

RED STAG FOR TWO

in Argentina

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #184 —



Larry with an average red stag, for that area.

Brenda and I had been to Argentina several times with the family, to shoot doves; but then the idea of a two-mission trip came up; red stag on the front end and doves on the back end. We packed our rifles and shotguns and away we went. This is the story of the front end of the trip — the red stag mission. Our kids were both off to college, so we took one of our Employees, Tim Betz — from the Computer Department, to hunt with us.

Of course, red stag don't live in Buenos Aires, which is the typical arrival point; from there, we took another flight on south to the foothills of the Andes Mountains, near Bariloche. A reasonably short drive into the mountains brought us to an isolated cabin, without electricity. We were three hunters, three guides, and a cook; interestingly, about the only English

spoken was between the "north" Americans. In the rural parts of Argentina, the folks don't speak much English.

A guide with whom you don't share a language

makes for a unique hunting experience; we rode around in the mountains, on horseback, looking and listening for red stag. There wasn't any way to discuss trophy quality; it was pretty much up to me to decide on a shooter — then, a motion to my guide with my finger that I was going to pull the trigger. From horseback, we heard one "roar" a few hundred yards out. Tying up the horses, the rest of the way was sneaking along on foot. It was an easy, kneeling shot at about 140 yards.

Brenda was recovering from mononucleosis, diagnosed a few weeks before. She wasn't feeling well, but wouldn't hear of skipping this long scheduled trip. For the rest of the hunt, I tagged along; her guide spoke a bit of English.

We also located her stag by his roar and made a careful approach. Brenda was able to take the shot at 85 yards. From my perspective, behind Brenda, I could see a small stick half way between her muzzle and the stag. When she pulled the trigger, I saw the stick break off — she had hit it; the bullet deflected and she missed the stag. The guide and I both encouraged her to shoot again, which she did and the stag fell. Afterward I explained why she had missed and showed her the stick. Thankfully her second shot found its mark!

"...a guide with whom you don't share a language;"



Brenda with her red stag, and a nice pose.

USA
Midway

Larry Potterfield

Andes Mountains
Bariloche, Rio Negro Province
Argentina
2 April 1996



The original cabin (left) was made of logs; modern additions are on the right. I'm sitting on the left and Tim Betz, an Employee we brought along to hunt, is on the right.