

Waiting for the perfect time to hunt prized buck



LARRY
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Huntin'
For Fun

Not many 18-year-old archers would pass up shot opportunities on 43 bucks on the way to their first bow-kill, but Lyle Saindon from Pulaski was determined to make his first archery buck a wall-hanger.

Saindon had success at a young age hunting with a gun. By age 14 he had shot 125- and 140-class bucks.

At 15, Saindon took up bow hunting. His dad, Tim Saindon, had shot a few record-book bears with a bow, so it was only natural that Lyle Saindon would follow the family tradition.

Most beginner archers are happy to tag any deer, but Saindon had his sights set higher.

"I knew that there were bigger deer out there (in Oconto County)," he said. "I figured I would wait for a big one. Let 'em go, let 'em grow."

Over the course of his first two archery seasons, Saindon had numerous bucks in bow range. There was temptation to take one, but he stayed the course and waited for a trophy.

"It was a little hard at first passing on them," Saindon said. "It got easier every year because bigger bucks were showing up on trail cameras. My dad kind of got mad at me because a few that I passed were pretty borderline (trophy) bucks."

For several years, Saindon and his dad talked about putting in food plots to enhance the habitat on their land.

This spring they met Doug Kostreva, owner of HB Seed Co. in Pound, who helped them come up with a planting plan.

As soon as the snow melted, they worked up the plots, fertilized and planted seed. They also added Booner Max Mineral, a granular mineral powder, to attract more deer and to give the bucks nutrients to increase antler growth.

Daylight deer activity increased. On June 6, they got their first trail camera picture of a monster buck they named "Junkyard" because it had extra sticker points off the antler base.

Saindon immediately decided it would be Junkyard or bust for the 2015 archery season.

The first weekend of the archery season was warm and Saindon only saw a couple of does and a small buck. The second weekend was cooler, and his sister, Makayla, shot a



Submitted photos
ABOVE: Lyle Saindon poses after shooting this 15-point buck Oct. 10 in Oconto County. **BELOW:** The completed mount of the buck.

big fork horn with a crossbow.

"It was an amazing moment to see her so happy," he said. "I knew it was only a matter of time before I got my chance."

Hunting was slow until the second week of October when a frost killed some of the vegetation and deer started hitting the food plots. A trail camera on their "landing field" food plot showed several nice bucks. Saindon sat in a tree stand there the afternoon of Oct. 10.

"It was really slow until I heard something walking," Saindon said. "I looked back and saw a huge-bodied deer. It was around 5:30 p.m."

The deer stood in place for 20 agonizing minutes. The brush was so thick that Saindon could not tell if it was a buck or a doe.

The deer finally moved but it took another 10 minutes to make its way into the food plot. That's when he realized it was Junkyard.

Meanwhile, a little fork buck entered the plot and stood in one of Saindon's shooting lanes. Junkyard was irritated by the little buck, and all it took was two steps forward for the big buck to scare off the little guy.

That put Junkyard right in Saindon's wheelhouse, and he put an arrow in Junkyard's boiler room.

After calming down, he sent a text to his dad. They waited a few hours and quickly found Junkyard a short distance from the food plot.

The big buck had 15 points that



could be scored with an inside antler spread of 20 inches. It green scored 178-2/8 as a non-typical.

"It was kind of surreal finally laying your hands on a buck like that," Saindon said. "After three years it just makes everything worth it."

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