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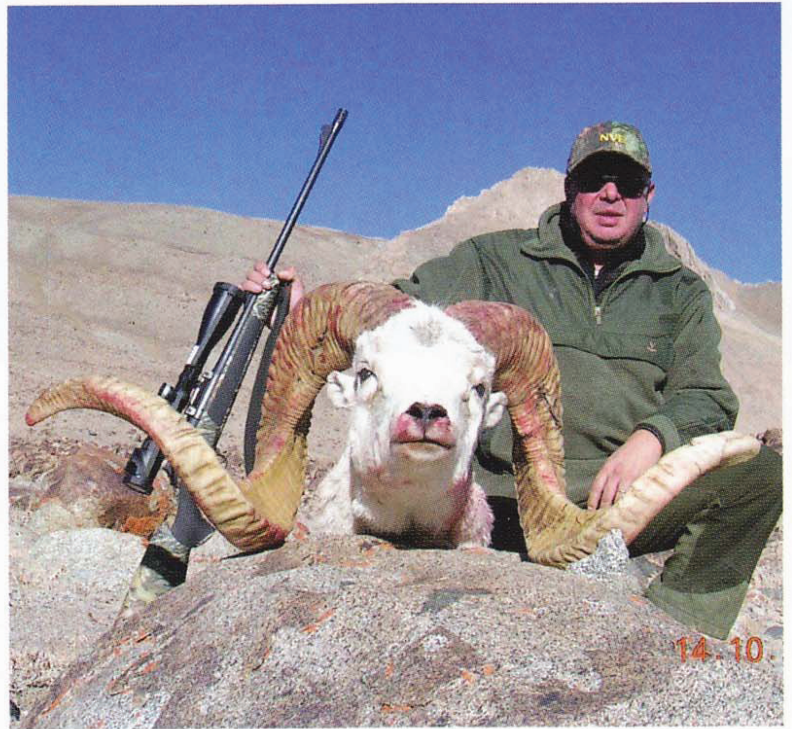


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Ruben Velatta (Italy) took this 56" Marco Polo in Tajikistan, October 2009.

This report came in from **Ruben Velatta** (Italy) about his recent Marco Polo hunt:

*Tajikistan: a hard but exciting hunt! I arrived at **Yuri Matison's** base camp at Kara Kol Lake in the Pamir Mountains on October 10. AMAZING! I was on the roof of the world!*

After one day of rest, I gradually adapted to the high altitude and finally started hunting. The transfers were on horseback and on foot, the average temperature was always minus 10°C, and oxygen was missing. I was at a height of 5,000 meters.

At 5 a.m. on October 14, I neared the

Marco Polo argali flock we had followed the day before. They were all lying on the ground, and I was able to arrive at a distance of about 350 meters. Just at that time, an unexpected noise alarmed the sheep. It was still dark at 5:30 a.m., but thanks to the half moon, I caught sight of the sheep and shot. The sheep took a high jump. My heart was beating violently as I wondered if I had missed him. No, after hundreds of meters, he fell. The unofficial measurement of my Marco Polo was 56".