



## **CIC UK OTHER SPECIES REVIEW 2017**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Those who have read the CIC's Annual Review of English and Welsh Roe will already be aware of the fact that 2017 was a bumper year CIC Trophy measuring, not only in the UK but within Europe and internationally. In the UK, we measured over 1000 trophies of which 816 were awarded medals. This is somewhere in the region of a 25% increase over recent years and is almost entirely due to the recognition amongst the hunting fraternity of the CIC's International reputation for consistency and accuracy in the measurement of deer antlers and other trophies and the quality of service provided.

Internationally the CIC ran nine qualification courses for CIC Certified Measurers (CCM) in 6 countries within Europe last year and in addition a course for the CIC's newest member nation, Argentina. One of the UK's Senior Judges was the instructor on this course providing guidance on a range of species not often featuring in the UK. He would say it was an interesting and stimulating experience. The UK TEB is running further training in 2018, re-qualifying existing CCMs from the UK and Eire and qualifying new CCMs from both the UK and Europe. The international nature of this training is extremely valuable in facilitating the exchange of good practice between CCMs and the gaining of experience of measuring the same species that we have in the UK, but from different environments. The effects of such different environments can have a singular change in the quality of what is measured.

Those who make use of our service will be aware that the rules governing 'drying out' time before measurement is possible has been reduced. After some considerable time and effort spent in researching the issue, it was concluded that, whilst weights of trophies fluctuate considerably within the first 30 days after preparation, after 30 days weights remain sufficiently stable to allow accurate measurements of the head to be made, taking into account the relative value of the weight measurement in comparison to other parts of the formula. It was on this basis that the International Trophy Evaluation Board meeting of September 2017, attended by three senior judges from the UK, agreed to reduce the 'drying out' time to 30 days, but for all species measured by the CIC. This change from a 'drying out' period for a specific number of species to all species is important because the same research on weights revealed that where there is a length component within the measuring formula, there is also a length differential involved with the drying out of the trophy. It is for this reason that the rule has become all encompassing. Along with this change has come the introduction of additional ways of monitoring the condition of the trophy prior to it being measured to ensure that it is properly dry.

The other change that UK hunters will notice from this review is the introduction of a table for Carnivore. Whilst the opportunities in the UK are limited mainly to Red Fox, there are an increasing number of fox shooters with an interest in the differing sizes of skulls and so we offer, in accordance with the CIC's practice elsewhere, to provide this as part of our offering to UK hunters.

Finally, we continue to measure all of the species listed in the 'Red Book', the last few of which will shortly be incorporated into the CIC Trophy Evaluation Database. Recently we measured a Gold medal Bharal (Blue Sheep) from Nepal, along with a quality Bronze medal Tahr from the same country. The hunter, a long-time CIC member was rightly delighted with these trophies from an area well known for its quality and sustainable population.

Having reviewed Roe separately again this year we have all six other 'wild' species put forward for assessment. In addition, we also include a small number of heads shot in the UK but measured in other countries as a result of hunters taking their heads to their home countries before the required drying period has been achieved. This number will increase in the future as other countries come on-line with the International Evaluation Database.

## **RED**

Red heads were up in number this year by 80% albeit that the ability to hit Gold medal status is proving difficult. Scotland unusually had a full spread of medals for 2017, including a new country record. Scored out by a team of CIC judges, Mr B Little's Galloway stag (*Cervus elaphus scotticus*) tops the all-time list at 192.64 points. Elsewhere two silvers entered the list including a nice 14 pointer from Ayrshire, so presumably with Galloway connections for E Kennedy. Out in the far west North Uist Estate, produced some exceptional island trophies for visiting American husband and wife team Bruce and Jane Keller, while long time visiting stalker Stephen Hunter stalking with Alisdair Scott grassed a 14 pointer which made it into bronze medal category.

English heads (*Cervus elaphus elaphus*) presented for evaluation were well up this year with 29 medal heads, but with the only Gold medal, and that with 225.6 CIC points, being from a park in Berkshire. There were a number of good Silver medals this year with A. Usher's head scoring 205.21 CIC points with a 20 point head from Suffolk, followed closely by M Griffin's Devon stag at 202.8 CIC points third in line, and still topping 200 points was A van der Valk's Suffolk's stag at 200.04 CIC points. These top three wild stags all had antler weights of over 8 kgs. T Clack's Norfolk stag was a close runner at 199.83 CIC points.

Red trophies came from Suffolk (12), Devon (6), Norfolk (5), Staffordshire (2), and Hampshire and Cornwall with one each, the quality undoubtedly coming from Suffolk, Norfolk and Devon, as we might expect.

The question has been raised about whether the UK environment will ever allow English red to compete with other European stags (*Cervus elaphus elaphus*). This a contention that we need to monitor. The CIC does make allowances for 'geographical' differences and it may be that we need to make a case for a return to a lower level of medal scores, particularly as an island population is bound to be in what could be described as a unique environment. Watch this space!

## **FALLOW**

In the 2016 Review I noted that we measured “Nearly twice as many as has been usual over the last few years and of the twenty heads awarded medals, no less than nine are Gold medals”. Well, numbers are up again with thirty-nine heads achieving medal status and no less than fifteen of those being Gold medals.

The best of these, and by some way, was G Garnham’s 211.93 CIC point buck from Oxfordshire. This is good news in the face of reports from that county of bucks being shot somewhat indiscriminately and often outside of the strictly legal framework that exists. A French buck from Rheims belonging to R Chester-Sterne led a number of 190+ point bucks, the best UK heads from Hampshire (RTA -196.69) Suffolk (Matt Goodwin - 196.17) and Norfolk (D Rowse -196.00).

Again, the average length of beam/palm width indicates medal quality with the Gold, Silver and Bronze averages this year being 69.0cms/19.8cms, 65.3cms/15.4cms and 62.6cms/13.6cms respectively.

## **SIKA**

This year we nearly doubled the number of heads measured with a total of 24 UK Japanese trophies and one Manchurian shot by J Boyd in the Ukraine. The quality remained good and whilst Dorset produced the majority of heads, Lancashire also featured amongst the Golds as did the top UK Sika from Dan Humble-Smith with his Devonian Sika at 278.3 CIC points, putting this potential traveller in the top ten heads measured in the UK.

The next two heads at 268.9 and 268.3 CIC points respectively came from Dorset (Tony Bell) and Lancashire (J Tilsley). Of the remaining twenty all but three came from Dorset, one from Lancashire and two from Scotland, Scott Milne’s 241.2 CIC point stag being a good example of the Dorset stock

## **MUNTJAC**

Muntjac has potentially been the star of the show this year up from 82 medal heads last year, to 146 this. Of those, 72 were Gold medals, 39 were Silver and 35 Bronze. Whether this reflects an increasing interest in Muntjac as a quarry, or the spread of this tough little deer’s habitat is a question we will try to answer this coming year, but certainly the number of counties from which we receive trophies to measure has expanded over the years, in 2016 twenty-one counties and this year again a high number at 19 counties.

The number of Gold medals represents an increase of 53% over 2016, which itself had seen an increase over the previous year. So, in two years we have seen the number of Gold medal Muntjac go up by nearly 80%. A genuine development in quality.

The top six heads all scored over 70 CIC points with Phil Easeman’s Buckinghamshire head scoring 77.3 CIC points, putting it fourth amongst all Muntjac heads achieving medal status so far. The next five heads, all scoring over 70.0 CIC points, come from different counties: Berkshire (Tim Magee), Norfolk (P Woodcock), Hampshire (D Boyce and Gloucestershire (A Keane), showing that the quality is not confined to just a few counties. In fact, the Gold medal heads recorded this year came from 14 different counties.

Good examples of the heads presented are Phil Easeman's slightly lumpy 77.3 CIC point Gold medal from Buckinghamshire and Tim Magee's very symmetrical and beautifully curved Berkshire head

### **CWD**

2017 saw a slightly larger number of CWD assessed than in 2016. Up 14 to 108 heads awarded medals, 79 were Gold medals (73%), 23 were Silver and just 4 Bronze. Of significance again this year was the reduction in young animals being presented for evaluation, as recorded in the closed or open nature of the tooth root. 240 CIC points puts CWD trophies into the top thirty in the UK and this year thirteen sets of tusks made that level of quality. Five sets of tusks over 250 CIC points were recorded. Rachel Dunk took both top slots with her two CWD scoring 264 and 260 CIC points, with both coming from Bedfordshire, as were the following three owned by Mr devan de Lange (252), R Clark (252) and Jonathan Saggerson (250). Oddities this year include CWD shot in Hampshire and Hertfordshire.

### **WILD BOAR**

Boar were very scarce this year with only one set from the UK, Adrian Banks' Herefordshire tusks coming in at 109.4 CIC points, just below the Bronze threshold. The remainder, two of which achieved Gold medal came mainly from Turkey with one Silver from Hungary and one Bronze from Croatia. R Carter's 128.85 CIC point trophy reflected the quality available in Turkey, an increasingly popular destination for those looking for quality Wild Boar.

### **CARNIVORE**

As mentioned elsewhere, the CIC offers, as part of the Trophy Evaluation System, the ability to measure Carnivores, a popular area internationally and one that in the UK has been rather neglected. Whilst still in its infancy, we recorded eight Fox skulls, with three making Gold, three Silver and two Bronze. Best of class was J Keith's from Northamptonshire at 25.6 CIC points. We look forward to an expansion of this area in the future.

### **THE FUTURE**

Having trained an additional ten CIC Certified Measurers in 2016, we look to a further four measurers joining our ranks in 2018. With a blend of experience and youth, male and female, we look forward to enhancing still further the quality service that we offer hunters in the UK. Consistency and accuracy is what we strive for, ensuring compatibility with our European and international colleagues.

Finally a cautionary tale. It is always difficult when we have to disappoint a customer who comes to us with a head that he believes to have a higher score than is actually the case. Last year we measured a Fallow head that had been previously measured by somebody who purported to measure in accordance with the CIC system, but who was neither trained by, nor qualified by the CIC. He produced a result that suggested a Gold medal. In fact, the head had been over-scored by 10 points, a difficult achievement even with Fallow, and as a result the customer was disappointed to be told that his head was in fact a Silver medal rather a Gold. If

you are unsure, check that the measurer you choose has his CIC issued ID card, which will give you the confidence that what you're getting is the real thing.

Our alliance with both the National and Scottish Gamekeepers Organisations continues to develop and has given us a great opportunity to widen our service to hunters countrywide. In 2018 we will be in attendance at the majority of Game Fairs this year such as Scone and the Deer Stalking Fair in Roxburghshire and Highland Field Sports Fair in Scotland and at the West Country Game Fair, Great Shires Game Fair, East Anglian Game Fair, The Northern Shooting Show, Highclere, The Game Fair, and the Midland in England. Full details are on the CIC TEB website [www.cicukteb.com](http://www.cicukteb.com) and on the TEB Facebook page.

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