

MONTANA

SPORTING JOURNAL



Wingshooting Issue 2011

THE UPLAND GRAND SLAM

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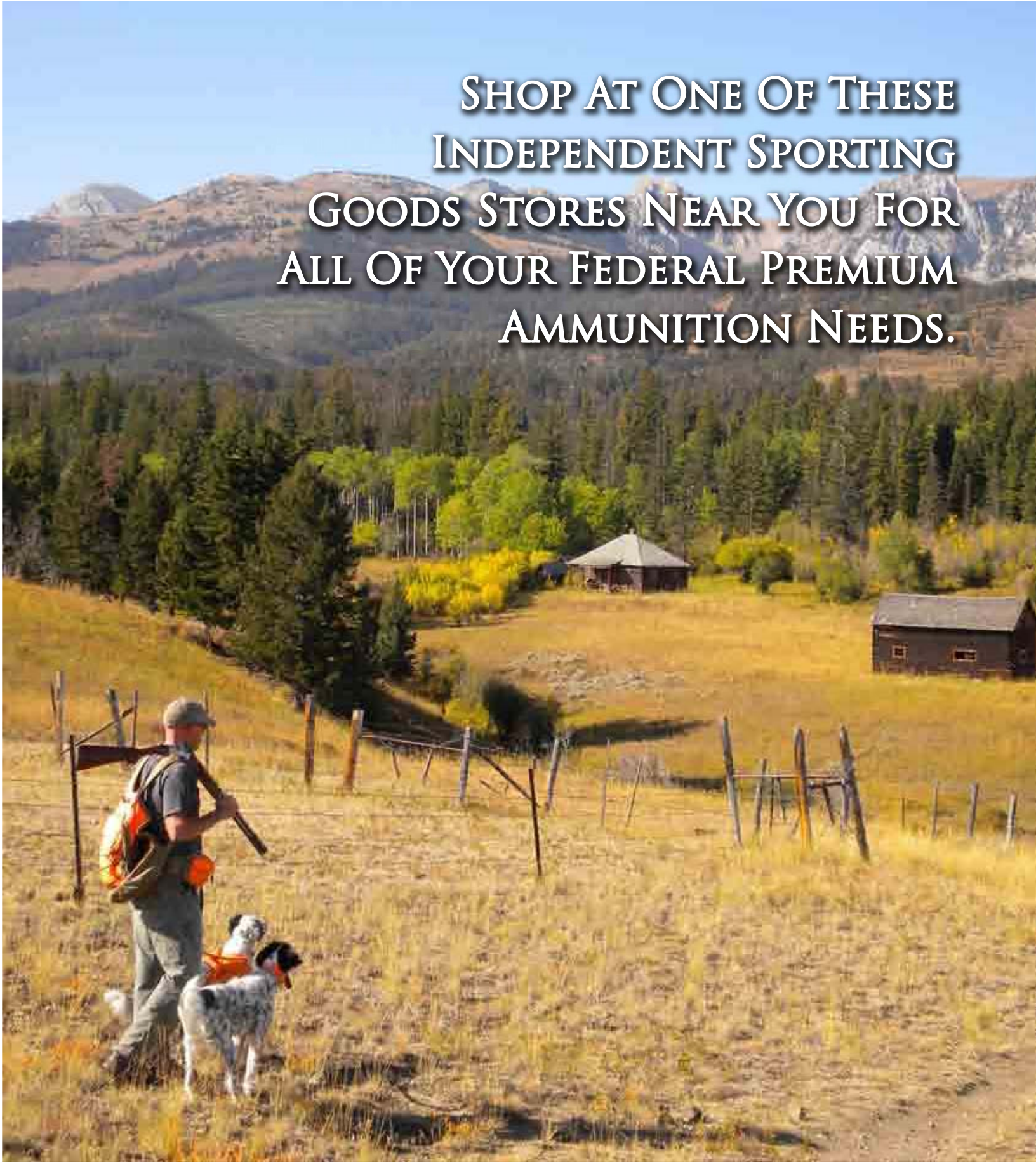
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Wingshooting Journal

By Jay Hanson



September 1st -

The start of the upland bird season. Too warm to be on the prairie; headed up in the mountains to look for blues. Almost too hot for that. Moved only big, lone males. Never saw any young broods. Dogs still a little out of shape and overly hyper to be expected on their first hunt of the year. Abby took a sharp stick in the snout, but it didn't seem to phase her.



September 12th -

2nd day of a Hun hunt along the Rocky Mountain Front. Neat country. A lot of open space. Windy day. Moved six coveys in seven hours of walking. Could have shot better though. This high country was Huns only. Never saw any other species.



October 10th -

Pheasant opener along the Hi-Line with the gang. Bird numbers were down slightly. Hunter numbers were as strong as ever. We still managed to get opening day limits. Plenty of dog power today, and a little bit of competition between the younger ones.





November 15th -

Took a break from elk hunting to look for some Huns with Brian and the dogs. Just a skiff of snow on the ground. Birds were fairly jumpy and visible with the snow, but we did manage a few solid points. Most of the birds had moved into the shorter sage from the grassy ravines where they were found in September.





November 28th -

After a big Thanksgiving meal, Dad and I headed west to give the dogs and us some exercise. It ended up being a banner day for late November. Very little snow on the ground. Saw birds in every spot where they should have been. The dogs found eight large coveys of Huns - a couple of which must have been two coveys combined since they were so large in number. Good thing I switched the 28 gauge for the 20; we also got into a bunch of roosters. Truly of one those memorable days, with some great dog work.



December 29th -

My last day afield this bird season. The snow was deep enough to make walking fairly rigorous. A lot of pheasants already visible in ranchers yards. Only had shots at two roosters over dogs all day. Killed just one. Still a good day to be outdoors. Dogs pointed a few hens. No other hunters seen. The last day of bird hunting is always a sad one. Next season the girls will be one year older. I guess I will be too.



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