

Achieving Clean Kills

Article Courtesy Mark Romanack

It's the same program every fall. Early in the bow season I take an adult doe to put fresh meat on the table. Like thousands of other bow hunters I'm anxious to test my hunting skills, draw blood, and poise myself for the buck hunting that will dominate the rest of the season.

Freezer deer came my way early last fall. A fat doe, probably in her third season, stepped out of a dense stand of tag alders and provided me an opportunity too good to turn down. The range was short, the shot angle was perfect, and there was plenty of daylight left to trail a wounded animal.

With all the variables in my favor, I decided to take the doe. I drew and anchored, concentrating on the crease where the front shoulder joins the first rib. I relaxed my bow hand and tightened an index finger around the release trigger. When the pin found its mark, one final nudge of the release trigger is all it took to send an ACC shaft speeding towards the target.

I knew instantly the shot was good, but my point of focus remained on the exact spot where I aimed. The arrow impacted and passed clean through the deer. Blood was clearly visible behind the front shoulder as the animal bolted for cover.

Confident in my shot, I gathered up my gear and walked directly to the spot the animal was standing. The proof of a lung shot lay on the ground before me. My arrow was completely coated in bright red. In the tall grass blood was splattered in a path that looked as if someone colored the ground with a can of red spray paint.

I immediately started following up the trail. There's no need to be patient and wait after a hit like this. An animal shot through both lungs is running dead. Usually they bound out of sight, then as if zapped by a lightning bolt, the animal comes to a skidding halt. It's all over in seconds.

I followed the blood spray directly to the deer like a beagle sniffing out a rabbit track. The trailing job was textbook