

200-Class Archery Buck



Richard Gates and his 200-class monster archery buck from New York!

From 2006!

NY's Best Bow Buck Of The Year!

by Jeff Brown

A story about a 200-class monster buck from anywhere in North America will always get my attention, particularly if it is taken with a bow and arrow. As I read the story and look at the pictures, I can almost put myself in the treestand of the hunter, and visualize the scene unfolding in front of my eyes. As a die-hard bow-hunter, I can imagine myself in Kansas, or Illinois, or Iowa, drawing back my bow and preparing for that moment-of-truth. Ahhh, the stuff of dreams. In 2006 millions of bowhunters took to the woods with that dream in mind. For a select few, that very dream became a reality right in front of their eyes. And a very small handful of those fortunate hunters had the “right stuff” to seal the deal and put the arrow in the boiler room, while the rest will be haunted for the rest of their lives by this missed opportunity. But only ONE HUNTER had the good fortune and the skill to make that dream a reality in the state of New York during the 2006 season. In the process he downed the biggest buck from the state that year, and the largest gross-scoring archery buck in the entire northeast from 2006.



The 2006 Gates Buck

Richard Gates has been hunting deer for many years now, primarily in his home state of New York. He has taken more than his share of deer during his hunting career, including some very good bucks. In 2002 he took a very impressive 18-point in Suffolk County that scored 174 1/8” gross and 162 4/8” net non-typical Pope & Young. Now that is a great buck! As he entered the 2006 season he could not have known that he was about to improve his “personal best” by more than 30”!

Richard first saw this huge buck from about a hundred yards away, during an afternoon tree-stand hunt in late October of 2006. One look was all he needed, and he was hooked. He hunted feverishly for the buck from that day on, but couldn’t get a glimpse of him. He started to think he lost his chance. But then on November 17th a close friend saw the buck in one of Richard’s hunting areas. Richard was re-energized, and began to plan the next days hunt.

On November 18th, Richard had the option of hunting from one of his tree-stands or setting up on the edge of a field in a ground blind. He chose the ground blind, and the turned out to be the right choice. At about 3:45 P.M. two does appeared from a thicket. Right behind them was a buck – no THE buck. The deer

went off to his east and disappeared. Richard was anxious and thought about moving in their direction, but he stayed put. Again, a good choice, because ten minutes later the big buck was back in the field, only this time he was by himself. Richard knew he was cruising for a hot doe so when he was about 80 yards away he gave him a buck grunt and doe bleat – a deadly combination. The wind was perfect and the unsuspecting buck picked his head up and looked for the source of the grunt and bleat. After a brief pause, he put his nose to the ground and started closing the distance. At that point Richard knew things were about to get real exciting! When the buck was about 40 yards out, he drew his PSE Scorpion Bow and settled into his anchor point. At 25 yards the buck turned right and presented a perfect broadside shot. Richard gave him a soft mouth grunt which stopped him in his tracks. With the sight pin buried behind the bucks shoulder, he released and followed thru. The Beaman ICS shaft passed clean through his chest cavity and the monarch bolted to the edge of the field. He stood there all hunched up shaking his tail wildly, showing signs of a possible liver hit. It appeared as if he was going down, but he started to slowly walk off.

continued on next page

NY's Best Bow Buck Of The Year *continued from previous page*

Confident that he could get another arrow in him, Richard took a risk and got out of the blind and began to stalk in on him. He cut an angle to where he last saw the wounded giant and as he rounded a cluster of trees, the hunter and the hunted came face to face at less than 10 yards! He was quartering toward Richard but appeared too injured to move. Richard raised his bow and instinctively shot. The wounded buck charged off



again, and quickly bedded down. At that point Richard knew the best thing to do was to back out. He had two good arrows in him, so it would not take long for the buck to bleed out.

Richard returned home to wait it out a while. After outfitting his daughter and oldest son with flashlights they set out with his uncle to take up the track. With very little drama, they recovered him a short distance later, lying peacefully along the field edge. Richard was speechless. The buck was gigantic – bigger than he had thought, and certainly a sight to behold. He knew this was his “hunt of a lifetime” – one he would never forget. While recovering the buck was a great feeling, the most cherished moment may have been while they were following the blood trail. His children looked up at him and said, “Dad, this is fun”. That it was - a truly joyous and emotional time, and a story Richard will never get tired of sharing.

Sometime later, Richard hooked up with scorers who represented all the major scoring organizations - the Northeast Big Buck Club, Pope & Young, Boone & Crockett, and New York State Big Buck Club. The buck was officially “panel scored” after the 60-day mandatory drying period. The outcome was worth the wait!

The Score

The gross B&C score of this great buck was 208 5/8” non-typical. The buck had 22 scoreable points, with a 12 point typical frame and 10 abnormal points totaling 40 4/8”. After asymmetry deductions, the buck tallied a net B&C score of 196 2/8” non-typical. The inside spread was just over 20”, and the main beams totaled 23 2/8” right, and 26 3/8” left. No tines were exceedingly long, in fact none were

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8” or greater. But the strength of the number of scorable points, particularly the abnormal growth, really drove the gross score to its 200” level.

In case you are wondering, several other great bucks have been arrowed in Suffolk County in the last decade. According to the NBBC records, in 2002 Mark Butta took a great 15-Point non-typical with a gross score of 179 4/8”, and a net P&Y score of 170 1/8”. In 1997 Anthony Alesi connected on a 173 2/8” gross, 166 1/8” net 19-Point non-typical. And of course Gates took the 2002 buck mentioned earlier in this article. So certainly there is great potential for big bow bucks from this densely populated county.

Other Great Archery Bucks *from 2006*

Of course, Suffolk County isn't the ONLY place big bow bucks fell in 2006. In fact, great archery bucks came from nearly every county in this diverse state. Here is a run down of some of the more notable bucks from 2006.



James Mastroianni

In case you missed it in our last issue, we brought you the story of Lewis County hunter James Mastroianni who arrowed a mammoth 16-Point non-typical on October 26th. Mastroianni's buck grossed 179 2/8”, and netted 166 6/8” Pope & Young. The buck was incredibly wide, with an inside spread of 24 3/8”, but short main beam reduced the spread credit in the final score. The great buck dressed 205 lbs. As if taking a great bow buck wasn't enough, Mastroianni followed up by taking a 160-class buck during the gun season as well! Wow, how is that for a successful New York season?

Another big 16-Point non-typical fell in October to archer Joseph G. Ebel. This one was taken on the 14th in Tompkins County. Ebel's buck had a gross P&Y score of 174 1/8” and a

net score of 169 3/8”. Some very nice typical bucks were taken as well. Wyoming County produced a 164 7/8” (gross) 154 2/8” (net) 10-Point for Daniel Nugent. This buck had a 20” inside spread. R. Scott Peck scored in Steuben County with a 163” (gross) 160 5/8” (net) 10-Point. This buck was massive with bases well over 5” each. And Brian Doyle arrowed a 161 7/8” gross 152 6/8” net 9-Point in Oneida County. Doyle's buck dressed a whopping 215 lbs.

In recent years, New York has produced some great archery trophies. In 2005 Rex Taft took an absolute monster scoring 203 7/8” gross, and 198 4/8” net B&C. Taft's great buck had 21 scorable points and was taken in Steuben County. A great typical bow buck fell in Onondaga County in 2003 to Mike Weinerth, scoring 181 3/8” gross as an 11-Point.



Joseph G. Ebel

Based on recent history we can assume that New York remains one of the most productive archery trophy states in the Northeast. Who knows what great stories we will have for you after the 2007 season!