

Shadow

Shadow was born in 2004, and died in 2012 at 8 years old. Why?? Normally a goat will survive at least 12-16 years. What happened to Shadow?

Well, to begin with, Shadow never really had a chance at a real life.

Originally, in my enthusiasm to get started in this packgoat enterprise, I obtained two goats from a local breeder. I now know that he was *not* a legitimate 'packgoat' source. As a result these goats did not have the beginning care they would have had with a packgoat-aware breeder.

One of these fellas was an Alpine, and the other an Alpine/Oberhasli cross. They came to me with pneumonia as it was going around in his herd (it goes without saying that I didn't know this when I picked them up). Within two days of picking them up I was giving them injections.

On the heels of that adventure, another malady struck these two, very similar in symptoms to pneumonia. Back to the injections!

Only a week or three after surviving these unpleasant happenings, I had them staked out (Since they had not had any socialization, and were definitely NOT bonded with me yet, I was not completely comfortable with letting them out without restraints), and apparently my staking rope was too small in diameter, as somehow Shadow apparently got tangled in it and broke his left hind leg.

I probably should have had him put down, but in my innocent ignorance, I paid \$400 to have the leg put back together with a stainless steel pin down the broken upper part of the leg. Which would have been OK if the leg had been repaired properly, but somehow it ended up being about 45 degrees off from what it should have been. And as a result, he shuffled this left rear leg along like Chester on Gunsmoke!

August 2005 found me venturing back into the Big Horn Crags with Shadow and one other unsocialized boy that I had obtained in my desperation to get going with goats. At some point, they sampled a bit of a frost-burned plant called a Corn Lily, and within an hour or so began showing signs of poisoning, which lasted all night. I sincerely expected to be bringing out collars and nothing else. Daybreak the next morning found them beginning to act normal, and starting to sample some of the 'safe' vegetation.

As Shadow matured, I attempted to pack him (loaded very light, obviously) and in 2007 I took Shadow and some others into Baron Lakes in the Sawtooths. As we were attempting to depart this area for home, he just stopped, and unmoving, basically said, "Sorry, I'm not going to do this any more." It was obvious that his hip hurt from the unusual angle of his back leg, and that he was not ever going to be good for any kind of hiking. Sad. He was such a good boy and fun to have along.

In 2010 or so, I tried to give him and the previously mentioned Oberhasli (a worthless and lazy goat) to a gentleman as weed eaters, so that I wouldn't have to continue feeding them, and so, hopefully, they could live out their years happily munching.

I didn't do my homework on this relocation, however, and this worthless individual just about starved Shadow to death. I had kept looking in on them periodically and when it

became obvious that Shadow was going to die if I didn't repossess him, I took him back to my pen and attempted to put some weight back on him as both of his hips were sticking up like flags since there was precious little weight on his bones.

He also came back with his long hair absolutely loaded with burrs he had picked up where this individual took them to graze. By the time I got them all cut out, there was very little hair left, and at this time we were perilously close to winter! So I had to buy a coat for him from Rex Summerfield so he had some chance of surviving the winter.

Well, survive the winter he did, but recover from this starving episode he did not. He regained some of his previous weight, but never completely regained his health. Add to that the fact that when he came back into the pen, he had to accept a position in the 'pecking order' that was somewhere off the bottom of the scale. He was never able to reintegrate with the others, and consequently had trouble getting to the hay, and was the brunt of a lot of the others aggression.

September 2012, I was backing up the driveway having returned from a hiking venture, and I noticed that he was 'down' in the pen. Turned out he had been down for some time, and by the time I got to him he was very near death.

It is my belief that he simply succumbed to the various perils that life had thrust at him, for they had been many... and frequent.