

NEW YEAR NEW MANUAL

I hope all our Official Measurers had a successful and fulfilling fall and holiday season. As has been tradition for the last 133 years, Boone and Crockett Club held its annual meeting in early December. This year found us in Tucson, Arizona, with the Records Committee meeting Thursday morning. The agenda covered numerous topics regarding records-keeping activities, though the two most important topics for our Official Measurers are some slight wording tweaks as we develop a joint manual with Pope and Young as well as a review of our entry affidavit rules.

Many of you have seen on social media the posts regarding the joint meeting held in October between Pope and Young and Boone and Crockett records staff and committee members. This consisted of two days of reviewing both manuals to identify variations. A few slight variations were

identified in this first meeting and then taken to the Boone and Crockett Records Committee for approval. This process will continue as we work through our separate manuals page by page to develop one cohesive manual to be used by both clubs.

When the Pope and Young Club was formed, Glenn St. Charles requested permission to use Boone and Crockett's scoring system to create a records book of trophies harvested by archery. One of the original purposes was to create this record to prove archery as a valid method of take. Glenn St. Charles was a regular member of Boone and Crockett Club and interestingly, though not surprisingly, was the first member accepted having taken the required three animals with a bow rather than a rifle. The original wording of Boone and Crockett Club required three animals taken with a rifle in Fair Chase to

be considered for regular membership. The Club supported Glenn and his desire to promote and preserve the sport of bowhunting, so permission was granted. Over time, and in large part thanks to the efforts of Pope and Young Club, archery hunting has flourished—as has the records program for Pope and Young Club. This eventually led to two separate organizations administering the same original scoring methods simultaneously. While collaboration has taken place since Pope and Young's inception, some slight differences have become apparent. Most of the variations can be attributed to the fact that the lower minimum scores for Pope and Young result in applying the scoring criteria to less-mature animals and therefore, certain horn characteristics may not be as pronounced.

What follows are the general updates to the new manual. Wording will be

finalized by both committees before the joint manual is printed, but the updates are generally so rare that it is unlikely you will encounter any of these circumstances prior to the printing of the manual.

The first difference is that Pope and Young allows the “carding” of the base of a bison. Bison reaching Boone and Crockett minimum generally have a pronounced ridge in the bottom center of the horn. When taking horn length, the tape is hooked on the lowest edge of this and measurement continues to the tip of the horn. The new wording in the joint manual will state that this is the procedure to follow, but if no ridge is evident, it is appropriate to card the base of the horn to determine horn length.

TROPHY TALK



JUSTIN SPRING
B&C PROFESSIONAL MEMBER
Director of Big Game Records

LEFT TO RIGHT: Kyle Lehr, Assistant Director of Big Game Records, Justin Spring, Director of Big Game Records, Mike Opitz, B&C Records Committee Chairman, Ed Fanchin, Pope and Young Club Records Chairman, and Eli Randall, the Pope and Young Club Records Director, met at B&C Headquarters to work on a joint Official Measurers manual.



The next few clarifications address moose palm length. The methodology of how moose are scored remains unchanged, but it was decided that Pope and Young's wording is more clearly states: "...the most parallel line to the inside edge of palm starting between depressions or bumps on the top of the antler and terminating between two qualifying points on the brow of the palm is the correct length. If two lines are equally parallel to the edge of the palm, it is appropriate to use the longer measurement."

The next clarification the committee ruled on regarded the length of palm and if it can ever cross space between points (this does not include the bay created between the brow and first point off the outside edge of the palm, which is commonly

crossed). The wording states that the length of palm must start at a depression between points or bumps on the top palm and terminate between two qualifying points on the brow. It states it can cross the bay as mentioned but does not specifically mention space between points (though is inferred). In some cases, a moose may exhibit antler characteristics that do not allow a line to be created without crossing space between points. In this instance where no line can be taken as described above, it is appropriate to cross that space (though this is only the case if no length can be taken without violating the rule of not crossing space between points). The line crossing the least amount of space in this case is the appropriate choice. It is not appropriate to adjust palm length over space if it is purely to create a more parallel line or longer line.

A clarification was made on Roosevelt's and tule elk regarding tine classification beyond G-4. On the score chart, no left/right deductions are recorded for tines beyond the G-4, but the question of an unmatched normal point came up. In most other

categories, an unmatched normal point within the normal tine sequence is treated as an abnormal. On a Roosevelt's or tule elk, the same process will be followed, though they will be recorded as crown points rather than abnormal points. This seems a moot point as no deductions are present, but in terms of where an H-4 circumference falls, it can make a difference in the final score. As in other categories, abnormal points—or in this case, crown points—cannot serve as a separator for a circumference.

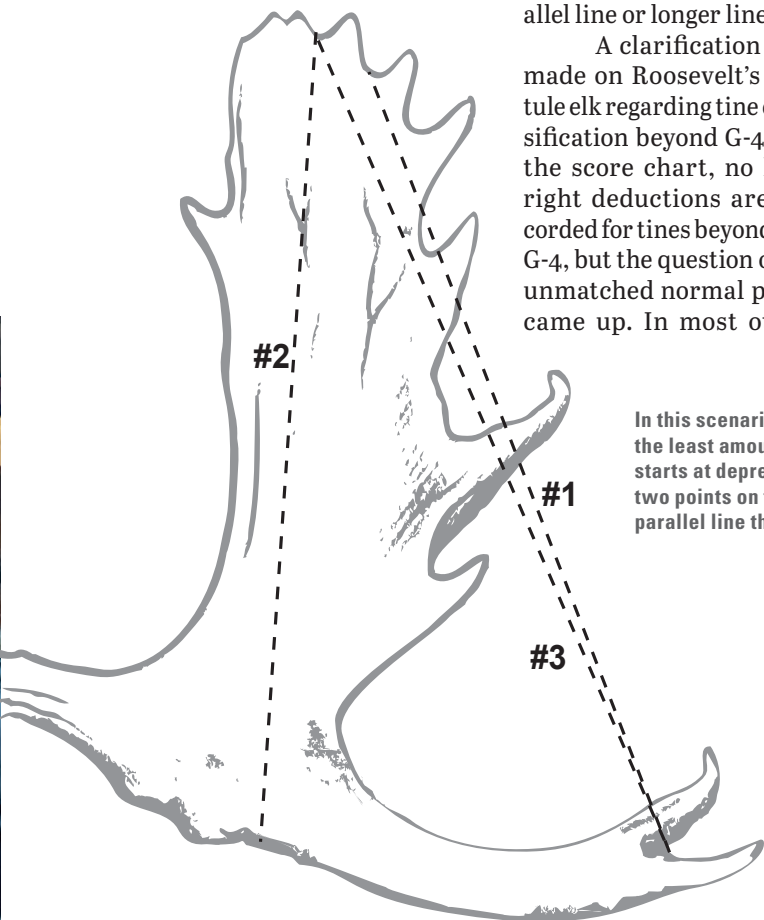
The other topic that was discussed had to do with the entry affidavit, specifically condition III. *Use of electronic communications devices (two-way radios, cell phones, etc.) to guide hunters to game, artificial lighting, electronic light-intensifying devices (night vision optics), sights with built-in range finding capabilities (including smart scopes), drones/unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), thermal imaging equipment, electronic game calls or cameras/timers/ or motion-tracking devices that transmit images and other information to the hunter.*

The Records Committee over time has defined the

bare minimum requirements of Fair Chase that must be followed for inclusion in the Records Program. As current technology comes forth almost daily, we are constantly asked to address emerging technologies regarding their acceptability.

The entry requirements of Fair Chase are by no means meant to be all-inclusive in terms of a hunter's ethic. This is purely a list of certain practices that the committee feels clearly crosses Fair Chase lines. These lines are drawn on the assumption that Fair Chase in general can be defined as taking to the field where the animal being hunted has a legitimate or "fair" chance to avoid the hunter. Animals do this by using their senses, so ultimately, as more and more senses are rendered useless by technology, the less "fair" the hunt becomes. The term Fair Chase is used universally by hunters and non-hunters alike who recognize that the activity of hunting must be conducted within guidelines acceptable to society.

The discussion at the meeting again revolved around technology and the question of whether a scope



In this scenario, line #3 would be the correct length of palm because it crosses the least amount of space between points and is the most parallel line that starts at depressions between points or bumps on the top and ends between two points on the brow. It is not appropriate to adjust this line to create a more parallel line that doesn't terminate between two points on the brow.

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with built-in range finding capabilities should be allowed. Operated individually, a range finder, wind meter, a scope with a reticle adjustable through a turret system, and a ballistic calculator currently do not violate Fair Chase requirements. With training, practice, and an understanding of physics, modern cartridges are easily capable of delivering a projectile with ample energy to distances beyond what the likes of T.R. could imagine.

At one point the committee discussed a maximum shot distance for inclusion but in discussion found that while one hunter's maximum effective range may be 500-plus yards, another hunter with the same equipment should keep shots to under 250 yards. As such, we approached the long-range shooting question as a personal ethical decision. If you are using modern equipment to turn the time-honored traditions of hunting into long-range target shooting at live animals, you have crossed the line.

In terms of scope technology, in the late 1990s the committee stated that a scope that would make range estimations and adjust the aiming

point accordingly for the hunter unfairly allowed hunters the perceived ability to shoot far beyond their capability and previous maximum range. To have a true mastery of your firearm or bow with some of the new sights on the market, this technology shortcuts much of the necessary understanding of bullet drop, wind drift, and at extreme ranges, even the rotation of the earth. At some point, a line must be drawn and perhaps an argument could be made that turrets, or a range finder that delivers a MOA drop to the hunter in essence does the same thing. While this does have some merit, these rules are the minimum requirements for entry. The committee confirmed with the members in attendance and the ones that joined via telephone, that a scope with the ability to illuminate or adjust a point of aim from a range electronically is where the line gets crossed. The original wording was maintained; scopes with built in range-finding capabilities are not eligible to be used.

The committee and Club have agreed that technology coming forward needs to be addressed, and the

current way of addressing each new product as we are made aware of it does not seem sustainable. An easy litmus test, "Does this product make a kill more likely?" seems reasonable, but if a product is going to sell, it needs to have at least a perceived advantage to cause someone to upgrade. Not all technological advances can or should be ignored. From its founding, the Boone and Crockett Club has promoted self-regulation by hunters.


Some lines regarding use of technology seem straightforward; a product that transmits information of an animal's current location during the hunt, for example, could be easily abused and allow the hunter to literally be in numerous places at once without physically being at any of them. And where else might this line get crossed? Consider for a moment if someone is scouting two months before season, locates a trophy-caliber elk, then sells the GPS point. Perhaps it is when a friend is coming from out of state and I elect to send them some waypoints of where I have found success or seen a good buck or bull in the past.

Unfortunately, the answers aren't always clear, and that fine line can even vary from one location to another depending on the norms and what is acceptable for the region. The Fair Chase requirements were put into place at the founding of the organization and remain paramount to ensuring hunting continues to stay accepted by society. Technologies are available now that aren't banned for use for entry but many feel have gone too far.

As this debate continues, perhaps instead of telling your hunting buddy they are wrong for using some technology, challenge them to pursue a certain buck using open sights, a muzzleloader, or just hunt one year without inventorying the property months ahead of season. When I was young, I remember hearing that hunting and fishing had a draw as an activity that was difficult yet attainable. Let us as a hunting community ensure it doesn't lose difficulty, for then we aren't hunting anymore, we are purely killing. ■



15K - 2019



HUNTER'S NAME (please print)

CATEGORY

SCORE

ENTRY AFFIDAVIT FOR ALL HUNTER-TAKEN TROPHIES

For the purpose of entry into the Boone and Crockett Club's® records, North American big game harvested by the use of the following methods or under the following conditions are ineligible:

- I. Spotting or herding game from the air, followed by landing in its vicinity for the purpose of pursuit and shooting;
- II. Herding or chasing with the aid of any motorized equipment;
- III. Use of electronic communication devices (2-way radios, cell phones, etc.) to guide hunters to game, artificial lighting, electronic light intensifying devices (night vision optics), sights with built-in electronic range-finding capabilities (including smart scopes), drones/unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), thermal imaging equipment, electronic game calls or cameras/timers/motion tracking devices that transmit images and other information to the hunter;
- IV. Confined by artificial barriers, including escape proof fenced enclosures;
- V. Transplanted for the purpose of commercial shooting;
- VI. By the use of traps or pharmaceuticals;
- VII. While swimming, helpless in deep snow, or helpless in any other natural or artificial medium;
- VIII. On another hunter's license;
- IX. Not in full compliance with the game laws or regulations of the federal government or of any state, province, territory, or tribal council on reservations or tribal lands;

Please answer the following questions:
 Were dogs used in conjunction with the pursuit and harvest of this animal? Yes No

LEARN MORE

- All of the Club's position statements and general policies of the Club's Records committee are available online.
- The entry affidavit is available for download.
- Read the Club's Fair Chase Statement as well as the Fair Chase position statement.