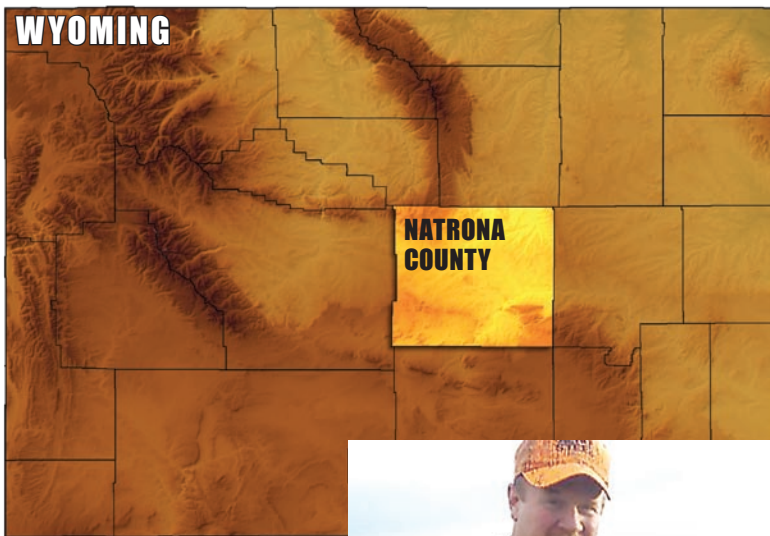


# BEYOND P.R. APP'D. 252 TC the SCORE

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## Over-the-Counter Tag Results in New State Record

Mike Wheeler felt that all-too-common disappointment of the unsuccessful draw notice from his home in Manchester, Michigan last year after applying for deer and pronghorn permits in Wyoming. Undeterred, Mike checked the leftover tag lists showing units available for over-the-counter purchase. He and his hunting partner, David Rowe, contemplated their options and decided to go back to the same area they hunted the previous year in Natrona County.



Mike Wheeler was hunting with an over-the-counter tag when he harvested this new state record pronghorn. The buck has final score of 91-2/8 points.



While not the renowned Carbon County, Natrona has produced 107 B&C pronghorn trophies placing it fourth in Wyoming and number six of all counties with at least one pronghorn entry. Pending panel score verification, Natrona county has now produced a tie for the Wyoming state record. Two years ago, the duo had taken two average pronghorn bucks and this past season they were looking for big mule deer. They had decided that if they were to fill a pronghorn tag it had to be something big, a “WOW” buck in Mike’s words. Wyoming is a do-it-yourself hunter’s paradise—evident from the success these two have achieved in two straight years. Mike and David planned to spend two weeks from late September to early October on the hunt with a few days scheduled for setting up camp and making sure firearms were sighted in.

Opening day, a shot at a respectable 6x5 mule deer presented itself to Mike, and he decided it was the trophy he wanted. The next morning, David connected on the second respectable mule deer for the pair.

Once the deer were taken care of, it was time to find a couple pronghorns. On the third morning it didn’t take long to get on some bucks that met their criteria. After a few unsuccessful stalks, they decided to take a break for lunch. From camp, David spotted a group of pronghorn on a nearby piece of state land with a buck worth some effort. Using the topography to his advantage, Mike closed the distance but was still out of his comfortable range. From the high vantage point on the ridge he was using for cover, he glassed the group and determined they showed no signs of moving, so he dropped back behind the ridge, enabling him to cut the distance nearly in half. The last few yards he stayed in the prone position crawling to a rock pile. From 175 yards, his .30-06 brought his stalk—and season—to a very successful conclusion.

The most unique part of his record animal is the mass measurements. While most of the highest-ranking pronghorn trophies carry horn lengths of 17 to 18 inches, his score sheet has a modest longer horn of 14-5/8 inches. Mike’s trophy score has over 60 points coming from the circumference and prong measurements; the larger base tapes an amazing 7-5/8 inches, the larger D-2 (second circumference) measurement of 9-1/8 inches with a left prong or “cutter” of 6-4/8 inches and the right measuring an impressive 7-2/8 inches. With only two inches of total deductions, and almost half of that coming from a broken tip on the left prong, the trophy nets 91-2/8 B&C points. ■

## Patience and Composure

Bryce Kniert spent four years in pursuit of a trophy tom that she could be proud of. It all started when she was 10, and her uncle had invited her along to chase the big cats of British Columbia.

The first day out she came face-to-face with a good cougar. Her uncle, who is an experienced houndsman, teamed with a pair of hunting partners to discuss the trophy potential of this first cat. Bryce's patience and composure must be commended. This young lady, at 10-years-old, looked at what was reported to be a 150- to 160-pound tom and decided to pass. Bryce was assured that with time and patience her uncle and crew could find a bigger cat for her. On December 26, 2008, the crew and the dogs made good on the guarantee. As Bryce tells it, her dream was coming true. After the hounds were



**Bryce Kniert and her uncle, Tim Flanagan, with her record-book cougar. The**

released, the old cat quickly treed and this one didn't take much time to judge. Bryce carefully positioned herself and with one well-placed shot from her .30-30, she had the biggest cougar entered from British Columbia in the last 11 years. It is currently sitting in the fifth spot in the 27th Awards Program. The final score of her trophy is 15-8/16 points. ■

**tom has a final score of 15-8/16 points and currently ranks fifth in the 27th Awards Program. They were hunting near Elk River, B.C.**

## Last Minute Call

Anytime one travels into the bush pursuing Canada or Alaska-Yukon moose, just reaching camp is an adventure in itself, as Delaware hunter Craig S. Spencer found out on his 2008 Alaskan moose hunt. After flying into Fairbanks, he found himself in the back seat of a Super Cub headed for the remote camp.

Upon arrival, the gear was quickly unpacked, but due to Alaska's law prohibiting hunting on the same day as flying, a few hours of grayling fishing became the first outdoor pursuit of this record hunt. The fishing excursion gave Craig his first exposure to the notorious hummock-laden landscape of Alaska moose habitat. The experience yielded around 50 fish for Craig and his hunting companion Ed in addition to a great distaste for walking the obstructive hummocks.

The next day, the pair found themselves in the field at first light, calling and glassing for moose. Dan, their guide, asked them who had first shot. Ed affirmed that Craig would have priority since he had put the hunt together, and it didn't take any debate for Craig to agree! The calling produced one cow that came in, which got the blood flowing, but no bulls could be enticed. Later that day, while still trying to lure moose into range, the hunters heard a pack of wolves, and moose calls quickly gave way to wolf calls. Soon, the pack of five or six wolves headed their way, but when a couple shots at the wolves came up empty, they headed back to camp near dusk for dinner. As they shed their hunting gear in favor of camp clothes, their guide did some last-minute cow calls. The next thing Craig knew, they were in pursuit wearing jeans and lacking bug repellent. They jogged over 500 yards from camp where they set up. Craig wanted a representative bull from the area, and asked the guide to let him know if it was a trophy meeting his criteria. As the bull closed the distance, Ed



was leaning over his shoulder saying he could see him, and from his expression Craig was certain that this was why they had made the trip. Dan mouthed the words with wide eyes, "He's a shooter!" By this time, Craig's nerves were shot. The bull appeared 175 yards away and took a minute to mutilate a bush. He closed the distance by 25 yards, finally stepping into a clear lane. After one good hit and a few follow ups, Craig Spencer stood over what, pending panel scoring, could be the 14th largest Alaska-Yukon moose ever taken.

**Craig S. Spencer's Alaska-Yukon moose has a final entry score of 248-5/8 points. He was hunting near Selawik, Alaska, during the 2008 season when he harvested the bull.**

The bull has a greatest spread of 67-7/8 inches; the left palm is 19 inches wide and the right palm is 21-7/8 inches. Palm lengths are 49-7/8 inches on the left and 52-1/8 inches on the right. At an entry score of 248-5/8 points, you can expect to see this one at the 27th Awards Period Judges Panel. ■