

# Professional Shoulder Mount Deer

## Part 3 — Mounting

By Dan Rinehart

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**T**hanks for coming back for Part 3. In this article we will be looking at all the things involved in mounting a Professional Shoulder Mount. So, let's not waste any time and get right to it!

First, lay the cape out on a bench and stretch it from side to side. This will put width back into the cape getting it back to the original proportions before fleshing. I tug pretty good to regain the neck measurement.

With the cape ready, we can apply hide paste. I like to use the WESCO hide paste.



Adjust your manikin as seen in this photo. I find this position easiest for applying the cape.





I apply hide paste **LIBERALLY** making sure it is applied to all areas especially concave or recessed areas.



Apply hide paste around the center muzzle area. Paste will be applied to the lips, nose and eye area when we individually set those areas.



I am using ear liners without ear butts. Therefore, I place a coil of Critter Clay around the base of the ear to create the ear butt. Musculature forming will take place latter.



With the manikin pre-positioned. Place the hide over the manikin locating the brisket and face in "general" position.



The lips, nose and eyes are in proper placement.



The brisket is placed in position.

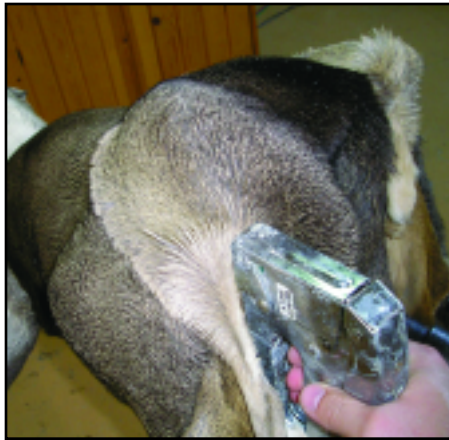
**NOTE:** the brisket area is a place I see many taxidermists aligning the hair patterns improperly. Simply put, the hair pattern of the brisket runs up the center of one leg, turns toward the center of the neck and then runs down the center of the other leg.



If the hair pattern of the brisket is extending past the center of the leg, your brisket is not aligned properly. A common problem is to try to fit a smaller cape over a larger manikin. The pull and stretch needed to bring the seam together forces the brisket over the center line of the leg.



Once the brisket is aligned, find and recess (if your manikin has armpit recesses) the hide in the armpit area.



Embed a securing-staple in each armpit to ensure the brisket will remain in place during mounting.



It will be a while until our sewing is completed and we can work on the lips, nose and eyes. Therefore, place a wet towel around these areas and pin in place.



Using T-pins, I secure the hide along the back seam.



I place a T-pin on both sides of the seam in 1-inch increments.



With the seam secured, our mount can be rotated upright in preparation for sewing.



The first area we will secure is along the antler bases. Adjust and place the hide in proper position. You will know when the hide is positioned properly when the hair line along the front and back of the antler burr comes together to form a cowlick. This hair cowlick will point straight down when the skin is positioned correctly along the antler burr.



The seam of this deer is cut with a "Y" incision. First, both antler burrs will be secured. Then one side of the "Y" will be sewn together. Finally, the other side of the "Y" will be sewed, with sewing continuing down the back seam. Securing the hide to the antler burr. Start by inserting and locking a stitch in the hide along the front area of the antler burr.



Once that first stitch is locked, loop the cape thread around the back of the antler base and insert the needle approximately 1/4" from the beginning locked thread.



Pull the cape thread tight and the front of the hide will "snug" to the front of the antler base.



Continue this back and forth sewing pattern until you have sewn back to the original incision of the hide at the antler base.



I have completed the back-and-forth sewing pattern along the antler burr.



Prior to continuing our sewing down the right side of the "Y", hide paste is applied along the antler base and forehead. After hide paste is applied, continue sewing down the "Y".



I have sewn along the right side of the "Y" and placed two locking stitches at the end. I then cut the cape thread, leaving 1"-2" of extra thread. Next, I cut a new piece of cape thread and begin the same burr/hide sewing sequence as performed on the right side.



The left side burr and seam have been sewn. We can now continue sewing down the back seam.



Prior to sewing down the back, lift the sewn "Y" and place hide paste back between the hide and the manikin.

I sew in 1/4" – 1/2" stitch-runs. **Note: it is very important to pull and push the hide forward (toward the head) on every stitch.** This helps assure that the neck and shoulder diameters are properly placed on the manikin. If you pull each stitch toward the shoulder, you are sure to pull the neck of the hide back into the shoulder area of the manikin. Pulling back toward the shoulders results in a gap in the hide (along the shoulders) that is impossible to pull together.

Continue sewing 1" past the back edge of the manikin.





Secure the sewn hide onto the manikin with a couple staples.



With the hide along the back and the armpits, secure with staples. Then secure the brisket and the shoulder area with a continuous row of staples spaced approximately 1/4" apart



Once all the back edge of the hide is fully secured with staples, use a hammer to push all staples firmly into the plywood backboard of the manikin.



Using a scalpel, trim the excess hide away from the stapled edge. Leave approximately 1/4" of hide between the severed edge and the secured staple.



If air is trapped in the chest/brisket area, cut a hole with your scalpel.



Then use your hand to force trapped air out of the cut hole.



It is now time to move-on to the procedures that will bring LIFE back to our mount. This is the mounting of the face (lips, nose eyes and ears). First, fold the hide (upper muzzle and lower chin) back and cover this part of the manikin with hide paste. Keep hide paste out of nostrils and 1/4" away from upper and lower lip lines (paste can be pushed to the edge of the lip line after the lip is tucked).



Balance is an important part of a professional mount. If one side is not balanced with the other side, a customer can see the lack of symmetry. We will be tucking the upper lip first. Within this upper lip, the first area to be tucked is along the center of the nose pad. Begin by centering the nose pad and lip over the manikin.



I used a stainless steel lip tucking tool hand crafted by World Whitetail Champion Gene Smith. This tool pushes the lip precisely into the lip slot without deforming the lip-line of the manikin. Note: all inner lip skin is recessed into the manikin and the nose pad is perfectly centered.



With the front upper lip secured, we need to find and tuck the back corner of the mouth. I have placed my thumb at the back corner of the lip line. Notice that the hair line naturally contours around my thumb, continuing along the lower lip line. We will soon see that this hair line eventually arcs down and away from the lip line, forming a cowlick. However, it is important to note this cowlick is NOT at the back corner of the lip. Instead the hair pattern runs in a continuous arc along the back corner of the lip (continuing to the downward cowlick in the lower lip).



With the back corner located and positioned, we can use our lip tool to tuck the corner lip skin into the back corner lip-slot. Note: the corner lip skin is tucked back into the lip and placed back into the side-muzzle area.



The front and back of the lip is secured. At first it will appear that there is too much lip skin. However, if you follow the following procedures, the lip skin will naturally fall into position.

