

Hartog's Alberta Moose

by Frank Hartog



It was May 1, 2002. I was sitting at my kitchen table opening my mail. The *Huntin' Fool* magazine caught my eye and I started dreaming about a fall moose hunt. It had been two years since my last moose hunt and my meat supply was running low. I started paging through *The Huntin' Fool* when my attention was drawn to a hunt advertised in northern Alberta, Canada. I called Carter's Hunter Services and spoke with Jason, who informed me that they had received good reports concerning a guide from the Edmonton area named Michael Terry and that he highly recommended him. I called Michael and was impressed with his experience and history, so I contacted

his references and called back and confirmed my hunt for late September.

September finally arrived, and I left my home near St George, Utah, and drove to Edmonton arriving on September 19. I spent the night at Michael's home. The next morning we drove to Fort McMurray and spent that night in a first class motel. From there we loaded our gear into a Cessna 210 at the Fort McMurray Air Service and, after flying through rain and snow for about an hour, landed in beautiful surroundings of a remote northern Alberta lake. The lodge owners, Jim, along with his wife Gen, had built a nice layout of four cabins, a boat dock, and a fleet of

sturdy aluminum outboard boats, which they rent mainly in the summer to sightseers and fishermen.

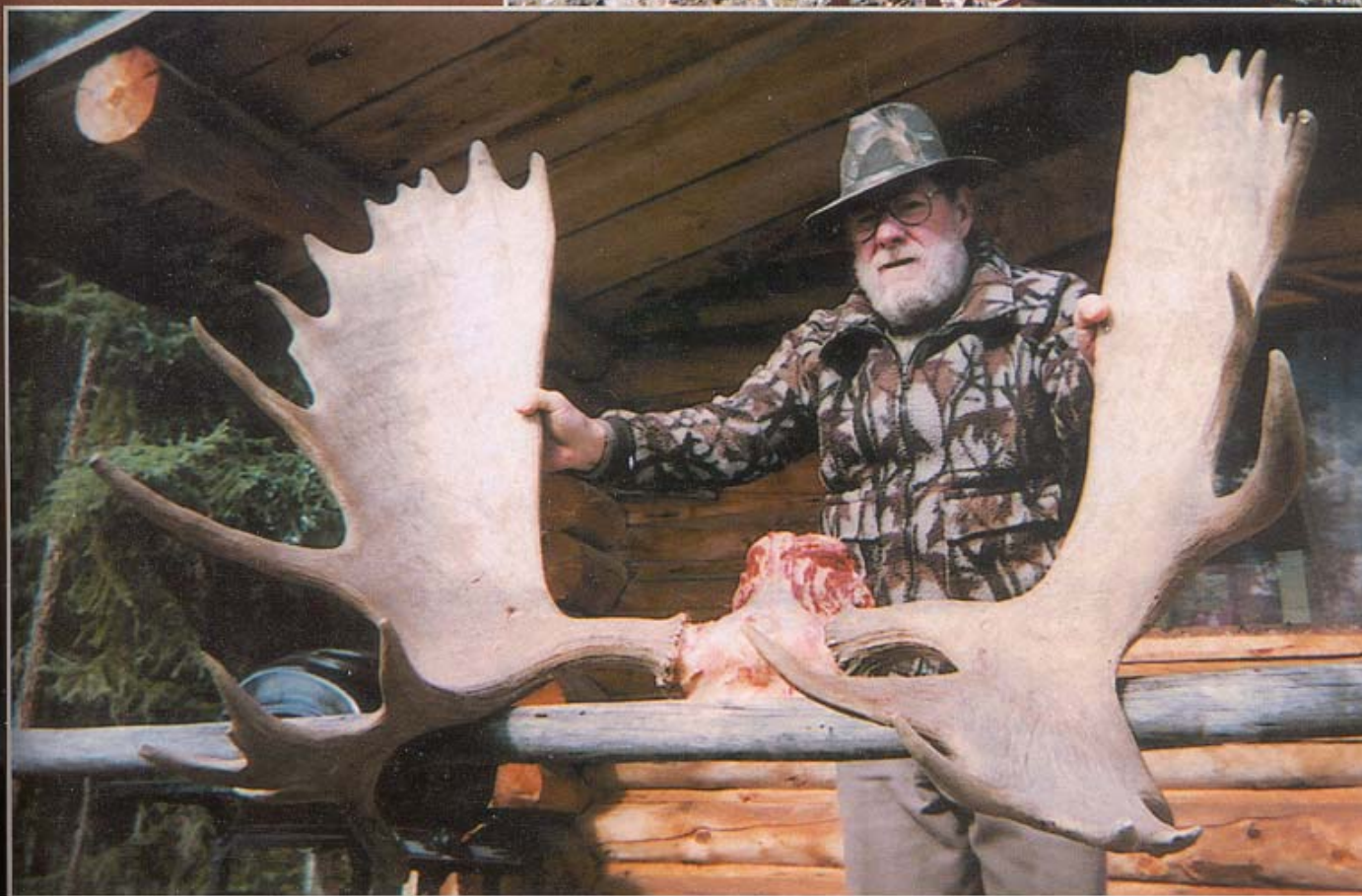
Two hours later we were in a boat, cruising the lake looking for moose. We were out only 30 or 40 minutes when I glassed a large moose on the shoreline approximately three quarters of a mile ahead. Before we could close the distance, he disappeared into the trees. Suddenly, as we rounded a point of land, we saw him again. This time he was about 200 yards away, swimming across a little bay we had just entered. As Michael turned off the motor, the moose spotted us. He was a large animal. His rack was massive, wide and

tall, with many very long points.

Needless to say, I was excited! Within two hours of landing, I was already facing a "keeper" bull! He was swimming, his large body was under water, and the boat was rocking. I also remember my guide's admonishment, "Don't shoot from the boat unless we are anchored and the motor is up." Anyway, in Alberta you have to wait six hours after disembarking from an aircraft before hunting so this was only a scouting trip. We would be back tomorrow.

For the next two mornings and evenings, we returned to this area and called until dark with no results.

On the fourth afternoon we tried a new area and went ashore on a small island which was located only about 100 yards





off the main shoreline on the opposite side of the lake. Michael began calling. Just before sunset I spotted a very large moose with a small rack on the shoreline of a neighboring island about 350 yards farther out. He was walking the beach, grunting and thrashing the willows trying to decide whether he should swim over to the island we were on or not. We watched him for a while until we observed two cows and a calf with him. Since we were looking for bigger game, and darkness was approaching we returned to camp.

Every day since our arrival the weather had been cold, windy, rainy and snowy, but day five broke sunny and clear. We toured the lake glassing and calling with no results until evening. We then returned to the small island where we had called the previous night. As soon as Michael began calling the same bull, with the small rack that we had seen the night before, stepped out and again started his display. After tormenting him awhile with Michael's cow calling,

and since we didn't want this moose, we decided to try another location. As we walked around a small point, we could hear another bull grunting in the poplars and alders on the main shoreline only 100 yards away. I knelt in the tall grass and waited to see what would happen. Suddenly the willows parted and a dark head with two very large white horn paddles appeared. I knew this was going to be my bull. He walked down to the water, took a long drink, entered the water and started to swim towards me, grunting all the while. Finally, his feet again touched the bottom and he walked onto the shore and stopped about 20 yards away. He was obviously trying to determine just what was kneeling in the grass directly in front of him.

While sighting through my scope, I was waiting for him turn and offer a good heart/lung/chest shot. I was shooting my 340 Weatherby magnum loaded with 250 grain round point bullets, so I knew I had enough fire power to

harvest him even with a frontal shot if that proved necessary, but I continued to wait for him to turn broadside. Suddenly he wheeled to escape and I pulled the trigger. He fell dead in his tracks and never moved again.

Mike and I were both excited, and after much hooting, hollering and hand slapping, we cautiously approached the beast. It was not until then, when I got my first closeup glimpse of those monster horns, that I realized what a truly magnificent animal he was. The horns measured 48 1/2" wide. The main paddles measured 35" x 12", with 27 points including two drop tines. The main beams are 8" in diameter. I believe he may make the book.

I had a great hunt. Michael Terry knows his hunting area and animals very well. In addition to hunting, we also took time to catch some great Northern Pike. The accommodations were very good, and Michael and his wife Debra are great hosts.