

Un-smart

I found myself laying in a cornfield with two friends a couple of weeks ago.

Weird huh? Well, we actually were goose hunting. The thermometer in the pickup at 6:30 a.m. read 11 degrees. We planned on five people but shortly before 9 p.m. the night before, two of us very smartly decided to back out. I wasn't one of the smart ones.

We got to the field around 7 a.m. and began to set up the 80 or 90 decoys we had on hand. Thirty minutes later we had a spread we thought would work. None of us had hunted that particular corn field yet this year so we didn't really know what to expect.

We parked the pickups and decided to sit a little while longer in the heated cab before heading back out to the field on foot.

8 a.m. rolled around and we were off. What laid ahead would be three of the coldest hours of my life. How do those Mt. Everest climbers do it?

We sat and chatted as we waited for the geese to pop over the horizon. One of my friends was fading fast. Let's just say he wasn't dressed for the occasion. We had a camouflage layout blind that actually keeps pretty warm. My other friend let him hop in it but just as he was zipping up, here came the first flock of geese. We scampered to our places and got covered up as fast as we could.

That first group gave us a great look. One goose locked in right away. Legs down and wings out he looked ready to land and then BANG! He unlocked and flew away along with the rest of the group. What!?! I didn't shoot. I sat up and looked over to my still pretty frozen friend. He had been the one who took the shot.

“What happened?” I yelled out. He responded with “I think I took them too early.”

Yeah right, took them too early evidently was code for fingers frozen together and eyeballs frozen in eye sockets. Whatever it meant, we waved it off and got set for another group.

We didn't see another flock for about 10 minutes or so. It was the same story. Frozen friend wanted to hop into the layout blind to warm up. Just as he was zipping up, here they came. Like clockwork. When he decided it was time to warm up, here came more geese.

This group must have received a Mayday call from the previous group. They circled over a couple of times and then their chief must have honked “let's try somewhere else,” and they flew away.

Frustrating to say the least. This happened again and again. We might as well have been wearing our bright orange clothes, running through the decoys waving flags. These geese wanted nothing to do with us.

Three hours later we had had enough. Frozen toes, frozen fingers, frozen buggers and frozen faces.

Frozen friend was the first to volunteer to walk and get the pickup. While he was hiking back, more geese came. I wish I could say they came our way and we managed to actually get something and we could blame it on frozen friend later, citing him as bad luck. But that wasn't the case.

He brought the pickup back all nice and warm for us. We picked up our decoys and left in shame.

The moral to this story is when two members of your hunting group back out, you should too. Especially when one of them is a good friend who usually does pretty well hunting and the other

See it like C Lee

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is your brother who tells you, “you have to not be right if you want to lay out in 11 degree weather waiting for some birds to fly your way.”

Maybe the geese looked down and could see three shivering bodies on the ground and weren't going to be fooled. Maybe they weren't interested in our set up. Or maybe, we just aren't that great at hunting.

Stupid geese.