

# 10 Minutes with Razor Dobbs

# "HOW TO KILL AN ELEPHANT WITH A BOW AND ARROW"

-THINGS A GUY SHOULD TO KNOW-

Killing an elephant with a bow and arrow can be easy. However, certain factors must come into play.

First off, physically and mentally you have to be able to walk endlessly through and over all sorts of terrain, then you have to get within bow range without getting yourself

**"...smashed into tatters by an elephant."**

killed. If you can make it this far without losing your mind or your life, then your only worry is hoping your broadhead penetrates deep enough to take out the medicine ball sized heart or the mattress sized lungs. If these factors line up, and the arrowed elephant doesn't charge and kill you before he dies, then you will have your bow killed elephant.

Obviously, your archery equipment has to be upgraded substantially from your usual "whitetail" or "plains game" set-up to kill an elephant, but how much of an upgrade will be substantial to kill the worlds largest



Four lives. Four stories. Four interpretations. Four meanings.

land mammal?

On a recent safari in Zimbabwe we were charged and nearly smashed into tatters by an elephant. Fortunately, our professional hunter Gordon Dunkin dropped the

and I performed arrow penetration tests on the dead beast with our two different bow/arrow/broadhead set-ups.

The first set-up was an 820 grain arrow, tipped with a Grizzly two-blade broadhead



This arrow hit a rib and deflected around the bone.

beast with a frontal brain shot just feet before we met our fate.

Before the dead elephant was skinned and butchered by the Shangaan tribe, fellow bowhunter Steve Selan

packing a payload of 81 foot pounds of kinetic energy (ft-lbs of KE). I had filed down the tip of the Grizzly broadhead leaving a less pointed head (reason for the filing will be

covered further on).

The second set-up was a 775 grain arrow, tipped with a Magnus two-blade cut-on-impact broadhead, carrying 91 ft-lbs. of KE.

FACT: To this date there is not a production bow or arrow set-up (including custom arrows) that can deliver enough lbs. of KE to bust through an elephant rib. If you

**"...the only thing you have accomplished is pissing off your elephant."**

stick the broadhead into the rib or leg bone the only thing you have accomplished is pissing off your elephant.

The chances of hitting a rib is somewhere around 40 to 50%. However, if you hit a rib and the broadhead does not stick into the bone but instead it deflects, sliding around the rib into the vitals, this can kill your elephant. This was my reason for filing the tip of the Grizzly head.

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With the rib factor in mind, on choosing a broadhead for my safari, I chose a tough two-blade head with a mild cut on impact point. The Grizzly broadhead fit that order but to further the chance of a rib hit not sticking into the bone but rather deflecting traveling around the rib, I used a file and rounded the point of the broadhead.

The Magnus broadhead on the second set-up was not modified

**"...slid around the rib and penetrated into the lung..."**

leaving it's pointed cut-on-impact head unchanged.

The first shot was with the 820 grain arrow/Grizzly broadhead with 81 lbs of KE. The arrow did hit a rib but just as we hoped the rounded Grizzly broadhead didn't stick into the bone, but slid around it and penetrated into the lung of the elephant. YOWZA!

The second shot was with the 775 Grain arrow and Magnus broadhead with 91 lbs of KE. This arrow *did not* hit a rib and the arrow penetrated up to the nock taking out both lungs of the elephant. PERFECT!

In a nutshell, if you shoot an arrow of sufficient weight (i.e. 770gr. or 820 gr.) and your are getting 80 plus foot pounds of kinetic energy (we suggest 90) you have enough power to penetrate through the vitals of the elephant, granted your broadhead is sharp as hell and you don't stick into bone.

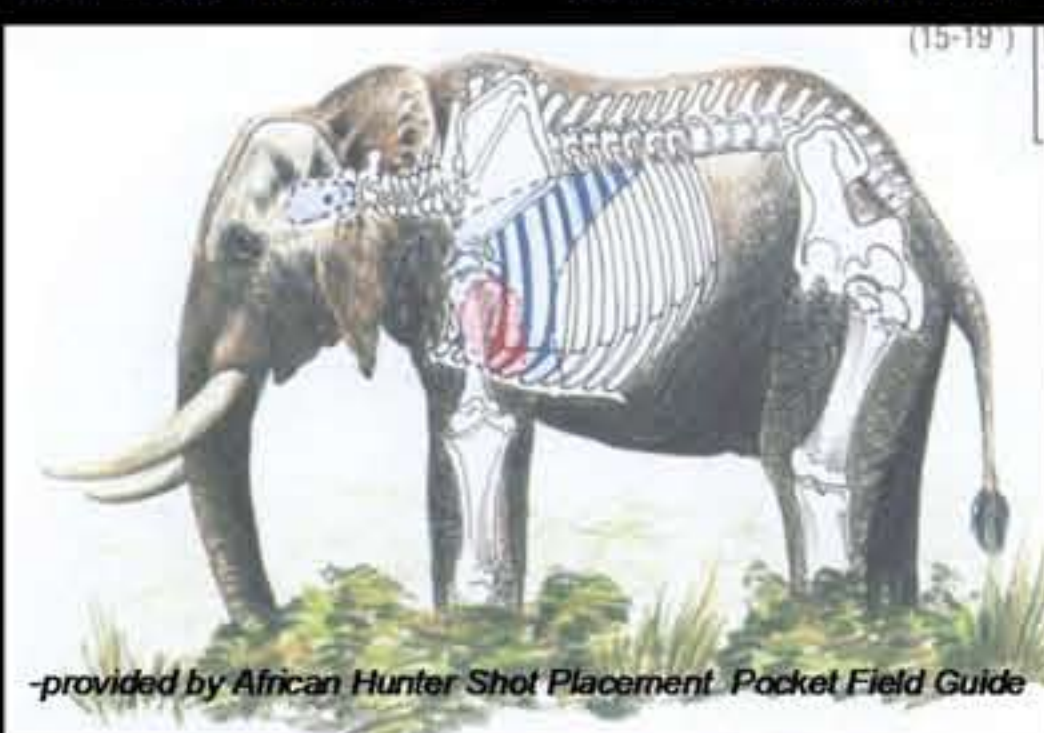
I highly recommend using a broadhead with a point that has been filed down just in case

you crap out and hit that rib. There is no guarantee that the rounded head will deflect and slide around the bone and into the vitals but it will better your odds none the less. Any idiot knows that shot placement is of mega importance, but lame shot placement on your elephant may cost you your life. When you venture on your elephant safari your Professional Hunter will give you the in depth details of arrow placement, but let's look at the

basic facts and locations of the heart and lungs.

If you penetrate the heart of an elephant he most likely wont make it 300 yards. But the heart shot is a very risky shot. As you can see from the picture (see insert picture) the elephant's vitals cover a huge area, but they are *protected* by heavy bone.

We discussed the rib bone earlier and the possible way to beat the perils of sticking in a rib,



-provided by African Hunter Shot Placement. Pocket Field Guide

but let's look at the leg bone. If the elephant is standing broadside (as in the picture) notice the heavy leg bone covering most of the heart. Not only is the heart protected by the heavy bone but the distance (gap) between the ribs is substantially smaller in the heart area then it is in a higher lung shot. Even if you hit the leg bone with the largest express rifle you wont get through to the heart. If a heart shot is what you desire, then wait for the elephant

to take a step forward which will move the leg bone from protecting the heart.

As deadly as a heart shot is, your best bet in killing your elephant with an arrow is to go for the double lung shot. As you can see from the picture, an elephant's lungs are positioned much like the lungs of most African game. To find the kill zone with out a "map" start from here:

From the base of

**"...sink into the vitals like greased moose poop."**

the chest, three inches from the back of the fore leg, raise 1/3 up the chest cavity and pick a spot. Here you will find the center of the lungs which gives you a good vertical and horizontal margin of error (compared to attempting a heart pocket shot). A double lung hit on an elephant will kill him dead as disco within minutes.

The truth of the matter is this: if you are using the proper arrow (775 grains and up), a sharp two-blade broadhead (I'd file the tip), 80 plus foot pounds of kinetic energy AND you don't stick in a rib or other bone, your arrow will sink deep into the vitals like greased moose poop and you'll have your bow killed elephant.

-Razor Dobbs