

470 Mbogo - From Start to Finish

470 Mbogo, custom built big bore rifle by Dave Estergaard

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Buffalo number three was a herd bull on the fourth day still in the upper camp area. We got a little close to this herd and the wind gave us away before we had a chance to glass the whole group of Buffalo. We followed and bumped this group again in the tall grass and they moved off, circling back in the direction where we first saw them. Seeing this pattern we decided to cut across diagonally and set up the shooting sticks. The herd started coming by at about 100 yds. First there were cows, young bulls and calves. About twenty animals passed by before the good bull appeared. With my gun resting on the shooting sticks and the recoil pad on my shoulder I was able to glass with my binoculars and we were all in agreement that this was a good bull. I turned my scope up to 5 power and took aim at the back of the rib cage aiming through to the off shoulder as the bull was quartering away.



At the shot all hell broke loose, the bull turned away into the herd of animals and then the entire herd started running straight towards us. They didn't know where the shot came from but as soon as they saw us the whole herd turned to our right leaving the bull I hit on his own. As soon as he made us out he headed straight for us but was very sick. All I could remember looking through the scope was this big red nose held high which gave me the opportunity to place a shot directly center of the chest at the base of the neck. The bull only made it four more steps and went down.



The first shot penetrated from the back of the ribs diagonally through the opposite shoulder and was recovered under the hide. The second shot went from the base of the neck through the top of the heart, through the lungs, liver and on through the stomach and was recovered in the last couple of inches of the stomach grass just ahead of the hind quarters. This was approximately five feet of straight-line penetration and the bullet still weighed 490 grains and measured .845 of an inch across the front.



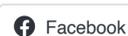
The impact of the 470 Mbogo impressed our P.H. who gets to see a lot of different calibers in action. It also impressed Ted Gorsline the owner of Kilombero North Safaris. Ted is a real gun nut and has tried lots of different big bores. He now shoots a 450 Ackley but was very impressed with the Mbogo because of the combination of bullet weight, diameter along with the velocity and moderate pressures. His comment was that

maybe the Mbogo was the "perfect African cartridge." I would take this as a great compliment whether true or not from a man with his experience. One option he likes is a five shot capacity so that in a bad situation you can get that one extra chance which could be a lifesaver.

I never fired a solid bullet at a Buffalo while on this trip and with the performance of the 470 Mbogo in combination with the Swift A-Frame bullets at 2500 f.p.s. I think a person could feel very confident with this combination and good bullet placement. From bullet test with solids penetrating about nine inches further than the Swifts in the soaking wet newspaper I wouldn't doubt that they would penetrate a Buffalo lengthways. Since this trip there has been a 470 Mbogo built on a Ruger number one and I have built another one on the new Bruno CZ 550 action. This rifle has a Pac Nor stainless barrel and a MPI fibreglass stock. It has an Ashley peep sight with an adjustable fiber optic front bead and it is very accurate.

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