

# BEATING THE ODDS

BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB



**BIG GAME AWARDS**

2004 • 2005 • 2006 FORT WORTH, TX

The **26th Awards Judges Panel** has just been completed, scores have been verified, and now many of the top trophy entries for the 2004-2006 program are on display for the public at Cabela's in Fort Worth. The banquet and Awards ceremonies are but days away. With that thought in mind, following are a few short stories of some significant trophies that will highlight the upcoming 26th Awards Book. These trophies are also currently part of Boone and Crockett Club's 26th Awards Display that will be open through June 23.



Frank A. Hanks (right) with his son Wade, posing with the seventh-largest Canada moose ever recorded by B&C. The bull has 33 total points and a near 60-inch spread.

## More Than They Bargained For 227-6/8 Canada Moose Frank A. Hanks Kawdy Mt., BC 2004

There are few things more special than father-son hunts. Frank Hanks and his son, Wade, made it a point to get together for hunting, and every other year or so to go on a special hunt.

For the 2004 season, they planned a Canada moose hunt near the Dease Lake area. After the long drive, they met their outfitter and took a floatplane into their hunting area.

The majority of their hunt consisted of glassing from a high knob, looking for the enticing glow of moose antler palms in the sea of brush and scrubby spruce that lay before them. The first day they were fed a steady diet of rain and snow — not conducive for good spotting. Even though the weather wasn't wonderful, Frank recalls being very taken with the beauty and enormity of the country they were in.

## New #1 Typical Mule Deer for Mexico 210-2/8 Typical Mule Deer Myra S. Smith Sonora, MX 2006

Myra Smith was watching a mule deer hunt on TV with her husband, Greg, when she got bit with the mule deer hunting bug. Shortly thereafter, they booked a hunt together in Mexico. It was a great experience, with both of them taking nice mule deer bucks.

The next year, in early 2006, they were booked again for the same hunt. Myra had her sights set a bit higher than the previous year. Little did she know what was in store.

On the first three days of the hunt, they saw plenty of deer and more than a few nice bucks, but nothing she wanted to tag. Also on the third day, Greg took a nice 5x5 buck that scored in the 170s. Now Myra had her benchmark.

On the fifth day, Myra saw what looked like a great buck, but could never make out the front forks properly and so never took a shot. It was on that same day that her husband (while hunting Coues' deer) saw a buck that got him so animated he could hardly speak when he tried to describe it. He and his guide estimated the buck to be 40 inches wide, with deep forks and long tines. As Myra puts it, "What more could a girl want?"

Myra, who usually falls asleep right away, had a difficult time that night trying to catch any sleep. Visions

Myra S. Smith with her #1 typical mule deer for Mexico. The trophy scores 210-2/8 B&C points.





Tired but happy, James H. Doyle with one of the top entries in its category for the 26th Awards Program.

The second day it cleared up, and both Frank and Wade saw multiple mature bulls. One bull seemed to be a well-developed trophy. The bull was nearly three miles away but, after some discussion, their guide thought he could get them within range.

They quickly mounted their horses and began the long ride, hoping to get within a suitable distance. They then dismounted and began a 30-minute stalk to get Frank and his .338 in range. Their stalk was successful, and Frank quickly dispatched his trophy bull moose, with no idea at the time that it would become one of the largest Canada moose ever taken. Frank's tremendous bull, at 227-6/8 is the seventh-largest recorded by B&C. It is an exceptional trophy, sporting 45- and 46-inch palms, 33 total points, and a near 60-inch spread.

Half an hour later, Wade had also taken his bull — a 203-2/8 B&C giant. At most hunting camps in Canada, Wade's bull would have been the toast of the hunt. This time, however, his tremendous trophy would have to settle for second-best. The fact that his dad had the larger trophy likely made it a little easier for Wade to handle. ■

of giant, 40-inch mule deer consumed her thoughts. Buck fever was beginning to get the best of her. The next morning was the last day of the hunt. They were going for broke; it was the big buck or nothing.

It was cold that morning but the day was warming up quickly. They glassed from several vantage points with no luck, until just before 10 a.m. Suddenly, Myra saw a huge buck take two jumps and disappear into thick brush.

The buck either had to run the length of the low area or up the other side. They eased into the area, looking for him. Myra spotted him under a tree, in the shade, and the deer was looking right at them. His dusky coat blended well in the dirt and shade.

The shot was 267 yards; she placed the crosshairs on the neck and squeezed. The first shot missed high. She quickly chambered another round in her .300 WSM, placed the crosshairs on the same spot, and squeezed again. This time, the buck dropped instantly.

Myra, who in the heat of the moment had no time to be nervous, now began shaking like a leaf as she began to comprehend the enormity of what she had just experienced. Her tremendous 210-2/8 typical mule deer, with a 38-2/8" greatest spread, is believed to be the largest ever taken by a woman, as well as the largest ever taken in Mexico. ■

## Third Time's a Charm

### 29-5/16 Alaska Brown Bear

#### James H. Doyle

#### Bear Lake, AK 2006

**Jim Doyle boarded the Cessna 185 in Kenai, destined for his third hunt for an Alaska brown bear. It may have been his third hunt, but the excitement and anticipation never seemed to dim. The hum of the engine made it easy to let his mind drift toward hunts he had taken and hunts he still had before him. It was a four-hour flight, but with nice weather it quickly turned into a fantastic sight-seeing trip and chance to reflect.**

The next day he met his guide, Mike Shepard. They quickly sorted gear that they would be taking to spike camp, boarded another small aircraft, and then flew into camp.

After getting settled in, they decided to take a quick hike to the top of a nearby knoll to see what might be roaming about. They watched several bears until almost dark, then returned for an early supper.

The next morning, they grabbed their rifles and packboards and headed back up toward that same knoll. Doyle had high hopes and expectations, and had given strict orders that he should not be allowed to take any bear that would square less than 10 feet.

They walked up the valley for a closer look at their surroundings. At one point, they stopped for a breather. Shepard pointed up to the top of a mountain and said, "Do you see that big rock up there?"

Doyle looked for a moment and then Shepard said, "That rock moved!"

Shepard didn't bother to ask if they should go and look at it; he simply said, "Let's go get that bear."

At times, their stalk forced them into breaking through snow up to their waists, but they were eventually able to get within 75 yards of their quarry. The bear was lying in the brush and had no clue the two hunters were anywhere in the area. Two shots from Doyle's .338 and the prize was down.

As they approached, Doyle's fatigue and emotion rushed to the surface — he couldn't even manage to lift the giant head of his trophy. It had been 11 tough hours from the time they had left camp until the bear was down. Doyle's giant Alaska brown bear squared 11'3" and scored 29-5/16 — one of the top entries in its category for B&C's 26th Awards Program. ■