

Guillotined

For me, it all started one late March evening when John Mitchell, president of *Adaptive Sportsman, Inc.*, called to let me know there was an Adaptive Sportsman member that needed somebody to turkey hunt with this spring, during the 5th period in Zone 29. I excitedly wrote down his information and called him immediately. "Hello, is Walter home," I asked. "Yes, this is Walter" was the reply. I introduced myself and a lengthy conversation ensued. A great friendship was underway.

Walter and I made plans to scout several areas in early April. We spent two fun-filled action packed weekends scouting turkeys (and seeing them), making notes of deer sign (for future use), and sighting in Walter's new crossbow he got for his birthday. I would also like to thank Wilma, Walter's wife, for all the excellent meals and great hospitality she provided whenever I was there.

Walter was going to be a "**Maverick**" upon my advice, and use the new *Gobbler Guillotine* broadheads. These heads take a bit of time to assemble and sight in, but once done, they are absolutely deadly on a gobbler's head and neck. I had field tested these heads for Matt Fettere of *ArrowDynamicSolutions* last year and was very impressed at their knock down power. Walter contacted Matt, who rush delivered the heads for the hunt. After watching Walter nail a dime size bullseye at 20 yards several times with the *Gobbler Guillotine*, I knew any gobbler coming into range was going for a ride home in Walter's truck.

For Walter, Walter Joost that is, the quest to harvest a wild turkey started last spring at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant Spring Turkey Hunt. Walter had a great time and a very nice hunt, but like so many other turkey bowhunts I have seen, his hunt ended with a bird that gets hit and can't be recovered. Thus, the decision to use the *Gobbler Guillotine* and cut the head off!

The hunt is finally here. Walter hunts all day Wednesday and Thursday in the Honey Creek area, seeing just hens. No Toms and no gobbling.

Friday the 13th (May 13th that is), Walter gets out of bed once again and heads for the woods in the Honey Creek area. Just like the other mornings he is in his *Ameristep Doghouse TSC Blind* by 4:40 a.m. set and ready. Its different today though! Thunder and lightning surround him and as it starts raining about 5:00 a.m., Walter thinks "I'm glad I'm in a blind" (nice Christmas present Walter). As luck would have it, the storm turned out to be short, and by 5:30 a.m. the rain had stopped.

Then, the first gobble heard all season erupted from the pines down below. The gobbling continued hot for the next fifteen minutes, then turned cold. Another long fifteen minutes passed without any action. Suddenly, about 40 yards away, a couple of hens walked out from the pines with two nice gobblers in tow. Walter got ready for a shot, but "no cigar Charlie"! The hens led the gobblers out of site into a nearby field. Walter felt somewhat disgusted thinking "There goes my chance".

But wait! Within minutes the hens reappeared, strolling back into bow range. Still following the hens, keeping 40 yards away from them were the Strutting Brother Toms. The hens walked past the blind feeding about 15 yards away. Walter hoped the Brother Toms would follow the hen's lead. But the boys stayed 40 yards away, continuously strutting. After several minutes, the toms made their way to within 20 yards of the blind but did not present a shot. If they would just get into the shooting window, Walter could get a shot. When the gobblers finally broke strut and headed through the shooting window, they walked by so quickly, our boy Walter was unable to get a shot. In desperation, Walter made a "putt" with his mouth. This stopped the gobblers instantly at about 13 yards from the blind. Walter's shot angle out the blind window was so severe, he had to act like a gymnast to get a shot off. He leaned over as far as he could, trying to keep his balance and not roll the whole blind over. As he leaned to the rolling point, he aimed his *Ten Point Elite QX4* crossbow topped with a red dot site. With the gobbler's neck stretched up and looking away, Walter placed the red dot on the turkey's neck. Just as Walter shot the tom pulled his head down, causing the *Beman Carbon Thunderbolt* tipped with the 100 grain 2"x 2" *Gobbler Guillotine* to hit high. The *Gobbler Guillotine* cut the bottom beak completely off and sliced his top beak half off and cut through his head behind the eyes blinding the gobbler.

The gobbler ran about 10 yards, then started walking small circles. At about 23 yards from the blind he stopped. The turkey appeared hurt, but Walter was unsure if he hit him. Not knowing the extent of the gobbler's injuries (if any), Walter cranked back his crossbow and knocked another bolt, wondering if he should shoot or not. He watched the gobbler for five full minutes before deciding to shoot again. The gobbler never moved. Its mannerisms indicated to Walter the tom had probably been seriously wounded. Walter was waiting for the gobbler to die, but got worried it was going to walk or fly away. Walter told himself, "Shoot him again. This guy could walk away on you and you'll never find him. Then you won't have nothing"!

He took aim again at the neck and shot. The gobbler took a nosedive as the *Gobbler Guillotine* cut his head off! Walter excitedly walked over to claim his first turkey. What a trophy it was! A 5th period bird in one of the hardest areas of the state to kill a gobbler (Zone 29). It weighed 21.5 #s, had 1" spurs, and was double bearded (10.25" and 6") for a NWTF score of 74 points eclipsing the 70 point minimum to qualify as a record book gobbler.

Congratulations Walter on your success! Just remember, it will take a long time to beat that one's score!

Story written by Mark Seeley.