

In the Spotlight

Giovanni Persona, Italy, 2014-STJ-009

How did you become involved with trophy evaluation?

*I have always been convinced that hunting must be known and mainly promoted with regard to its sustainability and scientific approach. During a wild boar driven hunt in Tuscany in 2000, I met two great representatives of the trophy world and CIC evaluators, **Annibale Drobniĝ** and **Giorgio Umari**, who sadly are no longer with us. They enlightened me on the fundamentals of the trophy culture and told me what they were doing in Italy and abroad. I was deeply impressed by it all and wondered why in Italy that discipline was so little known and insufficiently promoted. Their answer was that at the time there wasn't any reference handbook providing the formulas for trophy evaluation based on*

the CIC method and that they dreamed of publishing one in Italian.

I took their dream to heart and I presented this interesting project to the Regione Veneto.

*I started to take action in that direction and met **Luigi Rivoira**, President of the Exhibition and Trophy Commission of CIC Italy, who welcomed this initiative and encouraged me to become a member of CIC ITALY and to attend a training course for CIC Measurers held in Bologna in 2002 by Annibale Drobniĝ and Giorgio Umari with the participation of the famous CIC evaluator **Veljko Varićak**, Honorary President of the Exhibition and Trophy Commission, Vice-President of the CIC, as well as the author of handbooks on trophies published in three languages but not in Italian.*

After I got my license, I took part in various Evaluation Commissions getting more and more involved in this fascinating discipline. I was determined to carry on with the project of a trophy handbook in Italian and to this purpose I met Veljko Varićak many times in Lubiana and kept in touch with the various regional institutions.

Finally, in August 2002, Regione Veneto decided to publish the first Italian edition of Veljko Varićak's handbook: 'The Evaluation of Hunting Trophies for the management of Italian and European Wildlife' which went like hot cakes!

The TEB strongly encourages all hunters to have their trophies evaluated by a Certified CIC Measurer in order to enhance research possibilities and encourage a more wholesome approach to the evaluation, regardless of the trophy's potential to reach a medal limit.

I then prompted Regione Veneto to publish an updated second edition which came out in 2009.

It was such a success that it was called 'The Italian trophy evaluation Bible'.

Why do you think trophy evaluation is important?

Trophy evaluation represents an essential element to acquire knowledge of hunted species. The average trophy development of Cervidae and Bovidae provides information on the health state of the population, its composition by age and sex and, mainly, on the trophic capacity of the area.

Trophy evaluation must be considered as the ability to evaluate, through codified mathematical formulas, the state of health of the wildlife population present on the territory and is essential for the management of the species, being an irreplaceable instrument of scientific research.

Trophy evaluation is an integral and irreplaceable part of every hunting activity for its increasing technical and scientific value in the management of huntable wildlife populations. It's an important training/learning instrument for all hunters. It allows to compare and verify the state of health of specific wildlife populations within a specific area even with the help of dedicated databases. It publicizes the hunting plan that has been carried out through the various management exhibitions which represent the most important means of communication

with society and thus strengthening the relationship hunter/territory/population.

You are President of ABIF, can you tell us about some of the work ABIF does?

ABIF (Italian Wildlife Biometric Academy) was established after the introduction of new rules by the CIC not to squander 30 years of measuring carried out by roughly 200 voluntary CIC measurers. It was set up to inform, train, and plan communication strategies, in collaboration with Institutes of Zooprophyllaxis, Scientific Institutes and Public Authorities, aiming at the conservation and improvement of hunting activities while respecting our culture and local and rural traditions, without neglecting the many social sensitivities often exploited and uninformed about the important social role played by hunters in maintaining and improving biodiversity.

ABIF in close collaboration with Commissione Grand Gibier – Esposizione & Trofei CIC Italia :

- Organizes commissions for trophy evaluations according to CIC rules;
- Updates its members in real time on amendments made to the Handbook ;
- Trains experienced tutors to act as technical support in the CIC Commissions;
- Organizes CIC courses for the training of CCMS;
- Holds preparatory courses on the real usefulness of trophy evaluation in educational institutions, local authorities, hunting associations, etc.;
- supports courses for young people



(aged 8 to 17) of environmental and wildlife knowledge and enhancement of the various aspects of rural culture (Summer Camps);

- organizes round tables, seminars, workshops on issues and problems concerning wildlife and hunting;
- gathers data for the creation of a national database;
- design, manufacturing and type approval of measuring instruments specific for trophy evaluation (kit of instruments for trophy evaluators)
- Cooperates with Ce.R.M.A.S. (National Reference Centre for wild animals diseases) supplying information on health anomalies observed in wild animals useful for possible action or prevention;
- Carries out the 'Biometric Project', in collaboration with scientific bodies, in order to codify and harmonize the 'biometric datasheets' of hunted wild animals.

What is your favorite hunting memory?

I have so many that I could write a book. Hunting, for me, is a way of life and therefore every time I go into the wild I have the same feelings and emotions that I experienced the first time I went hunting so many years ago. Special moments and emotions that never leave me and that I like to live over and over again in my memories. So they are all important and meaningful; the real point is to have lots of them to tell and pass on.

What do you hope for the future generations of hunters?

Hunting must be a way of life made up of Training, Tradition, Respect for the Environment and Wildlife but also Solidarity and Economy. In short, Culture and Communication! This is the essential background of young new hunters aware of the role entrusted to them by society.

Do you know a member of the STJ/CCM network who should be in the spotlight?

Would you like your event highlighted in our events section?

Please send STJ/CCM nominations/event details to c.sorensen@cic-wildlife.org

If you have any questions about the above information, or the CIC TES in general, please contact Caroline Sorensen, CIC Conservation Officer, at c.sorensen@cic-wildlife.org.

Charles G Fenn

1 March 1944 – 23 October 2018

The sudden death on 23 October 2018 of **Charles Fenn**, a Senior CIC Judge and member of the UK delegation of the CIC, highly respected and renowned for his meticulous trophy measuring skills, will have come as a shock to all those who have known and worked with him over the years, whether at UK Game Fairs or in the field. A brilliant hunter with a wide and expansive knowledge of deer, particularly Roe and Sika, Charles frequently mentored and assisted newcomers to stalking and was always willing to offer advice and help. Always cheerful and ready to look on the positive side of life, he was not only an outstanding shot with a rifle, but his expertise in the field of trophy evaluation of African species led to his appointment as a Senior International Trophy Judge, where his extensive knowledge was well respected.

