



Phil Lozano, left, and author show off the tusker that was taken during an unprovoked charge in the bush.

with hand-loaded Nosler Partition 200-grain bullets fired from the .300 Weatherby barrel. Other larger animals such as cape buffalo would be taken with the .375 H & H with 300-grain Remington Swift A-Frame or Barnes solids.

Our first attempts to bait for leopard were unsuccessful. Bait No. 1 near where we found both leopard and lion tracks would have made a great video I'm sure. As we returned the morning after hanging our bait to see if the leopard had eaten, we found visible evidence that it had indeed come to the bait and while on the limb was trapped by a lion that clawed the tree, desperately trying to reach the leopard and the bait. The lion could not get up the tree, and the leopard couldn't get down. The claw marks on the tree and the ground tracks told the story. If only I had been in the blind that night with a camera! Apparently the leopard managed to escape with its life, and neither the leopard nor the lion ever returned to the bait.

Three hours' drive from our camp was a huge karango (a mostly dry riverbed with high banks and dense jungle foliage). All sorts of animals were located there, including leopard, but most prevalent were elephants. They charged through the brush above us, trumpeting and warning us not to enter their domain. They crossed the karango frequently and we were cautious, although it was difficult not to intercept them in the riverbed. I must say that these are not animals to be trifled with. They have bad tempers, are the undisputed kings of their domain and will not tolerate humans for one minute encroaching in their presence. These are not the peanut-eating, gentle creatures observed at the circus or

in the zoo. These animals will sort you out with their keen sense of smell and hearing and kill you in a heartbeat. They cannot be outrun nor hidden from, and except for their very poor eyesight, you couldn't get within the distance of a football field from them without being detected.

The karango provided opportunities to move in for up-close viewing of these magnificent animals. As the dry riverbed meandered through the jungle toward a towering mountain with ore deposit that shone like gold in the sunlight, we dodged huge craters dug by the tembo's tusks and trunks to produce fresh water sources. The viewing of the tembos was rewarding and provided a valuable education in evaluating the tusks. To a novice elephant hunter this



Author used his Blaser rifle for all hunting, including for this nice Cape buffalo. Shown, from left, are Tom Norris, Phil Lozano, Peter, the author, Today and Hasaan.

is not an easy task. Many elephants were close to meeting criteria, but short by a few inches. One big-tusked specimen was spotted walking from the river wash into the jungle and moving at a normal pace soon outdistanced us as we tried to track him. Each viewing was more and more distant until it finally disappeared into the jungle somewhere in the vicinity of the mysterious, towering, golden mountain.

On the fifth day of my safari we took a very nice mature east African kudu with two curls and we continued to hang leopard bait. Day number six we encountered a herd of buffalo. The lead bull was an old-timer with a big boss, deep hooks and was easily identifiable by white scar tissue across his withers, which was the result of what must have

been an horrific encounter with a lion. It is amazing that he survived, considering the size of the wound.

As we positioned ourselves with favorable wind in front of the herd, eventually it moved in on us. We had bulls and cows in front of us and to our left and right. One cow stopped dead-on and locked a stare on us at 10 yards. From my peripheral vision I saw my bull moving at 90 degrees to my left. A cow and brush obstructed a shot. I knew if the cow that was testing us suddenly bolted we

Author, at left, and Tom Norris show some of the horns and skins taken during the Hatari Safari.

