

NEW AWARD HONORS EXTRAORDINARY FAIR-CHASE HUNTS



Boone and Crockett Club
**BIG GAME
AWARDS**

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GPS MAPS**

The name Boone and Crockett is synonymous with trophy records, conservation and fair chase hunting. Trophies have long been honored with awards, books, exhibitions and events. Now, the Club's new Hunt Fair Chase Award is helping bring equal weight to the other half of the B&C brand.

Boone and Crockett's inaugural Hunt Fair Chase Award was sponsored by Hunting GPS Maps and presented as part of Club's recent 28th Big Game Awards in Reno, Nevada.

Matt "Rip" Rippentrop of Oelrichs, South Dakota, was honored for extraordinary ethics in a hunt that ultimately produced a massive bighorn ram scoring 203-6/8.

Well-known outdoor writer and television personality Craig Boddington presented the award to Rippentrop before a banquet crowd of 450. Boddington told the audience:

"Fair chase is just two words, but their meaning has deep significance to everyone who hunts and teaches young people about hunting. This was not an easy call to make, but of all the accounts of hunts from these 28th Awards, Rip's story read 'fair chase' from beginning to end. A 38-day, out-of-state, do-it-yourself campaign was certainly the way to honor a once-in-a-lifetime sheep tag."

The Hunt Fair Chase Award reads, "In recognition of a hunt that best represents the determination, self-reliance, and respect for the game that embodies the tenets of fair chase set forth by Boone and Crockett Club founder Theodore Roosevelt."

"We're honored to sponsor the Hunt Fair Chase Award," said Jason Ritthaler of Hunting GPS Maps. "All of us at Hunting GPS Maps are deeply grateful for the Club's work in conservation and fair chase across North America. We are happy to participate in this tradition by sponsoring an award that represents the tenets of hunting with determination, self-reliance, and respect for the game. It is these ethics that Hunting GPS Maps works to pass on to the next generation of hunters."

Hunting GPS Maps personnel joined the Boone and Crockett Club's Records Department and others in judging for the award from a number of written descriptions of hunts that exemplify the term "fair chase." ■

Jason Ritthaler of Hunting GPS Maps presenting Rip with the first Hunt Fair Chase award.



Rip's bighorn sheep was on display in Reno.



Rip and Justin Spring, Assistant Director of Big Game Records, displays his Hunt Fair Chase plaque, as well as his trophy plaque, after the banquet.

"WE GOT A STOMPER!"

MATT "RIP" RIPPENTROP HUNT FAIR CHASE AWARD RECIPIENT

The last thing I said to my friend John Wildeboer after he harvested his great 2005 South Dakota Black Hills ram was, "Before I die I will go on my own bighorn sheep hunt." Who knew that five years later I would draw the Holy Grail of all sheep hunts in the beautiful Missouri River Breaks of Montana. The research began immediately and lasted for the duration of the summer. I was determined to make the best of the opportunity I was given with the seven weeks of vacation I had available to use.

There were many sleepless nights throughout the summer in anticipation of the hunt. In July, my dad and I took our first scouting trip from South Dakota to the Breaks. We did not see any sheep on the north side of the Missouri River, but we did see 20 rams on the south side, and one was a monster. In August, Tom Powell and I went for a three-day scouting trip to the areas we wanted to concentrate on for the upcoming hunt.

Finally, the archery season arrived! Jared Bouman, Tate Bouman, and I arrived in the Breaks September 2 to do some scouting before the archery season opened on September 5. We saw about 10 rams, and two were in the 180s. Rattlesnakes were a constant concern, because they were seen and heard daily. Chance Wooden Knife—Game, Fish & Parks Director for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe—came up for the next six days. We packed in three miles through a couple

deep coulees and camped for three nights. We found another 10 rams and three 180s.

My dad came up for the next six days, and we started hunting a new area—not one ram found for three days. For the opening day of rifle season, we decided to go back to where we started. On September 15, we spotted our first 190-inch ram. He was bedded down, but the following morning he went onto private land. With weather moving in and Dad having to head home, we pulled out at noon. The next day, I got a phone call from another hunter who said, "Rip, I wanted to make you feel good about leaving. It was a downpour that turned into snow by morning. You are lucky you got out of here." When it rains in the Breaks, you usually can't get around for a day or two. Regardless of the

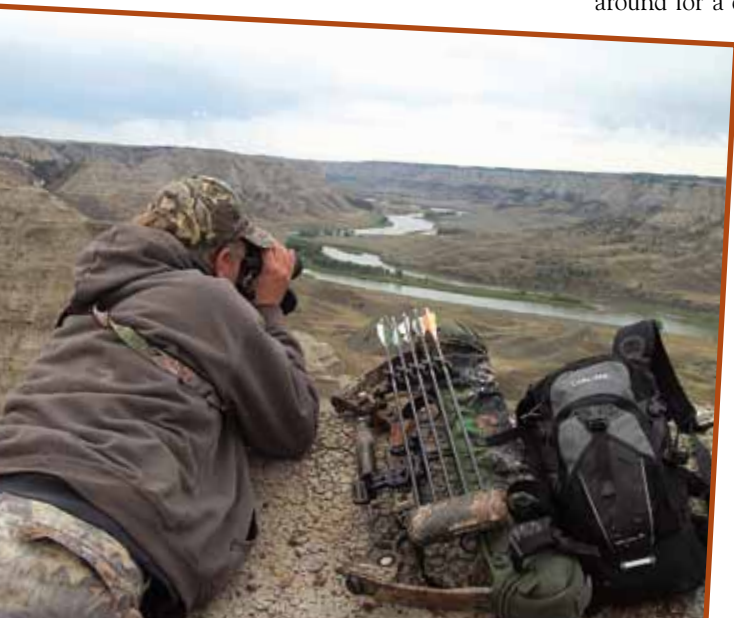
weather, some great rams were harvested during opening week of rifle season and I was second-guessing myself for leaving.

I knew we would not be going back to the Breaks for nearly 45 days until the rut started in November. I called some of my sheep hunting friends from Wyoming, Brian "Hip" Moore, Larry Brandt, Buck Porter, and Chuck Woodman—I called them the Wyoming Sheep-Wrecking



The next thing I remember, I was standing over the top of my blonde-haired ram with my eyes closed. Thanking the ram, the sheep gods, and the big guy in the sky. Hip walked up and said, "What do you think buddy?" I said, "I don't know, I haven't opened my eyes yet. Is he as big as we thought?"

Posse—to meet up at the Breaks. We all got there on November 1 and set our wall tent up at a local rancher's place for our base camp. Hip told us all that first night, "We need to find a Stomper!" Over the next few days, the weather was great and everybody was in awe of how many book rams we spotted. You have to see it to believe the quality of the rams in the Breaks. Josh Keller also showed up for three days to help with the glassing efforts.



"WE GOT A STOMPER!"

Rip had many friends and family help him along the way to finding his sheep.



The following days we saw three 195-inch rams that we called "Dino", "Grand Daddy", and "Lunch". Wow, were the guys upset with me for deciding not to pursue any of these three rams! I kept telling them my goal was a 200-inch ram, and I had the whole month of November off for vacation. At camp that night, we discussed how we felt like we were chasing a ghost, and I said, "Our day will come, guys. Everything will click, the stars will align, and the Big Guy in the Sky will shine down on us."

On November 6, it was just Hip and me left to hunt, and we were prepared to stay until the season closed on November 28.

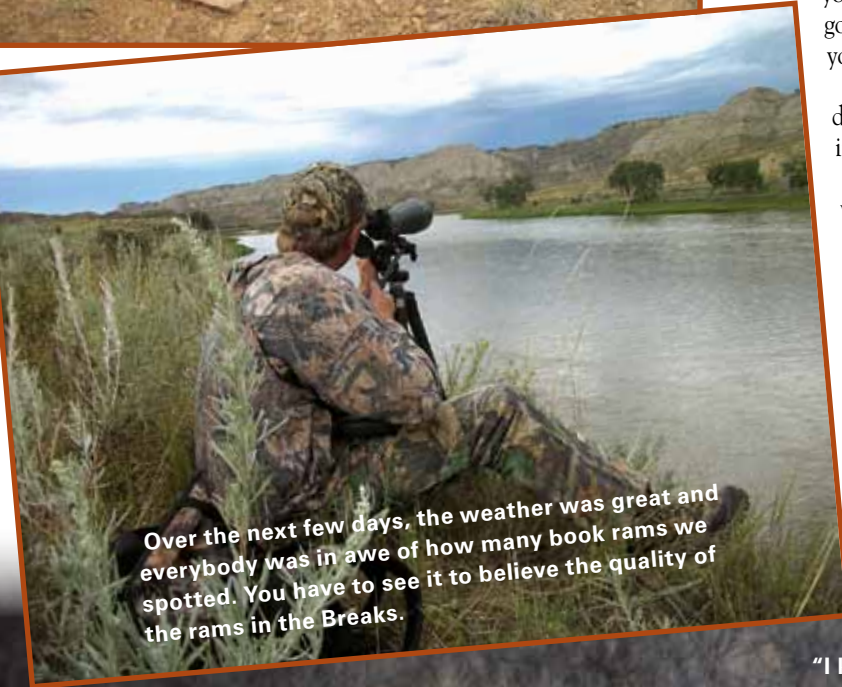
The next day brought a heavy rain—the low point of the hunt. During the rain/sleet/snow storm, the temperatures dropped from 70 degrees to 10 degrees that day, and the sheep patterns completely changed. That night Hip and I went into Winifred, Montana, to get our first shower in eight days, eat a cheeseburger instead of a can of chili or MREs, and to make some phone calls.

I called my wife Chidawn to let her know we hit rock bottom with the weather and felt we needed to try to find Dino again. Her reaction was, "What the heck!" I asked her what the problem was and she said, "There's a problem with you! I'm mad! You are not going to shoot a 195-inch ram with all the effort you have put in all summer and the vacation you have left to use! I'm going to hang up on you after I tell you this, don't come home unless you shoot a 200-inch ram!!"

Hip said, "I guess we're not shooting Dino and we do have 21 days left to hunt, bud. Back to work, Rip!" Man, was that the shot in the arm we needed.

The next morning Dad was back in camp for four days, and we were back to the drawing board. The last day Dad was there, Larry came back to help for the next three days. That night, I had great news for everybody! After splitting up for the last few days, I had found a big ram in a new area, and we needed to take a closer look at him. I hated to see Dad leave and not be around for the big day, but he had pheasant hunting in South Dakota on his mind. We did find the big ram the next day—I named him Money—and thought he might reach the 200-mark, but there was one problem. He was on private land that we did not have permission to hunt. There we sat for three days, watching the Money ram from a mile away, waiting for him to come to us. Larry had to leave and we still had 14 days of hunting left, but that evening

Over the next few days, the weather was great and everybody was in awe of how many book rams we spotted. You have to see it to believe the quality of the rams in the Breaks.



"I kept telling them my goal was a 200-inch ram, and I had the whole month of November off for vacation. At camp that night, we discussed how we felt like we were chasing a ghost."



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"WE GOT A STOMPER!"



Rip Rippentrop's Missouri Breaks bighorn sheep made the 200 mark, scoring 203-6/8 points. It was taken in Chouteau County, Montana in 2010.

we saw another ram come marching into the band of ewes with the Money ram. Hip immediately said, "Rip, you better take a look at this ram!" At first I was cautious to agree he was bigger, but once they were both standing side by side rubbing their horns on the same sagebrush, there was no comparison between the two of them.

The next morning we went to Winifred to have Nick Econom look at the pictures we had taken of both rams. Nick said smiling, "Rip, this ram is going to surprise you and it's going to be in a good way!" The phone call then went to Bill & Renita Brown with Chase Hill Outfitters who uses Jon Barker Trophy Hunts for bighorn sheep hunts. After talking with Bill, he gave us permission to go after the new ram on his land without being guided. Once there, we got out of the pickup and as I leaned down to take my spotting scope out of my pack, Hip whispered, "Rip, your last star just aligned, and he is walking over the hill!" I looked up, and sure enough it was the new ram walking towards us at 250 yards. I asked Hip, "Are you sure he is a 200-inch ram like we think?" He said, "He's the biggest ram we've seen!" After our discussion, and with sheep fever setting in, I harvested my ram at 230 yards. As he ran down a deep coulee, I realized the hunt had come to an end.

The next thing I remember, I was standing over the top of my blonde-haired ram with my eyes closed. Thanking the ram, the sheep gods, and the big guy in the sky. Hip walked up and said, "What do you think buddy?" I said, "I don't know, I haven't opened my eyes yet. Is he as big as we thought?" Hip said, "We got a Stomper! Open your eyes buddy!" We were both in awe of finding the 200-inch ghost. After celebrating and taking pictures, it took five hours to cape and pack the dark-horned ram out with our extra packer Brady Martin.

That evening we rough-taped him at 205-6/8 B&C, concluding 38 unbelievable days in the Breaks. We then checked the ram in with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and were off to Cody, Wyoming, to Dewey's Wildlife Studio. After 60 days of drying, the ram was officially B&C scored by Fred King at 203-6/8 inches, with bases of 17-4/8 inches and 17-2/8 inches, and curls measuring 43-3/8 inches and 40-5/8 inches.

I would like to thank the big guy in the sky, my hunting partners, all the ranchers that allowed me to hunt, the 150 people who took a phone call from me, the town of Winifred for treating us like one of their own, Montana FWP, and my company, Banner Associates, for allowing me time off to chase bighorn sheep. This hunt took a lot of teamwork, but I could not have done it without 100 percent support from my wife, our five kids, and my parents. Thanks for letting me live the dream! ■



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**BIG GAME
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Rip Rippentrop's story, along with many others, will be available to read in Boone and Crockett Club's 28th Big Game Awards, 2010-2012

THE BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB'S 28TH BIG GAME AWARDS BOOK 2010 – 2012

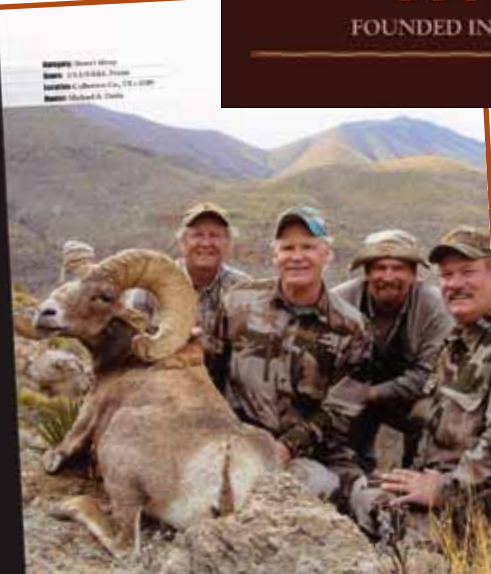
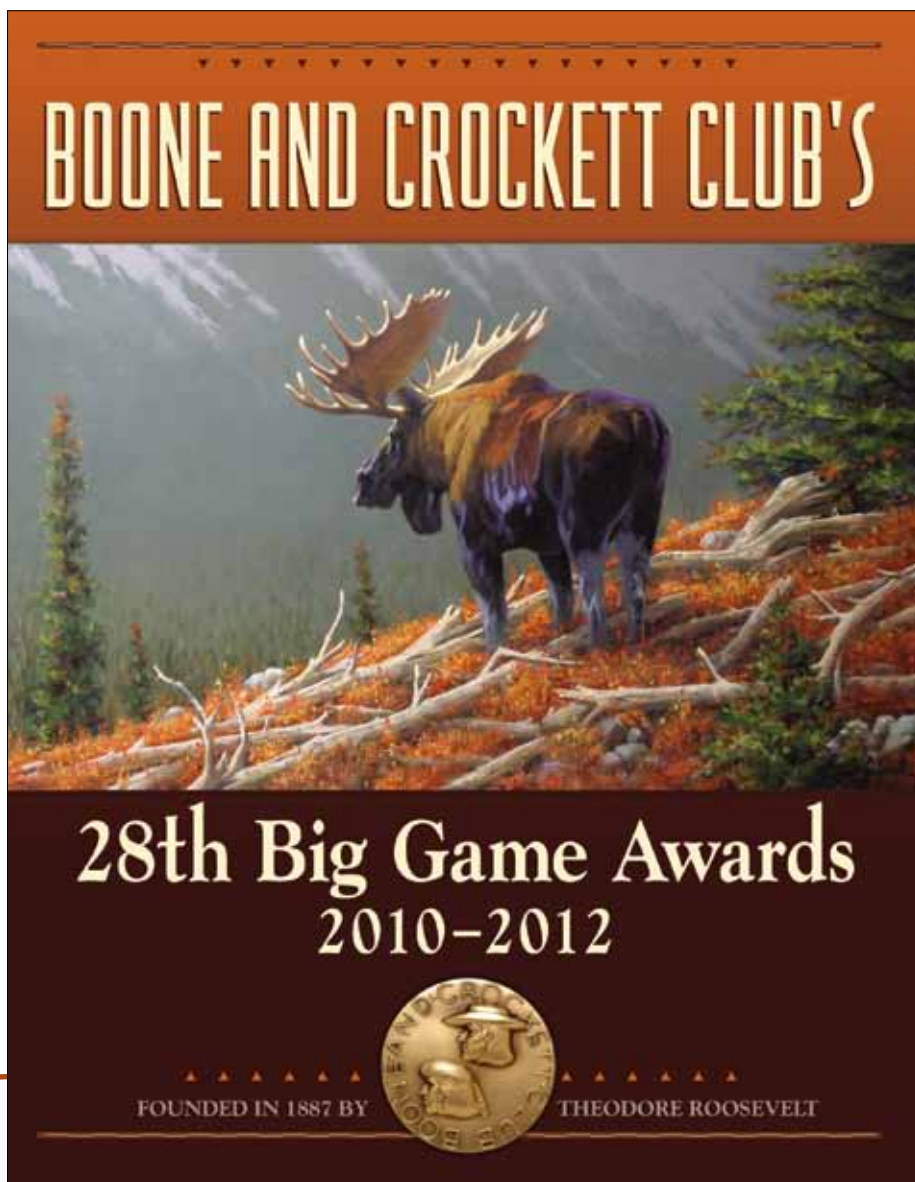
The most up-to-date big game records book available — includes over 5,000 trophies accepted in the last three years and dozens of stories about the top trophies.

Every three years the Boone and Crockett Club publishes a new Awards book. The newest edition in this series – **Boone and Crockett Club's 28th Big Game Awards, 2010-2012** – definitely raises the bar for hunting enthusiasts. This volume features a complete listing of trophies accepted in the 28th Awards Period including the B&C Gross Score, along with the Final Score, selected measurements, location and date of kill, hunter and owner, as well as the rank in the 28th Awards Program.

What sets this publication apart from other books are the tales of the hunts for the top North American big game trophies in the 28th Awards Program. Read about the hunts for some of the greatest trophies ever taken by modern-day hunters.

WHO'S LISTED?

All trophies accepted by the Boone and Crockett Club's Big Game Records Program between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2012, that meet or exceed the Club's entry requirements.



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