



Jim Shockey (BC) took a whirlwind trip into eastern Russia during August 2015 and was able to take three different species of snow sheep and a total of five rams (two each for the Yakutia and Kolyma and one Okhotsk). The Kolyma ram actually gave Jim his Ovis World Slam Super 30. As usual, Jim filed a great report, so with no further ado, he writes:

*I just returned from a 48-day, door-to-door adventure in the Far East of Russia. The adventure started a few years back when I read a report in OVIS about **Renee Snider** hunting Okhotsk, Yakutia and Kolyma snow sheep in one extended 23-day trip, and I remembered reading about another hunter doing the same trip in 17 days a few years before Renee. So I contacted **Artem Veselov** at Profihunt to see if he could arrange a similar expedition for me. Heck, if someone else could do it, so could I!*

*Artem suggested that we arrange the hunt through the renowned snow sheep outfitter **Sergei Rudakov** of **Kulu Safaris**, and said that since weather might play a role in the length of time I'd be hunting for the three species of sheep, I should book three back-to-*

back 15-day hunts. To which I remember saying something to the effect of, "Ha! I'm sure I'll be done in a couple of weeks!" I plan, and God laughs.

*Profihunt and Kulu Safaris did their jobs perfectly ... but my team not so much. When my "Uncharted" cameraman, **Matt Ziniel**, and I landed in Moscow on July 29, it turned out that Matt's Russian visa (due to a typo at the Russian Embassy in Canada) wasn't actually valid for another two weeks! So Matt was promptly escorted back onto the airplane by a phalanx of armed guards and sent back to North America. Long story short, I ended up being weathered in at Magadan, which gave Matt time to fly back to North America, hop a jet to the Russian Embassy in Ottawa (which thankfully opened up for him at 10 p.m. on a Friday night to correct their typo) and fly back to Moscow, and from there across Russia to Magadan to join up with me just as the helicopter was about to depart for the Okhotsk hunting area!*

We hunted for Okhotsk snow sheep in the Khosyn District on Mosquito Mountain, called that for reasons that were obvious by the zillions! We spent the first three days weathered in, but on the fourth headed out from base camp. We saw six rams that day, nothing big and spiked out. The next day, in a storm, we bumped



Jim Shockey (BC) took this 12-year-old Okhotsk snow sheep from Russia in August 2015. Jim arranged his hunt through Profihunt and hunted with Kulu Safaris.



Here you see a great photo of Jim Shockey's (BC) ancient Okhotsk snow sheep, which is only sporting one tooth!



Jim Shockey (BC) with his first Yakutia snow sheep taken from Russia in August 2015. It took 23 days of backpacking for Jim to take this ram with Kulu Safaris.



Jim Shockey (BC) with his team and Jim's second Yakutia snow sheep taken in Russia, August 2015. Jim's ram was 11 years old and broken on the right side.



Jim Shockey (BC) and his team were beat-up and dead tired after 23 days of backpacking for Yakutia snow sheep. Little did they know that they still had five days to go before being picked up by the helicopter.



Jim Shockey (BC) with his first Kolyma snow sheep taken from Russia, September 2015. Jim arranged his hunt through Profihunt and hunted with Kulu Safaris.

into seven more rams, including one ancient ram that was obviously older, albeit sporting horns quite a bit smaller than the next oldest ram. My guide **Sergi Slipchenko** made a plan and organized our stalk perfectly. The shot was easy, 100 yards, and we had our one-toothed old ram ... which put us right on schedule for my intended two-week/three-ram hunt.

After we backpacked back to base camp from spike camp, the helicopter picked us up and flew us nearly three hours to the Tuanakh Mountains in the Srednekansky District, where all plans, all bets and all scheduling went out the window. We backpacked and spike camped for most of the next 22 days, from three different base camps, in some of the most difficult terrain I've had the pleasure to endure, before we spotted our first mature Yakutia ram. I missed at 210 yards ... long story for another time. I was hugely popular that evening in our little spike tent ... Not!

Fortunately, the very next day we found a band of big mature Yakutia rams and made a successful stalk. I shot the first ram and then saw a beautiful old ram with one side nearly broomed off. So this time I opted for a second ram.

Getting back to base camp wasn't easy. In fact, it was an ordeal. Since climbing back up the steep cliffs that we'd climbed down wasn't an option, loaded with two rams, we decided to detour around the mountains to get back to our base camp. The first day we hiked 12 hours around the mountain range, and ended up further from base camp than when we started the day.

Our helicopter crew had grown tired of waiting for me to get my Yakutia ram, so they'd gone back to Magadan and when they returned three days later, we still were not back at base camp. Not to worry, they picked us up where we were and transported us back to the town of Seymchan, where we climbed onto a jeep and drove all night, back to Magadan.

We stayed in the city long enough to have a shower and then headed out on Sergei's boat for the 150-mile ride north to our Kolyma snow sheep hunting area on the Pyagin Peninsula (Pyaginskiye Gory) in the Ola District. By that point, our guide Sergi's knees were pretty much shot, but he still cowboied up and we donned our well-worn backpacks. Twice we climbed far and high into the mountains and twice we got blown off by "typhoons." It wasn't until the day before my 45-day hunt was over that the weather cleared enough for us to make one last attempt.

We couldn't start climbing until the waves resided, so we didn't make it to our spike camp until nearly dark, which left us one last morning to hunt. The helicopter was scheduled to come and get us at 2 p.m. on that last day, but we still headed out for one more try. Sergi's knees were locked up, so he had to stay in our spike camp, which left Matt, our packer, Alexi, and me to try for the Hail Mary. We hiked harder, faster and higher than we'd done on any other day and spotted a band of mature Kolyma rams three miles away ... at noon.

I called Magadan and begged them to hold the helicopter for two hours and then we raced for the faraway rams. At 3 p.m. I took two 60-yard shots and took two beautiful rams. They might not have been the biggest in the world, but they couldn't have been



This Kolyma snow sheep from the Pyagin Peninsula (Pyaginskiye Gory) of Russia was taken literally in the last hour by Jim Shockey (BC) in September 2015. Jim earned this ram after 45 days of hardcore backpacking and it gave him his Ovis World Slam Super 30.

more perfect in my eyes! At 4 p.m. the helicopter landed right at the kill site and we were on our way home after 45 days in the mountains. It was nearly the middle of September by then. Frankly, tough as it was, I hold that hunt as one of the very best hunts I've ever been on.

This exciting report sure makes one anticipate how it will be presented for the 2016 *Uncharted* TV programming. Surely Jim will split it up into three or four episodes. They should all be fascinating. By the way, you will see another Milestone Feature for Jim in this issue, with a report about another lifetime achievement for him.