

Interesting Moments in Measuring

INTERESTED STUDENTS OF CARIBOU HEADS CAN SEE CLEAR PHOTOS FROM RECENT RECORD BOOKS OF THE CURRENT WORLD RECORD TROPHIES. ONE FAMOUS MOUNTAIN CARIBOU IS SHOWN ONLY IN THE 1964 BOOK. JOHN I. MOORE TOOK THIS BULL AT COLD FISH LAKE, B.C., IN 1958; IT WAS IN FIRST PLACE AT THE 9TH AWARDS PROGRAM IN THE SPRING OF 1960 AND IT STILL RANKS IN 4TH PLACE.

The head is now on display at the Lone Star Brewery in San Antonio, Texas. The published photo doesn't show adequately why this head scores so high. The top points, the F-4 and F-5, are all over 24 inches long and the two points on each side have fused bases so that H-4 circumferences are over 16 inches each. These top points instead of extending upward are directed inward and the tips almost touch. If one saw this animal in the field it would take careful study to recognize the high scoring configuration of these top points. Usually on big caribou heads the top point and the



THIS WOODLAND CARIBOU, TAKEN IN 1950 BY GEORGE H. LESSER, WAS THE WINNER OF THE SAGAMORE HILL AWARD IN 1952.

second top point are widely separated so that the H-4 circumference is of moderate size. Compared to the Beaubien head, discussed in the previous issue, with big palmated tops, the Moore head superficially appears poorly palmated, but accumulates over 143 points from these 4 top points and the palmation associated with them. Figures A and B clearly show locations of the top palm measurements.

Another remarkable caribou head is in the Woodland class taken in Newfoundland in 1950 by George H. Lesser, winner of the Sagamore Hill Award in 1952. This trophy is illustrated in each of the records books from 1952 to the 1993, 10th edition, where it is still listed in 2nd place. The Lesser caribou has the largest combined size of the two brows exceeding all other known caribou. The head-on photo shows these structures, but they are best seen from the side. Each brow is 19+ inches wide and 20+ inches long with 18 total brow points. Many other big caribou have one shovel larger than the other, but having two such monstrous brows on the same head seems to be unsurpassable. In none of the other 5 classes of caribou do we find the smaller shovel so close to the size

of the larger one, than in Newfoundland caribou. Of the top 50 Woodland trophies only 3 are without double shovels, while in all the other classes many more big heads have only the single shovel.

It is surprising to me that the largest known caribou is still the Quebec-Labrador trophy taken in 1931 by Zack Elbow and on display at the Cody Museum in the Boone & Crockett collection. This monstrous head gains its high score with over 60 inch main beams and a 58 inch spread. The overall size of the top Alaskan barren ground trophies are much larger than the Quebec-Labrador animals. There are 18 Alaskan trophies now recorded at over 450 and only three of the Quebec-Labrador class above that figure.



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After review of the many ways in which caribou heads may acquire their high score, it is natural that, with tongue in cheek, we speculate about what sort of giant head we would have if we picked long beams from one, big shovels from another, high scoring top points from another, and so on. Doing this in an informal way, with the Beaubien head contributing 150 points from its top structure, the Hedgecock barren ground animal with 39 points from the rear points and 50 points from its bez points, the Lesser trophy with 97 points from its brows, 50 inch inside spread from the S. W. Terry barren ground, the 68 inch main beams from the Joseph Shoaf barren ground, the 73 total antler points (minus 14 brow points) from the Hollister mountain caribou, would all total over 600 points. The chance that such a trophy has ever in the past existed or will ever in the future is close to zero, but it is something we can dream about.

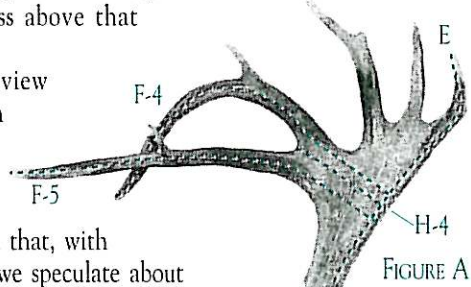


FIGURE A

INSIDE OF THE LEFT BEAM.
Note: Actual measurement would take place on the outside of the beam.

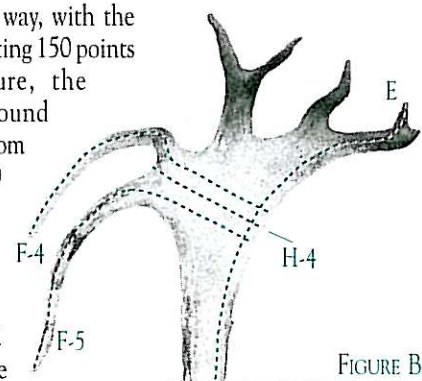


FIGURE B

OUTSIDE OF THE RIGHT BEAM.



THIS MOUNTAIN CARIBOU WAS TAKEN IN 1958 BY JOHN I. MOORE. NOTICE THE REMARKABLE TOP POINTS. PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN L. STEIN.