The Assessment of Deer (*Cervus elaphus*) Trophies

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Abstract

The red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) population's potential for trophy value from the 34 Neagra and 35 Sălard hunting areas on the Northern slope of the Gurghiu Mountains has been analysed and evaluated, based on a number of 42 red deer trophies taken between 2000-2014. The trophies were evaluated using the C.I.C. method, which was adopted at the "Conseil International de la Chasse" in Berlin in 1937. A description of the C.I.C. method and the score for the 42 trophies is included in the study. The result of the analysis shows that 50% of the total number of trophies are high value trophies (gold and silver medal), indicating the remarkable overall quality of the red deer population in the research area.

Keywords: *Cervus elaphus*, *red deer trophy, rod length, rosette circumference*.

INTRODUCTION

Probably considered the most important European game species, the red deer's (*Cervus elaphus*) trophy evaluation has generated countless debates over time. Some of the proposed methods include: the Jaques Blanchard method, the A. Dyk method, the Carpathian method, the Nadler method and finally the C.I.C. method, which was adopted at the "Conseil International de la Chasse" congress in Berlin in 1937. This is currently the official evaluation method that is recognised and used for red deer trophy evaluation (Botezat, 1942). As for the previous methods, the Nadler method, named after the director of the Budapest Zoo was the most used, including during the Leipzig (Lipsca) Hunting Show in 1930. By comparison to the C.I.C. method, the Nadler method does not take into account the length of the tray tine and it had a different points system for the crown. The aim of this study was to estimate the red deer population potential regarding trophy value, on two hunting areas on the Northern slope of Gurghiu Mountains. In this respect, a number of 42 red deer trophies, taken between 2010-2014 from the Neagra and Sălard hunting areas were analyzed and evaluated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The 42 red deer trophies taken from the two hunting areas, were evaluated using the C.I.C method. This method was presented in detail in several publications by Cotta V. (1982 and Cotta *et al*.,2001), Neacsu (1982), Selaru (2000 and 2006), Comsia (1968). The C.I.C. method uses a formula that includes several measurements, beauty and penalty points. The result of this formula is the C.I.C. score of the trophy. A description of this formula follows:

A.Measurements

1. Antler's length: each beam (which is the main trunk of the antler from which the tines or rays

protrude) is measured with measuring tape on the outside of the curve.

The measurements are taken in cm with a 1 mm precision. The goal is to obtain the highest length value for each antler through several tries. The measurement starts at the bottom of the coronet (the rosette of bone where the antler joins the skull) without pressing the measuring tape into the depression between the beam and coronet. It then follows the curves of the beam and when it reaches the crown it follows the back side of the longest ray. The average of the measurements for both beams is multiplied by a 0.5 coeficient and the result is recorded in the score sheet.

2. Brow tine: each tine is measured in cm with a 1 mm precision, starting from the upper part of the coronet up to the tip of the tine. If the brow tine is positioned higher (4-5 cm from the coronet), the measurement starts from the point where the tine protrudes from the beam. The average of the measurements for both tines is multiplied by a 0.25 coeficient and the result is recorded in the score sheet.

3. Tray tine: each tine is measured on the outside of the curve, starting from the point where the tine protrudes from the beam. The average of the measurements for both tines is multiplied by a 0.25 coeficient and the result is recorded in the score sheet.

4. Circumference of coronets: is measured without pressing the measuring tape in the depressions created by the pearling, in cm with 1 mm precision. The average of the measurements for both tines is multiplied by a 1 coeficient.

5. Circumference of the lower beams: is measured between the brow tine and the tray tine, where the beam is thinner. Each measurement has a 1 coeficient and is recorded (not the average).

6. Circumference of the upper beams: is measured same as above but between the tray tine and the crown. Each measurement has a 1 coeficient and is recorded (not the average).

7. Number of total tines: only tines over 2 cm count, measured from the point where they protrude from the beam to the tip of the tine. Naturally, broken tines are also counted. Those that were cut or artiicially added are not counted. Each tine counts for 1 point.

8. Weight: is measured with a 10 g precision on a dry trophy. If the skull is intact, 0.7 kg are subtracted, if the skull has been cut but the nasal bones are still present nothing is subtracted, and if only the upper jaws have been cut, 0.5 kg are subtracted.

If the trophy is evaluated 24 hours after it had been boiled, the subtracted weights are:
- for 4.0 – 6.0 kg trophies, subtract 0.3 kg;
- for 6.01 – 8.0 kg trophies, subtract 0.4 kg;
- for 8.01 – 10.0 kg trophies, subtract 0.5 kg;
- for trophies over 10.01 kg, subtract 0.6 kg.

The final weight is multiplied by a 2 coefficient and is recorded.

B.*Beauty points*

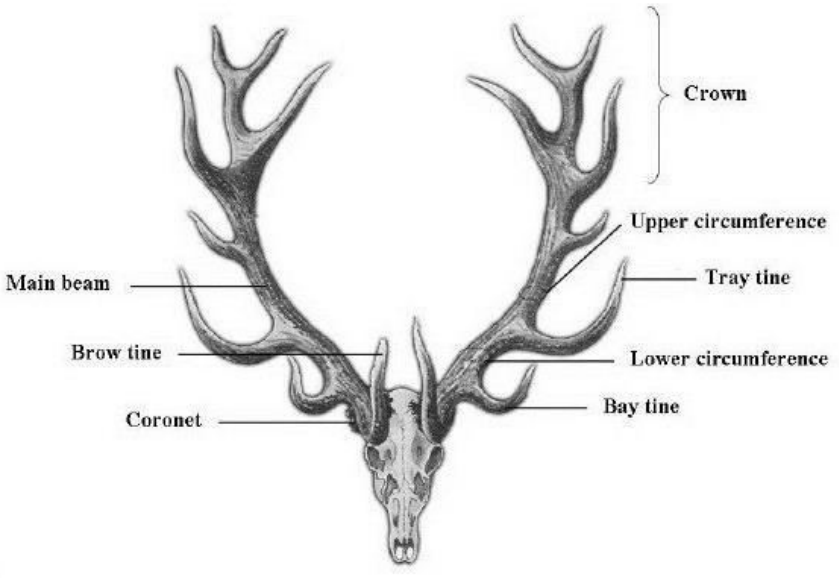

Fig. 1. The measured parameters of a red deer trophy (by Szederjei, 1960)

9. Spread of the main beams: is measured at the longest distance between the 2 beams, on the inside of the beams, below the crowns. The measurement is made perpendicular to the median of the skull. The number of points granted is based on the ratio between the spread of the main beam and the average of the beam length as follows:
- under 60% - 0 points;
- 60-69.9% - 1 point;
- 70-79.9% - 2 points;
- over 80% - 3 points.

10. Colour: beauty points for colour are granted as follows:
- yellow or artificial colour: 0 points;
- light brown or gray: 0 – 0.5 points;
- brown: 1 point;
- dark brown: 1.5 points;
- dark brown – black: 2 points.

11. Pearls:
- beams with no pearls or weak pearls: 0 points;
- beams with medium pearls: 1 point;
- beam with heavy pearls: 2 points.

12. The end of the tines:
- blunt and unpolished: 0 points;
- sharp and unpolished: 1 point;
- sharp and polished: 2 points;

13. Bay tines:
- for short tines 2 – 10.0 cm:
0 points for 1 tine;
0.5 points for 2 tines.
- for medium tines 10.01 – 15.0 cm:
0.5 points for 1 tine;
1 points for 2 tines.
- for long tines over 15.01 cm:
1 point for 1 tine;
2 points for 2 tines.

14. Crown: depending on the number of tines in the crown and their length, up to 10 points can be granted. All the tines above the tray tine are considered if they are over 2 cm.

Crown tines are grouped as follows:
- short tines - between 2 – 10 cm;
- medium tines -10.1 – 15 cm;
- long tines – over 15.1 cm.

The length of the crown tines is measured from the point where they protrude from the beam on the outside of the curve.

Depending on the number of tines in the crown and their grouping based on length mentioned above, the total score for the crown is calculated using an additional table.

C. *Penalty points*

Between 0 – 3 points can be subtracted for visible asymmetry of the main beams, the crown, the brow tines or the bay tines, if these elements were not taken into account during the measurements. Broken tines are not penalised.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analyzed material consists of the 42 red deer trophies in the table below (Table 1). It should be noted that these red deer were taken in conformance with the approved harvest plan, so they include selection trophies as well as high value trophies.

By analyzing the results from the evaluation of these 42 red deer trophies, we have found the following two high value trophies: the Ronald Deppe trophy, hunted in 2014, evaluated at 225.5 points (Fig. 2.) and the Gherd Reifschneider trophy, hunted in 2008, evaluated at 224.45 points (Fig. 3.). It is worth mentioning that 3 trophies over 210 points are Gold medal, 18 trophies between 190-209.9 points are Silver medal, and 12 trophies between 170-189.9 are Bronze medal.

The first 10 trophies in descending order based on C.I.C. score follow:

It is worth mentioning that the two top trophies (225.5 points and 224.5 points) were taken in years following major beech crops in the fall of 2007 and 2013, respectively.

CONCLUSION

Considering that the harvest plan on each of the studied hunting areas was one high value trophy and two selection trophies each year, the high value trophies (3 Gold medals and 18 Silver medals) make up 50% of the total harvest, which shows a remarkable overall quality.

Aside from a very good genetic background of the red deer population in these 2 hunting areas, the biosystem is extremely favourable for this species.

Table 1- Evaluation results of 42 red deer trophies

Species	C.I.C. points	Hunting date	Hunter	Location
Deer	176	20.09.00	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	200.16	27.09.01	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	191.84	28.09.01	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	195.13	28.09.02	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	160.3	20.09.03	Ogie Iko	Germany
Deer	192.78	22.09.03	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	204.625	02.10.03	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	187.85	23.09.05	Wolbert Roland	Germany
Deer	198.48	29.09.05	Alberto Pratessi	Italy
Deer	135	14.12.05	Gliga Vasile	Reghin, Romania
Deer	183	09 06	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	186.2	09 06	Difelice G.	Italy
Deer	188.24	09.06	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	169.23	10.07	Roşianu Mihai	Romania
Deer	189.21	09.08	Wolbert Roland	Germany
Deer	224.54	09 08	Gherd Reifschneider	Germany
Deer	188.16	09 08	Albert Keller	Switzerland
Deer	188.02	09 09	Joakhim Lohr	Germany
Deer	206.06	09 09	Meisberger Marc	France
Deer	182.2	09.09	Heiko Lober	Germany
Deer	205.51	09.09	Desaga Hubert	France
Deer	196.65	09.09	Million J.	France
Deer	185.73	10.09	Enzo Ide	Belgium
Deer	166.63	09.10	Dietemar B.	Germany
Deer	216.74	09 10	Lippmann F.	Germany
Deer	198.22	09 10	Emhart H.	Germany
Deer	170.73	09 10	Viazzo Pietro	Italy
Deer	150.92	28.09.11	Gliga Vasile	Reghin, Romania
Deer	204.18	23.09.12	Poma Luca	Italy
Deer	166.35	23.09.12	Pitacco Paolo	Italy
Deer	119.79	22.09.12	De Maistre Enrico	Italy
Deer	202	25.09.12	Herbert Romen	Italy
Deer	184.65	27.09.12	Dietmar Thaler	Austria
Deer	196.65	20.09.13	Poma Luca	Italy
Deer	203.13	21.09.13	Pitacco Paolo	Italy
Deer	197.78	22.09.13	Deorsola Francesco	Italy
Deer	191.03	22.09.13	Poma Luca	Italy
Deer	176.138	26.09.14	Uwe Bock	Germany
Deer	225.5	21.09.14	Deppe Roland	Germany
Deer	200.813	27.09.14	Florian Dany	Germany
Deer	196.176	26.09.14	Florian Dany	Germany
Deer	157.7	10.10.14	Dimitrie Sturdza	Ibăneşti, Romania

Fig. 2. The Ronald Deppe trophy, hunted in 2014, evaluated at 225.5 points (Original)

Fig. 3. The Gherd Reifschneider trophy, hunted in 2008, evaluated at 224.45 points (Original)

Table 2- The first 10 trophies in descending order based on C.I.C score

No	C.I.C score	Year	Hunter
1	225.50	2014	Roland Deppe
2	224.54	2008	Gherd Reifschneider
3	216.74	2010	Friedrich Lippmann
4	206.06	2009	Marc Meisberger
5	205.51	2009	Hubert Desaga
6	204.62	2003	Friedrich Lippmann
7	204.18	2012	Luca Poma
8	203.13	2012	Paolo Pitacco
9	202.00	2012	Herbert Romen
10	200.81	2014	Dany Florian

Also the natural predation performed by a well established population of predators (brown bear, wolf and lynx) contributes to the vigour and health of the red deer population.

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