

BEYOND THE SCORE

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As the Boone and Crockett Club staff prepares for the 27th Awards Program this June in Reno, Nevada, we are collecting stories for the top entries from the trophy owners who have been invited to attend our event and have elected to participate. As with previous awards books, we will profile the stories of the top hunter trophies for each category. The book will include full feature stories and photos of every hunter and trophy attending the Awards Program. Below is a sneak peak of two of those trophy stories.

Rocky Mountain Goat - A.C. Smid

Back in 2006, Boone and Crockett Club regular member A.C. Smid took a great summer Rocky Mountain goat that made the awards book. Impressed with his billy, but slightly disappointed by the hair length, Smid decided he would like to pursue a mature goat with a winter coat. On a trip to British Columbia, he mentioned his desires to his guide Roger, who recommended Bob Milligan, an outfitter that had some of the best goats British Columbia had to offer in his area. A look at the records tells us the best goats from that province translate to the best goats in North America.



A.C. Smid's efforts were rewarded during his 2008 hunt near Kalum Lake, British Columbia. This Rocky Mountain goat, scoring 54 points, is one of the invited trophies to be featured at the 27th Awards Program in Reno, Nevada.

"...Bob was scheduled to take some needed time off but instead called Roger and asked if I could get up there—now! The advent of the rut was coming and Bob knew that the billy would hang in the same general area with the nannies. This was a once-in-a-lifetime trophy..."

On November 18th, Smid landed in Smithers, British Columbia, and by the 20th was headed east towards Terrace, British Columbia, where the hunt would take place.

"...After settling in at their home for the night and going through the customary small chat, we got right down to the business at hand. Bob explained that the hunt was going to be a tough one. The weather won't cooperate, the climb will be long and steep, and the snow will be about six to eight feet deep. The plan is basic: drive the pickup until the snow gets too deep, unload the modified ATV with its snow tracks, and drive it to the end of the logging road, pulling a sled. Strap on the 12x14-inch snow shoes and hoof it from there..." People say there is no such thing as an easy goat hunt, but this is hardcore, no matter who you are.

Day one was snowed out, and day two brought the smallest opening between storms to make a run at the mountain and the goats. *"... After hiking for about two hours up a steep tree-lined ridge, we finally came to the first—and only—opening on our way up. About 300 yards long, the opening was interspersed with trees, but it gave us*

the first opportunity to glass up the mountain and look into the bowls for the goats. Just as Bob had predicted, there they were, about 15 in all; nannies and kids feeding while the three billies went about their power struggle..." The climb continued, and the pair finally reached the ridge to glimpse the bowl where they had seen the goats. Smid recalled, *"It is hard to describe the entire journey, but the climb was surreal. It was like being on a Stairmaster with snowshoes in eight feet of snow for over eight hours..."* Unfortunately the goat they were after was not there. They studied the goats and tried their best to stay warm in the 20-degree temps with 20 mph wind. Then, as all hunters hope for, horns appeared above the ridgeline. Over the top stepped the magnificent goat with his massive horns and gorgeous winter coat. He was out of range, so they had to get closer. *"... Trying to find a shooting position when the hill is so steep was a trick, and thank goodness for the tree. I had to lay my pack on an angle against it so I could get a steady rest..."* *"Charles are you on 12x power?" "Yes I am, and he's in my crosshairs."* *"Whenever you're ready, Charles."* The goat Smid took scored 54 points. Pending panel verification, this goat is tied for the 26th place in Boone and Crockett Club's records. ■

Non-Typical American Elk - Dan Agnew

2008 could have been the best year on record for the taking of trophy bulls across the West. While the majority of the articles that were seen in magazines and floating across the web focused on the new World's Record "spider bull," another bull of nearly mythical proportions for Washington state was harvested. As with the spider bull, rumors ran rampant surrounding this bull, and after a year-long due diligence investigation and verification process, this bull was accepted and declared Boone and Crockett Club's new Washington state record for non-typical American elk. The hunter is Dan Agnew, a long time supporter of conservation and especially elk. He describes the beginning of his hunt as follows.

"When I got into camp that night, my outfitter and guide mentioned that they had seen the bull before I arrived but that he was a long way off, and if he stayed where he was, it was going to be a tough hunt. I knew there was simply no way to know where he would be the next morning. Anxious and prepared for whatever was in store for the first day of my hunt, I went to bed excited, anxious and nervous...and as usual, I didn't sleep much."

We left camp in our pickup around 5:20 the next morning, and within 30 minutes, my guide Corey Reynard spotted a large group of elk feeding on an open hillside about a half mile from the road. While we waited in the pickup for the sun to come closer to the horizon so we would have enough daylight to get a better look on that clear eastern Washington September morning, Corey had the binocs up and excitedly said, "I can't believe it, that's him! I've never seen him up here on this open ridge and he's got a bunch of cows. We'd better get moving."

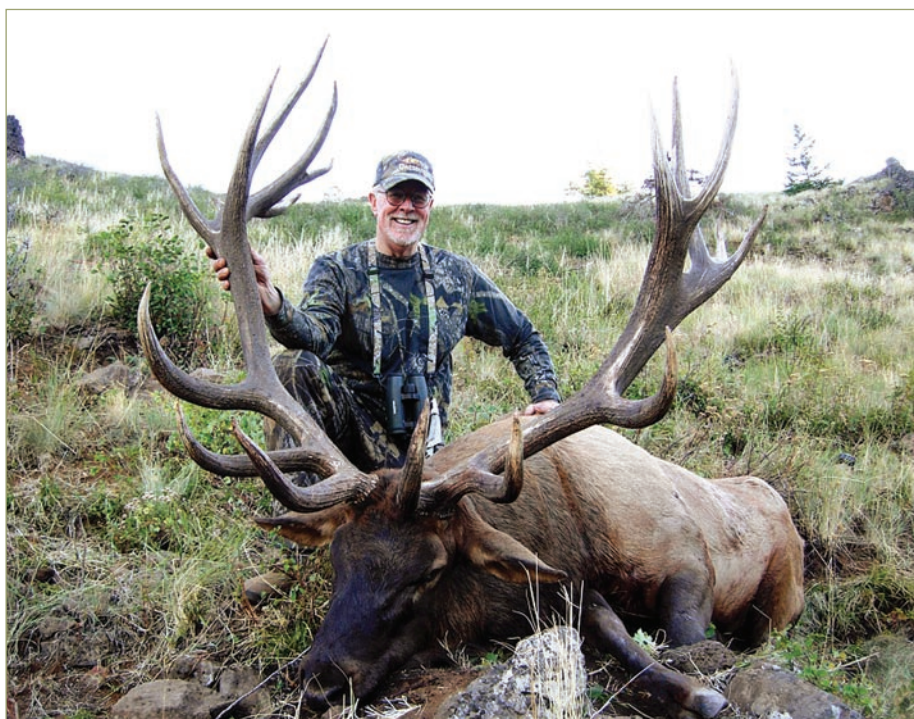
A 15-minute stalk ensued and a good piece of shooting by Dan had the bull down early on the first day of the hunt. He had planned to stay upwards of a month or longer if necessary to find the bull whose notoriety had drifted far beyond the mountains of Washington where he was hunting.

Dan had the following comments about his success and—as with many top trophies, extremely good fortune.

Back to luck...I love to elk hunt and have spent days, weeks, and months in the woods of Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon hunting for them. I came away on some hunts with great success and on other hunts, empty-handed. What a memory for my first elk hunt in my home state of Washington...within an hour after I left camp, I had shot the bull-of-a-lifetime and on public land. After field-dressing the bull, we hiked out with the meat and the antlers and were back in camp by early

afternoon...on the first day of my hunt! A lot of people have given me a really hard time because it sounded like I kind of showed up, shot my bull and went home. To be honest, that is kinda the way it happened. But, it's never happened to me before and will likely never happen again. And that's really okay with me.

Dan's bull is one of only 12 non-typical American elk entered from his home state of Washington and nets almost 15 points higher than the previous state record. The final score is 436-4/8 points. ■



Dan Agnew harvested this record non-typical American elk in Columbia County, Washington, in 2008. This bull is the new Washington state record scoring 436-4/8 points.



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