

2006 Big Bear Recognition

Dennis Braun — 467#

Jumbo Track (Smash's Bear)

Story written by Roger Halida for Dennis Braun

Dennis is from the southeast part of the state, so he doesn't get to come up hunting a whole lot. When he does he makes the best of it. Dennis has come hunting with us before and shot a bear that was just under 300 lbs., so he wanted a bigger one than that. Well the next tag is gonna get little harder to get a bigger one, because on opening day of the 2006 season, Dennis harvested a bear that weighed in at 530 lbs live weight and 467 lbs. dressed out.

The day started out when the alarm went off at 4:30, but everybody was up and ready. I looked outside and the lights in the mobile home were on already. The dogs were loaded and away we went to check baits. The baits were checked and Cory said to go take a look at the Dymtro Bait, that he had a "Jumbo". Chad and I went down by the bait and let out Smash and Spike. They opened so we let out Lenny and Riley. The dogs went out to the west and made a big circle and tracked back to the bait. Chad and I caught Lenny, Riley, Smash and Spike and went across the logging road. Smash opened and they were off again. We went around to the road and could see the "Jumbo" track on the road. Lenny and Riley were put back down behind Smash and Spike.

Spike, Riley and Lenny jumped and away they went. Smash came back to the road so I walked him in where they crossed the road. Smash opened and he headed southeast and the other three went northeast. Ray, Papa Bear Jerry went around the East road. They could hear the other three dogs bayed up to the North and Smash back to the South. Chad stayed with the dogs to the North because he could hear the all of them.

Cory and I went to the East Road. When I hit the East Road, Smash came out behind my truck. I stopped to look on the road for the track and he ran back in where he came from. He went in and started baying about a hundred yards off the road. In the meantime the other dogs were slowly moving back towards us. I packed Spot into Smash and they moved

back to the West. Chad got a couple dogs in with Spike, Lenny and Riley. I tried to get Sport in with Spot and Smash, but he went to the other dogs. Chad said the other pack was treed. He was headed into them. I went into Smash and Spot and they had the bear bayed under an uprooted pine. At this point we didn't know who had the "Jumbo", as I couldn't see the bear under the roots. I got in closer and out he came and he was a dandy! He headed Southwest.



I hollered on the radio for Dennis and Al to get back on the West Road since they had the kill tags. The whole gang went around and they could hear the dogs baying. I caught back up with Smash and Spot. The "Jumbo" was just walking in front of them. He saw me and took off again. Then I heard him climb; the two dogs had put him up. I called out for Dennis and Al to get in here and bring a couple more dogs in, just in case.

In the meantime, Chad made it to the other dogs and they had a 250 pound bear up. Dennis made it in by me and everybody else filtered in. Dennis put the smack on him with one shot to the neck and down he went, right down into the crotch of a maple. Now what to do? Al and Ray went to take a look at the other bear for Al. Al decided to pass on the bear since it was opening day.

Now the work began on how to get the "Jumbo" out of the tree. Cory climbed up and couldn't get him. Cory and I went to get tree pegs to get up there, but Cory still couldn't get him out. After a couple tries Chad and Ray finally got him out. Papa Bear got his four-wheeler in by the bear and we loaded him up and road out. That wasn't the easiest task, but we got him out.