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Contact: Josh Bean | 251-327-0901 | josh@dcwins.com

5-year-old from Lee County wins ALBBAA Big Buck Photo Contest

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (Feb. 21, 2025)– Jacks Benton, a 5-year-old hunter from the Salem community in Lee County, squeezed the trigger on his .243 Remington rifle to fire at the buck standing about 40 yards away.

The 10-point buck didn't run.

"No, he flopped," Jacks said.

Just like that, Jacks harvested his first buck while hunting on a 20-acre plot of family land in Russell County. It was a memorable moment for Jacks and his father, Brad, who also harvested his first deer from the same family land when he was a kid.

"I remember being a little kid and killing my first deer on the same property, the same little 20 acres," said Brad Benton, who entered a photo of a smiling Jacks with the 10-point buck in the Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association's 13th annual Big Buck Photo Contest.

Out of more than 200 entries, the photo of Jacks is the winner after receiving more online votes than any other entry.

Jacks wins a \$150 gift card and a copy of "Black Belt Bounty," a coffee table book filled with stunning images, colorful stories, wildlife essays and wild game recipes. The prize package carries a retail value of more than \$200.

What does Jacks plan to buy with his prize money? "Gum and a toy," he said.



“Alabama’s Black Belt offers some of the very best whitetail deer hunting available anywhere in America, and the fact that we received more than 200 photo entries into our contest this year proves it,” ALBBAA director Pam Swanner said. “We appreciate everyone who entered the contest and everyone who cast a vote this year. Our photo contests are designed to highlight the abundant hunting opportunities in the Black Belt, and we definitely accomplished that goal this year with the Big Buck Photo Contest.”

[The ALBBAA Best Sporting Dog Contest](#) remains open and continues through March 15, and the annual Big Gobbler Photo Contest will be launching in late March. Alabama’s wild turkey season begins March 25.

The Black Belt includes the following 23 counties: Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Crenshaw, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Marengo, Monroe, Montgomery, Perry, Pickens, Pike, Russell, Sumter, Tuscaloosa and Wilcox.

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***The Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association** is committed to promoting and enhancing outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities in the Black Belt in a manner that provides economic and ecological benefits to the region and its citizens. For information, go to www.alabamablackbeltadventures.org.*