



THE OUT FITTER

Bullet Board 16

Rack Room 17

Cartridge Corner 17

Quick Shots 18

New Gear 22

Staying Alive 22

Roughin' It 24

TROPHY SEIZURES ON THE RISE

Six months after Miguel Blasquez returned home from a hunt in Zambia, he received a call from the San Francisco-based brokerage firm he hired to help bring his trophies back to Mexico. Turns out there was a problem. All 10 of his animals—a Cape buffalo, leopard, and eight plains game species—had been seized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) at the port of entry in San Francisco. The animals were killed legally and his brokerage firm filled out all the necessary paperwork, but the airline submitted photocopies of the documents to the USFWS instead of originals.

"They didn't even give me a chance to fix it," says Blasquez. "It would have been a very simple thing to do."

Most trophies make it to their rightful owners without any problems, but an increasing number end up like Blasquez's and are seized by the USFWS for a minor technicality. Conservation Force Chairman John Jackson III said the rate of seizures has gone up

significantly over the past several years.

"The Service changed the wording that used to allow brokerage firms and foreign governments a 30-day grace period to correct any clerical errors. Now they just seize things at will," said Jackson, a New Orleans lawyer who has represented dozens of hunters subjected to trophy seizures. "There is about one seizure every day and a half, which is pretty telling because the number of hunters traveling overseas is down due to the economy."

Virtually all of the seized animal parts, including hides, skulls, horns, and even manufactured items like jewelry, are taken based on some technicality, even though they were taken legally. Jackson, who assisted Blasquez, has been involved in cases where someone wrote in a wrong date or identified an animal as a different subspecies, both mistakes that could have been easily corrected. Whatever the reason, the

