configuration. For a mule deer or whitetail there are three basic positions for the hunter:

- A. Sitting next to the buck's head while holding the head upright. This pose gives a pleasing frontal view of both subjects. This is really a great shot if the buck has a wide spread.
- B. Putting the hunter behind the buck's body with just the upper half of the hunter's trunk showing. With this position the trophy is the main focal point. This is the most common setup.
- C. Having the hunter straight behind the buck's body length. Because the animal's rack is closer to the lens it looks bigger in relation to the hunter. In most cases, I find this the least desirable setup, with the exception of photographing a moose. Experiment while doing variations to these three setups.

Every species has a particular setup that works better. A moose and hunter photo is more appealing from a frontal view. Position the person well in back by the hindquarters. With elk try sitting behind the body about the front shoulder letting the antlers extend to the side. Having a setup where the hunter stands and pushes the antlers up into the air is not as appealing to me. The best way to study setups is to browse through back issues of the Eastmans' Hunting Journal.

Background consideration is a key factor to photo quality. The cardinal rule is to never place the hunter right behind the animal's headgear. Get some blue sky in the back ground behind the antlers. So many good photos could have been great with just an adjustment of background. In the next issue I will touch more on background and natural lighting.

I'm giving you some helpful information here, but the real key is taking the time in the field to compose a photo memory. It will be handed down from generation to generation. You can use your trophy photo to motivate the next generation to enjoy the outdoors and hunting.

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