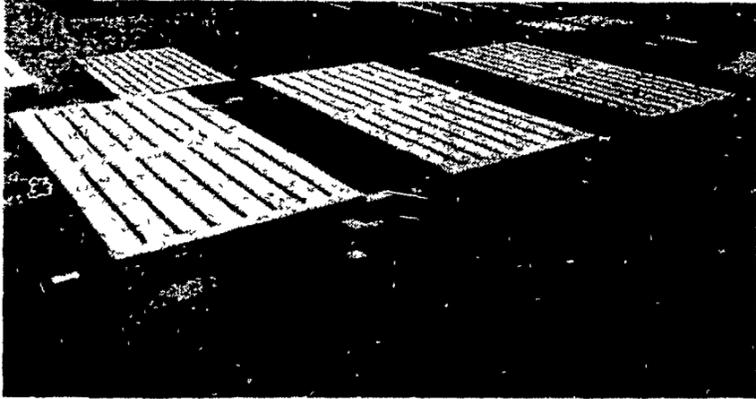


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Brief answers to short questions

Sheila's Shorts

By Sheila Miller

Tractor Pulling Pastime?
Whenever I think about tractor pulling, I always get a shiver up and down my spine.

Now, most people probably think about the contests where tractors try to pull the heaviest load the farthest distance. But when I think about tractor pulling, visions of tractor tires up to their hubs in a quagmire of mud fill my eyes.

I guess as long as I've been able to drive a tractor, I've been elected by Dad to be the one to come to the rescue when a tractor got stuck in the field.

Armed with chains and the second tractor, we'd head for the field. The closer we'd get to the trouble spot, the more my stomach churned and the more nervous I became.

Anticipating the worst, I was always glad when I finally saw the pull would be a nice easy, straight forward tow. But, many times I would be disappointed — that's when the adrenalin would start to flow.

Through experience, I learned to recognize when the stuck tractor was tilting to one side with an ominous lean that the matter of freeing it from the wet spot would not be easy.

Why does it always seem that a tractor can manage to get half way through a mud hole before it suddenly drops?

In these situations, I've also learned through experience that women have

more patience than men. It always seemed Dad's patience was a bit worn by the time the rescue mission was completed.

Over the years I managed to get quite an education in towing or being towed.

I learned it's best to ease up the slack in the chain before opening up the throttle on the tow tractor (much to Dad's relief). I also found it's always best to keep the front wheels relatively straight and to keep my foot off the brake and the tractor out of gear when being towed.

But, no matter how many times I've helped to free a tractor from the mud, I always get that tingling feeling in my stomach until the ordeal is over.

A Lancaster Farming reader had another type of tractor pulling in mind when he wrote to us:

Through the help of your news, we had attended our first stock tractor pulling contest in Harrisburg last year.

The contests, contestants, etc., have aroused our interest in this activity. We would like to know more about any other stock pulls — when, where, qualifications to enter, and anything else that would apply.

We would appreciate any early information on stock tractor pulls that you could give us. We just might enter one.

Kenneth Reiff
1881 Guinea Lane
Warrington, PA 18976

Mr. Reiff, although I've probably had more experience with the tractor pulls where mud is concerned, I can't say I'm not familiar with this type of tractor pulling too.

I covered my first contest held during the March Equipment Expo at the Farm Show Complex. I watched as the tractors poured their power into pulling a sled — some of them stalling out because of the load.

I agree with you. Tractor

pulls are exciting — I think I pulled along with most of the contestants and held my breath as the pull-offs determined the winning tractor and driver.

But, other than covering a few events, I am not up on the latest in tractor pulling. To get that kind of information for you, I contacted Les Houck, president of the National Tractor Pullers Association.

Taking time out of his busy schedule at Agri-Broadcasting in New Holland, Les wrote me the following letter to help answer some of your questions on stock tractor pulling:

The Pa. Tractor Pullers Association operates about 70 sanctioned pulls each year. The stock tractors compete in about 30 percent of these pulls along with the super stock and the modified tractors.

The stock classes are divided into the following weight classes, 5500 pounds, 7500 pounds, 9000 pounds, 11,000 pounds, 13,000 pounds and 15,000 pounds.

All the rules for stock tractors are established by the members of the PTPA, made up of 12 different tractor pulling chapters in the state.

The pulls for the stock tractors are open to anyone to compete as long as they follow the rules. The rules are simple and tailored to meet the needs of the farm tractors that come directly out of the field to the pulling track. The souped up tractors with added and extra turbo-chargers, fuel pump and the bigger tires are not allowed to pull in the stock classes.

Anyone interested in being made aware of when the stock pulls will be held can do so by getting on the mailing list of the Pa. Tractor Pullers Association Newsletter, called Pulloff. This publication not only lists the stock tractor pulls but all pulls that are being sanctioned by the Association.

The biggest stock pull of the year in the state takes place at the Farm Equipment Exposition that is held annually at the Farm Show building the first week of March. That stock championship pull is open for anyone to compete in regardless of whether they are a state member or have competed at any prior state pulls.

Anyone interested in

(Turn to Page B12)

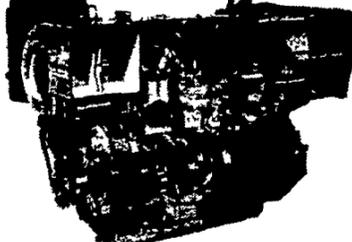
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