



Jim C. Lake (CO) did a great job writing about his November 2012 Hume argali hunt in Kyrgyzstan. We regret not having room for the whole piece, but we want to start here with his explanation of how the hunt came about:

*My hunt began (like so many others) at the 2012 GSCO convention. After learning my father would be unable to go on a long-awaited Hume argali/mid-Asian ibex hunt with **ProfiHunt** due to a scheduling conflict, he had asked if I would be interested in taking his place. I discussed the details with my wife, and as always received her unwavering support to be gone the three weeks necessary to complete this trip, as well as the unplanned financial investment.*

*The next day we met with the ProfiHunt crew: **Vladimir Koscheev, Dennis Shadow and Jerry Bush** (CO). Jerry had booked his trip at the same time as my father, and we would be traveling and hunting during the same time period. After a discussion about hunt details and the contract signed, I was heading to Kyrgyzstan in November.*

We now pick up Jim's story several days into his hunt:

After riding for about 30 minutes, I looked up near the top of a ridge directly in front of us to see a sheep walking up. We immediately turned the horses down into a small drainage to be out of sight. After hobbling the horses we began the first of three stalks to try to close the distance to 500 yards or less. After a bit of snow drawing, I had explained through hand signals and snow drawings I would like to shoot 350 yards or less, but would shoot to 500 yards if there

was no wind. We eased over the top and began glassing the band of sheep until we realized this was the group we were looking for, and there he was!

We hit him with the Leica range finder: 772 yards... no good. We eased back down and made another approach that ended at 669 yards from the ram. We slipped back down the hill and looked at all other possibilities to get us closer to allow a shot opportunity, including circling and looking at the backside of the ridge they were on that broke into a series of huge flat, grassy benches. I pointed at the last finger we had not tried and Bai-Shen shrugged his shoulders and up we went. The knee to thigh-deep crusted snow, along with the altitude, made this climb quite sporty at times. We eased over the top and I'm sure there were satellites in space that could see our grins when the rangefinder said 523 yards. We lay there for several minutes, arranging my pack and securing a rock solid rest. After my breathing was under control, and I had studied the angle of the big ram where he was bedded for several minutes longer, I told Bai-Shen I was ready to shoot.

I took a breath, let half of it go, and began to take the slack out of the trigger. BOOM! The Brown Precision .300 Win Mag went off. Feeling good about the shot, I began quickly scanning the running sheep. I counted them as they came out of the fold in the hillside: nine went in, eight came out. About that time, Bai-Shen tackled me, shouting "Marco Polo" over and over.

After pictures and caping the sheep and taking care of the meat, we started the 4 to 5-hour ride out to the road and the permanent camp where Vladimir and Marco were waiting for us. The celebration lasted for several hours that night, with many toasts and friendships bonded with words that had been missing over the three days prior. I feel I received the greatest compliment I have ever received from Bai-Shen that evening, when he asked Vladimir to tell me that he also enjoyed the hunt and that I had hunted like a local. The language barrier was easily overcome on this hunt, as it had been on many others, by the snow drawings, pictures in the dirt, and most of all the like-mindedness of hunters enjoying the hunt.

The mid-Asian ibex portion of the hunt was unsuccessful, which means I get to go back to Kyrgyzstan and hunt with some great folks again! I am planning on returning to hunt ibex with ProfiHunt in September 2013... when it's not quite so cold!