

EVALUATION OF PRONGHORN TROPHIES

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TOP FIVE PRONGHORN

93-4/8

MICHAEL J. O'HACO
Coconino County, Arizona
1985

93

EDWIN L. WETZLER
Yavapai County, Arizona
1975

92-6/8

SAM JAKSICK, JR.
Coconino County, Arizona
1991

91-6/8

STEVEN E. HOPKINS
Coconino County, Arizona
1992

91-4/8

WILSON POTTER
Arizona
1899

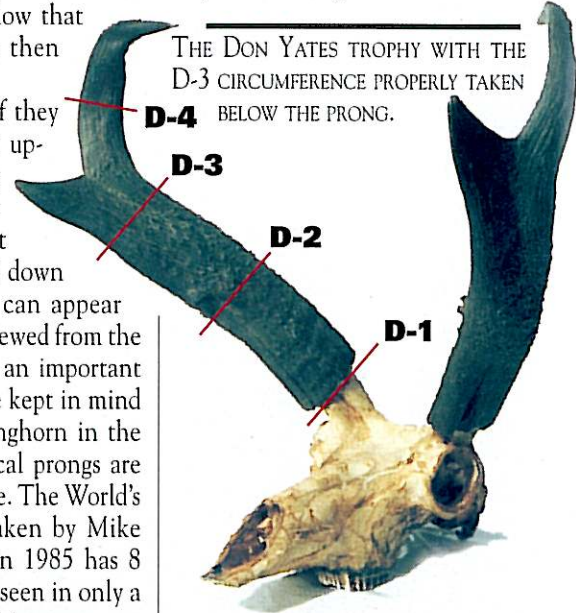
There is no horned or antlered species, except for Rocky Mountain goat, in which there is such a narrow range between the minimum score for entry into our permanent records and the World's Record. The minimum score for pronghorn is 82 points (80 points for the awards book) and the World's Record scores 93-4/8 points. A difference of only 11-4/8 points, unlike non-typical whitetail deer for instance where the difference between the all-time minimum and the World's Record is 138-7/8 points. Complete knowledge of the scoring system is extremely helpful when field judging for a trophy pronghorn.

A trophy pronghorn must have long and heavy horns with well developed prongs. A perusal of the listing of trophies shows that 17 inch horns with 6-1/2 inch basal circumference and 5-1/2 inch prongs

are about minimum for what hunters are looking for in a trophy. The total score for each side must be 41 or more. Any of those three measurements can be below that level but the others then must be above it.

The horn tips if they extend fairly straight upward to the tips may be 15 inches above the top of the head but if the tips are turned down as shown the horns can appear much shorter when viewed from the front or side. This is an important quality that should be kept in mind when evaluating pronghorn in the field. Long symmetrical prongs are always highly desirable. The World's Record pronghorn taken by Mike O'Haco in Arizona in 1985 has 8 inch prongs, a length seen in only a handful of other trophies.

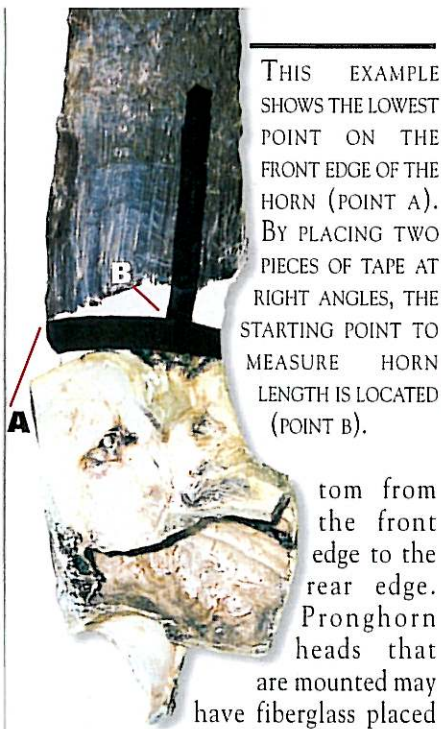
The horn length is measured from the lowest point on the outside of the horn. This can be anywhere along the outside bot-



THE DON YATES TROPHY WITH THE D-3 CIRCUMFERENCE PROPERLY TAKEN BELOW THE PRONG.

MINIMUM SCORE

	Awards	All-Time
Pronghorn	80	82



THIS EXAMPLE SHOWS THE LOWEST POINT ON THE FRONT EDGE OF THE HORN (POINT A). BY PLACING TWO PIECES OF TAPE AT RIGHT ANGLES, THE STARTING POINT TO MEASURE HORN LENGTH IS LOCATED (POINT B).

tom from the front edge to the rear edge. Pronghorn heads that are mounted may have fiberglass placed around the horn bases so that it becomes impossible to locate the lowest point on the horn. At each of the recent awards programs, at least one head was before the judges in which the trophy lost score because the judges couldn't accurately pinpoint that lowest point. In other words, if you have a big trophy which may be requested at a later judging program, either leave it unmounted or be certain that the taxidermist under-

stands the necessity of leaving that basal area exposed.

There is great variation in whether the prong is located high or low on the front of the horn. In the great majority of cases there will be two circumferences taken below the prong and two above it. The first quarter measurement is usually near the same dimension as the basal circumference, but the second quarter above the prong is likely to be four inches or less. Very rarely the prong may be high enough so the second quarter (D-3 measurement) can be taken below the prong. If this is done, however, we must be sure that there is no swelling below the prong to inflate this measurement. The Donald Yates trophy before the judges at the 17th Awards Program was correctly located in that fashion, and this head scored 91-4/8 points to win the first award (see photo on opposite page), but such pronghorns are most unusual.

As Jack Reneau announced in the Winter 1995 issue of *Fair Chase*, the Records Committee at its 1995 meeting voted to discontinue the penalty for excess spread between the horns. Perhaps one in twenty recorded pronghorn heads have had

some loss of score because of this conformation. This was corrected for those trophies already listed with us. In most cases it will result in only a minor change in the score but there are a few heads that will score more than two points higher.

What we have been unable to identify is those heads which in the past have had their score reduced below the minimum and because of this, have never been entered. We

invite trophy owners who have wide spreading trophies to have them rescored to see if they may make our minimum scores. I am certain that many wide spreading pronghorns have been passed up in the field because the hunter has felt they would be penalized excessively. The exception still remains that when the horns are so divergent that a direct measurement between the horns cannot be taken such heads may still be excluded.



THIS TROPHY WITH DOWN TURNED TIPS IS ONLY 12" ABOVE THE HEAD BUT THE HORNS ARE 16-3/8" LONG ON EACH SIDE.

