

TROPHY TALK



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DIRECTOR
Big Game Records

Integrity

Integrity has been of paramount importance to the Boone and Crockett Club since its founding in 1887. Even back then, when there were no game laws regulating bag limits, seasons,

methods of take, sex or age of animals, calibers, equipment, etc., etc., the Club incorporated its first "Fair Chase" statement (See Table 1) into its bylaws. This was a radical concept for the time, since "hunting" at that time was a 24/7, free-for-all activity engaged in by many settlers and market hunters. The name of the game was to get the animals off the land to eliminate competition for farming and ranching practices, or make as much money as possible from their hides and meat. Once the meat was gone, settlers picked up the bones and sold them by the ton to fertilizer factories.

The concept of "Fair Chase" became and is an integral and inseparable part of the Club's records-keeping activities. An

A pile of bison skulls at the Michigan Carbon Works towers over 50 feet (ca. 1880).



Entry Affidavit, formerly called the Fair Chase Statement, must be signed by hunters

submitting their trophies, with the signature witnessed by either a notary public or an Official Measurer. The affidavit currently lists nine conditions of taking that cause a trophy to be ineligible for the records program. These conditions, considered "unfair chase," have increased over the years as a result of technical advances in equipment and hunting techniques. By signing the Entry Affidavit, the hunter acknowledges that a fraudulently signed statement will bar the entry from the records archives or result in its removal from them. In addition, all prior entries are subject to deletion from future editions of the records books and future entries may not be accepted.

It has been said many times that Official Measurers are the backbone of the Club's records-keeping activities — and it is true. In addition to volunteering their time and talents to score trophies free-of-charge for the hunting public, Official Measurers are the eyes and ears of B&C, and it is their responsibility to help uphold the integrity of the Awards Program. If measurers become aware of any irregularities with entry procedures and non-compliance with the Entry Affidavit, they should notify the records department in Missoula, Montana. The reason I bring this up is that an Official Measurer recently told us his only responsibility was to score trophies for the Club. He went on to say that he didn't believe it his responsibility to notify B&C of any information about trophies taken in unfair chase or in violation of hunting regulations.

Nothing could be further from the truth. If our Official Measurers do not notify us of what's going on at the local level, how can B&C's records be above reproach?

There is no way the records department can know about circumstances surround-

ing every trophy entered in the records book. It really is the responsibility of Official Measurers to notify the records department of any alleged violations. Official Measurers do not need to confront individuals concerning allegations of unfair chase — in fact, they shouldn't. All they need to do is provide the records department with any information they have, and the allegations will be thoroughly investigated. Needless to say, we welcome information about trophies allegedly taken in violation of Club policies from anyone. We just need to know which trophy is involved and complete details (who, what, when, where, etc.) about the alleged violation.

All information received by the office about violations of Fair Chase, whether it is received from Official Measurers or other hunters, is treated with the utmost confidence and thoroughly investigated. I want to emphasize, however, that everyone is presumed innocent until the facts are confirmed after a thorough investigation and review by the records committee, the governing body of the Club's records-keeping activities. If the allegations are not confirmed, the trophy is either accepted or remains listed in the records book.

From time to time I check out various websites and chat rooms and read where participants accuse Boone and Crockett Club of removing a trophy because, "B&C has an ax to grind with that individual," or "B&C doesn't want a trophy from this state (or province) to be listed as a World's Record," or "B&C doesn't want that trophy to score that much." These sorts of outlandish comments go on and on, taking on many forms. I'm sure many of you have come across some of these same chat rooms. Again, nothing could be further from the truth. B&C has never favored one trophy over another or penalized a trophy for any unfounded reason. Every trophy is handled individually and treated with the respect it deserves. In the 26 years that I have processed and accepted trophies, I have yet to see how intentional discrimination against any trophy would benefit Boone and Crockett Club.

Fortunately, it is a fact that nearly all trophies listed in the Club's records books were taken by well-deserving, honest hunters. Unfortunately, there are always a few bad apples that make everyone look bad. The records office will continue to make every effort to maintain and uphold the integrity of the Club's Awards Program. ■

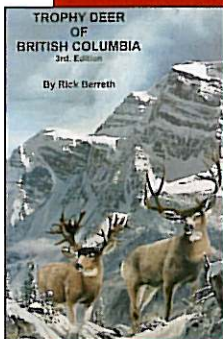
TABLE 1

The term "fair chase" shall not be held to include killing bear, wolf, or cougar in traps, nor "fire-hunting," nor "crusting" moose, elk, or deer in deep snow, nor killing game from a boat while it is swimming in the water." (Article V, Boone and Crockett Club by-laws, founded December 1887.)

RECORDS BOOK REVIEWS

BOWHUNTING BIG GAME RECORDS OF NORTH AMERICA, 6TH EDITION

The Pope and Young Club's 6th edition of *Bowhunting Big Game Records of North America* is hot off the press. This book contains comprehensive data on more than 62,000 North American big-game animals harvested in fair chase with a bow up through January 1, 2005. In addition to the final score for each trophy, data are also included on the county and state where taken, hunter's name, year taken, all-time rank, and a number of select, significant measurements. The listings are enhanced with portrait photographs, field photographs, and first-person accounts of the World's Records in each of the 33 recognized categories of North American big game. Also featured are chapters discussing the values of hunting, the Pope and Young Club/St. Charles Museum of Bowhunting, and historical data. For the first time, a CD of the records is included with the book. The CD contains a digital version of the full record book, in PDF format, as well as the records information in sortable database format. *Bowhunting Big Game Records of North America*, 6th Edition, is available for \$42 plus \$5.95 for shipping and handling. Send orders to Pope and Young Club, Box 548, Chatfield, MN 55923.



TROPHY DEER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

This is the third edition of Rick Berreth's book, *Trophy Deer of British Columbia*, on trophy-class mule deer, blacktail deer, and whitetail deer from British Columbia. It is a 418-page, hardcover book with a dust jacket. Between the covers are more than 450 photos of mule deer, whitetail deer, and blacktails. More than 400 of these photos have not previously been seen in print. The data is broken down into categories of typical and non-typical bucks, with listings for archery bucks, and shed antlers. There are historical photographs, stories, and color photographs. Maps and a bit of history are also listed along with a full section of records listed by final scores. Many of these deer are of Boone and Crockett class. Some place high in the records, including the World's Record Sitka blacktail. This book can be purchased for \$26.95, plus \$5 S+H, U.S. or Canadian. Send a check or money order to: Antler Enterprises, 2605 Marleau Rd., Prince George, B.C., V2N 5G5, or call (250) 964-8057.

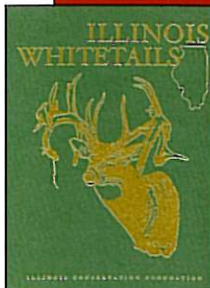
MAINE'S 26th ANNUAL BIG GAME RECORDS PUBLICATION

The Maine Antler & Skull Trophy Club (MASTC) recently released its latest records book, the *26th Annual Big Game Records Publication*. This edition depicts photos and score charts of Maine's top 12, all-time non-typical whitetail deer, including bucks taken by Hill Gould (262-7/8), James Mason (248-1/8), and Buzz Oberholser (238-4/8). Dozens of exciting trophy-deer, bear, and moose stories are featured, as well as a total listing of MASTC trophies taken from the 2004 season. Many new records were taken during the fall of 2003, including the new typical State Record, scoring 188-3/8, which was taken with a muzzleloader. Copies of the MASTC's *26th Annual Big Game Records Publication* can be obtained for \$28, which includes shipping. Please send check or money order to: Maine Antler & Skull Trophy Club, 150 Ames Rd, Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426. The Maine Antler & Skull Trophy Club is developing a website, so please check it out at: www.mastc.info.



ILLINOIS WHITETAILS

The Illinois Conservation Foundation today announced the release of *Illinois Whitetails*, a new hardcover book, edited by Gordon Whittington and published in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This edition includes all of the entries for typical and non-typical whitetail bucks taken by archery, firearm, and crossbow hunters that are listed in the Illinois Big Buck Recognition Program (BBRP). The Boone and Crockett Club also provided all of its records from Illinois for a special section in the book. *Illinois Whitetails* includes chapters on the history of the Prairie State's deer population, national and statewide research, biology, management, numerous photographs, big-buck stories, and much more. Copies of *Illinois Whitetails* can be obtained for \$24.95 through the Illinois Conservation Foundation website at www.ilcf.org or by calling (217) 785-2003.



BOOK REVIEW NOTICE

There are many state, provincial, and private organizations publishing local records books that use Boone and Crockett Club's copyrighted scoring system with permission of the Club. Since there is no single reference source for these books, and because there are many hunters who collect them, we will review them as time and space permit. Only those books that use the Boone and Club's copyrighted scoring system and terminology will be considered for review. Please note that the Boone and Crockett Club cannot vouch for the accuracy of the data contained in these books. Some of the books may include trophies that were not scored by certified Boone and Crockett Club Official Measurers. If there is a question about the status of a trophy listed in any of these books, the Boone and Crockett Club's records books/archives are the final reference source to settle any and all discrepancies.

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