

Check back next month for  
a full story from this  
caribou hunt in Quebec.  
QBH3

Tracks™

October 2007

## Definition of Success (Report by Larry Boll (OC - WI))

If you define success on a big game hunt as killing an animal, then this trip failed. If you define it as an overall experience with quality accommodations, guides, and the excitement of multiple stalks, then our recent archery elk hunt in the mountains of Central Oregon was an unqualified success. We hunted on a private ranch deep in the heart of the Umatilla National Forest at a comfortable elevation of about 4,500 feet above sea level. Due to the outfitter's quality management, elk were everywhere on the 20,000 acres that our group of six had to ourselves.

The outfitter was waiting at the Bend airport when my brother and I arrived. We loaded the trucks and took a scenic three hour drive to camp. It is always nice when you get picked up and delivered to your hunt location. The tent camp was very well appointed and the service impeccable. One of the guys in our tent snored so they immediately put up another wall tent just to accommodate him. Quality of sleep is very important when you are out hunting and hiking all day. They had 2 cooks in camp and we ate like kings with hot breakfast, great backpack lunches and full dinner every night. A full shower with plenty of hot water was also a welcome amenity.



We were out on the hunt well before daylight the next day and as the sun hit the horizon, our guide already had us on a herd of over 100 elk. Even though it was only the end of August, a number of bulls were quite vocal. This was an archery hunt, so we expected it to be a challenge to get in bow range this time of year, but before we knew it, they were right on us with 100 pair of eyes looking everywhere. We were "busted" before we had a chance to get set up, but what a great start to a great hunt. Those elk were everywhere and sounded like a convoy of gravel trucks heading out. We got "busted" many times in the next week, but each time it was the result of a patient stalk, crawl and wait, call, crawl and wait with hearts beating a mile a minute. We just never seemed to have the right luck with wind change or something to blow our stalk. Because we observed the "don't chase them all over the place" ethics, most of the elk on this ranch didn't move far and we knew we would get into them again as opposed to the very shy animals found on public land.

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For instance, if our guide didn't feel we could make a full deliberate stalk before it got too dark, we would put the herd "to bed" and they would be there in the morning because of the low hunting pressure. As we traversed the beautiful Oregon terrain amongst the ponderosa pine and junipers with the ever present grassy valleys, it was sometimes hard



not to just stop and take it all in and get the cameras out. I view Oregon as a well kept secret in the elk hunting world. There are quality hunts out there on large tracts of private land with reasonably priced over the counter licenses.

Was this a successful hunt? To my brother and I, very much so. We are making arrangements to go next year. I saw at least 10 good bulls that I could have shot with a rifle, but we are going archery again because we love to hunt.

If you are interested in booking a hunt with this outfitter contact your local Outdoor Connection agent. **ORH1**

## Lac Seul Fishing Paradise (Report by Chris Lemke (OC-MN))

When given the opportunity to fish the famed Lac Seul in Ontario, I jumped at the opportunity. I have heard tales of this body of water and the walleye that it produces since I was a very young man. Mike Wensink (OC - WI) and I arrived at our lodge near Ear Falls, Ontario on September 7 to a very clean and well maintained fishing camp. After receiving a well marked fishing map of our area, we wasted no time in getting our lines wet. Walleye of several year classes were soon in our boat along with a respectable 32 inch northern. Sauger, perch and northern were also plentiful during our visit.



What really impressed me with Lac Seul was what happened to my fish finder whenever I slowed down. The graph just lit up with balls of bait fish surrounded with large arcs. It did not take long to boat a 27 inch walleye. There are plenty of smaller fish to

enjoy during daily shore line lunches. After three days of fishing, I was convinced that I could spend an entire summer here without running out of new places to fish. This is the best drive-to fishing for walleye that I have ever experienced.



Lac Seul is the second largest enclosed body of water in Ontario and is one of the Ontario's finest fishing opportunities. This expansive, beautiful body of water covers over 400,000 acres, with thousands of miles of shoreline. Possibly best of all, this is a drive-to destination. Bring your own boat, or rent one of the lodges excellent fishing boats.

After viewing a 38 and 42 inch northern pike at the cleaning house, (the nicest cleaning house I have ever seen) I decided that the next time I visit Lac Seul, I plan on spending some time targeting the large pike and musky.

Are you an independent type of angler who enjoys fishing walleye on your own with enormous amount of water to explore? If so, call your Outdoor Connection agent and soon all your dreams will come true. **ONF2**

## Muskie Hunting on the Ottawa River (Report by Doris Maloney (OC-IA))

Who do the best muskie guides in the world fish with? Marc Thorpe, that's who. Why? Because in the minds of many, Marc is the best of the best when it comes to landing those muskie of a lifetime, those big ladies over 50". And he fishes one of the top, if not THE top muskie waters in the world, the Ottawa River in Quebec.



I along with good friend Trent, his brother Trevor and their father Joel, and fellow travelers Larry, Sarah and Ray and their two teenage sons, were only in the Ottawa River neighborhood for an afternoon, but we seized the opportunity to fish with Marc and his crew.

Larry and I, and Sarah and her family enjoyed the afternoon, in the presence of guides John and Samuel, masters at their craft patiently and willingly teaching us the finer points of muskie fishing. They shared with us what makes their Ottawa River so spectacular for muskie and told stories of muskies landed and muskies missed. The highlight in our boat came within

30 minutes of quitting, when Larry had a strike! We were immediately up on our feet scrambling about. Larry had a big one all right, was hooked on bottom, and it got our hearts pounding nonetheless.

Boat of the day honors goes to Trent, Trevor and Joel, fishing with Marc. Those boys have all been fishing forever, mostly the ponds and lakes of northern Iowa and Minnesota. Avid freshwater fishermen, they have landed their share of bass, walleye, pike and panfish. Along the way they've seen a muskie or two, but never the monsters, and have never deliberately fished for muskie. That was all about to change.

The 19 foot Princecraft with her 150 hp Mercury outboard housed the 4 guys well. Four poles in the water - trolling was the presentation of choice for the short afternoon of fishing. Today, bright colored crankbaits were trolled at depths of 8 to 20 feet. The fish finder flashed the depths, the bottom structure and groups of 13-14" bait fish. Every once in a while, a "mobylioth" icon (BIG fish) flashed on the screen. The ladies were there! If you have ever wondered why muskie are ladies, we learned it is because the really big fish landed are always females, and they are superbreeding females - hence, the importance of catch-n-release and careful handling of the fish. It is the female fish that live into their 30s. Male fish are around, but tend not to live as long so typically are not the big fish landed. We also learned where the muskie's "attitude" comes from. Apparently, by the time a muskie reaches 7 or 8 years old they have come to realize they have no predators, that THEY ARE the BIG FISH. So, they get cocky, aggressive and arrogant - becoming the water's fearless predator and a true adversary for anglers.

Suddenly, less than 30 minutes from the dock, there was a Click ... Zing! FISH-ON! Joel's been waiting the longest for his shot at a monster muskie, so first strike is his. She fights hard for 5 or 10 minutes, taking more line than she gives, winning the battle between angler and fish. Slowly the tide turns, she begins to tire and Joel responds by reeling, reeling, and more reeling. As Joel brings her close to the boat, the flick of the tail and boil of the water says this is a big fish. Yup, all 46" of her, to which Joel exclaimed "This guy's for real! Nice Fish Dad!!" It is funny how one fish can change a day, turning happy fishermen into exuberant muskie hunters. One muskie in the boat is a great day, do we dare hope for two? Sure, why not, we still have 3 hours and 30 minutes to fish. Suddenly, Click ... can it be? Zing! YUP, FISH-ON! After a brief "brotherly discussion" Trent takes the reel. She is taking out more line. She isn't tiring. Finally, Trent's turn to reel and reel and reel. Under the boat she goes, running with more line. And she rolls to the surface. BIG FISH! Yup, Trent reeled in his muskie of a lifetime, 1 inch "taller" than his young son - a 52" beauty!!

Most other muskie guides on the Ottawa River land one or two 50+" muskie by this time of year. Trent was muskie hunter #31 of the season to bring in a 50+" muskie under Marc's expert guidance. If you are looking for 3+ day muskie hunting adventure with the best of the best on the top muskie water in the world, look no further than Marc Thorpe. **QBF3**



## OC's Monthly Recipe

### Pheasant with Cream Sauce

- ~ 1 pheasant cut into serving pieces
- ~ 1 cup flour
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ 1/2 tsp pepper
- ~ 1 tsp paprika
- ~ 1/2 tsp garlic salt
- ~ oil
- ~ 1/4 cup chopped onion
- ~ 2 cans (4 oz) mushrooms, drained
- ~ 1/2 cup heavy cream



Mix the flour, salt, pepper, paprika and garlic salt together. Roll the pheasant pieces in the flour and let set for 5 minutes. In a skillet, heat about 1/2 inch of oil. Add the pheasant and brown on both sides, approx. 15 minutes. Remove the pheasant and place in a large stove top casserole dish. In a sauce pan, saute the onion and mushrooms in a little oil for 5-8 minutes. Pour the mushroom mixture over the pheasant and add the cream. Cover and cook over medium low heat for 15 minutes turning the pheasant over a couple of times. Uncover and cook another 15 minutes turning the pheasant over. Check to see when the pheasant is fork tender. Remove the pheasant, onion and mushrooms to a warm platter. Use the pan drippings to make gravy.

# Tracks™

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