



Action Shot

K-State students combine their passions for shooting game and filming hunts

Story by Audrey Schmitz and photos courtesy of Shane King

When all his buddies were buying trucks to drive in high school, Brady Burks, a student in Wildlife and Outdoor Enterprise Management, was purchasing his first Canon XA10 camcorder. Burks grew up in Wathena, Kansas; hunting dove, quail and pheasant with his dad. He also enjoyed watching hunters on the Outdoors Channel travel the world shooting different game. These experiences led to the idea of filming his friends' hunts by borrowing his parents' camcorder.

"I always get more enjoyment out of filming a hunt and then turning around and showing everyone," Burks says. Each time he takes a picture or video it is a way to remember the moment and relive the memory.

"I enjoy filming because you can't miss them, and they can't run away like when you shoot them with a gun," Burks says.

A Filming Friendship

Hunting from a young age inspired Burks to major in the WOEM program at Kansas State

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University. During a class trip to Raton, New Mexico his second year, Burks met Shane King, from Salina, Kansas. While riding the bus, King overheard someone comment on one of Burks' hunting videos. King, who at the time was a first year student in WOEM and shared similar interests, introduced himself explaining that he too filmed and documented his own hunts. A bond instantly formed as they learned their families both shared the same values; a deep respect for the wildlife and passion for hunting.

"We learned from our families that hunting wasn't only a way to provide food, but we also learned that it was a way of life," King says.

After connecting, the two friends started to film each other in their respective hunting seasons. Burks filmed King during bow season and King recorded Burks during duck and waterfowl season. Both Burks and King have their own separate businesses and social media platforms where they upload pictures and videos of their hunts. King's company, Manifest Outdoors, features white-tailed deer bow hunts while also providing hunting tips and entertainment. Burks's media company, Big Burks Outfitters,

features waterfowl hunts and offers photography and videography services.

Team Camo Cats

Last fall the two friends teamed up when Collegiate Outdoors started the Collegiate Hunt Series Challenge. The competition gives college students the opportunity to showcase their hunting skills, tactics and collegiate lifestyle in a competitive video production tournament. Ridge Nelson, a friend from Missouri State University encouraged Burks to form a team.

"The first guy I called was Shane," Burks says. "There are other guys that have cameras that love to hunt and love to film, but they don't understand that even when we are done hunting we still got to go recreate some things."

Burks says he and King are often on the same page on almost everything.

The two friends formed Team Camo Cats and are joined by Chris Barnhart and Jonathan Owens both undergraduate students also majoring in WOEM.

The tournament features three weekly challenges that teams submit by email and then uploaded to CollegiateOutdoors.com where viewers can vote on them. The teams are also required to submit three different videos up to five minutes in length of their complete hunting season.

"We were up until two just last night and have been burning midnight oil trying to get these submitted," Burks says.

Video Vibe

Prior to creating hunting videos neither Burks nor King had camera or video editing experience.

"We just kind of picked up a camera and had the eye for it," King says, "The majority of it we had to figure out ourselves and mess around with the cameras."

Currently, the team uses a digital, single-lens reflex camera in order to capture "cinematic" style footage like viewers would see in a Hollywood film as opposed to home movies.

"It provides us with the opportunity to control what kind of lighting we receive from the pictures and videos, along with giving us full control of the focus of an object," King says. "The DSLR cameras also allows us to capture the color of an animal or an object so our viewers feel as if they are right there witnessing the whole story unfold."

They use Adobe Premier Pro to edit their films, and when they do not know how to use an editing tool, they look it up on YouTube or ask mentors who also film hunts.

One of their goals when creating videos is to build a story line that shows the effort it takes to track game.



Shane King with his prize turkey.

They do this by showing viewers all the challenges and obstacles hunters endure. They strive to make the hunting process feel real by appealing to the viewers' emotions so they feel they are a part of the hunt.

Lastly, they want viewers to see that hunters have respect for the animals and for the sport.

The videos they create are uploaded to Vimeo and YouTube. They produce web-based shows because there are fewer costs involved than with actual TV shows.

After graduation they hope to continue filming what they love: the game that they hunt.

"Long story short upon graduation we would like to have our own media companies getting paid to travel around and follow people hunting everywhere," Burks says. **KS**



Members of Team Camo Cats set up and adjust their camera equipment to record their team introductory video for the Collegiate Hunt Series Challenge.