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Senior Project

Memorable Experience

Hunting

It was on a Saturday morning, a cold morning in which I was excited to get harvest my first deer. I was determined to get my first deer as I was every weekend that I went hunting although the success rate of getting a buck says otherwise. My uncle had already gotten his first deer on the opening week of rifle season and that was a confidence booster. That morning I heard many gunshots screech and echo through the wind and at times I felt a little downcast because I didn’t see anything that whole morning. I still had confidence that I would harvest my first buck and I wasn’t going to let anything get in that way of that confidence that I had.

My uncle and I had hiked the whole day and we were exhausted so we decided to hunt in our car by driving along the roads. We went off the pavement to get to a place called Click’s Creek which was near the pack station where people would pack their horses and travel horseback into the golden trout wilderness. While we were traveling down that dirt road near the pack station the car suddenly came to a stop and my uncle whispered to me saying to get my rifle ready. As soon as I heard those words I chambered a round into my rifle and slowly got out of the car without making a sound. I remember seeing a glimpse of the buck and the antlers that he had and I knew that he was a legal buck to shoot. When I got out of the car I remember getting off the road and going to the tree line where I thought he was. I had seen no trace of him and I was worried that I lost him.

After waiting quietly and scanning through the bushes, I saw something that looked like old branches but they weren’t the kind of branches that pine trees were supposed to have. That stuck out and I noticed that those “branches” that I saw were not branches; instead, they were the buck’s antlers as his body was hiding behind the bush. He didn’t see me and I knew I was going to have to make a decision whether or take or shot or not. His body was behind the bush in which I was able to determine where his vitals were due to how his neck and antlers were positioned. He was still spooked and he was already thinking about taking off and up the ridge due to his body movement. I knew if he was going to take off up the ridge then I wouldn’t see him again. I took off the safety and looked through the lens of my scope and steadied it near his body were his lungs and heart was located in order that I could make a clean and ethical shot. I was still deciding whether to take the shot or not as I looked through the lens. I let the “buck fever” get to me as I was never placed in this scenario before. I wasn’t used to it. I jerked the trigger out of being nervous and heard the loud boom that the gun made which didn’t affect my ears due to the adrenaline that I had. I quickly chambered another round just in case I missed him, which I did. The explosion of the rifle scared him and he jumped out of my sight and I wasn’t able to get another shot on him. I missed him.

My eyes began to water in anger that I missed him. I knew that I placed my crosshairs on his vital organs but I remembered that I tried to shoot him through a bush so the branches from the bush probably messed up the shot. I wasn’t going to take the shot until I noticed that he was going to run away and before he did that I took the shot. My uncle came to where I was and I took the shot without him being there. He heard the shot and when he got back to me he asked if I hit him and I told him I missed. I looked behind the bush where he once was for a blood trail that he might have left behind if I had hit him but there was no sign of blood. I missed him and my disappointment boiled within me.

Although I missed the deer, I would still consider this as a memorable experience because I was placed in a scenario that I wasn’t used to. This was experience that I will use in future situations like this because I learned how to deal with the adrenaline that was abundant in me that day. That day in which I shot the deer and missed has taught me patience. I know that this probably won’t be the last deer that I miss but I learned from this experience and hopefully it won’t happen the next time.