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# FROM THE EDITOR

## Boone and Crockett's Big Game Awards

BOONE AND CROCKETT'S 20TH BIG GAME AWARDS, held in 1989 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was my first opportunity to attend one of the Club's Awards Programs. Albuquerque was a very special time for me as I was a new Regular Member of the Club and had a whitetail deer and an Alaska brown bear accepted during the 20th Awards Entry Period. The traditions and aura surrounding the Awards Program were new and exciting but the most fond memories of that occasion that keep coming back to me are more about people than about trophies. It was at the 20th Big Game Awards that I met and became acquainted with Gene Alford, recipient of the Sagamore Hill Award Medal for a cougar taken on a solo hunt under the ultimate of fair chase conditions in Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Subsequent to that occasion, I made two summer pack trips in Idaho's Selway country with Gene where I got to know a man whom I admire as one of my all time "hunting heroes."

As the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd Big Game Awards programs have come and gone, again my memories of each of these events are more about people than they are about anything else. The 24th Big Game Awards was no different, it is the people whom I remember more than the trophies. I met and got to know many of the trophy owners, each with his or her own special story and individual charm. *Boone and Crockett Club's 24th Big Game Awards, 1998 - 2000*, features these hunters and the hunting stories written by the sportsmen and sportswomen who took the top 86 award winning big game trophies from 3,955 total trophies accepted during the 24th Awards Period. Two of these stories are featured in this issue of *Fair Chase*.

David Malzac's story about his World's Record grizzly hunt was particularly interesting to me as it reflected a wonderful Alaskan adventure conducted in traditional Alaskan style. Long-time Alaskans who had hunted together for years literally pioneered their way into the bush over a nearly impassable road to access their hunting area. The extreme difficulty of this trip and the tremendous team effort required from each member of the team made this a very special adventure. Even without the World's Record bear, this trip would have been a great success because of the adventure and camaraderie associated with the trek.

Our children are the future of our sport. Although Mary Isbell was not able to attend the Awards ceremony, Mary Isbell's story is featured in this issue. Mary's story about hunting with her family and the role family tradition played in everything from her selection of a rifle to use on the hunt to learning to hunt and shoot illustrates the importance of families in the introduction of hunting to our youth. Family and friends worked together to help Mary and her sister, Becky, be successful in their efforts to find their moose.

If you enjoy these stories, you will find many more like them in *Boone and Crockett Club's 24th Big Game Awards, 1998 - 2000*, which will be published by the time you read this. It will be a great addition to your library as well as make a super gift for someone special in your life. ▲▲▲



**George A. Bettas**

**Executive Director**  
Boone and Crockett Club



Sagamore Hill Award winner, Gene Alford with his dogs, Scratch and Kelly, in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George A. Bettas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.