



ELMER SIMON'S MOTHER, ALDINE, WITH THE RIBBON SEAL HE HUNTED IN HOOPER BAY. (FRANK KEIM Photo)

Simon gets his ribbon seal

The room was dark when I awoke and it took me awhile to realize it was dawn. I jumped out of bed, hoping that there wasn't a seal hunter already out hunting at the point.

Quietly, without waking up my folks, I started the campstove to heat up some water so I could have some hot coffee and tea to take out hunting with me.

After breakfast I went down to the dock to check the tide. The tide was low, but it was coming in farther out towards the mouth of the Hooper Bay slough. The wind was from the east at about 4-5 knots per hour - a perfect day for hunting. While mixing motor gas, I noticed some other hunters were beginning to walk down to the dock to check the tide. That gave me reason to enough to hurry so I could be the first one out to Nuok Spit which is located at the mouth of Hooper Bay.

I was pretty hot after carrying my gear and two 6 gallon cans of motor gas to the boat. It was about 8:30 a.m. when I finally left for the point. The slough still wasn't very high but it was high enough for my boat to get out.

I went past the last pole marker and slowed down to about 3 miles per hour, then cruised toward the point. As I

went, I looked from east to west and from south to north, but I saw nothing! I was pretty discouraged due to all the work I went to getting out to the bay first.

I decided to throw my anchor over and stay in one place for a while. I heard a boat coming out, opened my thermos and started to have a cup of coffee.

Just then I saw what seemed to be a sea duck, but it looked like it might be a seal too. I grabbed my binoculars and waited for it to come up again.

It came up, and sure enough it was a seal. In the background through the binoculars I also saw a boat coming towards me. Quickly, I took my .22 hornet rifle, pulled in my anchor and speeded toward the seal.

I slowed down. Then it came up only about 25 feet from my bow. I aimed....Bang!....Puk! I heard my bullet hit the seal. I went over and harpooned it, and to my surprise when I pulled in the line of my harpoon, I saw that what I had caught was a Ribbon seal. It was very beautiful, and I was happy. My hard work in getting out first had paid off.

So for those of you that wait till the sun comes out to hunt, you'd better start meeting the sun every day. It brings good luck.

Tu-ai,
Elmer C. Simon