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Flack's remarkable rhino

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According to a Mpumalanga Parks Board (MPB) press release, a 35-40 year old white rhino bull shot on 30 January 1998 at the Loskop Dam Nature Reserve situated between Middelburg and Groblersdal in South Africa's Mpumalanga province, set two, and possibly more records.

According to MPB hunting co-ordinator Billy Swanepoel, the VAT-inclusive R182 400 that well known South African sportsman Peter Flack, guided by PH Louis Marais of Karoo Safaris, paid for the rhino probably sets a new provincial, if not national record, for a white rhino. The previous highest price, according to Mpumalanga official records, had been the R105 000, paid for a cow with a 623mm-long front horn.

The Loskop bull's vital statistics, which probably make it the largest rhino trophy shot in 65 years, are: Front horn 927mm (36") weighing 9,8kg (21.6lbs) and the rear horn 292mm (11") weighing 3,8kg (8.38lbs) upon removal. Front horn circumference was 756mm (29^{3/4}") and the rear horn circumference 641mm (25^{1/4}"). It provisionally scores 103 SCI points, but it is expected to shrink to about 100-101 points after drying, which should make it the new SCI number one ranker if listed. The current SCI number one white rhinoceros scored 100^{4/8} points.

"It is always sad when an animal like this has to be shot, but the bull was past its prime and had little chance of survival as the younger



The front horn on Peter Flack's record white rhino measured 927mm long; the rear is 297mm.

bulls vied to challenge its supremacy." Swanepoel stated. "During December this rhino was injured in a fight. It would have been difficult for the animal to stake a new territory on an alternative reserve."

The money earned from the sale of the rhino bull will go towards the upgrading and electrification of the Loskop Dam Nature Reserve fence which will enable the MPB to introduce

lion and elephant onto the reserve.

Flack used a South African-made custom rifle built around a Czech Brno ZKK 602 action equipped with a German Walther barrel in English .416 Rigby calibre and topped with a Zeiss telescope. The magnificent trophy will be mounted by Rodney Kretzchmar's Trans African Taxidermists and displayed in Flack's private museum in the Karoo.

1 770 hectares added to MPB's Loskop Reserve

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According to a February press release, the Mpumalanga Parks Board recently acquired a 1770 hectare farm bordering its picturesque Loskop Dam Nature Reserve, thereby significantly enhancing the game-carrying capacity of the reserve. The farm was previously owned by Peter Dixon, a well-known Highveld cattle rancher.

"Due to the mountainous terrain of the current reserve a serious lack of suitable grassland

grazing for our growing animal population has always proved a challenge." said reserve manager, Jannie Coetzee.

Coetzee said that due to a lack of sufficient grazing, the condition of the reserve's valuable buffalo population, amongst others, often tended to deteriorate during certain times of the year. Coetzee said that the addition of the new farm to the approximately 18 000 hectare reserve more than doubled the reserve's overall grazing capacity due to its excellent quality. This, he described as exceptionally welcome

news as it fitted in well with the Parks Board's plans not only to enlarge and consolidate the reserve, but also to introduce the Big Five.

"This new land has an abundance of high quality grazing which not only augurs well for our current grazer population, but also for when we introduce new animal species to the property once the reserve's fencing has been upgraded," Coetzee said. He added that the new farm, which is situated to the north-west of the reserve in the direction of Moutse, was ideally