

Never Give Up

By Curtis Kenyon

It is easy to get discouraged when the turkeys are playing hard to get. This spring that day was May 5th. My brother Brian and a friend Dr. Rob Atkins came from Ohio to try to harvest a gobbler. My brother is an accomplished turkey hunter and has harvested numerous turkeys himself as well as called in many for others. Teaming up we were confident that we should be able to rack up a few for the freezer. We started off the morning rather slow with not even a gobble off the roost. We had a few hens come into us early but nothing with a big red head walking behind them. After hitting a few more spots where I knew there were birds, we had still done nothing. The birds seemed to have lock-jaw. I told Dr. Atkins that since Saturday the birds had quieted down because of the early emerging foliage in the southern tier of NY. The forest had changed and the birds did not like it. Dr. Atkins and Brian both were starting to attribute the quietness to simply their Ohio presence. I must agree it did seem that the days they had picked to come to NY were not the best but that would soon change over the next couple of days.

That first day, found us hitting spot after spot with little success. We worked a few birds in a couple of locations but many spots we went were quiet. The birds were just not being very vocal. Running out of time and energy we hit one more spot before we would be required to call it a day. It was 11:20 and as we pulled up to the farm we noticed a bird was out in the edge of the field strutting with a hen. Well we all thought it was worth a try. We had forty five minutes left before the NY spring turkey hours closed for the day, so we parked down the road out of site with a glimmer of hope of a shot. We slowly worked down the edge of the field about 20 yards inside the woods. Luckily for us there was a ravine that aided in our setup. We were able to use the ravine to hide our movement down the field. As we closed the distance my brother crawled up the ravine toward the field's edge to figure out where the birds were exactly. Seeing the birds we agreed that we needed to get on the other side of them. Again using the ravine we circled the birds and closed the distance to about 100 + yards. The plan was for me to video and Dr. Atkins to shoot. My brother was on the ravines edge about 25 yards to our left set up to call. Hopefully, the bird would work down the edge of the field and Rob would get a shot. Well, this bird had other plans. My brother started to call on his Woodhaven Copper II and the bird liked it. It was soon apparent that our luck was about to change for the better. The gobbler had lost his hen and we were just what the "doctor" ordered. Excuse the pun...Dr. Atkins. This bird was responding every time Brian called. It seemed he wanted to visit an Ohio freezer real bad and Dr. Atkins was willing to give him his wish. We knew this would have to happen fast because it was now 11:47 and our time was expiring rapidly. As the bird started to come it was apparent, he was not going to come along the field but straight on a bee line for Brian. Gobbling about 65 yards out the gobbler had two directions he could come in around a fallen tree. Left of the tree was an open shot for Brian and giving the bird a clear shot of our position. If the bird would come to the right of the tree it would be perfect but as I have learned from years of turkey hunting it does not always work out perfect. This was no exception. The gobbler came to the right at about 30 yards and spotted us. Rob could not get a good shot at the bird because it quickly ducked back around the brush of the fallen tree. Realizing Rob was not going to be able to shoot, Brian put the bird down. Wow! I quickly grabbed my cell

phone out of my pocket and looked at the time. It was 11:59am! We had done it with one minute to spare. Congratulations started immediately, although we were aiming for Dr. Atkins to fill his tag first. Filling his tags happened over the next couple of days. We went to lunch with a smile on our face and success finally grasped in our hands. That is why both in the woods and in life you never give up. As long as you keep trying something good will happen and you might find your day to be a successful one.