

B&C BOOKS

GRANCEL FITZ: Scoring System Pioneer



Theodore J. Holsten, Jr.
Editor of Specialty Books and Limited Editions Communications, Publications, and Marketing Committee

Although he was never a member of the Boone and Crockett Club, Grancel Fitz had a profound effect on Club activities as one of the fathers of the Club's unique scoring system. A long-time advocate of an improved way to judge North American trophies, he wrote an extensive chapter on his views for the 1939 Boone and Crockett book, *North American Big Game*, the second book to rank big game trophies according to a system pioneered by Prentiss N. Gray.

In 1949, a special committee was formed to devise an equitable, objective measurement system for the big game of North America. Chaired

by Samuel B. Webb, the committee included Fitz, and also James L. Clark, who had developed a rival scoring system. The work of this committee evolved into the present Boone and Crockett sys-

tem. Adopted in 1950, it became universally accepted as the standard for ranking North American big game.

The 1952 *Records of North American Big Game* was the first to incorporate all previous and new entries under the newly adopted system. Grancel Fitz and his wife, Betty, are credited with tireless work in re-evaluating previous records. Grancel also contributed superb photographs and a chapter on scoring for the 1952 edition. For many years Grancel and Betty Fitz were heavily involved in the North American Big Game Competitions. Grancel was three times a judge and twice was chairman of the Judges Panel.

An avid big game hunter, Grancel Fitz was one of the first to take good representative trophies of all North American big game species. His book, *North American Head Hunting* (1957) chronicles these ad-

ventures. Several of his trophies rank high in the current records listings.

Stricken with a heart attack while on a jaguar hunting trip in the Mato Grosso of Brazil, Grancel died in May 1963 at a hospital in New York. His book, *How to Measure and Score Big-Game Trophies* (1963) had been in preparation and was published shortly after his death. A revised and updated version was edited and published by his wife, Betty, in 1977.

Grancel Fitz was a former president of the Society of Photographic Illustrators, and he won eight national awards from art directors groups. He wrote and illustrated many stories for national sporting magazines. Why he never became a member of the Boone and Crockett Club is a mystery that grows dimmer with the passing years. His name at the Club headquarters in Missoula will live on through a memorial brick to Grancel and Betty Fitz donated recently by members of their family. ▲▲▲

BOOKS BY GRANCEL FITZ

North American Head Hunting (1957)

How to Measure and Score Big-Game Trophies (1963)

